

All font in the paper is 12 point Times New Roman (except footnotes, which are 10 point)

Entire title page is center aligned. Top margin is 2" and all other margins are 1"

CALVARY BIBLE COLLEGE

Space down 7 single spaces and type the title.

NORMATIVE GUIDELINES FOR INTERPRETING ACTS

The title of this particular paper

Space down 7 single spaces

A PAPER SUBMITTED TO

No title before instructor's name

MARDA JONES

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF

THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE COURSE

ENGLISH COMPOSITION

Space down 7 single spaces

EN112

Course title and course number

The content of this paper has been changed for illustrative purposes.

BY

Your first and last name

SALLY ROBINSON

Space down 5 single spaces

Location (city and state) the paper is being handed in

KANSAS CITY, MO

Date needs to be the current month and year

JANUARY 2003

OUTLINE

The heading (which is just the word OUTLINE, not the paper title) is 2" from the top, centered, and capitalized

I. Introduction

II. Principles of Interpretation

III. Conclusion

Use only first level headings from the paper for the outline.

Double space between outline points

The points need to be set to a 2" margin. This can be done by highlighting the section and going into Paragraph settings and putting in a 1" tab or by pressing TAB twice.

The outline page is numbered with a Roman Numeral "ii"

Top margin is 2"

NORMATIVE GUIDELINES FOR INTERPRETING ACTS

All text, including headings, is double-spaced

First-level headings are centered and italicized.

Introduction

Indent 1/2"

There are widely divergent attitudes toward the use of historical precedence for establishing ecclesiological doctrine. It is very common to assume that the church today is to be as nearly identical to the church as described in the book of Acts as possible. "By and large, most sectors of evangelical Protestantism have a 'restoration movement' mentality. We regularly look back to the church and Christian experience in the first century as the norm to be restored or the ideal to approximated."¹

Quotes less than 4 lines use quotation marks and are integrated into the paragraph.

Insert footnote after all punctuation at the end of the information you wish to footnote

On the other hand, it appears to be more popular in recent years to cavalierly dismiss any possible relevance of Acts from consideration in ecclesiological discussions. A pastor friend of the writer was recently heard to declare, "Well, everybody knows that you can't prove anything about elders from the book of Acts."

Fee has well stated the problem posed in seeking to establish normative polity based on

New Testament example.

Quotes of 4 full lines or more are single spaced and inset 1/2 inch from the left margin, with no quotation marks.

The hermeneutical problem of Acts, therefore is a crucial one and touches many parts of Scripture which are basically historical narrative. How is the book of Acts, which *prima facie* narrates a small segment of the early spread of Christianity, to be understood as the Word of God? That is, what is its Word which not merely *describes* the primitive Church but speaks as a norm to the Church at all times? Indeed, do such narratives somehow establish normative precedents for succeeding generations? Or are they merely

This line should only extend 1/3 of the page. If it is longer, your footnote spacing is wrong.

Extra space at the bottom of a page is necessary at times to keep a paragraph from having a single line at the top or bottom of a page.

¹ Gordon D. Fee and Douglas Stuart, *How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth: A Guide to Understanding*

Footnotes are first line indented, single-spaced, 10 point font. Note use of commas. Author, Title (City: Publisher, Copyright date), Page.

The page number on the first page is centered 0.9 from the bottom of the page.

Page numbers for the rest of the paper are .75" from the top and 1" from the right.

illustrative or informative? If they do have a word for us, and I think they do, how does one discover it, or set up principles in order to hear it?²

Is there any hope for resolution of such a critical question? Not all aspects of the issue can be included in a brief paper.³ The following principles are offered as a guide in this difficult area.

First level heading

Principles of Interpretation

Precedence of Doctrinal Passages

Second level headings are centered, but *not* in italics.

