Purpose

The purposes of the course are fourfold:

1. to acquaint the student with the historical-critical and literary-critical reading of Luke and Acts;
2. to help the student grasp the significance of this body of literature for the church today;
3. to provide a model of exegetical interpretation which can be used in the interpretation of almost any book of the Bible;
4. to provide a model of critical theological reflection which can be used in the analysis of almost any book of the Bible.

Approach

The course will combine lecture by the instructor with presentation by the students and discussion of commonly read Biblical texts and secondary sources.

Because the volume of literature in Luke-Acts is so large, it is impossible to move through the books unit by unit. We will, instead, survey the whole of the literature in the light of several key Lucan themes (one theme each week) and will illustrate how that theme comes to expression in the material by looking closely at representative texts.

Required Books:

The Harper Collins Study Bible with the Apocrypha (New Revised Standard Version)
Kurt Aland, Synopsis of the Four Gospels
Mark Allan Powell, What Are They Saying about Luke?
Mark Allan Powell, What Are They Saying about Acts?

You may not use Wikipedia or other on-line resources for papers or for other projects in this course.
Bible Dictionaries: (For your exegetical presentation and paper, you will need to consult these)

Anchor Bible Dictionary
Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament
HarperCollins One Volume Bible Dictionary
Mercer Bible Dictionary
The New Eerdmans Analytic Concordance
The Interpreter’s Dictionary of the Bible
The New Interpreter’s Dictionary of the Bible
Theological Dictionary of the New Testament

Commentaries: (For your exegetical presentation and paper you will need to consult two of these commentaries. Some of these volumes are in Reference and others are on Reserve).

F.F. Bruce, The Book of Acts (New International Commentary on the NT)
Fred B. Craddock, Luke (Interpretation) (in Reference)
J.M. Creed, Luke
F.W. Danker, Jesus and the New Age
Ernst Haenchen, Acts
F.J. Foakes Jackson and Kirsopp Lake, The Beginnings of Christianity, esp. vol. IV.
Howard Clark Kee, To Every Nation Under Heaven: The Acts of the Apostles
Gerhard Krodel, Acts (Augsburg Commentary on the New Testament)
I. Howard Marshall, Acts (Tyndale)
F.S. Spencer, Acts: Readings
Charles Talbert, Reading Luke
Charles Talbert, Acts (Knox Preaching Guides)
David L. Tiede, Luke (Augsburg Commentary on the NT)
Paul Walasky, Acts (Westminster Bible Companion)
One Volume Commentaries from from the Perspectives of Specific Social Locations (For your exegetical presentation and paper you need to consult two of these commentaries)

Tokunboh Adeyamo, *Africa Bible Commentary: A One-Volume Commentary Written by 70 African Scholars*


Curtis Paul DeYoung, Wilda C. Gaffney, Leticia Guardiola-Saenz and George E. Tinker, *The People’s Bible*

Curtis Paul DeYoung, Wilda C. Gaffney, Leticia Guardiola-Saenz and George E. Tinker, *The People’s Companion to the Bible*

Cain H. Felder, ed., *The Original African Heritage Study Bible* (in Reference)

Deryn Guest, Robert E. Goss, Mona West, and Thomas Bohache, *The Queer Bible Commentary* (in Reference)

Samuel Lachs, *A Rabbinic Commentary on the NT*

Bruce J. Malina, *Social Science Commentary on Acts*

Bruce Malina and Richard Rohrbaugh, *Social Science Commentary on the Synoptic Gospels*

Carol Newsom and Sharon Ringe, eds., *Woman’s Bible Commentary* (in Reference)

Daniel Patte, *The Global Bible Commentary* (in Reference)

Elizabeth Schuessler Fiorenza, ed., *Searching the Scriptures* (in Reference)

Fernando F. Segovia and R.S. Sugirtharajah, eds. *A Postcolonial Commentary on the New Testament Writings*

Assignment of Grades

Each student will engage in the following assignments, with the contribution of the particular assignment to the total grade indicated:

Quiz on the content of Luke-Acts (February 2) 5% 50 points

Paper on methodological issues (readings of Powell) 5% 100 points

Four of nine, two-page, double spaced papers each on a theme in Luke-Acts (100 points each) 40% 400 points

In-class exegetical presentation (a historical-cultural and/or literary-critical study of a passage in the light of a Lucan theme) (see Appendices 2 & 3) 20% 100 points

Exegetical paper: 12 pages (no more, please)

Exegesis paper due on the text on which you gave your in-class presentation. The paper should be no more than 12 pages of text and footnotes (not endnotes). The bibliographical pages can be extra. Due December 7 25% 300 points

Brief final paper (approximately 3 pages) in which the student indicates what she or he has learned in the course. What have you learned about the process of interpreting the Bible exegetically and hermeneutically? What have you learned about the content of Luke-Acts? What have you learned about yourself as a person? How do you anticipate this learning will help you as a minister? Due December 14 5% 50 points
Grades will be computed according to the following schedule:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>951</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>876</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>826</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>776</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>726</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>676</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>626</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D-</td>
<td>600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>559</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Regular class attendance is assumed. Two unexcused absences will result in the final grade being dropped one full letter. A grade that would have been a C would then become a D.

Written work is due at the end of the hour on the day assigned. Unexcused late work will be marked a full letter grade lower than it would otherwise have been marked.

All work must be completed to pass the course. Failure to complete any assignment will result in failure of the course.

Note: The instructor will read and grade late papers, but will not be able to comment on them.

