

ACTS / ROMANS NT516

Note: This syllabus is the “mini-syllabus” and is not to be confused w/ the large syllabus that contains all the class-lecture notes, biblio, various articles, etc. This large syllabus will be posted later on Self Service and is needed for all the class lectures. For the first class, the student should be prepared w/ either a hard-copy of the large syllabus or have it downloaded to his laptop.

Note: Test and paper are due three weeks after the end of the course lectures.

Note: If the student wants to get ahead, begin answering the Reading Questions at the end of this syllabus.

PROFESSOR

* Dr. Bob Cara (technically, Dr. Robert J. Cara).

PURPOSE OF COURSE (Course Objectives)

* The over arching aim is to provide *tools* to the student in order that one might better interpret Acts and Romans to one’s self, the church, and the world.

* Learn outlines and basic content of Acts and Romans.

* Learn major biblical-theological (BT) categories in Acts and Romans along w/ methodology to do further BT interpretation.

* Compare and contrast various systematic theology (ST) categories (e.g., Calvinism, RC) and various current church methodologies (e.g., “church growth”) w/ Acts and Romans.

* Learn enough about critical views to:

- 1) Utilize common grace insights in critical commentaries.
- 2) Provide an intelligent global critique of critical theories.

* See below for relationship of a variety of course objectives relate to the MDiv student learning outcomes.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. Reading

- * Carson and Moo, *An Introduction to the NT*, 2d ed., 285-330, 391-414.
- * Ladd, *A Theology of the NT*, rev. ed., 347-93.
- * Luther, “Preface,” xii-xxvi. (Included in large syllabus.)

- * Ridderbos, *When the Time Had Fully Come*, 44-77. (Included in large syllabus.)
- * Acts, Romans (read twice).
- * *Trinity Psalter* (use in class).

2. Reading Questions for C-M, Ladd, and Ridderbos.

- * See “Reading Questions and Paper Assignment” below.
- * Do not hand in but will be on final exam.
- * Cara will not answer these questions directly. You may / should enquire of a fellow student *in this class*.

3. Lecture Review Questions (LRQ)

- * Located at the beginning of each lecture.
- * Do not hand in but will be on final exam.
- * Cara will not answer these questions directly (except as part of class lecture). You may / should enquire of a fellow student *in this class*.

4. Daily Quizzes on outlines and chapter identification

- * Possible quiz questions given in advance and located at the beginning of each lecture.
- * Covers Bible content.
- * Quizzes are cumulative.
- * May have up to two quizzes a day.
- * May drop one quiz.

5. Paper

- * See “Real paper” comments below
- * Severe penalty for lateness (32.2 f/s/s).

GRADES

1. Final Exam

- * There will be only one test.
- * ≈ 85% of test will be verbatim questions from LRQ’s and Reading Questions.
- * Remaining 15% will be misc questions from lectures and *all* readings.
- * Test may be taken any time up through the Friday, three weeks after the last day of class, and at RTS library (32.2 f/s/s). Test will be 1 ½ hours long and completely closed book. (If you live outside the Carolinas, I may consider setting up a proctor.)
- * 50% of grade

2. Daily Quizzes

- * 10% of grade

3. Paper

- * Must be submitted to receptionist by the Friday, three weeks after the last day of class.
- * 30% of grade

4. Read Luther's "Preface" once and both Acts and Romans twice.

- * Must have read 100% to get any credit.
- * Only reading Acts and Romans between Dec and February counts.
- * On test you will be asked if you read 100% of these.
- * 10% of grade

5. *Trinity Psalter*

- * Loose points if you do not bring and sing.

READING QUESTIONS AND PAPER ASSIGNMENT

ACTS / ROMANS

CM, *An Introduction to the NT*

Acts

1. Give two of Vielhauer's four arguments against the Paul of Acts being authentic and C-M's rebuttals.
2. Critical scholars assign a late date to Acts based on 1) Luke 21 relates to destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD and 2) date of Mark. Explain hidden assumptions.
3. What is the Western text? According to C-M, what is its usefulness for determining the original reading? (Note, read carefully.)
4. How does the famous Thucydides quote affect the critics' view of the speeches in Acts?

Romans

1. Explain how the Roman church was started by Jewish Xns, but by the time of the writing of Romans, Gentile Xns were dominant.
2. Do C-M agree with Melancthon that Romans is a timeless treatise? Give a nuanced answer.
3. What is Romans' central theme according to C-M?

Ladd, *A Theology of the NT*, rev. ed.

Chapter 24

1. If Luke was with Paul at his Caesarean imprisonment as Acts 21:18 claims, How does this solve many of the supposed problems concerning historical sources?

Chapter 25

2. Explain the “vision” theory of the resurrection that most critics believe.

3. Explain Ladd’s comment on p 362, “The resurrection of Jesus ... ought not to be described simply as a supernatural event—a miracle—as though God had interfered with the ‘laws of nature.’”