Explicit doctrinal passages and commands have precedence over historical narrative.⁴

There are many doctrinal passages in Scripture that are specifically intended to teach particular doctrinal truth or to require specific action of God's people. There are numerous commands addressed specifically to the church. In these instances, there is little dispute regarding the

If a reference begins a sentence, the book title should be written out such as Second Timothy 1:9 says . . .

must form the primary basis of ecclesiological decisions. For

example, the "filling and coming upon" the believer in Acts 2, 10, and 19 with the resultant speaking in tongues does not take precedent over the doctrinal command in Eph 5:18 NIV,

"Instead be filled with the Spirit."

References are abbreviated (see Style Guide p. 11 & 12) without the use of periods.

Use Arabic numeral in references.

Historical Precedence Alone

For other Biblical text rules, see Style Guide, p. 9-10

Historical narrative records what did happen in a given situation. It does not prescribe what must happen in every subsequent situation. Historical precedence alone should never form the basis for normativeness. "On the basis of precedence alone it is probably not valid to say,

² Gordon D. Fee, "The Genre of New Testament Literature and Biblical Hermeneutics," in *Interpreting the World of God: Festschrift in Honor of Steven Barabas*, ed. S. J. Schultz and M.A. Inch (Chicago: Moody Press, 1976), 115.

1 blank line between footnotes

³ Millard Erickson has a helpful discussion for the larger question of identifying timeless truths. in *Scripture: Christian Theology*, 3 vols. (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1983-85), 1:120-25.

⁴ Gordon R. Lewis and Bruce A. Demarest, *Integrative Theology, vol. 1* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1987), 1-31.

Use an en dash between inclusive numbers

See Style Guide p. 19-28 for more information about footnotes.

‘Therefore, one must.’”⁵ “Just through being reported as truly happening, no event becomes the revelation of God’s universal will.”⁶

Scriptural Corroboration

Practices based on historical precedence are most clearly normative if corroborated by principles elsewhere in Scripture. There may not be a specific command addressing the situation, but there will be relevant theological principles that can be established from other prescriptive passages.⁷

Non-Contradictory

Third level headings are left aligned and in italics. (three levels are not recommended in a paper this length)

It should be obvious, but for the sake of clarity, a principle claiming support from historical narrative cannot contradict explicit statements found elsewhere in the epistles. “The meaning and principles derived from a story must be consistent with all other teachings of Scripture. A deductive principle drawn from a narrative which contradicts the teaching of some other scriptural passages is invalid.”⁸

It is perhaps valid to defend a given practice on the basis of precedence if there is substantial evidence for its practice and that pattern can be demonstrated to be the only pattern present. A consistent and clear pattern must be established. Specifically, polity considerations

⁵ Fee, “The Genre of NT Literature,” 117.

Reference to a previously footnoted source only includes the author’s last name, abbreviated title, and page number

⁶ J. Robertson McQuilkin, “Problems of Normativeness in Scripture: Cultural Versus Permanent,” in *Hermeneutics, Inerrancy, and the Bible*, ed. Earl Radmacher and Robert Preus (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1984), 234.

A footnote can also contain information that would interrupt the flow of the paper.

⁷ “For a biblical precedent to justify present action, the principle of the action must be taught elsewhere, where it is the primary intent so to teach.” Fee, “Genre of NT Literature,” 118. Although addressing a slightly different issue, the following comment is also relevant. “When these injunctions to a specific individual or group parallel general reaching found elsewhere, they may be viewed as normative, but not on their own strength.” McQuilkin, “Normativeness in Scripture,” 235.

⁸ Henry A. Virkler, *Hermeneutics: Principles and Processes of Biblical Interpretation* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1981), 220. See also Lewis and Demarest, *Integrative Theology*, 1:30–31.

based on Acts may be valid if the matter is both widespread (the actions of many churches reflect such a practice in the narrative) and unique (it is the only way in which the churches did something). “The strongest possible case can be made when only one pattern is found . . . and when that pattern is repeated within the New Testament itself.”⁹

Positive Versus Negative

This is an em dash, used to indicate a sudden break in the sentence.