Preparation for Class Sessions

Throughout the course, the student will need to follow the syllabus very carefully.

Students will be eager to prepare carefully for class sessions. Please be careful to read the assigned material and to be prepared to discuss the material.

When passages are being discussed, it is important that the student read the appropriate material in the required commentaries. Even though this material may not be explicitly assigned on the syllabus, it is assumed that the student will read it. This is especially important in connection with the studies of major Lucan themes. Pay careful attention in your reading in the commentaries to those passages that are marked with an asterisk (*) on the syllabus.

When selecting a passage for the in-class exegetical presentation, please make your selection from those beside which you see a line, like this:

Acts 15

Most of these passages are in the Common Lectionary.

NOTE: This class is designed to call for no more than six (6) hours of preparation outside of class each week. Please gauge your working pattern so that you stay within this time-frame.
Welcome to the Course.

Introductions.


Overview of the course and selection of assignments.


Reading Luke-Acts as a story:
   a. knowing the "vertical" components (archaeological meaning of words, phrases, etc.);
   b. knowing the "horizontal" components (the plot, the 'world' created by the narrative, the characters' point of view).


Read:

   a. plot;
   b. chiasmus;

Read:
   Luke 1-2;
   Luke 4:14-30;
   Acts 2:1-38;


**September 7**

Read: Luke-Acts several times and be prepared to take a short quiz on the content of Luke-Acts. Use Aland to help you distinguish material that is found in Luke that is not found in the other gospels and to identify distinctive Lucan theology, arrangement of material, stylistic features, etc. Also, note how Luke's picture of Paul differs from (and is similar to) the picture of Paul in the seven undisputed letters of Paul.


Overview of an approach to exegesis (Appendix).

Possible outline for an in-class presentation (Appendix)


* Trip to the Library to check out using bibliographical resources in preparation for your presentation/papers.

**September 14**


Read:

Mark Allan Powell, *What are They Saying about Luke?*
Mark Allan Powell, *What are They Saying about Acts?*

Due: five-page paper in which the student reflects on the two short and easy-to-read books by Mark Allan Powell. Include the following in your reflections:

What are Powell's major points in these books?
How do you see the major issues in the historical-critical interpretation and literary-critical interpretation of Luke-Acts in the light of Powell's analysis?
How do you think your methods of interpreting Luke-Acts will be (or ought to be) affected by your awareness of these issues?

As you think in a preliminary way about the world created by the narrative of Luke-Acts, how do the readings from Powell, and you growing awareness of being a part of that world, heighten your own sensitivity to specific aspects of Luke-Acts? In other words, what are you noticing now that you did not notice so much before?

How do you anticipate growing as an interpreter of Luke-Acts?
What will you consciously seek to develop this semester?

What weaknesses do you notice in the books?


Read:

Isaiah 61: 1-11;
Isaiah 58: 1-14;
I Kings 17: 1-24 (esp. 8-10);
II Kings 5: 1-14;


Lecture and discussion.

**September 21** The Spirit in Luke's Theological Vision and Religious Experience

Read:

- Genesis 1, esp. 1:1-2
- Numbers 11:24-30
- I Samuel 10:1-13, esp. 6, 10-13
- Micah 3:5-12, esp. 8
- Isaiah 11:1-9
- Paul, esp. 2:28 - 3:8
- Luke 2:5-25
- 1:26-38
- 1:67-80
- 2:25-35
- 3:15-17
- 3:21-22
- 4: 1-14
- 4:16-30
- 10:21-22
- 11: 5-13
- 12: 8-12
- Acts 1: 1-5
- 1: 6-11
- 1:15-20
- **2: 1-42, esp. 1-4; 5-13; 14-21; 38
- 4: 1-31, esp. 24-31
- 5: 1-16
- 6:1-6
- 7:55-60
- 8:15-27
- 8:26-40
- 9:10-17
- 10: 1-11:18, esp. 10:44-46
- 15:6-11
- 15:22-29
- 16: 6-10
- 19: 1-7
- 20:17-36
- 21:1-16
- 28:23-29

DUE: Two page paper in which you (1) tell what the Spirit was to the Jewish community; (2) outline the main characteristic and function of the Spirit in the Hebrew tradition; (3) state how Luke understands the nature and purpose of the Spirit, especially in relationship to its Jewish background; (4) summarize the work and importance of the Spirit as it is portrayed in Luke-Acts; (5) comment on the relevance (or nonrelevance) of Luke's understanding of the Spirit for the Church today.

September 28  Apostles, Disciples and Community

Read:

Exodus 3:1-12
II Kings 2:1-25
Isaiah 6:1-8, esp. 8
Isaiah 8:11-22
                     6:12-16
                     6:20-49
                     8:19-21
                     9:1-17, esp. 1-6, 10-17
                   * 10:1-20 ________________________
                     12:22-53 ________________________
                     11:1-13 ________________________
                     14:25-35 ________________________
                     17:1-10 ________________________
                     22:39-46 ________________________
                     24:44-52 ________________________
Acts  1:12-26, esp. 21-26 ________________________
        2:43-47 ________________________
        4:32-5:10 ________________________
        5:1-16 ________________________
        6:1-6 ________________________
        9:32-43 ________________________
       10:1-11:18 ________________________
       11:19-26 ________________________
       15:1-29 ________________________
F 19:1-7 ________________________
   20:7-12 ________________________
   20:17-35 ________________________

Fitzmyer, pp. 235-258.
"Apostle" in NIDB, vol. 1, pp. 205-207;
"Twelve" IDB, vol. 5, pp. 689-690 (Note: two articles on “Twelve” and “The Twelve”)
ABD, vol. 1, pp. 309-311;
ABD, vol. 2, pp. 207-210;
ABD, vol. 6, pp. 670-671;
Optional reading:

DUE: Two page paper which (1) describes the meaning of being an apostle and a disciple in the first century (2) delineates whom Luke designates by these terms in the narrative; (3) outlines the primary characteristic and purposes of the early Christian communities and (4) compares and contrasts your own local Christian community with the one pictured in Luke-Acts.

