

**Saint Louis Christian College**  
**BNT205n--Acts**  
**Harold Merritt, Professor**  
**3 Credit Hours**

**Fall, 2014**

**Monday, 8:00-10:00 p.m.**

**Course Prerequisites: BNT105n; BBI215n; GEN125n**

**MISSION STATEMENT**

Saint Louis Christian College pursues excellence in the Word and develops servant leaders for urban, suburban, rural, and global ministry.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

An exegetical study of the book of Acts as it reports the establishment and growth of the early church under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

**COURSE RATIONALE**

Acts provides accurate and powerful testimony of the divine establishment and growth of the church as God's Spirit filled and guided the early disciples. It traces the church's development from its narrow Jewish roots to its fearless and unhindered witness to all in the very heart of the Roman Empire. It answers that most crucial of all questions, "What must I do to be saved?" This course also contributes to student achievement of the following Division of Biblical Education objectives:

1. Given instruction in the Bible and in biblical theology, the student will exhibit knowledge of the messages of the various Old and New Testament books and the saving message of the Bible as a whole. (SLO 2, 8, 9)
2. Shown how to use tools and sound methods for interpreting the Bible, the student will demonstrate the ability to properly interpret, apply, and communicate Scripture. (SLO 1)
3. Presented the biblical mandates for worldwide evangelism, the student will communicate the imperative that every person needs Jesus Christ as Savior. (SLO 1, 7)

**COURSE OBJECTIVES**

*As a result of this course, the learner should be able to:*

1. Understand the introductory issues of Acts and how Paul's letters fit into its history.
2. Grasp the structure and essential message of Acts in its historical and geographical setting.
3. Understand the major theological themes of Acts and their implications for today.
4. Comprehend and appreciate the dynamic interaction between God and his people in the establishment and expansion of the church.
5. Appreciate the positive models of believers and churches in Acts and imitate their faithfulness and bold witness.
6. Explain the unique role of Christ as Savior in God's redemptive plan seen in Acts.

## COURSE TEXTBOOKS

Larkin, William. *Acts*. The IVP New Testament Commentary Series, 5. Downer's Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1995.

New International Version of the Bible

Course pack.

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

### 1. **Attendance.** (College catalog, p.30)

Class attendance is expected and required. Each course meets a total of 11 sessions with each session having two individual hours or units. Attendance will be taken during each of the total 22 hours or units that the course meets. Whenever four hours or units of absences occur, the student will be given an additional assignment to make up for the lost time in class. Failure to complete the additional assignment would result in a reduction in the final grade by one letter.

Institutional policy states “*If absences exceed 25 percent of the total class sessions, the student will be administratively withdrawn from the class with a grade of F.*” Only five total hour units of absences are allowed in this attendance policy. Absences beyond these five will exceed the 25 percent allowance and will result in a grade of F.

### 2. **Reading.**

- Read Acts and Larkin’s commentary keeping pace with the assigned schedule. A reading report is due each week, **INCLUDING WEEK #1 (Report form provided—see below, page 8)** Note that **no** Acts reading is due on week #1.
- Read Paul’s letters and the introduction to his letters in the NIV Study Bible following the assigned schedule. Answer the questions relating to Paul’s letters on the reading report each week starting August 12.

### 3. **Quizzes.** (1) There will be four chapter identification quizzes to assess the extent to which you are familiar with the location of the events of Acts. *See page 6.* (2) There will also be a map quiz to evaluate your knowledge of key locations mentioned in Acts. *A detailed map will be provided.*

### 4. **Christological Analysis.** The book of Acts teaches that salvation is found in Christ alone. He is consistently presented as the one and only Savior of all people, both Jews and Gentiles. Regardless of audience Jesus is always portrayed as the indispensable key in God’s plan of salvation in the evangelistic speeches of Acts.

