

THROUGH THE BIBLE STUDY

LUKE 2-3

Most moms have a book stuffed with mementos and photos that chronicle the early years of their child's life.

Her baby book is a cherished keepsake. And apparently, Mary kept a baby book on her firstborn son.

After Jesus' birth, Luke tells us, "*(Mary) kept all these things and pondered them in her heart.*" Either literally or figuratively, she compiled a baby book. And this became primary source material for Luke's Gospel.

When Paul was incarcerated in Caesarea, Luke toured the countryside researching the life of Jesus. Imagine him sitting with Mary and watching the old woman pull out the Son of God's tattered baby book.

Chapter 2 records the birth of Jesus. "*And it came to pass in those days that a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered.*"

This census first took place while Quirinius was governing Syria. So all went to be registered, everyone to his own city. Augustus, the adopted son of Julius Caesar, was one of Rome's most successful emperors.

It was said, "*He came to a Rome made of bricks and left it a city of marble.*" Augustus transformed the whole empire with his mighty armies and extensive roads. They even named a salad after him, *the Caesar Salad.*

His given name was Octavius, but in 27 BC, the Roman Senate approached him about taking a title. He could be called, "*king,*" or "*emperor,*" or "*dictator.*" He chose

“Augustus,” meaning *“revered one.”* Obviously, the man didn’t lack an ego. He claimed to be a god.

In fact, this census was intended to show off the vastness of Augustus’ kingdom and inflate an already bloated pride. Yet here’s the irony... The man who thought he was a god and tried to prove his supremacy was actually being manipulated by *the one true God*.

Micah the prophet, 700 years beforehand, foretold Messiah would be born in Bethlehem. *Now God has a problem...* Mary is about to deliver, and she’s in Nazareth 100 miles from the God-appointed birthplace.

A still small voice won’t be enough to prompt Joseph to take his waddling wife on a three-day donkey ride. Nothing short of a royal edict will move this couple...

And that’s exactly what God arranges. The arrogant Caesar in Rome flexes his muscle and expects the world to squeeze. *In reality, he’s just a puppet on a string. The shots are being called in heaven - not Rome.* A decree from Caesar is the only reason Joseph would uproot his pregnant wife and risk a rugged journey to his hometown of Bethlehem.

Notice too, while the world’s eyes were on Rome, *the attention of heaven was on two peasants traveling the Rift Valley from Nazareth to Bethlehem. I’m sure Rome and its Caesar dominated the day’s headlines,* while Joseph and Mary weren’t even a back page story.

Realize the news that interests this world isn’t always what interests God. *The kindness of a little old lady, the faithfulness*

of a father to his kids, an offering to your church may not get reported in the AJC, but God sees.

History's most important event is about to occur in Bethlehem - angels will look on - but not a single reporter or camera will be there to cover the story.

Verse 4 continues, "Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, to be registered with Mary, his betrothed wife, who was with child."

Ladies, imagine you are full-term, on the back of a donkey, riding over rocky terrain for 72 hours. *How many restroom stops did Joseph make?* The rigors of the journey may've been what triggered Mary's labor.

"So it was, that while they were there, the days were completed for her to be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn Son, and wrapped Him in swaddling cloths..." Hebrew moms wrapped babies in mummy-like shrouds to simulate the warmth of the womb.

Mary wrapped Jesus, "and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn."

When they arrived in Bethlehem, no one rolled out the red carpet. Instead, doors slammed in their face.

Not even the Econolodge had a room for God's Son.

Visit Bethlehem today, and under the Church of the Nativity, you walk down into a series of first-century caves. At the time, they were on the city's outskirts.

These caves served as stables for the livestock. And they were probably the site of Jesus' birth. Even today, the air below ground is cold, and musky, and smelly...

When Joseph promised Mary *a stable life*, an actual *stable* and manger were not what she was thinking.