**October 5**  The Mission to the Gentiles: The Great Reunion of the Human Family

Read: Genesis 12: 1-3  
Psalm 67  
Isaiah 42:1-9; 44:1-5; 60:1-7  
Micah 4:1-4  
Zechariah 8:20-23  
IV Ezra (II Esdras) 13:12-50  
Galatians 2-3  
Luke  
1:67-79, esp. 78-79  
2: 1-20, esp. 2:10  
2:22-32, esp. 30-32  
3: 1-6, esp. 4-6  
3:22-38, esp. 35-38  
4:16-30, esp. 25-28  
7:1-10  
11:33-36  
14:15-24, esp. 23  
15:1-10  
15:11-32  
24:44-49  
Acts 1: 6-11  
2:17-21  
3:25-26  
8:1  
9:1-19, esp. 15  
** 10:1-11:18  
13:46-48  
14:15-17  
** 15:1-29, esp. 14-21  
17:22-34  
18:5-11  
26:19-29  
** 28:26-30  
“Gentiles” in NIDB, vol. 2, p. 556  
“Nations” in NIDB, vol. 4, pp. 231-238  
Optional Reading:
Jaques Dupont, *Salvation to the Gentiles*, pp. 11-34;

DUE: Two page paper which answers the following questions:
(1) Who are the gentiles? (2) How does Luke portray the attitude of God and the Church towards them? (3) What is the mission of the Church vis-a-vis the gentiles? (4) What is Luke's rationale for this mission? (5) Who would you say are the gentiles today? (6) What is the Church's mission to them?

**October 12: Reading Week: No class**

**October 19  Women, the Disinherited and Samaritans**

Read:
Genesis 2:4-25, esp. 18-24, 3:14-19
II Samuel 13:1-22
Numbers 27:1-11
Leviticus 27:1-7

Women
Luke
  1:5-25
  1:26-39
  1:39-56
  1:57-66
  2:1-7
  2:36-38
  4:20-30, esp. 26
  7:1-10
  7:36-50
  * 8:1-3
  8:40-56
  10:38-42
  13:10-17
  13:20-21
  13:32-34
  18:1-8
  21:1-4
  23:26-55
  * 24:1-11
  24:22-27

Acts
  1: 1-4
  2:16-18
  6:1-6
  8:12
  9:36-43
  12:12-17
  16:1
Disinherited (Sinners, tax collectors, etc.)

Luke 2:8-20
4:12-16
5:27-31
13:1-9
*15:1-32
18:1-8
**18: 9-14
*19:1-14
Acts 3:1-10
8:26-40

Samaritans

Luke 9:51-56
*10:25-37
17:11-19
Acts 8:4-24

DUE: Two page paper in which the student selects one of the three foci for the class session (women, the disinherited, or Samaritans) and (1) traces the background of the motif in the world in which Luke wrote; (2) shows how Luke addresses the motif in Luke-Acts; (3) illustrates item 2 with reference to specific passages; (4) posits analogies for the group in today's church (who are today's women, the disinherited, Samaritans) (5) suggest ways in which Luke's news may be relevant to comparable groups today.

Read:
“Women in the Apocrypha,” NIDB, vol. 5, pp. 882-885
“Women in the OT,” NIDB, vol. 5, pp. 888-892
Markus Barth, Ephesians 4-6, pp. 655-662, esp. 655-657.
E.P. Sanders Jesus and Judaism, pp. 174-211.
“Samaria, Territory of,” NIDB, vol. 5, pp. 72-73
“Samaritan Pentateuch,” NIDB, vol. 5, pp. 73-74
“Samaritans,” NIDB, vol. 5, pp. 75-82
Optional Reading:
Elisabeth Schussler Fiorenza, *In Memory of Her*, pp. 105-118
Jacob Jervel, "The Lost Sheep of the House of Israel", *Luke and the People of God*

**October 26**  
Prayer, Baptism, The Lord's Supper, The Laying on of Hands and ritual aspects of Lucan church life

**Luke**
1:5-25  
2:36-38  
3:1-20  
3:21-22  
5:12-16  
6:12  
6:27-31  
7:24-30  
9:18  
9:10-17  
9:28-36  
* 11:1-13  
12:49-53  
* 18: -  
18:9-14  
* 22:7-22  
22:39-46  
**24:13-35

**Acts**  
1:14  
1:5-11  
2:38-41  
2:42-47  
3:1-10  
4:27-31  
6:1-6  
* 8:14-21  
8:36-40  
9:10-19  
10:1-33  
12:1-5  
12:12-17  
* 13:1-3  
13:16b-25  
14:19-23  
16:11-18  
16:25-34  
18:5-11  
18:24-28  
19:1-7  
21:12-26  
26:24-29
Read:
"Lord's Supper," NIDB, vol. 3, pp. 695-700

Optional Reading:
"Baptism" IDB Supplement, pp. 85-89.