Chapter 26

4. What is Ladd’s “best guess” as to why the Son of Man title is virtually dropped in Acts?

5. How does *maranatha* (1 Cor 16:22) argue against Bultmann’s view of the rise of the expression “Lord” for Jesus?

Chapter 27

6. According to Ladd, What is the relationship between the “tongues of fire” in Acts 2:3 and “[Jesus] will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire” in Matt 3:11?

Ridderbos, *When the Time Had Fully Come*, 44-77

Chapter 3

1. Contrast Luther and Ridderbos as to their view of the theological “entrance” to understanding Paul’s theology.

2. According to Ridderbos, How does Paul’s R-H view relate to the “Kingdom” from the Gospels?

3. Explain the “X for us” and “we in X” ideas.

Chapter 4

1. In simplistic terms, What is the difference between the Lutheran and Reformed views concerning the “law” in Paul?

2. According to Ridderbos, How does Paul relate the demands of the law and love (related to 3rd use)?

3. Explain how Eph 6:2-3 argues for the 3rd use of the law.

4. At the beginning of the chapter, Ridderbos asks about the unity of Jesus' (Sermon on the Mount) and Paul's use of the law. What component of X's teaching and Paul's teaching match?

"Real" Paper

* This should be a serious research paper of at least six to eight serious commentaries (including both critical and conservative) and a few BT's. Must also footnote at least one journal article. Note helpful annotated biblio at end of Cara syllabus.

* Must theologize!

* 10-15 typed pages.

* Paper may concern either Acts or Romans. If one has not had *any* Greek, must do paper on Acts.

* Acts Options:

1) BT study on any major or minor theme in Acts or Luke-Acts.

2) Exegesis of a pericope highlighting (in a BT way) its (or one aspect in the pericope) relationship to the rest of Acts or Luke-Acts.

3) Compare and contrast two similar pericopes of which one is in Luke, and the other, Acts.

* Romans Options

1) Exegesis of a pericope within the intro (1:1-15) and/or hortatory (12:1-16:27) sections highlighting its relationship to any or all of the doctrinal section (1:16-11:36).

2) Hermeneutical study on *any* OT quote or allusion in Romans. Must look at LXX and MT. (If you don't know Hebrew, see Cara for possible fudge room.)

**Course Objectives Related to MDiv Student Learning Outcomes
With Mini-Justification**

Course: Acts/Romans
Professor: Robert J. Cara
Campus: Charlotte
Date: November 2011

| <u>MDiv Student Learning Outcomes</u> | | <u>Rubric</u> | <u>Mini-Justification</u> |
|--|---|---|---|
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Strong ➤ Moderate ➤ Minimal ➤ None | |
| Articulation (oral & written) | Broadly understands and articulates knowledge, both oral and written, of essential biblical, theological, historical, and cultural/global information, including details, concepts, and frameworks. | Strong | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Acts and Romans theology 2. Historical-critical view of Paul, including New Perspective 3. Significant academic paper on a Acts or Romans theology topic |
| Scripture | Significant knowledge of the original meaning of Scripture. Also, the concepts for and skill to research further into the original meaning of Scripture and to apply Scripture to a variety of modern circumstances. (Includes appropriate use of original languages and hermeneutics; and integrates theological, historical, and cultural/global perspectives.) | Strong | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Major part of class is exegeting Acts and Romans texts 2. Original languages are used in class and encouraged in academic paper 3. It's a BIBLE class! |
| Reformed Theology | Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice, with emphasis on the Westminster Standards. | Moderate | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Traditional Reformed categories are used for explaining many Pauline categories, including Justification, three uses of the law. 2. References to creeds |
| Sanctification | Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student's sanctification. | Moderate | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Psalm singing in class 2. Personal application is made in class to many Acts and Romans texts |
| Desire for Worldview | Burning desire to conform all of life to the Word of God. | Minimal | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Attempt to analyze critical views from a consistently Scriptural view. |
| Winsomely Reformed | Embraces a winsomely Reformed ethos. (Includes an appropriate ecumenical spirit with other Christians, especially Evangelicals; a concern to present the Gospel in a God-honoring manner to non-Christians; and a truth-in-love attitude in disagreements.) | Strong | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Common grace use of historical-critical scholars is discussed & required in paper 2. Both Acts and Romans have significant implications for interacting w/ non-Xns. |
| Preach | Ability to preach and teach the meaning of Scripture to both heart and mind with clarity and enthusiasm. | Moderate | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Many times preaching applications are made from Acts and Romans texts 2. The Acts view of preaching being termed the "Word of God" is |

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| | | | emphasized. |
| Worship | Knowledgeable of historic and modern Christian-worship forms; and ability to construct and skill to lead a worship service. | None | |
| Shepherd | Ability to shepherd the local congregation: aiding in spiritual maturity; promoting use of gifts and callings; and encouraging a concern for non-Christians, both in America and worldwide. | Moderate | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Discussion of weak/storng in Romans 14-15 is discussed. 2. Acts' concern for reaching non-Xns. |
| Church/World | Ability to interact within a denominational context, within the broader worldwide church, and with significant public issues. | Minimal | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Lutheran, Reformed, and RC views/creeds of Justification. 2. New Perspective views. |