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THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

PS5105 Pentecostal Perspectives on Preaching

Course Syllabus
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Introduction

Preaching is a vital aspect of Christian ministry in most evangelical faith traditions. Basic elements of preaching theory and practice are imbedded in core historical approaches such as topical, textual, and expository sermons. Pentecostal/charismatic preaching shares these core elements and is historically known for an extra emphasis on the presence and power of the Holy Spirit.

An Assemblies of God pastoral theology textbook contains this rather effusive explanation for ‘pentecostal’ preaching:

“What images run through your mind when you hear the phrase *Pentecostal preaching*? I hear a mighty rushing wind sweeping through the auditorium. Electricity crackles in the air and builds to a rising crescendo of fire. It sends a trembling through the limbs of those poised on the edge of their seats, their faces enraptured by the inspired words of the speaker. The speaker? He is dripping from the exertion of his preaching, his hair and ties askew, his face alternately glowing and distorted, the words tumbling out of his mouth as fast as he can say them. There’s a fire blazing in his eyes, a reflection of the Pentecostal fervor planted within him by the Holy Spirit. His words are divinely inspired easy to understand, powerful in context. They have the power to drive a stake through the heart of a sinner until he is doubled over in agony and crying out for forgiveness. That is Pentecostal preaching!” (Ernest Moen, Assemblies of God statesman pastor and evangelist, in *The Pentecostal Pastor: A Mandate for the 21st Century*)

In addition to the fundamentals of homiletical theory and practice shared by most evangelical settings, this course also explores what the pentecostal/charismatic church culture might call ‘pentecostal’ approaches to preaching theory and practice. Ultimately, of course, it is audience response that determines what value or ‘plus factor’ there is in any preacher’s offerings.

Learning Outcomes

At the end of this course, the student should be able:

- To perceive and utilize basic homiletical structures and principles that promote clear and effective communication of biblical truths.

- To explore the relationships of evangelical preaching to classical Greek rhetoric and persuasion including the dynamic elements of logos, ethos, and pathos in preaching.
- To recognize the goals, purposes, and priorities which pentecostal perspectives aim to bring to the act of preaching.
- To assess strengths and weaknesses of different evangelical approaches to preaching including the strengths and potential weaknesses of pentecostal/charismatic perspectives and methodologies.
- To experience the personal challenge of preparing and delivering sermons that attempt different approaches to preaching.
- To assess the positive contributions which pentecostal perspectives may bring to the ongoing development of a personal philosophy and theology of preaching.

Required Textbooks

1. Greg Haslam, general editor, *Preach the Word: The Call and Challenge of Preaching Today*. Lancaster: Sovereign World, 2006.

On the cover jacket of this book, the author expresses the concern that “over the years there has been a decline in bold, authoritative and powerful preaching. In many churches this has resulted in a leakage of spiritual power, declining numbers and stunted spiritual growth.”

As pastor of Westminster Chapel in London, England, Greg Haslam organized a preaching school where 20 contributors (including people like John Stott) came together to address the call and challenge of preaching today. The mandate for all speakers was that the ministry of the Word of God be married to a strong dependence on the power of the Holy Spirit. This book is the result.

2. Kenton Anderson, *Choosing to Preach: A Comprehensive Introduction to Sermon Options and Structures*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2006.

While on sabbatical in England with the opportunity to spend hours leaning on Spurgeon’s pulpit, Anderson rounded out his comprehensive model for diverse approaches to preaching. He connects psychologist David Kolb’s Experiential Learning Model to four different combinations of homiletical structure used by preachers today (i.e., declarative, pragmatic, narrative, and visionary) then presents his own integrative model.

Anderson’s book is useful to assess alternate approaches to being effective as a preacher in a postmodern culture. And of interest to the present course is the question of where ‘pentecostal’ preaching fits on the quadrants of Anderson’s paradigm.

Note: If you want more of Anderson’s approach to diverse preaching modes, see his new book, *Integrative Preaching: A Comprehensive Model for Transformational Proclamation* (Baker, 2017). In this book Anderson expands the final chapter of *Choosing to Preach* into a full model.

3. Jerry Vines and Adam Dooley, *Passion in the Pulpit: How to Exegete the Emotion of Scripture*. Chicago: Moody Press, 2018.

This dynamic book, written by Southern Baptists, resonates with the pentecostal emphasis on emotion in preaching. They call pathos ‘the missing exegetical link’ in much preaching and present a depth study of how essential it is for a preacher to harness not only the logos and ethos surrounding a passage but also the core emotive presence within every passage of Scripture selected for a sermon. The authors issue a strong challenge to all evangelical preachers.

Supplementary Reading

Select one book from the following list (or another relevant book of your choice that you would like to ‘run by me’ first):

- Crabtree, Charles. *Pentecostal Preaching*. Springfield: Gospel Publishing, 2003.
- Eaton, Michael. *The Gift of Prophetic Preaching*. Chichester, West Sussex: New Wine Press, 2008.
- Hughes, Ray. *Pentecostal Preaching*. Revised edition. Cleveland: Pathway Press, 2004.
- Lybrand, Fred. *Preaching on Your Feet: Connecting God and the Audience in the Preachable Moment*. Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 2008.
- Moody, Josh and Weekes, Robin. *Burning Hearts: Preaching to the Affections*. Ross-shire, Great Britain: Christian Focus Publications, 2014.
- Tisdale, Leonora. *Prophetic Preaching: A Pastoral Approach*. Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press, 2010.