DUE: Two page paper in which the student selects one of the four foci for the class session (prayer, baptism, the Lord's Supper, or the laying on of hands) and (1) traces the background of the motif in the life and literature of Israel; (2) shows how Luke takes up the motif in Luke-Acts; (3) illustrates with discussion of specific passages; (4) compares and contrasts Luke's use of the motif with that of your own denomination; (5) evaluates the usefulness of Luke's way of thinking for the life of the Church today.

**November 2** The Use of Material Goods as Means of God’s Providence (or not)

Read: Exodus 20:22 - 23:33
Leviticus 25: 1-55, esp. 8-24
Deuteronomy 15:1-18, esp. 7-11
Amos 2:4-8; 5:21-24
Isaiah 1:12-17; 3:13-15
Psalm 146
Tobit 4:1-21, esp. 7, 9, 10-11, 21
3:10-14
4:16-30
5: 1-10
5:27-28
6:20-26
6:27-38
7:18-23
7:40-43
8:1-3
9:1-6
9:10-17
9:57-61
11:1-13
12:13-21
### November 9  The Lucan Paul

**Read:**
- Jeremiah 1:4-10, esp. 5c
- Isaiah 49:1-6, esp. 6b
- Acts 8:1-3 Paul as persecutor
  * 9:1-18; 22:3-21; 26:9-18  The conversion of Paul
- 13:1-14:28 the first missionary journey
15:1-35 The Apostolic Council at Jerusalem
15:36-18:21 The second missionary journey
18:22-21:15 The third missionary journey
22:21-29 Roman citizenship
22:30-23:11 Paul before the Council
23:12-22 Plot to kill Paul
23:23-35 Paul goes to Felix
24:1-27 Paul before Felix
25:1-12 Paul appeals to the Emperor through Festus
25:13-26:32 Paul before Bernice, Agrippa and Festus
27:1-28:10 The journey to Rome
28:11-31 Paul in Rome

*A model of Paul's importance and career for Luke: Acts 19

R.L. Brawley, *Centering on God*, pp. 148-158
Marshall, pp. 42-44.

DUE: Two page paper which includes a comparison of Luke's Paul with the Paul of the undisputed letters, including a brief comparison of Luke's version of Paul's conversion with Paul's call as self-described in Galatians 1:10ff. What is the news of which the Lucan Paul is the bearer? To what extent is the Lucan Paul a model for the Lucan community? Of what value is the Lucan Paul to the contemporary church?

**November 16**  The Relationship of Church and Israel in Luke-Acts: Continuity and Conflict

Read:
Isaiah 6:9-10
Luke 1:5-24
1:57-66
1:67-79
1:80
2:21
2:22-40
2:41-52
3:1-20, esp. 7-9
4:16-30
5:17-26
5:27-32
5:33
6:6-11
7:1-10
7:29-30

DUE: Two page paper in which the student (1) traces the broad lines of Luke's portrait of the Jewish people from the beginning of the gospel to the end of Acts, noting key pivotal turning points in the plot; (2) describes the different "Jewish groups" of whom he speaks and whether they manifest different responses to Jesus and the early Christian mission; (3) states Luke's "judgment" on the Jewish people; (4) offers a theological evaluation of Luke's position on the Jewish people.

November 23: Thanksgiving Break (no class)

November 30: Ron out of town (no class)

December 7: Attitudes toward the Relationship between the Church and the Political Government: God as Sovereign

Due: Final Exegetical Paper

Read:
Exodus 20:3
Psalm 50
Isaiah 46:1-13
Daniel 2:1-49
I Macabees 13:31-53, esp. 51
II Macabees 10:1-9, esp. 7
Luke:  
1:32-33  
1:37-55, esp. 52  
1:67-79  
2: 1-7  
3: 1-17, esp. 10-14  
3:18-20  
4: 1-12, esp. 5-8  
5:27-32  
6:12-15  
6:27-38  
7: 1-10  
12:49-53  
13: 1-9  
*19:28-40, esp. 38  
20:20-26  
21: 5-36  
22:24-30  
22:35-38 (Compare 9:1-3)  
23: 1-5, 13-25  
23:27-31  
Acts  
5:33-42  
16:19-40  
17: 1-10  
21:37-40  
24: 1-27  
25: 6-12  
25:13 - 26:32

"Roman Empire," *Harper's Bible Dictionary*, pp. 875-876.  
"Roman Empire," *NIDB*, vol. 4, pp. 828-835  
"Roman Religions," *NIDB*, vol. 4, pp. 836-841.  
*ABD*, vol. 5, pp. 835-839.


DUE: Two page paper in which the student (1) posits a clear statement of Luke's understanding of the relationship between the church and political authorities (especially Rome) in the light of key passages and issues; (2) posits why Luke takes the position described in the paper; (3) compares and contrasts Luke's attitude and that of the book of Revelation (especially as revealed in Revelation 13); (4) states the positive and negative aspects of Luke's view for the life of the Church today.

December 14  
Class does not meet but paper is due

DUE: 3 page paper described on page 2 of the syllabus.
APPENDIX 1

Outline of Exegetical Presentation/Paper

This sequence of steps may help you organize both your search and your writing.

Please remember that you need to include the following in your research and in your bibliography: (a) two commentaries from the list of commentaries on the book in which your passage is found from pp. 1-2 of the syllabus; (b) the Social-Science Commentary by Malina and Rohnbaugh (c) two books from the list of “single volume commentaries” on p. 2; (d) a monograph on the Gospel of Luke or the book of Acts; (e) at least three articles from the Bible dictionaries (please use: ABD, HCBD, IDB, MBD, NIB); (f) at least three articles from scholarly journals (These can usually be located by entering your passage in to the ATLA database in the library and conducting a search or by going to New Testament Abstracts).

