

Communications II (PT 5150)  
Summer 2020, Remote Residential

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### **Course Description**

This course seeks to continue the development of expository preaching by examining how to preach from Old Testament narrative texts. It is primarily a lecture course that lays a foundation for the preaching labs where students will preach from narrative texts. This course builds on the material of Communications I and seeks to develop a methodology of how to preach narrative texts. There will also be an emphasis on the theology of the Word of God as the basis for preaching within God's redemptive program and on certain hermeneutical issues that arise in relationship to preaching narrative.

### **Course Objectives**

- 1) To understand how narrative works in order to preach effective expository sermons from narrative texts
- 2) To develop a methodology of sermon preparation appropriate to Old Testament narrative texts.
- 3) To lay a foundation for the necessity of preaching in understanding the theology of preaching.
- 4) To introduce certain issues related to the hermeneutics of preaching and its significance for understanding the task of preaching.

### **Course Structure**

The course will meet for 13 sessions of two hours over a four-week period starting June 8. Specifically, we will meet live through Zoom from 2 PM to 4 PM (EST), Mon., Tues., Wed., and Fri. the weeks of June 8-12, 15-19, and 22-26. This class has lectures that explains assignments that students must complete during the course itself and be turned in for class discussion (see Handout 0000 on Assignments). For the other assignments related to this course which will be due after the course is over, see below.

There are a couple of hours of audio lectures the student will listen to in order to meet the correct number of classroom hours for the course.

### **Textbooks**

- 1) Murray Capill, *The Heart is the Target*, 244 pages
- 2) Bryan Chapell, *Christ-Centered Preaching*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., 2018 (1-346, 381-383)

- 3) Greg Heisler, *Spirit-Led Preaching: The Holy Spirit's Role in Sermon Preparation and Delivery* revised ed., 2018 (183 pages)
- 4) Timothy Keller, *Preaching* (pages 1-210)
- 5) Steven D. Matthewson, *The Art of Preaching Old Testament Narrative*, (Parts 1 and 2 and Appendix A, 190 pages): this book discusses how to preach OT narrative and has an excellent Appendix on the function of the imperfect waw consecutive in Hebrew narrative
- 6) "The Ebb and Flow of Lectio Continua Bible Reading in the English-Speaking Reformed Churches, 1539-2000," by Terry Johnson in *The Hope Fulfilled*, 290-316 (supplied to the student): this article discusses the history and importance of reading the Bible as part of worship
- 7) "Redemptive-Historical Themes in the *Westminster Larger Catechism*," by Robert Cara in *The Westminster Confession of Faith in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* (supplied to the student): this article lays out hermeneutical categories that are important for understanding different approaches concerning how to preach

### Assignments

- 1) The reading must be completed.
- 2) Each student will have the opportunity to read a narrative text in order to practice the public reading of Scripture; you must use the ESV so that the professor can follow the reading (see the Handout on the Public Reading of Scripture).
- 3) There is an oral presentation of 5-7 minutes that will include the following:
  - a. Scripture introduction (this will be explained)
  - b. Reading five verses from your text
  - c. Prayer
  - d. Introduction of the sermon followed by a statement of the proposition (proposition should be handed in to the professor)
- 4) One sermon from an Old Testament narrative text must be written, which should include the following (these will be explained in class):
  - a. a general plot analysis of the narrative which acts as the justification for the boundaries of the preaching text (in other words, the preaching text may not necessarily coincide with the chapter assigned the student)
  - b. a Homiletical Outline
  - c. state the audience to whom you are speaking
  - d. the proposition and main points should be in **bold** type