Years later when the little boy Jesus left the backdoor open, like all mothers, Mary shouted, "*Shut the door. You weren't born in a barn.*" *But He was...*

God's Son, the Lord of life, had peasants for parents. He was born in a stable. No doctor or midwife oversaw His birth. His first bassinet was a stone feed trough. The birth announcement came not to royal dignitaries, but to despised and grungy shepherds. Can you imagine a more ironic way to stage history's most important event? God defied every human convention.

The King of Heaven came to earth - *not with glitz and glamor - not with celebrity and fanfare* - but humbly. And He lived the way He came. Today, where do people who serve Him get off expecting *special treatment*? Jesus took the low road and we should too.

Verse 8 "*Now there were in the same country shepherds living out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night.*" Hebrew scholar, Alfred Edershiem, suggests that these were not ordinary flocks, but the sheep used in the Temple sacrifices. Bethlehem is just a few miles south of Jerusalem and the Jewish Temple.

In a sense, Jesus was a member of these sacrificial flocks. He was the Lamb of God who would end all sacrifices. It was

appropriate the news of His birth was first announced to shepherds aligned with the Temple.

“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.” Good news not just to Jews, but to *“all people!”* Jesus is for **all people!**

“For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be the sign to you: You will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger.” And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying...” And I hate to disappoint you, but the angels were *“saying”* not *“singing.”* One of my favorite Christmas carols is *“Hark the Herald Angels Sing.”* But it’s not accurate. The angels are *saying*, not *singing*.

FYI, only twice in the Scripture do angels sing. In Job 38:7, at creation, the angels sang for joy. And in Revelation 5:8, around God’s throne, the angels join the redeemed and praise the Lamb. Angels sing in the beginning and when Jesus returns. But while the world remains in its fallen state angelic lips refuse to sing.

But here they say, *“Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men!”* And it always inspires me to recall the angels came to shepherds.

Shepherds were dubious characters. When they came to town, the police were put on alert. See a shepherd and you’d

keep your hand on your wallet. A shepherd's testimony was inadmissible in a civil court.

Yet God's *peace and goodwill* first came to the worst of people. The *light of God* came to *shady shepherds*. That means there's hope for folks like us!

Verse 15 "So it was, when the angels had gone away from them into heaven, that the shepherds said to one another, "Let us now go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has come to pass, which the Lord has made known to us." They wanted to see for themselves...

"And they came with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the Babe lying in a manger. Now when they had seen Him, they made widely known the saying which was told them concerning this Child.

They didn't sit on what they'd seen. They spread the news of Jesus far and wide. *We should do the same.*

"And all those who heard it marveled at those things which were told them by the shepherds. But Mary kept all these things and pondered them in her heart."

I wonder what stories Mary told Luke that he didn't include in his Gospel? Perhaps when we get to heaven, we'll be allowed to browse through Mary's Baby Book.

"Then the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told them." The shepherds *praised* while Mary *pondered*. *Praising and pondering go hand in hand. Shout it out and mull it over - witness and worship.*

Both responses are examples for us to follow.

Verse 21 “And when eight days were completed for the circumcision of the Child, His name was called JESUS, the name given by the angel before He was conceived in the womb.” Did you know a newborn male lacks Vitamin K, which provides the blood its clotting ability? It takes 7 days for a baby’s blood to coagulate.

And God knew this detail long before modern science. The Jewish Law of Moses required that every baby boy was to be circumcised on the eighth day.

“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 (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.”

Besides circumcision, the Mosaic Law also required a Jewish couple to observe two more ceremonies... The mom’s purification and payment of a redemption price.

Purification required a sacrifice. If you couldn’t afford a lamb, you could buy “a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons.” This was the poor man’s exception.

Joseph and Mary qualified for the pauper’s option.

