

MNST 5212 INTRODUCTION TO PREACHING
Fall 2011, Monday and Wednesday, 4:00-5:15 pm
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DRAFT SYLLABUS: WATCH FOR UPDATES.
READINGS WILL REMAIN AS LISTED

In this course you will develop a biblical theology of communication and preaching, learn the principles of sermon construction, and put both into practice as you speak to the class and receive critique.

Course Goals

1. That you appreciate the need for a theology of preaching and begin to develop your own in conversation with those who have written and spoken about it.
2. That you take your place as a preacher in the tradition of the world-wide church of Jesus Christ.
3. That you learn how to move from the study of a biblical text to delivery of a sermon in the context of a congregation's life and worship.
4. That you will carry with you a lifelong focus on the character of God and the good news of the gospel in your preaching.

While the course in some ways supports all of the learning outcomes for the Master of Divinity degree that requires it, the following are emphasized:

- Living and working under Scripture's authority by knowing the Bible in its original languages and engaging responsibly in the interpretation and application of its teaching
- Developing a mature theological and ethical perspective within which to reflect and act
- Understanding the Christian tradition and one's own place within it
- The ability to communicate effectively through spoken and written media
- Developing a clear pastoral identity

Course Requirements

1. Attendance and participation in class exercises and discussion. Chronic lateness or unexcused absence will reduce your grade. 5%

Note: more than one absence for any reason (sickness or other emergency) makes an impact on course learning and will require a make-up assignment of extra reading from the recommended book list or a sermon critique. If you have to be absent, it is your responsibility to talk with me about the assignment.

2. One testimony to a preacher presentation (videotaped). 5%

3. One Scripture reading and biblical narrative presentation (videotaped). 20%
4. Two sermons preached to the class (videotaped). 30% each
5. An appointment with the instructor to review your first videotaped sermon (Grade reduction for non-completion).
6. All assigned readings and responses, including a response to Palmquist Lectures. You will submit a list of readings completed at the end of the course. (10%)

Course Texts

Required:

1. Richard Lischer, ed. *The Company of Preachers: Wisdom on Preaching from Augustine to the Present* (2002)
2. Paul Scott Wilson, *The Practice of Preaching*, revised edition (2007)
BE SURE TO BUY THE REVISED EDITION WITH THE TAN COVER
3. Frank A. Thomas, *They Like to Never Quit Praisin' God: The Role of Celebration in Preaching* (1997)
4. Thomas E. Boomershine, *Story Journey: An Invitation to the Gospel as Storytelling* (1988)
5. Glen Wiberg, *Housing the Sacred* (Covenant Publications, 2009)

Recommended:

6. G. Robert Jacks, *Getting the Word Across and Just Say the Word!*
7. Doug Lipman, *Improving Your Storytelling: Beyond the Basics for All Who Tell Stories in Work or Play*
8. Carol Norén, *The Woman in the Pulpit*
9. Ella Mitchell, *Those Preachin' Women*
10. Justo L. Gonzalez and Pablo A. Jiménez, *Pulpito: An Introduction to Hispanic Preaching*
11. Jung Young Lee, *Korean Preaching: An Interpretation*
12. Henry Mitchell, *Black Preaching: the Recovery of a Powerful Art*
13. Fred Craddock, *Preaching*
14. R. Lischer and W. Willimon, eds., *The Concise Encyclopedia of Preaching*
15. Elizabeth Achtemeier, *Preaching From the Old Testament*
16. Ellen Davis, *Wondrous Depths: Preaching from the Old Testament*
17. Thomas Long, *Preaching and the Literary Forms of the Bible and The Witness of Preaching*
18. Ronald Allen, ed. *Patterns of Preaching: A Sermon Sampler*
19. Haddon Robinson, *Biblical Preaching*, 2nd edition
20. *Covenant Book of Worship*

SCHEDULE

I. JOINING THE COMPANY OF PREACHERS

1. Introduction to the Course
2. What is Preaching? A Brief History
3. Theology and Preaching

Read: Lischer, "Introduction," and from "What is Preaching?" Alan of Lille, Brooks, Bonhoeffer, B. B. Taylor; from "The Preacher," Chrysostom, Palmer, G. Taylor, and one of your choice (Note which you choose- Use the table of contents to find the selections)

1. Lab: Testimony to a Preacher (Meet in Isaacson chapel)
2. Lab: Testimony to a Preacher

Read: Lischer, from "Proclaiming the Word," Luther, Wesley, Mitchell and one of your choice

Due at the time you speak: Written testimony to a preacher to accompany your oral presentation.