You may not use Wikipedia or other on-line resources for this paper or for other projects in this course.


The class presentation is a kind of work in progress, a report on where your thinking is going. You can only have 45 minutes. You can only hit the highlights of your work, but you need to give evidence of having engaged scholarly sources. You need to give the instructor an outline and a bibliography. Don’t be afraid to advance creative ideas, to test hypotheses, or to raise questions.

The exegesis paper is to be a mature work, written in formal style. As described on p. 2 For the paper itself, please include at least 25 footnotes, as noted, written in formal academic style.

The outline below combines concerns of historical criticism and literary/rhetorical/reader responses criticism, refracted through ideological and theological criticism.

In both your class presentation and your final paper, please number the steps in the materials that you give the instructor.

**Phase One: Exegesis of Yourself as Interpreter**

The first phase of exegesis is to become self-aware as an interpreter. You want to name and reflect on your social location and how that location affects your approach to the text.

1. Please tell us what attracted you to this text? What prompted you to want to study it and prepare a sermon on it? (in the paper, a paragraph; in the classroom presentation, just a few seconds)

2. In the paper (but not in the class presentation) present the translation from which you are working. You will want to read story aloud several times, listen to it on tape, and carry a
small written copy with you. You want to have it become a part of the fabric of your conscious and trans-conscious awareness.

3. Identify your social location as an interpreter and how that location may bias your interpretation of the passage. Take account of your gender, race/ethnicity, social class, nationality, political affiliation, theological orientation. For example, as an educated non-Hispanic European middle class male from the U.S. with a process orientation towards theology, I tend to read texts that are sympathetic to maintaining my non-Hispanic European male social and economic privilege and in such a way as to hear echoes of process theology in the texts. (In the presentation: a minute, in the paper a paragraph).

4. Without consulting interpretive helps (Bible commentaries, Bible dictionaries, or other scholarly sources) identify the most important naive questions and issues that this miracle story presents for you. Are there points at which the story troubles you? (in the paper, a paragraph; in the presentation, just a few seconds)

Phase Two: Becoming Aware of the Historical and Literary Contexts of Your Passage

In the second phase of exegesis, you want to identify the broad historical and literary background for your interpretation of the passage. You want to interpret how your text contributes to the developing story and theology of the gospel and how this text would affect the listener/reader.

For the in-class presentation, you can either skip steps 7 and 8 or abbreviate them if you are following the general reconstruction set forth by the instructor. Class members should be familiar with those matters and repeating them in class will be dull and boring.

5. Make sure your text is a meaningful unit of interpretation. Does the passage start and end at natural breaking points? Pay attention to this matter especially if you are preaching from a text assigned by a lectionary.

6. If your passages is in the Gospel of Luke, use Kurt Aland, Synopsis of the Four Gospels, to compare and contrast your passage with the versions in the other gospels (if there are parallels). How are they the same? How is your version different? The point of this exercise is to identify the distinctive qualities of your text in Luke so that you do not unconsciously conflate the various versions of the story. (In the paper: usually a short paragraph; in the presentation a “bullet summary,” again a few seconds)

7. Summarize your reconstruction of the historical to which the Gospel of Luke and the Book of Acts were written. We want to know what you think was happening in the world of Luke when the gospel and the Acts were written? You may follow the reconstruction posed by the instructor. If you assume another reconstruction, please indicate why you think it is persuasive,. You can help from the textbook you used for Introduction to New Testament or in the introductory sections of the commentaries. (this item can be combined with the next one in an extended paragraph or two).

8. What effect do you think the Gospel or Luke and Book of Acts were intended to have on their community? Later you will want to reflect on ways in which your text might contribute to that effect.
9. Determine the form or genre of your passage (e.g., parable, miracle story). A possible help here in explaining the form of your passage: James Bailey and Lyle Vander Broek, Literary Forms in the New Testament. The commentaries will also often help. What would people in antiquity expect this form to communicate?

10. Take account of the immediate literary setting of the passage. What happens before? How does that set the stage for your story? (a short paragraph).

Phase Three: Looking at the Details of the Text Itself

The third phase of exegesis is the heart of the assignment. Here you look closely at the text itself. You may want to organize your discussion generally around the developments in the narrative movement or plot of your text: setting, characters, dialogue, actions, tone or feeling.

11. What is the setting of the story, the place where it takes place? Would this place be significant to the readers of the gospel or the Acts? Be alert for (but do not force) theological symbolism or associations. For example, what would a sea setting evoke in the minds and hearts of first century folk? Does a place have a particular significance for Luke?

12. Look at how the story begins. Do the opening words orient you in a certain direction? What is the situation at the beginning of the text?

13. Follow and explain what happens in the story. Give the text a close reading. I find it helpful to go through the text segment-by-segment (more or less verse by verse) paying close attention to the words and to what happens. Pay attention to actions, the things the characters say, and descriptions. In shorter texts, you can often go phrase by phrase. In longer texts you can go scene by scene. Indicate how people would have responded to these things in the ancient world. Draw on the commentaries, Bible dictionaries, and scholarly studies. This discussion is probably the heart of the paper and the presentation and should probably take 3-4 pages or 15 or 20 minutes.

