

Why “All Things New”?

Introduction

2 Questions & Luke’s 1 Answer

A. There are 2 questions that everyone in this room, everyone in the world, is asking. They might not all ask them in the same way, they might not all express them with the same vehemence, but these 2 questions are there for everyone: (1) “What is wrong?” And then arising from this question comes the next: (2) “Who/what can make it right?”

1. Do you feel this? I feel it? I felt it on Sunday night when the texts were coming in.
 - a. Someone from our church, her little boy is in the ER at midnight, he’s broken, his tummy’s not working right, he’s throwing up, he’s crying.
 - b. And while these texts were coming in, I was receiving other texts from my best friend over in Colorado. They’re setting up hospice for his wife’s mom, only in her 50s, cancer, with tumors shot through her lungs. Doctors haven’t give a time frame yet. And then on Monday, text comes in, she’s dead, it’s over!

What is wrong?! Why is what is not what ought to be?! How come we all have this sense that this isn’t right? That pain and death are intruders into the human story. That we were made for something more, something right?

2. And this of course leads to that second question: If this is wrong, how do we get to right?! If this is broken, how does it get fixed?
 - a. I can tell you what this looked like for my buddy’s father-in-law as he’s watching his wife die. Through the whole thing he was in denial over how serious it was. He kept thinking they just needed to get the right treatment, the right medicine, the right doctor, and she’d be fixed. Even to the end he was hoping in this. “Dad, let it go, she’s dying!” That’s not going to make this right. Science isn’t able to buck her flatline back into rhythm. You just fall to your knees. Where then do you look? Who can take all that’s old and broken, and make it new?

B. Luke knows we’re asking these questions. And Luke knows, God has given us the answer, the one answer, in Jesus Christ. In Him alone we see what is wrong being dealt with and what is right being ushered in. He is the One in and through whom God is making all things new. So Luke writes His gospel to foreground Christ as the Pioneer of God’s new creation!

The Text

[Luke 1:1–4](#)

¹ Inasmuch as many have undertaken to compile a narrative of the things that have been accomplished among us,
² just as those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word have delivered them to us,
³ it seemed good to me also, having followed all things closely for some time past, to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus,
⁴ that you may have certainty concerning the things you have been taught.

The Outline

A. We just began last week our journey through the gospel Luke. The title of this series is “Luke: All Things New.” Last week I sought to answer the question: Why Luke? Why do I feel God is calling us to spend the first years of my pastorate here in this gospel? This morning, looking at the second part of the series’ title, I want to answer the question: Why “All Things New”? Why do I think these 3 words encapsulate the fundamental thrust of Luke’s gospel?

1. This sermon, while a vindication of my sermon series’ title, is at bottom an exposition of this first verse:

¹ Inasmuch as many have undertaken to compile a narrative of the things that have been accomplished among us...

- a. In particular I would draw our attention to the second half of this first verse: “the things that have been accomplished among us...” And even more narrowly, I would draw our attention to that single word: “accomplished.” As we press at this word in the second half of the first verse of Luke’s gospel, a whole world of glory opens up, quite literally.

B. Let me set the agenda then:

1. I want to quickly define this word “accomplished” for us.
2. Then I want to trace the appearance of one of its close synonyms within the gospel of Luke. This will drop us into 3 significant scenes in the life of Christ. What will emerge is a vision of Christ as: (1) A New Creator; who via (2) A New Exodus; will establish (3) A New Humanity...and, ultimately, a new world. (This simple study will help us get a handle on the overall movement of Luke’s narrative.)

A Quick Definition

A. What is meant by this word “accomplished”? I think the translation in the ESV is a bit misleading. Other translations are more helpful here, using “fulfilled” which best captures the likely meaning of the word for Luke in the Greek.

1. But do you see the difference?
 - a. Many people write about the accomplishments of great men in history. Michael Jordan accomplished a lot in his NBA career. And many books,

articles, interviews, video montages, even songs have been created to celebrate what was accomplished among us. But is that all Luke is getting at here? Not at all!

