

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-political, and literary backgrounds against which Luke's gospel is best understood.
3. Developed some familiarity with 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 a theme emerging from it.
5. Demonstrated an ability to teach/preach responsibly from the Gospel of Luke in some form of ecclesial setting.

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.

Talbert, Charles H. *Reading Luke: A Literary and Theological Commentary*. rev. ed. ed. Macon: Smyth & Helwys, 2002.

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

Longenecker, Bruce. *The Lost Letters of Pergamum*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2003 or **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. If you've read both and written papers on both for me in the past, buy neither and contact me for an alternative assignment.**

Required Reading Available in NTS Library and/or Blackboard

Johnson, Andy. "Holy, Holiness, NT" in *New Interpreters Dictionary of the Bible*, Nashville: Abingdon, 2: 846-50 (Library).

Johnson, Andy. "Sanctify, Sanctification," in *New Interpreters Dictionary of the Bible*. Nashville: Abingdon, forthcoming (available under Course Documents tab of Blackboard).

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, 2007, 76-94 (Library).

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).

Fitzmyer, Joseph A. *The Gospel According to Luke*, 2 vols. In The Anchor Bible. Garden City: Doubleday, 1981-85.

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

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

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

III. Requirements

1. Reading Luke (Objective 1). You must read Luke through (preferably in one sitting but **in no more than two** sittings) at least six times this semester. By 11:59 PM CT 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 (Objective 2). 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. If you have read both and written papers on them for me in a past class, contact me for an alternative 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 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 11:59 PM CT on February 10.

3. **Insights from Green's *Theology* (Objectives 1-3).** 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 11:59 PM CT on February 17. My teaching assistant will probably be grading this assignment.
4. **Fishbowl Discussion Sessions (Objective 4).** 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 four questions: (1) What is the main thesis/purpose of the particular chapter or essay? (2) How does the author argue his overall case? (3) What are the ramifications for our understanding of 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. It will be held on February 24.
- b. You may earn up to 40 points in the fishbowl devoted to Johnson's two essays and Thompson's essay which will be held on March 10.

- 5. Critical Reading Responses (CRR) to the Gospel and to the Commentary Reading (Objectives 1-3).** You will prepare three critical reading responses of **1,500-1,750 words** each in which you critically engage a portion of Luke and the commentary reading associated with it. For the specific content and due dates of these CRR's, see the Class Master Schedule 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 gospel text itself **prior to** reading the selections from Talbert and Tannehill. 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 six readings of Luke. (2) *Critical* questions and observations that your reading of Talbert and Tannehill 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 the claims of Talbert and Tannehill. (3) A comparative section noting any significant disagreements or inconsistencies between Talbert and Tannehill as to how they address these critical issues. An example of an "A" quality CRR will be available for you in Blackboard under the 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 Class Master Schedule below. You may earn up to 60 points for each CRR making them worth a total of 180 points. My teaching assistant will be grading your CRRs.

- 6. In-Ministry Assignment (Objective 5).** During the semester, you will teach or preach from a passage or passages from the Gospel of Luke. You could do this in a local church setting (e.g., preaching, teaching a Sunday School class, a Bible study, etc.) or a para-church setting (e.g., preaching at a nursing home or rescue mission, leading a Bible study at a youth center, etc.). It can be done any time this semester **between March 4 and April 27**. Whatever setting you choose, you must ask someone (preferably a pastor, a person in charge, someone with theological training who is not currently an NTS student, or a professional-type person) to fill out an evaluation form (available under the Course Documents tab in Blackboard) and sign it. **I must approve the person you plan to ask ahead of time.** I will use that person's evaluation of your presentation as well as your written sermon and/or sermon notes, lesson plan, etc. to evaluate this assignment. The person will complete the evaluation form, place it in a sealed envelope, and sign their name over the seal. They will give that back to you and you will place the unopened envelope together with your written sermon and/or sermon notes, lesson plan, etc. in my box at NTS by **no later than April 28 at 4:30 PM**. Alternatively, you may mail all these materials to me. If you do, the packet must be postmarked by **no later than April 28 at 4:30 PM** and sent to: Andy Johnson, c/o Nazarene Theological Seminary, 1700 East Meyer Blvd., Kansas City, MO 64131. **Please note: I will not accept this assignment late.** You may earn up to 70 points for this assignment.
- 7. Final Examination (Objectives 1-3).** 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 400 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 11:59 PM CT on May 5.

IV. Summary of Grading Policy

A Word about Grading: Evaluation in this kind of course, by its very nature, involves an element of subjectivity. It involves someone who is an expert in the field making a judgment on the kind of work you produce. That is a part of what you are paying for in this class. The primary factors I take into account in assessing “good solid graduate work,” the sort of work to which I assign a “B” are (1) ability to demonstrate a breadth and depth of understanding of the material engaged; (2) ability to engage this material **in a critical way**; (3) ability to exhibit how the material is related to a larger theological and ecclesial context. If you demonstrate a **consistent** ability to do these things in all your coursework, you can expect to receive a B. If you demonstrate consistent ability to do them **incisively and with excellence**, you can expect to receive an A. If you demonstrate an ability to do these things **often, but not consistently**, you can expect to receive a C. (Hence, I assume that a C means “average,” or “satisfactory” work. It does **not** mean “bad” or “unsatisfactory.”) If you **seldom** demonstrate an ability to do these things, you can expect to receive a D.

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
100	Fishbowl Discussion Sessions
180	Critical Reading Responses to Commentary Reading
70	In-Ministry Assignment
400	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. Late Work

Unless there are major unexpected and unavoidable issues in the student’s life and/or it has been cleared with me beforehand, work turned in less than one week late will be penalized by one letter grade. Work turned in more than one week late but less than two weeks late will be penalized by two letter grades. I will not accept work over two weeks late. **Please note: I will not accept the In-Ministry assignment if it is late at all.**

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

Date	Topic for Class	Assignments Due
02/03	Intro to the Course/Gospel Audiences Luke & Acts/Prologue: 1:1-4	
02/10	1:5-4:44	1 st and 2 nd Reading of Luke Longenecker/Theissen Reflection Paper
02/17	1:5-4:44	3 rd Reading of Luke Green "Insights" Assignment
02/24	1:5-4:44 5:1-9:50	Brower Fishbowl
03/03	5:1-9:50	CRR 1: Tannehill, 19-167; Talbert, 1-116
03/10	9:51-19:44	Johnson and Thompson Fishbowl
03/24	9:51-19:44	4 th Reading of Luke
03/31	9:51-19:44	CRR 2: Tannehill, 167-285; Talbert, 117-218
04/07	19:45-21:38	5 th Reading of Luke
04/14	22:1-23:56	
04/21	22:1-23:56	CRR 3: Tannehill, 286-364; Talbert, 219-264
04/28	24:1-53	6 th Reading of Luke In-Ministry Assignment Due
05/05		Final Exam Due at 11:59 PM CT