



Article

Mission and the book of Acts in a pluralist society

Missiology: An International Review
2019, Vol. 47(2) 104–120
© The Author(s) 2019
Article reuse guidelines:
sagepub.com/journals-permissions
DOI: 10.1177/0091829619830423
journals.sagepub.com/home/mis



Colin H. Yuckman

Duke Divinity School, Durham NC, USA

Abstract

A critical aspect of understanding the “missiology” of Acts is discerning the proper relationship between christology and mission practice. By analyzing the narrative construal of mission in Acts, I will show that Luke defines christology and missiology in relation to one another (Luke 24:47–49). Universal mission is not merely a secondary consequence of who Jesus is, but a basis for recognizing the full reality of Jesus’ lordship. According to Acts, the knowledge that comes with mission practice is as critical to understanding who Jesus is as understanding Jesus’ identity is a prerequisite for universal mission. This study will offer a (re)construction of mission theology for an intercultural context: first, by contesting the mission-as-mandate model that has dominated the imagination of mission practitioners; and, second, by showing how proper mission in Luke’s narrative world entails the practice of mission in which one “discovers” who Jesus is through participation in universal witness (especially to the ethnically “other”—e.g. Acts 10) rather than through imparting full knowledge to convert the other. Indeed, mission may bear an epistemological weight which, Acts suggests, radically challenges Christendom legacies of mission and offers a new foundation for mission as intercultural interdependence.

Keywords

book of Acts, missiology, christology, Acts 10–11, interculturality

Introduction

There are many possible ways to learn mission¹ from Acts.² Some have used Luke–Acts as a grab-bag of timeless commissioning statements or as a “casebook” of mission principles.³ Others have looked back to Acts as the golden age of missionary

Corresponding author:

Colin H. Yuckman, Duke Divinity School, Duke Box #90968, Durham, NC 27708-0968 USA.

Email: colinyuckman@gmail.com

triumph in an attempt to recreate it.⁴ Rather than offer one more eclectic approach which presumes the answers it goes in search of, I will start with Acts and allow the exegetical study to shape the questions—to say nothing of “answers”—with which we might interrogate our own mission practices. Specifically, I will take up an under-examined aspect of Acts—namely, the way in which the messianic identity of Jesus and universal witness are related. Specifically, I will argue that Luke’s narrative construal of the relationship between witness and what we might call—to use shorthand—“christology” is central to how Acts interprets the challenges of intercultural encounter. Taking the Cornelius incident as broadly representative (10–11:18; 15:7–11), I will show how Luke narrates the unfolding of universal witness (to Jews and Gentiles everywhere) as an unfolding of the identity of Jesus and sign of his universal lordship (10:36). From a witness’s perspective especially (in this case, Peter’s), recognition of Gentile inclusion is simultaneously an acceptance of Jesus’ universal lordship. Rather than focus on what Luke thinks about the challenge of the gospel to the “other” in some abstract way—which is really no way at all—I will pay attention to the portrayal of the challenge of Jesus’ universal lordship *for the apostles and witnesses themselves*. If Acts envisions the practice of universal witness as primarily the fulfillment of messianic identity, what are we to make of human participation in the unfolding of Jesus’ lordship, and how does it relate to the common presumption that mission is a mandate from Jesus (e.g., Matt 28:18–20)? With Luke’s help, perhaps, we can reimagine the place of intercultural encounter in a theology of mission, offering a Lukan sketch of what we might tentatively call a “christology of intercultural interdependence.”

Christology and universal witness

We begin with Luke 24:46–48, a pivotal text for Luke–Acts: “Thus it is written, that the Messiah is to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things.” Not only do Jesus’ death and resurrection fulfill the biblical script,⁵ so to speak, but so does universal witness—through proclamation of repentance and forgiveness of sin in his name to *all nations*. In a manner yet to be clarified, Luke claims the events of Jesus’ passion and resurrection now past and universal witness still to come represent the culmination of Israel’s testimony about the Christ.⁶

The conjunction of apostolic mission with Jesus’ death and resurrection may initially strike us as a novelty within Luke–Acts. After all, nowhere in the Third Gospel does Jesus himself take up sustained outreach to Gentiles,⁷ nor does he charge his followers with such a task until after he is risen from the dead (Luke 24:46–48; Acts 1:8). Therefore, universal witness seems, at least at first, to be an addendum to the established christological claim (of his death and resurrection), especially since the apostolic commission (chrono)logically comes *after* Jesus’ resurrection. Surely, we might suppose, the “Lukan commission” is intended as a kind of response to the recognition of Jesus as messiah, an answer to the summons to proclaim him abroad. Indeed, Luke’s two-volume work can be divided by these events—the Third Gospel offers the story of

who Jesus is, culminating in his passion and resurrection; Acts takes up the subject of universal proclamation by apostles and witnesses *after* Jesus' earthly departure (1:11). In short, Luke is about the identity of Jesus, Acts about the story of his followers.⁸ At least, according to the standard account, that is, Luke's two volumes move from Jesus to his witnesses or, in traditional terms, from "christology" to "missiology."⁹

One notable representative of this account is Chris Wright (2010), who understands the yoked claims of Jesus passion/resurrection (Luke 24:46), on the one hand, and universal witness through the preaching of repentance/forgiveness in his name (24:47), on the other, as distinct categories of biblical fulfillment, using the conceptual shorthand of "christology" and "missiology." Because of his overriding commitment to read the OT missiologically, but also to safeguard the OT from unchecked christological interpretations, Wright distinguishes sharply between the christological and the missiological. But such a distinction—let alone separation—between christology and missiology in Luke–Acts is by no means obvious, even if such distinctions are rhetorically a given today. As we will see, the evidence for such a distinction in Acts is surprisingly scant, especially if we temporarily bracket Matt 28:18–20.

Building on the thesis of Jacques Dupont,¹⁰ I submit that rather than a twofold scheme, Luke employs a threefold pattern of biblical fulfillment, first evident in Luke 24:46–48. Jesus is the Christ (1) by his death, (2) by his resurrection, and (3) *by his universal Lordship signified in the proclamation of repentance and forgiveness in his name to all nations*. On this view, witness belongs *within* the christological unfolding of Jesus' identity, not *alongside* it as a secondary claim. Even if these events are fulfilled in different tenses—passion and resurrection (past)¹¹ and witness in his name (future)—both are promised in Scripture¹² and therefore, for Luke, attest a common messianic framework.

Dupont (1974) makes the case for this reading in several ways.¹³ I will highlight and develop three aspects of his argument that illuminate Acts' narrative construal of the relationship between christology and witness. After a subsequent analysis of the Cornelius incident I will take up some possible implications of the discussion for informing mission today.

