

Four Views Of Christ (Part 5)

Luke

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We are going to begin this sermon in the book of Hosea, chapter 11. God is the speaker here and He says:

Hosea 11:3-4 I taught Ephraim to walk, taking them by their arms; but they did not know that I healed them. I drew them with gentle cords, with bands of love, and I was to them as those who take the yoke from their neck. I stooped and fed them.

I want to do some expounding on this verse because it illustrates very clearly the underlying thrust—it is not the main thrust—of the book of Luke. It is so important to see Christ in this dimension.

God says that He draws people; He draws His people Israel with cords of love—gentle cords or bands of love. Other translations say, "The cords of a man." Others say, "A harness of love." What these illustrations indicate is that God draws people by compassion, by gentleness, as contrasted to the guiding ropes that one needs to lead and guide a beast.

What He is indicating here is a child training method, learning to walk and gently leading. As with a child, you will hold out your finger and the little child will grab on to your finger, and you lead that child along as they are taking their very first steps. When they go to fall, trip over something, and stumble, you reach out and catch them. God is saying this is the way He leads and guides Israel to Him.

He is indicating that His method in dealing with mankind is one of persuasion, rather than one of coercion. In practical application, it means that even Christ's commands are in reality invitations rather than compelling orders that He has given.

In John 12:32, Jesus said, "If I am lifted up [and indeed He was—He meant on that stake and crucified]. . . I will draw all peoples to Myself." Again, He is not indicating coercion. He is indicating persuasion as the method by which He uses in dealing with man and bringing them to conversion.

Jesus says in quite a number of places, "Come to Me." One could say that is a command. That is not the way God wants us to look at it. It is an invitation. Just like we do with a child, "Come here, come here." We are not commanding them to do it. We are not compelling them to do it. We are trying to persuade them to step out, begin to walk, and come to us.

Jesus says, "Follow Me." If you want to, you could say that is an order. God looks at it as an invitation. There is no threat implied with these statements we get from Jesus Christ. God wants us to see them as invitations from Him.

The question always arises that since God sees all this mess that we have made here, why does He not do something about it? Why does He not fence us in and make us all obey His will and do things His way? If God wants me to do right, why does He not just compel me so that I never go astray?

Why does He not spare the world all this pain and fear that results from our stupidities, our mistakes, and our tragedies? If He wants us to serve and obey Him, why did He not use something stronger than a harness of love?

The answer to that is if He did it that way, we would not be free. Christianity is based on a personal relationship between God and us that prepares us for a relationship of even greater unity and harmony in the kingdom of God. It is not a relationship of master/slave or ruler/subject sustained by the grip of authoritarian power. It is a family relationship; in fact, a husband/wife relationship that is based on mutual respect, genuine love, warmth, and caring.

Such a relationship cannot be compelled. It must be impelled by a desire emanating from inside of both parties in the relationship. The hold that the Father and the Son have on us is not a vise, but a magnet of admiration and obligation.

In a relationship in which one party is held by fear, intimidation, or force, somebody is a slave, and a slave is not free. The one who is held as the slave is bound to strive to break free and that creates war. The attachment is not really expressive of that person and the relationship is not going to express truth and sincerity.

Besides all of this, if a person is not free, he is not really responsible for his actions. Without responsibility, a person is not free. It is a vicious circle. If a person is not free to choose between right and wrong, then what he does has no meaning at all. Life has no sense.

All of this has bearing on the book of Luke, because God, through Luke, has chosen to show Jesus more as a man, as a member of mankind, dealing with mankind as a means of harness to love.

Mark and Luke have so much in common in terms and expressions of the perspective that they chose to show Christ, that some people have switched the symbols. Some people think that Luke is the ox and that Mark is the man. My own personal feeling is that Luke indeed is the man, and Mark indeed is the ox.

Mark's emphasis is subtle and he adds to that the perspective of service that is shown there. Luke's approach is broad and plain, showing the Son of Man is very man. Luke adds the additional perspective that Christ is the Savior of all. He gives these things in a universal perspective, a universal sense, that Jesus of Nazareth is not just the Messiah of Israel. He is the Savior of the whole world.

