

Christ. The word, in our version, translated in order, does not refer to Chronological order. It does not imply that Luke intended to relate events strictly in chronological order, but rather to classify them, and thus give a distinct systematic account of them.

The individual to whom Luke dedicates his gospel, is the same person as *he*, to whom he inscribes his history of the Acts of the Apostles; and, indeed, it is mainly from the inscription of the two treatises, that we ascertain the authorship of the book of Acts. The word Theophilus signifies a lover of God, and was a common name among the Greeks and Romans.—History gives us no information with regard to the character or condition of this person. But it is evident from the title applied to him, Most Excellent, that he was a man of rank, probably the governor of some city or province. There are only two other individuals, to whom this title is applied in the New Testament. Felix, and Festus, governors of Judea. It seems to have been an official title, altogether irrespective of personal qualities, and employed somewhat in the same way, as the title of his Excellency is applied to the governor of this province. Thus we find both Claudius Lynas in his letter, and Tertullus, the advocate in his speech, apply the same term to the Roman Governor Felix. I say Tertullus employs the same term; for though in our version of the word as translated Most Noble, it is the same in the original, as that which is here translated, most excellent. Here then we find a divinely inspired Evangelist, writing for our instruction, employing the ordinary language of respect to a person of exalted rank; from which the obvious lesson is, that Christianity does not countenance rudeness, or the setting at naught the ordinary customs of civilized life. It is plain therefore, that those, who, from an affecta-

tion of superior sanctity, and regard to the word of God, refuse to employ the ordinary terms of respect, in the intercourse of life, not only act, without due authority from Scripture. but in opposition to it.

And now, dearly beloved, I would remark, in conclusion, that the blessing which we enjoy is unspeakable, in having in our possession, an account of the principal events in the life of Jesus, recorded for our instruction, and transmitted to our times with such an amount of evidence, as no events in history can claim.—Let us testify our appreciation of this blessing, by a diligent and prayerful perusal of these sacred records, and sure I am that in proportion as we study them with increasing diligence and prayerfulness, it will be, with increasing profit and delight. Finally, let us testify our gratitude to God for the unspeakable gift of His dear Son, by relying more simply and entirely on Jesus, than we have ever done, drawing more and more out of His infinite fulness, and testifying more and more our love to Him by the more faithful keeping of his commandments.

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#### TRUE GAIN.

'Religion is a gainful thing;' and this is a compelling motive which becomes effectual upon all. Gain is the God whom the world worships. What will not men do, what will they not suffer for gain? What journeys do men take by land, what voyages by sea, through hot and cold, through fair and foul, through storm and shine, through day and night and all for gain! Now, there is no calling so gainful as this of religion; it is the most profitable employment we can take up. 'Godliness is profitable unto all things.' It is a great revenue. If it be closely followed, it brings in the greatest income. Indeed, some men are religious for the world's sake; such shall be sure not to gain; but they who are religious for religion's sake shall be sure not to lose, if heaven and earth can recompense them; for 'godliness hath the promise both of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.'—*Mead.*