

**Syllabus for  
The Gospel of Luke  
NTL653**

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## **I. Course Description and Objectives**

*Catalogue Description:* A study of the Third Gospel, with special reference to its use of traditional material and its consequent unique rendering of the gospel message. (Prerequisite: BIB550 or equivalent.)

*Objectives:* Upon successful completion of the course you will have:

1. Demonstrated a basic grasp of the content, literary structure, and theology of Luke.
2. Demonstrated a rudimentary understanding of the historical, socio-rhetorical, and literary backgrounds against which Luke's gospel is best understood.
3. Demonstrated an ability to articulate a particular stand on various critical issues associated with the study of Luke including: its relationship to history, to Acts, and to the other gospels; its use of the OT.
4. Demonstrated an ability to engage in disciplined group discussion characterized by critical theological reflection on the biblical text and/or issues surrounding it.

## **II. Course Reading**

### **Required for Purchase:**

Brower, Kent. *Holiness in the Gospels*. Kansas City, MO: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 2005.

Green, Joel B. *The Theology of the Gospel of Luke*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995.

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

Ringe, Sharon H. *Luke*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1995.

Tannehill, Robert C. *Luke*. Nashville: Abingdon, 1996.

Willis, David. *Notes on the Holiness of God*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002.

Longenecker, Bruce. *The Lost Letters of Pergamum*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2003.

**Note: If you have already read Longenecker and written a paper on it for me in another class, purchase instead: Theissen, Gerd. *The Shadow of the Galilean*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1987.**

### **Required Reading Available in NTS Library or Blackboard**

Johnson, Andy. "Ripples of the Resurrection in the Triune Life of God: Reading Luke 24 with Eschatological and Trinitarian Eyes." *Horizons in Biblical Theology* 24 (2002): 87-110.

Rowe, C. Kavin. "Luke and the trinity: an essay in ecclesial biblical theology." *Scottish Journal of Theology* 56 (2003): 1-23.

Thompson, Richard. "Gathered at the Table: Holiness and Ecclesiology in the Gospel of Luke," in *Holiness and Ecclesiology in the New Testament*. Ed. Kent E. Brower and Andy Johnson. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, forthcoming (**I will make this available in Blackboard**).

### **Recommended Recent Critical Commentaries:**

Bock, Darrel. *Luke*, in the BECNT, Baker, 2 vols., 1994/1996 (based on the Greek text but with Greek terms transliterated and defined).

Bovon, Francois. *Luke 1: A Commentary on the Gospel of Luke 1:1-9:50*, in Hermeneia, Fortress, 2002 (based on the Greek text).

Green, Joel B. *The Gospel of Luke*, in the NICNT, Eerdmans, 1997 (based on the English text).

John Nolland, *Luke*, in the WBC, Word, 3 vols., 1989-1993 (based on the Greek text).

## **III. Requirements**

**1. Reading Luke.** You must read Luke through (preferably in one sitting but **in no more than two** sittings) at least six times this semester. By 11:00 PM CST on the due date of the reading, you must have posted a statement in the Reading Luke Forum in Blackboard saying that you have completed the reading of Luke due that day. Each reading counts 15 points toward your final grade, making all six readings count 90 points toward your final grade. **You cannot "make up" any of this reading. You can only get credit for what you actually read by the due date listed on the Schedule of Topics and Assignments below. Since these are basically "give away" points, this is an all or nothing assignment. You do not get credit for partial reading.**

**\*\*Note Carefully\*\*** **To save time**, as you read Luke, you should keep a running master list of *critical* questions and insights of comprehensive or theological significance that arise from a careful reading of the text. These questions and comments should not only note the scriptural context of the concern, but what matter of importance is at stake. These questions will later become a part of requirement 5 described below.

2. **Longenecker/Theissen Reflection Paper:** If you **have not** read Longenecker's, *The Lost Letters of Pergamum* and written a paper based on it for me, make Longenecker the basis for the following assignment. If you **have** read Longenecker and written a paper based on it for me, make Gerd Theissen's, *The Shadow of the Galilean* the basis for the following assignment.

