

2PT510 – Preaching Lab IB

Course Syllabus – Fall 2009

Instructor: Associate Professor Michael Glodo (mglodo@rts.edu or 407/366-9493, ext. 232)
Administrative Assistant: Joyce Sisler (jsisler@rts.edu)

Office hours: Tuesdays 10:00-noon
Wednesdays 11:00-noon and 1:00-2:00
Thursdays 10:00-noon.

(Often I will hold my office hours outside the Library or in the Student Commons. Joyce will know where I am or I will try to leave a note on my door indicating when I am outside my office.)

Class meeting: Thursdays 1:00-3:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall

Preaching Lab I is a 1 hour credit course.

Course objectives.

Knowing:

- Gain additional knowledge of sound sermon practices through preaching and listening to others.
- Begin to gain insight into one's own strengths and areas of needed improvement in preaching.
- To understand the nature and the basic kinds of public prayer.

Being:

- To receive the means of grace in the Word as preached by classmates.
- Heightened gratitude for God's gift of the preached word to the church and for the privilege of being Christ's ambassador.
- Deepened humility about one's own need for growth in preaching and God's grace that is necessary for that growth.
- Increased commitment to biblical principles of preaching.

Doing:

- Experience in sermon composition and delivery.
- Experience in leading public worship.

Course requirements.

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| Preach two (2) expository sermons | 60% | (30% each) |
| Leading in prayer | 10 | |

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| Learnings reflection | 20 |
| Class attendance & participation | 10 |

Required reading.

The following works are to be read in their entirety and their insight incorporated into the course assignments as relevant.

Gordon, T. David. *Why Johnny Can't Preach*.
Old, Hughes Oliphant. *Leading in Prayer*.

Expository sermons.

Each student will preach two expository sermons in class. These should be new sermons prepared specifically for class (though if you have opportunity to preach them outside of class during the semester that would be highly encouraged). The first sermon will be on a scripture text of your choosing and the second on an assigned scripture text. Sermons will be evaluated on the following criteria:

- Expository – this does not mean verse by verse commentary, but that the sermon faithfully expounds the authorial intent of a single scripture passage in its contexts (2 Tim. 2.15).
- Application – since Scripture was inspired by God for the purpose of transforming his people throughout all ages (Rom. 15.4; 2 Tim. 3.16), the sermon must contain application relevant to the contemporary audience which is reflective of the meaning of the scripture text.
- Redemptive – since the person and work of Christ is the hermeneutical key to Scripture and the decisive point of redemptive history (Luke 24; Gal. 4.4-5), exposition and application must point to, draw from and depend upon His person and work. This may be done in numerous ways within a sermon, taking into account the preaching occasion (context, audience, pastoral purpose etc.) as well as the specific Scripture text. For example, it may be done throughout the sermon; at the beginning with what follows being the implication; near the end to provide ultimate resolution and a number other ways. The primary basis to determine your redemptive angle (similar to “Christ focus”) will be determined by your scripture text.
- Clarity – choice of words and phrase, appropriateness and compellingness of language, clarity of sermon points or movements, ability to be followed by listeners, elocution, etc. should be clear. Clarity is enhanced greatly with recapitulation and transitional statements.
- Delivery – voice, gestures, eye contact, absence of distracting elements.

Each student is to read his scripture text, either preceded or followed by a prayer for illumination, before beginning his sermon. I.e., the reading of scripture should be a distinct element of worship, not buried inside the sermon after the introduction or later.

While illustrations are not listed above, good illustrations can be great aids to the listener. The best illustrations are ones which further expound the meaning of the text. Illustrations should not drive the exposition, be distracting, cause the listener to stumble, overshadow the exposition of the Scripture text or be emotionally manipulative. Good illustrations are often vivid in life detail, but without extraneous detail which

would attract more attention to the story than the point being made. Above all, they should actually illustrate the point being made and should be fashioned to ensure it. It is especially important to formulate a clear tie-in statement to the point being illustrated. Writing out such statements help ensure that you as well as your hearers know what the point is. Each student is allowed one movie illustration for the semester. Students who use no movie illustration in either sermon will receive a special bonus from me at the end of the semester. You will receive a double bonus if you use an illustration from a work of classical literature.

Visual aids such as film clips or PowerPoint slides are not permitted in this course. The proclamation of the Gospel (*kerygma*) should be distinguished from teaching (*didache*) which should both be utterly distinguished from entertainment or from the prioritizing of form over substance. While there is a continuum between *kerygma* and *didache* and while good proclamation contains some teaching and *vice versa*, the preacher should always keep in mind he is God's herald proclaiming the Good News. We must try to remember that it is the medium – the foolishness of the preached Word – which keeps us from voiding the power of God (1 Cor. 1:17-18).

