



NTST537
READINGS IN ACTS AND GENERAL EPISTLES
Spring, 2022
Carlos Camarena, PhD

This course is designed to understand the birth of the Christian Church as expressed in the book of Acts, the initial theological tensions that affected it, and how those tensions were handled through the guidance of the Holy Spirit. In this course, and depending on the time spent discussing the different “readings”, we will attempt to cover at least four biblical themes from Acts and the General Epistles.

CLASS & CONTACT INFORMATION

Class location: [Southern Union](#)

Class meeting dates: January 23 – January 27, 2022

Class meeting times: Sunday, January 23, 5:00 – 8:00 p.m.; Monday to Thursday, January 23 – 27, 8:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.; 1:30 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.

Course website: [LearningHub](#)

Instructor’s telephone: 619-962-7188. Favor enviar texto antes de llamar. Este instructor (por causa de “tele-marketers”) no responde a números desconocidos.

Instructor email: pastorcarlos2@yahoo.com

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Pre-Intensive:

Lectura de la bibliografía sugerente abajo (u otros libros o artículos preaprobados por el instructor, 20 horas, el/la estudiante deberá llenar el cuestionario: “*The Life and Letters of Paul*” con el propósito de adquirir un conocimiento general en torno a Los Hechos y las epístolas paulinas. El cuestionario puede ser llenado en español. Adquiéralo directamente del instructor vía texto o email.

Post-Intensive:

1. Class Notes: Students are to turn in their class notes organized in the manner given by the instructor on the first day of class. Students are expected to add their own comments, views or perspectives on the themes/issues discussed in class or even challenge the instructor on a given position with coherent, logical, and biblical soundness.

2. Estudio: de un mínimo de 20 páginas sobre uno de los siguientes temas:

a) El Espíritu Santo como *agua, fuego, aceite, lluvia* y *viento*.

b) Significado de bautismo del Espíritu Santo.

c) Confirmar o corregir la teología adventista sobre del juicio considerando el cuándo, dónde y cómo se llevará a cabo. En su exposición, el/la estudiante deberá confirmar o corregir la teología bíblica expresada en los siguientes himnos: “Cuando junte Jesús las naciones” (nuevo himnario adventista #311 y “Cuando suene la trompeta” (#169).

d) Confirmar o corregir la teología adventista acerca de la salvación y discutir cómo caben las siguientes citas dentro de nuestro entendimiento del tema:

1) “Cuando el carácter de Cristo sea *perfectamente* reproducido en su pueblo, entonces

vendrá él para reclamarlos como suyos” (Palabras de Vida del Gran Maestro, pág. 47). When the character of Christ shall be *perfectly* reproduced in His people, then He will come to claim them as His own” (*Christ’s Object Lessons*, 69). Énfasis nuestro.

2) ***“Nunca debemos descansar satisfechos de nuestra condición y cesar de progresar diciendo: ‘Estoy salvado’.*** Cuando se fomenta esta idea, cesan de existir los motivos para velar, para orar, para realizar fervientes esfuerzos a fin de avanzar hacia logros más elevados. Ninguna lengua santificada pronunciará esas palabras hasta que venga Cristo y entremos por las puertas de la ciudad de Dios. Entonces, con plena razón, podremos dar gloria a Dios y al Cordero por la liberación eterna. Mientras el hombre esté lleno de debilidades, pues por sí mismo no puede salvar su alma, ***nunca debería atreverse a decir: ‘Soy salvo’***” (Mensajes Selectos 1:369).

“We are never to rest in a satisfied condition, and cease to make advancement, saying, ‘I am saved.’ When this idea is entertained, the motives for watchfulness, for prayers, for earnest endeavor to press onward to higher attainments, cease to exist. No sanctified tongue will be found uttering these words till Christ shall come, and we enter in through the gates into the city of God. Then, with the utmost propriety, we may give glory to God and to the Lamb for eternal deliverance. ***As long as man is full of weakness—for of himself he cannot save his soul—he should never dare to say, “I am saved.”*** (*Selected Messages*, 314). Énfasis nuestro.