Building on Dupont, attention can first be drawn to the well-known conclusion that Luke has "updated" the apocalyptic tone of Mark by pushing Jesus' return from the imminent future to the distant horizon.¹⁴ Through a redactional study of Luke's use of Mark 13:10 we can see how Luke has translated the apocalyptic associations of Mark's understanding of universal witness into a motif of promise and fulfillment.¹⁵ In Mark, Jesus says, "first it is necessary (δεῖ) for the gospel (τὸ εὐαγγέλιον) to be preached (κηρυχθῆναι) to all nations (εἰς πάντα τὰ ἔθνη)" (13:10; cf. 16:15). Following Ferdinand Hahn (1965: 59–63), we note that Luke omits this verse from his version of the same discourse (Mark 13:5–32 // Luke 21:8–33), even though Luke records the verses around Mark 13:10 in two different places (12:11–12; 21:12).

In characteristic fashion, Luke has moved the statement from its apocalyptic setting in Mark into a setting where it functions prophetically—in this case, to Luke 24:47. Evidence of this can be found in the fact that only in Mark 13:10 and Luke 24:47 does the passive infinitive κηρυχθῆναι appear in each respective Gospel. Perhaps more

remarkably, the same holds true for the phrase εἰς πάντα τὰ ἔθνη (cf. Rom 16:26). Even the original tone of divine necessity (δεῖ) in Mark 13:10 fits Luke's outlook in Luke 24, where the especially Lukan word is used repeatedly with regard to the fulfillment of Scripture (cf. Luke 24:7, 26, 44). Luke has translated Mark's forward-facing claim into a backward-facing claim, even if proclamation to all nations is still to come.¹⁶ Thus, whereas for Mark universal witness is a sign of the end, for Luke it is a guarantee that Jesus is the Christ, to whom the Scriptures bear witness.

Second, Luke describes Paul's ministry (13:47; 26:20–23) in a way that refers back to and fulfills the "messianic oracle" (*oracle messianique*) of Luke 24:47–48/Acts 1:8 (Dupont, 1974: 138). The significance of this connection grows when we realize that Jesus' promise to his apostles that they will "be witnesses in Jerusalem ... to the very ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8) goes largely unfulfilled, *except* by Paul. Luke connects Paul's ministry back to Jesus' commission in a speech at Pisidian Antioch, when he quotes ("the Lord," quoting) Isa 49:6 (Acts 13:47; cf. Isa 42:6) with respect to himself and Barnabas, "I have set you to be a light for the Gentiles, so that you may bring salvation to the ends of the earth" (13:47). Isaiah's words, especially the phrase "to the end(s) of the earth," remind us that Paul is the only character to engage fully in a vocation of universal witness (Acts 9:15–16; 22:15; 23:11; 26:16–23). Even his retrospective account in Acts 26:20 echoes the geographical ordering of Acts 1:8: "[I] declared first to those in Damascus, then in Jerusalem and throughout the countryside of Judea, and also to the Gentiles, that they should repent." As some have pointed out, underlying Paul's self-understanding in Acts (9:15–16; 13:46–47; 22:14–15, 21; 26:16–18, 22–23) is an Isaianic conception of servanthood and witness that echoes Luke's construal of Jesus himself.¹⁷ By putting Isaiah's words into (Jesus' and) Paul's mouth in Acts 13:47, Luke exemplifies a pattern of overlap between the vocation of Jesus' servants and that of Jesus himself (Beers, 2015). In the unfolding of universal witness, the universal lordship of the Christ will be plain to see.¹⁸

Third, toward the end of his ministry, in a speech before King Agrippa, Paul unmistakably echoes Luke 24:46–47, saying that "the Messiah must suffer, and that, by being the first to rise from the dead, he would proclaim light both to our people and to the Gentiles" (26:23). Again employing δεῖ, Luke has Paul repeat and elaborate the threefold scheme issued by Jesus at the end of Luke's Gospel, including the same motif of scriptural fulfillment. These three events—Jesus' passion, resurrection, and the proclamation of light to all people—are, according to Paul, "nothing but what the prophets and Moses said would take place" (Acts 26:22)—i.e. "just as it is written" (Luke 24:46). Luke also has Paul clarify that when Luke 24:47 says "to all nations," it means "both to our people and to the Gentiles." In this light, "to the end(s) of the earth" (Acts 1:8) is retrospectively illumined as a geographically *as well as an ethnically* universal statement. The match with Luke 24:47–48 establishes the threefold scheme of Jesus' messianic fulfillment as bookends to the narrative of Acts, making the so-called Lukan commissions (Luke 24:47–48; Acts 1:8) *christological* as well as ethnic and geographical (Köstenberger and O'Brien, 2001: 130).

Cumulatively, Paul's dual claim that he fulfilled universal testimony (26:19–20) and also that "the Messiah ... would proclaim light both to our people and to the

Gentiles” (26:23) captures what is true for all witnesses: to speak of one’s own testimony is really to speak simultaneously of Jesus’ self-declaration (26:23; cf. 14:3). Without universal witness, the third pillar of Jesus’ identity—his universal lordship—remains unestablished, helping to explain why Acts on the whole is suffused with a strong sense of divine superintendence (or “pneumatology”). The fulfillment of universal witness, in this sense, is a key aspect of Jesus’ messianic identity, since it is ultimately carried out by God at work in Christ and by the power of the Spirit through his followers.

The logic of the article to this point may give the impression that Jesus is *not* the true Lord if his followers do not engage in universal witness in his name. Luke would hardly have understood this way of putting it. Rather, to the question of Jesus’ identity, Luke would point to the Scriptures and the way prophetic expectations find fulfillment in the story of Jesus’ death and resurrection (Luke 24:25–27, 32, 44–46) and in the story of his universal lordship signified by universal witness (Luke 24:47–9; Acts 1:7–8). In other words, Luke would tell the story of his Gospel and Acts. We can summarize Luke’s construal of the relationship between Jesus’ identity and the universal proclamation in his name as “christology-in-witness.” Luke, however, prefers showing to telling, and the Cornelius episode (Acts 10:1–48; 11:1–18; cf. 15:7–11) and its aftermath (11:19–21) vividly demonstrate how Luke narratively portrays “christology-in-witness” in its intercultural dimensions.

Acts 10: a nexus of christology and universal witness

The Peter and Cornelius story (Acts 10:1–48) is the key episode in Acts’ construal of universal witness, in part because it marks the crowning recognition of Jesus’ universal lordship (10:36), in part because Luke gives this event unparalleled emphasis.¹⁹ In the story, the Jewish Peter and the Gentile²⁰ Cornelius receive parallel revelations from God (10:3–6, 30–32; 10:11–16), eventuating in their meeting (10:23–25). In the course of Peter’s message to Cornelius’ household (10:34–43), the Gentiles are baptized by the Spirit and begin praising God and speaking in tongues (10:44–46), the propriety of which Peter formally acknowledges by ordering their water baptism (10:47–48). Peter then goes on to defend the significance of this event to the Jerusalem Jewish believers and apostles in 11:1–18 and later the whole Jerusalem council (15:7–11). For the sake of space, I offer three observations on the significance of the story for Acts’ construal of christology-in-witness in an intercultural key.