Ellipse dots are created by typing a word, a space, a period, a space, a period, a space, and the next word.

In establishing patterns, it should be recognized that positive patterns are clearer than negative patterns. In other words, the fact that something was done is more significant than something that was not done—unless the text explicitly and emphatically states that a specific action was not involved. Arguments from silence are dubious and inconclusive in most instances.

Intention Versus Incidentals

Exegesis must emphasize the intention of the passage rather than incidental allusions.¹⁰ Historical narrative texts record numerous minor details. Although accurate descriptions of what actually happened, they are not to be elevated to the primary, didactic level unless the writer is clearly representing these details as significant to his primary thesis.¹¹ For example, an exegete must be careful not to draw too many thematic principles from the death of a proud politician as found in Acts 12. On a related matter, it should be noted that extensive passages on a subject take priority for theological purposes over brief allusions.¹²

Use Ibid. for consecutive footnotes from the same source. Include page number if different from previous footnote.

⁹ Fee and Stuart, *How to Read the Bible*, 102.

¹⁰ Ibid., 116.

¹¹ They may, of course, illustrate specific teaching recorded elsewhere.

¹² John Jones, “Missing the Point,” www.bibledoctrine.net Accessed December 2, 2002.

Electronic sources must include an accurate web address and the date you accessed the information. Author, title of article, and other identifying information should be included if available. (See Style Guide, p.27 for further information.)

Conclusion

The book of Acts can be legitimately used to establish ecclesiological polity in the contemporary church. If these principles are followed consistently, the interpreter will not be guilty of wresting Scripture to teach something that God never intended.

Paragraphs consist of two or more sentences.

Helpful Turabian Hints:

*There must be at least two paragraphs on a page

*Do not use contractions such as don't, wasn't, etc.

*Any form of 1st or 2nd person is never used. This includes: *I, we, you*, etc. Instead use words such as: *one, a person, the writer*, etc.

*A "Capitalization/Lowercasing Glossary" can be found in the Style Guide, p. 12–16.

*See Style Guide, p. 9–11 for other general writing information.

Insert page break at the end of the paper before the Bibliography to insure correct page numbering on the Bibliography. To insert page break, click the Page Layout tab, click the Breaks button, and click the section break Next Page.

A bibliography will include all works cited in the paper plus all quality works consulted in order to write the paper.

2" from the top and centered

See Style Guide, p. 16–18 for approved footnote and bibliography abbreviations.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Erickson, Millard. *Christian Theology*. 3 vols. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1983–85.

Fee, Gordon D. "The Genre of New Testament Literature and Biblical Hermeneutics." In *Interpreting the Word of God: Festschrift in Honor of Steven Barabas*. Edited by S. J. Schultz and M. A. Inch, 105–27. Chicago: Moody Press, 1976.

Use ½" hanging indent.

Fee, Gordon D. and Douglas Stuart. *How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth: A Guide to Understanding the Bible*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1982.

Jones, John. "Missing the Point." www.bibledoctrine.net Accessed December 2, 2002.

Lewis, Gordon R. and Bruce A. Demarest. *Integrative Theology*. 3 vols. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1987.

McQuilkin, J. Robertson. "Problems of Normativeness in Scripture: Cultural Versus Permanent." In *Hermeneutics, Inerrancy, and the Bible*. Edited by Earl Radmacher and Robert Preus, 217–53. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1984.

Virkler, Henry A. *Hermeneutics: Principles and Processes of Biblical Interpretation*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1981.

Bibliographical entries are alphabetized by author's last name; therefore, the last name is given first.

(Note: information categories are separated by periods rather than commas.)

Author. Title. City: Publisher, Copyright date.

For further Bibliography information see Style Guide, p. 19–28.

The first page of the bibliography is consecutively numbered with the text, is centered, and is in the footnote at the bottom of the page.