

# Gordon Conwell Theological Seminary

## NT613 – Exegesis of Luke

Summer I: June 14-18 + 21-25, 9:00am-12:00pm

Professor: Elizabeth Shively

Office: LL124

Office Hours: by appointment

Email: [eshively@gcts.edu](mailto:eshively@gcts.edu)

Phone: (978) 646-4611, ext. 4611  
(770) 403-9634 (cell)

### ***Course Description:***

This course is designed to build upon the tools and methods for exegesis learned in NT 502, using the Gospel of Luke as a case study. We give attention to three aims. First, we aim to learn the content of Luke as well as issues and skills related to its interpretation. We focus on the Gospel in its literary and historical context. Narrative criticism is the main, but not sole, exegetical method for the course; we use a synthesis of historical-critical tools to interpret the text. The essential question for the course is: *To what extent is a literary reading of the Gospel of Luke helpful in determining Luke's theological intention?* We approach Luke as a unified narrative and rhetorical composition, with a unified literary-theological goal. Through analysis of the Gospel's rhetoric and themes over the course of the semester, we seek to grasp Luke's presentation of Jesus with a view to understanding his life, teaching, and mission.

Second, we address hermeneutical issues and consider how Luke's narrative functions normatively for individuals and the Church. Third, we aim to cultivate exegetical thinking. Although the application of exegetical steps or methods to a text is foundational, students have not actually interpreted a text until they connect the parts of their research to illuminate the whole text in a meaningful way. A reader begins with an investigation of the parts of a text, by researching its form and function, grammar and vocabulary, and social and historical background. The discrete display of this research, however, is not an interpretation, but the basis for one. Interpretation requires a creative act of the imagination. The musician is not virtuosic until she combines tempo, rhythm, dynamics and intonation with a personal engagement of the piece she plays. Thus, in this course, we give attention to engaging Luke and synthesizing the results of exegetical methods in order to produce a sound and meaningful interpretation.

### ***Course Objectives:***

In this course students will do the following:

- translate and analyze the Greek text of the Gospel of Luke (articles 1-2 of the GCTS Mission Statement)
- synthesize the results of their exegetical work on Luke into a sound and meaningful interpretation (articles 1-2 of the GCTS Mission Statement)
- articulate the theological message of Luke's Gospel (articles 1-2 of the GCTS Mission Statement)
- articulate ways that their lives, theologies and ministries are informed by the message of Luke's Gospel (articles 5-6 of the GCTS Mission Statement)
- resolve significant hermeneutical issues involved in reading an ancient text in a modern world, and explain the ways Luke's Gospel functions normatively for individuals and the Church (articles 1-3, 6 of the GCTS Mission Statement)

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**Required Textbooks:**

Green, Joel. *The Gospel of Luke*. NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997.

Johnson, Luke Timothy. *The Gospel of Luke*. Sacra Pagina; Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1991.

Resseguie, James. *Spiritual Landscape: Images of the Spiritual Life in the Gospel of Luke*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2004.

**Required Reading (on CAMS under “readings”):**

Bock, Darrell, “Narrative Criticism and Gospel Genre,” pp. 205-214 in *Studying the Historical Jesus: A Guide to Sources and Methods*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2002.

**Recommended Commentaries on Luke:**

Bock, Darrell. *Luke 1:1-9:50 and Luke 9:51-24:53*. Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1994, 1996.

Caird, B. B. *Saint Luke*. Pelican New Testament Commentaries. Great Britain: Penguin Books, 1963.

Fitzmyer, J. A. *The Gospel According to Luke I-X and The Gospel According to Luke X-XXIV* Anchor Bible 28. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1981, 1985.

Marshall, I. H. *Commentary on Luke*. New International Greek Testament Commentary. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978.

Nolland, John. *Luke*. 3 vols. Word Biblical Commentary 35 A-C. Dallas, TX: Word, 1989-93.

Schweizer, Eduard, *The Good News according to Luke*. Atlanta: John Knox, 1984.

Talbert, C. H. *Reading Luke: A Literary and Theological Commentary on the Third Gospel*. New York: Crossroads, 1989.

Wright, N. T. *Luke for Everyone*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 1994.

**Recommended Reading:**

Bock, Darrell. *Proclamation From Prophecy and Pattern. Lucan Old Testament Christology*. JSNTSSup 12. Great Britain: Sheffield Academic Press, 1987.

