

Prefaces to the Gospel of Luke and Acts of the Apostles

GOSPEL OF LUKE

1 Since many have undertaken to set down an orderly account of the events that have been fulfilled among us,
2 just as they were handed on to us by those who from the beginning were eye-witnesses and servants of the word,
3 I too decided, after investigating everything carefully from the very first, to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus,
4 so that you may know the truth concerning the things about which you have been instructed.

ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

1 In the first book, **Theophilus**, I wrote about all that **Jesus** did and taught from the beginning
2 until the day when he was taken up, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the **apostles** whom he had chosen.
3 After his suffering he presented himself alive to them by many convincing proofs, appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God.

Purposes of literary prefaces in Greco-Roman literature:

1. Securing audience favor and attention
2. Preparing them to receive instruction

"...ancient dedications (which are relatively rare in historical writers) commonly name the addressee of the book, and the dedicatees very rarely appear to be fictional." (S Walton 107)

"Receiving a book dedication was an honor, a matter of great importance at least for the politics of the urban elites" (C Keener 655)

"Part two of Luke's Gospel, known to us as the Acts of the Apostles, narrates stunning newness. The newness begins with Jesus. Not an idea, not a principle, not even a memory, but an impossible reality, flesh and - blood on the other side of death standing in front of the disciples, alive and well." (W Jennings 13)

"If we understand the term 'apostle' in a reduced way as referring to the Eleven/ Twelve we have here an androcentric authorial characterization that deprives women of their status as evangelical witnesses of the resurrection, but if we understand the term 'apostle' as symbolic (twelve tribes of Israel) or in an extended sense, then the narrative includes women and men." (L Maloney/I Richter Reimer 97)