Toda asignación post-intensiva deberá ser enviada al correo electrónico del instructor y subido al portal LearningHub en las fechas indicadas.

REVISION STATEMENT

The instructor reserves the right to revise the syllabus for the benefit of the learning process with appropriate notification to the students.

COURSE OVERVIEW

Course topics and assignments have been selected to contribute to learning and evaluating these Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs) as follows:

A. Direccionales (Program Learning Outcomes [PLO]):

1. Contribuir en la formación de pastores que se identifiquen con las verdades bíblicas como fueron presentadas por los autores del NT con el propósito de no solo enriquecer la teología y la misión de la Iglesia Adventista del Séptimo Día, sino a enseñarlo con el “Escrito está”.

2. Alcanzar un entendimiento más claro sobre cómo Dios transmitió verdades eternas a través de nuestro Señor Jesucristo y la forma peculiar cómo, quienes escribieron acerca de estas verdades, lo hicieron en un contexto totalmente fuera del nuestro, pero que todavía tienen relevancia para el cristiano posmoderno.

3. Get acquainted with the main ecclesial and theological tensions in the early Christian churches, as recorded in the New Testament.

4. To empower the pastor to respond to similar ecclesial tensions in contemporary pastoral task.

5. Aclarar que ningún individuo posee toda la “verdad” y que tampoco un solo individuo, sea quien sea, posee la palabra final sobre cualquier tema.

B. Operacionales (Student Learning Outcomes [SLO]):

1. Explain in a sound way the main tensions in the early Christian churches, as reflected in the book of Acts and the general epistles.

2. Be equipped to propose solutions to today’s similar tensions in a way that is biblical, reflects the character of Jesus, and exemplifies personal integrity and professional ethics. Habilitar al estudiante a aplicar a su vida y ministerio los descubrimientos teológicos obtenidos durante y después de este curso.

3. Desafiar al estudiante a considerar los conceptos teológicos tales y como se encuadran dentro de la naturaleza teológica inherente en los escritos de Lucas y Pablo. Cada tema bíblico ha de considerarse dentro de su contexto socio-cultural, religioso, lingüístico, etc. antes de pasar a considerarlo dentro de nuestro contexto socio-cultural, religioso, lingüístico, etc.

4. Desafiar al estudiante a interesarse en la literatura académica que ilumine su mundo teológico más allá de las fronteras denominacionales.

COURSE OVERVIEW

Date	Topic	Method
January 23	Reporte de lectura PRE-INTENSIVE ASSIGNMENT DUE	Post the questioner in learninghub and email to the instructor in MSW format before midnight this day. Late assignments may lose points.
	Intensive	
Sunday January 23	General instructions, syllabus review, course introduction.	Group questions/discussion
Monday January 24	Readings on the Holy Spirit, birth of a New Church, Ecclesiological Controversies	Lecture and class discussion
Tuesday January 25	Readings on Ecclesiology	Lecture and class discussion
Wednesday January 26	Readings on Soteriology	Lecture and class discussion
Thursday, January 27	Readings on Eschatology	Lecture and class discussion
	POST-INTENSIVE ASSIGNMENTS DUE	
Sunday April 24		Final project is due today:

		(<i>90 días desde el inicio de la clase</i>), the final project and all missing assignments must be posted on the LearningHub and emailed in MSW format to pastorcarlos2@yahoo.com
Monday May 23		<i>120 días desde el inicio de la clase</i> , students who have not completed all intensive requirements will receive a grade no higher than a “B”.
Thursday June 23		<i>150 días desde el inicio de la clase</i> , all assignments must be posted on LearningHub .
Thursday July 15		<i>172 días desde el inicio de la clase</i> , all pre and post class requirements must be posted on LearningHub and emailed to the instructor on MSW format. Students who have not completed all intensive requirements by July 15, 2022, will receive an “F” and will have to repeat the class.

