

COURSE OF STUDY 324

PRACTICE OF PREACHING

Syllabus and Pre-Class Assignments

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Class Dates: January 29, February 26, March 26

Textbooks

- Childers, Jana. *Birthing the Sermon: Women Preachers on the Creative Process*, Atlanta: Chalice Press, 2001.
- Craddock, Fred B. *Craddock on the Craft of Preaching*, St. Louis: Chalice Press, 2011.
- LaRue, Cleophus James. *The Heart of Black Preaching*, Philadelphia: Westminster John Knox Press, 2000.
- Lowry, Eugene. *The Homiletical Plot: The Sermon as Art Form*, Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1980.
- Taylor, Barbara Brown. *The Preaching Life*, Lanham, MD, 1992.
- Webb, Joseph. *Preaching Without Notes*, Nashville, Abingdon Press, 2001

Learning Outcomes:

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 evaluation of one's own sermon.
4. Develop plans for ordering and delivering sermons in their congregational and communal context.

Class participation: Students are expected to participate in class by completing all assignments, engaging in class discussions and group assignments, and completing assigned readings. Class lectures will be informed by, but will not necessarily repeat, information from assigned readings. Students will be responsible for assigned readings whether or not details from assignments are repeated in class.

Late Work: Assignments are expected a week prior to each Saturday class. If you have an emergency that prevents you from submitting an assignment, then call me immediately (325-793-4997 or 325-864-9836) in order to make acceptable arrangements to submit the assignment.

Cheating: Plagiarism or cheating in any form will result in automatic failure of the class. *Plagiarism* includes using someone else's ideas or words and presenting these ideas or words as if they were one's own. Students should document sources and give credit to the authors of these sources. Moreover, plagiarism includes cutting and pasting someone else's work from the Internet without giving credit to the original author. *Cheating* – for the purposes of this course – is the use of any form of dishonesty in order to appear to achieve objectives or assignments for the course or to raise one's grade. *Cheating* also includes presenting someone else's work – in any form – as if it were one's own (e.g. copying off of another student's test) or allowing someone else to copy assignments or tests.

Course Assignments and Grading Calculation

Sermon I, 15%

Sermon II, 15%

Sermon III, 15%

Theology of Preaching, Assignment II: 20%

Creative Process Paper (Childers' book): 10%

Webb Book, Assignment III: 10%

Participation, 15%

Grading System: 95-100 = A, 90-94 = A-, 87-89 = B+, 84-86 = B, 80-83 = B-, 77-79 = C+, 74-76 = C, 70-73 = C-, 67-69 = D+, 64-66 = D, 60-63 = D-, <60 = F.

Assignment I (Submit written assignments on January 22 for class on January 29)

- “Pericope,” definition: A pericope is a unit of scripture. Identifying a pericope is somewhat open to interpretation. For example, the parable of the prodigal son constitutes a pericope. One could also argue that the parables of the lost coin, lost sheep, and lost son, considered together, also constitute a pericope. The bottom line is that a pericope is a full unit of scripture in context, not a single verse or two ripped out of context. For instance, John 3:16 is not a pericope. John 3:1-21 is a pericope.
- **NOTE:** All sermons delivered in this course are to be derived from a **full biblical pericope**. Each sermon should narrate the full passage. Do not attempt to create a sermon out of one or two verses unless you can make a case that the verse or two alone constitute a full pericope, as may be the case with a proverb. Craddock describes one-verse preaching as “almost Bible.”
- *The Homiletical Plot* by Eugene Lowry
 - Read *The Homiletical Plot*
 - Prepare a sermon manuscript based on what you learned from reading Lowry’s book. Preferably, this is a sermon to be delivered in “real life” in your congregation. Whether you use a full manuscript each Sunday, a full manuscript is necessary to fulfill this assignment.
 - Be prepared to explain and discuss how the sermon was influenced by Lowry’s book.
- Deliver the sermon described above in class. Use a full manuscript for this sermon, approximately six double-spaced pages. Note, you will deliver a total of three sermons in this course (one each Saturday). The first sermon will utilize a full manuscript, the second sermon will utilize any form of notes that the student prefers except a full manuscript, and the third sermon will be delivered without notes.
- Read *Craddock on the Craft of Preaching*

Assignment II (Submit written assignments on February 19 for class on February 26)

- Develop an essay describing your theology of preaching, approximately four pages, double-spaced. Headings should include: a. The Nature of God and Preaching (Theology), b. The Incarnation of Christ and Preaching (Christology), c. The Role of the Holy Spirit in Preaching (Pneumatology), d. Human Nature and Preaching (Theological Anthropology). We will spend time in the first session discussing what is expected for this assignment.
- Prepare a sermon of approximately 15 minutes.
 - The sermon will be delivered in class.
 - Be prepared to describe how the writing of the paper influenced the sermon.
 - You may use any form of notes except a full manuscript.

Read Cleophus James LaRue, *The Heart of Black Preaching*

Assignment III (Submit assignments on March 19 for class on March 26)

- *Birth of the Sermon: Women Preachers on the Creative Process* by Childers
 - Read the entire book.
 - Write a brief (two-page) essay describing your personal “creative process” for sermon preparation and delivery.
 - Write a brief (two-page) essay describing your “creative process” for a wedding homily.
 - Write a brief (two-page) essay describing your “creative process” for a funeral homily.
- *Preaching Without Notes* by Webb
 - Write a brief (two-page) essay describing how this book was or was not helpful.
 - Include a description of the pulpit aids that are most helpful to you (full manuscript, outline, thought-blocks, list of one-word reminders, or no notes at all). Keep in mind that lack of notes in the pulpit DOES NOT mean lack of preparation and does not imply impromptu speaking. Rather, it involves the extensive preparation and a higher level of mastery in order to deliver the sermon effectively without notes.
 - How might context or situation impact or change your choice of pulpit aids?
- Prepare a sermon of approximately 15 minutes.
 - The sermon will be delivered in class **without notes**.
 - Be prepared to discuss how readings, assignments, and class discussions this semester influenced the preparation and delivery of this sermon.

Read Barbara Brown Taylor, *The Preaching Life*