And while in the Temple, Joseph and Mary bumped into two old saints... Verse 25 “And behold, there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon, and this man was just and devout, waiting for the Consolation of Israel (a title for the

Messiah), and the Holy Spirit was upon him. And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ." "Christos" is Greek for *Messiah*

"So he came by the Spirit into the temple. And when the parents brought in the Child Jesus, to do for Him according to the custom of the law, he took Him up in his arms and blessed God and said: "Lord, now You are letting Your servant depart in peace, according to Your word; for my eyes have seen Your salvation which You have prepared before the face of all peoples, a light to bring revelation to the Gentiles, and the glory of Your people Israel." Simeon quotes **Isaiah 52:10**.

The old sage knew what most Jews at the time didn't, and many still don't. Messiah will be a light not just to Jews, but **Gentiles**. And now that Simeon has seen that light, he's ready to close his eyes a final time.

"And Joseph and His mother marveled at those things which were spoken of Him." And I'm sure this was one more marvel added to Mary's Baby Book.

But the old man wasn't through, verse 34, "Then Simeon blessed them, and said to Mary His mother, "Behold, this Child is destined for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign which will be spoken against (yes, a sword will pierce your own soul also), that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed."

Simeon makes a four-fold prediction... Jesus is **pivotal**. Every human will rise or fall on their reaction to Him. He'll be **persecuted**. He's "a sign which will be spoken against..."

He'll cause **pain**, especially to Mary. *(Yes, a sword will pierce through your own soul...)*

This was fulfilled at the cross. Mary watched her son bleed and die. She was “blessed” and “highly favored,” but it didn't shelter her soul from being pierced.

And Jesus will **peel** back facades. Simeon says, “the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.” He'll be **pivotal** and **persecuted**, His life will cause His mother **pain**, and He'll **peel** back intentions. *No one will trifle with Mary's Child. He is a force to be reckoned with...*

“Now there was one, Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, and had lived with a husband seven years from her virginity; and this woman was a widow of about 84 years, who did not depart from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day.” Anna had been married for seven years, but that was 84 years ago. The earliest a Jew could be married was age 13, which made Anna at least 104 years old.

And instead of remarrying, she had given herself totally to God. She lived in the Temple and performed chores for the priests... And Ana had a *bucket list*.

It was short. She wanted to see her Messiah. *And on this day it happened.* “And coming in that instant she gave thanks to the Lord, and spoke of Him (of Jesus) to all those who looked for redemption in Jerusalem.”

Verse 39, “So when they had performed all things according to the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own city, Nazareth.” *And what was it like to parent the God-man?*

In his book "God Came Near," Max Lucado tries to answer that question. He has a chapter titled, "*Twenty-five Questions for Mary.*"

Here are a few... "When Jesus saw a rainbow did He ever mention a flood? Did you ever feel awkward teaching Him how He created the world? When He saw a lamb being led to the slaughter, did He act differently? How did He act at funerals? Did the thought ever occur to you that the God to whom you were praying was asleep under your own roof? Did you ever catch Jesus gazing at the flesh on His arm while holding a clod of dirt? And did you ever think, 'That's God eating my soup?'" Mary probably had answers to these questions she tucked away in her Baby Book.

What life was like for Jesus growing up we're not sure. He was certainly taught the Scriptures from an early age. He learned a trade. He followed in his foster father's footsteps and became a carpenter like Joseph.

Though a tiny village, Nazareth sat at the crossroads of three trade routes. Strangers in town exposed Jesus to various people and cultures. Nazareth was just over the valley, 4 miles southeast of the town called, "Sepphoris" - summer retreat for the Jewish Sanhedrin.

Tradition says Sepphoris was where Mary spent her childhood. Perhaps she had relatives there and visited often. Joseph and Jesus may have found carpentry work in the bustling town. In Sepphoris, a young Jesus could've been taught by rabbis on vacation - the most brilliant minds in Judaism adding to His education.

In verse 40, Luke summarizes, “And the Child grew and became strong in spirit, filled with wisdom; and the grace of God was upon Him.” Jesus exhibited *unusual spiritual strength* and *keen discernment*. From an early age, it was obvious the hand of God was upon Him.