ATTENDANCE

Regular attendance is required at all classes and other academic appointments. When the total number of absences exceeds 10% of the total course appointments, the teacher may assign a failing grade. Merely being absent from campus does not exempt the student from this policy. Absences recorded because of late registration, suspension, and early/late vacation leaves are not excused. The class work missed may be made up only if the teacher allows. Three tardies are equal to one absence.

SUGGESTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Dupertuis, Atilio René, *Romanos: El poder transformador de la gracia* (Berrien Springs, MI: Pioneer Publications, 2000).

Gane, Roy, *Sin temor al juicio* (APIA, 2006).

Johnson, Luke Timothy, *Reading Romans: A Literary and Theological Commentary* (New York: Crossroad, 1997).

Johnson, William G., *Experiencing Romans* (Westlake Village, CA: Oak & Acorn, 2021).

Knight, George R., *Exploring Galatians & Ephesians* (Review & Herald, 2005).

_____, *Exploring Thessalonians* (Review & Herald, 2012).

Liefeld, Walter L., *Interpreting the Book of Acts* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1995).

Paulien, Jon, *What the Bible Says About the End-Time* (Review & Herald, 1994).

Schreiner, Thomas R., *Interpreting the Pauline Epistles* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1990).

Talbert, Charles H., *Reading Acts: A Literary and Theological Commentary on The Acts of the Apostles* (New York: Crossroad, 1997).

Talbert, Charles H., *Reading Corinthians: A Literary and Theological Commentary on 1 and 2 Corinthians* (New York: Crossroad, 1987).

TIME EXPECTATIONS FOR THE COURSE

US Credit-Hour Regulations

For every semester credit, the Andrews University credit hour definition requires that:

- **Courses for professional masters’ degrees (e.g. MDiv)** include 15 instructor contact hours and 30 hours of independent learning activities.
- **Courses for academic masters’ (e.g. MA [Religion]) and all doctoral degrees** include 15 instructor contact hours, and 45 hours of independent learning activities.

The calculation of hours is based on the study skills of the average well-prepared graduate student. Students weak in these skills: 1) may require more time and should consider taking fewer classes each semester; and 2) can find skill development assistance through the Seminary Study and Research Skills Colloquia, the AU Writing Center, and AU Student Success office.

To achieve the outcomes of this course, learning time will be distributed as follows:

		Professional Masters’ Programs	
		2 Credits	3 Credits
Instructor Contact Hours	Face to Face Instructional Time		45 hrs
Independent Learning Activities	Name of Assignment #1 Pre-Intensive Reading		30 hrs
	Name of Assignment #2 20-page project/paper		60 hrs
Total Hours:			135 hrs

Note. To make grading fair for everyone, grades will be assigned on the basis of the above requirements alone. No individual arrangements will be made for those requesting last minute grade adjustment or extra credit.

Submission of Assignments

Assignments are to be turned in on Learning Hub before the dates indicated in the Course Overview--Above.

Late Submissions

Because student assignments are an essential part of class activities, assignments turned in after the time they are due will be worth a maximum of 50 of possible points%--for this course, see penalties posted on the *Course Overview Table*. Any requests for extra time on an assignment must be made in advance with the professor. Such requests should be a rarity and should be accompanied by a valid reason why the work could not be done by the date due.

TIME EXPECTATIONS FOR THE COURSE

In order to achieve the outcomes of this course, learning time will be distributed as follows:

MAPMin Program Class Hours			
		3 Credits	Percentage Points
Pre-Intensive Assignments / Independent Learning Activities	Questioner on Acts and Epistles	30 hours	25
Post-Intensive Assignment	In-person hours	45 hours	30
	Preparation of class notes	30 hours	20
	10-page study	30 hours	25
Total:		135 hours	100

ABOUT THE INSTRUCTOR

Carlos Camarena (PhD), has a long history of pastoral and teaching ministry (pastor 1979-1989 and 2002-present, Southeastern California Conference) and teaching in the formation, text, and theology of the New Testament since 1989; first at Faculdade Adventista da Bahia (formerly Instituto Adventista do Nordeste [IAENE]), Cachoeira, Bahia, Brazil, 1989-1996); contract instructor at Andrews University religion department, 1996-2001; instructor of biblical Greek, Introduction to Seminary life, Introduction to the New Testament and other courses at the Andrews University Theological Seminary 1998-2001; and since 1997, professor Camarena has been teaching for the master in pastoral ministry program, Hispanic Institute, Andrews University SDA Theological Seminary; Since 2002, Camarena has been teaching courses on New Testament interpretation for the Interamerican Division Theological Seminary (SETAI).

