1-1-2001

PR 610 Servant as Proclaimer

Michael Pasquarello

Follow this and additional works at: http://place.asburyseminary.edu/syllabi

Recommended Citation
http://place.asburyseminary.edu/syllabi/1016

This Document is brought to you for free and open access by the eCommons at ePLACE: preserving, learning, and creative exchange. It has been accepted for inclusion in Syllabi by an authorized administrator of ePLACE: preserving, learning, and creative exchange. For more information, please contact thad.horner@asburyseminary.edu.
For we do not preach ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus’ sake.” II Cor. 4:5.

PR 610  THE SERVANT AS PROCLAIMER

FALL SEMESTER 2001  TUES-THURS 1-2:15 PM

PROFESSOR MIKE PASQUARELLO
michael_pasquarello@asburyseminary.edu
Ext. 2239
Office Hours: Tues and Thurs 2:30-5:30

The purpose of this course is to promote a partnership of teaching and learning that will impart and foster vision and discernment for preaching as a theological and pastoral activity in service to the Gospel of Jesus Christ Crucified. Preaching will be viewed as both a gift of the Holy Spirit and a human vocation by which the Risen Lord continues to speak to, in, and through his people for the life of the world. This course will assume that proclamation of the Gospel by means of Scripture is the central (although not exclusive) activity by which the Church is continually created, sustained, corrected, and strengthened to worship and to participate in the life and mission of the Triune God.

This course is designed to be an extended conversation that will exemplify, encourage, and nurture pastoral competence and confidence in the Word of God to form Christian conviction, character, and community through proclamation of the Kingdom come in Christ. Preaching will be regarded primarily as an act of worship offered to the God of Israel and Jesus Christ who continues to speak his gracious promises and saving purposes through the witness of the Prophets and Apostles in the power of the Holy Spirit.

An important aspect of this course will be to gain a vital and necessary understanding of preaching as a theological and ecclesial practice that requires: 1) the practices of daily prayer and obedience by the preacher; 2) the constant reading, study, and interpretation of Scripture as the Word of God addressed to his people and for the world; 3) the testing of biblical interpretation by means of the central theological convictions of the Church to insure faithful homiletic performance that glorifies God and produces Christian disciples who aspire to a life of holiness in Christ. To be consistent with the nature and purpose of preaching as a theological discipline, a strong emphasis will be placed upon the life-long task of acquiring practical wisdom appropriate to the pastoral vocation: spiritual and moral attentiveness and insight to faithfully call the Church to know, love, and serve the Triune God whose speech authors its life and secures its future.

A primary goal of this course is that students will come to see themselves as members of the whole company of preachers in conversation with God on behalf of his people, and that the conditions of our conversation together will encourage the discovery of a discourse by which preaching as a theological and pastoral practice may be examined,
understood, articulated, and defended. Students also will be encouraged to view themselves as responsible participants in the ongoing narrative of the Word of God rather than detached consumers or users of skills and techniques; as those called to embody and exercise Christian virtue and discernment for self-involvement in the concrete forms of life, contingencies, and conditions of particular congregations in order to bring Christ to speech.

It is my hope that you will:

1) focus on the Gospel of Jesus Christ as the power and wisdom for your ministry of preaching
2) listen with discernment to the Scriptures as source, norm, and goal of your sermons
3) share with each other and me in the joys, temptations, risks, and anguish of preaching
4) acquire practical skills appropriate for preparing yourselves and your sermons for preaching
5) appreciate the urgency of preaching in pastoral ministry and the mission of the Church in the world
6) embrace the following criteria of a good sermon:
   - faithfulness to the text
   - articulation of the Gospel
   - contextual accuracy
   - coherence, simplicity, and gracefulness of expression

REQUIREMENTS

1) Read assignments as scheduled, prepare written responses, and participate in class conversation. Always bring a Bible to class.

2) Preach three sermons in class and write two additional sermons. In-class sermons will be from assigned texts: Old Testament, Gospel, and Epistle. Two additional sermons will be from a text of your choice and will be written for particular occasions: one evangelistic sermon, and your choice of one from three options: Holy Communion, a Baptism, or a Funeral. A manuscript and exegetical notes that support your homiletic judgments and decisions will be submitted on the day
the sermons are due. I will provide worksheets to guide you in your exegetical notes.