- e. transitional statements should be in *italic* type
  - f. placement of the text (reference to verses) should be underlined, for example, v. 7
- 5) Online Interactions on Canvas
- a. Students must answer 6 Topical Discussion Questions and respond to each of Dr. Belcher's follow-up question
  - b. Students must have 3 posts/interactions in the Student to Professor Forum (here you can ask the professor questions related to the content of the course)
  - c. Students must have 5 posts/interactions in the Student to Student Forum
- 6) If you want to get a start on the reading/assignments before the class begins, the following are good places to start:
- a. Listen to the lecture "The Theology of Preaching" available on Canvas under Files. The following assignment is related to this lecture, but it can be done without listening to the lecture
  - b. Read "Brothers, Bitzer was a Banker," in John Piper, *Brothers, We are Not Professionals: A Plea to Pastors for Radical Ministry* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2002), 81-88 (available on Canvas) and write out a statement that could be included in a philosophy of ministry that explains why the original languages are important for ministry and how you plan to keep up with the languages and use the languages in your ministry. This assignment should be from ½ a page to one page and should be handed in.
  - c. Read the Johnson article, and as much of Chapell and Matthewson as you are able
- 7) Due dates:
- a. The reading will be due Saturday, July 18, 11:59 PM by sending an email to [rbelcher@rts.edu](mailto:rbelcher@rts.edu) and indicate the percentage of reading completed (out of 100%); this email should also include confirmation that the student has listened to any audio lectures provided by the professor (part of Homework).
  - b. The Student to Professor and Student to Student interactions must all be completed by Saturday, July 25, 11:59 PM.
  - c. The written sermon will be due Saturday, July 25, 11:59 PM, uploaded to Canvas (either Word or pdf).
- 8) There will be no exam for this class.

**Grades**

1) Written Sermon	50%
2) Required Reading	25%
3) Homework and Class Participation	10%
4) Public Reading of Narrative	05%
5) Oral presentation	05%
6) Canvas Interactions	05%

**Note:** RTS affirms that local churches, denominational structures, parachurch organizations, educational institutions, and mission agencies present many strategic ministry and leadership opportunities where preparation through the M. Div. degree can be particularly helpful for women and other non-ministerial students. While RTS limits the MDiv preaching labs to male students, women in the MDiv degree program can either (a) take elective courses in the place of the two preaching labs, or (b) take a directed study in general communications, which may involve women or other non-ministerial students attending a section of the preaching lab with similar but alternative assignments.

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**Course Objectives Related to MDiv\* Student Learning Outcomes**

Course: Communications II

Professor: Richard P. Belcher, Jr.

Campus: RTS Charlotte

Date: Summer 2020

<b>MDiv* Student Learning Outcomes</b>		<b>Rubric</b>	<b>Mini-Justification</b>
<p><i>In order to measure the success of the MDiv curriculum, RTS has defined the following as the intended outcomes of the student learning process. Each course contributes to these overall outcomes. This rubric shows the contribution of this course to the MDiv outcomes.</i></p> <p><i>*As the MDiv is the core degree at RTS, the MDiv rubric will be used in this syllabus.</i></p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong</li> <li>• Moderate</li> <li>• Minimal</li> <li>• None</li> </ul>	
<b>Articulation (oral &amp; written)</b>	Broadly understands and articulates knowledge, both oral and written, of essential biblical, theological, historical, and cultural/global information, including details, concepts, and frameworks. Also includes ability to preach and teach the meaning of Scripture to both heart and mind with clarity and enthusiasm.	Strong	a written sermon is required; the theological basis and the hermeneutics of preaching are covered
<b>Scripture</b>	Significant knowledge of the original meaning of Scripture. Also, the concepts for and skill to research further into the original meaning of Scripture and to apply Scripture to a variety of modern circumstances. (Includes appropriate use of original languages and hermeneutics; and integrates theological, historical, and cultural/global perspectives.)	Strong	Preaching focuses on the original meaning as a basis for modern meaning; there is an emphasis on using the languages in understanding the original meaning for preaching purposes
<b>Reformed Theology</b>	Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice, with emphasis on the Westminster Standards.	Minimal	the theology and hermeneutics of preaching touches on a few issues
<b>Sanctification</b>	Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student's sanctification.	Minimal	discussions of application of the text deals with sanctification issues
<b>Worldview</b>	Burning desire to conform all of life to the Word of God. Includes ability to interact within a denominational context, within the broader worldwide church, and with significant public issues.	Minimal	the goal of preaching is to help people do this
<b>Winsomely Reformed</b>	Embraces a winsomely Reformed ethos. (Includes an appropriate ecumenical spirit with other Christians, especially Evangelicals; a concern to present the Gospel in a God-honoring manner to non-Christians; and a truth-in-love attitude in disagreements.)	Minimal	respect for other methods of preaching is encouraged
<b>Pastoral Ministry</b>	Ability to minister the Word of God to hearts and lives of both church and unchurched, to include preaching, teaching, leading in worship, leading and shepherding the local congregation, aiding in spiritual maturity, concern for non-Christians.	Strong	ability to minister the word of God is the heart of this course