**Make an analysis** of selected speeches in Acts (*Typed and double spaced, size 12 font.*) Examine the following speeches:

1. 3:12-26
2. 10:34-43
3. 13:16-41
4. 17:22-31

Include:

- |                        |                      |
|------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Scripture reference | 5. Circumstances     |
| 2. Speaker             | 6. Summary of speech |
| 3. Audience            | 7. Results           |
| 4. Location            |                      |

**Conclusions:** After analyzing all 4 speeches, write ½ **to one page** on **each** of the **following points**:

- (1) The unique and indispensable role of Jesus Christ as Savior of all people.
- (2) The differences in approach in preaching to different kinds of audiences.
- (3) The implications of this for your own sharing the gospel with others

**Due September 8.** See **ATTACHED MODEL (page 7)** of *Analysis of an Acts Speech*.

5. Final Exam. This exam will be comprehensive, covering major people and events. A study guide will be provided.

### **COURSE ASSESSMENT**

|                                 |     |
|---------------------------------|-----|
| Chapter Identification Quizzes  | 12% |
| Map Test                        | 11% |
| Acts Reading                    | 5%  |
| Larkin Reading                  | 15% |
| Relating Paul's Letters to Acts | 15% |
| Christological Analysis         | 20% |
| Final Exam                      | 22% |

### **COURSE SCHEDULE**

|   | <b>Acts<br/>Chapters</b> | <b>Larkin<br/>Pages</b> | <b>Paul's<br/>Letters</b> |
|---|--------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| July 7 Getting a Grip on Acts             | -----                    | 13-36                   |                           |
| 14 Pentecost—Powerful Beginnings          | 1-2                      | 37-63a                  |                           |
| 21 Opposition and Open Hands              | 3-6a                     | 63b-102                 |                           |
| 28 Flashpoint—Stephen & Mission Expansion | 6b-8                     | 103-137a                |                           |
| <b>Chapter ID Quiz, chs 1-8</b>           |                          |                         |                           |

|                                  |   |        |           |                      |
|----------------------------------|---|--------|-----------|----------------------|
| Aug 4                            | Conversion of Paul & Cornelius                          | 9-11a  | 137b-174a |                      |
| 11                               | Growth & Opposition; Paul's 1 <sup>st</sup> Journey     | 11b-14 | 174b-218a | Gal<br>1 & 2 Thess   |
| <b>Chapter ID Quiz, chs 1-14</b> |   |        |           |                      |
| 18                               | Jerusalem Council; Paul's 2 <sup>nd</sup> Journey       | 15-17  | 218b-261a | 1 & 2                |
| <b>Map Test</b>                  |   |        |           |                      |
| 25                               | Paul's 3 <sup>rd</sup> Journey; Farewell to Eph. Elders | 18-20  | 261b-300a | Eph, Php<br>Col, Phm |
| <b>Chapter ID Quiz, chs 1-20</b> |   |        |           |                      |
| <b>Sep 1 NO CLASS—LABOR DAY</b>  |   |        |           |                      |
| 8                                | Witness to Rioting Crowd & Sanhedrin                    | 21-23  | 300b-336  |                      |
| <b>Christological Analysis</b>   |   |        |           |                      |
| 15                               | Witness to Rulers                                       | 24-26  | 337-65a   | Romans               |
| <b>Chapter ID Quiz, chs 1-28</b> |   |        |           |                      |
| 22                               | Witness at Sea, on Malta, at Rome                       | 27-28  | 365b-393  | 1 & 2 Tim<br>Titus   |
| <b>Final Exam</b>                |   |        |           |                      |

## SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Barrett, C.K. *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*. 2 vols. International Critical Commentary. Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1994, 1997.
- Bruce, F.F. *Commentary on the Book of Acts*. Rev. ed. New International Commentary on the New Testament. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988.
- Ferguson, Everett. *Backgrounds of Early Christianity*. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003.
- Marshall, I. Howard. *The Acts of the Apostles*. Tyndale New Testament Commentaries. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980.
- Polhill, John B. *Acts*. New American Commentary. Nashville: Broadman, 1992.
- Sherwin-White, A. *Roman Society and Roman Law in the New Testament*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1991.
- Winter, Bruce, ed. *The Book of Acts in Its First Century Setting*. 6 vols. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993-97.
- Witherington, Ben III. *The Acts of the Apostles: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998.

See also the select bibliography for further reading at the end of the textbook.