Conzelmann, Hans. *The Theology of St. Luke*. 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed. London: Faber and Faber, Ltd., 1960. (German original, 1957).

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Johnson, L. T. *The Literary Function of Possessions in Luke-Acts*. SBLDS 39; Missoula: Scholars Press, 1977.

Marshall, I. H. *Luke: Historian and Theologian*. Exeter: Paternoster Press, 1970.

Miner, Paul. *To Heal and To Reveal. The Prophetic Vocation According to Luke*. New York: The Seabury Press, 1976.

Tannehill, R. C. *The Narrative Unity of Luke Acts: A Literary Interpretation. Volume 1: The Gospel According to Luke and Volume 2: The Acts of the Apostles*. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1986, 1994.

***Course Requirements:***

1. Each student is required to complete all reading, translations and assignments as indicated on the syllabus. Class readings, translations, and analyses will be drawn on during class, and the instructor will assume knowledge of this material.
2. Each student is expected to be present in class. Unexcused tardiness or absence from class may be reflected in the final grade for the course.
3. All written assignments must be turned in at the end of the class for which they are due.
4. All work must be submitted on time. Late assignments will receive a 10% drop in grade. ***All written work must be submitted in order to receive a passing grade for the course.***

***Course Evaluation:***

1. Reading and Exegetical Notebook – 25% of final grade  
Students will be required to read all of the Gospel of Luke in English, to translate and analyze *selected portions of the Gospel* as indicated in the course outline, and to read the assigned commentaries. Students will be required to keep track of this work in an Exegetical Notebook according to guidelines provided by the instructor. The Exegetical Notebook Guidelines are available on CAMS under “assignments.” Students are encouraged to prepare the bulk of this work during the month preceding the course. Students will submit their Exegetical Notebooks to the instructor at the last class meeting. These notebooks will be returned promptly so that students may use them as a resource for the final exam and exegesis paper.
2. Class Assignments – 15% of final grade  
Each class meeting has a translation text from the Gospel of Luke associated with it, indicated in the course outline. For each class meeting, students will be required to complete an assignment for which they analyze a portion of the translation text for the day, to complement the work of their Exegetical Notebook. A handout explaining the assignments is posted on CAMS under “assignments.” Assignments are due at the end of each class meeting as indicated on the course outline. Students must submit hard copies of all assignments. Email submissions are not acceptable.

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3. Class Participation – 5% of final grade  
Students will be asked to translate one or two verses at every class meeting out of the portion of the text assigned for translation for that day, and to answer questions about parsing, syntax and grammar. In addition, students are expected to demonstrate engagement with the primary and secondary material during class.
4. Book and Study Questions – 10% of final grade  
Students will be responsible for reading James Resseguie, *Spiritual Landscape: Images of the Spiritual Life in the Gospel of Luke* and completing a set of study questions based on that reading, due on the first day of class, June 14. Study questions are posted on CAMS, under “assignments.”
5. Final Exam – 15% of final grade  
Students will prepare a take-home, open-book final exam, in which they trace the development of a theme through the Gospel, and explain the extent of its significance for understanding Luke’s overall literary and theological aims. The purpose of the exam is to allow students to synthesize the course material, including lectures, primary and secondary readings, and their own work on the text. In this exam, students are to demonstrate their understanding of the whole Gospel, and of the function of a particular theme within that whole. Students may choose one of the following five themes: family/household; material possessions; salvation; the Holy Spirit; or the Temple. Students may use their English Bibles for this project, but are expected to interact with the Greek text. Students may take the exam any time after the final class meeting and before August 13. The exam must be taken in a 3-hour timeframe, proctored by a friend or family member who signs his or her name under the starting and ending times. Students may submit the final exam to the professor at the LL124 office, electronically, or via campus mail.
6. Exegesis Paper – 30% of final grade  
Students will be required to write a 12-15-page exegesis paper on a passage they choose, to be submitted by the last day that written work is due, August 13. Students may submit the final exam to the professor at the LL124 office, electronically, or via campus mail.