You will want to take account of the following. I recommend that you organize this part of the paper meaningful segment by meaningful segment (e.g. verse by verse, sentence by sentence, etc.)

a. Who are the main characters in the story? What do they represent in the gospel or the Acts? Note what happens to them as the story unfolds. Do they have any broader associations in your gospel? For instance, Luke sometimes casts Jewish leaders in a negative light. (a short paragraph)

b. Study the main issue in the text, e.g., demon possession, illness, prayer, confrontation with Jewish or Roman authorities. Describe the main lines of this issue and its importance for Luke’s world. Were there religious, social, or cultural associations with this circumstance? How would a person in the first century react to hearing about this situation or issue? For instance, what mythological associations would a sea storm bring to the mind and heart of people in the first century? (a substantial paragraph or two). The Bible dictionaries and commentaries (and sometimes the scholarly articles) will be a lot of help here.
c. Identify and study the key words in the text. Of course, you have already taken some steps in this direction by looking at the place, the characters, and the problem. The Bible dictionaries and the commentaries are essential. You will also want to look up key words in a concordance: look for nuances in the way in which your gospel uses the words. How would people in Luke’s audience have reacted to these key words? You may want to present your results here in connection with the next item.

14. From the perspective of social science criticism, consider the “social scripts” that may operate in your text. (usually a paragraph will do). Bruce Malina and Richard Rohrbaugh, *A Social Science Commentary on the Synoptic Gospels* and *A Social Science Commentary on the Book of Acts* are often good guides).

15. As the story ends, what in the situation has changed? What is the significance of this change from the perspective of people in the world of the first century? In the social world of the first century, for instance, what does it mean for a woman with a hemorrhage to be healed? (a paragraph). This item may be connected close to No. 21 below.

16. Look at the immediate literary context following the text. How does your story contribute to that context? (a short paragraph)

17. This step and the next two very closely connected. Look at the broader literary context in the gospel after your text. Does your passage contribute to the development of that story? Are there words or allusions that connect your story to things that follow? Does your story anticipate things that come later?

18. Bring your text into dialogue with its chiastic parallel (see Appendix 2). What is the relationship between the two passages? How do the two passages illumine one another? In particular, how does the chiastic parallel help you understand your passage? In particular, does it help you see things you might have overlooked? How does your awareness of these two chiastic parallels enrich your larger understanding of Luke-Acts?

**Phase Four: Theological and Hermeneutical Analysis**

The *fourth phase of this process* is to move toward theological analysis and hermeneutics. You are ready now to think about the theological adequacy of the text itself and about possible directions for preaching and teaching.

19. Consider ideological aspects of the text in antiquity. You want to tag whose social power is reinforced by the story, and whose is diminished. A text may intend to shift the balance of power in a community (or in the mind and heart of the listener). The story often attempts to support the social location of the gospel writer’s community while criticizing and even undermining the social location of others. Who benefits from the ideological values in the text? Who gets hurt? For instance, if a woman is a main character, what would that culture have assumed regarding the place and role of women? To take another example, what ideology drives the negative portrayal of Jewish leaders in some of the miracle stories? You need to reflect normally on such ideologies from the perspective of the theological norms in step 23. (at least substantial paragraph in the paper and a minute or so in the presentation)
20. Think again about the intended effect of the gospel of Luke and the book of Acts on its recipients. How does your story fit into that purpose? What is this story supposed to bring about in the community and in the listener or reader? What word of promise is in your story? Does that word come at the expense of others (e.g., certain Jewish leaders)? What do the various elements of the story ask the first century community to believe and do? What does this text promise the listening community? This is a key summary paragraph.

21. Note what has happened to your preunderstanding of the text in the process of doing the exegesis. Compare what you think about the text now with what you thought in connection with step 4 above.

22. Reflect theologically on what the story asks you to believe and do. AIM.

   a. Is what the text asks you to believe and do appropriate to the gospel?
   b. Is what the text asks you to believe and do intelligible?
      (i) Can we understand them?
      (ii) Are they logically consistent with other things that we believe?
      (iii) Are they at home in the way that we understand the world? That is, are they seriously
   c. Is what the text asks you to believe and do morally plausible, that is, does the text call
      for the moral treatment of all affected by it.

23. Given the preceding theological analysis, name your theological and hermeneutical relationship with the text. You will likely have one of the following relationships with the text. Each relationship suggests different things you need to do in preaching or teaching.

   a. Agree with what the text asks you to believe and do.
   b. Agree with part of what the text asks you to believe and do, but not all.
   c. Basically disagree with what the text asks you to believe and do.

24. If your relationship with the text is (a) or (b) from the preceding question, can you identify an analogy in our world today? Can you identify a situation (or people) similar to the ones in the text itself or in the community or world to whom Luke wrote?

25. Write a paragraph stating how you might use your text for preaching or teaching today.
APPENDIX 2

THE CHIASTIC STRUCTURE OF LUKE-ACTS

Chiasm was a commonplace literary structure in antiquity in which an author arranged the elements of a text in inverted parallelism. The name chiasm derives from the Greek letter chi (which is made like the English letter “x”) because chiastic structure follows the pattern of the letter x: In antiquity, a chiasm could be as short as two lines or as long as an entire document. Within a chiasm, the parallel elements could be as short as lines or as long as paragraph.

For convenience, scholars label the corresponding elements of the chiasmus by the letters A and A’ (pronounced “A” and “A-prime”), B and B’, C and C’, etc. and arrange them as follows:

```
   A
   B
      C
   B’
   A’
```

Scholars print the text in this visual pattern on the page so that readers today can easily identify the chiastic element. Ancient texts were not laid out this way. They were written or spoken from start to finish. Chiasmus was such an ingrained phenomenon in antiquity that listeners or readers could identify the presence of a chiasmus without special visual or auditory prompting.

