

**ASSEMBLIES OF GOD THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY**  
**BNT 540**  
**Studies in the Synoptic Gospels/Acts: Acts**

**Benny C. Aker, Ph.D.**

**Spring, 2002**

***COURSE SYLLABUS***

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course will study Acts inductively, looking at its narrative structure, its content, as well as the history and culture behind and within it. Since Acts is important to contemporary Pentecostal/Charismatic traditions, practical and theological issues pertinent to them will receive great attention. Such issues are baptism of the Spirit, missions, proclamation of the gospel, signs, wonders, and miracles, prayer, and the community of God.

**OBJECTIVES**

At the successful completion of this course the student should be able to:

1. Respond to questions in a knowledgeable manner on a variety of issues, people, and texts that relate to Pentecostal concerns;
2. Interpret narrative texts more skillfully;
3. Preach more meaningfully from the book of Acts;
4. Integrate more fully Charismatic theology into Christian life and practice;
5. Pray and believe more effectively for life and ministry;
6. Articulate historical, social, and theological background issues of the book of Acts for interpretive purposes;
7. Explore missionary methods and leadership strategies more effectively for Charismatic communities.

**TEXTBOOKS**

***Required:***

Witherington, III, Ben. *The Acts of the Apostles: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998.

***Recommended:***

Keener, Craig S. *The Spirit in the Gospels and Acts: Divine Purity and Power*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers Inc., 1997.

McKechnie, Paul. *The First Christian Centuries: Perspectives on the Early Church*. Downers Grove: IVP, 2002.

Menzies, Robert P. *The Development of Early Christian Pneumatology With Special Reference to Luke-Acts*. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1991.

Patzia, Arthur G. *The Emergence of the Church: Context, Growth, Leadership & Worship*. Downers Grove, IL:IVP Press, 2001.

Stronstad, Roger. *The Charismatic Theology of St. Luke*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1984.

Turner, Max. *The Holy Spirit and Spiritual Gifts*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers Inc, 1996.

## **BASIC OUTLINE**

- I. Introductory matters:  
Relative to the course  
Relative to the book of Acts
  
- II. Analysis of Acts:  
Chapter 1—Preparation for Pentecost  
Peter  
Chapters 2-8:1—Peter and the Church in Jerusalem  
Chapters 8:2-12:25—Peter and Expansion to Greater Judea & Palestine  
Paul  
Chapters 13-14—Paul and Expansion to Asia Minor the 1<sup>st</sup> Missionary Journey  
Chapters 15-16:5—Church Council: Pause and Regroup  
Chapters 16:6-18:22—Paul and Further Westward Expansion and Solidification:  
2<sup>nd</sup> Missionary Journey  
Chapters 18:23-21:16—Paul's 3<sup>rd</sup> Missionary Journey  
Chapters 21:17-28:31—Paul on the Road to Rome

## **METHODOLOGY**

In this course we will seek to meet our objectives through:

1. Classroom lecture.
2. Classroom discussion of issues related to assigned reading, lectures, and class assignments.
3. Teaching opportunities
4. Individual reading, research, and writing.

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

1. Attendance at all class sessions is expected. Whenever possible absences should be announced beforehand to the professor. Excessive absenteeism

is defined by the AGTS catalog and may result in a grade reduction.  
(Consult the Student Handbook)

2. Students should prepare themselves in advance for each class session by completing their appropriate reading assignment in Acts and the textbook. Participation in classroom discussion through comments and questions are encouraged.
3. Completion of all reading assignments:
  - a. The Book of Acts in one's favorite translation
  - b. The textbook in its entirety as the class works its way through Acts
4. Assist the professor and gain teaching experience by preparing a lesson plan on a small section of Acts and leading the class into discovering the meaning of that text. Early in the schedule, texts, times, etc. will be chosen and assigned.
5. An expository (interpretive) paper on a paragraph in Acts (preferably from the section of Acts with which the student assists the professor). (15-20 pages excluding title page, table of contents, and bibliography; follow Turabian for all matters pertaining to formatting of paper, footnotes, and bibliography and to elements of a formal paper) **DUE\_\_\_\_\_ . Late papers will be penalized.**
6. Mid-term Exam
7. Final Exam

## **GRADING PROCEDURE**

### **Grade Values**

1.	Interpretative paper	100 points
2.	Midterm Exam	100 points
3.	Teaching opportunity	50 points
4.	Final Exam	100 points

**The grade will come from the appropriate percentages of the total possible:**

95-100 %	A	80-83 %	B-
90-94 %	A-	77-79 %	C+
87-89 %	B+	74-76 %	C
84-86 %	B	70-73 %	C-

## **SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY**

Arrington, French L. *The Acts of the Apostles: An Introduction and Commentary*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1988.