II. ENGAGING THE TEXT

1. Rhetoric and Preaching
2. Reading and Storytelling

Read: Wilson, Chapters 1, 2, 3, 11

Read: Boomershine, "Beginnings" and Chapters 1-5

Read: Lischer, From "Rhetoric," Augustine, Wilder and one of your choice

Due xx: Select a narrative from the Old or New Testament that will become the basis of your story presentation and first sermon. Complete the exercises at end of chapter 1 (p. 25) and 3 (p. 52) in Wilson, *Practice of Preaching*. Note that the questions for the most part can be answered using an English translation without consultation of any secondary sources such as commentaries. About question 5, page 2: you are encouraged, but not required, to make a provisional translation from Hebrew or Greek as advanced preparation for the exegesis for your first sermon.

1. Rhetorical Interpretation of Scripture
2. An Exegetical Method for Preaching

Read: Wilson, Chapters 4, 5

Read: Boomershine, Chapters 5-10, "Endings" and "Appendix"

Read: Lischer, From "Biblical Interpretation," González and González, Hays, and one of your choice

Due XX: First draft of prepared Scripture text and exercises from Wilson, Chaps. 4- 5

March 1. Lab: Practice in Reading and Storytelling (Meet in Isaacson Chapel)

2. Lab: Practice in Reading and Storytelling (Meet in Isaacson Chapel)

Due at the time you speak: Final draft of Scripture Text and manuscript of the story presentation

Required attendance (or viewing) of Palmquist Lectures, March 3, nine until noon.

NO CLASS XX: SPRING BREAK

III. DEVELOPING THE SERMON

March

1. Stories and Images

2. Congregational Context: Considering the Listeners

3. Liturgical Context: Preaching as an Act of Worship

Read: Wilson, Chapters 6, 7, 12, 13

Read: Lischer, From "Preaching and the Church," Romero, Wainwright, and one of your choice

Due XX: First draft of sermon exegesis

March

1. Shaping the Sermon: Forms and Proofs

2. Language and Delivery

Read: Wilson, Chapters 8, 9, 10

Read: Lischer, From "The Hearer," Spener, Craddock and one of your choosing

Due XX: First draft of sermon (use Wilson's instructions on p. 183, assignment 14)

IV. PREACHING LABS

March 29/31 (Meet in Isaacson Chapel)

Preaching Lab

Due XX: Response to Palmquist Lectures and their significance for preaching (two pages, double-spaced). Post your own paper on blackboard and then write a response to two others (maximum 2 responses per paper)

(Meet in Isaacson Chapel)

Preaching Lab

Due XX: Response to Thomas, *They Like Never to Quit Praisin' God* (three pages, double-spaced). Present a summary and critique. Include your answer to the question, what in Thomas's approach offers a challenge or help for improvement with your next sermon?

(Meet in Isaacson Chapel)

Preaching Lab

(Meet in Isaacson Chapel)

Preaching Lab

(Meet in Isaacson Chapel)

Preaching Lab

Due XX: Response to Wiberg, *Housing the Sacred* (three pages, double-spaced). Present a summary and critique. Include your answer to the question, what would you like people understand about preaching in a congregation you serve or will serve? How might you invite them to take part in the preaching task?

