

Guidelines for Writing Sociorhetorical Commentary

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction ...	1
Short Version ...	2
I. Formatting of the Commentary Proper-- with Recommendations ...	2
RHETOGRAPHY ...	2
TEXTURAL COMMENTARY ...	2
RHETORICAL FORCE AS EMERGENT DISCOURSE ...	3
II. Writing of the Commentary Proper-- with Recommendations ...	3
Section 1: Economically describe rhetography ...	4
Section 2: Analyze and interpret the textures ...	4
A. Inner Texture ...	4
B. Intertexture ...	5
C. Social and Cultural Texture ...	5
D. Ideological Texture ...	5
E. Sacred Texture ...	5
Section 3: Analyze and Interpret the Rhetorical Force ...	5
Expanded Version ...	6
I. Formatting of the Commentary Proper-- with Recommendations ...	6
RHETOGRAPHY ...	6
TEXTURAL COMMENTARY ...	6
RHETORICAL FORCE AS EMERGENT DISCOURSE ...	7
II. Writing of the Commentary Proper-- with Recommendations ...	7
Section 1: Economically describe rhetography ...	8
Section 2: Analyze and interpret the textures ...	9
A. Inner Texture ...	9
B. Intertexture ...	10
C. Social and Cultural Texture ...	11
D. Ideological Texture ...	13
E. Sacred Texture ...	18
Section 3: Analyze and Interpret the Rhetorical Force ...	18
Appendix 1: Blended Spaces and Locations in Early Christian Rhetorolects ...	19
Appendix 2: Summary of the Six Rhetorolects ...	20
Appendix 3: Blended Rhetorics in Each Rhetorolect ...	22
Bibliography ...	23

Introduction

These steps are intended to guide authors in the Rhetoric of Religious Antiquity (RRA) series to write volumes of Sociorhetorical Exploration Commentary (SREC) on entire books. They also can serve as a guide for writing essays that contain sustained Sociorhetorical Interpretation (SRI).

The goal of these guidelines is to integrate the progymnastic and textures phases of SRI (Robbins, *Tapestry of Ancient Christian Discourse*, 1996; Robbins, *Exploring the Texture of Texts*, 1996) with conceptual blending theory and critical spatiality theory (Robbins, *The Invention of Christian Discourse. Volume 1*, 2009) which developed after December 2002.

First there is a short version of the Guidelines. Second there is an expanded version that includes extended quotations from works of Todd Oakley and others to create an environment for “blending” in SRI.

Use *The SBL Handbook of Style*. Second edition. Atlanta: SBL Press, 2014 for all stylistic matters. If something is not covered in this book, the most recent *Chicago Manual of Style* will determine the style.

NB 1: Do not put any single-column displays in tables. Put only two or more column displays in tables.

NB 2: Use hyphens only in words (lead-in; social-cultural, etc.). Between all numbers use en-dash (6:1–4; 4:1–6:8, Mark 6–8, etc.). Use em-dash with no spaces on either side either within a sentence or at the end of it for special comments (He had many unusual reasons—which he did not regularly enumerate—for doing what he did. Please find here special guidelines—with recommendations.).

NB 3: Be sure to consult pp. 77–82 in *SBLHS* for the special uniform style for the names of presses. The use of two-letter abbreviations for state or province for less than major cities (Winona, MN; Kingston, ON) in contrast to omission of the state or province abbreviation for major cities (Philadelphia; Toronto) is easy to remember, but it is important to consult these pages for the special way SBL Press refers to presses (e.g., Mohr Siebeck [without hyphen, and never JCB Mohr] and Fortress [without Press]).

NB 4: Possessive of Jesus and Moses are Jesus’s and Moses’s, as well as all other singular possessives (Socrates’s; Robbins’s), but possessives with a plural ending in s simply have an apostrophe (horses’).

NB 5: Put only a single space after a period and colon (He did it. Yes he did it. The proper entry for the press for these volumes is Atlanta: SBL Press.).

NB 6: Always use unjustified margins, even in block quotations. Though justified margins may look beautiful to you, they hide too many spaces between words, etc.

NB 7: If you use EndNote or some other bibliographic software, be sure to embed the actual footnote, and not the link.

NB 8: In footnotes, only location, publisher, and date go in parentheses. Secondary bibliographical data stands outside the parentheses.

SHORT VERSION

I. Formatting of the Commentary Proper—with Recommendations

Include a brief section that provides an overview of scenes/steps or of one’s sociorhetorical approach to that section.

As often as possible, create a title for the section that reflects SRI blending of topoi that you have found in that section.

For example,

RHETOGRAPHY [Notice bold caps]

1. Use bold caps to introduce the rhetography/visual texture section.
2. In the rhetography/visual texture section there will be no use of bold or italics for interpretive analytic topoi, in contrast to the textural commentary section.
3. Include chapter and verse references, as is helpful, so readers can correlate visual description with specific verses.

DISPLAY OF TEXT [Do not put this data in a table.]

Eph 1:1–21

Eph 1:1–2 Paul’s Apostolic Address and Priestly Greeting

Scene 1→ Apostolic Address with Priestly Greeting

¹ Paul, an apostle of Anointed One Jesus by the will of God, To the saints who are also faithful in the anointed One Jesus:

² Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord, Jesus the anointed One.

TEXTURAL COMMENTARY [Notice bold caps]

Formatting in the commentary section regarding the major textures:

1. Use bold caps to introduce the textural commentary section.
2. When the textural commentary begins, after a lead-in paragraph or two, indent and type the name of the texture in bold followed by one space. Capitalize the initial letter of the texture.
3. The same textural name may be used various times at the beginning of paragraphs in a section, if the interpreter is alternating among textures (inner texture, intertexture, social-cultural, ideological texture) in the section. It is possible that some interpreters will decide to present all the aspects of one texture in one location followed by the presentation of the all the aspects of another texture, etc.
4. All major textures (inner texture, intertexture, social-cultural, ideological) should be included in textural commentary. Sacred texture may be included, but need not be.

On identifying sub-textures within textural commentary:

1. Italicize names of rhetorolects and sub-textures (i.e., interpretive-analytic SRI topoi) in the prose that are different from the textural heading at the beginning of the paragraph.

2. After the first occurrence of an italicized name of a sub-texture, rhetorolect, or major texture (if it is different than the texture heading), do not italicize subsequent occurrences in consecutive paragraphs that do not introduce a new textural heading.
3. The words “topos” and “topoi” should not be italicized.

