**COS – 324 : Preaching**

January 13,14 and February 17,18 2016

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**Course Description**

This course focuses on communicating and interpreting the message of the Gospels through the preaching moment. Emphasis will be placed:

* on understanding the contexts and perspectives of the Gospel writers,
* on understanding and practicing biblical exegesis,
* and on communicating the gospel message effectively and relevantly for the preacher’s particular context, in the preacher’s own ‘voice.’

The preaching texts are all taken from the lectionary readings for 2017, Year A, and so will hopefully be of practical use to each preacher!

**For Session One:**

**Read:**

1. *Preaching*, by Fred Craddock; Parts I and II (pp.13-150)
2. *Craddock on the Craft of Preaching,* by Fred Craddock, chap. 1-9 (pp.5-95)
3. *The Preaching Life,* by Barbara Brown Taylor, Part One (pp.3-91)
4. “Doing Exegesis”, see posted material

**Assignments:**

1. Usingyour biblical course work to date, and other resources, write a four page paper, one page for each of the four Gospels, describing each Gospel’s unique character. Include answers to these questions:

* From what community/cultural background does the writer come?
* To whom are they writing?
* What are their central questions / issues? What is the unique viewpoint of this writer?
* Who is the Jesus, the Christ, they describe?
* What is the follower of Jesus called to be and do?

1. Write a 2-4 page paper discussing these questions:

* What is the purpose of preaching?
* What’s the role of preaching in worship?
* Describe the intersections and differences between preaching and bible study…
* Have you heard a sermon from another preacher that you especially remember? What made it memorable? What was its lasting impact on you?
* What’s the pastoral ‘context’ in which you work? Describe your community, the personality and issues of the church, the worship style, etc.

1. Prepare a preliminary exegesis of Matthew 6:24-34 (8th Sunday after Epiphany) including these elements: (Make sure you check posted material on ‘Doing Exegesis’)

* Significance of the reading’s location within the Gospel
* Appearances of the reading (or portions of the reading) in other Gospels (similarities and differences)
* To whom was Jesus speaking? Why? What specific circumstances might have inspired these teachings?
* Are there roots for this teaching in the Hebrew Scriptures?
* Significance of the reading: 1.) for Jesus’ audience, 2.) for the early church, 3.) for us
* What in this reading most ‘hooks’ you? What might be your starting point or central question for preaching?

Because we’ll be discussing the process of exegesis in class, you’ll have an opportunity to review your exegesis on Friday night and submit it – by hardcopy or electronically – on Saturday. If you quote or draw substantially from a published commentary, including on-line sources, make sure that you credit it. This is a good time to use *Gospel Parallels*!

**Teaching Topics:**

1. The Exegetical Process: How do I ‘hear’ the Word?
2. The Preaching Process: How do I invite others to hear the Word with me?
3. Developing Your ‘Voice’: What’s your most effective preaching style?
4. Resources: Where do I go for background, context, inspiration? Who can be my mirrors?

**For Session Two:**

**Read:**

1. *The Heart of Black Preaching,* LaRue:

Read Chapter 1, pp. 9-29; Chapter 4, pp.114-127; and, in the appendix of sermons,

read the two sermons by Jeremiah Wright and the last three sermons by Mozella Mitchell,

Fred C. Lofton, and Carolyn Ann Knight, respectively. (You are, of course, welcome to

read them all!)

2. *The Preaching Life,* Taylor:

Read any four of the sermons in Part II. (Again, you’re welcome to read them all!)

3. *Craddock on the Craft of Preaching,* Craddock: chap. 10-18 (pp.97-194)

4. “Ethics, Plagiarism, and Transparency in Preaching” – see posted materials

**Assignments:**

1. Choose one of these texts from which to preach, and prepare a detailed exegesis of it:

* Matthew 4:1-11 (First Sunday in Lent, Year A)
* Matthew 21:1-11 (Palm Sunday, Year A)
* John 20:19-31 (Second Sunday of Easter, Year A)
* Matthew 28:16-20 (Trinity Sunday, First Sunday after Pentecost, Year A)

1. Write a one-sentence ‘what’s-the-point-of-the sermon?’ statement, which will be required before your preach your sermon.
2. Prepare a 10 minute sermon (no longer!) on your exegeted text, and preach it to the class. **A hardcopy manuscript of the sermon is required** whether you preach from manuscript, outline, notes, or without notes. You may email a draft of your exegesis and manuscript to Rev. Hanson for preliminary feedback before the second session, but please do this at least 5 days out. After preaching, be prepared to engage with the class about your preparation, your choice of sermon/preaching style, your delivery, and these questions: “So what?” and “Now what?”

