

## ACTS AND PAULINE EPISTLES SYLLABUS

### I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

An exposition of Acts and 10 of the Pauline Epistles (all except Romans, Ephesians, and Philippians) with emphasis on the biblical theology of these books, their genre, and application. *Prerequisite or Corequisite:* BE101 Bible Study Methods and Hermeneutics and BE105 The Gospels. *3 hours (2 hour MABC)*

### II. DIFFERING COURSE REQUIREMENTS

This syllabus contains different course requirements based on the credit hours required for students's degree programs and catalog year. These requirements reflect curricular changes to the MABC degree program beginning fall 2017.

Students enrolled in the MABC degree program, under the 2017 catalog year, are exempt from certain assignments in accordance with taking this course for two (2) credit hours. The notation "MABC students taking this course for two (2) credit hours are exempt from . . ." has been added to the applicable books and assignments.

It is the responsibility of MABC students who plan to take this course for two (2) credit hours to ensure they are eligible by verifying their catalog requirements with the Advising Center ([advising@dts.edu](mailto:advising@dts.edu)). The professor is not responsible for verifying this information.

### III. COURSE OBJECTIVES

#### A. Overall Objectives

The objectives of this course are for the student to *know* the general contents of the 11 Bible books studied, gain *insight* into the contents and selected problems in the books, develop the *skill* of tracing the argument of a book, and *internalize* spiritual principles from each book.

#### B. Specific Cognitive Objectives

That you will be able to:

1. *Write* a brief synthetic statement and analytical outline for the 11 Bible books studied in the course.
2. *Reconstruct* the history of the early church and the writing of these epistles.
3. *Locate* important events, topics, and characters in the Bible, particularly the Apostle Paul.
4. *Interact with* interpretive issues in these books and be able to discuss them critically.

. . . so that you will develop your ability to:

SCOPE OUT A BOOK: Recognizing a book's purpose and structure is a foundational component of its interpretation.

REALIZE HOW THEY FIT TOGETHER: The messages of Paul's epistles are informed by the history of the church recorded in Acts.

KNOW YOUR WAY AROUND YOUR BIBLE: The ability to locate these is helpful in ministry, to expedite study, and provide reasons for our hope.

CONVEY THE WORD'S AUTHORITY: The successful interpreter must be able to deal with the many problem passages in these books.

#### C. Specific Affective and Skill Objectives

That you will:

5. *Record* how the argument of a Bible book is revealed through its content, and how it applies to its original audience.

*Justification:*

WALK YOUR WAY THROUGH A BOOK: The book conveys its message through the understanding of its argument. This understanding is necessary for presenting the book's exposition.

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <p>6. <i>Develop a system</i> for recording facts about Bible characters, dates, events, and ideas.</p> <p>7. <i>Acquire</i> some of the spiritual qualities of commendable characters in these books.</p> <p>8. <i>Prepare to communicate</i> the contents and principles of one or more of these books to others.</p> | <p><b>ORGANIZE YOUR WORK:</b> An effective research system gives assurance that learning is taking place and also helps develop one's own teaching methods.</p> <p><b>ACT LIKE A BELIEVER:</b> We should learn from and follow godly leaders. In particular, the Pastoral Epistles instruct spiritual leaders in godliness.</p> <p><b>PREACH THE WORD:</b> The ultimate Dallas Theological Seminary goal of biblical exposition is to proclaim God's Word to others.</p> |
|---|--|

#### IV. COURSE TEXTBOOKS

##### A. Required

###### *The Holy Bible*

Bock, Darrell L. *Acts*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007. Exceptional detail. Accessible even by those students lacking background in New Testament Greek.

Hawthorne, Gerald F., Ralph P. Martin, and Daniel G. Reid, eds. *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1993. (MABC students taking this course for two [2] credit hours are exempt from reading this book.)

Swindoll, Charles R. *Paul: A Man of Grace and Grit*. Nashville: W. Publishing (Thomas Nelson), 2002. Note that pages 353-56 of this work provide maps of Paul's travels. (MABC students taking this course for two [2] credit hours are exempt from reading this book.)

