MOROGORO BIBLE COLLEGE

# Overview of Luke: Doing theology Lukewise

## What do we mean by theology?

### ‘Theology is taught by God, teaches of God, and leads to God.’ (attributed to Thomas Aquinas)

### Theology is speaking about God order to evoke a response of faith and love and obedience; cf. Mark 12:30

## Luke does theology through stories

### Luke as a storyteller

#### 1:1-4: notice that he presents his work in an *orderly* way v 4

#### Luke is writing in order to *persuade* v 4—this is not ‘neutral history’—and that will affect the way you preach on this material

### structure of Luke

#### chapters 1–2 introduce Jesus onto the scene through the infancy narratives

#### 3:1–9:50 focused in Galilee

#### 9:51–19:44 the long journey to Jerusalem—markers of travel9:51, 53, 56, 57; 10:1; 13:22, 31, 33; 14:25; 17:11; 18:31, 35-36; 19:1, 11, 28

#### 19:45–24:53 focused in Jerusalem itself, Jesus’ last week, death and resurrection

### Luke’s portrayal of time/proportions of his book

#### 2:40 (12 years)

#### 2:52 (18 years?)

#### 19:28–24:53 (a week?)

#### 22:1–23:56 (48 hours?)

### how Luke prepares for the cross

#### Luke prepares for the passion narrative by the fact that Jesus’ death is predicted *by Jesus* 9:31, 51; 12:50; 13:32-33; 17:25

#### Luke interprets the passion narrative using Scripture18:31-33; 20:17 (Psalm 118:22); 22:37 (Isaiah 53:12); 24:26-27, 44, 46

## Luke does theology through characters

### narrative critics distinguish three kinds of characters

#### *flat*: small number of predictable traits

#### *round*: have a variety of (potentially conflicting) traits

#### *stock* (‘agents’): usually only one trait is highlighted, e.g. widow in 21:1-4

### key question: what reaction is the author seeking from his readers to a character?

#### *empathy*: identify strongly with character, e.g. disciples in Luke 6:12-16; 8:25; 9:40; 10:23; 11:1; 22:40, 45-46 (cf. Acts 12:5); 24:27, 32, 45, 44-53

#### *sympathy*: identification, but less intense, e.g. woman in 7:36-50

#### *antipathy*: alienation from or disdain for character,e.g. Judas 6:16; 22:3, 47-48 (cf. Acts 1:16-20); Satan 4:1-13; 8:12; 13:16; 22:3, 31

## Luke does theology through patterns

### story-like techniques of foreshadowing, echoing, artistic patterning

### wealth and poverty as a case study of Luke’s patterning

#### poverty not just about economic status—think of it as having low ‘social capital’

##### social capital is shown by family, sex, disability, performance

#### Joel Green: ‘In “evangelizing the poor,”...Jesus in the Third Gospel is concerned fundamentally with those defined as “them,” as outsiders—a social status that may or may not have economic roots.’ (Joel B. Green, ‘Good News to Whom? Jesus and the “Poor” in the Gospel of Luke’, 60).

##### people called ‘poor’ are those forced to look to God because of their dire social situation, e.g. Psalms 34:6 40:17; 70:5

##### strong tradition in Scripture of powerful and wealthy people having a particular responsibility to people in poverty, e.g. Micah 6:1; Leviticus 23:22; Deuteronomy 15:11

### *birth narratives chs 1–2*

#### Mary’s *Magnificat*: proud and mighty vs humble 1:51-53

#### Jesus born into a poor family: the doves 2:22-24; Leviticus 12:6-8

#### Anna 2:36-38 (Deuteronomy 14:28-29; 27:19)

### *the establishing of Jesus’ ministry in Galilee 3:1–9:50*

#### a programmatic statement in Nazareth 4:16-30 (Isaiah 61:1-2), echoed 7:18-23

#### Jesus criticised for spending time with ‘tax collectors and others’ 5:29-30 with 31-32

#### sermon on the plain: blessing and woe 6:20-22 (cf. 6:17; 19:37), 24-26; note vv 27-36

#### children 9:46-48

### *the journey to Jerusalem 9:51–19:44*

#### no fixed abode and dependent on others 9:57-58; 10:5-8

#### be a neighbour to those in need 10:25-37

#### disciples need to pray for their bread to be provided 11:3

#### the rich fool 12:13-14, 15-21, leading to 12:22-31, 32-34

#### similar sequence in ch. 14: v 7 leading to vv 8-11 followed by vv 12-14, 16-24

#### rich man and Lazarus 16:19-31; cf. 16:9

#### Jesus and Zacchaeus 19:1-10 followed by vv 11-27, 28-35

### *the last week 19:45–24:53*

#### the question about paying taxes 20:20-26

#### the widow who gives ‘all she has’ 21:1-4 with 20:45-47 (cf. 18:1-3)

#### Judas 22:3-6

#### a place for Jesus to eat the passover with his disciples 22:7-13 leading to vv 24-30

#### Jesus associated in his death with two criminals 23:39-41