Barclay, William. *Turning to God: A Study of Conversion in the Book of Acts and Today*.

- London: Epworth, 1963.
- Barrett, C. K. *Luke the Historian in Recent Study*. London: Epworth, 1961.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Signs of an Apostle*. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1972.
- Blaiklock, E.M. *The Acts of the Apostles: An Historical Commentary*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1959.
- Black, Matthew. *An Aramaic Approach to the Gospels and Acts*. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. Oxford: Clarendon, 1967.
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- Bruce, F.F. *The Book of the Acts: The English Text with Introduction, Exposition and Notes*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1954. Grand Rapids: Wm B. Eerdmans, 1984, repr.
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- Burkitt, R.C. *Christian Beginnings*. London: University of London, 1924.
- Cadbury, Henry J. *The Style and Literary Method of Luke*. 2 vols. Cambridge: Harvard University, 1919-20
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- Calvin, John. *Commentary Upon the Acts of the Apostles*. 2 vols. Edited by H. Beveridge. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1949.
- Clark, Albert C. *The Acts of the Apostles: A Critical Edition with Introduction and Notes On Selected Passages*. Oxford: Clarendon, 1933, repr. 1970.
- Conzelmann, Hans. *The Theology of St. Luke*. Translated by G. Buswell. New York: Harper & Row, 1961.
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- Dodd, C.H. *The Apostolic Preaching and Its Developments*. London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1936.
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- Evans, Craig A. & James A. Sanders. *Luke and Scripture: The Function of Sacred*

- Tradition in Luke-Acts*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993.
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- Gasque, W. Ward. *A History of the Criticism of the Acts of the Apostles*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1975; Plus Addendum: Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers Inc, 1989.
- Haenchen, Ernst. *The Acts of the Apostles*. Translated by R. McL. Wilson. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1971.
- Hanson, R. P. C. *The Acts in the Revised Version with Introduction and Commentary*, In the New Clarendon Bible [New Testament]; Oxford: Clarendon, 19697.
- Harrison, Everett F. *The Apostolic Church*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1985.
- Hengel, Martin. *Acts and the History of Earliest Christianity*. Translated by John Bowden. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1980.
- Horton, Stanley M. *The Book of Acts*. Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, 1981.
- Keck, L.E., and J.L. Martyn, eds. *Studies in Luke-Acts*. Nashville: Abingdon, 1968.
- Knowling, R. J. *The Acts of the Apostles*. Vol. 2 of the Expositor's Greek Testament. Edited by W.R. Nicoll. 1900. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1951.
- Longenecker, Richard N. *The Acts of the Apostles*. In *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, Vol. 9. Edited by Frank E. Gaebelein. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1981.
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- Winter, Bruce, series editor; I. Howard Marshall and David Gill, Consulting editors. *The Book of Acts in Its First Century Setting*. 5 volumes. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company: Volume 1: *The Book of Acts in Its Ancient Literary Setting*. Edited by Bruce W. Winter and Andrew Clarke, 1993; Volume 2: *The Book of Acts in Its Graeco-Roman Setting*. Edited by David W.J. Gill and Conrad Gempf, 1994; Volume 3: *The Book of Acts and Paul in Roman Custody*, 1994; Volume 4: *The Book of Acts in Its Palestinian Setting*, Edited by Richard Bauchkam, 1995; Volume 5: *The Book of Acts in Its Diaspora Setting*, Irina Levinskaya, 1996.

## **SPECIFIC DATA**

Syllabus prepared by Benny C. Aker, Ph.D. December 2001