First, it should be pointed out that the story focuses our attention on Peter’s perceptions of events, rather than on Cornelius’. When the story is told again in chapters 11 and 15, Cornelius’ name is first excised and then the man himself erased altogether (Witherup, 1993: 55–56). What occupied Luke above all was the meaning of the unfolding of events *for Peter* and for the wider church.²¹ Therefore, Luke’s exacting detail centers our attention on two things at once: at the broad salvation-historical level, the admission of Gentiles into God’s people as equal to Jews (“[They] were astounded that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the Gentiles for they heard them speaking in tongues and extolling God”; 10:45–46); at the granular

level, Peter's experience of witness in a boundary-crossing encounter ("it is unlawful for a Jew to associate with or to visit a foreigner [ἄλλόφυλος] ... but God has shown me that I should not call anyone profane or unclean"; 10:28). What concerns us primarily is the second level, Peter's response to the divine revelation from God and through the Gentile Cornelius, which brings us to the heart of Luke's construal of witness, christology, and interculturality.

Before arriving at Peter's new insight, however, we must draw attention to a second aspect of Luke's characterization—Peter's sluggish theological pace. The characterization of the apostle is primed by the fact that the divine revelation to Cornelius occurs first (10:1–6, 30–32) and Cornelius' response is, by contrast with Peter's, immediate. In his own divine vision, three times Peter declares scruples before the specter of clean and unclean foods (10:14–16). Even as Peter makes the turn toward acceptance, he implicitly calls Cornelius' household ἀλλόφυλου—foreigners (literally, "[an]other tribe/race"). After time and distance, he will revise this judgment, dissolving the linguistic dichotomy of "us" and "them"²² which underwrites his ethnocentric definition of clean and unclean. With the Jerusalem council in Acts 15, for the first time in the Gospels or Acts (or contemporary Jewish literature), non-Jewish believers are called "brothers" by their fellow Jewish/Christian believers (Kuecker, 2011: 178, 213).

Even though his kerygmatic speech indicates his grasp of the new reality set in motion, by the end of chapter 10 Peter's actions indicate he is still playing "catch up" to what the Spirit is doing.²³ The Spirit even falls on the new believers while Peter is still speaking (10:44),²⁴ reminding us again that events have theologically outstripped him. In other words, this is hardly a story of apostolic triumph in the face of adversity; the story's suspense derives from Peter's misgivings about relinquishing ethnic boundary markers. Indeed, God's will now allows for Gentiles *qua* Gentiles to be included among God's people, yet also seems to place a condition on Jewish apostles to recognize that fact. Remarkably, Gentiles may remain Gentiles after turning to Christ; Jewish believers must change their self-understanding vis-à-vis non-Jews. Consequently, practices tied to Jewish identity—ritual cleanness, dietary laws, circumcision—are downgraded to cultural expressions of Israelite faith, not essentials to be required of Gentile converts.²⁵

Third, we turn to Peter's speech in Acts 10:34–43, which expresses his recognition that God's impartiality includes all people in the invitation to repentance and forgiveness of sins in Jesus' name. Moreover, narratively, the acceptance of this invitation by Gentiles like Cornelius—in spite of Peter's wavering—signals that Jesus is indeed Lord of *all* (10:36). Even Peter's word order emphasizes the recognition—πάντων κύριος. As a Jewish disciple, Peter knew of God's impartiality (cf. Deut 10:17; 2 Ch 19:7; Job 34:19); as a follower of Jesus, he had proclaimed Jesus "Lord and Christ" (Acts 2:36). But the designation "Lord" that helps explicate "Christ" had been under-defined, for Peter and for Acts' audience, because the universal lordship of Jesus had not been *narratively* established by Acts 2.²⁶ The scope of Jesus' Lordship, represented by actual intercultural contact at least, had until Acts 10 been limited to Jews (and non-Gentile Samaritans). That the scope of universal witness is tied to Jesus' identity is indicated by the fact that Peter's revelation is at once christological and soteriological:

“everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name” (10:43). Recognizing the universal scope of who is acceptable to God (10:34, 43) goes hand-in-hand with the recognition that Jesus is truly Lord of all (10:36).

An obvious point follows: it is not Peter’s encounter with Jews from the Diaspora (Acts 2) or even the sight of new Samaritan believers (Acts 8) that opens his eyes but an encounter with a Gentile (Acts 10). The Roman soldier in Caesarea, within the arc of Luke’s narrative, plays the part of the “nations” (τὰ ἔθνη) in God’s plans.²⁷ Just as Cornelius’ turn to the faith depends on Peter’s arrival, so Peter’s recognition of Jesus’ universal lordship depends on Cornelius’ religious “otherness” (ἄλλόφυλος). Bearing witness to a Gentile—which necessarily includes the giving and receiving of hospitality (10:23–24, 48)—becomes pivotal for the transformation of those proclaiming repentance/forgiveness in Jesus’ name (Peter), not just for the recipient of proclamation (Cornelius). Because of the perspectival focus of the episode, a rich portrayal emerges of christology-in-witness rather than simply “conversion” of the “other.” Acts 10 signals a new epistemological possibility—namely, that recognition of Jesus’ universal Lordship is predicated upon participation in its intercultural unfolding, which is why the triumph of Cornelius’ conversion is narrated equally, perhaps more so, as the counter-triumphal “conversion” of the apostle Peter.

To put our findings in the context of the whole of Acts, we can conclude that Peter’s christological “discovery” depends on his venturing into a new intercultural context (he must go to Caesarea, not Cornelius to Joppa or Jerusalem). To refuse the trajectory toward “all nations” (Luke 24:47) and “the end(s) of the earth” (Acts 1:8)—which Peter (and the apostles) had seemingly done until Acts 10—is to limit one’s own capacity to recognize Jesus as Lord of all. Universal witness itself expresses a crucial aspect of who the Lord Jesus is, a point unintelligible to Peter except from *within* the unfolding of that witness, from within the kinds of practices emblematic of that recognition (fellowship, hospitality, fictive kinship). Certainly, Peter could have recognized Cornelius as a different category of believer or placed conditions on his membership among God’s people, as some Jewish believers do in Acts 15:5 (cf. 11:2). Peter instead acquiesces to God’s leading, not only because it authorizes theologically Paul’s ministry to come (Acts 13–28) but also because the mutuality of intercultural acceptance names who Jesus fundamentally is—Lord of *all*. Jesus’ lordship can only be expressed in irreducibly intercultural terms (Acts 2); difference is essential but not essentialized. Thus the absolutizing of one’s own culture (taking it as the measure of other enculturated responses to the gospel)²⁸—no matter how logical internally—is a contradiction of the gospel. At stake in Peter’s acceptance or rejection of Cornelius’ testimony is the very identity of Jesus as Lord of all (10:36), which itself expresses the consistent character of the God of Israel as “impartial” (10:34).