Zuck, Roy B., and Darrell L. Bock, eds. *A Biblical Theology of the New Testament*. Chicago: Moody, 1994.

##### B. Suggested

Bailey, Mark L., and Thomas L. Constable. *Nelson's New Testament Survey*. Nashville: Word Publishing (Thomas Nelson), 1999. This used to be the course text but has just recently gone out of print. Find a copy of this in bookstores or the aftermarket. It is an excellent resource for studying a book's argument.

Constable, Thomas L. "Dr. Constable's Expository (Bible Study) Notes." Sonic Light. <http://soniclight.com/constable/notes.htm> (accessed August 3, 2015). These are also available in the course files.

Walvoord, John R., and Roy B. Zuck, eds. *The Bible Knowledge Commentary*, New Testament. Colorado Springs: ChariotVictor, 1983. This is a "best buy" for an overview of the Bible books reflecting Dallas Seminary scholarship, identifying and providing help in dealing with major problem passages.

##### C. Supplementary Bibliography

This will be posted in Canvas during the course.

#### V. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

##### A. Reading Assignments

Students must complete the assigned reading by the end of the course. Reading requirements for can be found in each course module. (MABC students taking this course for two [2] credit hours have reduced reading requirements.) You should keep an up-to-date record of how much you've read. You will report what percentage of the reading you completed in Module 10.

##### B. Videos Watching

**All Students**, regardless of whether they are taking the course for two (2) or three (3) credit hours, must watch all the course videos by the end of the course. This includes the module introductions. Since video

transcripts are a supplemental help, reading the transcripts is not a substitute for watching the videos. Required videos can be found in each course module. Many videos can be watched in a single sitting, but some videos for this course are longer than others. This is strategic given the nature of the topic. Therefore, you are encouraged to watch even longer videos in one sitting, if possible. You should keep an up-to-date record of your video watching. You will report what percentage of the videos you watched for the course in Module 10.

### C. Written Assignments

#### Assignment #1: Write an Argument of a Bible Book

The Bible Exposition department has set as a goal that students in BE106 will be able to write an argument of a Bible book. To begin, you need to develop an outline (original or otherwise, as your professor will specify) for the Bible book that you (or the professor) select(s). The length of the book will determine the amount of detail that you should include in the outline. The longer the book, the less detail is required. It is not necessary to present the outline separately from the argument; the argument must incorporate the outline, as illustrated below.

Writing the argument itself is the crux of this assignment. Under each point of the outline you need to explain *what the writer said* and *why he said it*. (A synthesis, in contrast, only summarizes content, but an argument also explains why it is there.) An argument, therefore, is not a summary of the contents of a book, nor a detailed outline, nor a sermon, nor a list of assorted applications, but *an explanation of how the contents of the book relate to its purpose*. You will seek to trace the development of the author's thought through the book.

Therefore, you will also need to determine the purpose of the book. Ask yourself, "Why was this book written?" You can determine a book's purpose by noting such clues as the historical context, the occasion of the book, its emphases, the peculiarities of the book, etc. Sometimes a writer will state the purpose of his book openly (e.g., John 20:30-31), but usually you will have to discover the purpose.

Here is an illustration of how to incorporate your outline of the book into your argument:

The promotion of the project 1:1-15

Give an overview of this section of the text and explain *why* the author wrote it.

a. The rebuke 1:1-11

Explain how the author challenges his readers, who he addressed, and why this paragraph was included.

b. The response 1:12-15

Etc.

You should also include at the beginning of your paper a brief statement or discussion of such introductory matters as authorship, date, recipients, occasion, etc., especially as these relate to the setting and purpose of the book.

Include also a statement of the message of the book. The message is a summary statement (usually one sentence) that should contain the main *subject* with which the book deals, and a *complement* (what the author said about the main subject). For example, one might conclude that the subject of John's Gospel is Jesus. The complement might be that (He) is the Son of God.