Read Longenecker/Theissen. Then read the Gospel of Luke carefully (this will count as your second reading of Luke). Assume for now that Theissen's novel captures the socio-historical, cultural, and especially the **political** feel of Jesus' first century setting in Luke's story or assume that Longenecker's novel captures the socio-historical, cultural, and especially the **political** feel of the first century setting in which Luke's Gospel would have been first heard. Write a 750-1,000 word (3-4 pages) paper, typed, and double-spaced, answering the following question: How does understanding Jesus against this background change the way I read the Gospel of Luke? Give specific examples from the text of Luke which sound different to you after having read Theissen or Longenecker. You may earn up to 100 points for this assignment. To submit your paper, go into the Assignments Tab in Blackboard to the Longenecker/Theissen Paper assignment. Click on View/Complete Assignment at the bottom of the description. Then upload your assignment as an MS Word file by 11:00 PM CST Tuesday, January 10.

3. **Insights from Green's *Theology*.** After carefully reading Green's, *The Theology of the Gospel of Luke*, briefly describe 25 significant insights you gained from the book. The book has 6 chapters. Make sure you draw at least 3 insights from each chapter (6 x 3 = 18) **noting the chapter and page number from which you are drawing the insight.** The remaining 7 may come from anywhere in the book. You may earn up to 60 points for this assignment. To submit this assignment, go into the Assignments Tab in Blackboard to the Green Insights assignment. Click on View/Complete Assignment at the bottom of the description. Then upload your assignment as an MS Word file. Submit this assignment by 11:00 PM CST on Tuesday, January 17. My assistant, David Young, will probably be grading this assignment.

4. **Fishbowl Discussion Sessions.** You will actively participate in various "fishbowl" discussions. The "fishbowl" will consist of a class discussion/critical analysis of the reading assigned for that day. **I will not simply give these points away because you show up in class that day.** You must make regular contributions during this discussion period in a way that demonstrates an understanding of, **and a critical engagement with**, the assigned reading. I will split the class into two or three groups with one group discussing one part of the assigned reading and the other group(s) discussing the other part(s) of the reading. You will not know which part of the reading you will be assigned to discuss. **In any case, you are responsible for all of the assigned reading.** Hence, you should carefully read all of the assigned reading and take careful notes on it (in some form or fashion) or even bring a summary of it to refer to during the discussion.

I will attempt to focus the discussions by asking at least two of the following three questions: (1) What is the main thesis/purpose of the particular chapter or article? (2) How does the author argue his overall case? (3) What are the ramifications for our understanding of theology/Christology and/or holiness/sanctification if their arguments

are taken seriously? (4) What are the pastoral ramifications of their argument(s) for engaging in Christian formation in the church of North America?

- a. You may earn up to 60 points in the fishbowl devoted to Brower and Thompson. It will be held on Tuesday, January 24.
- b. You may earn up to 30 points in the fishbowl devoted to Rowe and Johnson which will be held on Friday, January 27. **Read Rowe before reading Johnson.**
- c. You may earn up to 60 points in the fishbowl devoted to Willis. It will be held on Thursday, February 1.

**5. Critical Reading Responses (CRR) to Commentary Reading.** In the second half of the course you will prepare a critical reading response of **3-6 pages** for three commentary reading assignments and each section of Luke associated with them. The specific content of the reading assignments and the due dates of the critical reading response are on the Schedule of Topics and Assignments below.

These responses should have three sections: (1) *Critical* questions and insights of comprehensive or theological significance that arise from a careful reading of the section of Luke being focused on **prior to** reading the selections from the textbooks. These questions and comments should not only note the scriptural context of the concern, but what matter of importance is at stake. These questions should be an **edited version** of your running master list of *critical* questions and insights that you generated during your prior readings of Luke. (2) *Critical* questions and observations that your reading of Tannehill and Ringe raises in your mind about the biblical text and/or vice-versa, critical questions and observations that reading the biblical text raises in your mind about Tannehill and Ringe. (3) A comparative section noting any significant disagreements or inconsistencies between the two commentators **as to how they address specific critical issues**. An example of an “A” quality CRR will be available in Blackboard under the Course Documents tab in the Guidelines Folder. It will be called “Model CRR.”

To submit your assignments, go into the Assignments Tab in Blackboard to the CRR 1, 2, or 3 assignment. Click on View/Complete Assignment at the bottom of the description. Then upload your assignment as an MS Word file. Submit each CRR by no later than 11:00 PM CST on the dates listed on the Schedule of Topics and Assignments below. You may earn up to 50 points for each CRR making them worth a total of 150 points. My assistant, David Young, will be grading your CRRs.