Moreover, so often missed in source-critical (and some missiological) studies of Acts is the narrative observation that the story of the Syrian Antioch church immediately follows Peter’s defense of the Cornelius incident in Acts 11:1–18. Scattered in the wake of Stephen’s persecution (11:19)—and not from a missionary mandate!—Hellenistic Jews spoke to other Jews in the diaspora, but some also reached out to non-Jews with whom they shared a cultural and linguistic background (Greek). That

the community was particularly successful (“a great number became believers”) is a result of the fact that “the hand of the Lord was with them” (11:21). It is hardly coincidental that Luke tells us the word “Christian”²⁹ is first applied to believers in Antioch (11:26), which happens to be our first glimpse of an inter-ethnic church. How should we understand the two pivotal breakthroughs for the universal mission (Acts 10–11:18; 11:19–26) in relation to one another?³⁰

In some ways the two similar outcomes happen in reverse order: Peter/Cornelius was clearly driven by God, mediated by the Spirit; Antioch followed from the exiles’ likely inevitable intercultural contact, the fruit of which is divinely multiplied. In terms of our thesis, we might say in Antioch a prior recognition of Jesus’ lordship emboldened Greek-speaking Jews to engage Greek-speaking Gentiles; whereas in Peter’s case, recognition of Jesus’ universal lordship *followed* from his encounter with Cornelius (and the Lord). Luke appears to keep the two pictures together because both help illuminate God’s purposes, and the manifold way in which humans can participate in the fulfilling of universal witness.³¹ They also both herald, in their own way, the witness to Jews and Gentiles which will coalesce narratively around the ministry of Paul, introduced in ch. 9 and taken up almost exclusively from ch. 13 on. Concerning Luke’s construal of universal witness in the Cornelius–Antioch sequence, what are the implications for human participation in intercultural encounter, given this broader portrait of christology-in-witness?

Human participation in universal witness

One reason it is easy to overlook universal witness as an expression of Jesus’ messianic identity is because mission over the last several centuries has been shaped by a certain reading of Matt 28:18–20³² (the Great Commission) that obscures such a perspective. The prevailing Protestant reading, at least since William Carey’s eighteenth-century treatise (1792), has construed mission primarily as obedience to a dominical command, a view which has been taken as the default NT impetus for mission.³³ Even the “father” of missiology, Gustav Warneck, concluded that the primary reason for the historical phenomenon of universal Christian mission was as a response to Jesus’ commission (Acts being no exception).³⁴ Chris Wright’s otherwise careful exegesis of Luke 24 is ultimately driven by the same considerations,³⁵ putting an undue emphasis on biblical witness as human response to God’s actions in Jesus Christ.

Rather than read Jesus’ commissions in Luke through the Great Commission in Matthew, when we look closely we notice Luke’s commissions lack imperatives. As we have seen, Luke conceives of universal witness primarily as a (scriptural) promise and therefore a sign of christological identity. Indeed, it is a mistake to read the progress of the word in Acts as simply the triumph of human obedience out of missionary obligation. But if we have established that witness in Acts is *primarily* a means of recognizing what God is doing in Christ and less the discharge of an obligation, what does “you will be my witnesses” really mean? By our analysis thus far it does *not* mean that witness is a second discrete step (“missiology”) in a sequence initiated by Jesus’ death and resurrection (“christology”). “You *will be* my witnesses” (1:8) signals

that Jesus retains agency over the unfolding of the witness because it is his universal lordship that is, in fact, at stake, and not the church's dominion.

But where does that leave the apostles and witnesses and, by extension, readers who identify with them?³⁶ Are they merely puppets twitching with every jerk of the divine hand, as Ernst Haenchen (1959: 315)³⁷ memorably imagined it? While it is true that Luke narrates the triumph of the *missio Dei* rather than that of the *missio ecclesiae*, to say that Jesus retains agency over the mission does not nullify the role of human participation in the fulfillment of universal witness.³⁸ Because universal witness is arguably not completed in Acts, only initiated in earnest with Acts 10 and exemplified in Paul's wide-ranging exploits,³⁹ the witnesses themselves are in a position of learning and relearning the identity of Jesus (Gaventa, 2008) as they participate in ongoing witness to him.

Another way of putting it is that witnesses *discover* the fulfillment of Jesus' identity specifically *by participating in universal witness*. This is one of the reasons why Acts' pivotal pronouncement of Jesus' identity—that he is “Lord of all” (πάντων κύριος, 10:36)—comes out additionally as a realization of Peter's. The two aspects of the claim, surprising recognition and kerygmatic pronouncement, are intertwined, evident in the phrase's odd syntax.⁴⁰ Moreover, the emphatic position of the modifier (πάντων) reminds us that what is new is not Jesus' lordship but its scope (“of all”). Ultimately it is the *scope* of Jesus' lordship that gives proof of his scriptural, messianic identity (cf. Isa 49:6; 42:6). To learn of the scope of his lordship, moreover, requires intercultural contact through witness.

If participation in universal witness is a means both of fulfilling Scripture's witness concerning Jesus' messianic identity and, in a manner, of discovering it anew, the book of Acts qualifies popular notions of mission as obedient response and information-sharing. Acts emphasizes instead learning Jesus' expansive identity through intercultural encounter and the mutuality it implies. What results is a kind of christology of intercultural interdependence, which cuts across traditional modes of mission supported by the binaries of “we”—“they,” missionary—missionized, knowledgeable—ignorant, and so on, and puts all on equal footing as those in need of repentance and forgiveness, including and maybe especially the “witnesses” themselves. Luke construes christology in the unfolding of universal witness itself so that Jesus' identity as Lord of all is *learned* by intercultural encounter as much as it is *delivered* by missionary proclamation.

In an age when world Christianity—rather than “global Christendom” (Sanneh, 2009b: 21–26; Flett, 2016)—reflects the intercultural origins of the Christian “way” (Acts 9:2; 16:17; 18:25, 26; 19:9, 23; 22:4; 24:14, 22), we are reminded that at stake in Christian witness among cultures is the very question of who Jesus is. If indeed he is “Lord of all” (Acts 10:36), it is more than a propositional claim to be passed on to others in the name of missionary obligation. Rather, Jesus' universal lordship is a reality to be endlessly discovered through intercultural witness, so that witness becomes the epistemological premise of faith itself. “You will be my witnesses” (Acts 1:8) is an invitation above all to find out, with Peter and the Hellenistic Jewish believers, that “the God whose presence calls forth a distinctive form of doxology in one culture is the same God whose mercy calls forth grateful praise as well from other cultures, in other forms” (Brownson, 1998: 24).

Acknowledgements

I am grateful for the helpful responses this paper received at the 2018 ASM meeting. Special thanks go out to Amy Whisenand, Julie Newberry, and Michael Barram for their critical feedback on an earlier draft of this article.

Funding

This research received no specific grant from any funding agency in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.

