

ASSEMBLIES OF GOD THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
PTH 939: Bringing the Biblical Story to the 21st Century

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COURSE SYLLABUS

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is designed to improve the participant's ability to prepare and effectively communicate narrative sermons. Using a literary/historical approach to the interpretation, this course unlocks the dynamics of the text and shows how to incorporate those dynamics into our preaching. Learning experiences include reading, discussion, lecture and preaching.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Upon successful completion of this course the student will be able to prepare and deliver clear, relevant and exegetical *narrative* sermons without the use of notes.

1. Explain the benefits of narrative preaching and story as related to our postmodern society.
2. Identify and explain the elements of a good story.
3. Develop sermons that move from the "exegetical idea" to the "homiletical idea."
4. Develop sermons from passages in narrative literature, adeptly utilizing the elements of plot, character, conflict and resolution, and other literary forms.
5. Demonstrate competency in methodology and technique in narrative preaching.
6. Prepare and preach narrative messages that are true to the biblical text, clear and well organized, interesting to listen to, and relevant to the listeners' needs.
7. Deliver a narrative sermon in class without the use of notes.

PRE-SESSION READING LIST

Required Reading

- Blomberg, Craig L. *Preaching the Parables: From Responsible Interpretation to Powerful Proclamation*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2004. (219 pages)
- Edwards, Kent J. *Effective First-person Biblical Preaching: The Steps from Text to Narrative Sermon* (with CD-ROM). Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005. (181 pages)
- Johnston, Graham. *Preaching to a Postmodern World: A Guide to Reaching Twenty-First Century Listeners*. (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2001). (175 pages)
- Lowry, Eugene L. *The Homiletical Plot: The Sermon as Narrative Art Form*. (expanded edition). Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001. (131 pages)
- Matthews, Alice. *Preaching that Speaks to Women*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003. (164 pages)
- Matthewson, Steven D. *The Art of Preaching Old Testament Narrative*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2002. (226 pages)
- Miller, Calvin. *Preaching: The Art of Narrative Exposition*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2006. (284 pages)
- Robinson, Haddon. *Biblical Preaching: The Development and Delivery of Expository Messages*, 2nd edition. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2001. (245 pages)

Texts of Choice

- Arthurs, Jeffrey. *Preaching With Variety: How to Recreate the Rhetorical Dynamics of Biblical Genres*. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2007. (220 pages)
- Bartholomew, Craig and Michael W. Goheen. *The Drama of Scripture: Finding Our Place in the Biblical Story*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2004. (213 pages)
- Gibson, Scott. *The Big Idea of Biblical Preaching*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1998. (172 pages)
- Green, Joel B. and Michael Pasquarello III. *Narrative Reading, Narrative Preaching: Reuniting New Testament Interpretation and Proclamation*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003. (193 pages)
- Jensen, Richard L. *Thinking in Story: Preaching in a Post-Literate Age*. Morneo Valley: CCS Publishing Co., 1993. (145 pages)
- Kaiser, Walter. *Preaching and Teaching from the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003. (189 pages)
- Standing, Roger. *Preaching the Plot: Preaching in Narrative Style*. Bletchley, UK: Paternoster Press, 2004. (238 pages)

METHODOLOGY

1. The course will utilize readings and written assignments.
2. It will contain lectures and class discussion of various narrative methods.
3. Students will participate in the development of example narrative sermons.
4. There will be presentations of narrative preaching by the students with critique and discussion.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. **Pre-session Reading and Assignments** (400 points)

- a. Read all of the textbooks on the Required Reading list. (100 points)

All books should be new reads for the student. If the student has previously read one of the required texts, then an alternate should be selected from the Texts of Choice list. **Note:** Please substitute Scott Gibson's *The Big Idea of Biblical Preaching* if you have already read Haddon Robinson's *Biblical Preaching*.

On the first day of class, students should be ready to turn in the accompanying certification sheet indicating that they have read the required texts.

- b. Write a 3-to 4-page self-evaluation paper in which you summarize your present preaching style in relation to the narrative techniques presented in the readings. How has the reading changed your outlook on narrative preaching? Where do you want to go from here? Be prepared to turn in the paper during the first day of class and also to share your paper analysis verbally with others in the class. (100 points)

- c. Additionally, the student should have prepared a 5-to 7-page Critical Analysis Paper that interacts with the reading. This should not be a rehashing of what was read but rather a critical analysis. What did these books tell you about narrative preaching? Which ones did you find most useful and why? Did you agree with the various philosophical perspectives? Which technique-oriented books do you believe offered preaching options which you would like to use? What was not helpful? The paper which should be ready to turn in during the first day of class. (100 points)

- d. Also, write a 4- to 6-page narrative sermon manuscript based on what you have learned from the assigned reading. Bring the sermon manuscript to the first day of class. Be prepared to preach a 15-

minute sermon in class and to critique it along with other students' sermons. At this point, it is more for a base of discussion, interaction and learning than it is for the purpose of a "perfected" narrative sermon. (50 points – manuscript *only* will be graded, not the student's sermon delivery)

e. Finally, explore the following biblical texts. Study them in their context, and then jot down what you think is the subject and complement (found in Haddon Robinson's *Biblical Preaching*). Try to state the subject and complement in one sentence (exegetical idea). In each case what do you think the biblical writer wants to communicate to the reader? Then think about how they might apply to a modern audience. In class we will work through these passages as we consider how to move from the "exegetical idea" to the "homiletical idea."

