Preaching Lab I
02PT5125—All Sections
Winter 2026

INSTRUCTORS' CONTACT INFORMATION

SECTION	EMAIL	PHONE
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COURSE DATES

COURSE BEGINS: December 1, 2025

ONLINE DATES: December 1, 2025 – January 10, 2026

ON CAMPUS DATES: January 12-16, 2026, 9:00am-noon

COURSE COMPLETION DATE: February 14, 2026

SUMMARY OF DUE DATES:

This is not a self-paced course as Global or some hybrid courses but follows a fixed schedule. Assignments submitted after the deadlines will be assessed a grade penalty.

Students may wish to begin study of their homily and sermon texts prior to the start of the course and, if possible, to schedule opportunities to preach these messages before live listeners. You are encouraged to sign up for scriptures texts as soon as registration opens by following this link.

Because this course runs through the Christmas and New Year's holidays, it's very important to plan ahead, schedule your tasks realistically, and complete the tasks as scheduled.

Weekly assignments are due by 6:00 p.m. in your time zone on the Saturdays indicated. Please ignore any Canvas late assignment indicators for on-time assignments due to being in a time zone other than Eastern. The Saturday deadline is to encourage you to be present with your family on Saturday evenings and to begin preparation for the Sabbath. If you have an anticipated scheduling problem, you may submit assignments early. If an assignment is late, there is no benefit to submitting it on a Sunday rather than waiting until Monday. It would be better for you to keep the fourth commandment.

- December 1
  - Registration deadline.
  - Class begins.

- Dec 6
  - Watch instructor-to-student introduction.
  - Upload your student-to-instructor introduction video.
  - Choose homily and sermon passages from Google doc linked on Canvas course web page.
  - Take three-question quiz confirming you have done the above three things.
- Dec 7
  - Submit homily manuscript to the "Homily Manuscript" assignment on Canvas.
- Dec 20
  - Preach, video record, upload to internet, and post link to "Homily Recording" assignment on Canvas.
- Dec 27
  - Watch peer reviews for assigned homily recordings and submit feedback. See instructions below.
- Jan 3
  - No assignments due – on-campus sermon study week.
- Jan 10
  - Submit on-campus sermon manuscript.
- Jan 12-16
  - Preach on-campus sermon in class according to schedule posted on Canvas by your instructor.
- Feb 14
  - Upload manuscript of post-campus sermon to "Post-Campus Sermon Manuscript" assignment on Canvas.
  - Preach, video record, upload to internet, and post link to "Post-Campus Sermon Recording" assignment on Canvas.
- Feb 21
  - Watch peer reviews assigned for post-campus sermon recordings and submit feedback. See instructions below.
  - Confirm compliance with Use of Resources policy (see below) by taking single question quiz.

COURSE OVERVIEW

DESCRIPTION:

This is a HYBRID COURSE that will incorporate e-learning components for six weeks prior to the on-campus class dates. Course activities start on the date indicated above. This hybrid preaching lab is designed for and available only to MDiv students enrolled in RTS Orlando's Distance MDiv degree program. Non-distance students are not eligible. Prerequisite: Communication I (02PT5100). *2 credits*.

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this course is to apply the principles of sermon preparation and delivery learned in Communication I by preaching Christ-centered expository sermons and receiving peer and instructor feedback as well as hearing and providing feedback to peers.

GOALS:

- *Comprehension*
  - To increase your knowledge of the core expository sermon preparation process.
  - To increase your knowledge of your gifts, abilities, and vulnerabilities in the sermon preparation and preaching process.
- *Competence*
  - To enhance your ability to research, compose, and deliver expository sermons.
  - To enhance your ability to listen to and constructively analyze the sermons of others.
- *Character*

– To grow in your self-knowledge and self-confidence as you preach and receive feedback.

– To grow in your reliance upon the Holy Spirit during sermon preparation and preaching.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

SUMMARY OF REQUIREMENTS

Student to instructor introduction	--
Homily	15 %
In-class sermon	35
Post-campus sermon	35
Class participation	15

OVERVIEW

Students will preach three messages—a pre-campus homily, an on-campus sermon, and a post-campus sermon. By the deadline indicated students are to follow the link on Canvas to sign up for specific scripture passages for each of their three messages. For the pre-campus homily and post-campus sermon, students are to submit sermon manuscripts on Canvas and video record, upload, and post a link to the relevant video recording assignment on Canvas. Students will be assigned peer reviews for three classmates (If you do not post your own sermon by the deadline, you will not be assigned nor receive peer reviews). The on-campus sermon will be preached before the entire class with the instructor leading a feedback session following. Video recordings of in-class sermons will be made available on Canvas. Carefully read the assignment descriptions below to note the deadlines for submission of manuscripts, recordings, and comments. While sound exegesis is essential for sound preaching, students are reminded not to spend disproportionate time on exegesis since the purpose of this course is to develop sermon construction and delivery skills. Remember the rule of 1/3s!