For example:

Inner texture Ephesians 2:11–22 exhibits a distinct *argumentative texture* that contains a purposeful and illuminating structure that correlates political topoi through *progressive* and *repetitive texture*. These political topoi display dimensions of *wisdom* and *priestly rhetorolect* and will be discussed below under *social-cultural texture*.

RHETORICAL FORCE AS EMERGENT DISCOURSE [Notice bold caps]

1. Use bold caps to introduce the rhetorical force as emergent discourse section.
2. In the rhetorical force as emergent discourse section, there will be no use of bold or italics for interpretive analytic topoi, in contrast to the textural commentary section.
3. Include chapter and verse references as is helpful.

II. Writing of the Commentary Proper—with Recommendations

Writing commentary on discrete pericopes is done in three sections:

Section 1: Describe the rhetography and/or visual texture in the discourse;

Section 2: Analyze and interpret the rhetography and rhetology in the discourse (in other words, produce “rhetorical commentary”) using the strategies laid out in the textures that you find to be most productive in each section of text. Be sure to include the names of the textures in bold print and sub-textures in italics where you are using them as interpretive-analytic guides;

Section 3: Analyze and interpret the rhetorical force of the rhetography and rhetology as emergent discourse.

Section 1: Economically describe rhetography (the rhetoric of the graphic images) or your thesis concerning the rhetography of the discourse

Begin by presenting your view of the rhetoric of the visual imagery (the rhetography) in the text in such a way that it invites modern audiences into your construction of the ancient audience’s experience of the text. You may describe the sequence of the visual imagery that you think takes the audience(s) to a particular way of understanding, or how particular images may exercise a dramatic rhetorical function. You may describe shifts in foregrounding and back-grounding, or other elements of the “cinematography” of the text. Commentary written from this starting point may move through the textural commentary drawing support for these deductions about the rhetoric of the visual imagery. Phenomena that may play a special role in this section may be: the body, household, geophysical world, vegetation world, non-human living beings’ world, political world, celestial sphere, sacred world.

This section may include preliminary observations concerning the presence or absence of one or more of the six major first century Christian rhetorolects in the discourse: wisdom, prophetic, apocalyptic, precreation, miracle, and priestly (see “Appendix: Summary of the Six Rhetorolects”). This activity presupposes the existence of an initial “Blending Outline” for the section of text being interpreted (See “[The ABC’s for Establishing a Sociorhetorical Blending Outline of Texts](#)”).

Section 2: Analyze and interpret the rhetography and rhetology in the discourse (in other words, produce rhetorical commentary) using the strategies laid out in the textures that you find to be most productive in each section of text.

This section may contain any sequence of the major textural interpretations, completed one at a time. Alternatively, this section may interweave textural interpretations in various sequences that the commentator decides will best exhibit the sociorhetorical aspects of the text being interpreted. This means that paragraphs dedicated to a major texture may recur various times in the section. See guidelines on formatting for negotiating both kinds of sequencing.

A. Analyze and Interpret the Inner Texture of the Rhetography and Rhetology in the Discourse [in any order; and can be repeated]

Using guidelines from *Tapestry*: 44–95 and *Exploring*: 7–39, analyze and interpret the relation of rhetography and rhetology in the discourse’s elaboration by selecting among the following strategies (interpretive-analytic SRI topoi) and/or combining these with other rhetorical strategies of interpretation: repetitive, progressive, narrational, opening-middle-closing, argumentative, and sensory-aesthetic texture and pattern. These strategies activate and correlate two traditions of inquiry that often are separated: the “image tradition of inquiry” and the “logic tradition of inquiry.” The goal of this “double-mode” of “inner texture” inquiry is to locate “frequency” data that exhibit textures and patterns that integrate and correlate rhetography and rhetology in the discourse. This is a double mode of inquiry, since frequency data is likely to call attention both to patterns of images and to patterns of logical assertions in the discourse.

B. Analyze and Interpret the Intertexture of the Rhetography and Rhetology in the Discourse [in any order, and may be repeated]

Using guidelines from *Tapestry*: 96–143 and *Exploring*: 40–70, analyze and interpret various aspects of intertexture (oral-scribal, cultural, social, historical) from the perspective of both rhetography and rhetology.

C. Analyze and Interpret the Social and Cultural Texture of the Rhetography and Rhetology in the Discourse [in any order, and may be repeated]

Using guidelines from *Tapestry*: 144–91 and *Exploring*: 71–94, analyze and interpret various aspects of social and cultural texture (specific topics, common social and cultural topics, and final cultural categories) from the perspective of both rhetography and rhetology. Using critical spatiality theory, identify and interpret “Firstspace” (socially experienced) places; “Secondspace” (socially and culturally imagined) spaces; and “Thirdspace” (daily living) spaces of blending in

relation to wisdom, prophetic, apocalyptic, precreation, miracle, and priestly rhetorolects (see Appendix).

D. Analyze and Interpret the Ideological Texture of the Rhetography and Rhetology in the Discourse [in any order, and may be repeated]

Using guidelines from *Tapestry*: 192–236 and *Exploring*: 95–119, analyze and interpret various aspects of ideology (individual locations, relation to groups, modes of intellectual discourse, and spheres of ideology) from the perspective of both rhetography and rhetology. Include the categories of critical spatiality theory where they shed light on the ideological texture of the text.

E. Analyze and Interpret the Sacred Texture of the Rhetography and Rhetology in the Discourse [optional using *Exploring*: 120–31]

Section 3: Analyze and Interpret the Rhetorical Force of the Rhetography and Rhetology, highlighting its contributions to emergent discourse(s)

How the text invites the audience to picture particular aspects of their world in a particular way, and to respond to it accordingly. Analyze and interpret how the interaction between the rhetography and rhetology of the text blends topics (generally regarded as native to different rhetorolects) into fresh discourse. Account for the ways in which authors help audiences negotiate that which is fresh or peculiar in the discourse, rendering it accessible and “portable” into multiple social settings (household, city, empire).

EXPANDED VERSION

I. Formatting of the Commentary Proper—with Recommendations

Include a brief section that provides an overview of scenes/steps or of one’s sociorhetorical approach to that section.

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For example,

RHETOGRAPHY [Notice bold caps]

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Scene 1→Apostolic Address with Priestly Greeting

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² Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord, Jesus the anointed One.

TEXTURAL COMMENTARY [Notice bold caps]

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For example:

Inner texture Ephesians 2:11–22 exhibits a distinct *argumentative texture* that contains a purposeful and illuminating structure that correlates political topoi through *progressive* and *repetitive texture*. These political topoi display dimensions of *wisdom* and *priestly rhetorolect* and will be discussed below under *social-cultural texture*.