Notes

1. In using “mission” with respect to Acts I am well aware that such terminology is anachronistic. Not only was the Latin term *missio* not used until the fourth century, it was employed primarily in reference to persons of the Trinity (cf. Bosch, 1991: 543–47). The first use of the term to describe what we tend to think of when we think of the mission word family (missions, missionary, missional) can be attributed to Ignatius of Loyola in the sixteenth century. Despite the trenchant critique of Stroope (2017) and Kollman (2011), this does not mean that reading Acts *with a view to mission practice* today is mired in hapless dehistoricizing, as long as we are careful not to import notions of mission and missionaries from the modern period into Luke’s narrative world. To this end, I employ Luke’s own language of “witness” as often as possible.
2. It goes without saying that practitioners of Christian mission take the canonical Acts as normative. But precisely what that means for *how* we approach the text is admittedly contested. Are the results of exegesis normative or the text itself? Historically, we have agreed to the latter, but there is not really such a thing as the text in the abstract, only the text-as-read-or-performed in some way (Lash, 1986). In the absence of a normative approach, therefore, it makes the most sense to read the words the way they run, that is, as comprising the final form of a whole *narrative*. Read narratively, the book of Acts offers a potentially different resource than a collection of disparate episodes or a tractate on Christian mission practices. In other words, the quest to read Acts “normatively” is bound up with the quest to pay attention to the way it is written. Yet the question of normativity also hangs on the kinds of contemporary questions we bring to a text, driven by a conviction that a first-century text *can* speak to such questions. Even the task of forming questions is, in a sense, a normative act because it expresses aspirationally what we affirm canonically—Acts is for the church. Thus, implied in this discussion is the ecclesial reality that whatever dispositions, practices, and beliefs which Acts commends are most intelligible to those people whose own form of Christian life together render them intelligible.
3. Cf. e.g., Kraft (2005: 152–68), who speaks of the Bible broadly as “God’s Inspired Casebook.” Moreover, in reading Acts as narrative I am resisting the tendency, more pronounced in previous eras perhaps, of treating the text as a compendium of disparate (hypothetical) sources or even a collection of discrete episodes. While there is much to commend these other approaches, they rely on presuppositions about the origin and/or redactional intent of the author/editor. We do not have those sources, let alone an account of how they were edited; what we do have is the book of Acts, and it is a narrative, or, in Luke’s terminology, a διήγησις (Luke 1:1).
4. Among the many resources to take this tack throughout history, one interesting example is Hunter III (2009), who takes the *rate of church growth* in Acts, above all, as what is

- normative about Acts. Given that premise, it inevitably leads to an evaluation of the present—like most restoration approaches—as a narrative of decline.
5. See Moessner (1996). As for which Scriptures say what, at least in Luke 24, Luke is no more specific than “everything written about [Jesus] in the law of Moses, the prophets, and the psalms” (Luke 24:44; cf. 24:26–27, 32), even if we find specific Isaianic resonances elsewhere. Several times Luke links what is written about Jesus in the Scriptures (Luke 18:31–33; 24:46–47; cf. Acts 18:28) with Jesus’ own predictions of his fate from earlier (Luke 9:22, 44; 17:25; 24:6–7). Even where no Scripture is explicitly cited, several predictions carry a sense of divine necessity (*δεῖ*) associated with God’s plan (cf. 17:25; 24:7, 26). Cf. Cosgrove (1984) and Squires (1993). The events of Jesus’ death and resurrection, in other words, confirm God’s ancient purposes in accordance with Israel’s Scriptures. The scriptural basis for a universal mission of proclamation of repentance and forgiveness of sins to all nations, however, is less obvious. Certainly, some texts, especially in “2nd” and “3rd” Isaiah give hints of the (eschatological) inclusion of Gentiles among God’s people, though few if any command a direct evangelization of Gentiles. Cf. Kaminsky and Stewart (2006: 160, fn. 83) who say that only Isa 66:19 appears to charge Israel with actual outreach to Gentiles. It may appear all the more remarkable then, at least at first, that Luke includes in the broad matrix of scriptural fulfillment the claim about a universal mission to come.
 6. Cf. also Moore, 1997: 60.
 7. Cf. Wilson, 1973: 1–58. This is based on the judgment that the portrait of Jesus in Luke, however amenable to the inclusion of individual Gentiles (e.g., Luke 4:25–27; 7:1–10; 23:47), is not one of *sustained* outreach.
 8. The traditional title (Irenaeus, second century)—“Acts of the Apostles”—contributes to this impression, though, it should be remembered, this is not the title which “Luke” included in his book.
 9. Among many possible examples, see Bock (1987: 278): “[C]hristology is the ground for the church’s justified universal mission”; and Reicke (1959: 158): “This means that Acts is not biography, but theology. More precisely, its central concerns are *christology* and *ecclesiology*, the main themes being Christ and his church”; or, more broadly, Dollar (1996), a condensed version of his Fuller dissertation (1990).
 10. Dupont, 1974: 125–43, esp. 125, 134, 141–42. Cf. also Dillon, 1978: 208.
 11. We speak of Jesus’ death and resurrection as past events even though, grammatically, we might call the infinitives here examples of the “timeless aorist” in indirect discourse. The point is that they are in the past for the apostles (and readers) even if their grammatical force knows no real tense. Indeed, we might go further by saying that Jesus’ death and resurrection in Luke’s narrative, while chronologically in the past, stand at the eclipse of the ages. It is Luke, after all, who prefaces the lengthy Joel quotation in Acts 2:17–21 with “in the last days . . .” (v. 17) even as he interprets Jesus’ death and resurrection (and ascension) as confirmation (2:22–35) of his identity as “Lord and Christ” (2:36).
 12. That is, Jesus’ death, resurrection, and proclamation of repentance/forgiveness in his name all fall within the global claims Luke repeats in the “hinge chapter.” Witness is part of “the things about himself in all the scriptures” (24:27) and “everything written about [Jesus] in the law of Moses, the prophets, and the Psalms” (24:44).
 13. In abbreviated form: (a) the way Luke 24:46–48 sums up the scriptural matrix in Luke 24 (esp. vv. 7, 26, and 44) points to a primary rather than secondary claim about universal witness in his name as a divine necessity; (b) how Luke 24:47 is an (eschatological) reinterpretation of Jesus’ (apocalyptic) words in Mark 13:10; (c) the way in which Luke rephrases the commission of the apostles in Acts 1:8 and connects it with Paul’s vocation (Acts 13:47;