Final semester letter grades will be assigned as follows:

|              |            |
|--------------|------------|
| A 93% and up | C 73.3%    |
| A- 90        | C- 70      |
| B+ 86.6%     | D+ 66.6%   |
| B 83.3%      | D 63.3%    |
| B- 80        | D- 60      |
| C+ 76.6%     | F below 60 |

All work for the course will be graded according to the policies outlining performance expectations in the GCTS Catalog. In this class, grades are based on the student's actual performance in a course judged against the criteria for grading stated in the course syllabus. The following letter grades and the accompanying description are used:

- A - Reserved for outstanding work of exceptionally high quality that reflects a creative appropriation of course material and practices.
- B - Work that meets all of the stated course requirements and reflects a firm grasp of course material and practices.
- C - Work that shows a basic grasp of the course materials and practices.
- D - Work that shows serious deficiencies but meets the minimal requirements of the course.
- F - Work that fails to meet the minimal requirements of the course. No credit is given.

A “minus” or “plus” indicates work that falls just short of the stated descriptions.

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***PRE-LECTURE WORK (Due on the first day of class, June 14):***

1. Complete no. 1 in the Exegetical Notebook Guidelines (see handout on CAMS, under “assignments”).
2. Complete the Exegetical Notebook for the translation texts assigned for 6/14 and 6/15 according to the Exegetical Notebook Guidelines (see CAMS under “assignments”).
3. Complete Assignments 1 and 2, explained on the Assignment Sheet, on CAMS under “assignments.”
4. Read James Resseguie, *Spiritual Landscape: Images of the Spiritual Life in the Gospel of Luke* and answer the Study Questions, available on CAMS under “assignments.”
5. If you are able to complete nos. 1-4 above, you are strongly encouraged (but not required) to continue with the Exegetical Notebook and Assignments to complete as much as you can before class meetings begin.

***Course Outline***

Introduction to the course

|             |  |
|-------------|--|
| Mon. 6/14   | Greek competency exam<br>History of Interpretation: How should we read Luke and why does it matter?<br>Prologue<br>Luke 1:1-4<br>Translation text 1:1-4<br>DUE: Assignment 1 |
| Tues. 6/15  | The Birth of John and Jesus (and Jesus’ childhood)<br>Luke 1-2<br>Translation text: chaps. 1-2<br>DUE: Assignment 2  |
| Wed. 6/16   | The Ministries of John and Jesus<br>Luke 3-8<br>Translation texts: chaps. 3:1-22; 4:1-5:11; 6:20-49<br>DUE: Assignment 3   |
| Thurs. 6/17 | Preparing a Leadership for the People<br>Luke 9<br>Translation text: chap. 9:12-17<br>DUE: Assignment 4  |
| Fri. 6/18   | Jesus Journeys to Jerusalem<br>Luke 10:1-12:59<br>Translation text: chap. 12:13-34<br>DUE: Assignment 5  |

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- Mon. 6/21     Jesus Journeys to Jerusalem  
                  Luke 13:1-16:18  
                  Translation text: chap. 15  
                  DUE: Assignment 6
- Tues. 6/22     Jesus Journeys to Jerusalem  
                  Luke 16:19-19:48  
                  Translation text: chap. 19  
                  DUE: Assignment 7
- Wed. 6/23     Jesus in Jerusalem  
                  Luke 20:1-21:38  
                  Translation text: 21:5-38  
                  DUE: Assignment 8
- Thurs. 6/24    The Suffering of Jesus  
                  Luke 22:1-23:53  
                  Translation text: chap. 23  
                  DUE: Assignment 9
- Fri. 6/25      Jesus is Raised Up  
                  Luke 24  
                  Translation text: chap. 24  
                  DUE: Assignment 10

Material on CAMS (under “Course Documents,” then under “assignments” or “resources” as indicated):

Exegetical Notebook Guidelines – “assignments”

Assignment Sheet – “assignments”

Study Questions for Resseguie, *Spiritual Landscape* – “assignments”

Aland, *Synopsis of the Four Gospels*, Luke 6:20-36 and par. text – “assignments”

Aland, *Synopsis of the Four Gospels*, Luke 21:5-38 and par. texts – “assignments”

Parsing Sheet – “resources”

Fee, *NT Exegesis*, 114-131 (guidelines for underlining a Synopsis) – “resources”

Functions of Prepositions – “resources”

Functions of Participles – “resources”

“How to Mark a Book” by Mortimer Adler – “resources”

Bock, “Narrative Criticism and Gospel Genre” – “readings”

Exegetical Checklist – “resources”

Outline for Exegesis Paper – “resources”