

Life & Letters of Paul

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Covenant Theological Seminary

Course Information

I. Course Description

This course offers an opportunity to study the purpose, theology, and chronology of Acts; the life and theology of Paul; the origin, situation and message of his epistles; and elements of the early Christian church. This course also introduces the student to the Old Testament background to Paul's writings and the historical context of the early church. The lectures were recorded in Spring 2000.

II. Objectives

- *Read carefully the Book of Acts and the entire Pauline corpus.
- *Gain a rudimentary understanding of the theology of Acts and the Pauline writings.
- *Study the life of the early church and of Paul in their historical and linguistic settings.
- *Gain an appreciation for the contribution of Acts to the study of Paul and the complexities of incorporating Acts into such study.
- *Deepen and broaden knowledge of each individual Pauline letter and the issues bearing on its interpretation.
- *Be initiated into, or become more conversant with, the world of contemporary critical study of Acts and Paul as a means of sharpening one's own theological understanding both doctrinally and apologetically.
- *Make progress toward developing an apostolic philosophy and praxis of ministry and a more biblical spirituality.
- *Integrate Acts and Paul's epistles historically and theologically.
- *Grow in applying Acts and Paul's epistles in personal and public life.

III. Themes & Keywords

Pauline chronology and theology; message and purpose of Acts; interpretation of a narrative text; historical integration of Acts and the epistles; theological integration of Acts and the epistles; particular situation of the church to which a letter goes and the historical context of the epistles; flow of thought—rationale for the development of thought; application of Acts and Pauline epistle for today

IV. Texts

These books can be purchased from most Christian booksellers, or you can order them online from the Covenant Seminary bookstore by visiting www.covenantseminary.edu or by calling the bookstore at 314-434-0110 (toll-free 877-213-3353).

- *Bruce, F.F. *Paul: Apostle of the Heart Set Free*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1977.
- *Marshall, I.H. *Luke: Historian and Theologian*. Grand Rapids, MI: Intervarsity Press, 1988.
- *A standard English translation of the Bible (ESV, NIV, NASB, RSV, NRSV, NEB, etc.).

V. Class Calendar

Lecture 1—The OT Background to Luke-Acts & the Pauline Epistles (*Reading: Acts 1-8*)

Lecture 2—The Book of Acts

Lecture 3—Theological Characteristics of Acts & Flow of Thought

Lecture 4—Exegesis of Acts 1 (*Acts 9-16; Marshall, pp. 1-76*)

Lecture 5—The Outpouring of the Holy Spirit

- Lecture 6—The Challenge of Acts 8 & 19
 Lecture 7—The Speeches of Acts: An Overview (*Acts 17-20; Marshall, pp. 77-156*)
 Lecture 8—The First Major Speeches in Acts
 Lecture 9—Acts 2:36 & the Christology of Acts
 Lecture 10—Acts 2:42-47 & the Ecclesiology of Acts (*Acts 21-28; Marshall, pp. 157-222*)
 Lecture 11—Flow of Thought from Acts 10-17 & Exegesis of Acts 10:34-43
 Lecture 12—Exegesis of Acts 17:22-31
 Lecture 13—Galatians: Occasion, Setting, Addressees & Purpose (*Galatians; Bruce, chs. 1-18*)
 Lecture 14—Galatians & the Law(s)
 Lecture 15—Galatians: Indicative versus Imperative & Flow of Thought
 Lecture 16—Pauline Chronology: Life & Letters (*1-2 Thessalonians; Philemon; Bruce, chs. 19-21, 34*)
 Lecture 17—1 & 2 Thessalonians
 Lecture 18—Letter to Philemon
 Lecture 19—Corinthians: Occasion & Purpose (*1-2 Corinthians; Bruce, chs. 22-24*)
 Lecture 20—1 Corinthians
 Lecture 21—2 Corinthians
 Lecture 22—Romans: Background, Occasion & Purpose (*Romans; Bruce, ch. 25*)
 Lecture 23—Romans: Addressees & Flow of Thought
 Lecture 24—Romans: Themes
 Lecture 25—Ephesians: Occasion, Purpose & Addressees (*Ephesians; Bruce, chs. 26-28*)
 Lecture 26—Ephesians: Flow of Thought
 Lecture 27—Philippians: Background & Outline (*Philippians; Bruce, chs. 29-31*)
 Lecture 28—Philippians: Outline & Flow of Thought
 Lecture 29—Philippians: Flow of Thought (cont.)
 Lecture 30—Colossians: Background (*Colossians; Bruce, chs. 32-33, 35*)
 Lecture 31—Colossians: Occasion & Outline
 Lecture 32—Colossians: Flow of Thought
 Lecture 33—Paul & Theology: Biographical notes; Conversion (*1-2 Timothy; Titus; Bruce, chs. 36-38*)
 Lecture 34—Paul & Theology: Changed Anthropology
 Lecture 35—Paul & Theology: Changed Understanding of Faith, Torah & Relationships
 Appendix A—Geographical & Chronological Table of Paul's Life, Journeys & Letters

VI. About the Professor

Hans F. Bayer, Associate Professor of New Testament. M.A. and M.Div., Ashland Theological Seminary, Ohio; Ph.D., University of Aberdeen, Scotland. Born and raised in Germany, Professor Bayer came to Covenant in 1994 after teaching for ten years at the German Theological Seminary at Giessen, where he also planted a church. With his expertise in critical scholarship and a commitment to the authority and unity of the Scriptures, Dr. Bayer is a model of a “pastor-scholar.” His strong personal interest in world missions adds a rich multicultural dimension to each student's world vision for the Gospel. He has written English and German monographs, essays, and dictionary articles on the synoptic Gospels and the book of Acts. Professor Bayer is married with three children.

VII. Letter from the Professor

Dear Students:

Welcome to Life and Letters of Paul. Through the course you should become more familiar with the colorful setting and mission of the apostolic church. At the center of my hopes is, however, that you will catch a glimpse of the wonder of God's self-revelation in Christ, and the particular means God has chosen to make His purposes known (Acts and the Pauline epistles).

I trust that the richness and comprehensive challenge of the Gospel will take hold of your heart and mind to shape you into a useful disciple in the 21st century.

Sincerely,
Hans F. Bayer