3) Class attendance for lectures, discussions, and sermons is assumed. Three unexcused absences are allowed. Assignments turned in late will be penalized. An important element of the course is to foster Christian friendship and mutual help rather than professional competition or jealousy. Your attendance, participation, comments, and encouragement when others preach are imperative. Preachers will ask a fellow student to serve as a responder for each in-class sermon. The responder will initiate the discussion on the sermon. Sermons must be preached on the assigned dates. No make-ups will be arranged.

4) Required Texts:
Thomas Long, *The Witness of Preaching*
Jonathan Wilson, *For God so Loved the World: A Christology for Disciples*
Leslie Newbigin, *Proper Confidence: Faith, Doubt & Certainty in Christian Discipleship*
Marva J. Dawn, *Powers, Weakness, and the Tabernacling of God*
James W. Thompson, *Preaching Like Paul: Homiletic Wisdom for Today*

5) Plagiarism. Preachers are notorious for borrowing from the work of others. I want to encourage you to see your sermons as a statement of the whole Church’s truth, drawing from the wisdom of others. However, in your exegetical notes and sermons let me know whom you are reading and from whom you have learned. I will expect that your sermons will be fresh, new, and current, rather than work you have already used.

More on Sermons:

Sermons will be 12 to 14 minutes in length. In order for you to preach 3 times with feedback and discussion it will be necessary to adhere to this time frame. Please be respectful of others and stay within your limit! If you cannot offer a clear, concise sermon from a biblical text in 12-14 minutes, you have filled too much time with irrelevant material. Once you are in a congregation there will be ample opportunities to amplify and expand. However, lucid brevity is a far greater test and measure of knowledge and wisdom than is our wordiness. Sermons will be videotaped, please bring a tape on your assigned days.

Please double-space your manuscripts and type your text at the beginning in single-spaces. In preparing your exegetical notes, I will expect you to utilize the skills you have learned in your courses in biblical studies and your knowledge of the biblical languages. Please do not use Internet preaching helps and sources (I do not mean ATLA) or one-volume commentaries (Such as the Abingdon one-volume commentary on the Bible). For this course, it is important that you use solid, critical commentaries, essays, and studies that have been written to support proclamation and teaching in the Church. Do not skip exegetical work in order to go directly to exposition and application. I also
encourage you to limit your use of illustrations, making them brief and related directly to the message of the sermon. Examples that demonstrate the embodiment of the Word in life are always superior and more faithful expressions of the Gospel. (We will discuss this issue) In all cases, keep your eye on the focus of the sermon that has grasped you through your careful listening to Scripture. The form and function of the sermon must serve the proclamation of Christ and the claims he is making on our lives in the present.

Remember that we are interested in moving from exegesis to proclamation. You will discover your sermon by listening to the Spirit speak in the text, and this Word will inform, shape, and guide your sermon! Your sermon, however, is not about the text. Neither is your sermon a lecture or a talk about your exegesis. The Word we proclaim is not a text, it is Jesus Christ, a living person with a living voice who speaks to us today. The text is a particular witness to the God of the Gospel, rendering his identity and activity to us in the present, calling for appropriate and faithful response that shapes Christian identity and activity into the future God is creating.

Consider the following:
1) How does the text witness to God?
2) What sin or sins does the text uncover or address? What virtues, or examples of faith and obedience?
3) How does this text PREACH the Gospel of God’s self-disclosure in Jesus Christ?
4) What is God doing: teaching, commanding, asking, inviting, persuading, encouraging, promising, blessing, cursing, etc.?
5) What is surprising in this text? Odd or strange?
6) How is this text a Word to and for the Church: what is it doing to form, to sustain, to correct, to encourage, to build up, to empower disciples? How is it doing this?
7) Where and how have I seen this Word being enacted in the life of the Church, among Christian people, or in the world?