The central element of the chiasmus (C and C’ above) reveals the most important concern of the chiasm. The elements that precede the central element lead to the central concern. The elements that follow the central element draw out the implications of that concern.

I believe the Gospel of Luke and the Book of Acts is a giant chiasmus in which the Gospel provides the elements A through GGGG and Acts provides elements GGGG’ through A’. The elements of Luke-Acts are in a relationship of synthetic parallelism the elements in the Gospel tell the story of the manifestation of the Realm through the ministry of Jesus while the comparable elements in Acts show how these themes play out in the life of the church.

The main theme of Luke-Acts is that God has begun the final and full manifestation of that Realm through the ministry of Jesus. The Realm will come finally and fully only when Jesus returns. Before that event, God must complete the promises God made to Sarai and Abram to bless gentiles. According to Luke, God’s way of doing so is to welcome them into the Realm. Acts tells the story of god using the church as means of reaching out to gentiles and incorporating them into the movement towards the Realm.

However, the community to whom Luke wrote was beset by conflicts both within the church and between the church and outside groups. Luke wrote the Gospel and Acts to empower the community to witness by assuring it that God through Christ was in control of the movement of history.

The chiastic structure of Luke-Acts embodies this purpose in literary expression. The central element of the chiasmus is the ascension of Jesus (see GGGG and GGGG’ below). The
Gospel shows that God was controlled the birth of Jesus in Judaism, and guided the ministry of Jesus in announcing the Realm through the conflicts that led to his crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension. The ascension confirms that God was working through the ministry of Jesus to manifest the Realm and to create a community to witness for we see Jesus at the right hand of God. Acts draws out the implications of the fact that God is at work through the Jesus movement to extend the community of the Realm into the gentile world. Just as God guided the ministry of Jesus and brought him safely to resurrection and ascension, so God guides the church as it witnesses to the Realm in its seasons of conflict.