He does show Christ linked to a certain kingdom, but also to all the sons of men. He is the Son of Man, the pattern Man. Hang on to that. He is the pattern Man through whom man is blessed.

He is seen in the book of Luke not only in moral perfection, but also in human feeling, suffering, and honors—the kind of thing that God wants to be a heritage to all of mankind.

In the book of Luke He is not shown so much as a King commanding, although some of that element is there, but as a Man living on common ground with all men. When God says He is going to draw us with the bands of a man, you begin to get the picture. He is going to draw us, as it were, from one man to another. Not just Israelites, but to all of mankind.

Like Adam before Him, Christ is the beginning of a new family, a new nation that represents the true heritage of all of mankind.

Let us go to the book of Romans, chapter 5, to continue this preference to the book of Luke.

Romans 5:12-17 Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned—(For until the law sin was in the world, but sin is not imputed when there is no law. Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those who had not sinned according to the likeness of the transgression of Adam, who is a type of Him who was to come. But the free gift is not like the offense. For if by the one man's offense many died, much more the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abounded to many. And the gift is not like that which came through the one who sinned. For the judgment which came from one offense resulted in condemnation, but the free gift which came from many offenses resulted in justification. For if by the one man's offense death reigned through the one, much more those who receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.)

Brethren, mankind was made in the image of God, made to rule the creation of God. But mankind failed through Adam and God made a judgment—that as Adam did so would all his progeny do, and indeed we did. All have sinned and come short of the glory of God. However, the good news is that the second Adam, the pattern Man, succeeded where the first Adam failed. Thus, man's heritage is renewed with even greater promise and blessing through Jesus Christ.

God, through Luke, chose to present Jesus in this light—the pattern Man, sharing life, as it were, with the common man. Approaching Jesus with that perspective, we get a very interesting insight into the way He looked at things and judged things, why He did things the way that He did, and what He was fulfilling in His responsibility as is shown in the book of Luke.

We could go to other scriptures. You can just jot down I Corinthians 15:20-23, 45-49, where it reiterates and emphasizes the things that I have just shown you, and that is that Jesus Christ is indeed the pattern Man. We are being conformed to His image. The book of Luke is important in this regard.

Let us go back to the book of Matthew in chapter 23. If you know anything about Matthew 23, you know what is here. There is a clear illustration of the different approach between Matthew and Luke.

Matthew 23:1-7 Then Jesus spoke to the multitudes and to His disciples, saying: "The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat. Therefore whatever they tell you to observe, that observe and do, but do not do according to their works; for they say, and do not do. For they bind heavy burdens, hard to bear [contrast that with Jesus' approach to things], and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers. But all their works they do to be seen by men. They make their phylacteries broad and enlarge the borders of their garments. They love the best places at feasts, the best seats in the synagogues, greetings in the marketplaces, and to be called by men, 'Rabbi, Rabbi.' "

Then you get to all of the woes that are aimed at the Pharisees. What I am driving at here is that in Matthew, a great deal of the teaching is done by contrasting Christ, the true Heir and King, to the

leaders of what was then the kingdom on earth—the rulers, the scribes, and the Pharisees. We know that these people had a zeal for God, but it was not according to knowledge.

What we see in the book of Luke is the pattern Man, as He should be, and He is in contrast with man in general as he is. Luke does this without directly stating it by showing Christ in two of His offices.

Hebrews 3:1-3 Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, Christ Jesus, who was faithful to Him who appointed Him, as Moses also was faithful in all His house. For this One has been counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as He who built the house has more honor than the house.

First of all, Christ is seen as the Apostle/Messenger, the One bearing a message from God to man. The second office He is seen in is as Priest/Mediator. There are a number of scriptures we can give you to mark down.

Hebrews 5:7 [W]ho, in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications, with vehement cries and tears to Him who was able to save Him from death, and was heard because of His godly fear.

If you go back to the beginning of the chapter, he is talking about Christ qualifying as High Priest.

He is shown, not merely bearing a message from God, but bearing it with infinite concern and priestly compassion necessary for a mediator for those receiving the message. This is in the book of Luke.