Think of your sermon in terms of Focus and Function:

The focus of the sermon should:

a) unify the whole text
b) encapsulate the Gospel
c) have an impact on life

You should be able to state this in a sentence or two! Keep it clear and simple!
The function of the sermon is what you hope the Holy Spirit will do with your words among your hearers. This should be derived from a close reading of the biblical text in conversation with your preaching context. For in-class sermons, please assume we are your congregation. Your written sermons will be aimed towards a congregation; one you know, or one you have or presently are serving.

ASSIGNMENTS

In addition to the sermons, which are the most important part of the course, you will have an opportunity to give a 6-7 minute (non-graded) introduction to a preacher in the Bible, briefly telling about their life, message, and the conditions in which they preached. Draw this from a single text. For example, tell us about Paul in one preaching situation in the Book of Acts, don’t try to tell us about Paul’s entire preaching ministry. This is not just story-time, rather it is time for a biblical story from which we may gather practical wisdom exemplified by holy examples. Tell us what we can learn from this preacher, sermon, and situation. Be brief, clear, and concise.

We will read Witness to Preaching in installments, using it as a guide in walking through our preparation to preach. I would like to have a one-page (double space) evaluation from you on the other required texts. (Except for Dawn, which should be 2-3 pages) I am interested in what you have garnered from these books as preachers. I don’t want a summary or a synopsis, but your honest assessment in how these authors may assist all of us to be more faithful in our preaching ministry.

On the day of our class final, (there is no final exam!) Friday Dec 14, you will hand in a 3-5 page Practical Theology of Preaching. This is not a research paper, rather, it is a serious, reflective essay on our life as pastors who are called to preach the Word of God in and for the Church. Drawing from our reading, discussions, and your study and preaching of Scripture, tell me what you believe is most important for us to remember in who we are and what we must do to be faithful in our contemporary situation.

The final assignment is that you attend worship at Estes Chapel during the semester (at least part of the time) listening to the preachers and preparing written comments on 7 sermons. These should be 1 page in length, covering the same criteria we are using in class:

Faithfulness to Scripture, Articulation of the Gospel, Fittingness for the situation, Coherence, clarity, gracefulness of expression. What did you see in this person and hear in this sermon? Your written comments are due on the last regular meeting of class.

I am available to meet with you and to discuss matters concerning this course, preaching, and our call to pastoral ministry. Please feel free to email me at any time! I will respond as soon as possible. I also would like to have lunch with each of you at least once during this semester to get better acquainted and to discuss your vocational plans and this course. I will have a calendar for us to schedule these times during the second half of the
semester when we are into preaching. (I will be doing the same with my other class during the first half of the semester)

GRADING:
In-class sermons and exegetical notes= 60%
Written sermons and exegetical notes= 20%
Written assignments and class participation= 20%

OUR CALENDAR

T-September 4: Introduction, Syllabus
R-September 6: Discuss Long, pgs. 9-59. Preaching and Witness.
T-September 11: Presentations on Preachers in Scripture (6-7 minutes, no notes).
R-September 13: Presentations on Preachers in Scripture (6-7 minutes, no notes).
T-September 18: Our Preaching Context: Discussion of Dawn, Powers, Weakness, and the Tabernacleing of God. Write a 2-3 page essay on Dawn using her primary points to emphasize the contemporary importance of Romans 1: 16, “I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God (italics mine) for the salvation of everyone who believes: for the Jew, then for the Greek.” (NIV)
Turn in 1 page assessment of Newbigin. Proper Confidence. On what basis, or authority, do we proclaim the Gospel boldly and with confidence?
The remainder of the semester will be occupied with preaching, a separate schedule with assigned texts will be handed out by Sept 11.
Nov 15: Turn in a one-page assessment of Thompson, Preaching Like Paul. Now that we have preached from Paul, what have we learned from him in terms of his message and his example? What does he show us about biblical preaching?
Dec 6: One page assessment of Wilson, For God so Loved the World. Has reading Wilson made the reality of Christ more real to you as we have worked our way through the semester? Has he helped you to keep the fullness of Christ in sight in preparing to preach? Is discipleship optional for preachers?
I hope you will enter fully into this conversation with me and with one another. I consider you to be colleagues who are being formed to share a common ministry of the Word. Let us pursue this high and holy calling together.

Peace,
Mike Pasquarello