Course Content

Note: Topics for the one-week module are taken from the list below. The Directed Study format expands the required readings and may cover some alternate items to the module content list.

Review of traditional core sermonic forms

- expository, textual, topical, etc.

Additional modes of preaching that are of interest to Pentecostals

- evangelistic, revivalist, healing, camp-meeting, prophetic, extemporaneous, impromptu, preaching without notes, use of contemporary media in preaching, ‘black’ preaching, etc.

Going back to the beginning

- preaching in the Gospels and the Book of Acts
- developing a theology of preaching

Some attitudes/perspectives that are inherent in pentecostal perspectives on preaching:

- being open to the ‘moving of the Spirit’ and use of spiritual gifts in preaching (e.g., discernment, word of knowledge, word of wisdom)
- preaching expressed through the five-fold ministries (apostolic, prophetic, evangelistic, pastoral-teacher)
- the ‘anointing’ and preaching ‘in the moment’

Some issues related to ‘pentecostal’ preaching:

- ‘study to show yourself approved’ versus ‘open your mouth and let the Lord fill it’
- women as preachers (e.g., where have all the Aimee Semple McPherson’s gone?)
- ‘wearing out’ your people (e.g., who said that good pentecostal preaching has to be long preaching?)
- the role of appeals and altar calls (e.g., to what extent is the ‘after-service’ an essential part of pentecostal preaching?)
- living as a preacher in the shadows of charisma (e.g., why should my people choose me over the preacher on television at 11:00 a.m. Sunday morning?)
- the impact of literalism and fundamentalisms on pentecostal preaching (e.g., is the pentecostal preacher ‘boxed in’ by restrictive worldviews?)
- ethics in the pulpit (e.g., do preachers exercise integrity in altar calls, discipline, and avoidance of plagiarism, etc.?)

Finding a place for pentecostal/charismatic preaching within the context of Anderson’s model

- what combination of declarative, pragmatic, narrative, and visionary?
- what blend of inductive/deductive and cognitive/affective?

Implications of Greek rhetoric for contemporary preaching today

- examining the rhetorical elements of logos, ethos, and pathos in relation to preaching today

Preaching practicum (for application of concepts and contexts covered in this course)

- practice in the critique of sermons of others
- prepare, preach, and self-evaluate sermons

Course Requirements

1. Sermon Analysis and Critiques

- Experience two different sermons preached in a pentecostal/charismatic church setting (by two different preachers) and complete a written analysis of each sermon
- Due dates: TBA
- Note: This assignment has no fixed marks value; however, non-completion will detract from your overall grade assessment

2. Preparation and Preaching of Two Sermons (2x20% each)

- Prepare and preach two different types of sermons
 - Length of sermons will vary depending if completed during module week or as a Directed Study course
- Process followed for this activity:
 - Video each sermon
 - If fulfilled outside of module week, enlist a qualified observer to view each sermon (live or on the video) and complete an evaluation form for each sermon
 - Submit videos to me for viewing and assessment
 - View the video recordings yourself and complete a self-evaluation form for each of the two sermons

- Meet with me (in person or via skype) to review sermon evaluations
- Due dates: TBA

3. Reports on Required Readings (45%)

a. Haslam text

- Select 20 chapters from the 49 chapters of the book
- For each of your selected chapters, write ½ to one page (125-250 words) to summarize the personal value you have taken from that chapter
Note: You may opt for an oral report on these chapters; if so, make informal personal notes as you read the chapters, arrange for a discussion meeting with me, and hand in your notes
- When finished all 20 selections, reflect on everything you have read and write 2 to 3 pages (500-750 words) to summarize what you have learned from the Haslam text about preaching in general and about pentecostal/charismatic preaching in particular
Note: If you opt for the oral report (above), be sure to have this written summative statement ready to hand in at the time of the discussion meeting.
- Due date: TBA

b. Review of Anderson text

- Read Anderson's book
Note: You can omit the section on Anderson's presentation of a 5th 'integrative' approach; read his whole book on the topic if interested
- Write a personal assessment of the four-quadrant model and explore your own present and potential relationship as a preacher to each of the four styles.
- Length: 3 to 4 pages (750-1000 words) Due date: TBA

c. Review of Vines and Dooley text

- Read the book, *Passion in the Pulpit*
- Write a personal response to the book including a brief overview of significant content, positive features and strengths of the book, any issues or problematic areas raised by the content, etc.; be sure to address the role and value of 'passion' in the pulpit
- Length: 3 to 4 pages (750-1000 words) Due date: TBA

4. Report on Supplementary Reading (15%)

- Select and read one of the books in the Supplementary Readings list (above) or alternate choice approved by me
- Write a personal response to the book including a brief overview of significant content, positive features and strengths of the book, any issues or problematic areas raised by the content, etc.; be sure to make it clear what lasting value you expect the book to have in your life as a speaker/preacher
- Length: 3 to 4 pages (750-1000 words) Due date: TBA

Evaluation Summary

40% -Preparation and presentation of two sermons

- 45% -Reports on required readings
- 15% -Report on supplementary reading

Bibliography/Resources

Extensive resources for preaching are available at the Horizon library and through the internet. When web surfing, however, take adequate time to assess the credibility of the source before using the material. Much of the web is not subject to any formal screening or editing process. Many 'less-than-balanced' people have placed material on the web. The pentecostal-charismatic culture has more than our fair share of them.

A Bibliography is available on the populi course website.