**Teaching Topics:**

1. Elements of Delivery and ‘Connection’
2. Sermon Feedback
3. Continuing to Grow…

**General Expectations and Grading:**

* The grading system is Wesley’s, is based on a point system, and is fairly demanding. **Wesley gives no course credit if the grade is under 75**. Points will be awarded for class participation and for each assignment in this course, as follows:
* Participation in class discussion and feedback: 10 pts.
* Session 1; Gospel summaries paper (4 pages): 10 pts.
* Session 1; Preaching overview paper (2-4 pages): 10 pts.
* Session 1; Exegesis of Luke 6:39-49 10 pts.
* Session 2; Exegesis of preaching text: 15 pts.
* Session 2: Sermon statement: 5 pts.
* Session 2: Sermon manuscript: 20 pts.
* Session 2: Sermon delivery and feedback: 20 pts.

*(The preaching time limit is 10 minutes. Points may be deducted for going over the limit.)*

* We have a lot of basic material to cover in a limited amount of time. You **must** have your reading done before class! Teaching, discussion, and application all depend upon it.
* Please be on time, with your presence and your assignments. Late assignments *may* be accepted, but only with a compelling reason, and they will be substantially lowered in possible grade. (See above!) The assignments, for a course at this level, are relatively few and integral to the course material. **Failure to hand in any assignment will mean failing the course**.
* As always, what we gain from any learning experience is directly proportional to what we invest in it. In this course that will include being open to the insights of our texts’ authors, being open and attentive to each other, and risking a little vulnerability in order to get maximum helpful feedback. We should also expect to have fun!

**A Note on Required Books:**

Most of the required texts are assigned by Wesley. I have added two (\*) that, in my experience, offer maximum practical help with minimal jargon. To cut down the cost, use libraries or look for ‘used’ resources wherever possible – from Amazon or other booksellers or colleagues (District website?).

**I. Required Texts:**

1. Fred Craddock, *Craddock on the Craft of Preaching* (Amazon, new, approx. $14. paperback)
2. Fred Craddock, *Preaching (25th edition)* (Amazon, new, approx. $19. Paperback)
3. Cleophus LaRue, *The Heart of Black Preaching* (Amazon, new, approx. $23. paperback)
4. Barbara Brown Taylor, *The Preaching Life* (Amazon, new, approx. $14. paperback)

***Note: you’ll find used copies of these at very cheap prices!***

**II. Required Reference Materials:**

1. Brueggemann, Cousar, Gaventa, Newsome; *Texts for Preaching, Year A \**

(Amazon, used, from $2 - $32, hardbound or CD ROM)

**Note: This resource in ‘new’ form may be out of stock at Amazon…you can check for availability, or go to the ‘used’ booksellers. I’ve had great luck there, relatively cheap. It’s also available on CD and download.**

1. Throckmorton, *Gospel Parallels \** (Amazon *kindle,* $19.59 or used, various prices)

**OR**– Leander Keck, *Disciple II: Jesus in the Gospels; Gospel Comparisons\** (about $14.)

**III. Supplementary Reading:** (for your own growth and search for excellence, **not required!**)

* Leander Keck, *Echoes of the Word*
* Joseph Webb, *Preaching Without Notes*
* Adam Hamilton, *Unleashing the Word*
* Paul Scott Wilson, *The Four Pages of the Sermon*
* Marvin McMickle, *Shaping the Claim: Moving from Text to Sermon*
* Frank A. Thomas*, They Like to Never Quit Praisin’ God: The Role of Celebration in Preaching*
* Amy Jill Levine, *Short Stories by Jesus: The Enigmatic Parables of a Controversial Rabbi*
* Amy Jill Levine and Marc Z. Brettler*, The Jewish Annotated New Testament*
* Peter Gomes; *Strength for the Journey, Sermons (Sermon Collections)*
* Samuel Wells, *Speaking the Truth (Sermon Collection)*
* Barbara Brown Taylor; *Gospel Medicine, God in Pain, Bread of Angels, Mixed Blessings, etc.*

*(Sermon Collections)*

* John Bell, *States of Bliss and Yearning (Sermon Collection)*

**Note: the point of reading sermon collections is not to preach their sermons (never do this!) but to let ourselves be challenged and inspired by masters of the medium.**

* Dan Kimball, *They Like Jesus But Not the Church (a helpful ‘mirror’ for preachers)*
* Anne Lamott, *Traveling Mercies (a great faith/life story-teller)*
* Donald Miller, *Blue Like Jazz (another great faith/life story-teller)*
* Fred Craddock, *Sermons from Cherry Log,* audio recordings …or check You Tube and his web site for recorded sermons!