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SP 501 Communication As Christian Rhetoric

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Syllabus

Course: SP501 X3 (SP 2009)

Title: Communication As Christian Rhetoric

Hours: 2.00

Published: Yes, on 01/16/2009

Prerequisites:

None

Department: Speech

Faculty: Dr. Chuck Killian



Email: chuck.killian@asburyseminary.edu

Office:

SPO:

Meetings:

During 02/09/2009 to 05/22/2009 Online via ExL.

Maximum Registration: 16

Catalog Description: This course provides a context for instruction and practice that introduces the art of written and spoken communication within a clearly articulated Wesleyan theological framework for the purpose of Christian ministry. As a core course within the theological curriculum, its purpose does not simply replicate undergraduate speech and communication studies. Students will be provided with appropriate means for cultivating necessary habits of Christian life and speech in light of the Christian rhetorical tradition, classical rhetoric, and contemporary communication studies in preparation for Christian ministry in a multicultural society. This course is designed to integrate theological and scriptural knowledge, rhetorical and cultural understanding, for clear, coherent, and persuasive written and oral expressions of Christian speech in the practice of Christian leadership.

Objectives:

Asbury Theological Seminary

Asbury Theological Seminary

SP 501

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Welcome to SP501!

Congratulations! You are about to enter the world of change. When we speak a word--any word--we impact the world around us....

The spoken word can be the medium of new knowledge. Think of how the words "E=mc²" have changed the face of our culture. The spoken word can create chaos. We think of the diatribes of Hitler as he enflamed the world with hatred and bitterness...The spoken word can be the channel of healing and hope. "Hush," says the caring mother, "Don't cry. Mother's here." Fear and uncertainty are changed. Transformed.

The Christian message is the communication of supreme change: "And the Word became flesh...and to those who believed in Him he gave power to become the children of God."

The aim of this course is to help us all to become more EFFECTIVE communicators of the Christian Message. The word "effective" is an important one. There is one thing I need to say right off the bat:

"THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS A GOOD OR A BAD COMMUNICATOR"

(Please say that right now...out loud)

We evaluate communication in terms of EFFECTIVENESS. That's what this course is all about; becoming more effective in our presentations and thereby effect change.

Course Description

Communication for Christian Leaders is designed to give you both a theoretical understanding of communication in the real life context of church and ministry as well as hands-on experience as we develop our skills as Christian communicators. My goals for you as students are that...

1. You will explore a variety of communication theories from Aristotle's Canons of rhetoric to contemporary theories of narrative, persuasion, and compliance-gaining. As a result, you will not only gain a broader understanding of communication but will be able to develop your own model of the communication process.
2. You will acquire the tools to better understand your listeners. Effective communicators are listener-centered, and we'll learn ways to carry-out audience/congregation analysis.
3. You will develop the resources for constructing effective presentations. While your biblical and theological studies will be the essential sources, we'll investigate the outside sources from which you can draw illustrative materials.
4. You will develop and apply different organizational strategies in the development of presentations.
5. You will carefully examine the components of presentational effectiveness from non-verbal communication, vocalization dynamics, and word choice.
6. You will focus your attention on three critical areas of effective communication: (a) communicating information, (b) making emotional appeals, and (c) communicating to persuade.
7. You will explore secondary ways to enhance the effectiveness of your presentations such as the incorporation of visual aids.
8. You will improve your ability to critical listen and evaluate the presentations.

Text: **PUBLIC SPEAKING**, Duane Litfin

See selected bibliography for extended reading options

Class Procedures

The ExL program of Asbury Theological Seminary works to insure that you, as an on-line student, will be receiving the same materials and equivalent experiences of those who are taking the class on-campus. To help achieve this goal, the course is divided into learning modules. Modules will be posted in the course center as the class advances throughout the course. Each module will include items for you to discuss as a class, to work on as a team, and to complete as individuals. Each module will also include the due date for the completion of assignments/presentation.

Formatting the course:

The course format will cover four modules, essentially one module per month for the semester:

February: The theoretical base for good praxis

March: The good rhetoric of Aristotle—introduction, body and conclusion with an emphasis upon structure in the speech

April: Moving beyond Aristotle--Speaking to persuade with an emphasis on the movement in the speech

May: The sum of it all—your ‘white paper’ for effective communication

Module One -- February ‘The Theoretical Base for Good Praxis’

Assignment #1

During the first week of class, I would like everyone to send a greeting to the class. No more than a page that will help us all to get better acquainted. Due date: February 6

Assignment #2

Give a speech before a local audience (congregation, Sunday School class, small group or family gathering). After it is finished, get feedback from your group and then share this with your group and to me. Due: Feb. 13

Assignment #3

By the middle of the month, you should be close to finishing the text by Litfin, PUBLIC SPEAKING. At the end of each chapter, there are several exercises. I am going to list 8 exercises and you may choose to do any five of them and send your report to me. And, in addition, list at least five communication principles you have gleaned from the book that will prove helpful in the preparation and delivery of your oral presentations. Due: Feb. 27

Chapter 2, #2; Chapter 3, #4; Chapter 4, #1

Chapter 5, #4; Chapter 6, #4; Chapter 7, #3

Chapter 8, #4; Chapter 9, #2

Module Two -- March ‘The Good Rhetoric of Aristotle—introduction, body and conclusion with an emphasis upon the structure in the speech

Assignment #4

This first speech will be 8-10 minutes in length. This can be a speech to inform, to persuade, or a gospel talk, whatever. You may want to share your idea with your group and get feedback. You must record this presentation on cassette, videotape, computer (whatever). Due: March 9.

