NT 615-HA Exegesis of Luke

May 16 - August 12

Class meetings: June 13-17, 20-24 from 1-4 pm

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Course Objectives

The aim of this course is to deepen the knowledge and refine the skills needed for robust exegesis in pastoral ministry, and to do this by means of an investigation of the Gospel of Luke. Toward this end, the course is structured around the following learning objectives:

2. Students will gain a stronger grasp of NT Greek and improve their ability to make use of such reference works as the Grammars of Wallace and Blass-Debrunner-Funk for purposes of syntax analysis of a passage of Scripture.
3. Students will gain familiarity with some aspects of narrative criticism as applied to the Gospels (including the analysis of the literary shape of a parable).
4. Students will become better equipped to identify and analyze the significance of an allusion to the Old Testament in a Gospel text.
5. Students will increase their understanding of the cultural and historical backgrounds of the ministry of Jesus.

Course Requirements

Required texts

- Joel Green, Commentary on the Gospel of Luke (NICNT). 860 pp. (600 required)

**Recommended texts**

• For Greek analysis, the more technical commentaries (esp. Joseph Fitzmyer in the Anchor Bible Commentary series) will greatly aid your study of Luke’s Gospel.


**10% of the final grade: Outline due Monday, June 15**

A detailed outline of the English text of Luke is due in the first class meeting on Monday, June 15. (N.B. The substantial weight given to this assignment relative to the final grade reflects its importance in the exegetical process [cf. comments of Fee, *New Testament Exegesis*, §1.1]. You will do well to invest considerable time in this assignment!) An outline forms the beachhead in any focused study of a Biblical book. As the first step in the exegetical process, the aim is to gain a provisional sense for the flow of thought across the work as a whole and so to establish the thematic context that will guide the analysis of individual passages. For this reason, an outline is not a summary of every paragraph or chapter. (Work that merely paraphrases the successive sections of the book as demarcated in an English Bible will not receive a favorable grade.) If you are uncertain how best to proceed in forming your outline, you may use the following steps:

i. Read through the entire work twice in a short period of time (one week at most).

As you do, reflect carefully on the following matters (Fee, *New Testament Exegesis*, §1.1.2-3):
a. Discover everything you can about the purpose. Does the author explicitly say anything about it? What is implied?

b. Note special emphases or concerns that emerge. What words or ideas are frequently repeated? What unusual vocabulary recurs? What, if anything, might these tell you about the occasion or purpose?

ii. After having acquainted yourself with the work as a whole, seek to identify the major breaks in the narrative. These become the main points in your outline. Look for major shifts in the focus of the narrative, such as leaps in time, changes in geography or itinerary, sustained changes in tone, audience, focus of teaching, etc. There are commonly only a handful of major sections in a narrative (if you identify 13, you have found too many!). Summarize each of these sections in a sentence or less.

iii. Next, re-read the first major section and identify secondary level divisions within the narrative. Do the same thing for each major section. Summarize each of these sections in a sentence or less.

iv. Next, identify third order divisions within each of the secondary divisions across the book. Summarize each of these sections in a sentence or less.

v. As appropriate and helpful, you may add additional divisions to your outline. Do not take your outline below the level of the individual pericope; the pericope (or self-contained story in the Gospel) should be the smallest unit in your outline. The aim is not to create endless divisions, but to represent the flow of thought in a way that will provide a genuinely helpful guide as you engage with individual passages in the book.

10% Three-five page reflection paper on Smith book, due Fri, June 24

Reflect on Smith in light of your study of Luke’s Gospel. This is a very open ended assignment.

20% of the final grade: Translations and annotations, due Fri, July 1

Students will submit four assignments in which they provide a smooth, idiomatic translation of required passages and provide commentary on the syntax of select forms and constructions throughout each passage. Do not PARSE anything! Rather, pull the
passage apart on the level of syntax. Discuss, explain, and analyze every facet of the grammar that is not obvious or may be interpreted in different ways. (E.g., “this verb is a 1st person singular imperfect” is BAD; “this is likely an inceptive imperfect because it opens a scene in which Jesus is beginning to address the crowd with a lengthy discourse” is GOOD; “2nd masc pl aor psv ptc” is BAD; “adverbial ptc of manner” is GOOD.) Submissions with a lot of parsing will receive a failing grade, regardless of the translation!

Each assignment must make use of at least two of the major reference grammars\(^1\) as well as multiple technical commentaries\(^2\). Do NOT use Greek handbooks such as the Baylor Handbook of the Greek New Testament, or The new linguistic and exegetical key to the Greek New Testament (by Cleon Rogers), etc. These works will short-circuit your learning process in this course as well as your ability to engage in-depth the NT text yourself.

Format can be very ‘bare bones’, but it must be prose writing, not a list of bullet points. See the style used in the ‘Notes’ sections of the major critical commentaries (esp. Word, Anchor, ICC).

**Students who are uncertain of how to analyze a passage in this fashion will have wait until class meetings begin to learn more about this crucial step in the exegetical process. In the meantime, it is highly recommended that students prepare all of the translations prior to the first class meeting due to the compressed nature of the schedule and due dates in late June. Those who proceed in this way should be sure to reserve at least 2 hours/day in the library throughout the last two weeks of June to conduct the syntactical analyses for each passage assigned.**

10% of the final grade: Quizzes on Tues, June 21 & Fri, June 24

Brief quizzes (15 min max) on the works by Wright and Johnson will ensure preparedness for discussions in class on those dates.

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\(^2\) The following series are best: *International Critical Commentary; Anchor Biblical Commentary; New International Greek Testament Commentary; Word Biblical Commentary.*
20% of the final grade: Test on Fri, July 22

The exam will test the student’s assimilation of the broad theological themes and concepts treated in class as well as in the required readings. Students will not be asked to reproduce the views of any one scholar or school of thought. Rather they will be tested as to the depth of their apprehension of Luke’s theological program. Answers should be replete with references to the text of Luke. Use of a Bible will be permitted for the exam.

30% of the final grade: Exegesis paper due Fri, August 12

- **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.

- **Paper length and quality.** Papers must be between 12-15 pages in length. Papers that fall outside these limits will be penalized. 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.

- **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 during the course, by making regular use of Strunk and White (recommended above).

- **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, and 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 notable 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 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.

**Workload for this course**

The following breakdown of course work represents an estimate of the time required to complete all aspects of the course. Estimates are based on past experience with GCTS students in exegesis courses as well as conversations with colleagues.

- 52 vv of translation @ 8vv/hr = ~7 hrs
- 2 hrs for each annotation assignment (after translations have been made) = 8 hrs
- 1250 pp rdg @ 30pp/hr = 42 hrs
- Class time = 30 hrs
- Exegesis paper = 15 hrs
- Exam = 2 hrs
- **TOTAL = 104 hrs of work** (135 hrs/course is considered standard; I have left a space cushion for those who require more time than estimated for various parts of the required work, who spend more time on the exegesis paper, and/or who may do additional reading in Lukan theology ahead of the exam.)

**Class meeting plan**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class Meeting</th>
<th>Material covered</th>
<th>Work due</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mon, June 13</td>
<td>Intro to course and Luke</td>
<td>Outline of Luke</td>
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<td>Wed, June 15</td>
<td>Galilee; Messianism</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thur, June 16</td>
<td>Luke 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Reading/Activity</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tues, June 21</td>
<td>Narrative criticism</td>
<td>Quiz on Wright, <em>Jesus as Storyteller</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Thur, June 23</td>
<td>Luke 22</td>
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*Translations and annotations are not due until Fri, July 1. Students will benefit from class discussion of passages, however, if they have completed the translations ahead of time.*