I’m sure Luke spent days browsing Mary’s Baby Book. Why he didn’t record more stories, we’re not sure, but he closes Chapter 2 with an incident he probably thought was indicative of Jesus’ childhood.

Verse 41 “His parents went to Jerusalem every year at the Feast of the Passover.” All Jewish males were required to journey to the Temple each year for the three major feasts: Passover, Pentecost, Tabernacles.

“And when He was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem according to the custom of the feast.

When they had finished the days, as they returned, the Boy Jesus lingered behind in Jerusalem. And Joseph and His mother did not know it; but supposing Him to have been in the company, they went a day's journey, and sought Him among their relatives and acquaintances. So when they did not find Him, they returned to Jerusalem, seeking Him.” Now before you report Joseph and Mary to DFACS for child neglect understand a Jewish pilgrimage. Families caravanned together - *women in front, men and boys in the rear*.

Mary thought Joseph had Jesus. Joseph thought Mary had Him. Neither parent realized their Son wasn’t with them until they stopped that night to camp.

In verse 46, they rush back searching frantically. “Now so it was that after three days they found Him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers, both listening to them and asking them questions. And all who heard Him were astonished at His understanding and answers.” Imagine, Jesus, equal to a 6th grader at the time, with the Jewish scholars discussing Scripture.

“So when they saw Him, they were amazed; and His mother said to Him, “Son, why have You done this to us? Look, Your father and I have sought You anxiously.

And He said to them, “Why did you seek Me? Did you not know that I must be about My Father's business?” They should've known He'd be attending to heavenly business. Jesus lived in two worlds. He was firmly planted on earth, but He had an ear to heaven.

And here's the question for you and me - *in whose business are we embroiled?* Are we so wrapped up in our own stuff that we neglect the concerns of heaven?

“But they did not understand the statement which He spoke to them. 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.” Luke included this story to show us that even at 12, Jesus had a sense of who He was and what He'd come to do.

“And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.” And here's a model for conscientious parents. Ask, is my child growing “*in wisdom* (intellectually) *and stature* (physically), *and in favor with God* (spiritually) *and men* (socially)”? ”?

Here's a balanced upbringing. Children need to grow **intellectually, physically, spiritually, and socially.**

“Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea, Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, his brother Philip tetrarch of Iturea and the region of Trachonitis, and Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene, while Annas and Caiaphas were high priests.” And here Luke is nailing down a date.

And when historians connect all the dots they arrive at **29 AD**, which meant both Jesus and John were around **35 years old** when they started their ministries.

At that time, “**The word of God came to John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness.**” John was a priest by pedigree, but he'd abandoned the corrupt, religious system of his day. The priests who were his peers lived a life of ease and opulence. *John was the opposite...*

No fancy robes for John; he wore a camel's hair coat. He dined on locust and wild honey, a poor man's food. Sun-dried locusts have the texture of shrimp - the honey helps. Amidst the rigors of the wilderness, John developed a simpler, stronger, more authentic walk with God. Now the time has come for Him to speak...

“**And he went into all the region around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins...**” John's message was two-fold: **repent and be baptized.** Turn from sin toward God. Then prove it publicly by being baptized. This was his stump speech.

And it was unusual. Only Gentiles were baptized as a sign of conversion. Yet John was baptizing Jews.

These repentant Jews were getting real and admitting they were no more righteous than a Gentile!

In verse 4, Luke quotes **Isaiah 40:3**, “As it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet, saying: “The voice of one crying in the wilderness: ‘prepare the way of the LORD, make His paths straight.’” The OT predicted Messiah would have an advance man. A forerunner, John, “*the voice crying in the wilderness.*”

“Every valley shall be filled and every mountain and hill brought low; the crooked places shall be made straight and the rough ways smooth; and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.” Before a foreign king visited a country, **the local DOT was sent out to level hills, straighten out dangerous bends, and pave potholes.** Every effort was made to smooth out the road.

