



NT302/502
THE EARLY NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH
Semester 2, 2015

Brisbane School of Theology offers high quality, Bible-centred theological training in a diverse and supportive community, shaping the whole person for God's purpose. Aiming for more than simply growing students' knowledge of theology, BST is developing passionate, capable disciples who use what they know about God's word to serve him in the church and the world.

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• Know God's word; take it to the world •

INFORMATION ABOUT THIS UNIT

Description	This unit follows NT301/501, Jesus and the Gospels. NT302/502 covers the book of Acts and at least seven of New Testament epistles. Given that this is an introductory course the focus is on overview rather than in depth analysis. Special attention is given to the occasion and purpose of each book studied as well as how the authors develop their arguments. How Acts and the epistles apply to life and ministry is also a major part of the unit.		
Teaching staff	Lecturer	Dr Alan Stanley <i>BAgr, DipAgrSci, ThM, PhD</i>	
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Additional information	Credit points	4	
	Co/pre-requisites	N/A	
	No. of teaching weeks	13	
Assessment Summary	NT302		
	Item	Details/Due Date	Weighting
	Essay	2,500 words Due: 10 th September	60%
	Exam	80 minutes Due: 13 th November	40%
	NT502		
	Item	Details/Due Date	Weighting
	Essay	2,500 words Due: 10 th September	50%
Exam	80 minutes Due: 13 th November	40%	
Book review	1,000 words Due: 29 th October	10%	

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES AND UNIT CONTENT

Unit Outcomes

On completion of this unit, NT302/502 students will be able to:

- 1) Understand the Book of Acts as a presentation of history, theology and narrative; and the contents, themes and theology of the various books of the New Testament.
- 2) Understand the key developments in the growth of the early church, together with an awareness of emerging patterns and common themes alongside exceptional and notable events.
- 3) Summarize and outline relevant information from Acts and various epistles, with an increased capacity to review significant themes, perspectives and interpretations associated with the material in view.

Unit Content

Section A: the beginnings and expansion of the church as reflected in the New Testament documents, with special attention to the Acts of the Apostles.

1. The Jerusalem church
2. Early Christian preaching
3. Stephen and the Hellenists
4. The Pauline mission and churches
5. The Council of Jerusalem
6. Schism, heresy and external threat in the early church

Section B: the main issues confronted in and the teaching of at least seven major New Testament epistles.

UNIT OUTLINE

Week	Date	Topic	Pre-reading
1	July 24	Introduction to unit Introduction to Acts and content	
2	July 31	Theology of Acts Outlining Acts	Acts 1-6; Kostenberger, 329-365
3	Aug 7	Early Christian Preaching	Acts 7-12; Ladd, 347-63
4	Aug 14	The Early Church Stephen and the Hellenists	Acts 13-18; Kostenberger, 873-895; Ladd, 364-78
5	Aug 21	The Pauline Mission and the Churches	Acts 19-24; Kostenberger, 366-404; Ladd, 379-93
6	Aug 28	The Council of Jerusalem Schism, Heresy and External Threat to the Early Church	Acts 25-28; Kostenberger, 635-666.
7	Sept 4	Galatians	Galatians; Kostenberger, 405-460; Ladd, 397-434
8	Sep 11	1 Corinthians Essay Due (5pm, Sep 10)	1 Corinthians; Kostenberger, 461-509; Ladd, 435-77
9	Sep 18	Romans	Romans; Kostenberger, 510-557; Ladd, 478-537
STUDY WEEK (Sep 21-26) MID-SEMESTER BREAK (Sep 28-Oct 2)			
10	Oct 9	Ephesians	Ephesians, Kostenberger, 558-634; Ladd, 537-614
11	Oct 16	Hebrews	Hebrews; Kostenberger, 667-700; Ladd, 617-33
12	Oct 23	James	James, Kostenberger, 701-780; Ladd, 634-56
13	Oct 30	Revelation Book Review Due (5pm, Oct 29)	Revelation; Kostenberger, 781-872; Ladd, 657-83
	Nov 2-6	Study week	
	Nov 13	Exam	

UNIT OUTLINE FOR NT 302

This applies to students who are enrolled at Bachelor level.