Websites: [www.bible.org](http://www.bible.org) = NET Bible  
[www.ntgateway.com](http://www.ntgateway.com)  
[www.ntimages.com](http://www.ntimages.com)

## COURSE POLICIES

1. **Late Work:** Assignments are due at the beginning of the class period. In the event of extenuating circumstances (illness, emergency, etc), late work will be accepted for full credit. Other late assignments will be accepted, but the grade will be reduced one increment from the assigned grade (for example B to B-) per day, including weekends and holidays. No late work will be accepted after 10 days. **Extenuating circumstances must be explained in writing within 4 days. If you do not communicate with the professor, it will be assumed there were no extenuating circumstances.**
2. **Missed Quizzes:** Quizzes missed due to an excused absence (extenuating circumstances) may be made up with the professor's permission. The quiz should be taken within one week. Quizzes missed due to an **unexcused** absence may NOT be made up and will receive a grade of F (zero).
3. **Learning Disability:** If you have a diagnosed learning disability, please see me privately to discuss assessment measures that would enhance your ability to learn.
4. **Classroom Decorum:** To promote a productive learning environment students are expected to conduct themselves in a Christ-like manner--showing respect to the professor and other students. Failure to act maturely may result in a warning, a grade demotion, or failure/dismissal from the class.
5. **Academic Honesty:** Any cheating or plagiarism will result in a grade of F (zero) for that quiz/assignment. See the college catalog.
6. **Adjustment of Syllabus.** The professor reserves the right to modify the following course schedule as long as it does not add to the student's work load.
7. **Keep all papers.** It's essential that you keep all returned papers in case a question arises regarding their submission/grade or the accuracy of your final grade.
8. **Cell Phones.** Cell phones/texting is not permitted during class sessions.

## COURSE INSTRUCTOR CONTACT INFORMATION

Campus phone and e-mail address: (314) 837-6777, ex 1504; [hmerritt@slcconline.edu](mailto:hmerritt@slcconline.edu)

Home phone: (314) 831-8837

## Chapter Identification Topics

|         |   |
|---------|---|
| Chap 1  | Jesus' Ascension<br>The replacement of Judas  |
| Chap 2  | Pentecost   |
| Chap 3  | The healing of the lame man at the Gate Beautiful<br>Peter's second sermon                                |
| Chap 4  | Peter and John before the Sanhedrin<br>United prayer and renewed evangelism<br>Barnabas' gift to the poor |
| Chap 5  | Sin of Ananias and Sapphira<br>All of the apostles before the Sanhedrin                                   |
| Chap 6  | Selection of the seven<br>Stephen's ministry  |
| Chap 7  | Stephen's speech  |
| Chap 8  | Philip in Samaria<br>The conversion of the Ethiopian eunuch   |
| Chap 9  | The first account of Paul's conversion<br>Peter heals Aeneas and raises Tabitha                           |
| Chap 10 | The conversion of Cornelius   |
| Chap 11 | Peter defends his mission to Cornelius<br>The establishment of the church at Antioch (Syria)              |
| Chap 12 | The death of the apostle James<br>The deliverance of Peter<br>The death of Herod Agrippa I                |
| Chap 13 | Paul at Pisidian Antioch  |
| Chap 14 | Paul at Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe  |
| Chap 15 | The Jerusalem Council<br>Paul and Barnabas part company after an argument                                 |
| Chap 16 | Paul at Philippi  |
| Chap 17 | Paul at Athens  |
| Chap 18 | Paul at Corinth   |
| Chap 19 | Paul at Ephesus   |
| Chap 20 | Paul's speech to the Ephesian elders  |
| Chap 21 | James advises Paul regarding a rumor<br>Riot against Paul in Jerusalem                                    |
| Chap 22 | Paul's speech to the rioting crowd  |
| Chap 23 | Paul before the Sanhedrin<br>The plot to kill Paul  |
| Chap 24 | Paul before Felix   |
| Chap 25 | Paul before Festus  |
| Chap 26 | Paul before Herod Agrippa II  |
| Chap 27 | Paul's voyage to Rome   |
| Chap 28 | Paul on Malta<br>Paul at Rome   |

## MODEL OF SPEECH ANALYSIS

**Scripture Reference:** Acts 2:14-40

**Speaker:** Peter

**Audience:** Jews and proselytes from many nations gathered to celebrate the day of Pentecost (a festival usually held between mid May and mid June).