As a Man, He is also God's prophet and He has feelings—feelings that are similar to and not just for those that He is bearing the message to. His feelings are just like ours. In doing this, He then shows us our responsibilities and duties as sons of men.

The book of Luke has a number of distinctive characteristics. The distinctiveness begins in the very first sentence.

Luke 1:1-4 Inasmuch as many have taken in hand to set in order a narrative of those things which have been fulfilled among us, just as though who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word delivered them to us, it seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write to you an orderly account, most excellent Theophilus, that you may know the certainty of those things in which you were instructed.

The opening to the book of Luke is entirely distinctive from the other accounts in that it is a personal, man-to-man greeting. He (God, through Luke) is sending us a signal right from the very beginning. It is a personal letter. It is approaching Christ from a different perspective. A man is going to be described, so Luke begins to draw Theophilus by the cords of a man by showing his personal knowledge of Jesus' life.

The opening chapter in the book of John begins by showing Jesus' origins as not being of the world. Matthew begins with a genealogy of a king. Mark jumps right in and shows Jesus serving. But Luke begins by giving a background for a simple tale. Verse 5 says, "And there was in the days of Herod. . ." That is kind of interesting. It almost starts off like some fairy tales or novels that I have read.

You begin to see the different approach altogether. He is drawing us with a warm, human story, not of the divinity that is out of reach, but rather somebody that is warmly human. Immediately we are introduced to human feelings and relationships. There is nothing like this in the others. We begin to get intimate circumstances of His birth, the infancy of Jesus Christ, of John the Baptist, and even His family relationship to John the Baptist.

It is only in Luke that we have the inspired songs of Mary, His mother; Zacharias, His uncle; and Simeon, who was no relation, but had been promised by God that he would not die until he saw the Savior of Israel. Only Luke shows the census. He then shows Joseph and Mary, like any other couple would do, responding so that they could be taxed. He does not show Christ coming to rule, that is, in the birth announcement, but one beginning life on ground that is as common as one can get—born in a manger.

How many other children of that day and time were born under similar circumstances? In all probability, almost everybody was. I do not mean born necessarily in a manger, but I am saying born in lowly circumstances, born at home, and born in a barn. Who knows? Jesus' beginnings as a man were similar to everybody else's in that day and time.

The message that is delivered from the angels to the shepherds—interesting contrast here. Flip back to chapter 2 of Matthew.

Matthew 2:1-2 Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, saying, "Where is He who has been born King of the Jews?"

Kings are born in palaces, are they not? Not this King. See, that is clarified in the book of Luke and God shows Him sharing a beginning of life that was similar to everybody else.

Today, when we look back on the birth of one of our greater presidents, Abraham Lincoln, and we think it is really kind of odd that he was born in a log cabin. No! Almost everybody in that circumstance at that time was born in a log cabin—I mean, born out on the frontier. Almost everybody was born in a log cabin. Abraham Lincoln shared that with virtually everybody else who lived on the frontier. That i's the way God is showing Christ. He had a human beginning just like all the others.

Luke 2:8-11 Now there were in the same country shepherds living out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. And behold, an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were greatly afraid. Then the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord."

Not the king, but a Savior. See the approach? Already, things are beginning to clarify in the approach that Luke has as contrasted to Matthew and Mark. Mark shows a servant, Matthew shows a king, and Luke shows Jesus sharing humanity with you and me. A birth that was common. He is not coming as King in Luke, but He is coming as a Savior of mankind. He is not just Savior of Israel. He is Savior to all the people. We begin to see the universal approach of Luke, the Gentile. Jesus is Savior of everybody, not just Israel. He is Messiah to all. That is the distinctiveness that is being established here at the very beginning of the book.

Luke is the only one who shows the census. After the announcement by the angel, then follows the story of His infancy and His growth; the boyhood and increase in wisdom and stature with men and God.

In chapter 2, again sharing what every first-born male child would have shared with all the other first-born male children in Israel:

Luke 2:22-24 Now when the days of her purification according to the law of Moses were completed, they brought Him to Jerusalem to present Him to the Lord [which would have been done in the case of any first-born] (as it is written in the law of the Lord, "*Every male who opens the womb shall be called holy to the LORD*"), and to offer a sacrifice according to what is said in the law of the Lord, "*A pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons.*"

Incidentally, that last phrase, "*A pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons,*" also gives an insight into the economic status into which He was born. They could have offered a bullock, but they obviously did not have the money, so they offered the "lowest grade" because apparently that is all that they could afford.