INSTRUCTOR-TO-STUDENT INTRODUCTION

By the date indicated above, view your instructor's video introduction in which he introduces himself and describes his expectations for the class.

STUDENT-TO-INSTRUCTOR INTRODUCTION

Students are to submit a video introduction of themselves to Canvas by the date indicated. The assignment description specifies what you should include in the introduction. This video will also give your instructor a first impression on your ability to communicate orally and before a camera. Therefore, give consideration to the lighting and placement of your camera.

SIGN UP FOR HOMILY & SERMON SCRIPTURE TEXTS

Using the link above and found on the Canvas home page, sign up for homily, on-campus, and post-campus scripture texts by the deadline indicated. The texts listed provide some continuity within each section and broad coverage of scriptural genres between the two lab courses. If you have a compelling reason to preach a homily or sermon on a different text, contact your instructor to seek permission (Sermons preached previous to this class will not be accepted.).

VALUES

Students should review the qualities of good exposition as explained and developed in Communication 1. These include the following:

– Expository—explaining and applying the meaning of the scripture text.

- A <u>Big</u> <u>Idea</u> (thesis, main proposition) which contains a <u>premise</u> (truth) and <u>response</u> (application) faithfully summarizing the central meaning of the scripture passage and its implications (application) for the contemporary listener.
- <u>Introductions</u> should grab listeners' interest, introduce a question or establish a problem to be solved, point the listeners to the scripture text, and state the thesis.
- <u>Conclusions</u> should recapitulate the message and restate the thesis, be the dramatic peak of the message, and end with a clear call to action.
- The <u>homily</u> should have a <u>single</u> <u>point</u>—the thesis—expounded from the text, illustrated, and applied.
- The full-length sermons should have an <u>outline</u> structure supporting the thesis in which each main point has a premise and a response which are clearly explained and clearly proven from the scripture text. The outline should have <u>progression</u> and <u>unity</u> with clear and logical recapitulations and transitions between each one. Each main point should be <u>illustrated</u> and <u>legitimately</u> <u>applied</u> based on the exposition.
- All messages should be <u>Christ</u>-<u>centered</u>, that is, they should point to the person and work of Christ in a way that is <u>legitimately</u>-<u>based</u> <u>upon</u> <u>the</u> <u>scripture</u> <u>text</u> <u>being</u> <u>preached</u>.
- All three messages should aspire to good verbal expression (well-written) and good mechanics (i.e. pace, eye contact, vocal projection, quality and variation, conviction, freedom from distracting or nervous habits, etc.).
- These messages are to be prepared and preached for <u>ordinary</u> <u>Christians</u>, not simply to seminary students and people in ministry.

RECORDING & UPLOADING VIDEOS, PEER REVIEWS

After you video record your pre-campus homily and post-campus sermon, upload the recordings to an internet site of your choosing (YouTube, Vimeo, Google Drive, DropBox, your church's media page, etc.), then copy and paste the link into the relevant "Sermon Video Assignment" on Canvas.

After the due date for these video recordings, a "Peer Review" assignment will appear requiring you to watch three classmate videos and offer feedback on each of them using the criteria indicated in this syllabus. These peer reviews are to be completed by the date indicated in the schedule, but will not appear on Canvas until after the initial due date of the video recording links. <u>If</u> <u>you</u> <u>do</u> <u>not</u> <u>post</u> <u>your</u> <u>video</u> <u>recordings</u> <u>by</u> <u>the</u> <u>deadlines,</u> <u>you</u> <u>will</u> <u>not</u> <u>receive</u> <u>or</u> <u>be</u> <u>assigned</u> <u>peer</u> <u>reviews</u>.

Completion of these peer reviews is required to receive full credit for the class participation portion of the course grade. Peer reviews are to be <u>substantive</u>, making specific observations about strengths and weaknesses. Insubstantial peer reviews will not receive full credit.

<u>Recording videos</u>: When recording the pre-campus homily and post-campus sermon videos, it is preferrable to preach before a live group of people. Whether before others or not, preach standing rather than seated, optimize the room lighting, step back into the room instead of close up (as in a Zoom or Facetime call), have the camera at a good angle (not looking up into your nostrils, but as close to eye level as possible), include your whole body so that your posture and gestures can be seen, and project your voice well. If available, use a lapel or other mic close to you. You may wish to record a brief trial sample and view it before recording your entire messages.

HOMILY

The homily will provide you an opportunity to practice formulating a single idea for a message. Shorter messages are in some ways more difficult than longer ones because you must be more selective and summarize your exegetical work. The homily is to have an introduction, single point, and conclusion and be 12-15 (maximum) minutes in length when preached.

