

In this thread I have been discussing whether Luke, the gentile physician, the traveling companion of Paul, wrote the Third Gospel and the book of Acts. The first point I've made, over a couple of posts, is that the idea that Paul *had* a gentile physician as a traveling companion is dubious. That notion is derived from the mention of Luke in the book of Colossians, but Paul almost certainly did not *write* Colossians. Paul does mention a companion named Luke in the book of Philemon, but he does not say anything at all about him (not, for example, that he was a gentile or that he was a physician).

Still, one could argue - and many have! - that whatever his name, it was a companion of Paul who wrote the books of Luke and Acts. The main argument in favor of that thesis - with which I heartily disagree - is the presence of the "we-passages" in Acts, that I mentioned previously. My view is that these passages do NOT demonstrate that the author was Paul's traveling companion. But it's a complex issue, and to get to the bottom of it takes a lot of demonstration.

Here I will again, over a series of posts, reproduce what I say elsewhere, but in a book very few members of this blog will have read ([Forgery and Counterforgery](#)). I have omitted the footnotes here to make it easier to read. This is a section where I talk about what we can say about who wrote the book of Acts (who was the same person who wrote the Third Gospel):

The key to any discussion of the authorship of Acts is provided by the so-called "we-passages" that occur on four occasions (depending on how one accounts), narratives in which the author shifts from third- to first-person plural narrative. The scholarship on these passages may seem daunting in its scope, but it is even more disheartening in its execution, one suggestion even more implausible than the one preceding. Several full length studies have been devoted to the question, the most recent by William S. Campbell, but including earlier important contributions by C. Thornton and J. Wehnert.

Now ***here's*** something you're not gonna learn in Sunday School! But it's important knowledge — for anyone interested in the New Testament. Is that you? Then join the blog!

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