And in a spiritual sense, this was John’s job. He prepared for Jesus’ arrival. He plowed up the pride of people’s hearts and readied them for faith in the Messiah.

And John did so boldly, verse 7 “Then he said to the multitudes that came out to be baptized by him, “Brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come?” John doesn’t mince words. He could care less about upholding the status quo or appeasing the establishment. John compared the religious leaders of his day to a dangerous brood of poisonous snakes.

The man was amazing! To our knowledge, he never worked a miracle or taught in the Temple; yet, people flocked to hear him. *How did he attract such crowds?*

It was because people sensed in John the Spirit of God. They were tired of hollow religion and hungered for a real relationship with God. Rather than sensational, John was sincere. He had what people wanted. The church today could learn from his example.

And John tells the crowd, “Therefore bear fruits worthy of repentance, and do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.' For I say to you that God is able to raise up children to Abraham from these stones.” John taught *a behavioral about-face*. Turn from your sinful ways. The Jews taught the opposite. They trusted in their lineage - a bloodline.

John emphasized a turn. The Jews toed a line.

They were proud to be Abraham’s heirs! Yet John says, *that’s no big deal*. God can turn rocks into rabbis.

What marks a true child of God is “*fruits worthy of repentance*.” John insisted on real change - “*fruits*” or *evidence of repentance*. *Have I adopted new friends? Am I altering my habits? Am I adopting new pastimes? Am I tangibly showing that I’m willing to follow Jesus?*

Verse 9 “*And even now the ax is laid to the root of the trees. Therefore every tree which does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.*” Trees without fruit get axed and end up firewood. Just making a confession, or tipping

your hat to religion doesn't cut it with God. **Repentance is the desire to change.**

"So the people asked him, saying, "What shall we do then?" And John gives them a sample of the evidence God is seeking... "He answered and said to them, "He who has two tunics, let him give to him who has none; and he who has food, let him do likewise." In essence, stop living for yourself and care about other people.

"Then tax collectors also came to be baptized, and said to him, "Teacher, what shall we do?" And he said to them, "Collect no more than what is appointed for you." Play fair! Be honest! True repentance should be seen in how you conduct business. Sunday confessions need to bleed over into Monday practices.

"Likewise the soldiers asked him, saying, "And what shall we do?" So he said to them, "Do not intimidate anyone or accuse falsely, and be content with your wages." Don't bully people to get your way. Learn to be content... *Does your life show fruits of repentance?*

Verse 15, "Now as the people were in expectation, and all reasoned in their hearts about John, whether he was the Christ or not, John answered, saying to all, "I indeed baptize you with water; but One mightier than I is coming, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to loose." A rabbi had disciples who did an assortment of menial tasks for him. **But the one job too dirty for him was removing sandals. This was reserved for a slave.**

John is saying he's not worthy to be Jesus' slave. By lineage, Jesus and John were cousins. But spiritually, Jesus was a different breed. He was on a higher level.

John says of Jesus, "He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire." John baptized with water, which symbolized a turning point - *the desire to change*. But his baptism imparted no power to make that change.

Whereas, Jesus baptizes with "*the Holy Spirit and fire,*" or in essence, with God's power and passion.

For years, I knew only one baptism - of repentance. Each week, the pastor deciphered my sin and pounded home God's judgment. I'd come to the altar genuinely sorry and promise to change. But though I wanted to change, I lacked the dynamic to do so... until I learned of *Jesus' baptism!* Now I lean into Him. Jesus promises the power to make the changes He desires. *We have to want to change; then Jesus empowers us to do so.*

In NASA's early days, the problem with space travel was the ability to break out of Earth's gravitational pull. How can you produce an upward explosion greater than gravity's downward force? *This mirrors our problem...* We want to live pleasing to God, but sin keeps pulling us down. How do we break through?

Only Jesus can give me the upward thrust I need.

