



## Was Luke an apostle?

This is a question I received after one of our Daily Devotional readings from the Gospel of Luke.

We typically refer to the Old Testament as being written by "The Prophets" and the New Testament as written by "The Apostles." Both of those statements are generalizations. Most of the Old Testament was written by those who were known as "prophets." There are some exceptions to that generalization. For example, a large number of Psalms were written by David, the king, and a large number of Proverbs were written by Solomon - also a king.

In the same way, the vast majority of the New Testament was written by apostles - those disciples specifically sent by Jesus to tell the world about Him. Among the exceptions are the books of James and Jude (Jesus' brothers) and the books of Luke and Acts (both written by Luke.)

Before I go any further, we need to be reminded of what the apostle Peter wrote: (2 Peter 1:20-21) *"Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation of things. For prophecy never had its origin in the human will, but prophets, though human, spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit."* The Apostle Paul put it this way in 2 Timothy 3:16 *"All Scripture is God-breathed,"* (or "inspired by God.")

Even though the words of the Bible were written down by men, everything they wrote was what God prompted them to write, so God is ultimately THE Writer of both Old and New Testaments.

A lot of times when people are interested in finding out more about Jesus and aren't sure where to start reading, I will point them to the Gospel of Luke. One reason is that Luke records several things that most people have at least some familiarity with, like the "Christmas" story in Luke 2 and the famous parables of the "Good Samaritan" in Luke 10 and "Prodigal Son" in Luke 15. Another reason is because of what Luke tells us at the beginning of his Gospel: *"Since I myself have carefully investigated everything from the beginning, I too decided to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, so that you may know the certainty of the things you have been taught."* Anyone interested in finding out about Jesus wants to know the truth, the facts. Luke states point-blank that everything he wrote was a result of careful research, so that whoever reads what he wrote can be confident that it is true.

Luke had to do "careful investigation," because he was not an eyewitness to the events he wrote about in his Gospel. He records at the start of the Gospel of Luke that his "careful investigation" included talking with those who were eyewitnesses. Obviously, these eyewitnesses included the disciples who were with Jesus from the start of His ministry. But we get the idea - especially from the details of the "Christmas Story" - that Mary was also one of the eyewitnesses Luke interviewed.

Luke first used "we" in Acts 16:10. Prior to that he referenced events by using "they." This indicates that it was at this point on the Apostle Paul's second missionary journey (ca 49-51 AD) that Luke had joined Paul and thereafter also becomes an eyewitness.

Thanks for asking,  
Pastor David

Send your questions to [pastor@livingwordlutheran.net](mailto:pastor@livingwordlutheran.net)