

Teaching and Preaching from the Letter to the Romans Today/New Testament Letter Workload 3 ECTS. 18 contact hours (45') in school, 60 individual work hours.

MA level elective course, Spring 2025

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Assessment differentiated

Language of Instruction – English, but written work can also be done in Estonian.

Learning outcomes. After passing the course successfully, the students

1. follow the structure of Paul's argument through grammatical (syntactic) analysis
2. recognize elements in grammar and word choice which are important for understanding the text
3. explain rhetoric elements and its function in Romans, especially diatribe
4. show the connection between the interpretation of Romans and Christian dogma and how they impinge on important current questions
5. evaluate Christian approaches to the politics around Israel from the letter to the Romans
6. choose independently a bibliography to adequately argue their interpretation of a text in Romans to read academic work in English critically

Assessment Methods and Criteria

Assessment Methods	Due date	Assessment Criteria
Final paper "Original sin" in Romans 5, 12-21? Expected length (1500-3000 words), number of expected sources 14+	June 10 2025	C – Content: the richness and completeness of research for the subject; evidence of your own work on the text; x2 B – Bibliography: number and quality of items as relating to the subject x1 L – Thesis and logic of the presentation (do you have a clear idea what you are arguing for? Are the steps in your argumentation clear?) x2 S – work with sources; how you use your literature to strengthen your argument both by direct quotation and by paraphrasing; x2 Sty – Language and style, clearness of presentation, academic level etc. x1 Tech – All technicalities, consistency, and clarity in quoting sources; correctness, work with Word processing etc. x1 The Final Grade is the average of these individual grades.

Instructions for the final paper:

Please, note that the main part of this paper is your own work on the biblical text. Students should do this using the work sheet supplied online for sources for this course before looking at traditional beliefs and commentaries. Please do not provide a “verse by verse” interpretation in your final paper. This is usually an unhelpful selection of random commentary sentences that rarely fit together well or amount to a thesis. Other people’s opinions need to supplement your own exegetical findings not to replace it.

In the Introduction to the paper, you can give a short overview of the doctrine of original sin. This should not be longer than 2 pages (600 words). This paper is not a display of the doctrine of original sin, but the work on the text on which it has been based. Your main question is whether any versions on the doctrine really reflects what Paul pursues in Romans 5. The introduction should state your thesis – in this case how you agree or disagree with certain notions of original sin in tradition, on account of the reading of Rom 5. Ideally, it should announce your major arguments and the structure of paper. Introduction is usually written at the end.

NB: I do not normally provide all individual problems in the papers, as this tends to be hard to swallow for some students. If you want a more detailed response to help you in your writing in the future, please note so when sending in your paper.

Formation of the final mark is based on the mark of the final paper

Study flow

Independent work	Contact (18h)	Content and methods (Look also at the more detailed document)
Compulsory reading before contact hours: Dunn’s article – The New Perspective ... Suggested reading: T. Kuhn, <i>The Structure of Scientific Revolutions</i>	May 15 10 h	Paulines: the oldest testimonies in the NT The place of Romans in Paul's mission Old and New Perspectives: a contemporary approach to Romans The occasion(s) for Romans: Who said Paul was ashamed of the Gospel? The „end“ of the Law and salvation from What? Reading Scripture – amending tradition: Abraham and Adam from the Perspective of the Christ event Romans 4 and 5 Application: What do you think needs „amending“ in your church's theology? Why? How this can be brought about?

Suggested reading: article by V. Rabens “Spirit and Deification in Paul”, J. Staples: What Do Gentiles have to do with all Israel?, Magda, “Unity as Prerequisite for Mission”	May 16 8 h	The Centre in Romans The Spirit of God central to new life Romans 6-8 Salvation of Israel and of all the nations in the plan of God Rom 9-11 Why unity is imperative to mission? Rom 12-15 From Corinth to Rome via Jerusalem Romans 16
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Reading materials:

Compulsory:

“Introduction“ in James D. G. Dunn, *Romans 1-8*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Academic, 2015.

Recommended:

James D. G. Dunn, “The New Perspective on Paul” in: *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* 65/2 (1983) 95-122.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.7227/BJRL.65.2.6> (PDF in Moodle)

Volker Rabens, “The Holy Spirit and Deification in Paul: A ‘Western’ Perspective,” in: P. Dragutinovic / K.-W. Niebuhr / J.B. Wallace (eds.), *The Holy Spirit and the Church according to the New Testament* (in co-operation with C. Karakolis; WUNT I/354; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2016), 187–220

Can be accessed through Academia Edu.

https://www.academia.edu/22648489/The_Holy_Spirit_and_Deification_in_Paul_A_Western_Perspective_in_P_Dragutinovic_K_W_Niebuhr_J_B_Wallace_eds_The_Holy_Spirit_and_the_Church_according_to_the_New_Testament_in_co_operation_with_C_Karakolis_WUNT_I_354_T%C3%BCbingen_Mohr_Siebeck_2016_187_220

Jason A. Staples, „What Do Gentiles Have to Do With All Israel? In: *JBL* 130/2 (2011), 371-390

Online at: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/41304206> (PDF in Moodle)

Ksenija Magda, „Unity as a Prerequisite for a Christian Mission: A Missional Reading of Rom 15:1-12“ in: *Kairos*, 2/1 (2008) 39-52

Online: <https://hrcak.srce.hr/clanak/37227> (PDF in Moodle)