**6. Journal/BB Discussion in Dialogue with Resseguie’s *Spiritual Landscape*.** This book has an Introduction followed by six chapters. Over a period of 9 weeks after the module is over, you will read the Introduction and these six chapters. Based on the “landscape” images of each chapter, I will select a specific passage from Luke that is an example of such an image and will communicate these passages to you later in the semester. **After reading the chapter in Resseguie**, you will engage in a 20-30 minute meditative reading of the passage I assign based on the instructions available in Blackboard under the Course Documents tab in the Guidelines Folder. The document will be called “Guidelines for *lectio divina*” (i.e., sacred reading).

In a group discussion board of 4-5 people, you will then post a brief paragraph of reflection on that reading as it emerges from, and relates to, your own spiritual journey. Your reflection paragraph must be posted by 11:00 PM CST on the due date listed on the Schedule of Topics and Assignments below. After posting your own reflection, you will read the reflections of your other group members and will have about 10 days to post at least one response to another group member's reflection. At the due date of the next reflection paragraph, discussion of the last reflection paragraphs will be closed (in terms of grading). You may earn up to 100 points for your reading, reflection paragraphs, and responses to your group members.

**7. Final Examination.** There will be one exam during the semester. It will be a take-home essay exam, synthetic in nature. On it, you will be responsible for the material we've covered in class for the entire module as well as the assigned reading. I will give you the exam at least one month in advance of the due date. You may earn up to 350 points on this exam. To submit your essay/paper, go into the Assignments Tab in Blackboard to the Final Exam assignment. Click on View/Complete Assignment at the bottom of the description. Then upload your assignment as an MS Word file. Submit your Final Exam by 11:00 PM CST on Friday, April 7.

#### **IV. Summary of Grading Policy**

The final grade will be computed using the following point scale. There are 1,000 possible points.

90	Reading Luke
100	Theissen/Longenecker Reflection Paper
60	Insights from Green's Theology
150	Fishbowl Discussion Sessions
150	Critical Reading Responses to Commentary Reading
100	Resseguie's <i>Spiritual Landscape</i>
350	Final Exam

The following point scale will determine letter grades:

A	1,000-930	C+	799-780	D-	629-600
A-	929-900	C	779-730	F	599-0
B+	899-880	C-	729-700		
B	879-830	D+	699-680		
B-	829-800	D	679-630		

#### **V. Policy on Attendance and Tardiness**

You are expected to attend class regularly and participate in the daily discussions. Attendance will be taken daily. An absence will only be excused in accordance with the guidelines established in the NTS catalogue.

## VI. Schedule of Topics and Assignments (Subject to change at my discretion)

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic for Class</b>	<b>Assignments Due</b>
01/03		1 <sup>st</sup> Reading of Luke
01/10		2 <sup>nd</sup> Reading of Luke Longenecker/Theissen Reflection Paper
01/17		3 <sup>rd</sup> Reading of Luke Green “Insights” Assignment
01/23	Intro to the Course/Gospel Audiences Luke & Acts/Prologue: 1:1-4	
01/24	1:5-4:44	Brower and Thompson Fishbowl Discussion
01/25	1:5-4:44 5:1-9:50	
01/26	5:1-9:50	
01/27	9:51-19:44	Rowe and Johnson Fishbowl Discussion
01/30	9:51-19:44	
01/31	9:51-19:44	
02/01	19:45-21:38 22:1-23:56	Willis Fishbowl Discussion
02/02	22:1-23:56 24:1-53	
02/10		Resseguie: Intro and Chapter 1 Reflection
02/20		Resseguie: Chapter 2 Reflection
02/24		4 <sup>th</sup> Reading of Luke CRR 1: Tannehill, 19-167; Ringe, 1-144
03/03		Resseguie: Chapter 3 Reflection
03/10		5 <sup>th</sup> Reading of Luke CRR 2: Tannehill, 167-309; Ringe, 147-254
03/14		Resseguie: Chapter 4 Reflection
03/24		6 <sup>th</sup> Reading of Luke CRR 3: Tannehill, 311-364; Ringe, 255-290
03/28		Resseguie: Chapter 5 Reflection
04/07		Resseguie: Chapter 6 Reflection
<b>04/13</b>		<b>Final Exam Due</b>