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PR 610 The Theology and Practice of Preaching

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Course description (catalog): “The course nurtures a vision of Christian preaching as a theological and pastoral activity of the church in service to the gospel. The core objectives of this course have been established to facilitate critical understanding of and competence in view of (1) preaching as witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ revealed in the Christian Scriptures and (2) preaching as both a gift of the holy Spirit and a human vocation which serves the creation of a community called to worship the Triune God as revealed through the narrative of the whole biblical canon. This course approaches preaching as a theological practice and from a perspective shaped by the Wesleyan tradition; it is informed by a conscious integration of doctrinal and biblical exegesis and the practice of theological hermeneutics. Emphasis is placed on the life-long task of acquiring practical habits appropriate for cultivating judgment required for faithful communication of the biblical witness in service of the Word of God, as an act of Christian worship and within the context of personal, social, and cultural challenge and change.”

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I. COURSE GOALS

You will:

1. Begin shaping your theology of preaching.

2. Master foundational principles of homiletical structure, with special reference to both sermon organization and the picture oriented culture in which we live.

3. Embrace the imperative of personal Christian religious experience and integrity of character as basic to Gospel proclamation.

4. Establish a working, professional and ethical relationship with resources for preaching.
5. Begin a filing system for storing preachable illustrations, quotations and ideas.

6. Commence formulating a theory of pulpit communication.

7. See clearly Scriptural exegesis as foundational to homiletical integrity and presentation.

II. IMPLEMENTING THE COURSE GOALS

1. To come to terms with the theology of preaching, please write a five page paper. Show personal creativity, biblical sources and bibliographical documentation. Class readings and discussion will also play their part in helping you formulate your theology of preaching.

   Paper due Tuesday 22 April (1,000 words).

2. To master homiletical construction, you will move through the primary textbook section by section, doing supplementary readings and processing class handouts. To establish the picture character of contemporary preaching, you will read a book and write a response to it; more, you will deliver a word picture in classroom practicum.

   Response to Smalley and Treat (600 words) due Thursday 10 April

3. To see the relevance of personal Christian religious experience and quality of character, the class will address specific issues: the call to preach, the work of the Spirit, ongoing spiritual formation, etc. Every class period will begin with sharing and prayer.

4. To begin to get acquainted with the resources for preaching, you will look at salient literature, both print and on-line. Note the bibliographies and resources in the books you buy, especially the primary text. The class will talk about the threat of plagiarism.

5. To begin a housing scheme, you will create your own filing system.

   Students will submit 28 February a hard copy outline (two or three pages) of their filing program.
6. To explore theories of Gospel communication, the class will, here and there throughout the course, look at the dynamics of how one person can transmit ideas to others in the context of Christian public proclamation.

7. To see scriptural and homiletical relationships, you will see texts within contexts and read *Proclaiming the Truth: Guides to Scriptural Preaching*.

### III. REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS


   From this primary textbook, the class will read daily assignments and process accompanying handouts; also do supplementary readings.


   Read the book and report that you have done so at end of term.


   Use the book for devotional purposes through the term (note the daily scheme and feel free to adapt to your own pattern).


   Students will write a two page paper in response to this book.
IV. RECOMMENDED BOOKS


   This remarkable book, an anthology by leading homileticians and preachers, furnishes information on every phase of preaching.


   Christian ministry, the riskiest profession, suffers the loss of some 1500 clergy per month. The challenge: spiritual, emotional and physical health.


   A resource that covers a wide spectrum of concerns, including cross-cultural issues.

V. COURSE CALENDAR

Tuesday 12 February: Orientation – class bonding, syllabus.

   Assignment for next time: Read pp. 7-24 in the primary textbook, plus at least 30 pp. (see supplementary bibliography suggestions, pp. 40-41).

Thursday 14 February: Handout on the Call to Preach.

   Assignment for next time: Read in the primary textbook, pp. 24-33 plus at least 30 pp. (see supplementary bibliography suggestions, pp. 41-42).

Tuesday 19 February: Handout on Anointing.