Assessment 1	Item	Essay, 2500 words
	Details/Due Date	<p>Write an essay on one of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Discuss the significance of the Damascus event in Acts 9:1-22 and its implications for the Christian Church today. b) Discuss the theological issues and the significance of the Jerusalem Council in Acts 15:1-32 in the life and the ministry of the early church and its implications in our Australian context today. c) Discuss the placement, role and significance of Acts 6:1-7 in the flow of the Acts narrative. What lessons does this account have for those in ministry? d) Discuss the placement, role and significance of Acts 27 and how it fits into the overall purpose of Acts. What lessons arise from this chapter for those in ministry? <p>Due: Thurs, 10th September, 5pm.</p>
	Weighting	60%
Assessment 2	Item	Exam, 80 minutes
	Details/Due Date	<p>The exam will cover the entire unit including readings from the textbooks. There will be five essay questions, from which you will choose two and write your answers.</p> <p>Due: Fri, 13th November.</p>
	Weighting	40%

ASSESSMENT OUTLINE FOR NT501

This applies to students who are enrolled at Masters level.

Assessment 1	Item	Essay, 2500 words
	Details/Due Date	<p>Write an essay on one of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Discuss the theological issues and the significance of Pentecost (Acts 2) in the life and ministry of the early church. What lessons are there for the church in Australia today? b) Compare and contrast the following conversion experiences in Acts: Acts 2 (Jews), Acts 8 (Samaritans), Acts 10 (Gentiles), and Acts 19 (disciples of John the Baptist). Discuss the reasons for the differences and discuss the role these accounts play in Luke's overall purpose. What lessons arise from your study for the church today? c) What does Luke's report of Paul's mission in Athens (Acts 17:16-34) contribute to thinking about context-sensitive mission today? d) Why does Luke take so many chapters to report on Paul's journey from Jerusalem to Rome (Acts 21-28)? Explain what significance Paul's journey would have had for the original readers of Acts? Demonstrate how these chapters apply to us today. <p>Due: Thurs, 10th September, 5pm.</p>
	Weighting	50%
Assessment 2	Item	Book Review, 1000 words
	Details/Due Date	<p>Write a review on one of the following:</p> <p>Wright, N. T. <i>Paul: Fresh Perspectives</i>. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2009.</p> <p>Moyise, S. <i>The Later New Testament Writings and Scripture: The Old Testament in Acts, Hebrews, the Catholic Epistles and Revelation</i>. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2012.</p> <p>Bird, M. F. (ed.). <i>Four Views on the Apostle Paul</i>. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012.</p> <p>Due: Thurs, 29th October, 5pm</p>
	Weighting	10%
Assessment 3	Item	Exam, 80 minutes
	Details/Due Date	<p>The exam will cover the entire unit including readings from the textbooks. There will be five essay questions, from which you will choose two and write your answers.</p> <p>Due: Fri, 13th November.</p>
	Weighting	40%

LECTURE ATTENDANCE

Please note the [ACT policy](#) (see also BST Student Handbook) on lecture attendance in the *Undergraduate Handbook* and the *Graduate and Postgraduate Handbook*. You are required to attend at least 80% of lectures. This means you can miss a maximum of two lectures. If you know that you will not be at a lecture, please phone or email the lecturer beforehand. If you miss more than two lectures, your enrolment for this unit may be ended.

HOW TO STUDY THIS UNIT

You should allocate approximately 7 hours outside of class each week to this unit.

LATE SUBMISSION OF WORK

Please note the [ACT Late Penalties Policy](#) (including extensions; see also BST Student Handbook). Failure to submit any individual assignment on time may result in either a late penalty or a zero mark for the assignment.

PASSING THIS UNIT

To pass this unit you must complete and submit each assessment item. You must also attain an overall percentage mark of 50% or more.

PLAGIARISM

Please note the [ACT Academic Misconduct Policy](#) (see also BST student handbook) on plagiarism. This is a serious issue and it is your responsibility both to understand what plagiarism includes and to avoid it completely. If you are found to have plagiarised, there will be serious consequences as specified in the BST student handbook.

Penalties for plagiarism are as follows (from [ACT Academic Misconduct Policy](#)).

First offence:

Students will be subject to academic counselling, with the maximum penalty being to fail the item with no marks awarded. Where deemed appropriate, the minimum penalty available will be that students may be granted an opportunity to resubmit the assessment with a maximum of 50% for the assessment.