(Meet in Isaacson Chapel)

Preaching Lab (If needed)

GUIDELINES

- A. On quotations and citations: you may not quote from your research sources in writing your exegetical notes. Restate a writer's points in your own words and credit the writer for the idea with either a footnote or a citation in parentheses. (See Turabian's Guide or http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html). You should also be aware of the definition of plagiarism: taking material from another source and presenting it as your own is a serious breach of ethics in academic writing as well as preaching. Finally, you may use quotations in your sermon only when they add something you couldn't say as well in your own words. Don't just quote for the sake of quoting authorities. If and when you do quote, be sure to use quotation marks and credit the source in the written copy and acknowledge your source in the oral delivery.
- B. The sermons we do in class are real sermons, even though they are not preached in the context of a worship service. Your classmates are the congregation you should have in mind as you prepare. Every sermon does not have to relate to the life of a seminary student; instead preach to whole persons who need to hear the word of God.
- C. It is courteous to be on time and ready for class, especially when preachers begin their sermons. If for some reason you must come late, enter through the back door of the chapel; if it is locked, knock quietly. See me after class to explain why you were late.
- D. It is also courteous to give one's full attention to the speaker. It is inappropriate to be doing anything other than listening when a sermon is delivered, especially making last-minute preparations for your own sermon. Wait until the preacher is finished before you fill out the feedback sheets. Hold onto the feedback sheets until the end of the class session and then give them to the preacher.
- E. If English is your second language you may wish to talk with me about preaching all or part of the second sermon in your first language.

- F. North Park Theological Seminary provides services for students with documented disabilities to ensure equal access to programs, services, facilities, and activities. Students with a disability who believe that they may need accommodations in this class are encouraged to contact Seminary Academic Services as soon as possible. If desired or necessary, discussion pertaining to documentation and accommodation can take place at another suitable location or by telephone.
- G. You are expected to abide by the "Statement of Inclusive Language" (in the *North Park Theological Seminary Catalog*) in your preaching, writing, and class discussion. For that reason, use New Revised Standard or Today's New International Version, both of which are inclusive, in your study and preaching. If there is a reason you believe you should use another version, talk with me.
- H. You may not use internet resources that have not published in a book or journal.
- I. Edit and proofread papers carefully to remove errors of spelling and grammar. There will be one no-penalty rewrite given per term.
- J. No food in class, and no food or beverage in the chapel other than water for the preacher.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR ASSIGNMENTS

Testimony Presentations

- A. Remember to bring a good quality VHS cassette with your name marked on it.
- B. You will give a brief testimony about "a sermon that made a difference in my life." The exercise will help us get to know one another better and will provide a baseline example of your speech. Tell the class your name and then give a brief description of the biblical text, sermon, and the preacher, offering a reflection how preaching does influence lives. **In your presentation, address these questions: In what ways have the readings from Lischer helped you understand the qualities that made your chosen preacher effective? What theological assumptions about preaching did you detect? Your presentation should be 5-7 minutes long, and you may only use notes, not a manuscript.**

Interpretative Scripture Reading and Storytelling

- A. A very good resource that I will ask you to use is G. R. Jacks, *Getting the Word Across* (on reserve at the library). You may want to read the chapters on emphasis and phrasing.
- B. Choose a narrative Scripture text (a story from the Old or New Testament) that is approximately one half to one chapter long. More important than the length of the passage is that it can stand alone as a complete unit: choose a text that has a clear beginning and end. For a first exercise in reading and telling (and preaching), it will help to choose a text you are excited about. You may wish to use a narrative you are studying in another class.

- C. Read "Appendix One- Belshazzar Revisited" in *Getting the Word Across*. Following the procedure Jacks outlines, type out your text on a word processor, and then
- i. Separate thought units such as sentences and phrases as Jacks has done in the phrased version (p. 215; the explanation is on pages 209-210).
 - ii. Indicate emphasis as Jacks has done in the phrased and emphasized version (p. 220; the explanation is on p. 211).
 - iii. Pay attention to the emotions that might be communicated in the passage and work to be sure you have internalized the text.
- D. Prepare a short introduction of two or three sentences that will help your listeners attend to the reading. Provide background on your text: the events that have come before, the people involved, anything that sets the stage. Make your introduction appropriate for a congregation that you know. Write out the introduction, rehearse it a few times, then throw it away. Your introduction should be spoken extemporaneously.
- E. After you read you will tell the story, in your own words, without using notes (five to seven minutes in length). The goal is to engage your powers of memory, description, and expression. Telling from memory does not mean you will memorize a biblical text word for word. Instead, tell the story in a way that shows you have internalized the story and can help listeners appreciate it with understanding and feeling.
- F. Imagine you are telling the story to people who have heard it many times and need to hear it in a fresh way. You can choose to tell the story as it is found in Scripture, or you may want to change the point of view to one of the characters (anyone but God or Jesus, of course). In your story try to bring out the message and the rhetorical strategy you discovered in your exegesis exercise. Try to use third person narration instead of first person to help you follow Flannery O'Connor's recommendation: "Show us, don't tell us about it." Instead of getting into the character's mind, get us into the scene and its action.