We begin to see their economic status. He was not born into wealth. He was born, at best, into what we would call today a middle class family. Also we find in verse 21, like every other Jewish boy, He was circumcised on the eighth day.

Luke 2:39 So when they had performed all things according to the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own city, Nazareth.

Again, Luke is the only one that brings that in—that Jesus grew up in a city in Galilee named Nazareth. This again shows that God did not favor His Son by having Him brought up in the center of all the cultural, political, and religious activity in Jerusalem. He had Him growing up in a minor village, way to the north, in the town of Nazareth. Jesus could easily be looked upon, by those who looked down their nose, as a country bumpkin, coming from a little town. Such as it is with God.

All of these things are injected into the story so we could understand how God is approaching things through Luke. We get insight into this facet of the life of Jesus Christ, and this dimension is added to His personality.

Luke 2:40 And the Child grew and became strong in spirit, filled with wisdom; and the grace of God was upon Him.

Then after the discussion with the doctors of the law, in the Temple:

Luke 2:51-52 Then He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was subject to them, but His mother kept all these things in her heart. And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.

Just like you and me, He had to grow. God did not open up Jesus' head and pour in all this knowledge, wisdom, and power like a funnel. He had to go through all the exercise of discipline it takes to thoroughly understand something and accumulate knowledge; meditate on things and come to understand them.

Incidentally, I might add something here that all these things are given that we can understand that when Jesus finished His course, He was prepared to be our Mediator and High Priest. He saw life from the same perspective, from the same worldview as we do. He grew up in a middle class family, a family that did not have a lot of money, in a small town. He grew in wisdom. He accumulated knowledge and understanding just as we do.

In chapter 3, Luke gives us a rough date: "In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar." We do not need to pay too much attention to that for our purposes here. Then, he goes into the preaching of John the Baptist, and I want you to notice a difference here. Also, I want to pick up on something in verse 2, and that is, Annas and Caiaphas being high priests. Just mark that in the back of your mind.

We have John introduced, the son of Zacharias, "And he went into all the region around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for the remission of sin." [Luke 3:3]

Let us go back to Matthew the 3rd chapter and look at verse 2 with Matthew's approach.

Matthew 3:2 Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!"

John preached the kingdom of heaven. Luke preached repentance. Matthew also mentioned repentance, but he linked it to the kingdom of God. In the book of Luke, it is not that he does not mention repentance; he does not mention the kingdom of heaven. The reason is, he does not want us to link it to Christ in his telling of the story. Luke has a different goal, a different point. He is approaching that point from a different perspective. At this point, he does not want to link Jesus to a kingdom; he wants to link Him to Savior/High Priest/Mediator/Apostle. These are all offices He can hold as a man.

John is shown—and this also fits into the flow of things—in Luke the 3rd chapter, as preaching to every level of men. Look at verse 12.

Luke 3:12, 14-15 Then tax collectors also came to be baptized. [They asked him a question.] . . . Likewise the soldiers asked him, saying, "And what shall we do?" . . . Now as the people were in expectation, and all reasoned in their hearts about John.

John was preaching to the whole nation, to every level of people, and that fits in with the thrust of what Luke is trying to get across here. Matthew, Mark, and Luke all record elements of the preaching of John the Baptist, but the apostle John shows none of it because it does not have any bearing on Jesus' divinity.

In verse 23, we have Luke giving Christ's age.

Luke 3:23 Now Jesus Himself began His ministry at about thirty years of age being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph, the son of Heli.

Luke does that, the others do not. This has important bearing because in Numbers 4:3, that is when a priest could officially do the work of a priest, at age 30.

Baptism pictures the burial of the old man, and that answers to our relationship to Adam. All of us are related to Adam, and we are related through the old man. When you get baptized, you are buried in the water, you come up out of the water (typical of a resurrection), and that has relationship to our relationship, or bearing upon our relationship, to Christ—a new breed, a new nation, a new family that is being created.