Second offence:

Fail unit, with no remedial opportunity.

Third or major offence:

Exclusion from any award of the ACT, or exclusion from the award for up to two years, or other outcome appropriate to the case but with an impact less serious than exclusion.

In the case of severe plagiarism and/or cheating, a student may be subject to a separate disciplinary process approved by the ACT Academic Board. Colleges are required to immediately report to the ACT Director of Academic Services all offences of wilful academic misconduct, for recording on TAMS.

READING MATERIALS

Prescribed text(s)

- Köstenberger, A. J., L. S. Kellum and C. L. Quarles.
The Cradle, the Cross, and the Crown: An Introduction to the New Testament. Nashville: B&H, 2009.
- Ladd, G. E.
A Theology of the New Testament. Rev. ed. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994.

Other recommended texts

- Bird, M. F.
A Bird's-eye View of Paul: The Man, His Mission and His Message. Colorado Springs: IVP, 2008.
- Bird, M. F. (ed.).
Four Views on the Apostle Paul. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012.
- Bock, D. L.
A Theology of Luke and Acts: God's Promised Program, Realized for All Nations. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012.
- Caird, G. B and L. D. Hurst.
New Testament Theology. Oxford: Clarendon, 1994.
- Chester, A. and R. P. Martin.
The Theology of the Letters of James, Peter, and Jude. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994.
- Dunn, J. D. G.
Unity and Diversity in the New Testament. London: SCM, 1990.
- Dunn, J. D. G.
The Theology of the Apostle Paul. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006.
- Cassidy, R. J.
Society and Politics in the Acts of the Apostles. New York: Orbis, 1987.
- de Silva, D. A.
An Introduction to the New Testament: Contexts, Methods & Ministry Formation. Leicester: Apollos, IVP, 2004.
- Goulder, M.
St Peter Verses St Paul: A Tale of Two Missions. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1995.
- Hengel, M.
Acts and the History of Earliest Christianity. repr; Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2003.
- Hurtado, L.
Lord Jesus Christ: Devotion to Jesus in Earliest Christianity. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003.
- Jeremias, J. and K. C. Hanson.
Jesus and the Message of the New Testament. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2002.
- Marshall, I. H. and D. Peterson (eds.)
Witness to the Gospel: The Theology of Acts. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998.
- Marshall, I. H.
New Testament Theology: Many Witnesses, One Gospel. Downers Grove: IVP, 2004.
- Matera, F. J.
New Testament Theology. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2007.
- Moyise, Steve.
The Later New Testament Writings and Scripture: The Old Testament in Acts, Hebrews, the Catholic Epistles and Revelation. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2012.
- Ridderbos, H.
Paul: An Outline of His Theology. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997.
- Schreiner, T. R.
New Testament Theology: Magnifying God in Christ. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008.
- Thielman, F.
Theology of the New Testament: A Canonical and Synthetic Approach. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005.
- Thompson, A. J.
One Lord, One People: The Unity of the Church in Its Literary Setting. London: T. & T. Clark, 2008.
- Winter, B. W. (Gen. ed.)
Book of Acts in its First Century Setting. 6 Vols; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993-1996.
- Wright, N. T.
Paul: Fresh Perspectives. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2009.

