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**Uncovering the Literary Dimensions of Luke's Gospel**  
*Learning from the Silence in Luke 4:30*



After Jesus is threatened to be thrown from a cliff by an angry crowd, Luke 4:30 says that He “passed through the middle of them and went on his way.” What happens to elicit his escape? Why are readers not given all the details of this important story? What should we be listening for in this seemingly intentional silence?

In this refreshingly unique book, New Testament scholar Bruce Longenecker demonstrates that reading Luke’s narrative is richly enhanced through attentiveness to that which is tantalizingly left out. *Hearing the Silence* invites the reader to delve deeply into the literary and theological dimensions of the Lukan narrative through an exploration of Jesus’ strangely under-narrated “escape” in Luke 4:30. Through a unique survey of this scene in Jesus novels and films, Longenecker brings into dramatic relief the options for interpreting this curious event, including a variety of strategies that have been employed to iron the scene’s narrative oddity. Against their backdrop, Longenecker’s own constructive proposals bring the reader into direct contact with some of the most significant features of the Lukan Gospel and worldview.

Students and professors of New Testament and Biblical Studies, as well as professional scholars, pastors, and Christians interested in exploring Luke’s Gospel in a fascinating way will find *Hearing the Silence* to be an indispensable resource.

**Bruce W. Longenecker** is Professor of New Testament and the W. W. Melton Chair of Religion in the Department of Religion at Baylor University, Texas.

*Hearing the Silence: Jesus on the Edge and God in the Gap—Luke 4 in Narrative Perspective*  
by Bruce W. Longenecker / Cascade Books / Wipf & Stock Publishers  
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## **Praise for *Hearing the Silence*:**

“‘But the dog did not bark!’ Sherlock noted. Now Bruce Longenecker, with a similar steely detective-like resolve, explores one of the most perplexing silences in the Gospel of Luke. Specifically, what actually happened to Jesus on the edge of a hill in Nazareth, that he was able to walk away scot free from an angry mob? With literary sensitivity, Longenecker demonstrates how the silence of details actually speaks volumes . . . God is at work to reveal the liberating power of the kingdom of God by preserving the messianic deliverer in the midst of evil. An engaging read!”

—**Michael Bird**, Professor of Theology and Bible, Crossway College, Brisbane, Australia and author of *Colossians and Philemon: A New Covenant Commentary* (Cascade, 2009)

“This is an entertaining book with a serious point. Longenecker takes his readers on a captivating journey from the absurd to the sublime. Focusing on a single ‘gap’ in the text of Luke’s Gospel, he starts with novelistic attempts at filling it (the absurd) and ends with deft reflections on how Luke crafts a narrative Christology (the sublime). With this highly innovative approach, Longenecker deepens our appreciation of Luke’s Gospel, while also bearing testimony to the mystery of Christ.”

—**George Hunsinger**, Hazel Thompson McCord Professor of Systematic Theology, Princeton Theological Seminary and editor of *Thy Word Is Truth: Barth on Scripture* (2012)

“Longenecker proposes a christological arc for hearing Luke’s narrative as a whole: the one who undergoes the eucatastrophic ‘escape’ from the enraged townsfolk of Nazareth and is taken up by divine custody from his death by his nation to fill out the greater, overarching blessing to Israel and the nations. The author’s wit and imagination for filling in the gap of Luke 4:30 through the . . . arc of Psalm 91 outsmarts even the most creative Jesus novelists . . . in making sense of Jesus’ mysterious ‘passing through their midst’—stimulating, provocative, a delight to read!”

—**David P. Moessner**, A. A. Bradford Professor of Religion, Texas Christian University