Jesus Himself was baptized to fulfill all righteousness. He did not have to be baptized because of sin. But He did have to be baptized in order to (as it were) break the link between Adam and the Kingdom of God. Think about it.

He did that. That is what happens to us. When we are baptized we have died to sin—sin that we have done as a result, as it were, of our link to Adam. We come up out of the water ready for a relationship with Christ—a new man, part of a new breed.

Here, in the book of Luke, he links Him to all of mankind, because the very next thing that occurs is the genealogy. The genealogy of Christ in the book of Luke goes back to Adam. That is very significant in understanding the book of Luke, because he is trying to establish (in a very subtle way) how our link to Adam is *broken*. If we are ever going to be part of the Kingdom of God, part of the Family of God, there must be repentance, there must be a death of the old self, there must be burial, there must be cleansing, there must be a resurrection. That is why Luke writes in the order that he does so that we will get the picture here.

Christ and we are linked to Adam, and symbolically by baptism that link is broken and we have established a much higher lineage to God Himself and Jesus Christ His Son in heaven. We could go through the scriptures (which I will not do) in Romans 6:4-5; I Corinthians 6:4-16; and II Corinthians 5:17. God through Christ, as part of the message that the apostle brought us, is announcing a new creation. The book of Luke, right here, is fitting right into that.

There is a secondary reason why this list of rulers is given and the high priests are mentioned at the beginning of chapter 3. I do want to go into this just a little bit. The reason they are given is Luke wants us to see clearly the state of the political affairs of the nation of Judea. They were not even ruling themselves. Did they need the Messiah? Did they need to be rescued? Absolutely they needed to be rescued!

Let us go back to Proverbs 11. I might ask us, has the state of the world changed any from the time of Christ? It has not at all. I am just going to string together four verses here.

Proverbs 11:11 By the blessing of the upright the city [a political unit] is exalted, but it is overthrown by the mouth of the wicked.

Proverbs 14:34 Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people.

Sin is a disgrace, or a shame to, any people.

Proverbs 16:12 It is an abomination for kings to commit wickedness, for a throne is established by righteousness.

Proverbs 25:5 Take away the wicked from before the king, and his throne will be established in righteousness.

Let us go back to Luke, the 3rd chapter again. Look who is judging God's people Israel. Look who is sitting in the seats of power. They are not even Israelites. They are not ruling themselves. They are a slave nation to these Gentile rulers: Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate, Herod, his brother Philip, and Lysanias are all mentioned there. And then horror of horrors, we have Annas and Caiaphas as the high priests! Two of them at once, apparently! Either that, or they flipped back and forth.

All of you ought to understand that God appointed the high priest to his job; and he received it because he was a direct descendant of Aaron. He should of come into his office as a result of that. Do you know what was happening at the time of Christ? The Gentile rulers were putting into the office of high priest anybody who could bribe them with the most money. The office was for sale.

That is stuck in there so we can understand the kind of political setting Jesus had to operate in. It was about as corrupt as you could get. You think we have a bad government in the United States? You think our officials are corrupt? You think they are liars? You think they are taking us into socialism at the least, or communism, or whatever else? How would you like to have lived under these people, or even the people you should have been able to trust—your own people who were in the highest office of the land that would be given to somebody of your own race. They were corrupt themselves in buying the office of high priest. That is pretty bad stuff.

You think Jesus did not learn how to deal under corrupt leadership like that? He had to face it too, and far more corrupt than we have in this nation. He was dealing as Man to men. That is Luke's approach. Never forget, "I will draw you with the cords of a Man." God does not want to beat us over the head, but He is going to work all He can to persuade us to give ourselves over to Him.

What we essentially see in the naming of these people, and understanding a little bit of the history, is that we see men arranging the world the way they liked. And then, the second Adam came into their midst and He shows us what man is really supposed to be like.

Luke 4:14-16, 18 Then Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee, and news of Him went out through all the surrounding region. And He taught in their synagogues, being glorified by all. So He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up. And as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up to read. . . . The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor. . .