- 1 Samuel 17 (David and Goliath)
- Judges 4 (Deborah)
- Judges 13-16 (Samson)
- Luke 15
- Ephesians 3:14-21
- 1 Thessalonians 1:2-10
- 1 Timothy 2:9-15

You are not required to compose a sermon on these passages, but you should be familiar with them when you come to class. This should require no more than one typed page. (50 points)

2. Post-Session Papers and Projects (600 points)

Writing Assignments – Choose two of the three assignment options below. Be prepared to share during the last day of class which two you will choose.

- First-Person Narrative Sermon.** Prepare a 6-to 8-page sermon manuscript showing knowledge/utilization of the steps presented in Edwards' book *Effective First-person Biblical Preaching*. The manuscript should read like a sermon and not an academic research paper. Preach the sermon and write a two-page evaluation based on both a self-assessment and the insights gained from some of your listeners. Record and view your sermon as a part of your self-assessment. (300 points)
- Third-Person Narrative Sermon.** Prepare a 6-to 8-page manuscript of a narrative sermon in the third person from a narrative text. Be sure your manuscript reads like a sermon and not like an academic research paper. Preach the sermon and write a two-

page evaluation based on both a self-assessment and the insights gained from some of your listeners. Record and view your sermon as a part of your self-assessment. (300 points)

- c. **Homiletical Plot Sermon.** Prepare a 6-to 8-page manuscript of an expository sermon using Lowry's homiletical plot from a non-narrative text. Be sure your manuscript reads like a sermon and not like an academic research paper. Preach the sermon and write a two-page evaluation based on both a self-assessment and the insights gained from some of your listeners. Record and view your sermon as a part of your self-assessment. (300 points)
- d. **Biographical Preaching?** Prepare a 6-to 8-page manuscript of a biographical sermon. Be sure your manuscript reads like a sermon and not like an academic research paper. Preach the sermon and write a two-page evaluation based on both a self-assessment and the insights gained from some of your listeners. Record and view your sermon as a part of your self-assessment. (300 points)

LATE WORK

After the deadline passes for post-session work (May 28, 2012), the maximum grade for these projects will decline by one letter grade for each week beyond the due date. To be on time, the paper must be post-marked no later than the due date.

COURSE GRADING

Pre-session Reading 100 points

Pre-session Self-evaluation Paper 100 points

Pre-session Reading Critical Analysis Paper 100 points

Pre-session Preparation of Narrative Sermon 50 points

Pre-session Subject-Complement of Biblical Passages 50 points

Post-Session Projects -Three projects of 300 points each for a total of 600 points

TOTAL: 1000 points

All grades will be awarded using the AGTS Grading Scale:

Publishable = A+

1000 - 940 = A

939 - 900 = A-

899 - 870 = B+

869 - 840 = B

839 - 800 = B-

799 - 770 = C+

769 - 740 = C

739 - 700 = C-

699 - 670 = D+

669 - 640 = D

639 - 600 = D-

599-0 = F

Bibliography

Abbott, H. Porter. *The Cambridge Introduction to Narrative*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.

Alter, Robert. *The Art of Biblical Narrative*. New York: Basic Books, Perseus Books Group, 1981.

Arthurs, Jeffrey. *Preaching With Variety: How to Recreate the Rhetorical Dynamics of Biblical Genres*. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2007.

Ayers, James. *Finding the Story: Hard Texts, Homiletical Narratives, and Hearing God's Voice*. Lima, OH: CSS Publishing Co., 2007.

Baker, Augusta and Ellin Greene. *Storytelling: Art and Technique*. New York: Bowker, 1977.

Barr, David. *Tales of the End: A Narrative Commentary on the Book of Revelation*. Santa Rosa: Polebridge, 1998.