RHETORICAL FORCE AS EMERGENT DISCOURSE [Notice bold caps]

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4. All major textures (inner texture, intertexture, social-cultural, ideological texture) should be included in textural analysis. Sacred texture may be included, but need not be.

On identifying sub-textures within textural analysis:

1. Italicize names of rhetorolects and sub-textures (i.e., interpretive-analytic SR topoi) in the prose that are different from the textural heading at the beginning of the paragraph.
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Section 1: Economically describe rhetography (the rhetoric of the graphic images) or your thesis concerning the rhetography of the discourse

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This section may include preliminary observations concerning the presence or absence of one or more of the six major first century Christian rhetorolects in the discourse: wisdom, prophetic, miracle, I, priestly, and apocalyptic (see "Appendix 2: Summary of the Six Rhetorolects"). This activity presupposes the existence of an initial "Blending Outline" for the section of text being interpreted (See "[The ABC's for Establishing a Sociorhetorical Blending Outline of Texts](#)").

Theoretical Resources for this Section:

(Oakley 1999: 110): At the most basic levels of intelligent behavior, scene construction is fundamental.

(Oakley 1999: 111): A scene is an ordered set of categorizations of familiar and novel events in space and time, some with and some without necessary physical and causal connections to other entities and events in the same environment (Edelman 1992: 118). For Sereno (1986, 1990), Damasio (1994), and Edelman (1989, 1992), the ability to construct elaborate scenes is the prerequisite for learning; that is, events significant to an organism's past experience (prior scenes) are partially mapped onto new, novel events, however causally unconnected and remote in time. Constructing and mapping scenes constitutes the neuropsychological component of our human rhetorical potential.

(Oakley 1999: 98): *Human agents learn, reason, decide, and act by running "imaginative mental simulations."* Mental simulations are partial representational structures that human agents construct (viz., pattern completion) and project about entities and relations in perceived, imagined, past, present, or future events and actions (e.g., I can construct a mental simulation of my evening run the morning before it occurs, simulating the distance, duration, weather conditions, and quality of the terrain). One persistent way in which human agents learn, reason, decide, and act is by switching perspectives with other agents, human or otherwise (e.g., running the same mental simulation with my son, Ben, as the runner to determine if he can "go the distance" and thus to decide whether to invite him to join me). I call this the principle of *projection*.

(Oakley 1999: 113): What language confers, over and above basic primate consciousness, is the ability to create what Sereno (1990) calls “fictive” scenes, a sequence of “phoneme representations” in the secondary auditory cortices that no longer tie consciousness to an organism’s present environment.

(Cameron 1991: 23): The next two chapters will focus on two features of Christian discourse in the period before Constantine, each of which helped it to develop in its own right and to plant its roots more firmly in the contemporary culture of the empire. The first is its essentially figural character, a feature well known and much discussed in the context of Christian literature and Christian exegesis, but much less so in terms of the relation of Christian and pagan discourse. The second is the role of Christian myth as story, against the background of other literary developments in the early empire.

Section 2: Analyze and interpret the rhetography and rhetology in the discourse (in other words, produce rhetorical commentary) using the strategies laid out in the textures that you find to be most productive in each section of text.

This section may contain any sequence of the major textural interpretations, completed one at a time. Alternatively, this section may interweave textural interpretations in various sequences that the commentator decides will best exhibit the Sociorhetorical aspects of the text being interpreted. This means that paragraphs dedicated to a major texture may recur various times in the section. See guidelines on formatting for negotiating both kinds of sequencing.

A. Analyze and Interpret the Inner Texture of the Rhetography and Rhetology in the Discourse [in any order; and can be repeated]

Using guidelines from *Tapestry*: 44–95 and *Exploring*: 7–39, analyze and interpret the relation of rhetography and rhetology in the discourse’s elaboration by selecting among the following strategies (interpretive-analytic SR topoi) and/or combining these with other rhetorical strategies of interpretation: repetitive, progressive, narrational, opening-middle-closing, argumentative, and sensory-aesthetic texture and pattern. These strategies activate and correlate two traditions of inquiry that often are separated: the “image tradition of inquiry” and the “logic tradition of inquiry.” The goal of this “double-mode” of “inner texture” inquiry is to locate “frequency” data that exhibit textures and patterns that integrate and correlate rhetography and rhetology in the discourse. This is a double mode of inquiry, since frequency data is likely to call attention both to patterns of images and to patterns of logical assertions in the discourse.

Theoretical Resources for this Section:

(Coulson and Oakley 2000: 193, based on Galison 1997: 19–31): The image tradition of inquiry focuses on golden-events with the aim of capturing as much of a given event as possible. Much rhetorical and literary criticism, discourse analysis, and semiotic analysis routinely mine for golden events. The logic tradition of inquiry focuses on statistical frequency with the aim of capturing regularities of form and meaning within a language or sign system. Much work in composition studies relies on quantitative research on the production and distribution of written forms (i.e., genres and sub-genres) within specific settings.

(Fauconnier and Turner 2002: 48–49): *Elaboration*: We elaborate blends by treating them as simulations and running them imaginatively according to the principles that have been established for the blend. Some of these principles have been brought to the blend by completion.... Part of the power of blending is that there are always many different possible lines of elaboration, and elaboration can go on indefinitely. We can run the blend as much and as long and in as many alternative directions as we choose....

(Oakley 1998: 341): Blends are elaborated by imaginative simulation according to its emergent principles and logic.

B. Analyze and Interpret the Intertexture of the Rhetography and Rhetology in the Discourse [in any order, and may be repeated]

Using guidelines from *Tapestry*: 96–143 and *Exploring*: 40–70, analyze and interpret various aspects of intertexture (oral-scribal, cultural, social, historical) from the perspective of both rhetography and rhetology.

Theoretical Resources for this Section:

(Fauconnier and Turner 2002: 48): We rarely realize the extent of background knowledge and structure that we bring into a blend unconsciously. Blends recruit great ranges of such background meaning. Pattern completion is the most basic kind of recruitment: We see some parts of a familiar frame of meaning, and much more of the frame is recruited silently but effectively to the blend.... A minimal composition in the blend is often automatically interpreted as being a richer pattern....