- 26:20), thereby signaling universal witness as both the “program” of Acts as well as the defining dominical commission given him personally; and (d) the crucial repetition of the three elements (death/resurrection/universal witness) from Luke 24:46–48 in Acts 26:23 illuminating Luke’s purposes.
14. Though I will not deal with the question of synoptic relationships, I do assume Markan priority and, because of the limited scope of the study, need not say much more than that. On the question of Luke’s eschatology, see of course the debate that swirls around Conzelmann (1982), originally published in German (1960). We can summarize, more simply, the difference between Luke and Mark (and Paul) by referencing Käsemann’s famous quip: “You do not write the history of the Church, if you are expecting the end of the world to come any day.” That being said, Luke retains a certain apocalypticism behind his notion of universal witness (cf. Acts 1:11, e.g.). The emphasis, however, of Luke’s narrative falls on the universal lordship of Christ established by witness to all nations rather than on the completion of witness as a step toward the *eschaton*.
 15. See Schubert (1954); Tiede (1980); Bock (1987); Strauss (1995).
 16. Dupont (1974: 133–34): “Ce rapport établi entre l’évangélisation des nations et la fin du a il monde disparaît entièrement chez Luc; fait place à un rapport tout différent, celui qui unit l’évangélisation des nations aux prophéties de l’Ecriture dont elle est l’accomplissement. Hahn le dit très bien: au cadre apocalyptique supposé par le δει de Marc, Luc substitue le schéma prédiction et accomplissement.”
 17. See Moore, 1997: 60; Mallen, 2008: 92f.; Beers, 2015: 179; cf. also Dupont, 1974: 140–41.
 18. Just as importantly, the claim “he would proclaim light both to our people and to the Gentiles” (26:23) puts the proclamation of repentance and forgiveness under the direction of Jesus himself despite his narrative absence. Though Paul is undoubtedly Acts’ most far-ranging witness, Jesus is actually the one proclaiming light to Jews and Gentiles, thereby fulfilling scriptural promises and validating his identity as Lord of all. For instance, Dupont (1974: 134) says, “This proclamation is part of the Scriptures’ program *for the Messiah*” (emphasis original). Paul’s attribution of universal witness to Jesus should not be totally surprising since elsewhere Jesus identifies himself very closely with his followers. For instance, concerning Paul’s earlier harassment of Christians, Jesus tells him, “I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting” (9:5; 22:8; 26:15). Such an identification helps us understand the grammatical ambiguity of the Lukan “commissions”: the slightly odd passive formulation “repentance/forgiveness (is) *to be preached* ... to all nations” (Luke 24:47) preserves the possibility of Jesus’ own role and presence in universal witness. Indeed, the subsequent statement—“you are witnesses of these things”—may imply that the apostles will witness the unfolding of Jesus’ lordship in the same way they witnessed his death/resurrection. Further, “you will be my witnesses ... to the end(s) of the earth” (Acts 1:8) emphasizes that the apostles will be witnesses by selection rather than choice (10:41), by promise rather than imperative, implying some measure of divine anticipation and direction of events. And “you will be my witnesses” suggests both that Jesus is the content of witness (i.e., it is about him) and that witnesses are authorized by and sent out in representation of Jesus (cf. Johnson (1992: 30)). Indeed, even Peter and the apostles, in response to persecution in Jerusalem, claim that Jesus (and/or God) “gives” repentance to Israel (Acts 5:31), a claim later echoed by the same apostles regarding the inclusion of Gentiles: “Then God has given repentance even to the Gentiles” (11:18).
 19. Among the many reasons to pay attention to the story, Luke deems it necessary to repeat the story immediately in 11:5–17 and then later during the decisive Jerusalem council meeting (15:7–11). Furthermore, the number of verses Luke uses in total for the story (and its retellings) far exceeds the proportion of time in which the events take place which it

describes. That is, by most reckonings Acts covers roughly 28 years in 28 chapters, meaning each chapter should cover about a year. Obviously, by virtue of the events of the story there are many gaps where nothing is narrated for a time and other places where narrative time slows down considerably. For instance, Peter's Pentecost sermon similarly takes up a disproportionate amount of Acts' surface area given the speech's confinement to a small window of time on a single day. Yet the Cornelius incident far exceeds other events. The percentage of Acts' 28-year account by this roughly five-day long story is around two chapters, making the five-day narrative seem more than 100 times its temporal size. The only other event with nearly comparable proportionality is Paul's conversion-commission (9:1–20; 22:3–16; 26:9–20), yet even with the repeated summaries combined, the account takes up little more than a single chapter's worth of verses. Moreover, it largely concerns Paul's own vocation and is not treated as the salvation-historical pivot the way Peter's account of the Cornelius incident is.

20. It should be noted that very rarely does Luke portray direct contact between Jesus' followers and Gentiles without some affiliation with the synagogue/Judaism. Even Cornelius is several times described (by the narrator, angel, and Cornelius' servants in 10:2, 4, 7, 22, and 31) as "devout" or "God-fearing," even "well-spoken of by the whole Jewish nation." Only in 14:6–18 and 17:16–34 does Paul address pagans directly, even if Jews appear on the outskirts of the story (cf. 14:19).
21. Cf. ἐξετίθετο αὐτοῖς καθεξῆς (11:4), where Peter's retelling is described as "in order"—i.e. in the order of significance, which any recollection naturally imposes on events past. Cf. Luke 1:3 and this important hermeneutical concept for all of Luke–Acts. Cf. Witherup (1993: 53).
22. Cf. the deliberate reverberations in 10:47 ("Can anyone withhold the water for baptizing *these people* who have received the Holy Spirit *just as we have*?"); 11:15 ("the Holy Spirit fell upon *them just as it had upon us*"); 11:17 ("God gave *them* the *same* gift that he gave *us* when we believed"); and climactically in 15:8–9 ("giving *them* the Holy Spirit, *just as he did to us*; and ... he has made *no distinction between them and us*") and 15:11 ("we believe that *we will be saved* through the grace of the Lord Jesus, *just as they will*"). By contrast we see conventional out-group titles employed by the uncircumcised men who criticize Peter after the Cornelius incident: "Why did you go to *uncircumcised men* and eat with *them*?" (Acts 11:3).
23. That is, Acts 10 is one of the few places where water baptism follows Spirit baptism. In fact, putting aside questions of normative church order, Peter's almost formulaic claim in 2:39 ("Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit") establishes readerly expectations in such a way that the shift in order in Acts 10 only underscores Peter's tardy comprehension—i.e. his earlier proclamation is not holding (cf. also Paul's rhetorical question in 19:3, underlining the "typical" ordering: "Into what then were you baptized?"). Another way of recognizing Peter's ambiguous characterization is in the subtle wordplay Luke uses to indicate Peter's scruples: Peter hesitates (διακρινόμενος) about the meaning of God's revelation, which consists of the dissolution of distinctions (διακρίνω) between Jew and Gentile. Though the Spirit tells him to go with Cornelius' Gentile servants "without hesitating" (μηδὲν διακρινόμενος, 10:20), Peter on recalling the incident a chapter later claims, "the Spirit told me to go with them *not making a distinction* (μηδὲν διακρίναντα) between them and us" (11:12). And when presenting his experience to the Jerusalem council he offers an interpretive judgment: "[God] has *made no distinction* [or, has not discriminated: οὐθὲν διέκρινεν] between them and us" (15:9). That the wordplay

is subtle is indicated by the divergence among several translations of *μηδὲν διακρίναντα* (cf. NRSV, ESV, NAB, ERV, CEB, NIV, and NET). The matter is further complicated by the fact that the *Textus Receptus* (TR) reads *μηδὲν διακρινόμενον*, presumably by attraction to *μηδὲν διακρινόμενος* in 10:20. Translations privileging the TR, therefore, render the appearance of both phrases as the equivalent of “not doubting” (KJV; NKJV; NASB; YLT), a less likely reading.

