

COS 324 Preaching
Course of Study School of Ohio at MTSO

Summer 2019: June 21-22, July 12-13

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This course focuses on preaching the gospel from the Old and New Testaments.

Course Objectives

Students will be able to:

1. Articulate a theology of proclamation.
2. Exegete a variety of biblical passages for preaching.
3. Evaluate sermons for biblical integrity, theological soundness, internal logic, and delivery, and appropriate insights gained from the evaluation of their own sermons.
4. Develop plans for ordering and delivering sermons in their congregational and communal context.

TEXTBOOK SELECTION by General Board of Higher Education and Ministry

Required Texts:

Fred Craddock, *Craddock on the Craft of Preaching*

Barbara Brown Taylor, *The Preaching Life*

*Cleophus LaRue, *The Heart of Black Preaching*

**May be borrowed from a library or other student*

Reference: *(recommended to build a reference library, but selected articles may be read from a library or the book borrowed from another pastor or student)*

Paul Scott Wilson, ed., *The New Interpreter's Handbook of Preaching*

Supplementary: *(will not be used in class, but are offered as optional resources)*

Joseph Webb, *Preaching Without Notes*

Adam Hamilton, *Unleashing the Word*

ASSIGNMENTS

- *Reading assignments are expected as part of preparation for the written assignments and classroom work.*
- *Written assignments are due at the beginning of class or on the date listed. Electronic submission via email (please use Microsoft Word) is preferred for all written assignments, however I do accept paper as well. Please format the title of your file as follows: "Last name.assignment number," so for assignment 4, my file would be titled: "Rand.4.docx." Please turn in all parts of each assignment under this singular file name, including any preparation or evaluation forms.*
- *A word about plagiarism: Sermons and illustrations are easy to find online. They are also easy to trace. Do your own work, please. The point of this class is to help you find your own voice in preaching, not how to weave together other*

people's ideas. Follow the process outlined in this syllabus and it will help you find YOUR voice as you bear witness to the good news of Jesus Christ.

WEEKEND 1: June 21-22

Read: Taylor, chapters 1-7, and two sermons from part two.

LaRue, chapter 4, and two sermons from the appendix.

Craddock, chapters 1-11.

New Interpreter's Handbook, Part 10: Sermon, article: "The Four Pages of the Sermon"

Recommended (not required but helpful): From *New Interpreter's Handbook*, Part 11: Theology, article: "Word of God"; from Part 1: Bible, "Introduction: Choosing and Delimiting a Text," and "Exegesis"; from Part 7: Social Location, articles: "Exegesis of the Congregation, Denomination," "Exegesis of Self"

SUBMIT (email is preferred, but paper is accepted) by the beginning of class on Friday:

1. Read slowly and prayerfully Matthew 4:12-7:19. Have a conversation with Jesus asking, "what is this good news all about?" and "help me see and know this kingdom you announce." In a paragraph each, respond to the questions: "What is the good news Jesus proclaimed?" and "What is the kingdom of God?" Focus your responses on what you can learn from this specific passage. (5% of final grade).
2. Reflect on Taylor, part one and LaRue, chapter 4. Taylor writes about how her experience of God changed over time and LaRue about how image of God interacts with sociocultural experience. Write a 1 page autobiography of your God concepts, reflecting on how your image of God has changed over time. How do you interact with God? How has that changed as your relationship with God grows deeper? How have your own experiences in life impacted the way you encounter God? Conclude with a simple statement of what you wish everyone knew about God. (5 % of final grade).
3. Of the four sermons you read in Taylor and LaRue, choose two to analyze more fully as below. Summarize for each of the sermons, one page per sermon:
 - a. In one sentence, how would you describe the human condition addressed in each sermon? How is that related to the biblical text?
 - b. In one sentence, identify the good news in each sermon. How is the good news related to the human condition identified?
 - c. In one simple, declarative sentence, state what you perceive the message of this sermon to be.
 - d. What is the predominant image of God in each sermon?
 - e. What draws you in to the sermon? What helps you connect with God?
 - f. What gets in your way or keeps you from encountering God?
 - g. What do you notice? What do you wonder? What are you learning about the ministry of preaching as a result of this analysis? (10% of final grade).