(Fauconnier and Turner 2002: 49): The creative possibilities of blending stem from the open-ended nature of completion and elaboration. They recruit and develop new structure for the blend in ways that are principled but effectively unlimited. Blending operates over the entire richness of our physical and mental worlds.

(Oakley 1999:109): Cognitive rhetoric ... must return memory to the status Quintilian afforded it in his *Institutio Oratoria*. “Our whole education,” he asserts, “depends on memory,” for “it is the power of memory alone that brings before us all the stores of precedents, laws, rulings, sayings, and facts which the orator must possess in abundance” (XI.ii.1). For Quintilian, and likewise for the anonymous author of the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* (III.xvi.28–xxi.35), remembering precedents, laws, rulings, sayings, and the like involves more than the acquisition of a list of features in propositional form; remembering involves the evocation of complex scenes built from perceptual signs.

(n. 8: 125): The anonymous author of the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* claims that artificial memory can be improved by cultivating our natural ability to construct backgrounds (*ex locis*) and images (*imaginibus*). “By backgrounds,” the author means that, “scenes are naturally and artificially set off on a small scale, complete and conspicuous, so that we can grasp and embrace them easily by the natural memory” (III.xvi.29). Remembering a horse, for instance, means

placing “its image in a definite background” (III.xvi.29). For the ancients, memory was a function of perception.

(Oakley 1999: 109): [M]emory is a complex and dynamic process of constructing a complex scene and marshaling our learned capacity to order successive changes. Performance itself is a form of recategorization, the act of placing something in a category by considering its properties.

From a rhetorical perspective, it is easier for viewers to repeat a nominal compound construction (it is shorter) than the entire particularized processes, events, and conditions that the phrase may (p. 110) invoke.

(Oakley 1999: 110): Taken separately, the possibilities for projection are large and indefinite (perhaps recalling Peirce’s 1931–1958, 2.300, notion of “unlimited semiosis”). As a full noun phrase, these words [tombstone technology] prompt us to construct a cognitive routine (see Principles 2, *projection*, and 4, *materiality*, above), which, when combined with a previously established context, or scene, provides working memory with the starting point from which to selectively attend to specific information and to attenuate or obliterate irrelevant information. Linguistic form is a computationally cheap way to hold thoughts steady in the memory.

C. Analyze and Interpret the Social and Cultural Texture of the Rhetography and Rhetology in the Discourse [in any order, and may be repeated]

Using guidelines from *Tapestry*: 144–91 and *Exploring*: 71–94, analyze and interpret various aspects of social and cultural texture (specific topics, common social and cultural topics, and final cultural categories) from the perspective of both rhetography and rhetology. Using critical spatiality theory, identify and interpret “Firstspace” (socially experienced) places; “Secondspace” (socially and culturally imagined) spaces; and “Thirdspace” (daily living) spaces of blending in relation to wisdom, prophetic, miracle, I, priestly, and apocalyptic rhetorolects (see Appendix 1).

Theoretical Resources for this Section:

(Oakley 1999: 96): [C]ognitive rhetoric, as set forth in Turner (1991, 1994, 1996), operates under the assumption that meaning is neither “in here” nor “out there” exclusively; rather, meaning is constructed or negotiated through the interactions of people who share a common embodiment and environment. It is a human being’s “situatedness” that frames intelligent behavior.

(Oakley 1999: 96–97): Cognitive science as embodied intelligence ... generat[es] research programs in which the starting assumptions are broadly compatible with rhetorical theory: (a) that mind is a process not an object (cf. Vygotsky 1978); (b) that language is context-dependent and dynamic, not context-free and stable, and that the focus of study should be on its individually enriching and socially limiting effects, not simply the study of forms and their distributional properties (cf. Vygotsky 1978, 1934/1986); and (c) that cultures and their material artifacts constitute the foundational scene of intelligent behavior.... Under the embodied intelligence paradigm, cognitive science can be described profitably as the story of an organic or synthetic system’s *pragmatic action*: an organism’s action on the world to achieve a physical goal.... Ultimately, the aim of cognitive science is to fully analyze and create systems that approach

epistemic action: an organism's action on the physical world for the purpose of affecting its own mental tasks....

(Dozeman 2003: 455): Lefebvre and Soja offer a three-part model for interpreting spatial representation in contemporary society, not ancient historiography. Yet their categories provide methodological focus for interrelating the different functions of geography in ancient historiography. The first category is perceived space: it is the concrete, physical geography of our world.¹ Perceived space in the work of Herodotus would represent his aim to advance a description of world geography grounded in the physical terrain and open to testing and modification, as opposed to the legend or myth of Ocean.

The second category, conceived space, includes the social order that is interwoven and imposed on physical geography.² Conceived space is a self-conscious construction of physical space. It is created or imagined by a society, thus representing public and overt social forms of power and ideology. Conceived space in Herodotus would represent his social configuration of the continents," and it would also include his work on ethnography, where he seeks to relate physical geography to nation and social structures.

The third category, lived space, is the immediate world of experience.³ Lived space embraces physical geography (perceived space) and public social structures (conceived space) within the immediacy of one's inhabited world of emotions, events, and public choices. Both Lefebvre and Soja underscore overlap between conceived and lived space....

... The power of geographical representation in ancient historiography arises from the interweaving of physical and historical geography with social and ideological representations, and not from their separation into the categories of myth and history, or the physical and the mental.

(Berquist 2002: 5): Many spatialities draw a distinction between material spaces and mental or imagined spaces. Often, human geographers refer to this as space (the material) and place (the human-constructed meanings attached to specific spaces). (Cp. Jones 2001:121, who refers to this notion of place as "lifeworld.") This is very similar to Soja's distinction between Firstspace and Secondspace.

This notion of "place" is an idea, a mental construct, or a meaning. Thus, it can be imagined and narrated. Place as a social construct is intimately connected to the social construct of identity; geographers with concern for identity often argue that place and identity are simultaneously constructed (Richardson 2001: 267). Thus, critical geographies of place allow for integration of critical spatiality with imagination, narrative, and identity.

Edward S. Casey defines space as "the most encompassing reality that allows for things to be located within it," whereas place is "the immediate ambience of my lived body and its history, including the whole sedimented history of cultural and social influences and personal interests" (Casey 2001: 404).

D. Analyze and Interpret the Ideological Texture of the Rhetography and Rhetology in the Discourse [in any order, and may be repeated]

¹ Lefebvre describes this category as "spatial practice" (Lefebvre 1991: 33, et passim). See Soja 1989: 74–79.

² Lefebvre 1991: 33, 245; Soja 1996: 66–67.

