

Acts and Paul

Reformed Theological Seminary, Washington
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I. Purpose

1. To begin an understanding of how to handle critical questions concerning Acts and the Pauline letters.
2. To be able to appreciate the man Paul and the time in which he lived.
3. To develop proper hermeneutical practices for interpreting Acts and the letters of Paul.
4. To get an understanding of the message of Acts and of each of the letters of Paul and how they can be applied today.

II. Texts

1. F. F. Bruce, *Paul: Apostle of the Heart Set Free*, Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1977. (ISBN 0-8028-4778-1)
2. D. A. Carson and Douglas J. Moo, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan Publishing House, 2005, pp. 198-224; 285-595. (ISBN 0-310-23859-5)
3. Dennis E. Johnson, *The Message of Acts*, Phillipsburg, New Jersey: P. & R. Publishing Co., 1997. (ISBN 0-87552-235-1)
4. Herman Ridderbos, *Paul, An Outline of His Theology*, Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co. 1975, pp. 1-90. (ISBN 0-8028-4469-3)

Articles to be sent

1. James D. G. Dunn, "The New Perspective on Paul," *Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library of Manchester*, vol. 65, no. 2, Spr. 1983, pp. 95-122.
2. John R. W. Stott, *Romans: God's Good News for the World*, InterVarsity Press: Downers Grove, Illinois, 1994, pp. 24-31.

III. Grading

1. There will be a take home final (worth 50%). The test will cover all the material covered in class and in the assigned readings. This test will be distributed on the final class period and must be returned by **June 12**.
2. There will be two small papers (each worth 10%). The first paper, dealing with the "New Perspective" on Paul, will be due at the beginning of the third day of class, **May 20**. The second will be due on **June 5**. See section **IV**.
3. There will be one larger exegesis paper (worth 20%) due **June 26**. See section **IV**.
4. Class participation (10%). This is a necessary and vital component for this class. You must be prepared.

IV. Papers

You are to write two papers (about 1200 words each), and each will be worth 10% of your grade, and a third larger paper worth 20% of your grade. If the papers are late the grade will be lowered.

The first paper (due on **May 20** at the beginning of class) will be a comparison of two articles on the "new perspective" on Paul. These articles will be sent to you. In your comparison define what the "new perspective" is, what are the key terms used, and what are the important biblical terms or phrases that are reinterpreted. Evaluate the weaknesses and strengths of each position, and state what steps you would use to further examine this issue.

The second paper (due on **June 5**) is a review of Johnson's book. Show your knowledge of his basic approach to the book of Acts and give your evaluation of this approach, especially on how Acts should be applied today.

What strengths do you see in his presentation, and what weaknesses? How was it helpful to you? Send a **hard** copy to me at Dr. Daniel MacDougall, c/o Covenant College, 14049 Scenic Highway, Lookout Mountain, GA, 30750. (This assignment may be completed before classes begin.)

The third paper (due on **June 26**) is an exegesis paper on some portion of Romans 1-8 (at least 10 verses). The

section should be a coherent section. Use significant commentaries, lexicons and other important resources to help you understand the passage. You must incorporate in your research not only commentaries and other exegetical helps, but also you must find at least 2 relatively recent articles on your section. Be sure to footnote any information you get from any sources. Include a bibliography. The paper is to be typed, double-spaced. This is a major paper, but should not exceed about 12 pages. If you know Greek, make use of it, but knowledge of Greek is not required.

1. Pick a coherent section Romans 1-8 you are interested in studying of at least 10 verses.
2. Show how your section fits into the outline of the whole epistle and further develops Paul's argument as a whole in this letter.
3. Give a single sentence stating the theme of the section you are examining.
4. Give a very detailed outline of your passage (how every phrase fits in relation to the others).
5. Explain each verse in your passage, discussing any problems in the text and giving your understanding of each verse. This may be done in a commentary style. This is the main portion of the paper.
6. State how the information from your passage should be applied today.
7. Send a **hard** copy to me at Dr. Daniel MacDougall, c/o Covenant College, 14049 Scenic Highway, Lookout Mountain, GA, 30750.

V. Course Outline and Reading Schedule (Take notes, you will be tested over this material even if it is not covered in class. This material may be read before the week of classes, or following. It would probably be more helpful to you to read it ahead of time, but that may not be possible for all of you.)

I. May 18, Introduction to Paul

Read: Carson and Moo, pp. 331-390
Bruce, Chapters 1-8

II. May 19, The Book of Acts and Epistolary Analysis

Read: Carson and Moo, pp. 198-224, 285-330
Bruce, Chapters 9-16

III. May 20, The New Perspective on Paul, The Pauline Epistles: the early letters

Read: Carson and Moo, pp. 456-478, 532-553
Bruce, Chapters 17-24

Paper # 1 due the beginning of class: Analysis of New Perspective Articles

IV. May 21, The Pauline Epistles: the long letters

Read: Carson and Moo, pp. 391-455
Bruce, Chapters 25-32

V. May 22, The Pauline Epistles: the prison and pastoral letters

Read: Carson and Moo, pp. 479-531, 554-595
Bruce, Chapters 33-38

Assignment: Book Review on Johnson's book due **June 5**. (send hard copy)

Assignment: Exegesis Paper on Ephesians due **June 26**. (send hard copy)

Final: Take home, given out on May 22, send it to me by **June 12** (either electronically or hard copy)
In addition to the other readings also read Ridderbos, pp. 1-90 for the final.