

THE BOOK OF ACTS (NT 6304)
M 4–6:40 PM

MATS Educational Goals Supported by the Course

1. The student will identify and offer informed discussion of major issues in the interpretation of representative books of the New Testament (Gospels and Acts, Pauline letters, General Letters, Apocalypse).
2. The student will prepare papers, sermons, classes, and other assignments demonstrating familiarity with methods and principles of biblical exegesis in Old and New Testaments.

Aims of the Course

1. Students will acquire mastery of the content and structure of the book of Acts.
2. Students will gain an appreciation of the theological perspective on the significance of Jesus and the beginnings of the Church presented in Luke's two-volume narrative ("Luke-Acts").
3. Students will increase their understanding of helpful methods of literary, historical, and theological exegesis of Scripture in application to Acts.
4. Students will explore the application of the central emphases of Acts to concerns in the life of the contemporary church, with particular attention to possibilities for preaching these letters.

Required Texts

1. Carl R. Holladay, *Acts* (Westminster John Knox)
2. Hans-Joseph Klauck, *Magic and Paganism in Early Christianity: The World of the Acts of the Apostles* (Fortress)
3. A recent scholarly translation of the Bible (e.g., RSV, ESV, NIV, NASB, NAB, NJB, REB, NRSV). Two excellent tools for study are the *HarperCollins Study Bible* and the *NIV Study Bible*, which give the reader quick access to current academic (i.e., mainline Protestant) and evangelical Protestant lines of interpretation, respectively. Paraphrases such as the New Living Translation or *The Message*, if consulted, should be regarded as commentary on the text rather than a translation of the text itself.
4. Strongly recommended: the Nestle-Aland *Novum Testamentum Graece* (28th ed.), for consultation of both the Greek text of the letters and the full marginal references to parallel passages. An edition of the Nestle-Aland bound with the Revised Standard Version is available through the American Bible Society; for more information, see Ms. Kennell in the Austin Graduate School bookstore.

Course Requirements

1. Prompt attendance at all scheduled meetings of the class, completion of the assigned reading, and informed participation in class discussion. The student should note that the reading assignment includes consultation of the Scripture references in the secondary discussion. In addition to the reading assigned, each student will select one of the following commentaries on Acts (available for checkout from the Worley Library) and read through it in preparation for each class meeting. Each student is allowed one free absence in the course of the semester without grade penalty. Absence beyond this may result in the reduction of the course grade by one letter; in this connection, three tardies will be treated as one absence. [10% of final grade].
2. Each week, no later than the midnight before each class meeting, as part of preparation for

class, each student will email to the instructor at least two (2) quotations per biblical chapter selected from the secondary reading assignment (i.e., Holladay, Klauck, and the additional commentary), each quotation conveying a point significant for the interpretation of the week's primary reading assignment in Acts. The student may also include comments or questions raised by the week's preparation, which the instructor will seek to address either by email or in class. [20% of final grade] You may select from commentaries including the following (others require approval from the instructor):

C. K. Barrett (International Critical Commentary)
Hans Conzelmann (Hermeneia)
Joseph Fitzmyer (Anchor Bible)
Luke Johnson (Sacra Pagina)
Charles Talbert, *Reading Acts*

3. An exegetical paper, eight (8) to ten (10) pages in length, treating a pericope selected from Acts in consultation with the instructor and following the steps recommended in the faculty's "Guide to Writing an Exegesis" (http://austingrad.edu/images/Resources/student/Exegesis_Guide.pdf). An essential introduction to the sort of reading required for exegesis is Mortimer Adler and Charles Van Doren, *How to Read a Book*; a good discussion of exegetical method Michael Gorman, *Elements of Biblical Exegesis*; works that will aid in the preparation of an exegesis are thoroughly discussed in Frederick W. Danker, *Multipurpose Tools for Bible Study*. A draft of the paper is due on Monday, March 20, and the final paper is due during the week of final exams, on Thursday, May 11). Late papers will not be accepted without prior consultation with the instructor. The exegesis will be graded according to the AGST Exegesis Rubric (<http://austingrad.edu/images/Resources/student/AGST%20Exegesis%20Scoring%20Rubric-1.pdf>). [35% of final grade]
4. An expository sermon series on Acts, including (a) an *outline* of a ten-week sermon series, indicating for each sermon the *pericope* on which it will be based and a *theme statement* (on the model of Fred B. Craddock, *Preaching*, esp. pp. 155–57; see also Gordon D. Fee, *New Testament Exegesis: A Handbook for Students and Pastors*, esp. pp. 145-164) and (b) a manuscript of one (1) sermon developing the theme statement proposed on the series outline and including footnotes indicating the resources the student has consulted in the preparation of the sermon. The series outline and one (1) manuscript are due by 4 PM the last day of class meeting (Monday, May 1). Late work will not be accepted without prior consultation with the instructor. The sermon will be graded according to the AGST Message Rubric (<http://austingrad.edu/images/Resources/student/AGST%20Message%20Rubric.pdf>). [35% of final grade]

Plagiarism and Citation of Sources:

Plagiarism is the representation of another person's work as your own and is a form of theft. This includes material composed by other students, purchased from an online paper vendor, or copied from published books and articles or from the Internet. If in any assignment you employ material written by someone else, you must give the author proper credit, documenting the source with an appropriate citation and marking any words directly quoted with quotation marks (or with indentation if four or more lines are quoted). Failure to appropriately credit the sources you use will result in a reduction in your grade for the assignment in question and/or the requirement that you revise the assignment. Intentionally representing another person's work as your own will be grounds for academic discipline, including possible dismissal from the School. For more information on how to acknowledge sources properly and avoid plagiarism, you may refer to the School's "Guide to Written Work" (http://www.austingrad.edu/images/Resources/student/guide_for_written_work.htm).

SCHEDULE OF READINGS AND CLASSES

Monday, January 23

Introduction to (Luke and) Acts. Holladay, 1–70

Monday, January 30

Acts, chaps. 1–2. Holladay, 71–109; Klauck, 1–12

Monday, February 6

Acts 3:1–4:22. Holladay, 110–121

Monday, February 13

Acts 4:23—8:3. Holladay, 121–177

Monday, February 20

Acts 8:4–9:31. Holladay, 178–222; Klauck, 13–30

Monday, February 27

Acts 9:32–11:18. Holladay, 222–43; Klauck, 31–44

Monday, March 6

Acts 11:19–12:25. Holladay, 244–56

Monday, March 13

Acts, chaps. 13–14. Holladay, 257–93; Klauck, 45–62

Monday, March 20: NO CLASS MEETING (Spring Break)

Monday, March 27 — FIRST DRAFT OF EXEGESIS PAPER DUE

Acts 15:1–35. Holladay, 294–308

Monday, April 3

Acts, chaps. 15:36–18:23. Holladay, 309–60; Klauck, 63–96

Monday, April 10

Acts 18:24–20:38. Holladay, 361–401; Klauck, 97–110

Monday, April 17

Acts 21:1–22:21. Holladay, 402–28

Monday, April 24

Acts 22:22–25:27. Holladay, 428–67

Monday, May 1 — SERMON SERIES/MANUSCRIPT DUE

Acts, chap. 26–28. Holladay, 467–82; Klauck, 111–122.

STUDENT SERMONS PRESENTED.

Thursday, May 11

FINAL DRAFT OF EXEGESIS PAPER DUE