³ Lefebvre 1991: 33; Soja 1996: 31.

Using guidelines from *Tapestry*: 192–236 and *Exploring*: 95–119, analyze and interpret various aspects of ideology (individual locations, relation to groups, modes of intellectual discourse, and spheres of ideology) from the perspective of both rhetography and rhetology. Include the categories of critical spatiality theory where they shed light on the ideological texture of the text.

Theoretical Resources for this Section:

(McNutt 2001): Soja's categories are similar in their essential characteristics to the three kinds of space defined by Lefebvre. These are: *perceived* (or "real") space, *conceived* (or "imagined") space, and *lived* space (1996: 10).

Perceived space, Soja's Firstspace, consists mainly of concrete spatial forms, things that can be empirically mapped, but are also socially produced, as *mediums* and *outcomes* of human activity, behavior, and experience. This materialized, "physical," socially produced, empirically measurable space is space that can be directly sensed and is open to relatively accurate measurement and description. Perceived space is thus apparent in the concrete and mappable geographies of our lifeworlds, ranging from the emotional and behavioral space "bubbles" which invisibly surround our bodies, to the complex spatial organization of the social practices that shape our "action spaces" in such contexts as households, neighborhoods, villages, cities, regions, and nations (1996: 10, 66, 74–75).

Conceived space (Soja's Secondspace) is that space that is constructed in mental or cognitive forms (or, as Lefebvre puts it, it is "imagined"). Conceived space is expressed in systems of "intellectually worked out" signs and symbols, that is, in the written and spoken word. For Lefebvre, this is the dominant space in any society. Located in these "dominating" mental spaces are the representations of power and ideology (1996: 10, 66–67).

Soja notes that the boundaries between First- and Secondspace knowledge are blurred, but that Second- or conceived space epistemologies can be distinguished by their implicit assumption that spatial knowledge is constructed primarily through the spatial workings of the mind. This does not mean that there is no material reality, no Firstspace, but rather that knowledge of this material reality is comprehended essentially through thought, and expressed in symbolic language and action. However its essence is defined, in conceived space the "imagined" geography tends to become the "real" geography, with the symbolic representation defining and ordering that "reality."

Lived space (Soja's Thirdspace) consists of *actual* social and spatial practices, the immediate material world of *experience* and *realization*. Lived space overlays physical space, making symbolic use of its objects, and tends to be expressed in systems of *nonverbal* symbols and signs. For Lefebvre lived space was both distinct from physical and mental space and an all-encompassing mode of spatial thinking, as Soja puts it, a "transcending composite of all spaces" (1996: 62). Lived space embodies the real and imagined lifeworld of *experiences*, *emotions*, *events*, and *political choices*. As Soja describes it, this space is "directly lived," the space of "inhabitants" and "users," containing all other real and imagined spaces simultaneously. Thus, Thirdspace is a mode of thinking about space that draws upon both the *material* and the *mental* spaces of perceived space and conceived space, but extends well beyond them in scope, substance, and meaning. It is simultaneously real and imagined and more (1996: 31).

Everything comes together in Thirdspace: subjectivity and objectivity, the abstract and concrete, the real and imagined, the knowable and the unimaginable, the repetitive and the differential, structure and agency, mind and body, consciousness and the unconscious, the

disciplined and the transdisciplinary, everyday life and unending history. Anything which fragments Thirdspace into separate specialized knowledges or exclusive domains—even on the pretext to handling its infinite complexity—destroys its meaning and openness (Soja, 1996: 56–57).

In his analysis of Thirdspace, Soja places a great deal of emphasis on the relationship among space, knowledge, and power, arguing that power is embedded in the spatial relationship between center and periphery, and that lived space is shaped by the interplay between them (1996: 31). Like all social relations, power is contextualized and made concrete in the social production of social space. Soja is particularly interested in how power is used to construct and maintain “difference,” and how this relates to spatiality. Those in authority use power, he argues, to actively produce difference as a strategy for creating and maintaining social and spatial divisions that are advantageous to their continued empowerment and authority. “We” and “they” are thus spatialized and become enclosed in imposed territories such as ghettos and reservations, which emanate from the center-periphery relation (1996: 87).

This is the dominated space that is created by the imagination of Second- or conceived space. But these lived, “dominated” spaces are also the domain for generating what Soja calls “counterspaces,” spaces of resistance to the dominant order that arise from within subordinate, peripheral, or marginalized contexts (1996: 31–32, 62–63, 67–68). Using the writings of bell hooks, Cornel West, Gloria Anzaldúa, Edward Said, and others as illustrations, Soja argues that in these “counterspaces,” “difference” can be used as a basis for community, identity, and struggle against the existing power relations (1996: 89). For those who use their “differentness” in this way, who choose their marginality, the hierarchy of center and periphery is thwarted—the margin refuses its placement as “Other.” Soja thus makes a definite distinction between the marginality that is imposed by oppressive structure and that marginality which is chosen as a site of resistance. This chosen marginality becomes a site one wishes to stay in, cling to, because it nourishes the capacity to resist (1996: 98).

(Camp 2002: 2): At the heart of critical spatiality is the recognition that, like history and society, space is not encountered as a transparent or objective “reality,” but is constructed in social practice and must therefore be theorized. Soja (1996), adapting the seminal work of Henri Lefebvre’s *Production of Space* (1991), analyzes space as epistemologically triune. Firstspace indicates “geophysical realities as perceived” (Berquist, 1999: 6), “the concrete materiality of spatial forms, . . . things that can be empirically mapped.” Secondspace is imagined space, “ideas about space, . . . thoughtful re-presentations of human spatiality in mental or cognitive forms” (Soja 1996: 10). Thirdspace might be partially encapsulated in the notion of “lived realities as practiced” (Berquist, 1999: 6), yet, as we shall see, is also more than this. Lefebvre names these categories perceived space (or spatial practice), conceived space (or representations of space), and lived space (or spaces of representation); [Jim Flanagan sometimes substitutes for these terms material space, designed space, and lived space. The theorists’ agreement in describing the third category as “lived” space is notable, and will be taken up below.]