- b. The word fulfilled, on the other hand, has an historical antecedent, an anticipation to it. It means things prepared for in the past are being realized in the present. Michael Jordan wasn't fulfilling some ancient oracle when he won that 6th championship. But from when Jesus Christ first arrives on this earth, we watch as His life, death, and resurrection, bring to climactic fulfillment thousands of years of promises, prophecies, symbols, and shadows. He is not just accomplishing something great, He is fulfilling something ancient.
2. This is an important distinction for us to make because we live in an American culture that loves all things new and seems to despise all things old. It's the newest leaders, the newest products, the newest technologies, the newest medicines that we think offer us the most potential for change and righting all that's wrong. "We've tried all that old stuff, it didn't work, give me something new!"
 - a. But as we saw last week, and as Luke is attempting to highlight at the outset of his gospel, all things new is emerging from all things old. And this is because God has been moving towards a new creation ever since things went wrong with the first.
 - i. So, are we looking to America's latest and greatest to save us, or to the Ancient of Days and to His eternal, unchanging, and ever-advancing plan, which reached a head here in the person and work of His Son?
- B. Now, having defined this word as "fulfilled" we are prepared to trace its synonym through Luke's gospel. Why trace its synonym? Because this is the only place in Luke-Acts where Luke uses this particular word, probably for stylistic reasons to set his prologue (vv. 1-4) apart. But he uses a related word elsewhere, which, I think, unfolds for us the meaning of this "fulfilled" in [1:1](#).
1. It is illuminating to note that Luke deals with fulfillment in a much different way than Matthew. The word we're going to trace shows up all over Matthew's gospel, as he tries to show Jesus to be the fulfillment of explicit Old Testament promises and prophecies. Luke uses this word with reference to Christ only at high water mark points in his gospel. He is not so concerned to show Christ as the fulfillment of this or that Old Testament text but to show Christ as the fulfillment of the entirety of the Old Testament. The fulfillment is much more comprehensive, concerning the sum total of Old Testament anticipation.
 - a. And this is why, when Luke does speak of Christ's fulfilling something, he has the broadest and most sweeping of Old Testament anticipations in view: new creation, comprehensive redemption and renewal, all things new.

- C. At 3 extremely significant points in his gospel, Luke speaks of Christ as fulfilling something. It is to these that we now turn.

(1) A New Creator (4:16-21)

- A. We move first to [Luk 4:16-21](#), where we will see Christ put forward as A New Creator. He's just been baptized in the Jordan by John, where the Holy Spirit descends upon Him, from there He was led into the wilderness to be tested by the devil, and after triumphantly resisting His foe, here now He begins His public ministry. And this is the first story Luke highlights—that's significant!

¹⁶ And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up. And as was his custom, he went to the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and he stood up to read.

¹⁷ And the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written,

¹⁸ "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed,

¹⁹ to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."

²⁰ And he rolled up the scroll and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him.

²¹ And he began to say to them, "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing."

- B. What a scene! The reading is particularly drawn from [Isa 61:1-2](#). Then, with all eyes "fixed on him," there is the declaration of fulfillment. But what exactly is He fulfilling?
1. The first part of the Scripture reading points us to the most significant character in Isaiah's prophecies: the Messianic Servant.
 - a. This Servant has the Spirit of God upon Him ([42:1](#); [48:16](#)), and He is put forward as the hope for the exiles of Israel, as the One who will bring in God's salvation. And Jesus is saying, having just been anointed by Spirit at His baptism: "That Messianic Servant from Isaiah, it's Me!"
 2. The second part of the Scripture reading describes the mission of this Servant, indicating the purpose of His anointing—"good news to the poor...liberty to the captives...sight to the blind...liberty...[to the] oppressed...to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."
 - a. The background to the text in Isaiah, and this "year of the Lord's favor", is the Year of Jubilee from Israel's liturgical calendar ([Lev 25](#)). The Year of Jubilee came as the last layer in the extensions of the Sabbath principle.
 - i. We remember that because God created the world in six days and then entered His royal rest on the seventh (a day that seemingly never ended), the people of Israel were commanded to pattern their lives after Him.

