

**Reformed Theological Seminary
Fall 2018**

**NT516 Acts and Romans 2 Hrs.
Sept 7-8, Oct 12-13, Nov 9-10
Fri, 6:30-9:30PM, Sat 8:00AM-3:00PM**

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Description (as per RTS *Catalog*)

“A study of Acts and Paul’s Epistle to the Romans that emphasizes both the original meaning and the modern meaning” (p.70)

Course Objectives

- (1) To understand and critically to evaluate academic research in Acts and Romans.
- (2) To understand issues of special introduction pertaining to Acts and Romans.
- (3) To understand Acts and Romans in their first century context.
- (4) To understand the implications of Luke’s and Paul’s writings for the contemporary church, and to understand Luke and Paul as a model of applying theology to the life of the church.
- (5) To understand with greater clarity and precision key questions and issues in Acts and Romans: the person and work of Christ, the nature and condition of man, covenant and law, the application of redemption (justification by faith alone, sanctification, union with Christ, etc.).

Required Texts (see below for page assts.; note the abbreviations)

- (1) The Holy Bible, preferably in a recent translation such as the New American Standard or the English Standard Version. Students who are competent in Hellenistic Greek are strongly encouraged to bring their Greek New Testaments to each class session.
- (2) Carson and Moo, *An Introduction to the New Testament* (2nd ed.; Zondervan) [C&M]
- (3) Richard B. Gaffin, Jr., *Perspectives on Pentecost* (P&R) [G]
- (4) Dennis E. Johnson, Jr., *The Message of Acts in the History of Redemption* (P&R) [J]
- (5) Herman Ridderbos, *When the Time Had Fully Come* (Eerdmans) [R] [available on reserve]
- (6) Guy Prentiss Waters, “Romans,” in *A Biblical-Theological Introduction to the New Testament* (Crossway) [W1] [available on reserve]
- (7) Guy Prentiss Waters, *The Life and Theology of Paul* (Reformation Trust, 2018) [W2]

Assignments & Requirements

- (1) A final exam will be taken at a date set by the registrar, and will be cumulative. The final exam must be taken on the date posted by the seminary. Please arrange your schedule accordingly. The final exam is worth **40%** of your final grade.
- (2) Memorization of Romans 5:1-11. You must recite Rom 5:1-11 (in any translation) to a fellow student in the course. That student must indicate to the instructor in writing that you have successfully completed the assignment (i.e. that you have recited Romans 5:1-11, from memory,

without error). This assignment is due at the beginning of the final exam. It will be 10% of your final exam grade [i.e. 4% of your course grade].

(3) Read Acts & Romans in English. You must Acts & Romans in their entirety this semester. This assignment is due at the beginning of the final exam. You will be asked to give a percentage reflecting the extent of your reading. This assignment will be 10% of your final exam grade [i.e. 4% of your course grade].

(4) Reading Digests. 60% of your final grade. On each reading digest, you must indicate the extent (as a percentage) of the material that you have read. **Submit all reading digests electronically through Canvas in PDF format by 6 P.M. of the date listed.**

(a) To read and to prepare a digest of Carson and Moo, *Introduction* (2nd ed.), Chaps. 7-10. See attached guidelines. **Due Sept 7.** Late work will subject your work to reduction of one full letter grade per day late (or fraction thereof). **10%** of the final grade.

(b) To read in full and to prepare a digest of Gaffin, *Perspectives on Pentecost*. See attached guidelines. **Due Sept 7.** Late work will subject your work to reduction of one full letter grade per day late (or fraction thereof). **10%** of the final grade.

(c) To read in full and to prepare a digest of Johnson, *The Message of Acts in the History of Redemption*. See attached guidelines. **Due Oct 12.** Late work will subject your work to reduction of one full letter grade per day late (or fraction thereof). **10%** of the final grade.

(d) To read in full and to prepare a digest of Ridderbos, *When the Time Had Fully Come*, pp. 44-77. See attached guidelines. **Due Oct 12.** Late work will subject your work to reduction of one full letter grade per day late (or fraction thereof). **10%** of the final grade.

