



Lecture # 12 Part 2

INTRODUCTION TO ACTS

II. AUTHOR

- B. We have three sources of information about Luke.
1. The three passages in the NT ([Colossians 4:10–14](#); [Philemon 24](#); [2 Timothy 4:11](#)) and the **book of Acts itself**.
 2. The second century *Anti-Marcion prologue* to Luke (A.D. 160–180)
 3. The early church historian of the fourth century, **Eusebius**, in *Ecclesiastical History 3:4*, says “Luke, by race, a native of Antioch, and by profession, a physician, having associated mainly with Paul and having companioned with the rest of the apostles less closely, has left us examples of that healing of souls which he acquired from them in two inspired books, The Gospel and The Acts of the Apostles.”
 4. This is a composite profile of Luke.
 - a. a Gentile (listed in [Colossians 4:12–14](#), with Epaphras and Demas as helpers and not with the Jewish helpers)
 - b. from either Antioch of Syria (i.e. *anti-Marcion prologue* to Luke) or Philippi of Macedonia (i.e. Sir William Ramsay on [Acts 16:19](#))
 - c. a physician ([Colossians 4:14](#), or at least a well-educated man)
 - d. became a convert in middle adulthood after the church was started at Antioch (*Anti-Marcion prologue*)
 - e. Paul’s traveling companion (the “we” sections of Acts)
 - f. unmarried
 - g. wrote the third Gospel and Acts (similar introduction and similar style and vocabulary)
 - h. died at the age of 84 at Boeotia
- C. Challenges to Luke’s authorship
1. Paul’s preaching on Mars Hill in Athens uses Greek philosophical categories and terms to form a common ground (cf. [Acts 17](#)), but in [Romans 1](#) and [2](#) Paul seems to regard any “common ground” (i.e. nature, inner moral witness) as futile.
 2. Paul’s preaching and comments in Acts depict him as a Jewish Christian who takes Moses seriously, but Paul’s letters depreciate the Law as problematic and passing away.
 3. Paul’s preaching in Acts does not have the eschatological focus that his earlier books have (i.e. [1](#) and [2 Thessalonians](#)).
 4. This contrasting of terms, styles, and emphases is interesting, but not conclusive. When the same criteria are applied to the Gospels, the Jesus of the Synoptics speaks very differently from the Jesus of John. Yet, very few scholars would deny that both reflect the life of Jesus.



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- D.** When discussing authorship of Acts it is crucial that we discuss Luke's sources because many scholars (ex. C. C. Torrey) believe Luke used Aramaic source documents (or oral traditions) for many of the first fifteen chapters. If this is true, Luke is an editor of this material, not an author. Even in the later sermons of Paul Luke only gives us a summary of Paul's words, not verbatim accounts. Luke's use of sources is as crucial a question as Luke's authorship of the book.

III. DATE

- A.** There is much discussion and disagreement as to the time of the writing of Acts, but the events themselves cover from about **A.D. 30–63** (Paul was released from prison in Rome in the middle 60's and rearrested and executed under Nero, probably in the persecutions of **A.D. 65**).
- B.** If one assumed the apologetic nature of the book concerning the Roman government, then a date **(1)** before **A.D. 64** (the beginning of Nero's persecution of Christians in Rome) and/or **(2)** related to the Jewish revolt of **A.D. 66–73**.
- C.** If one tries to relate Acts to Luke's Gospel in sequence, then the date for the Gospel influences the date of the writing of Acts. Since the fall of Jerusalem to Titus in **A.D. 70** is prophesied (i.e. [Luke 21](#)), but not described, seems to demand a date before **A.D. 70**. **If so, then Acts written as a sequel must be dated in the 80's.**