- ii. There was the Sabbath day that came for them on the last day of every week, where they rested from their labors.
- iii. Then there was the Sabbath year that came every 7th year, where the land was allowed to lay fallow and have its rest.
- iv. And then there was the Year of Jubilee, which brought this principle to its highest expression. It was the Sabbath year of Sabbath years, meaning after 7 Sabbath years (49 years), the Year of Jubilee was declared. And in [Lev 25:10a](#) it is said of the this Year of Jubilee: “You shall consecrate the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout the land to all its inhabitants.” And this liberty meant a number of things: (1) Any land that had changed hands was restored to its original inherited line of ownership; (2) any debts owed were forgiven; (3) any debt-slaves were set free: and (4) the land, again was allowed to lay fallow.

b. It was a year that the poor, the indebted, the oppressed, the captive loved—“I’m free!”; and a year that the rich, the oppressors, the captors loathed—“I can’t get ahead!” It was a year that reminded the people that the earth and all its fullness, even we His people, ultimately belong to the Lord. It was a year that displayed for the people of the gracious, redeeming, liberating heart of YHWH. It was a year that, as Isaiah shows us, was to point them forward to a coming final liberation—a liberation they would enjoy in the new heavens and new earth, the new creation of God, where man would truly enter into God’s royal and eternal rest!

- i. For this, look at the verses that come right before these words that Jesus reads in the synagogue ([Isa 60:19, 22b](#)). Speaking of the glories of the New Jerusalem God will build, Isaiah writes:

¹⁹The sun shall be no more your light by day, nor for brightness shall the moon give you light; but the Lord will be your everlasting light, and your God will be your glory... [[Rev 21:23](#)]

²²...I am the Lord; in its time I will hasten it.

c. So this new creation work, pictured in the Year of Jubilee, will be hastened by the Lord in its time, and brought in by the Messianic Servant, who has upon Him the Spirit of God ([61:1](#)). And Jesus, in a little synagogue, in a little town, reads this text, sits down, and says: “Today...this Scripture...fulfilled!” The time for beginning this new creation work is now!

C. Christ is shown to be the New Creator, the pioneer of God’s new creation. And he marches off to do just that—preaching the gospel to the poor ([4:31-32, 43-44](#)); setting people free from the oppression of the devil ([4:31-37, 41](#)); healing the sick ([4:38-39, 40](#)).

- 1. But all of His earthly ministry was heading towards something no one would expect, though everyone should have. All these physical manifestations of His Messianic identity were partial and anticipatory of the fuller, even spiritual, liberation He

would accomplish for us in His death and resurrection. It is to this that Luke directs us as we drop into the next scene.

(2) A New Exodus (9:28-31)

- A. Our word is used with reference to Christ again in [Luk 9:31](#), with Jesus and the three up on the mount of transfiguration. Begin at [v. 28](#) for context:

[Luk 9:28–31](#)

²⁸ Now about eight days after these sayings he took with him Peter and John and James and went up on the mountain to pray.

²⁹ And as he was praying, the appearance of his face was altered, and his clothing became dazzling white.

³⁰ And behold, two men were talking with him, Moses and Elijah,

³¹ who appeared in glory and spoke of his departure, which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem.

1. With the first part of our text we see the glory of this Messianic Servant, we see indication that He truly is the Son of God, the One commissioned to liberate the world and bring in the promised new creation. The glory of God shining forth from His face!
 2. But this vision of splendor and glory takes a surprising turn at [v. 30](#). Moses and Elijah are there with Him. And they are speaking of His “[departure](#)” which He was about to “[accomplish](#)” (there’s our word: “[fulfill](#)”) at Jerusalem. Where is Jesus going? To what are they referring? Nothing less than the impending crucifixion-resurrection event. Here Moses and Elijah are speaking of what Jesus has just started to reveal to His disciples: “[The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised](#)” ([Luk 9:22](#)).
 - a. But there is something hidden beneath our translations that I want to bring to our attention. This word “[departure](#)” is, in the Greek, “[exodus](#).” A line is drawn between what Christ is going to accomplish or fulfill in Jerusalem and the Exodus event that was the defining moment of the children of Israel. Christ’s exodus in Jerusalem would lead to the ultimate liberation of the people of God and would fulfill all that the first exodus symbolized. The new creation is coming through a new exodus!
- B. But this new exodus will involve the suffering and death of the Lord’s Anointed. He will have to lay Himself into the waters of the sea to make a way for the children of God to walk through! And this is what became such a stumbling block for people.
1. Consider Peter’s response to this whole glorious scene. The same Peter who is recorded as rebuking Jesus for saying He must suffer and die ([Mat 16:22](#)), when He sees this glory on the mountain says: “Now this is good! Let’s keep everyone here and never leave!” ([v. 33](#)).