It is Thirdspace that has held the most interest for both non-biblical and biblical theorists. Thirdspace as a theoretical category is understood to be at one and the same time distinct from First and Secondspace and comprehensive and transformative of them (Soja 1996: 62). “Lived space embodies the real and imagined lifeworld of *experiences, emotions, events, and political choices*” (McNutt 2001). But Thirdspace is also, in Soja’s formulation, a “critical strategy” that he calls “thirthing as Othering,” understood as “a creative recombination and extension, one that

builds on a Firstspace perspective that is focused on the ‘real’ material world and a Secondspace perspective that interprets this reality through ‘imagined’ representations of spatiality” (1996: 5–6). Thirdspace interests theorists because of the possibility of creative openness inherent in it, especially in resistance to the oppressive power structures that are associated with the ideologies of Secondspace. Lefebvre regards livedspace as clandestine, concealed, as opposed to the overt, frontal quality of Secondspace (Boer 2000). Soja’s articulation of Thirdspace, like Lefebvre’s, focuses on this dimension as a space of resistance, as “politically charged” (Soja 1996: 35). Thirdspaces “are ‘the dominated spaces,’ the spaces of the peripheries, the margins and the marginalized. . . . They are the chosen spaces for struggle, liberation, emancipation” (Soja 1996: 68), “the spaces that are ignored” (Flanagan 1999b).

(Camp 2002: 11–14): Once Simeon appears [in Sirach 50:1], Woman Wisdom disappears, a point we’ll return to in a moment.

The verticality of the Temple experience embodied in Simeon can be seen also by means of contrast to another famous biblical constructor of Temple space, namely, Ezekiel. As demonstrated by Kalinda Rose Stevenson (1996) in her book on the territorial rhetoric of Ezekiel 40–48, the prophet “uses horizontal language” to construct his Temple. The essential thing for Ezekiel is the establishment of boundaries; status is determined by how near or far one is from sacred space, how much access one has to it. Ben Sira’s vision is, with the exception of his elevation of Simeon, more democratic (though equally male!): “the whole congregation of the sons of Israel” observes the libation, participates in prayer, and receives the priestly blessing (50.17–21). Access to heaven is available to all, but through a single point in space alone, that point manifest in the body of the high priest in whom the whole space and meaning of the Temple inheres.

Ben Sira, then, having built a Temple through textual bodies, identifies all those bodies with one human body, authorizing text with flesh, flesh with text, and both with the affective power of the ritual experience as preserved in his textual space. The sage’s own text seems to embody Flanagan’s dictum regarding the organization and perception of space in segmented social systems: “in such societies, people move through people, not through space. Spatiality and people are organically linked” (1999b: 11). Ben Sira allows us to extend this insight to texts as well: people also apparently *read* through people, not through books (or scrolls). Textuality and people are organically linked. As we have observed, however, Ben Sira is not only interested in his readers’ reading through ancient textual persons, but also through himself as represented in his text. [n. 16] The dynamic of mutual authorization that he brings to bear between text and Temple is also at work between this author and his text. For this reason, even though his book reaches an emotional climax in Simeon at the altar, it does not end there. He turns almost immediately from the blessing of the priest and a prayer for the well-being of Simeon and the eternal priestly covenant (50.20–24) to a self-naming and the assurance that those who concern themselves with the matters in his book will also find blessing (50.27–29). The book concludes with an acrostic, an arguably erotic—or at least eroticized—autobiographical poem about the author’s relationship with female Wisdom.

This last unit is of particular interest to me here. It links Ben Sira to Simeon in terms of both space and person. Both men preside over a house: the house of God for the priest, the house of instruction for the scribe. Whether or not Ben Sira refers to an actual school in his own case is an interesting historical question, but misses the multi-spatial point. He claims for himself a divinely authorized space that is the equivalent of the priest’s. But the two houses involve a

separation of functions: the priest speaks ritual blessing but the scribe speaks instruction in wisdom. In the end neither Temple nor schoolhouse matter so much as the mouths of their authorized presiders. But this reality is not merely conceptual; it is also lived. People move through people. People read through people.

People move through people, and yet something different is going on with both Simeon and Ben Sira than what Flanagan has in mind with this phrase. His observation about the nature of space in segmentary societies refers to the networks of kin associations, real and fictive, that constitute the space of tribal peoples. In Ben Sira's hymn to the fathers, the reference to kin is much more attenuated; indeed, it is for the most part metaphorical. Simeon has a house but no wife, brothers but no mother. He appears as born of the sanctuary itself, from whose inmost space he emerges. Indeed, real women are missing in general from the Temple built of Ben's Sira's books. Except for one site: Solomon. The man who built the Firstspace Temple had real women. But these wives were the source of stain and shame for the male body, causing its issue in foolish sons (47:19–24). Simeon's honor cannot be marred by the presence of women; his beauty is that of Adam, that of Aaron; he is the new man, the perfect man-alone. But women do not depart from his space of their own accord, as the reference to Phinehas, both at the end of the Aaron pericope and at the end of Simeon's, shows. Ben Sira discreetly refrains from expounding on the exact nature of the "zeal" that won Phinehas's descendents the eternal covenant of priesthood (44.23–24). But every (implied) reader knows the untold story of Phinehas, son of Eleazar, plunging his spear through the bellies of the Simeonite(!) Zimri and his Midianite wife Cozbi in the sacred space of the tent of meeting (Numb. 25.6–18). How ironic, then, Ben Sira's plea that God fulfill the covenant of Phinehas with the present Simeon (50.24).

Ben Sira hints that he himself would like to have the zeal of Phinehas; indeed, he names himself "son of Eleazar." But in most respects it seems that he identifies more with Solomon. He has traveled the world, acquiring wisdom and sharing it (34.11–12; 39.4). Like Solomon his wisdom is universal. He compares himself, like Solomon, to an overflowing river, expanding to a sea (24.30–31). But there are also hints that, like Solomon, he does not quite measure up on the sexual purity front. His anxiety that he will be brought to shame by women in general and wives in particular is one of the most striking aspects of his textual self-revelation. Notably, his concluding poem begins with the line: "when I was a youth, *before I went astray*, . . . she came to me in her beauty" (51.13–14). His burning desire for Wisdom (51.19), whom he attains with his "purified" hands (51.20), is covered by the shadow of the "short time" he paid heed to her (51.16). How this short time before going astray fits in with his claims that his desire is "never relenting" and that he will "never forsake her" (51.19–20) is a mystery. Except of course to a psychoanalyst. The apparent incoherence between his values and his body is only partially resolved by sharing his house with a wife who, though luscious, is actually just a book that has proceeded from his own mouth. For this is the same Woman Wisdom whose presence in the Temple the scribe has suppressed by transferring her attributes of glory to Simeon. The shame he casts out of God's house by means of the tradition's stories and the priest's body he cannot quite cast out of his own.