Ordinarily the elements of a chiasmus would be presented on the page as they are above. Because of the limitations of the size of the pages in this book, I set out the elements of the chiasmus in two parallel columns.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B. Luke 1:26-38. When an angel confirms to Mary that the child to whom she will give birth is God’s representative to bring the Realm in the end-time, she immediately agrees, and becomes the model of obedience.</td>
<td>B’. Acts 28:17-21. When Paul confirms to Jewish leaders in Rome that Jesus is God’s representative in bringing about the final manifestation of the Realm, disagreement results (</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Luke 1:39-56. Mary visits Elizabeth and praises God for the final manifestation of the Realm taking place through the birth and ministry of Jesus.</td>
<td>C’. Acts 28:11-16. Paul visits with Jewish leaders in Rome and explains that the manifestation of Realm through Jesus is the hope towards which Israel has been living..</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Luke 1:57-80. After the birth of John, Zechariah prophesies that God through Jesus will give light to those who sit in darkness, i.e. will manifest the Realm to gentiles.</td>
<td>D’. Acts 28:1-10. On Malta, two remarkable incidents show that God is working through Paul to manifest the Realm to gentiles.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. Luke 2:1-7. The birth of Jesus takes place under difficult circumstances, a sign that the promise of the Realm can be trusted, even in difficult circumstances.</td>
<td>E’. Acts 27:39-44. Paul is saved in the difficult circumstances of shipwreck, a sign that the promise of the Realm can be trusted, even in difficult circumstances.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R. Luke 5:27-39. Putting fresh wine (the witness to the Realm) into old wineskins destroys the skin; fresh wine requires fresh wineskins.</td>
<td>R’. Acts 23:16-22. The fresh wine of the witness to the Realm has burst the old wineskins (the Jewish plot to murder Paul) while the fresh wineskin (the Tribune) preserves the fresh wine.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. Luke 6:37-49. In the Realm, people are not to judge. A good tree bears good fruit but a bad tree bears bad fruit</td>
<td>V’. Acts 21:37-22: 21. The Jewish crowd judges Paul. Paul’s testimony shows that the Realm is the good fruit but those who have arrested him are the bad.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X. Luke 7:18-35: John and Jesus played the flute and wailed (i.e. announced the Realm) but many people did not dance or mourn (i.e. turned away from the Realm)</td>
<td>X’. Acts 21:17-26. Some people turn away from the Realm by claiming that Paul teaches Jewish people living among gentiles to forsake Moses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AA. Acts 8:4-21. The parable of the sower depicts the Realm as a seed growing quietly that will one day bring things to light and constitute a family or community.</td>
<td>AA’. Acts 20:17-38. Paul described his ministry Ephesus in ways that are reminiscent of a growing seed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bb. Luke 8:22-54. The Realm is manifest through four miracle stories climaxing with a raising from the dead.</td>
<td>BB’. Acts 20:7-17. God through Paul manifests the realm by raising the dead.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DD. Luke 9:18-36. Confession of faith followed by teaching that disciples will make up their crosses daily, and the transfiguration—a momentary realization that the Realm in the present.</td>
<td>DD’ Acts 19:21-41 Confession of faith leads to suffering during the riot in Ephesus climaxing in a reprieve—a realm-like moment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. Luke 10:38-42. Jesus treats Mary as a full fledged disciple by teaching her in the manner of a rabbi, thus pointing to the restoration of women</td>
<td>II’. Acts 18:1-4. Aquila and Priscilla become a teaching couple whose cooperation points to the restoration of male and female relationships.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KK. Luke 11:14-32. Many people think that Satan is the power behind Jesus.</td>
<td>KK’. Acts 17:16-21. In contrast to Jewish people, philosophers seek to understand the power behind Paul and the Realm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PP. Luke 13:10-21. The Realm is like a seed growing secretly or yeast leavening a loaf; the healing of the woman possessed by Satan is such a sign indicating that the Realm includes the restoration of women.</td>
<td>PP’. Acts 16:11-15. Lydia believes and becomes a part of the community of the Realm, a sign that the Realm includes the restoration of women.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TT. Luke 14:7-14. The Realm seeks those who ordinarily would not be invited to a banquet—those who cannot walk, who cannot see, etc.</td>
<td>TT’. Acts 15:6-21. The Realm seeks gentiles, who are in a position vis-à-vis the church similar to those who are poor, who cannot walk, etc., in the parable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UU. Luke 14:15-24. The parable of the great dinner urges the disciples to invite to those who are poor, who cannot see or walk, etc.</td>
<td>UU’. Acts 15:1-5. The church must consider the terms under which to invite gentiles.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VV. Luke 14:25-34 Jesus teaches that the disciples must be prepared to pay the cost</td>
<td>VV’. Acts 14:1-28 Paul and Barnabas repeatedly pay the cost of discipleship.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZZ. Luke 17:1-10. When Jesus cautions the disciples to be careful not stumble or cause others to do so, the apostles ask Jesus to increase their faith.</td>
<td>ZZ’. Acts 12:12-19. Peter’s release from prison increases the faith of the community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AAA. Luke 17:11-19. While Jesus heals ten lepers, nine Jewish and one Samaritan, the Jewish lepers go on their way while the Samaritan thanks Jesus.</td>
<td>AAA. Acts 12:6-11. While Jewish people were pleased when Herod imprisoned Peter, an angel releases Peter.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GGG. Luke 18:18-30. A rich ruler wants to know how to inherit eternal life, but he goes away sad because he cannot act on Jesus’s message.</td>
<td>GGG’. Acts 10:44-48. The Holy Spirit falls on gentiles; these gentiles are more discerning than the Jewish rich ruler.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KKK. Luke 19:11-27. The parable of the pounds urges readers to multiply their witness to the Realm.</td>
<td>KKK’. Acts 9:19b-31. Some responses to the call and initial ministry of Paul are of the five and ten pound variety, but some are one-pound responses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>authority of Jesus.</strong></td>
<td><strong>magic.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>wicked tenants portrays some Jewish</strong></td>
<td><strong>confirms that some Jewish people are</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>leaders as wicked.</strong></td>
<td><strong>wicked tenants.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>as an idolatrous leader who creates his own</strong></td>
<td><strong>deacons as leaders who, in contrast to</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>abusive domain.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Caesar serve the Realm of God.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Jesus and the Sadducees in which Jesus</strong></td>
<td><strong>the apostles and the Sadducees (and some</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>shows his superiority.</strong></td>
<td><strong>other Jewish leaders) in which the apostles</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>scribes for being self-impressed and</strong></td>
<td><strong>wisely, advising the council not to harass</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>devouring widows’ houses.</strong></td>
<td><strong>the church.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>contributes to the temple treasury, confident</strong></td>
<td><strong>holds all things in common, thus providing</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>that the treasury will provide for her needs.</strong></td>
<td><strong>for the poor. But when Ananias and</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>distress that will accompany the end of the</strong></td>
<td><strong>experience distress a result of testifying to</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>old age, including the destruction of the</strong></td>
<td><strong>the coming of the Realm, but the scene ends</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>temple, but the discourse ends with a vision</strong></td>
<td><strong>with the disciples confident that God’s</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>of Jesus’s return, thus fulfilling God’s</strong></td>
<td><strong>promise will be fulfilled.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>betray Jesus.</strong></td>
<td><strong>boldly before the council.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Jesus acknowledges that he will suffer as</strong></td>
<td><strong>asserts that many in the audience had</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>part of the coming of the Realm.</strong></td>
<td><strong>conspired to cause Jesus’s suffering. But</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Denial</strong></td>
<td><strong>of healing at the Beautiful Gate</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>been living from day to day on the</strong></td>
<td><strong>early Jerusalem community become a</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>hospitality of the people to whom they</strong></td>
<td><strong>means of mutual support, thereby</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>went, but now must provide for themselves</strong></td>
<td><strong>embodying the life of the Realm</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>disciples to pray they will not come into the</strong></td>
<td><strong>respond to the invitation to repent and join</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>time of trial (the great tribulation).</strong></td>
<td><strong>the church in its movement towards the</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>people conspire with gentiles to put Jesus to</strong></td>
<td><strong>while misguided people crucified Jesus,</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>death thus illustrating the brokenness of</strong></td>
<td><strong>God now invites all to repent and to become</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>community in the old age.</strong></td>
<td><strong>a part of the community moving toward the</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>new age.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EEEE. Luke 24:13-35. The risen Jesus appears to disciples on the road to Emmaus</td>
<td>EEEE. Acts 1:15-26. While Judas becomes a definitive sign of the old world by taking his own life, the presence of Jesus reconstitutes the community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GGGG. Luke 24:44-53. The ascension culminates the Gospel of Luke by revealing that Jesus is God’s representative in bringing the final manifestation of the Realm. The story of Jesus that has reached this point is completely trustworthy.</td>
<td>GGGG’. Acts 1:1-11. The life and witness of the church in Acts takes place under the ascension which reveals that Jesus is God’s agent ruling over all. The church, then, can act with complete confidence in God’s purposes.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>