   Assignment for next time: Read in the primary textbook, pp. 33-39 plus at least 30 pp. (see supplementary bibliography suggestions, pp. 42-43).
Thursday 21 February:  Lesson on *kerygma and didache.*

Assignment for next time: Read in the primary textbook, pp. 47-72 plus at least 30 pp. (see supplementary bibliography, pp. 73-75). Please do your supplementary reading in the area of your chief growing edge.

Tuesday 26 February:  Handout on The Disciplines of the Preacher.

Assignment for next time: Read Chapter 3 of the primary textbook plus at least 30 pages (see supplementary readings suggestions on pp. 103-104).

Thursday 28 February:  Handout on How to Find Subjects: Planning and Filing.

2 – 3 page outline of your filing plan due.

Assignment for next time: Read Chapter 4 and do the usual supplementary readings of 30 pp. or more (see suggestions pp. 120-121).

Tuesday 4 March:  Handout on making introductions.

Assignment for next time: Write an introduction for a sermon text of your choice, limiting it to 200 words.

Thursday 6 March:  Practicum on Introductions.

Tuesday 11 March:  Practicum on Introductions.

Assignment for next time: Read Chapter 5 and do usual supplementary reading (suggestions on pp. 144-145). Bring your sermon outline or flow chart to class (pick your own text passage).

Thursday 13 March:  Sharing and critiquing of sermon outlines/flow charts.
Tuesday 18 March: Sermon outlines/flow charts (continued).

Assignment: Read Chapter 6 and do usual supplementary readings (suggestions on pp. 162-163).

Thursday 20 March: Handout on making conclusions.

Assignment: Write a conclusion and prepare to deliver it.

Tuesday 25 March: Practicum: Deliver your conclusion.

Thursday 27 March: Practicum: Deliver your conclusion.

Assignment: Read Chapter 7, “The Picture Principle” and do supplementary reading (see pp. 188-190).

MARCH 31-APRIL 4 READING WEEK

Tuesday 8 April: Handout on word picture painting.

Assignment for next time: Write a word picture and prepare to deliver it.

Thursday 10 April: Practicum: Deliver your word picture.

Smalley and Trent response (no more than 600 words) due.

Tuesday 15 April: Practicum: Deliver your word picture.

Assignment for next time: Read Chapter 8 and do usual supplementary reading (see pp. 213-214).

Thursday 17 April: Handout on the Bases of Pulpit Communication.

Assignment for next time: Read chapter 9 and do usual supplementary reading (see pp. 228-229).
Tuesday 22 April: Handout on Preparation before Delivery.

Assignment: Prepare a full sermon for practicum delivery. (Register your name on sign-up sheets)

Theology of preaching paper due (no more than 1,000 words).

Thursday 24 April: Practicum: Full Sermon.

Tuesday 29 April: Practicum: Full Sermon.

Thursday 1 May: Practicum: Full Sermon.

Tuesday 6 May: Practicum: Full Sermon.

Thursday 8 May: Practicum: Full Sermon.

Tuesday 13 May: Practicum: Full Sermon.

Thursday 15 May: Practicum: Full Sermon.

May 19 - 23 FINAL EXAMS

VI. OPTIONAL HONORS PROGRAM

If you wish to enhance knowledge and lift your grade, you may

1. Read one or more books or some articles in preaching journals, homiletical anthologies, or on-line. Talk to the professor before reading.

2. Critique sermons. Professor can provide a “Live Sermon” critique sheet.

3. Engage in a project of your choosing. See professor before launching work.
VII. GRADING

1. University of Michigan scheme: 10 = A; 9 = A-; B+; etc.
2. The professor will evaluate/record assignments: written work, practicum experiences, reading.

30% of the grade: reading assignments.

30% of the grade: writing assignments.

40% of the grade: practicum experiences.

3. Class attendance, punctuality in attendance and submitting assignments, class participation and eagerness to learn can factor into your grade.

4. Significant honors work (books read, reports, projects) can lift your course grade.