Also please include a summary paragraph to review the contents of your paper. Be sure to include footnotes and a bibliography. Outside reading does not stifle originality but encourages it.

An argument is much more difficult than a synthesis and therefore takes more thought and time. Please plan ahead, study the book section by section, and meditate on it. Constantly ask, "Why is this section of the text here?"

**For BE106OL . . .** The book assigned for this course is *Galatians*. The length of this assignment is to be 15-20 pages. Consult at least six (6) appropriate sources throughout the argument.

Original outlines are preferred; however, you may consult secondary sources **after** you have wrestled on your own with how the structure of the book conveys the message. Do not simply employ an outline without first critical reflection. (Of course, cite any sources from which you use their words or ideas.) Ensure that there is continuity between the message statement, outline, and presentation.

Sample book argument has been provided in the Canvas course files. *Students are highly encouraged to use the format presented in these samples.* For additional grading expectations, please consult the rubric for this argument paper in Canvas.

**Assignment #2: Write a reflection of the Apostle Paul's life based on Swindoll's *Paul: A Man of Grace and Grit* (MABC students taking this course for two [2] credit hours are exempt from this assignment)**

As you know, this course covers the book of Acts and ten of Paul's letters. By exposing ourselves to so much Pauline material, we will become familiar with Pauline language and theology. We will also come to appreciate the apostle's "story." Swindoll's book on Paul may be his best in the *Great Lives Series*. My intent in this process is for you to become familiar with Paul's miraculous transformation, his incredible contribution to the New Testament writings, and his passionate pursuit of sharing the love of Christ to all humanity. In short, his life should be contagious and motivating to believers.

This project is simple. Read the book, reflect on the life the Apostle Paul, and write about it. While this project may contain a summary of book's material, the goal is not to evaluate Swindoll's book *per se*. Thus, this is not a book review (however, evidence that you read the book should be apparent).

Instead, the goal of this project is for you to interact with life of Paul based on the material presented in Swindoll's book and the Bible. Share which of Paul's experiences resonate with you and why. Describe what you learned and what impresses you about his life and ministry. Be sure to address not only your perspectives, but also the instances/events of Paul life that influenced you. Demonstrate the connection between them.

The length of this assignment is to be 3-5 pages. For additional grading expectations, please consult the rubric for this assignment in Canvas

**D. Interaction (MABC students taking this course for two [2] credit hours are exempt from this assignment.)**

There are two requirements for this interaction.

First, all students will attend and participate in **one (1) live** interaction using Zoom. Students will choose one interactive session date and should budget one hour for the discussion. Registration for each session is limited, so you are encouraged to register early in the course in order to reserve the time that works best for you. This portion of the assignment is worth 8% of the interaction.

Second, all students will **watch a recording of another interaction from this course**. This cannot be the interaction in which you participated. This portion of the interaction is worth 2% of the interaction.

You will report your participation in the interaction in Module 10. See "Course Interaction Information" in Module C for more information.

**E. Final Exam**

**All Students**, regardless of whether they are taking the course for two (2) or three (3) credit hours, will take the final exam for this course. You will take it online during finals week (see Module 10). A study guide and "Chronology of Paul" have been posted in the course files to help you prepare. It will be an objective exam (mostly multiple-choice questions). It will focus on biblical facts (people, places, events, ideas, dates, etc.). Much of this material *will not* be covered in the course videos. The exam *will not* focus on interpretation or application. *Note: No helps of any kind (e.g., class notes or videos, Bibles, another person,*

*internet, etc.) may be used for this exam. The use of such helps will result in an automatic zero (“0”) for the exam and other disciplinary action deemed appropriate by the professor.*

*Department Policy on Final Exams for Bible Exposition*

Do not discuss this exam and its questions or any other BE exam with anyone who has already taken the exam. You WILL be asked to affirm that you have not done so when you take the exam. To discuss the exam with someone who has already taken it will result in a significant penalty.

## VI. COURSE SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

### A. BE106 Final Exam Review Sheet

A review sheet for the final exam has been provided in the course files.