Academic Integrity

The Seminary expects its students to exhibit rigorous moral integrity appropriate to ministry leaders representing Jesus Christ. Complete honesty in academic matters is a vital component of such integrity. Any breach of academic integrity in this class is subject to discipline. Consequences may include receipt of a reduced or failing grade, suspension or dismissal from the course, suspension or dismissal from the program or degree cancellation. Disciplinary action may be retroactive if academic dishonesty becomes apparent after the student finishes the course or program. A record of academic integrity violations is maintained by the University Student Academic Integrity Council. Repeated and/or flagrant offenses will be referred to an Academic Integrity Panel for recommendations on further penalties.

Academic Dishonesty includes:

- Plagiarism in which one fails to give credit for another person’s ideas or exact words, whether in a formal paper or in submitted notes or assignments. Credit is to be given by use of:
 - Correctly designed and inserted footnotes each time one makes use of another individual’s research and/or ideas; and
 - Quotation marks placed around any exact phrases or sentences (3 or more words) taken from the text or speech of another individual.
- Presenting another’s work as one’s own (e.g., placement exams, homework assignments);
- Using materials during an examination other than those explicitly allowed by the instructor.
- Stealing, accepting, or studying from stolen quizzes or examination materials.
- Copying from another student during a regular or take-home test or quiz.
- Assisting others in acts of academic dishonesty.
- Submitting the same work or major portions thereof, without permission from the instructors, to satisfy the requirements of more than one course.

For additional details see: https://www.andrews.edu/academics/academic_integrity.html

Use of Electronics

Courtesy, respect, and professionalism dictate that laptops (no cell phone use during class) are to be used only for class-related activities during class time. The professor, at his discretion and upon notifying the student, may consider a student as “absent” should it be confirmed that he used his/her computer for other purposes during class.

Communications and Updates

Email is the official form of communication at Andrews University. Students are responsible for checking their Andrews University e-mail, Moodle, and iVue alerts regularly.

LearningHub Access

Your Learning Hub username and password are the same as your Andrews username and password. The following contact information if you need technical assistance at any time during the course, or to report a problem with ***LearningHub***:

Username and password assistance	helpdesk@andrews.edu	(269) 471-6016
Technical assistance with Learning Hub	dlit@andrews.edu	(269) 471-3960

Technical assistance with your Andrews account	http://andrews.edu/hdchat/chat.php	
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Emergency Protocol

Andrews University takes the safety of its student seriously. Signs identifying emergency protocol are posted throughout buildings. Instructors will provide guidance and direction to students in the classroom in the event of an emergency affecting that specific location. It is important that you follow these instructions and stay with your instructor during any evacuation or sheltering emergency.

Please Note: The instructor reserves the right to revise the syllabus, with the consensus of the class, at any time during the semester for the benefit of the learning process. The up-to-date Course Description for this course may be found at www.learninghub.andrews.edu .

APPENDIX 1: INTERPRETING LETTER GRADES

Letter Grades and Percentages

95-100%	A	80-84%	B	65-69%	C
90-94%	A-	75-79%	B-	60-64%	C-
85-89%	B+	70-74%	C+	55-59%	D
				58-Below	F

THE B GRADE

The B grade is a sign that you have competently fulfilled all of the requirements stipulated for an assessment or competency evaluation. It is a very good grade and demonstrates a high level of the knowledge, insight, critical competence, and professional presentation standards essential for an individual wishing to pursue a career as a professional leader in ministry.