Note the deadlines by which you are to submit a manuscript of the homily and a cloud link to your recording. Note that these are two separate steps: 1) uploading the manuscript and 2) posting a cloud link to the recording.

Preferably you will preach this homily before live listeners, but if there is not an opportunity to do so, preach it just to the camera. Once the video is recorded, upload it to an accessible cloud location such as YouTube, Vimeo, or your church's media page, and post a link to Canvas using the homily video link assignment. After the homily recording

deadline has passed, the following week you will be assigned peer reviews to view classmate videos and make comments. Failure to submit the video link by the deadline may result in not receiving or being assigned peer reviews. Note the deadline above for submitting peer reviews.

ON-CAMPUS SERMON

Your on-campus sermon should be a maximum of 30 minutes (including scripture reading and prayer) and exhibit the values indicated above. In advance of the on-campus session, you are to submit your full sermon manuscript by the deadline indicated above. This sermon will be preached according to the schedule provided by your instructor by the weekend before the on-campus session. Your sermon will be video-recorded, so you should be mindful of your appearance.

After you have preached in class the instructor will lead a discussion commending your sermon's strengths and offering suggestions for improvement. Each classmate will complete a written feedback form and those forms, along with the instructor's final feedback, will be provided to you via Canvas. Following the class, you will be provided access to the video recording. You are strongly encouraged to view your video, with spouse if married.

POST-CAMPUS SERMON

The post-campus sermon is to meet the same criteria as the on-campus sermon and be video recorded. Preferably it is to be preached before live listeners, but if necessary, preached to the camera only. Upload your manuscript to the Canvas assignment by the above deadline. Once the video is recorded, upload it to an accessible cloud location and post a link to the video link assignment on Canvas. Once the assignment deadline has passed, peer review assignments for classmates will appear the following week on Canvas. Your comments should be guided by the criteria covered in Communication I and summarized above. Failure to submit your video link by the deadline will result in not being given or assigned peer reviews. Note the deadline above for submitting the peer reviews.

CLASS PARTICIPATION

Class participation involves substantive peer reviews for the homily and post-campus sermons; your presence in the class on campus; participation in the verbal feedback discussion following on-campus sermons; and completion of written feedback for classmate sermons. Quality feedback on the peer reviews for the homily and post-campus sermon is required to receive full credit for this portion of the course requirements.

ON-CAMPUS CLASS PROCEDURE

The on-campus preaching schedule will be announced on Canvas by the instructor by the weekend preceding the on-campus portion of the course. Each student should come to campus ready to preach.

You should dress appropriately on the day you preach. Coat and tie are not required but are recommended. Mainly, dress in a way which reflects the dignity and gravity of what you are doing and in a way that will represent you well as others watch your videos. The way we dress and groom interacts with complex social sign systems and speaks intentionally as well as unintentionally to others about who we are and what we think about what we are doing. Since preachers are ambassadors of King Jesus, we should preach accordingly.

After each student preaches there will be a time of verbal feedback from the instructor with the opportunity for classmates to contribute. Each student will complete a feedback form, copies of which will be provided to the student who preaches. The feedback form on the following page or one like it will be provided. The video recording of your sermon will be posted on Canvas.

No computers or smart phones will be needed or permitted to be used when class is in session, but have your printed Bible to follow along just as you would at church. You will break periodically throughout the daily sessions.

USE OF RESOURCES

Students are expected to do their own original research and writing unless stipulated otherwise. Assignments must be the student's original composition except when attributed through citation (e.g. footnotes). Students may not use artificial intelligence bots, language generation models, or similar tools (e.g. Chat-GPT) for research, compilation of materials, or completion of assignments.

The reason for this policy is that the ministry of the Word is a calling in which the Lord's servant takes into himself the counsels of God and, through character and wisdom, speaks out of the abundance of his heart. "I have stored up your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you" (Ps. 119.11). Integrity is the integration of the whole person, including one's speech, not the projection of a public persona that it inconsistent with the person's inner life. Artificial intelligence is a powerful capability and very beneficial for many things, but not for the minister's study, preparation, and exposition.

If you have any questions or reservations about specific aspects of this, please contact your instructor. Students will be asked at the end of the course to confirm their compliance with this policy.

GRADING POLICY

- Assignments submitted after their deadline will be penalized accordingly unless prior permission for late submission was granted. With advance availability of the syllabus and the ability to work ahead on the assignments, students should plan for any known schedule disruptions so that they can submit assignments by the deadlines.
- The published RTS grading scale is used in this course.

Sermon Evaluation Form[*]   **Preaching Lab I (January 2026)**

Speaker ....   Evaluator ....

Scripture ....   Date ....

Title ....

Mark the following continua by circling the appropriate place on the scale. Provide any necessary or helpful comments under each category. See the attached sheet for a list of possible strengths and weaknesses for each category.