- a. Peter, though well-meaning, illustrates for us the spirit of this age. We want the glory of the resurrection without the shame of the crucifixion. But this is to try to get to the solution without dealing with the problem, to get to all things new without dealing with what made things broken in the first place. Sin. Jesus has to deal with what's wrong if He's going to make it right—pain, suffering, death have at their root, sin...and God's curse on that sin.
2. I mentioned earlier that this would be unexpected, though it shouldn't have been. God had prepared His people for this all over the Old Testament.
- a. The Messianic Servant of [Isa 61](#), anointed with the Spirit of God, is the Suffering Servant of [Isa 53](#), "...smitten, stricken by God, and afflicted. But He was pierced for our transgressions; He was crushed for our iniquities; upon Him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with His wounds we are healed" (v. 4b-5). He would make all things new, but He would do it by offering Himself unto death.
 - b. This is why the year of Jubilee was announced when? On the Day of Atonement ([Lev 25:9b](#))—on the one day of the year when the high priest was allowed to enter the holy of holies and offer sacrifices for the sins of all the people!
 - c. This is why the Exodus of Israel from Egypt occurred when? Immediately following the slaughter of the Passover Lamb, killed as a substitute in place of the firstborn sons of Israel.
- C. All of this was to prepare the world to see Christ as bringing the answer to its 2 most pressing questions. What is wrong? I am, my sin, my heart (I am the poor, the captive, the oppressed, the blind). Who/what can make it right? He can, and He is through His crucifixion death and resurrection life!

(3) A New Humanity (24:44-46)

- A. But the most tragic of all realities is that, because of our sin, we don't even see this. We're so poor, so captive, so oppressed, so blind, we see in the most significant event in cosmic history, weakness and foolishness, an utter failure not an overwhelming triumph. By nature we look upon the cross of Christ like those two on the road to Emmaus. They are looking at the risen Lord Himself, and they're all sad: "[We had hoped that he was the one](#)" ([Luk 24:21](#)).
- 1. You see, there's another step in the redemptive program of God that's required. As Jesus had said: "[Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God](#)" ([Joh 3:3](#)). We need Him to open our eyes if we are to see the glory of what He's done and be made new in Him. We need the resurrected Christ to resurrect us!
- B. And this is precisely what is pictured for us in our third and final scene. Jesus, now resurrected, appears to His disciples, in the last chapter and the last verses of this gospel:

Luke 24:44–46

⁴⁴ Then he said to them, “These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled.”

⁴⁵ Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures,

⁴⁶ and said to them, “Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead...

1. We see our word there—the Law, the Prophets, the Psalms, the entire Old Testament...“fulfilled” in Him! He has done it! And here we see Him calling others into the benefits of it. He is constituting a new humanity around His crucifixion-resurrection accomplishments. He opens their minds...and suddenly, they get it! Suddenly, they see He is the firstborn from the dead, and the firstborn among many brothers. Suddenly, they see that He is a New Creator who through a New Exodus is establishing a New Humanity. Suddenly, they can see the “things that have been accomplished (fulfilled) among [them].” And now we come full circle, back to the very first verse of this gospel.

Conclusion

A. I’m praying this for us.

1. I’m praying that those of us who have yet to see anything glorious in the person and work of Christ, would this morning have the veil lifted and the lights turned on. I’m praying that like the two on the road to Emmaus—“Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us on the road, while he opened to us the Scriptures?” (24:32)—as I’ve been sharing, your heart is burning within you. Maybe Jesus is the answer to my questions!
2. I’m praying for those of us that have already trusted in Christ, that when our kid’s in the hospital or our wife is dying from cancer, our eyes remain open to the accomplishments of our Savior. He is taking the pain, the sorrow, the death, even my sin, taking all that seemed hopeless and broken, and making something new from it! His resurrection is proof He can do it, and His resurrection Spirit in us, is His guarantee that He will!
 - a. He is the One who has begun and will ultimately, finally, fully make all things new!