THE A GRADE

An A grade is given only when a student not only fulfills the criteria for a B grade, but in doing so demonstrates an advanced academic aptitude for content knowledge, critique, synthesis and independent insight, while exhibiting highly developed communication skills and professional publication standards that would allow them to pursue a highly competitive academic career.

THE C GRADE

The C grade differs only from a B grade in that the traits outlined in the B grade above are not consistently applied. However, with diligence and by applying feedback from your lecturer, the academic process can provide opportunity for a student to improve their consistency, and hence, their grade.

THE D GRADE

The D grade points to a limited level of knowledge, insight, and critique, as well as to inadequate quality of written work. This may be because of a lack of time management on the part of the student, difficulty grasping the concepts being taught, use of English as a second language, or a personal issue that is affecting one’s concentration and motivation levels.

Again, with diligence, applying feedback from your lecturer, and seeking services offered by the University like the writing lab or the counseling center, the academic process can provide an opportunity for a student to significantly improve their performance.

THE F GRADE

A failing grade is given when very limited or no demonstrable competency has been observed or when the final assignment is not submitted within the dates indicated in the Course Overview Table.

ASSIGNMENT RUBRIC

Rubric for Assessing Project Plans

Student _____

Criteria	(5) Exceptional	(4) Proficient	(3) Satisfactory	(2) Emerging	(1) Unsatisfactory	Score
Title Page	Includes: 1) institution’s name, 2) title, 3) name of the course, 4) course period, 5) name of the student, 6) date submitted, 7) follows AU Standards for Written work (AUSWW). Has no errors	Misses 1 of the 7 components	Misses 2 of the 7 components	Misses 3 components	Misses more than 3 components	
Introduction	The introduction is engaging, states the main topic and purpose of the paper, and previews the structure of the paper	Introduction states the main topic and purpose of the paper and previews its structure	States the main topic and purpose of the paper, but does not adequately preview its structure	The introduction states the main topic but lacks a purpose and a preview of its structure	There is no clear introduction or main topic, and the structure of the paper is missing	
Project Description	Project is described in detail. Protocols to be followed are presented. Specific aspects of the organization, implementation, and evaluation are offered. Meets paper length requirements	Project is well described. Some details regarding protocols, organization, implementation, and evaluation of the project are missing. Meets length	Project is satisfactorily described and meets paper length	Project is poorly described and does not meet number of pages.	The report misses entire sections of the project description. Does not meet paper length.	
Organization	Report provides a table of contents, and is organized using different subhead levels, following AUSWW. Subheadings are exceptionally well-worded and reflect upon the main subject. Exceeds all organizational specifications stated in the syllabus	Table of contents and subheading levels follow AUSWW Standards. Subtitles reflects upon the subject, but wording can be improved.	Paper provides a table of contents and is organized using different subheading level. However, does not follow AU standards of written work	Paper provides first level headings, but headings do not clearly reflect upon the subject. No table of contents. Does not follow all specifications stated in the syllabus and AUSWW	Does not provide a table of contents and is not divided under headings and subheadings. Does not follow organizational specifications stated in the syllabus and AUSWW	
Format/Style	All texts and references follow specifications from AUSWW. Syntax and semantics are outstanding. Models’ language and style. No errors in punctuation, spelling, and sentence formation	Consistently follows AUSWW with minor flaws. Syntax and semantics are very good. No major errors in style	Consistently follows all AUSWW format. Syntax and semantics are good. Few errors in style	Inconsistently follows some AUSWW. Syntax and semantics are poor	Does not follow AUSWW. Syntax and semantics are deficient	

Conclusion	Conclusion is engaging and provides an outstanding overview of the project and personal reflections on projected implementation. Exceeds expectations	Conclusion restates the purpose, gives a good summary, and provides personal opinions about the outcome	Conclusion restates the purpose and satisfactorily summarizes results Lacks personal reflection on projected implementation	Conclusion attempts to summarize the thrust of the project, but is ambiguous. Lacks personal reflection	Conclusion fails to summarize and to express personal reflection on the project	
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