

Communication I Syllabus

Reformed Theological Seminary, Atlanta

Fall, 2023

Friday 6:00-9:00 pm, Saturday 9:30-4:30

8/25-26, 9/15-16, 9/29-30

Instructor: Rev. Aaron Messner

a.messner@wmpca.org

Course Objectives:

1. To understand the overarching mission of the church, and how preaching and teaching fits into and serves this larger mission.
2. To understand the daunting (dare I say, impossible) nature of the teacher/preacher's task, and the absolute dependence one must have on the supernatural content and power of the Ordinary Means of Grace (particularly for this course, the Word of God and Prayer) if one's teaching/preaching is to be truly fruitful.
3. To understand the need for the preacher/teacher to be continually affected and transformed by the Word that is taught/preached; being a person of continual repentance, faith in Christ, and new obedience.
4. To understand the fundamental nature of preaching and the calling on the preacher from the Scriptures.
5. To develop greater facility in studying the Bible, so that one can consistently ascertain the basic structure and primary emphasis(es) of a given Biblical text in its larger context.
6. To develop greater facility in seeing how Christ is proclaimed from every text in the New Testament.
7. To develop greater facility in preparing sermons in which the content and emphasis of the sermon is in conformity with the content and emphasis of the Biblical text, in which Christ is faithfully and organically preached from the text in question, and from which faithful and practical application of the text is made to the lives of the listener.
8. To help students take further steps in "finding their own voice" as a preacher and teacher by exploring various rhetorical styles and modes of presentation.
9. To develop greater facility in listening to sermons, both for spiritual nourishment and for pedagogical considerations.
10. To analyze other's reflections/instruction on preaching and determine the relative value and priority of such instruction.

Course Texts:

Preaching and Preachers, D. Martyn Lloyd Jones

Christ Centered Preaching, Bryan Chapell

Introduction to *Horae Homileticae (Expository Outlines on the Whole Bible)*, Charles Simeon

2 Timothy, Paul

Course Schedule:

August 25: Course Introduction; The Preacher's Purpose, Challenges & Instruments

August 26: The Preacher's Task: Staying on the Line; Text and Framework; Proclamation & Contextualization; Stop, Look and Listen; Understanding and Discerning Structure in New Testament Texts

September 15: Understanding and Discerning Structure in NT Texts (cont.) Student Expositions of 2 Timothy 1:1-7, 2 Timothy 1:8-18, 2 Timothy 2:1-7, 2:8-13

September 16: The Preacher's Task: Reading Texts in Context; Hearing the Melodic Line of Biblical Books; Student Expositions of 2 Timothy 2:14-19, 2:20-26

September 29: The Preacher's Task: Preaching Christ in all the Scriptures, Including the NT; Student Expositions of 2 Timothy 3:1-9, 2 Timothy 3:10-17

September 30: The Preacher's Task: The "A" Team (Connecting Your Exegesis to Your People) Finding Your Own Voice; Q & A on Preaching, Student Expositions of 2 Timothy 4:1-8, 4:9-22

Course Assignments and Grade Structure:

50% Class Participation (Attendance, General Engagement, Expositions)

50% Final Writing Assignment. Due September 26. Answer the following question: "If you had a friend who was sensing a call to a preaching ministry, and you had to recommend only one of our course texts (Lloyd Jones, Chapell or Simeon), which one would you recommend and why?" Paper should interact with all three texts, pointing out key strengths and weakness of each work, and making an argument for why one particular work is the most beneficial "first work on preaching." (6 page limit).

RTS Grading Scale:

A 97-100

A- 94-96

B+ 91-93

B 88-90

B- 86-87

C+ 83-85

C 80-82

C- 78-79

D+ 75-77

D 72-74
D- 70-71
Below 70 = F

Extension Policy:

All assignments and exams are to be completed by the deadlines announced in this syllabus or in class.

Extensions for assignments and exams due within the normal duration of the course must be approved beforehand by the Professor. Extensions of two weeks or less beyond the date of the last deadline for the course must be approved beforehand by the Professor. A grade penalty may be assessed.

Extensions of greater than two weeks but not more than six weeks beyond the last deadline for the course may be granted in extenuating circumstances (i.e. illness, family emergency). For an extension of more than two weeks the student must request an Extension Request Form from the Student Services Office. The request must be approved by the Professor and the Academic Dean. A grade penalty may be assessed. (RTS Catalog p. 42 and RTS Atlanta Student Handbook p. 14)

Any incompletes not cleared six weeks after the last published due date for course work will be converted to a failing grade. Professors may have the failing grade changed to a passing grade by request. (RTS Catalog p. 42)