GRADUATE OUTCOMES

Attribute	Emphases of Unit			Comment
	Strong	Moderate	Light	
1) Passionate discipleship		√		Even though the term "disciple" does not occur after Acts, the epistles nevertheless demonstrate what discipleship looks like in 'everyday life.' Hence through our study we will learn what it looks like to follow Christ in a variety of settings.
2) Sound knowledge of Bible		√		Through Acts-Revelation we see the beginning and development of the early Church. Their Bible was the OT and the writers quote it and allude to it all over the place. Furthermore, these writers are following Jesus' command to teach everything He had commanded them. Therefore to study any of these NT books is to expose us to large amounts of Scripture rather than simply the book we might be studying.
3) Humility and faithfulness			√	Not only does Acts-Revelation give us examples of humility and faithfulness but they also give us plenty of teaching on it. In fact as we go further into the NT we will see that humility forms the basis for faithful obedience.
4) Communicating the Gospel	√			The book of Acts shows us how the early church communicated the good news. The epistles and Revelation show us the comprehensive nature of the gospel and how it applies to multiple situations inside and outside the church.
5) Commitment to mission	√			Acts is the missionary book of the NT; the thirteen Pauline epistles are written by a missionary; the general epistles (Heb-Jude) are addressed, in many cases, to second generation Christians: i.e., the recipients of mission; while Revelation demonstrates God's heart for the lost of this world. It's mission from beginning to end!
6) Commitment to team ministry		√		Acts shows us the advance of the kingdom from Jerusalem to Rome. But it makes clear that no one individual is responsible for this. Under the sovereign direction of God it is a team effort. All of Paul's letters acknowledge his co-workers but on top of this Acts through to Revelation teaches us that the Christian life and ministry happens within community.
7) Basic ministry skills	√			As we study Acts-Revelation we will learn such things as how we are to relate to God, how we relate to one another, and how we are to relate to the world.
8) Commitment to lifelong learning			√	Studying Acts-Revelation means that we will be exposed to a variety of settings and situations. There is therefore much to learn and understand in addition to actually studying the text. Quite simply, there is so much in these books to learn and a survey approach to these books will help us to see how much more there is to learn and study.

GRADUATE ATTRIBUTES

1) They will be passionate disciples of Jesus Christ. Graduates will maintain a vibrant relationship with God, be passionate about following Jesus and walk by the Spirit in every area of life. They will seek to love God above all else and others as themselves in attitudes, words and deeds. They will be imitators of Jesus, obey His Word, deny themselves, take up their cross and follow Jesus wherever He may lead (Mark 8:34).

2) They will have a sound knowledge of the Bible. Graduates will have an in-depth and comprehensive knowledge of the Bible. They will be committed to the infallibility and authority of the Bible as God's Word in everything pertaining to salvation and the Christian life (2 Tim 3:14-17). They will do their best to be good teachers of the Bible who correctly explain the word of truth (2 Tim 2:15).

3) They will have genuine humility and demonstrate faithfulness in life and ministry. Graduates will live lives of holiness, humility and faithfulness. They will be willing to acknowledge their shortcomings and mistakes, and be open to receive constructive criticism and advice. They will do nothing out of selfish ambition, but in humility will consider others better than themselves (Phil 2:3). They will be prepared to suffer for the sake of Christ, knowing that "we must go through many hardships to enter the kingdom of God" (Acts 14:22).

4) They will be effective communicators of the Gospel. Graduates will know the Gospel and will be eager and able to communicate the Gospel, especially in word, but also through writing and other media, in ways that are culturally sensitive and intelligible to others. They will have compassionate hearts, listening empathetically to people in their particular contexts. They will be ready to preach the Word at any time with patience and care (2 Tim 4:2), trying to persuade people to believe the Gospel and to become followers of Jesus (2 Cor 5:11).

5) They will have a great commitment to God's mission. Graduates will be aware of the needs and opportunities of local and global mission. They will endeavour to see the coming of God's kingdom in every sphere of life, strive for justice for the poor and work towards community transformation. They will be passionately committed to and will be active in working towards the fulfilment of the Great Commission, to make disciples of all nations (Matt 28:18-20).

6) They will be committed to team ministry and servant leadership. Graduates will be committed to the local church as the family of God and as their context for ministry and base for mission (Heb 10:24-25). They will work enthusiastically and cooperatively with others in ministry teams. They will be open to Christians across various evangelical denominations and churches (Luke 9:49-50). As leaders they will be disciple-makers, following the Lord Jesus in serving, leading by example, and training and mentoring other leaders (Mark 10:43-45).

7) They will be competent in basic ministry skills. Graduates will be competent in basic ministry skills, including preaching, teaching, leading and caring for people. They will use their gifts to implement constructive change in the church and community (1 Tim 4:6-16). They will be culturally attuned and flexible in dealing with a range of issues (1 Cor 9:19-23). They will embrace accountability and maintain professional standards in various contexts. They will be "salt and light" in the world (Matt 5:13-14) and be able to "prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up" (Eph 4:12).

8) They will be committed to lifelong learning and personal growth. Graduates will be proactive in expanding their knowledge and abilities. They will be open to new challenges, be willing to face unfamiliar problems and accept wider responsibilities. They will continue to grow in faith, knowledge and maturity, "forgetting what is behind and pressing ... toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus" (Phil 3:13-14).