To conclude: Ben Sira's Temple is a monument of Thirdspace, a monument to the male textual body. It is a monument that exists only in Thirdspace, in the lived experience that generates such texts and that these texts in turn (re)generate. For the texts become the kind of texts they are—Bible text—by virtue of having made this space, a space in which the authority of heaven is channeled through the body of the priest, but only by means of the mouth of the scribe. Ben Sira's text was not always divorced from Firstspace. He lived in a real city—called,

typically, Jerusalem rather than Zion—and worshipped in a real Temple made of earthly substances. In this Temple a real male priesthood celebrated before a male god (whose reality I will not comment on here). Women and their impurity could be ritually, though no less really, expunged. Here is one space in which the Bible begins its odyssey.

But writing takes place in the scribal house, one step removed from the purity of the Temple, as the presence of Woman Wisdom hints. And it must address real men, who cannot drive all women from their houses, however much they may hate or fear them. Ben Sira’s effort to construct an all-male Temple from the tradition must fail in the face of a larger lived space, as well of the tradition itself, where women’s stories are not absent. But what to make of these?

I think that this effort to understand one moment of Bible-making in spatial terms may help us cut through an interpretive dilemma introduced by feminist analysis. It begins with the early feminist question of whether the “text itself” is patriarchal or “only” its subsequent interpretation, and it lingers in later, more radical feminist insistence that the problem lies indeed with the text. Both answers to the question implicitly theorize a clear distinction between text and interpretation. A spatial approach to biblical genesis suggests instead a more integrated process. To make a Bible is to make a space in which the Bible can be Bible. Bible only happens to the degree it can keep making this space. In one sense, biblical Thirdspace divorced of any material Firstspace and challenged by other conceptual Secondspaces, as it is in Western culture today, has to work all the harder to naturalize itself as lived space. The fact that one of its spaces of departure was gynophobic at best, misogynist at worst, does not predestine all its spaces to be so. But it was not a good start, and the residues of biblical patriarchy leave one wondering about the cost of further construction.

E. Analyze and Interpret the Sacred Texture of the Rhetography and Rhetology in the Discourse [optional using *Exploring*: 120–131]

Section 3: Analyze and Interpret the Rhetorical Force of the Rhetography and Rhetology, highlighting its contributions to emergent Christian discourse(s)

How the text invites the audience to picture particular aspects of their world in a particular way, and to respond to it accordingly. Analyze and interpret how the interaction between the rhetography and rhetology of the text blends topics (generally regarded as native to different rhetorolects) into fresh discourse. Account for the ways in which authors help audiences negotiate that which is fresh or peculiar in the discourse, rendering it accessible and “portable” into multiple social settings (household, city, empire).

Theoretical Resources for this section:

(Cameron 1991: 21): [I]f ever there was a case of the construction of reality through text, such a case is provided by early Christianity. Out of the framework of Judaism, and living as they did in the Roman Empire and in the context of Greek philosophy, pagan practice, and contemporary social ideas, Christians built themselves a new world.

They did so partly through practice – the evolution of a mode of living and a communal discipline that carefully distinguished them from their Jewish and pagan neighbors – and partly through a discourse that was itself constantly brought under control and disciplined.

(Cameron 1991: 6): My concerns are twofold: to show that a large part of Christianity’s effectiveness in the Roman Empire lay in its capacity to create its own intellectual and imaginative universe, and to show how its own literary devices and techniques in turn related to changing contemporary circumstances.

(Cameron 1991: 7): [T]he absorption into social discourse at large of scriptural models and language is an integral part of the process I am trying to trace, although it has not yet, I think, been analyzed from that point of view.

(Cameron 1991: 7): [I]n contrast to the common emphasis on the distinctiveness of Christian writers, it is basic to my approach that they be seen as reflecting and responding to the same influences that were making themselves felt on pagan discourse. They were both less and more distinctive than they themselves supposed.

(Cameron 1991: 9): It is an important part of my argument that the very multiplicity of Christian discourse, what one might call its elasticity, while of course from the Church’s point of view needing to be restrained and delimited, in fact constituted an enormous advantage in practical terms, especially in the early stages. No account of Christian development can work if it fails to take this sufficiently into account.

Appendix 1: Blended Spaces and Locations in Early Christian Rhetorolects (see [online](#))

Generic spaces (Rhetorolects)	Wisdom	Prophetic	Miracle	Precreation	Priestly	Apocalyptic
Places of Social Relationships (Firstspace)	Household and Created World (Nature) -Garden	Prophet’s body as communication of God’s will to persons -Tabernacle -Temple -Wilderness -Mountain	Bodily agent and recipient of God’s power	Empire -Emperor’s household	Temple City and Afflicted body	Empire -Imperial Army
Culturally Configured Spaces (Secondspace)	Cosmos (God the heavenly Father)	Cosmos (God the heavenly King)	Cosmos (God as power of life vs. powers of death)	Cosmos (God as heavenly emperor Father)	Cosmos -Temple	Holy bodies -Temple
Places of Mental Conception	Cause-effect, change, time, identity, intentionality, representation, part-whole Formal argumentative topics: opposites, grammatical forms of the same word, correlatives, more and less, time, turning back upon the opponent, definition, varied meanings, division, induction, previous judgment, parts, consequence, contrast, openly and secretly, analogy, same result, before and after, purpose as cause,					

	for and against, implausible probabilities, contradictions, cause of false impression, cause and effect, better, doing contrary to what has been done, mistakes, meaning of a name. ⁴					
Places of Blending or Livedspace (Thirdspace)	Bodies of people who produce goodness and righteousness	God's righteous kingdom on earth	Inter-subjective bodies of people with full social well-being	God's household giving people eternal benefits	Sacrificial bodies effecting beneficial exchange between God and people	Holy cosmos filled with well-being and presence of God

Appendix 2: Summary of the Six Rhetorolects (see [online](#))
 [See the Glossary in *The Invention of Christian Discourse, Vol.1*, xxi-xxx]

Early Christian wisdom rhetorolect (generic space) blends human experiences of the household and the created world (firstspace: two places of social experience) with the cultural space of God's cosmos (secondspace). In the space of blending (thirdspace), God functions as heavenly Father over God's children in the world, who are to produce goodness and righteous through the medium of God's wisdom (light). Wisdom rhetorolect, then, features productivity and reproductivity. The goal of the conceptual blending is to create people who produce good, righteous action, thought, will, and speech with the aid of God's light, which equals God's wisdom which certain people speak on earth.