(e) To read in full and to prepare a digest of Waters, "Romans" in Kruger, ed., *A Biblical-Theological Introduction to the New Testament*, pp. 169-94. See attached guidelines. **Due Nov 9.** Late work will subject your work to reduction of one full letter grade per day late (or fraction thereof). **10%** of the final grade.

(f) To read in full and to prepare a digest of Waters, *The Life and Theology of Paul*. See attached guidelines. **Due Nov 9.** Late work will subject your work to reduction of one full letter grade per day late (or fraction thereof). **10%** of the final grade.

Attendance

Class attendance is required for NT 516. If a student anticipates an unavoidable absence, he should notify the instructor in advance. Each hour of unexcused absence subjects the student to reduction of his final grade by one-half of a letter grade. Two tardies (arriving after the beginning of the hour) constitute an hour of unexcused absence. Students missing more than one session (for any reason) may **either** submit an additional, compensatory assignment [determined by the instructor] **or** choose to receive a full letter grade reduction in their final grade.

Grading Scale

The grading scale for this course is the seminary's grading scale. You may find it listed in the *RTS Catalog*.

Plagiarism

Please review the seminary's policy on plagiarism. Plagiarized work will subject the student to failure in the course and possible disciplinary action.

In-Class Computer Use

Computers and tablets are permitted in this course for course-related purposes only. Cell phones must be set to silent and stowed. If for some extraordinary reason you need to take a call, you may either wait until the break or leave the classroom.

Approximate Course Schedule

Please note that this schedule is approximate and subject to change at any time. The instructor's announced changes in class will be the final word on the nature and date of assignments. They are the student's sole responsibility to note and to implement.

Sept 7-8	CM, G due Course Introductions Acts
Oct 12-13	J, R due Acts Romans
Nov 9-10	W1, W2 due Romans

Paul & The Letters of Paul in Church History

“At length they saw a man coming (namely Paul), of a low stature, bald (or shaved) on the head, crooked thighs, handsome legs, hollow-eyed; had a crooked nose; full of grace; for sometimes he appeared as a man, sometimes he had the countenance of an angel.”

Acts of Paul and Thecla, 1.7

“With avid intensity I seized the sacred writings of your Spirit and especially the apostle Paul. Where at one time I used to think he contradicted himself and the text of his words disagreed with the testimonies of the law and the prophets, the problems simply vanished. The holy oracles now presented to me a simple face, and I learnt to ‘rejoice with trembling’ (Ps. 11:7).”

Augustine, Confessions, VII.xxi (27)

“Meanwhile in that same year, 1519, I had begun interpreting the Psalms once again. I felt confident that I was now more experienced, since I had dealt in university courses with St. Paul's Letters to the Romans, to the Galatians, and the Letter to the Hebrews. I had conceived a burning desire to understand what Paul meant in his Letter to the Romans, but thus far there had stood in my way, not the cold blood around my heart, but that one word which is in chapter one: "The justice of God is revealed in it." I hated that word, "justice of God," which, by the use and custom of all my teachers, I had been taught to understand philosophically as referring to formal or active justice, as they call it, i.e., that justice by which God is just and by which he punishes sinners and the unjust.

But I, blameless monk that I was, felt that before God I was a sinner with an extremely troubled conscience. I couldn't be sure that God was appeased by my satisfaction. I did not love, no, rather I hated the just God who punishes sinners. In silence, if I did not blaspheme, then certainly I grumbled vehemently and got angry at God. I said, "Isn't it enough that we miserable sinners, lost

for all eternity because of original sin, are oppressed by every kind of calamity through the Ten Commandments? Why does God heap sorrow upon sorrow through the Gospel and through the Gospel threaten us with his justice and his wrath?" This was how I was raging with wild and disturbed conscience. I constantly badgered St. Paul about that spot in Romans 1 and anxiously wanted to know what he meant.