Again, Luke mentions Nazareth, where He was brought up, and it is just a little touch tying Him to a community, showing that He was not otherworldly. It is here that Jesus makes clear the calling of the Gentiles. Again, if you will compare this to Matthew and Mark, it simply is not there.

He reinforces that annunciation through the 4th chapter. He [Luke] does it by showing His path agrees with Elijah and Elisha. He mentions them specifically. I am sure the reason he did that is that both of these men went to the Gentiles.

This distinction continues throughout the book of Luke. For example, whenever Luke gives his account of the Sermon on the Mount, there is no reference to, "You have heard it said of old time." That would only have relationship to an Israelite. Luke's approach (even though at times we may feel it is subtle) is always to show Jesus Christ preaching to mankind, not just Israel. You will find no allusion to the law and the prophets. There is no correction of the religionists of Christ's day. There is nothing about alms, fasting, and prayer in the Sermon on the Mount. There are simply broad, moral teachings that suited man as man, whether Israelite or Gentile, not man as an Israelite.

Here is another interesting contrast. Matthew says in the Sermon on the Mount, "Be you therefore perfect." Do you know what Luke says in exactly the same place? "Therefore be merciful." It is a different approach. Matthew—righteousness in relation to a kingdom; Luke—merciful in relation to anybody.

There is a more common ground in Luke with all of mankind. The thought is almost always toward universality. When Matthew gives the apostle's commission—let us look at this. This shows this very clearly.

Matthew 10:5-7 These twelve Jesus sent out and commanded them, saying: "Do not go into the way of the Gentiles, and do not enter a city of the Samaritans. But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And as you go, preach saying, 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand.'"

Let us go back to the book of Luke, chapter 9.

Luke 9:1-6 Then He called His twelve disciples together and gave them power and authority over all demons, and to cure diseases. He sent them to preach the kingdom of God and to heal the sick. And He said to them, "Take nothing for the journey, neither staffs nor bag nor bread nor money; and do not have two tunics apiece. Whatever house you enter, stay there, and from there depart. And whoever will not receive you, when you go out of that city, shake off the very dust from your feet as a testimony against them." So they departed and went through the towns, preaching the gospel and healing everywhere.

Do you see how broad it is? He does not say anything about the Gentiles. He says nothing about going to Israel. Have you figured out why? Because Theophilus, with that name, was very likely a Gentile. It is not absolutely certain, but it is a pretty good indication that he was a Gentile. The implication, the inference throughout the entire book of Luke is that this is something that God primarily intended for Gentiles to read. He did that so there would be common ground with everybody. That is why there's no reference to things like the law and the prophets, teachings like the Sermon on the Mount. There is always a universal approach. We have teachings that would fit anybody at anytime.

Let us go back to Mark, the 9th chapter.

Mark 9:38-41 Now John answered Him, saying, "Teacher, we saw someone who does not follow us casting out demons in Your name, and we forbade him because he does not follow us." But Jesus said, "Do not forbid him, for no one who works a miracle in My name can soon afterward speak evil of Me. For he who is not against us is on our side. For whoever gives you a cup of water to drink in My name, because you belong to Christ, assuredly, I say to you, he will by no means lose his reward."

Let us look at that same thing in the book of Luke.

Luke 9:49-50 Now John answered and said, "Master, we saw someone casting out demons in Your name, and we forbade him because he does not follow with us." But Jesus said to him, "Do not forbid him, for he who is not against us is on our side."

Mark puts in what he does, especially in verse 41, about giving a cup of water. That is an act of service. He shows that because it bears on his thrust of showing Christ serving or teaching about serving. In the book of Luke, Luke is saying that God may be working something that is beyond us (of which we are unaware) so do not interfere. That is as far as he goes—a broader, more universal approach.

Luke 9:51 Now it came to pass, when the time had come for Him to be received up, that He steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem.

You should be beginning to see the story here. He was turned away. James and John wanted Christ to send down fire from heaven.

Luke 9:55-56 But He turned and rebuked them [His own disciples] and said, "You do not know what manner of spirit you are of. For the Son of Man did not come to destroy men's lives but to save them." [To draw people, not hit them with a baseball bat.] And they went to another village.