For some suggestions and inspiration on storytelling, you may wish to consult *The Storyteller's Companion to the Bible* or the following web sites:

Network of Biblical Storytellers	http://www.nobs.org/index.htm
Hasidic Stories	http://www.hasidicstories.com/
The Art of Storytelling	http://www.eldrbarry.net/roos/art.htm
National Storytelling Network	http://www.storynet.org/
Illinois Storytelling	http://www.storytelling.org/

- G. Prepare for your storytelling presentation by stating your purpose. What are you trying to achieve? What effect do you believe the story should have on your audience? What do you want them to understand, or how do you want them to respond? Write it down under the heading, "Purpose Statement." Then write out your story and try to be as descriptive as you can. Create pictures in the mind of your listeners; remember Winston Churchill's maxim, "the ear is one-tenth the organ of the eye."

- H. Once you have chosen your story and determined its purpose, write it out to help you work out structure and word choices--then practice, practice, practice! Decide what parts of the story give it structure and work on memorizing those turning points. Tell the story as many times as it takes you to feel that you know it cold. Have fun with it. If appropriate, use voices for the characters. Help us to enjoy the story as much as you do. You may want to record your practice or ask someone to listen and coach.
- You will turn in your prepared Bible text, purpose statement and story manuscript at the time of your presentation.**

First Sermon (Narrative)

- A. Remember to bring a VHS cassette with your name marked on it.
- B. For this course, you will first preach one sermon from a text of your choosing and then one taken from the lectionary. If you choose an OT text, your NT text will come from lectionary; likewise if you choose the NT text, your OT text will come from the lectionary. This will allow students who are taking Greek or Hebrew exegesis to preach a text they are working on in that class if they so desire. Each sermon will be 12-15 minutes long, and should not be something you have already preached elsewhere.
- Your sermon will be between 12 and 15 minutes long and you may use a manuscript. Be aware, however, that a manuscript is not required.**
- C. Prepare for the sermon using the exegesis worksheet distributed in class and write at least three pages of exegetical notes. Include with your notes a bibliography of at least eight different sources you used in your research. Do not include different versions of the Bible as resources and don't draw all your sources from one publishing house or theological viewpoint.
- D. Write a manuscript version of your sermon, even if you do not plan to use it when you preach. Writing the manuscript in full gives you the opportunity to refine your structure and choose your words with care. You are not required to use the manuscript in the pulpit, but you may if you wish. Failure to hand in exegetical notes, bibliography, and sermon manuscript at the time you preach will reduce your sermon grade by at least one full letter.

Second Sermon (Lectionary)

- A. Your sermon will center on a text from the lectionary; choose one text from one of the Sundays in Year A, September through November. You can find the texts online at <http://lectionary.library.vanderbilt.edu>

There are some very good lectionary helps available on-line, but they are not to be listed in your bibliography:

Working Preacher

<http://www.workingpreacher.org/>

Lectionary at Lunch

http://www.csl.edu/Resources_AudioVideo_LectionaryatLunch.aspx

Text Week

<http://www.textweek.com/>

Living Pulpit

<http://www.artofthesermon.org/>

Lectionary.org

<http://www.lectionary.org/>

- B. You will prepare for this sermon the way you did for your first sermon (prepared Scripture text for reading, exegetical notes, bibliography and manuscript), but you may only use notes of up to ½ the written sermon in length. You may not use your manuscript in the pulpit. **Your notes will be turned in along with your other materials.**
- C. We can discuss the possibility of preaching your second sermon off-site as part of a service of worship.