**Location:** Jerusalem

### **Circumstances:**

After Jesus' ascension his disciples were gathered together praying in Jerusalem. Suddenly the Holy Spirit came upon them and they began to speak in other languages about the wonderful acts of God. People from many nations heard and understood what they were saying. They were amazed and confused because the disciples were speaking in their own languages. Some, however, thought that the disciples had been drinking too much new wine.

### **Summary of content:**

Peter explains that the disciples are not drunk. The events which amazed the crowd are in fulfillment of prophecy (Joel 2:28-32)—specifically the coming of the Holy Spirit. (2:14-21)

God accredited Jesus by the miracles He performed. Although Jesus was put to death by the Jews, God raised Him from the dead in fulfillment of Ps. 16:8-11. This prophecy cannot refer to David since he died and his tomb remains to this day. Instead the prophecy refers to David's descendant Jesus. The disciples themselves are witnesses of the resurrected Jesus. (2:22-32)

God has exalted Jesus to His right hand, where He has received and poured out the promised Holy Spirit. This too is in fulfillment of prophecy (Ps. 110:1). Therefore all Israel should know that Jesus is both Lord and Christ. (2:33-36)

When asked by the guilt-stricken crowd what they should do, Peter tells them to repent and be baptized for the forgiveness of sins and they will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. He then continues to warn them and urge them to be saved. (2:37-40)

### **Results:**

Three thousand people believed in Jesus as the Christ and were baptized into his name. They devoted themselves to the teaching of the apostles and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and prayers. The Lord kept adding those who were being saved.

## ACTS READING REPORT

July 7, 2014

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_

**Please state how much of the reading you have completed:**

**Acts (none assigned this week)**

**Larkin, pp. 13-36, pages read \_\_\_\_\_**

**Larkin**, Two **important** insights (insights gained **only** from Larkin's explanation of the text). These are insights that help understand the text and the historical events, **NOT** life lessons = application. This applies to **ALL** Larkin reading reports.

(1)

(2)



**ACTS READING REPORT FORM**

**July 14, 2014**

**Student Name** \_\_\_\_\_

**Please state how much of the reading you have completed:**

**Acts, chapters 1-2, chapters read** \_\_\_\_\_

**Larkin, pp. 37-63a, pages read** \_\_\_\_\_

**Larkin, Two important insights**

(1)

(2)

**ACTS READING REPORT FORM**

**July 21, 2014**

**Student Name** \_\_\_\_\_

**Please state how much of the reading you have completed:**

**Acts, chapters 3-6a, chapters read** \_\_\_\_\_

**Larkin, pp. 63b-102, pages read** \_\_\_\_\_

**Larkin, Two important insights**

(1)

(2)

**ACTS READING REPORT FORM**

**July 28, 2014**

**Student Name** \_\_\_\_\_

**Please state how much of the reading you have completed:**

**Acts, chapters 6b-8, chapters read** \_\_\_\_\_

**Larkin, pp. 103-137a pages read** \_\_\_\_\_

**Larkin, Two important insights**

(1)

(2)

**ACTS READING REPORT FORM**

**Aug. 4, 2014**

**Student Name** \_\_\_\_\_

**Please state how much of the reading you have completed:**

**Acts, chapters 9-11a, chapters read** \_\_\_\_\_

**Larkin, pp. 137b-174a, pages read** \_\_\_\_\_

**Larkin, Two important insights**

(1)

(2)

## ACTS READING REPORT FORM

Aug. 11, 2014

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_

**Please state how much of the reading you have completed:**

**Acts, chapters 11b-14, chapters read \_\_\_\_\_**

**Larkin, pp. 174b-218a, pages read \_\_\_\_\_**

**Larkin, Two important insights**

(1)

(2)

### **Paul's Letters—Galatians**

1. When was the letter written?
2. At what point does it fit into Acts?
3. Why was the letter written?
4. Are there any problems/issues in the letter that relate to Acts? If so, describe.