He fills me with a *God-ward push* greater than sin's *downward pull*. The baptism of the Spirit is what lifts me from the gravity of sin. *And it's mine for the asking.* God gives the Spirit's power to those with faith to ask.

But Jesus also baptizes with “*fire*” or judgment. John says, “His winnowing fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly clean out His threshing floor, and gather the wheat into His barn; but the chaff He will burn with unquenchable fire.” Technically, John was an OT prophet, and here he follows their pattern. He merges Jesus’ first and second comings into one prophecy.

At His first coming, Jesus baptizes with the Spirit.

But at His second coming, He executes a harvest. He will apply “*his winnowing fan,*” or pitchfork, to separate the wheat from the chaff - the righteous from unrighteous.

Verse 18 “And with many other exhortations (John) preached to the people. But Herod the tetrarch, being rebuked by him concerning Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, and for all the evils which Herod had done, also added this, above all, that he shut John up in prison.” King Herod was an evil man. He committed adultery with his sister-in-law. They both divorced their previous spouses and married each other. Their antics were Jerusalem’s soap opera. *And John had tuned in.*

He rebuked them publicly. Adultery, divorce, incest, how could he ignore their sin? At first, Herod Antipas tried to *shut John up* by *locking him up* in prison.

But that happens later. Verse 21 flashes back to a previous incident. “When all the people were baptized, it came to pass that Jesus also was baptized...”

Once, a church in New Orleans caught fire. The fire department doused the flames. The next day they sent an inspector, a Roman Catholic, to survey the scene.

As he was walking along, he tripped and fell into the baptismal pool - still full of water from the night before.

After the inspector dried-off, he asked, "Who does this church belong to?" He was told, "Protestants." The wet Catholic shook his head and said, "I don't know much about them, but I guess I'm one of them now."

And just as that Catholic inspector identified with the Protestants through baptism, this is what baptism meant to Jesus. Since our Lord was sinless and had *no need to repent*, He had *no need to be baptized*.

But Jesus was baptized to identify Himself with us. We, in turn, are baptized to identify ourselves with Him.

"And while (Jesus) prayed..." Luke is the only Gospel writer to mention Jesus prayed at His baptism.

In fact, we'll discover that Luke had a fascination with Jesus' prayer life. He speaks about His praying often.

"While (Jesus) prayed, the heaven was opened. And the Holy Spirit descended in bodily form like a dove upon Him, and a voice came from heaven which said, "You are My beloved Son; in You I am well pleased."

I'm sure you realize there are all kinds of speculation as to how Jesus spent his 35 years before He began His ministry. *Where did He go? What did He do?*

We don't know. The Bible is silent. But we know this, in all He did, He pleased the Father. Jesus was sinless.

And here is a picture of the Triune God. The Son is standing in the water. The Father is blessing from heaven. And the Holy Spirit is descending as a dove. God is one God, but He exists in three distinct persons.

Verse 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..." History tells us Herod died in 4 BC, and Jesus was born before his death. If 29 AD was the starting point of His ministry, then Jesus was 33 years old. Luke rounds it off to "*about 30.*"

Notice too, Luke calls Jesus, Joseph's "*supposed*" son. Joseph was a foster father. Jesus' biological dad was God. Joseph's genealogy appears in Matthew.

Luke gives us Mary's genealogy. The father's lineage was political. It traced the royal or kingly line. While the mother's lineage was genetic. It showed the **bloodline**.

One other point, under Jewish law, if Mary had no brothers, her husband was considered her father's son. Thus her lineage reads, "*Joseph, the son of Heli...*"

And I'll let you read the rest of Mary's genealogy.

One fact you'll notice is that unlike Matthew's family tree, which stops at Abraham, Luke's genealogy of Jesus traces all the way back to the first man, Adam.

Matthew wrote to the Jews, who claimed Abraham as their father. But Luke wrote to Greeks - who exalted all of

humanity. Luke's focus on Jesus' humanness proved to the Greeks that Jesus was the ultimate man.