

**Bringing Good News for All People:
Engaging Luke's Narrative Soteriology for the Nations**

Robert L. Gallagher

Biblical Studies & Mission Study Group

14th Assembly of the International Association of Missions Studies

In this paper, I will explore the notion of God's engagement of the nations in the Book of Acts by examining the author's understanding of salvation through his narratives. In this hermeneutical journey, I will seek to contribute to a mission theology that has relevance in my context and the global arena.

After a brief overview of salvation in the Gospels and Acts, the paper examines Luke's use of the Greek word *sōzō* and its derivatives in his early church stories. Having completed my investigation, I will then analyze and integrate Luke's understanding with other scholarly interpretations of Lukan soteriology. My hope is that this study of the Lukan theology of the Savior's connection with the nations will assist God's people today. The church needs the Spirit's insights as it outworks the implications of faith and practice in mission for a pluralistic and multicultural world.

The essay moves from a comprehensive perspective to a focused understanding of salvation. The goal of the exercise is to explore the writer's application of the primitive Greek root *sōzō* and its derivations in his narrative case studies. First, an analysis is made of *sōzō* in Acts using a number of Greek-English lexicons. Second, the interpretation of the observations will reveal how the author understood his perception in the narratives. This tactic allows opportunity for a number of historical-critical questions: What was the first author saying to the original audience? How did the initial audience understand the meaning and response required? Then later in the paper, I will suggest what the church's response could be today.