I meditated night and day on those words until at last, by the mercy of God, I paid attention to their context: "The justice of God is revealed in it, as it is written: "The just person lives by faith." I began to understand that in this verse the justice of God is that by which the just person lives by a gift of God, that is by faith. I began to understand that this verse means that the justice of God is revealed through the Gospel, but it is a passive justice, i.e. that by which the merciful God justifies us by faith, as it is written: "The just person lives by faith." All at once I felt that I had been born again and entered into paradise itself through open gates. Immediately I saw the whole of Scripture in a different light. I ran through the Scriptures from memory and found that other terms had analogous meanings, e.g., the work of God, that is, what God works in us; the power of God, by which he makes us powerful; the wisdom of God, by which he makes us wise; the strength of God, the salvation of God, the glory of God.

I exalted this sweetest word of mine, "the justice of God," with as much love as before I had hated it with hate. This phrase of Paul was for me the very gate of paradise. Afterward I read Augustine's "On the Spirit and the Letter," in which I found what I had not dared hope for. I discovered that he too interpreted "the justice of God" in a similar way, namely, as that with which God clothes us when he justifies us. Although Augustine had said it imperfectly and did not explain in detail how God imputes justice to us, still it pleased me that he taught the justice of God by which we are justified."

Martin Luther, 1545 (LW 4:421-428, trans. Andrew Thornton, OSB; © 1983, St. Anselm Abbey)

"In the evening I went very unwillingly to a society in Aldersgate Street, where one was reading Luther's preface to the Epistle to the Romans. About a quarter before nine, while he was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone, for salvation; and an assurance was given me that He had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death."

John Wesley, *The Journal of John Wesley*

"The Reformation fought and conquered in the name of Paul"

Albert Schweitzer, *The Mysticism of Paul the Apostle*

Guidelines – Digests (adapted from Dr. Richard B. Gaffin, Jr.'s guidelines)

Please prepare a digest of each assigned reading, double-spaced or 1.5 spaced. A written digest is not simply a repetition but a summary or overview organized to highlight the author's main ideas and distinctive emphases. It may have one of several formats – an outline, a running commentary, a series of brief paragraphs. It should be concise without being superficial. A digest is not a response paper. I want to see that you have understood what you have read.

Your digests should be not longer than 10 pages each.

Course Objectives Related to MDiv* Student Learning Outcomes

Course: Acts and Romans
 Professor: Waters
 Campus: Houston
 Date: Fall 2018

<u>MDiv* Student Learning Outcomes</u>		<u>Rubric</u>	<u>Mini-Justification</u>
<p><i>In order to measure the success of the MDiv curriculum, RTS has defined the following as the intended outcomes of the student learning process. Each course contributes to these overall outcomes. This rubric shows the contribution of this course to the MDiv outcomes.</i></p> <p><i>*As the MDiv is the core degree at RTS, the MDiv rubric will be used in this syllabus.</i></p>		<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	1. Theology of A&R 2. Final exam in which exegetical and biblical-theological knowledge of A&R will be assessed.
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	1. Major part of class is exegeting A&R. 2. Original languages are used in class and encouraged on exam. 3. It's a BIBLE Class!
Reformed Theology	Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice, with emphasis on the Westminster Standards.	Moderate	Traditional Reformed categories are used for explaining many categories of A&R.
Sanctification	Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student's sanctification.	Moderate	Personal application is made in class from many texts of A&R.
Desire for Worldview	Burning desire to conform all of life to the Word of God.	Moderate	Multi-faceted applications are made from texts of A&R, e.g. church & politics.
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.)	Moderate	Historical-critical scholarship is discussed and engaged in class and readings.
Preach	Ability to preach and teach the meaning of Scripture to both heart and mind with clarity and enthusiasm.	Moderate	Many times, preaching applications are made from the texts of the A&R
Worship	Knowledgeable of historic and modern Christian-worship forms; and ability to construct and skill to lead a worship service.	Minimal	Lectures touch on New Covenant worship from the A&R.
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.	Minimal	Jesus' establishment of the church; appointment of church officers discussed.

Church/World	Ability to interact within a denominational context, within the broader worldwide church, and with significant public issues.	Moderate	Global character of the people of God is emphasized.
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