Early Christian prophetic rhetorolect blends human experiences of a prophet's body with the cosmos, under the presupposition that God's will has been communicated to the prophet. In the space of blending, God functions as heavenly King over his righteous kingdom on earth. Prophetic rhetorolect, then, features the performance of righteousness on the earth according to God's will. The goal of the conceptual blending is to create a governed realm on earth where God's righteousness is enacted among all the people in the realm with the aid of God's specially transmitted word in the form of prophetic action and speech.

Early Christian miracle rhetorolect blends human experiences of a bodily agent of God's power with the cosmos, where God's power to create and restore life is opposed by powers of death. In the space of blending, God functions as healer of inter-subjective bodies of people on earth. This means that as God heals malfunctioning bodies of individual people, God is restoring communities of people to relationships of well-being among one another. Miracle rhetorolect, then, features transformation through healing and restoration. The goal of this blending is to create full social well-being among all inter-subjective bodies on the earth with the aid of God's power in the form of a miraculous event.

Early Christian precreation rhetorolect blends human experiences of the emperor and his household with the cosmos, with the presupposition that God has the status of a loving heavenly emperor with a household populated by loving people. The result of this blending is the presence in God's heavenly household of God the loving Emperor Father, God's Son who does what His Father asks him to do, and heirs and friends of the emperor and his son, who receive eternal benefits from their relation to God's household through its members. In the space of

⁴ Aristotle, *Rhetoric* II.23.1–29 (1397a-1400b); G. A. Kennedy, *Aristotle, On Rhetoric: A Theory of Civic Discourse* (New York/Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991) 190–204.

blending, God functions as heavenly Emperor Father who possesses eternal blessings He will give to people as a result of his love for the world and the people in it. People may enter into this love by believing, honoring and worshipping not only God but also members and friends of God's household whom he sends out with a message of eternal blessings. Precreation rhetorolect, then, features love that is the source of all things in the world and the means by which people may enter into God's eternal love. In this rhetorolect, God's light is love that provides the possibility for entering into eternal love, rather than being limited to light that is the basis for the production and reproduction of goodness and righteousness. The goal of the blending in precreation rhetorolect is to guide people towards community that is formed through God's love, which reflects the eternal intimacy present in God's precreation household.

Early Christian priestly rhetorolect blends human experiences of the temple city with God's cosmos, with a presupposition that specific actions in the temple are actions that benefit God in a manner that activates divine benefits for humans on earth. In the space of blending, people make sacrifices by giving up things that give them well being in the form of giving them to God. Things like food, possessions and money but also things like comfort and honor may be given up to God. Some of these things may be given to God by giving them to other people on earth, or by allowing other people to take things like honor or fame away without protest. The greatest sacrifice people can offer to God, of course, is their entire life. Usually, in contrast, a person gives up only certain highly valued things in life. Priestly rhetorolect, then, features beneficial exchange between God and humans. The goal of the conceptual blending is to create people who are willing to give up things they highly value in exchange for special divine benefits that come to them, because these sacrifices are perceived to benefit God as well as humans. In other words, sacrificial actions by humans create an environment in which God acts redemptively among humans in the world.

Early Christian apocalyptic rhetorolect blends human experiences of the emperor and his imperial army with God's heavenly temple city, which can only be occupied by holy, undefiled people. In the space of blending, God functions as a heavenly emperor who gives commands to emissaries to destroy all the evil in the universe and to create a cosmic environment where holy bodies experience perfect well-being in the presence of God. Apocalyptic rhetorolect, then, features destruction of evil and construction of a cosmic environment of perfect well-being. The goal of this blending is to call people into action and thought guided by perfect holiness. The presupposition of the rhetorolect is that only perfect holiness and righteousness can bring a person into the presence of God, who destroys all evil and gathers all holiness together in His presence. Apocalyptic redemption, therefore, means the presence of all of God's holy beings in a realm where God's holiness and righteousness are completely and eternally present.

Appendix 3: Blended Rhetorics in Each Rhetorolect (Expanded)

	Wisdom	Prophetic	Miracle	Precreation	Priestly	Apocalyptic
Blended Wisdom Rhetorolect	God's speech through Christ produces fruitfulness	God's speech through Christ calls people to produce a righteous kingdom	God's speech through Christ miraculously produces benevolence and goodness in people's bodies	God's speech through Christ produces eternal fruit	God's speech through Christ produces sacrificial, holy fruitfulness	God's speech through Christ produces new beginnings and good endings
Blended Prophetic Rhetorolect	God and Christ call people to produce righteous fruit	God and Christ call people to be a righteous kingdom	God and Christ call people into miraculous, righteous bodily transformation	God and Christ call people into an eternal righteous kingdom	God and Christ call people into sacrificial, holy righteousness	God and Christ call people into new beginnings
Blended Miracle Rhetorolect	God's power in and/or through Christ produces transformed fruitfulness	God's power working in and/or through people whom God has chosen transforms people into a righteous kingdom	God's power in and/or through Christ produces miraculous bodily transformation	God's power in and/or through Christ produces eternal bodily transformation of believers	God's power in and/or through Christ produces holy bodily transformation of believers through sacrifice	God's power in and/or through Christ produces new bodily beginnings
Blended Precreation Rhetorolect	Christ's primordial divinity produces eternal fruit for believers	Christ's primordial divinity chooses people to be an eternal kingdom of believers	Christ's primordial divinity produces eternal bodily transformation in believers	Christ's primordial divinity produces eternal life in believers	Christ's primordial divinity and sacrifice produces eternal holiness in believers	Christ's primordial divinity produces eternal beginnings in believers
Blended Priestly Rhetorolect	Christ's sacrifice produces holy fruit for believers	Christ's sacrifice calls people to sacrificial action internal to a holy kingdom of believers	Christ's sacrifice produces holy bodily transformation in believers	Christ's sacrifice produces eternal holiness in believers	Christ's sacrifice produces holy benefit for believers	Christ's sacrifice produces holy beginnings for believers
Blended Apocalyptic Rhetorolect	Christ's initial coming produces new fruit and Christ's return will produce an abundant harvest	Christ's initial coming called people into God's kingdom in the world and Christ's return will call people into Christ's kingdom	Christ's initial coming produces exorcism of demons from bodies and Christ's return will produce resurrection of bodies to eternal life	Christ's initial coming produces eternal destruction of sin and renewal of life for believers	Christ's initial coming and return produces a new holy benefit for believers through his sacrificial death	Christ's initial coming produced a new beginning and Christ's return will produce a new world

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