NT 615-HA Exegesis of Luke

June 18-22, 25-29
9am-12pm
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Course Description
The course provides an in-depth introduction to the Gospel of Luke and the major issues surrounding its interpretation in the contemporary Church. Attention will be directed especially toward the Gospel’s teaching about the person of Jesus, discipleship and ethics.

Course Objectives
The aims of this course are the following:

1. To refine and sharpen exegetical skills needed for robust, pastoral ministry of the Word of God. To this end we will examine a series of passages from the Gospel in a manner that heightens sensitivity to the grammar, literary features, Old Testament allusions, and historical and cultural backgrounds of the passage (Articles 1-2 of GCTS Mission Statement).

2. To treat some of the major interpretive issues in the theology and application of Luke in the contemporary Church (Articles 3-4 of GCTS Mission Statement).

Course Requirements

1. PLEASE NOTE! This course runs from May 21 – Aug 17. Even though class meetings have been compressed into a two-week period there is significant work required prior to the first class meeting (specifically, Greek translation and the reading of 1-2 books). Failure to complete this work in advance of the first class meeting on June 18 will seriously compromise the student’s ability to perform well on the tests administered at the end of each week of class (see further below).

2. The following texts are required:
3. The following are recommended:

4. **50% of the final grade: Two tests.**
   a. **Test 1 (20%).** Friday, June 22. This test will consist in the translation and annotation of three passages from Luke taken from the texts discussed in class Tues-Thurs of week 1. To be adequately prepared for this test it is of paramount importance that students prepare these texts in advance of the first class meeting so they can begin to assimilate unfamiliar vocabulary and can maximally benefit from in-class discussions of each passage.
   b. **Test 2 (30%).** Friday, June 29. This test will consist in the translation and annotation of two passages (out of the three discussed in class Mon-Wed of week 2) followed by an essay section on the works by Fitzmyer and Bird treating messianism. Note well: this is not merely a test on your knowledge of messianism, but on your ability to assimilate and critique two works treating the same subject (a subject of importance for the Gospels) from different angles. To be adequately prepared for this test it is of paramount importance that students prepare these texts (from Luke) and make significant progress in the books by Fitzmyer and Bird in advance of the first class meeting. We will devote time to the books in class on Fri, June 22, although I will not review their contents.
5. **50% of the final grade: Exegesis paper.** Due Friday, July 20 by 4 pm. Papers may be submitted in the library or electronically. Please be sure to check with the instructor before settling on a passage for the paper!

a. **Paper length and quality.** There is no limit on the length of the papers. Please observe the following two caveats, however. First, it is doubtful that a paper under 8-10 pages will succeed in producing a thorough treatment of a passage. Second, *lengthier papers are no more likely to obtain a high grade than 10-page papers*. The goal must be detailed, thoroughgoing analysis of a passage presented in concise and straightforward fashion. Grades are based on the quality of the work, measured in these terms, rather than on the length of the work.

b. **A word on style.** The appropriate style of writing is formal/academic, not conversational. You will learn much in this regard by imitating the writing style in most top-tier journal articles. The quality of your writing will be greatly improved (even this semester) by making regular use of Strunk and White (recommended above).

c. **Passage selection.** Please select one of the following passages on which to write your paper: Luke 8:26-39; 16:19-31; 19:1-10; 24:1-12.

d. **Paper format.** Papers should be divided into the following sections.

i. **Greek text.** *Detailed analysis of every facet of the grammar, syntax and semantics of passage.* **Grammar:** Do not parse (unless the parsing is in dispute). Rather, pull the passage apart. Discuss, explain, analyze every facet of the grammar that is not obvious or may be interpreted in different ways. Make use of at least two of the major Greek grammars (Blass, Debrunner, Funk; Zerwick; Robertson; Wallace; Moulton and Turner) as well as multiple technical commentaries and relevant journal articles. **Words:** Look up several words that seem to have potential significance in the passage: does usage outside the NT contribute anything (LXX, Apocrypha, Josephus, Philo, Papyri/Inscriptions [Milton and Milligan])? Does usage elsewhere in the NT, the Gospels and
Luke add anything to your understanding of the word in the passage? This is to be a densely written section. Be concise, not wordy! Verbosity will lose points.

ii. **Literary features.** This section will form a discussion of the literary features of the passage. Please begin by providing an outline of the passage, then proceed to noteable literary devices such as metaphors, inclusios, chiasms, etc. Note any catch-words or echoes that link the passage to larger motifs in the Gospel. Has the author emphasized some feature of the account by his manipulation of narrative time vs real time, speech vs action, who is given speech vs who is denied it, etc.? Again, your discussion should interact with multiple technical commentaries and relevant journal articles.

iii. **Relevant backgrounds: Old Testament, Second Temple Jewish, Greco-Roman.** This section will be devoted to identifying and drawing out citations, allusions and echoes of the OT, and/or identifying and elucidating the relevant themes, customs or ideas from the Jewish or Greco-Roman background that illuminate the passage. *After* making your own initial study of the background you will do well to appropriate a few journal articles treating this specific facet of your passage in more depth than the commentaries are able to do.

iv. **Theological significance.** This section is NOT (NOT!) a summary of your findings in the above sections. It is rather the place to trace the author’s thought in the pericope (what is the point(s) the author is making by means of his inclusion of this particular story, at this particular point in his narrative, in the shape in which he has crafted it?) and to ask how this idea contributes to the flow of thought across this section of the Gospel and/or to the thought of the Gospel as a whole. Does the passage ultimately speak to our understanding of who God is (theology proper)? Who Jesus is
(Christology)? What he came to do (Redemption)? How Jesus expects his followers to live (discipleship, mission)? Other issues? You may draw upon commentaries and articles for this section but the bulk of the work ought to be your own reflection growing out of all the work you have done on the passage.

**Schedule of Passages and Lectures**

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*Asterisks mark passages for which students will be responsible on the test that week.*