Luke is the only one who records this. Christ did not try to overthrow, but instead, He submitted (like a gentle man would) to the slight of shutting Him out, and was longsuffering. He was not quick to judge His fellow man to condemnation. Again, "I will draw you with the bands of a Man."

Again, when the seventy are sent out in chapter 10, we see differences there as well. Let us go back to chapter 5 to an interesting insight into Peter. Luke is the only one that shows this little insight into Peter's feelings.

Luke 5:3-8 Then He got into one of the boats, which was Simon's, and asked him to put out a little from the land. And He sat down and taught the multitudes from the boat. When He had stopped speaking, He said to Simon, "Launch out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch." But Simon answered and said to Him, "Master, we have toiled all night and caught nothing; nevertheless at Your word I will let down the net." And when they had done this, they caught a great number of fish, and their net was breaking. So they signaled to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both the boats, so that they began to sink. When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord."

I think if you were in the same situation, it is very likely you would have pretty much the same kind of feelings that Peter had. Peter at this time felt that God was very near to him; and indeed He was. How did Peter feel? Small, dirty, vile, unholy. His sins were being exposed and he knew it. That is what happens to a man when he really gets close to God. Only Luke includes that little insight.

There is a similar thing regarding a person's feelings also in chapter 5, but this time in verse 37. It is a story that the others have, but only Luke has this.

Luke 5:37-39 And no one puts new wine into old wineskins; or else the new wine will burst the wineskins and be spilled, and the wineskins will be ruined. But new wine must be put into new wineskins, and both are preserved. And no one, having drunk old wine, immediately desires new; for he says, "The old is better."

Matthew, Mark, and Luke all record this, but only Luke tells us the effect of drinking the old wine. What he is doing here, is showing the power of habit; he is showing the power of association. In this case it is the power of association to what leads to death. Our tie to Adam is not completely broken. Our tie to sin is not broken.

What Luke is saying, using our feelings—very common, normal human feelings—is that we indulge ourselves in what is old, in what excites us. *We will not relish what is new!* Do you get the teaching, brethren? If we continue to do what we did in Adam—if we continue to do what we did before baptism, if we continue to do prior to our repentance and our conversion, if we continue to do things like that—then the way of Christ *will not be* attractive to us. We will not do it! We are going to have trouble overcoming.

Luke illustrates this by reminding us of feelings. Feelings are powerful motivators for what we do. We have to recognize that the old is going to be very appealing to our feelings because we feel comfortable with it and it gives us feelings of pleasure that we want to continue. We are afraid to let go of it and indulge ourselves in the new.

In many scenes that are common to the others, there is almost always something that is strikingly unique in Luke. I will tell you one, and again this is important as to seeing Christ as a man. There is nobody who mentions Christ praying as much as Luke does. Nobody even comes close to the number of times that he mentions Christ praying.

Do you know why he does that? It has to do with this undercurrent that he is writing about all the time. Christ is a man! He is meeting life as men meet life. He is meeting things common to all other men. He has to live under wicked governments. He has to live under a corrupt religion. He has to deal with all the things a man does.

So what does a man, a godly man, do in that kind of a situation? A godly man prays and depends upon God. See how he shows us what we should be doing? Even though Christ may not command it, the teaching is in the example. We see Christ praying so frequently in the book of Luke. Christ prays at His baptism in the book of Luke. Christ prays again in chapter 5, verse 12.

Luke 5:12 And it happened when He was in a certain city, that behold, a man who was full of leprosy saw Jesus; and he fell on his face and implored Him, saying, "Lord, if You are willing, You can make me clean." [Jesus prayed.]

Luke 5: 16 So He Himself often withdrew into the wilderness and prayed.

Luke 6:12 Now it came to pass in those days that He went out to the mountain to pray.

When He chose His apostles in Luke 9:18-20, He prayed all night. At Peter's confession in Luke 9:28, Jesus prayed. At the transfiguration, Jesus prayed. In Luke 11:1, Jesus prayed.

Luke 22:32 Peter I have prayed for you [that when you are converted] that your faith should not fail.

Only in Luke does Jesus pray in the Garden of Gethsemane with great droplets of blood coming out. He is showing a Man dependent on God. Do you get the teaching? That is what we need to do.