### **Paul's Letters—1 Thessalonians**

1. When was the letter written?
2. At what point does it fit into Acts?
3. Why was the letter written?
4. Are there any problems/issues in the letter that relate to Acts? If so, describe.

**Paul's Letters—2 Thessalonians**

1. When was the letter written?
2. At what point does it fit into Acts?
3. Why was the letter written?
4. Are there any problems/issues in the letter that relate to Acts? If so, describe.

## ACTS READING REPORT FORM

Aug. 18, 2014

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_

**Please state how much of the reading you have completed:**

**Acts, chapters 15-17, chapters read \_\_\_\_\_**

**Larkin, pp. 218b-261a, pages read \_\_\_\_\_**

**Larkin, Two important insights**

(1)

(2)

### **Paul's Letters—1 Corinthians**

1. When was the letter written?
2. At what point does it fit into Acts?
3. Why was the letter written?
4. Are there any problems/issues in the letter that relate to Acts? If so, describe.

### **Paul's Letters—2 Corinthians**

1. When was the letter written?
2. At what point does it fit into Acts?
3. Why was the letter written?
4. Are there any problems/issues in the letter that relate to Acts? If so, describe.

## ACTS READING REPORT FORM

Aug. 25, 2014

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_

**Please state how much of the reading you have completed:**

**Acts, chapters 18-20, chapters read \_\_\_\_\_**

**Larkin, pp. 261b-300a, pages read \_\_\_\_\_**

**Larkin, Two important insights**

(1)

(2)

### **Paul's Letters—Ephesians**

1. When was the letter written?
2. At what point does it fit into Acts?
3. Why was the letter written?
4. Are there any problems/issues in the letter that relate to Acts? If so, describe.

### **Paul's Letters—Philippians**

1. When was the letter written?
2. At what point does it fit into Acts?
3. Why was the letter written?



4. Are there any problems/issues in the letter that relate to Acts? If so, describe.

**Paul's Letters—Colossians**

1. When was the letter written?
2. At what point does it fit into Acts?
3. Why was the letter written?
4. Are there any problems/issues in the letter that relate to Acts? If so, describe.

**Paul's Letters--Philemon**

1. When was the letter written?
2. At what point does it fit into Acts?
3. Why was the letter written?
4. Are there any problems/issues in the letter that relate to Acts? If so, describe.

**ACTS READING REPORT FORM**

**Sep. 8, 2014**

**Student Name** \_\_\_\_\_

**Please state how much of the reading you have completed:**

**Acts, chapters 21-23, chapters read** \_\_\_\_\_

**Larkin, pp. 300b-336, pages read** \_\_\_\_\_

**Larkin, Two important insights**

(1)

(2)

**ACTS READING REPORT FORM**

**Sep. 15, 2014**

**Student Name** \_\_\_\_\_

**Please state how much of the reading you have completed:**

**Acts, chapters 24-26, chapters read** \_\_\_\_\_

**Larkin, pp. 337-365a, pages read** \_\_\_\_\_

**Larkin, Two important insights**

(1)

(2)

**Paul's Letters—Romans**

1. When was the letter written?
  
2. At what point does it fit into Acts?
  
3. Why was the letter written?
  
4. Are there any problems/issues in the letter that relate to Acts? If so, describe.

## ACTS READING REPORT FORM

Sep. 22, 2014

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_

**Please state how much of the reading you have completed:**

**Acts, chapters 27-28, chapters read \_\_\_\_\_**

**Larkin, pp. 365b-393, pages read \_\_\_\_\_**

**Larkin, Two important insights**

(1)

(2)

### **Paul's Letters—1 Timothy**

1. When was the letter written?
2. At what point does it fit into Acts?
3. Why was the letter written?
4. Are there any problems/issues in the letter that relate to Acts? If so, describe.

### **Paul's Letters—Titus**

1. When was the letter written?
2. At what point does it fit into Acts?
3. Why was the letter written?
4. Are there any problems/issues in the letter that relate to Acts? If so, describe.

**Paul's Letters—2 Timothy**

1. When was the letter written?
2. At what point does it fit into Acts?
3. Why was the letter written?
4. Are there any problems/issues in the letter that relate to Acts? If so, describe.