4. In 2 pages or less, review two of your recent sermons to identify the following:
 - a. The biblical text from which you preached.
 - b. In one sentence, how would you describe the human condition addressed in each sermon? How is that related to the biblical text?
 - c. In one sentence, identify the good news you proclaim in each sermon. How is the good news related to the human condition you identified, and how does it arise from the scripture?
 - d. Write a single, simple, declarative sentence summarizing the message of each sermon.
 - e. What is the predominant image of God in each sermon?
 - f. Look over a-e. What do you notice? What do you wonder? What are you learning about yourself, about God, and about the ministry of preaching as a result of this analysis? (10% of final grade)
5. Spend time listening to God through *one* of the following: 2 Kings 2:1-2, 6-14, Psalm 77:1-2, 11-20, Galatians 5:1, 13-25, Luke 9:51-62. What part of this scripture stands out to you? Read it again, slowly. In what ways does God reveal your life in light of this scripture? Read it again, slowly. Is there a story you could tell from your own experience that could help other people connect with this scripture? Using Craddock to guide you, develop that story carefully (this is not a full sermon, but a simple, singular story from your own life that relates to and illuminates the scripture. The story should take 2-4 minutes to tell. Consider the following:
 - What is the hook? Craft an opening sentence that invites interest.
 - What details, thoughts, emotions, experiences are important to help people identify with your story?
 - What do you want people to discover as a result of hearing your story? How can your story illuminate a point without overtly stating it? How does this story lead us into an encounter with Christ through scripture?
 - How can you land the story well?
 - Consider the best way to connect your story with scripture. Keep it simple. Make the connection in no more than 1-2 sentences.
 Prepare the story in writing to turn in, but since this is *your* story, we will look forward to you telling it *without notes* in class (you can use the Bible to read a verse or two, if you wish). (5% of final grade).
6. Using the same scripture you chose in step 5, interrogate the text. What do you notice about it? What do you wonder about it? What do you not understand? Are there links to a twice-told story somewhere else in scripture? If so, how does that scripture give background that illuminates this one? Are there words you don't quite understand in that context, or that you have noticed in other places in scripture? Are there cultural cues that you wish you understood better? In one page or less, brainstorm a list of questions that you would like to investigate through concordances, biblical or theological dictionaries, or commentaries. Do not investigate yet, just list your preliminary questions. (5% of final grade).

Due Tuesday, July 2

Read: Craddock, chapters 12-16

Recommended (not required but helpful) reading: LaRue, chapter 1, *New Interpreter's Handbook*: Part 10: Sermon, article: "Introduction: Seeking to be Heard." Part 5: Poetics, articles: "Illustration and Stories," "Moves," and "Worship Environment"

Submit by email:

7. Using tools from the class, develop and preach a sermon on June 30 (Third Sunday after Pentecost) using the text you chose in assignments 5-6. Invite feedback from the congregation using tools from class. Have someone record the sermon on video. After watching it and receiving congregational feedback, write up a self-evaluation according to the tools used in class. The video is for your use. I do not need to see it. Submit manuscript as well as preparation and summary evaluation (taking into account the evaluation of others as well as your own). (20% of final grade)

WEEKEND 2: July 12-13

Read: Craddock, chapters 17-18

Recommended (not required but helpful, especially for your theology paper, assignment 9): *New Interpreter's* Part 6, Preacher, article: "Authority of the Preacher," Part 11: Theology, articles: "Anthropology," "Ecclesiology," "Missiology," "Systematic, Constructive Theology," "Theology in the Sermon."

Submit at the beginning of class on Friday:

8. Develop and preach a sermon in class based upon a lectionary text from 6th Sunday after Pentecost, Year C (for July 21, 2019). The sermon should not be more than 12 minutes long. Turn in sermon preparation forms (handed out in class Weekend 1) as well as a prepared manuscript (although you are free to preach without it). (20% of final grade, initial grade may be revised after the submission of assignment 10).
9. With reference to Taylor, Craddock, LaRue, and relevant articles from the *New Interpreters Handbook of Preaching*, articulate in no more than 5 pages your own theology of proclamation. This is an academic paper. Full use of citations is expected. Prompting questions will be offered in Weekend 1. (10% of final grade).

Due July 23:

Read: Recommended (not required but helpful): *New Interpreter's Handbook*, Part 6: Preacher, articles: "Preacher's Week", Part 8: Experience, "Lectionary and the Christian Year."; Part 6: Preacher, articles, "Devotional Life/Lifestyle," "Long-range Sermon Planning," "Preacher's Creative Process," "Preaching out of the Overflow," "Sermon Research," and "Time Management"; Part 8: Experience, articles: "Introduction: Preaching in a Diverse World," "Emerging Church Preaching."

Submit by email:

10. Refine the sermon developed for assignment 8 based upon class feedback and re-preach in your congregation on July 21. Again use video and congregational feedback to write up a self-evaluation according to the tools used in class (grade included as part of assignment 8).
11. Develop a six-week preaching series from July 28, through September 1, 2019 according to the tools used in class. This assignment will consist of one paragraph articulating an overarching vision for a series and six sermon prep forms. Please send all of the above as one singular document. Use of the lectionary is recommended, but not required (10% of final grade).

Academic Honor

The Course of Study School of Ohio requires that all material submitted by a student in fulfilling his or her academic requirements be the original work of the student.

Violations of academic honor include any action by a student indicating dishonesty or lack of integrity in academic ethics. Violations in this category include, but are not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, or knowingly passing off work of another as one's own.

Cheating includes seeking, acquiring, receiving or passing on information about the content of an examination prior to its authorized release or during its administration. Cheating also includes seeking, using, giving or obtaining unauthorized assistance in any academic assignment or examination.

Plagiarism is the act of presenting as one's own work with the work of another whether published or unpublished (including the work of another student). A writer's work should be regarded as his or her own property. Any person who knowingly uses a writer's distinctive work without proper acknowledgement is guilty of plagiarism.

A student found guilty of a violation of the academic honor code, after a review of the case, may be subject to one or more of the following actions: (1) warning; (2) probation; (3) suspension for the remainder of the course; (4) dismissal from the Course of Study School of Ohio; (5) grade of Fail for the course. Regardless of the outcome, a letter will be sent to the student's District Superintendent and Board of Ordained Ministry representative.