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PR 810 Preaching as Spiritual Discipline

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Prospectus for the Course
PR810 "Preaching as Spiritual Discipline"
January 18-22, 1999
Dr. Charles Killian

This course is designed principally as a laboratory experience in preaching. Special attention will be given to: a) a history of one's own preaching; b) peer and professional evaluation; c) an on-campus fully mediated sermons with critique; and d) the developing of understandings on the assessment of preaching as spiritually formative.

Rationale:

From time to time students request some help in re-learning preaching. Some have reached a stage where preaching has become laborious, ritualistic and dreadfully dull. As an art form, some have suggested that preaching has lost relevance. The course will attempt to enhance the skills of the gifted. It is hoped that the course will be an enabler for the problematic. Special attention will be given to recent studies in the teaching of preaching: theological, ecclesiological and cultural.

Objectives:

1. To assist the student in assessing his/her preaching strengths and weaknesses.
2. To sensitize students to see preaching as a theological task, a communal event, and a rhetorical/communication enterprise.
3. To enable students to evaluate their preaching, to be prescriptive for growth and insight.
4. To facilitate an awareness on the part of the student that preaching is an on-going process. Journaling about one's preaching can be a means of spiritual formation.

Themes:

The Canons of Aristotle Revisited
The Myers-Briggs and Preaching
How People Listen Today
Orality and Preaching
Narrativity is Here to Stay
The Role of Media for Practicum
Formative Evaluation

Projects:

Pre-Class Assignments

1. Write a paper (5-7 pages), focusing on your preaching during the previous year. Narrate your response, centering on how you would characterize your preaching. Lectionary? Old vs New Testaments? Topical, Textual, Expository? What about your tools for exegesis and biblical studies?

2. Narrate, as precisely as you can, the hermeneutical trail you take from the text to the sermon to the pulpit. (3-5 pages)
3. Write a response-paper (2-3 pages), reflecting on the preaching course-work you had at Seminary. What have you discovered that has remained steady and constant? What has been informed and clarified? What has been discarded?
4. Keep a journal with reflections on your preaching.

In-Class Assignments

1. Bring your best sermon, fully manuscripted. It will be distributed to class for discussion. Sermons (12-15 minutes) will be preached with critique.
2. The sermon will be videotaped. (*Please bring appropriate preaching attire--robe or suit*). Playbacks for the class, along with analysis will be conducted. The individual will do some independent work on the sermon after the in-class experience.
3. Each student will prepare a 2-3 page reflection on each class participant's work. These will be due at the last class session.
4. Class discussions will focus on content and delivery, theological issues, and sermon as sacrament.

Post-class Assignments

1. What has your journal said to you regarding preaching as a spiritual discipline or preaching as spiritual formation?
2. Prepare a 2-3 page reflection on the course experience.
3. Indicate two or three areas for growth in preaching and how you plan to go about growing in those areas.
4. After the three above projects are completed, prepare and send in a videotape (if possible) of a sermon preached in the worship context.

ALL WORK MUST BE FINISHED 60 DAYS AFTER THE LAST CLASS SESSION

Readings:

Speaking From the Heart, Richard Ward.

Student will select an additional 500 pages of reading, growing out of their own needs and interests as it relates to preaching and spiritual formation.

Attached are two forms, *The Sermon Analysis Grid* and *Sermon Listener's Response Guide*.

Working the Angles, Eugene H. Peterson. Eerdmans, 1987.

THE SERMON ANALYSIS GRID

<p>1. Describe the emergence of the sermon idea (the “ah ha”) and how you got it.</p>	
<p>2. What was going on in your life that made it especially important to you?</p>	
<p>3. Why was it an “important” idea that should be taken seriously by others?</p>	
<p>4. What was the central intention of the sermon you finally prepared?</p>	
<p>5. What did you hope the sermon would do?</p>	

SERMON LISTENER'S RESPONSE GUIDE

1.) Describe the content of the sermon as you heard it, i.e., what was the message?

2.) What good news (if any) did you hear?

3.) Did the sermon speak to something in your own life? What?

4.) What did the preacher say or do that helped or hindered your listening?

helped

hindered

5.) What would you like to say to the preacher about his/her preaching--or about preaching in general?