In this speech you will have your listening group of at least five who will evaluate you following your presentation. You will then discuss the speech with your group and summarize their findings and send that to your listening group and to me. The critique sheet below can be reproduced and made available to your listening group. (see below)

1. Introduction

Attention-getting?

Thesis: Was there a clearly defined thesis?

2. Arrangement (Body)

Was it coherent?

Was there progression of thought?

Was there a clearly defined structure?

3. Style and delivery

Use of language?

Use of voice?

Use of the body (non verbal cues)

4. Conclusion

Did the speech conclude? How?

Did you feel like the speech was unified?

5. What helped? Be specific. What hindered? Be specific.

6. Application

Did it catch your interest?

Did it speak to something in your life?

On a basis of 1-10 (10 being the best possible score), what score would you give the speech? You will average the numbers and send that to me. All videotapes should be returned to the speaker so that they can be used for the next presentation. Due: March 20

Assignment #5

Journal about your experience. What did you learn about yourself? About the communication process? And what three principles are you taking with you in the preparation of your final speech? Send these to your group and to me. Due: March 27

Module Three -- April 'Moving Beyond Aristotle--with an emphasis on structure and 'movement' in a speech/sermon that encourages the listener to hear what is being said.' Remember, the point is not to get something said, but to get something heard.

Assignment #6

Revisit your findings from the previous speech. Journal about what all of this means as you prepare for your final speech/sermon. Due April 10.

Assignment #7

In this presentation, you may want to preach a sermon or you can give another speech to persuade. Again, 8-12 minutes in length. You will send a copy of your tape to each member of your group and one to me. You will follow the same procedure as you did in #1. (Keep in mind you can adapt the critique sheet but make sure it allows some final evaluation), and you will summarize the findings and send them to your group and a copy to me. Due: April 24.

Module Four -- May 'The sum of it all—your white paper for effective

communication'

Assignment #8

Your final paper. It should be no more than 8-10 pages, summarizing your principles and observations about effective communication. You will want to include the following: What does it mean to speech to the contemporary culture from a Christian perspective? What have you learned about yourself as a communicator and how that relates to effective communication? You may want to interview a pastor and get their 'take' on the process. You may want to do some reading about effective preachers and assess their success. Your collateral reading should encompass at least 500 pages beyond the text. Make sure that is included in your bibliography. And finally, having had this course, "So What?" What do you want to say to me and to the course? Due: May 15

Logistic

Whatever the size of the class (hopefully no more than 16), you will be assigned to a group of 3 or 4, shortly after the class begins. This also means that you will need about tapes (one for each member of your group and one for me, or if you use the computer to do the presentations, that will be just fine). Once you view the sermon from your group, try your best to get back with your critique/observations within two days.

Keep in mind you will need a listening group of at least five persons. These five who will serve as evaluators and they ought not be a member of your family, although they can be apart of your listening team. I will expect all to be fair and candid. If all come back as "10's" I will know something is askew.

You will need some equipment: A) a video camera of some sort, and B) video equipment to copy video presentations. DVD's can work, too.

From time to time there will be some online discussions, so let me suggest that we keep faith with them. Tardy work will be looked upon with some disdain.

Collateral reading should include an additional 500 pages of reading in the genre beyond the text. Include this in the bibliography of your final paper.

Course Evaluation

Module one 25 pts

Module two 25 pts

Module three 25 pts

Module four 25 pts

Grading: 97-100 A

93-96 A-

89-92 B+

85-91 B

Below 85, Pray.

Making contact

I welcome you to contact any time by e-mail. If you need to speak with me, feel free to call me on my cell phone (919 538 5822). Calling me is no problem, and I prefer it to having you sit in doubt about an unclear concept or assignment.

Selected Bibliography

Anderson, J. A. (1996). *Communication Theory: Epistemological Foundations*. New York: The Guilford Press.

Broadus, J. A. (1979). *On the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons*. (Fourth ed.). New York: Harper and Row Publishers, Inc.

Craddock, F. (1974). *As One Without Authority: Essays on Inductive Preaching*. Enid, Oklahoma: The Phillips University Press.

Craddock, F. B. (1985). *Preaching*. Nashville, Tennessee: Abingdon Press.

Demaray, D. E. (1993). *Introduction to Homiletics*. (2nd ed.). Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House.

Fisher, W. (1987). *Human Communication as Narration: Toward a Philosophy of Reason, Value, and Action*. Columbia, South Carolina: University of South Carolina Press.

Lewis, R. L., & Lewis, G. (1983). *Inductive Preaching: Helping People Listen*. Westchester, Illinois: Crossway Books.

Lewis, R. L., & Lewis, G. (1989). *Learning to Preach like Jesus*. Wheaton, Illinois: Crossway Books.

Lowry, E. (1989). *How to Preach a Parable: Designs for Narrative Sermons*. Nashville, Tennessee: Abingdon Press.

Lowry, E. L. (1980). *The Homiletical Plot: The Sermon as Narrative Art Form*. Atlanta: John Knox Press.

Miller, C. (1995). *Marketplace Preaching*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Books.

Perry, L. M. (1973). *Biblical Preaching for Today's World*. Chicago, Illinois: Moody Press.

Robinson, H. W. (1980). *Biblical Preaching: The Development and Delivery of Expository Messages*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House.

Robinson, W. B. (Ed.). (1990). *Journeys toward Narrative Preaching*. New York: The Pilgrim Press.

Rose, L. (1990). *The Parameters of Narrative Preaching*. In W. B. Robinson (Ed.), *Journeys toward Narrative Preaching*. New York: The Pilgrim Press.

Or, any other book you wish to use as long as it relates to the genre of oral communication.

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