### B. Supplemental Resources

Retired Bible Exposition Chair and Professor Emeritus, Dr. Tom Constable, taught BE106 online for many years. His pastoral care and scholarship helped shape students for decades. As an added benefit to this course, we have made his notes and video lectures on Acts and Paul’s epistles available to you (see “Supplemental Resources” in each module). *Reading or watching Dr. Constable’s notes or videos is not required*; however they may be helpful if you desire more detailed coverage of a particular biblical text.

### C. Disability Accommodation Policy

Dallas Theological Seminary works to provide reasonable and appropriate accommodations to students with psychological, medical, physical, and learning disabilities. A student desiring or needing accommodations on the basis of such disabilities or of medical incidents such as hospitalization or severe injury is to contact the Director of Services for Students with Disabilities (<https://students.dts.edu/studentlife/disability-services/>). If the student is aware of a condition that may impact his/her studies, the student should contact the Director of Services for Students with Disabilities prior to the beginning of the semester or at the onset of a crisis.

### D. Presence of the Professor

You can expect your professor to participate substantially in this course. In each module the professor will post a new module introduction video to highlight relevant course information and content. The professor will also participate in live interactions and hold virtual office hours. More information is available in Module B. Additional phone or video chat meetings with professor or GTA can be scheduled as necessary.

## VII. COURSE POLICIES

### A. Late Assignments

No late assignments will be accepted unless due to an extreme emergency and/or cleared in advance with the professor or GTA.

### B. Plagiarism

According to section 1.17.3 of the Student Handbook, “Plagiarism occurs in research whenever a writer appropriates material that falls outside the sphere of common knowledge, and is from any source not his own without indicating his or her indebtedness to that source. The theft may have to do with substance (i.e., ideas or information taken from a source without acknowledgment in the form of proper documentation), or it may have to do with verbal expression (i.e., wording or phraseology taken from a source without acknowledgment in the form of proper documentation and quotation marks around the quoted material).”

**C. Letter/Numerical Grade Scale**

<b>A+ 99-100</b>	<b>B+ 91-93</b>	<b>C+ 83-85</b>	<b>D+ 75-77</b>	<b>F 0-69</b>
<b>A 96-98</b>	<b>B 88-90</b>	<b>C 80-82</b>	<b>D 72-74</b>	
<b>A- 94-95</b>	<b>B- 86-87</b>	<b>C- 78-79</b>	<b>D- 70-71</b>	
<b>The grade of A</b> means the assignment is exceptional. The work is extremely well done and little could have been done to improve it.	<b>The grade of B</b> means the assignment is commendable. It is a solid piece of work, with all the aspects of the assignments covered effectively.	<b>The grade of C</b> means the assignment is acceptable. It is adequate to fulfill the assignment, though it may not have been as complete, as well thought out, or as organized as it could have been.	<b>The grade of D</b> means the work was of a minimal but passing quality.	<b>The grade of F</b> means the work is below master's-level quality, because it was incomplete, missed the point of the assignment, or was superficial.

**D. Weighing of Course Requirements for Grading:**

<b>Assignment</b>	<b>MABC students taking the course for two (2) credit hours</b>	<b>All students taking the course for three (3) credit hours, including some MABC students</b>
Reading Assignments	20%	15%
Video Watching	25%	20%
Written Assignments	--	--
Galatians Argument	40%	30%
Apostle Paul Reflection	Not Required	15%
Interaction	Not Required	10%
Final Exam	15%	10%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Total Course Hours</b>	<b>2 Credit Hours</b>	<b>3 Credit Hours</b>
<b>Total completion time</b>	<b>Approx. 80 hours</b>	<b>Approx. 125 hours</b>

**VIII. COURSE SCHEDULE**

Please consult Canvas for the course schedule and assignment due dates. Suggested dates for completing each module have been included in the module titles. Students are encouraged to follow the suggested module dates in order to balance the course workload. The professor will upload a module introduction at the beginning of each module.