

University of Dubuque Theological Seminary
BI657: New Testament Exegesis (residential)
The Gospel of Luke and Galatians

Instructor:

Dr. Jordan Ryan
[contact info TBD]

Course Description

This course aims to foster skills in the interpretation of the New Testament, focusing on the Gospel of Luke and Paul's Epistle to the Galatians. We will make use of historical, literary, and archaeological methods in order to explore and understand these texts in their first-century context. We will also explore and discuss scholarly issues pertinent to the interpretation of the text. Particular attention will be paid to the historical context of Luke and Galatians in early Jewish and Greco-Roman thought and society.

Course Objectives

Throughout the course, students will:

- Identify the message and key theological themes of the Gospel of Luke and Galatians;
- Interpret the Gospel of Luke and Galatians in light of their historical and cultural contexts;
- Hone and develop Greek translation skills;
- Learn and apply exegetical methods;
- Evaluate scholarly interpretations of Luke and Galatians and justify their own interpretations on the basis of evidence;
- Apply the theological teachings of the Gospel of Luke and Galatians to their own Christian ministry, faith and practice in preaching and teaching.

Curricular Goals

This course is designed to fulfill the following goals:

- Interpret the Christian Scriptures through faithful exegesis and in light of the Christian tradition.
- Be formed by, live in, and minister out of scripture and the historical and theological tradition of the church.
- Engage contemporary theological and ethical issues with insight and humility.

Required Texts

1. A physical copy of the Greek New Testament. The UBS Greek New Testament, 4th ed. is preferred.
2. An English-language study Bible, preferably NRSV.

3. Croy, N. Clayton. *Prima Scriptura: An Introduction to New Testament Interpretation*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic Press, 2011.
4. Moo, Douglas J. *Galatians*. Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic Press, 2013.
5. Westerholm, Stephen. *Justification Reconsidered: Rethinking a Pauline Theme*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2013.
6. Wright, N.T. *Paul: In Fresh Perspective*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2009.
7. Edwards, James R. *The Gospel According to Luke*. Pillar New Testament Commentary. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2015.
8. Topical articles, essays, and chapters on the Gospel of Luke and its historical/archaeological background will be provided through Moodle.

Course Requirements

1. Weekly translation assignments. Each week (excluding the first), students will be assigned a selection of text from the Greek text of Luke or Galatians to translate. Students will be expected to translate the text and to include at least one note or observation about each verse. Alternative assignments are available for students who have not studied Greek. These weekly assignments will be submitted via Moodle.
2. Weekly questions. Each week, students will be expected to prepare three questions about the assigned biblical text for that week. These questions can be historical, literary, linguistic, theological, practical, or personal. Questions should be brought to class as well as posted to Moodle. *These questions may lead to topics for exegetical papers*. Residential students should also come to class with one question about the secondary readings for the week. These questions will form the basis for some of our in class discussion.
3. Reflection on Westerholm's *Justification Reconsidered* and Wright's *Paul: In Fresh Perspective*. Students will write a 1,000-1,300 word reflection on Westerholm's *Justification Reconsidered* and Wright's *Paul: In Fresh Perspective*. What do you consider to be the most valuable lessons that each book has taught you? What aspects of the argument did you consider to be the strongest or most persuasive? What did you disagree with, and why?
4. Research report on the historical background of Luke. Choose one of the passages assigned for translation and select one aspect of the historical, archaeological, linguistic, or cultural background of that passage that you would like to learn more about. Research that topic and write a 1,000-1,300 word report on it. Discuss what you consider to be the most interesting features of the topic

that you researched as well as its relevance for your passage. How did your research help you better understand the passage? You will need to consult a minimum of four scholarly sources for this report.

5. Short exegetical paper on Galatians. A 1,500-1,800 word paper on a chosen passage from Galatians. Details, expectations and parameters will be discussed further in class. Croy's *Prima Scriptura* should be consulted as a guide for this assignment. You will be expected to consult a variety of scholarly sources for this paper.
6. Exegetical paper on Luke. Write a final paper of 3,500 – 4,000 words on a passage chosen from the Gospel of Luke. You will be expected to consult a variety of scholarly sources and to discuss the interpretive issues and debates that you encounter in your research. Croy's *Prima Scriptura* should be consulted as a guide for this assignment. You will also be expected to address and discuss elements of the historical, cultural, archaeological, and linguistic background as they are relevant to your topic. Details, parameters, and expectations will be discussed in class.