- Bartholomew, Craig and Michael W. Goheen. *The Drama of Scripture: Finding Our Place in the Biblical Story*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2004.
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- Blomberg, Craig L. *Preaching the Parables: From Responsible Interpretation to Powerful Proclamation*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2004.
- Bond, L. Susan. *Contemporary African American Preaching: Diversity in Theory and Style*. Chalice Press, 2003.
- Boomershine, Thomas E. *Story Journey: An Invitation to the Gospel as Storytelling*. Nashville: Abingdon, 1988.
- Bradt, Kevin M., S.J., *Story as a Way of Knowing*. Kansas City: Sheed and Ward, 1997.
- Brown, David M. *Transformational Preaching*. Virtualbookworm.com Publishing, 2003.
- Buber, Martin. *Tales of the Hasidim*. New York: Schocken Books, 1948.
- Buttrick, David. *Homiletic: Moves and Structures*, Philadelphia: Fortress, 1987.
- Cahill, Dennis. *The Shape of Preaching*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2007.
- Chappell, Bryan. *Using Illustrations to Preach with Power*. rev. ed. Crossway Books, 2001.
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- Cobley, Paul. *Narrative*. London: Routledge, 2001.
- Coles, Robert. *The Call of Stories*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1989.
- Cothen, Joe. *The Old, Old Story: A Guide for Narrative Preaching*. Pelican Publishing Company, 2003.
- Craddock, Fred B. *As One Without Authority: Essays on Inductive Preaching*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1978.
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- _____. *Preaching*. Nashville: Abingdon, 1985.
- Edwards, Kent J. *Effective First-person Biblical Preaching: The Steps from Text to Narrative Sermon* (with CD-ROM). Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005.
- Ellingsen, Mark. *The Integrity of Biblical Narrative: Story in Theology and Proclamation*. Eugene: Wipf and Stock Publisher, 2002.
- Enyart, David A. *Creative Anticipation: Narrative Sermon Designs for Telling the Story*. Philadelphia: Xlibris, 2002.
- Eslinger, Richard L. *Narrative and Imagination: Preaching the Worlds That Shape Us*. Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress Press, 1995.

- Eslinger, Richard. *The Web of Preaching: New Options in Homiletic Method*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2002.
- Eswine, Zach. *Preaching to a Post-Everything World*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2008.
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- Franklin, Jon. *Writing for Story: Craft Secrets of Dramatic Nonfiction by a Two-time Pulitzer Prize Winner*. New York: Penquin Group, 1986.
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- Graves, Mike. *What's the Matter with Preaching Today?* Westminster John Knox, 2004.
- _____. *The Sermon as Symphony: Preaching the Literary forms of the New Testament*. Judson Press, 1997.
- Greidanus, Sidney. *The Modern Preacher and the Ancient Text: Interpreting and Preaching Biblical Literature*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988.
- Green, Joel B. and Michael Pasquarello III. *Narrative Reading, Narrative Preaching: Reuniting New Testament Interpretation and Proclamation*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003.
- Hays, Richard. *The Faith of Jesus Christ: The Narrative Substructure of Galatians 3:1-4:11*, 2nd ed., Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002.
- Hunt, Arthur W. III. *The Vanishing Word: The Veneration of Visual Imagery in the Postmodern World*. Wheaton: Crossway Books, 2003
- Jensen, Richard L. *Envisioning the Word: The Use of Visual Images in Preaching*. Augsburg Fortress Publishers, 2005.
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- Koller, Charles W. *How to Preach without Notes*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1997.
- Larsen, David. *Telling the Old, Old Story: The Art of Narrative Preaching*. Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 1995.

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Linares, Joe. *Proclaiming God's Stories*. Greenville: Bob Jones University Press, 2009.

Long, Thomas G. *Preaching and the Literary Forms of the Bible*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1989.

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- Toolan, Michael. *Narrative: A Critical Linguistic Introduction*. Second edition. London: Routledge, 2001.
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- Wiesel, Elie. *Souls on Fire*. New York: Harper & Row, 1972.
- Yandell, Keith E., ed. *Faith and Narrative*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001.

Preaching Resource Websites and Link Lists:

The Evangelical Homiletics Society. <www.evangelicalhomiletics.com>

Homiletics Journal. <www.homileticonline.com>

The North American Academy of Homiletics. <www.wlu.ca/~wwwsem/ah>

Preaching Magazine. <www.preaching.com>

Online Pulpit. <www.gospelcom.net/ivpress/churchlink/onlinepulpit/>

Leonard Sweet. <www.preachingplus.com>

Preaching Today <www.preachingtoday.com>

Rick Warren and Saddleback Church. <www.pastor.com>

Sermon Central. <www.sermoncentral.com>

The Africa American Pulpit. <www.judsonpress.com/taap>

Course Reading Report

PTH 93?: Bringing the Biblical Story to the 21st Century

February 20, 2012

Name (Please print): _____

Please verify the number of pages read from the Pre-session Readings list. A minimum of 1600 pages is required. (Where substitutions have been made, note accordingly.)

This form is to be turned in on the first day of the course.

<i>Book Title</i>	<i>Pages Read</i>
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