24. When Peter later recalls the sequence, he says he had just *begun* to speak (11:15), underscoring that we ought to read his speech as the dawning of recognition rather than a statement fully on one side of the story or the other.
25. See Plunkett (1985). It is important to note that the Cornelius episode does not, as some have read it, imply the dissolution of purity laws for Jewish believers. Otherwise, the emphasis on Paul’s Jewishness later in the story would seem disingenuous at best, hypocritical at worst (cf. 21:20–27; 24:17–18).
26. The early clues about Jesus’ universal lordship—Luke 2:10, 30–32; 3:6; 4:25–27—took the form of declarations *about* his lordship, but narratively Jesus’ lordship had not been established, creating expectations for its fulfillment in Acts. Luke 24:46–49 reignites those expectations even if they have to wait to Acts 10 to be met.
27. This is further supported by the fact that Cornelius drops out of Peter’s recollections in chs. 11 and 15. Moreover, we note the irony that while Peter’s recognition comes as something of a surprise to Peter, it is also narrated in such a way that it fulfills God’s promises to Israel—“*All the prophets* testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name” (10:43), words echoing Luke 24:47 (“thus it is written ...”). Again, we are reminded of the motif of biblical promise and fulfillment that lies behind Luke’s construal of the Messiah’s identity: he died, he was raised, he is Lord of all (Luke 24:46–48). As some have noted, even if the story of Acts proceeds according to God’s plan, it hardly proceeds according to expectation—an important missiological premise! See Squires, 1993.
28. See, e.g., Newbiggin, 1989: 116–27, 184–97; Walls, 1989; Sanneh, 2009: 13–55.
29. *Χριστιανοί*, as Luke tells it, are those whose common life together as Jews and Gentiles explicates the story of Jesus’ death, resurrection, and universal lordship. See the nuanced discussion of Rowe (2009: 129–35). The new community is neither monocultural nor multicultural, but intercultural in its constitution. Acts 10 highlights the stakes of this radical breakthrough, Acts 11 reminds us it took shape in actual churches, and Paul’s ministry guarantees that it reveals and confirms the identity of the Lord of all.
 Though it falls beyond the scope of this article, part of the larger argument on which this article rests includes an account of Paul, Luke’s main character. As Paul’s witness becomes gradually universal, Acts narrates Jewish rejection of the Messiah as simultaneously a rejection of Paul’s outreach to the Gentiles (cf. 13:45, 48–51; 14:2, 19; 17:13; 22:21–24; cf. Luke 4:25–29). To reject part of Jesus’ messianic identity (namely, his death and resurrection) is to deny the other part, his universal Lordship and the witness that represents it.
30. One way of understanding it is by saying the Peter–Cornelius encounter gives us the movie version of this breakthrough—establishing in our memory the theological backing for this shift (Dibelius, 1956)—while the story of the church at Antioch likely gives us the more pragmatic account of origins: intercultural contact.
31. See the perceptive observations of Ott, 2014.
32. There may also be residual influence from the imperative in Mark 16:15, which most studies agree is probably a later addition specifically based on the commissions of Matthew

and Luke (and possibly John): πορευθέντες εἰς τὸν κόσμον ἅπαντα κηρύξατε τὸ εὐαγγέλιον πάσῃ τῇ κτίσει. Cf. Kelhoffer (2000), who suggests that the best explanation is that Mark's Longer Ending combines Matthew 28:19 (πορευθέντες with an imperative) and Luke 24:47 (converting κηρυχθῆναι into the imperative κηρύξατε). For our purposes, in this light, Mark 16:15 is not really *another* example of a dominical command from the Gospels, but a doubling of Matthew's and, indirectly, an attempt to convert Luke's non-imperative into one.

33. See, e.g. Braaten (1977: 15). Like many interpreters of mission, Braaten reads Christian history as largely a period of missionary dormancy in which the dominical commands (Mark 16:16; Matt 28: 18–20; Luke 24:46–48; Acts 1:8; 9:15; 22:21; 26:16–18; John 20:21) had been forgotten or misinterpreted (e.g., by the Reformers, as limited to the original generation).
34. See Boer (1961: 29–30), who quotes at length and analyzes the position of Warneck (1897).
35. Cf. e.g. Wright's analysis of Matt 28:18–20 in Wright, 2017: 66, 70. We should not be wholly surprised by this given Wright's intellectual genealogy, which can be traced directly back to John Stott, who is one of the twentieth century's strongest supporters of the mission-as-obedient-response model. See Bosch, 2008.
36. Referring primarily to the Gospel of Luke, Joel Green's comments are apropos for all of Luke–Acts: The story “encourages its audience to recognize, and having recognized, to embrace and to serve the salvific aim of God ... [F]or God's aim necessarily involves the collusion of human actors” (1995: 24).
37. “[D]ie Menschen drohen zu Marionetten zu werden.”
38. While it is well beyond the scope of this article to weigh in on the relationship between divine and human agency in Luke—nor am I convinced there exists one satisfactory way of conceptualizing it—the point of this section is to show that Acts construes witness as something in and through which Jesus himself, for lack of a better word, is immanent. Cf. 14:3, which claims that “the Lord” himself (presumably Jesus) “testified to the word of his grace by granting signs and wonders to be done through them [Paul and Barnabas].”
39. See Tannehill (1986: 17–18): “Thus Acts 1:8 does not outline the actual course of Acts beyond Samaria, and it envisions a goal that reaches beyond the end of Acts. It is an outline of the mission, but only in part an outline of Acts.”
40. For some, “he is Lord of all” functions as a parenthetical/aside: Haenchen, 1959; Barrett, 2002; Culy and Parsons, 2003; and for others, a climactic announcement: Johnson, 1992; Tannehill, 1986; Rowe, 2010. Some like F. F. Bruce claim both options at once (1952: 225)—“Parenthetic but none the less emphatic.”

References

- Barrett CK (2002) *Acts*. London: T&T Clark.
- Beers H (2015) *The Followers of Jesus as the “Servant”: Luke’s Model from Isaiah for the Disciples in Luke–Acts*. New York: Bloomsbury T&T Clark.
- Bock D (1987) *Proclamation from Prophecy and Pattern: Lucan Old Testament Christology*. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press.
- Boer H (1961) *Pentecost and Missions*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans.
- Bosch D (1991) *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis.
- Bosch D (2008) The structure of mission: an exposition of Matthew 28:16–20. In: Chilcote P and Warner L (eds.) *The Study of Evangelism*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, pp. 73–92.