Luke also shows human concerns, such as sympathy, that only he records. In dealing with the widow, only Luke tells us that the child was her only son. In Luke 8:41-42, it was the only daughter. In Luke 9:38, it was the only child. In Luke 7:36, we see Jesus there as the social Man. He was attending a banquet at a Pharisee's place. Whether He was in houses of publicans or Pharisees, He never lost the opportunity to instruct. Even there in that sumptuous setting He was occupied with a poor sinner and His compassion toward her provokes the others at the dinner to judge Him, first of all as profane and then they say He is arrogant. Luke shows human emotion at work in what people do.

The different approach is very interesting that Luke has from Matthew when they have similar teachings. Matthew will tend to show Christ preaching in public. Then when you get to the book of Luke, you see the same basic teaching, but Jesus is doing it privately. There is no big crowd. He is talking to a few.

Do you know what happened? Undoubtedly Jesus said the same things many times, the same teachings. In one place He would give a sermon for a whole group of people. On another occasion there would be a small group of people, a circle of people standing around Him, or He was at somebody's home enjoying dinner, they were asking Him questions, and He gave the same teaching in a private setting.

Luke chooses to show the private setting, whereas Matthew shows Him in a more commanding position as the King addressing His subjects and preaching from on high. A different approach altogether.

In chapter 14, there is a long story in verses 1-15. Again, despite the setting and His knowing they are watching to get something on Him, He heals and then He reproves the people. Luke shows Jesus also as a Man of courage, a Man of conviction who carries through with His responsibility of teaching, regardless of the circumstances.

You know that you and I would have creepy, fearful feelings in such a situation. You think Jesus did not have those things? Sure He did, but He overcame them. You can tell by the prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane that He had feelings about His crucifixion. He did not want to do it. He would like to get out of it. It was a pain for Him to think about it. It was such a pain to think about it that He perspired blood. That is pretty hard thinking—a pretty stressful situation.

The parables in the book of Luke are almost always introduced as a certain Man. In contrast to Matthew, they are introduced as, "The kingdom of heaven is like. . ." Luke looks at Christ broadly in

terms of mankind whereas Mark and Matthew center in on something that is very specific—one in terms of service; the other in terms of a king.

In Luke 21:24, only in Luke do we have the "times of the Gentiles" mentioned. In Luke 21:29, you read the story about the fig tree. Only Luke mentions "all the trees." The fig tree which was probably Judea, the people to whom Christ came expecting fruit and He did not find any, and He cursed the tree. But there is a mention in Luke's account of all the trees, meaning all of the Gentiles. In Luke 23:33, only Luke uses the Gentile name Calvary instead of Golgotha, the Hebrew or Aramaic word.

Here in Luke we have the pattern Man. He prays and shows His dependence on God. We see Him as a social Man, affecting others in the power and strength He received from God. We need to see that though we are men, the physical, that our orientation, like Christ's, has to be to a higher and greater calling in order that we might be conformed to Him.

That is a major portion of the purpose of the book of Luke—to show Christ dealing with life from a man's point of view, from a man's perspective. We are to go and do likewise despite those things that are arrayed against us. If we are ever going to be in His image, it is going to be because we are following the same path as He did.

Let us close in the book of Hebrews once again, this time in chapter 2.

Hebrews 2:14-18 Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is the devil, and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. For indeed He does not give aid to angels, but He does give aid to the seed of Abraham. Therefore, in all things He had to be made like His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. For in that He Himself has suffered, being tempted, He is able to aid those who are tempted.

The angel said at the very beginning, "Unto you a Savior is born." Yes, but also, a Man was born and nothing in man's [domain] is now alien to Him, because He came and He shared life on our terms. He was born a Brother to us that through God's grace we might be linked to Him.

He enables us, by His experience and through His office of, not just the Apostle preaching the message, but the High Priest who shared our experience, is now resurrected, and at the Father's right hand. Because He has done these things He is able to understand in a way He could not understand before. He learned things by obedience, by the things that He suffered, and that is what the book of Luke is trying to get across to us—that He is fully capable of doing what God has assigned Him to do as our High Priest. Our salvation is thus assured because of what He did.