You should dress appropriately when you preach. I won't prescribe a dress code, but let your appearance reflect your own sense of the task and the context. Bear in mind that your sermon video may be of some use in your future candidating.

In that regard, the question of intended audience comes up. A preaching lab is somewhat artificial by nature. Nevertheless, each of us (professor and students) are sinners in need of the grace of God which comes especially through the preached Word (WSC 89, 90). Preach not as to a classroom, but to an assembly of believers needing God's grace. If you wish to make additional particular assumptions about audience (e.g. a youth group, a church of a certain size and makeup) that is perfectly fine and up to you.

After each sermon, I will lead the class in a discussion of the strengths and areas of possible improvement of the sermon. You will also receive written feedback from each classmate and me. Attached is a sample feedback form that your fellow students and I will use.

Leading in prayer.

The ministry of public prayer is rapidly declining in North American worship (this might be so in other contexts, but this is the one with which I am most familiar). The decline is reflected in

- 1) the absence of purpose for particular prayers and their functions within public worship;
- 2) the decreasing proportion of time spent in prayer in public worship;
- 3) the abandonment of public prayer by ministers of the Word and the handing over of that role to musicians and others without adequate understanding or training in the ministry of the Word and
- 4) increased interest in fixed liturgies

Most RTS-Orlando students have not experienced practiced, sound ministries of public prayer before or during seminary. This absence of examples further perpetuates the decline without conscious efforts to the contrary.

Each student will participate in leading in prayer in Chapel at least once during the semester. You will be assigned a date on which to lead and the particular kind of prayer you are to lead. I will give you guidance on whether your prayer should be a collect or extemporaneous. Bear in mind that “extemporaneous” has nothing to do with a lack of preparation.

You are to read the relevant chapter(s) in Hughes Old’s *Leading in Prayer* as well as Ligon Duncan’s summary of Samuel Miller’s *Thoughts on Public Prayer* (published as an appendix in Matthew Henry’s *Method for Prayer*, Reformed Academic Press edition) as part of your preparation. You will be assessed on the content as well as your actual leading.

Learnings reflection.

By the term paper deadline you will submit a 5-8 page double-spaced paper describing

- 1) ways in which you have grown in your preaching during semester;
- 2) the most helpful thing(s) you learned through this class (from colleagues as well as me);
- 3) your assessment of your delivery skills from having watched your own sermon videos;
- 4) areas where you feel you have the most continued need for growth;
- 5) any remaining significant issues about preaching on which you feel you still need greater understanding
- 6) Conclude with a summary of your own sense of your readiness and/or progress toward preaching as a Minister of the Word.

This paper should be submitted electronically as an e-mail attachment in MS Word or Rich Text Format. The file name should be the class name, assignment name and your last name. E.g. “PL1-Reflection-Yourlastname.” If you want to receive acknowledgement of your submission, please set up your e-mail for a delivery receipt. Due to the volume of assignments submitted each semester, I cannot acknowledge each one individually.

All papers will be assessed on clarity, correctness and form as well as upon content. This means using good grammar, complete sentences, correcting spelling errors, using proper format for references, etc. Care in expressing oneself is a highly reliable guide to carefulness in thought.

Class attendance & participation.

Pastors readily reflect that some of the most important lessons learned in seminary were learned from classmates. Preaching labs rely heavily upon the range of impressions received by classmates and shared during feedback. Further, seeing more faces in the room is a help to preaching well. You will receive the blessing of feedback from classmates, therefore it is incumbent to return that blessing by being present to hear them preach – especially in the weeks before fall break and end of semester. Therefore, a portion of the final grade will be allotted to attendance and participation in the listening and feedback processes.

Video recording of sermons.

Each in class sermon will be video recorded and made available for you to download. Since RTS is only now resuming the recording of sermons in preaching labs, we may have some bugs to work out of the system. If you have any difficulties, let me know immediately. If your computer resources preclude you from downloading and storing your sermon video, please let me know and we can make alternative arrangements.

Comm Lab IIB – Student Survey

To be completed and turned in on the first day of class.

Name.....

I have preached in an actual church worship service approximately _____ times.

Up to this point in time, I have taught or spoken publicly (counting all opportunities) (check one)

- quite a bit
- several times
- a limited number of times.

At this point in time, Lord willing,

- I have a strong sense of call to a preaching/teaching ministry.
- I expect to preach and teach as a supplemental aspect of what I expect I will be doing after I graduate.
- I will use my time in seminary to discern better what role public ministry may have in my future.

For me individually, the hardest part of preaching is.....
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One subject I would like us to discuss some time in class this semester is.....
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