- Braaten C (1977) *The Flaming Center: A Theology of the Christian Mission*. Philadelphia, PA: Fortress.
- Brownson J (1998) *Speaking the Truth in Love: New Testament Resources for a Missional Hermeneutic*. Harrisburg: Trinity.
- Bruce FF (1952) *Acts*. London: Tyndale Press.
- Carey W (1792) *An Enquiry into the Obligations of Christians to Use Means Necessary for the Conversion of the Heathens*. Leicester: Ann Ireland.
- Conzelmann H (1960) *Die Mitte der Zeit*. Tübingen: Mohr.
- Conzelmann H (1982) *The Theology of St. Luke*. Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press.
- Cosgrove C (1984) The divine Δ EI in Luke–Acts: investigations into the Lukan understanding of God’s Providence. *Novum Testamentum* 26(2): 168–90.
- Culy M and Parsons M (2003) *Acts: A Handbook on the Greek Text*. Waco, TX: Baylor University Press.
- Dibelius M (1956) The conversion of Cornelius. In: Greeven H (ed.) *Studies in the Acts of the Apostles*. New York: Scribner’s.
- Dillon R (1978) *From Eye-witnesses to Ministers of the Word: Tradition and Composition in Luke 24*. Rome: Biblical Institute Press.
- Dollar HE (1990) *A biblical-missiological exploration of the cross-cultural dimensions in Luke–Acts*. PhD thesis, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.
- Dollar HE (1996) *St. Luke’s Missiology: A Cross-Cultural Challenge*. Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library.
- Dupont J (1974) La portée christologique de l’évangélisation des nations d’après Luc 24.47. In: Gniska J (ed.) *Neues Testament und Kirche: für Rudolf Schnackenburg*. Freiburg (im Breisgau): Herder, pp. 125–43.
- Flett J (2016) *Apostolicity: The Ecumenical Question in World Christian Perspective*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic.
- Gaventa B (2008) Learning and relearning the identity of Jesus from Luke–Acts. In: Gaventa B and Hays R (eds.) *Seeking the Identity of Jesus*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, pp. 148–65.
- Green J (1995) *The Theology of the Gospel of Luke*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Haenchen E (1959) *Apostelgeschichte*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht.
- Hahn F (1965) *Mission in the New Testament*. F. Clarke (transl.). London: SCM Press.
- Hunter III G (2009) *The Apostolic Congregation: Church Growth Reconceived for a New Generation*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press.
- Johnson LT (1992) *The Acts of the Apostles*. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press.
- Kaminsky J and Stewart A (2006) God of all the world: universalism and developing monotheism in Isaiah 40–66. *HTR* 99(2): 139–63.
- Kelhoffer JA (2000) *Miracle and Mission: The Authentication of Missionaries and Their Message in the Longer Ending of Mark*. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck.
- Kollman P (2011) At the origins of mission and missiology: a study in the dynamics of religious language. *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 79(2): 425–58.
- Köstenberger AJ and O’Brien PT (2001) *Salvation to the Ends of the Earth: A Biblical Theology of Mission*. Downer’s Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press.
- Kraft C (2005) *Christianity in Culture: A Study in Biblical Theologizing in Cross-Cultural Perspective*. 2nd ed. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis.
- Kuecker A (2011) *The Spirit and the “Other”: Social Identity, Ethnicity and Intergroup Reconciliation in Luke–Acts*. New York: T&T Clark.
- Lash N (1986) What might martyrdom mean? In: *Theology on the Way to Emmaus*. London: SCM, pp. 75–92.

- Mallen P (2008) *The Reading and Transformation of Isaiah in Luke–Acts*. London: T & T Clark.
- Moessner D (1996) The “script” of the scriptures in Acts: suffering as God’s “Plan” (βουλή) for the world for the “release of sins.” In: Witherington B (ed.) *History, Literature, and Society in the Book of Acts*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 218–50.
- Moore TS (1997) The Lucan Great Commission and the Isaianic servant. *Bibliotheca Sacra* 154: 47–60.
- Newbiggin L (1989) *The Gospel in a Pluralist Society*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans.
- Ott C (2014) Diaspora and relocation as divine impetus for witness in the early church. In Wan E (ed.) *Diaspora Missiology: Theory, Methodology, and Practice*. Portland, OR: Institute of Diaspora Studies, pp. 87–108.
- Plunkett MA (1985) Ethnocentricity and salvation history in the Cornelius episode (Acts 10:1–11:18). *Society of Biblical Literature Seminar Papers* 24: 465–79.
- Reicke B (1959) The risen Lord and his church: the theology of Acts. *Interpretation* 13: 157–69.
- Rowe CK (2009) *World Upside Down: Reading Acts in the Graeco-Roman Age*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Sanneh L (2009a) *Translating the Message: The Missionary Impact on Culture*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis.
- Sanneh L (2009b) *Whose Religion is Christianity? The Gospel beyond the West*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans.
- Schubert P (1954) The structure and significance of Luke 24. In Eltester W (ed.) *Neutestamentliche Studien für Rudolf Bultmann zu seinem 70. Geburtstag am 20. August 1954*. Berlin: A. Töpelmann, pp. 165–86.
- Squires J (1993) *The Plan of God in Luke–Acts*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Strauss M (1995) *The Davidic Messiah in Luke–Acts: The Promise and its Fulfillment in Lukan Christology*. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press.
- Stroope M (2017) *Transcending Mission: The Eclipse of a Modern Tradition*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic.
- Tannehill R (1986) *The Narrative Unity of Luke–Acts*. Vol. 2. Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press.
- Tiede D (1980) *Prophecy and History in Luke–Acts*. Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press.
- Walls A (1989) The gospel as prisoner and liberator of culture. In: *The Missionary Movement in Christian History: Studies in Transmission of Faith*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, pp. 3–15.
- Warneck G (1897) *Evangelische Missionslehre*. Vol. 1. Gotha: F. A. Perthes.
- Wilson S (1973) *The Gentiles and the Gentile Mission*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Witherup R (1993) Cornelius over and over and over again: “functional redundancy” in the Acts of the Apostles. *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 49: 45–66.
- Wright CJH (2011) Truth with a mission: reading all Scripture missiologically. *Southern Baptist Journal of Theology* 15(2): 4–15.
- Wright CJH (2017) Participatory mission: the mission of God’s people revealed in the whole Bible story. In: Sexton J (ed.) *Four Views on The Church’s Mission*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, pp. 63–105.

Author biography

Colin H. Yuckman is an ordained Teaching Elder of the Presbyterian Church (USA). He formerly served as Pastor/Head of Staff of The United Presbyterian Church of New Kensington, PA. Currently, he is completing his doctoral dissertation in New Testament and Mission Theology at Duke Divinity School, Durham, NC.