Delivery

Significant improvement needed   1   2   3   4   5   Excellent

Exposition

Sermon not clearly drawn from the text   1   2   3   4   5   Sermon very clear from the text

Unity

Not very unified   1   2   3   4   5   Very unified

Structure & Components
(incl. introduction, outline, illustrations, conclusion

Structure needs significant improvement   1   2   3   4   5   Excellent structure

Legitimately Christ-Centered

Not very   1   2   3   4   5   Very

Application

Lacking, unhelpful or dubious   1   2   3   4   5   Plentiful, helpful & legitimate

General Feedback

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[*] This form or one similar to it will be used for in-class sermons.

Take sermon notes on back.

Following is a list of potential strengths and weakness for each of the categories from the first page. These categories are in something of concern in preparation. They also represent, along with the detailed development, the essence of what the preaching curriculum attempts to provide you for the core of your preaching ministry, notwithstanding additional subtopics (such as occasional sermons, advanced sermon outline, hermeneutics, etc.). A student who masters these categories will be well prepared to begin his preaching ministry.

Delivery

- Physical appearance – neat, well-groomed, respectfully dressed.
- Voice – volume, clarity, vocal variation, good pacing, variation in pace, pitch.
- Flow – clear connections between thoughts; absence of fill words.
- Word choice – appropriate vocabulary level; descriptive; good grammar; absence of vulgar terms.
- Visual – gestures, appearance, eye contact, body language. Any distracting mannerisms, e.g. swaying, pacing?
- Are the pulpit and the bible used well or in distracting ways?
- Use of notes helpful or distracting? Physical handling of notes; lost train of thought; overdependence; under-dependence.

Exposition

- Scripture reading – read well in order to aid understanding? Read separately as distinct element of worship? Were explanatory comments (if any) minimal and helpful?
- Are statements individually and the sermon as a whole supported by the text?
- Clearly demonstrated where points and observations are drawn from the text?
- Is this sermon what this text is about?
- Is exposition unnecessarily technical (e.g. references to original languages)? Is exegesis more to impress listener than to aid sermon?
- Sufficient and frequent enough reference to the text to show that it is the authority and to support the sermon?
- Are all of the major components of meaning in the text accounted for in the exposition?
- Are problem issues in the text adequately addressed?
- Is pacing of thoughts helpful? (in distinction from pace of speech)

Unity

- Is there a Big Idea or central thesis which unifies the sermon throughout?
- Does the Big Idea contain a premise and a response (i.e. "truth/consequences" form)?
- Does the Big Idea actually unify the sermon?
- Do the main points develop the Big Idea?

Structure & Components

- Are main points or sermon phases clear?
- Does each main point contain a clear premise and response?
- Is there a clear, distinct progression? Development of argument or structure from beginning to end?

- Are main points clearly related to one another? Proportional? Connected but no co-extensive?
- Are transitions regularly and adequately provided, including recapitulations?
- Does the introduction 1) introduce the subject; 2) make a case for the sermon to be heard (i.e. establish a need) and 3) create interest? Does the introduction clearly connect the subject of the sermon and the scripture text to the world of the listeners?
- Illustrations: Are they appropriate? Is there legitimate analogy? Do they point toward the subject rather than the preacher? Are they distracting? Are they vivid? Are tie-ins clear and strong? Are they superfluous in length or extent of detail? Are they ultimately in service of the message?
- Conclusion: Is there a definitive conclusion? Is it the affective peak of the sermon? Does it adequately recapitulate and summarize the sermon?
- Are transitions provided throughout which demonstrate clear development and unity? Is logical, temporal, causal or some other kind of relationship between points demonstrable and clear?

Legitimately Christ-Centered

- Is the sermon redemptive in tone and substance?
- Is Christological meaning and application made?
- Is Christological meaning and application made *legitimately* from the text?

Application

- Are problem issues or questions from your context adequately addressed? (e.g. situations within your congregation, events within your community)
- Is application clear, helpful and practical?
- Sufficiently detailed and concrete to make clear the implications of this text?
- Is application within the authority provided by the text? Supported by the text?
- Is there a distinction between biblical application and "a good idea?"
- Does the sermon as a whole adequately cross the bridge from the world of the text into the world of the listeners or is it simply left "out there" in the world of the text? Is the bridge crossed frequently enough but not too frequently?

REFORMED ✝ THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
SYSTEM

Course Objectives Related to MDiv* Student Learning Outcomes

Course: 02PT5125
Instructors: Michael Aitcheson/Michael Osborne/Geoffrey Ziegler/Dan MacDonald
Campus: Orlando
Date: January 2026

MDiv* Student Learning Outcomes *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. *As the MDiv is the core degree at RTS, the MDiv rubric will be used in this syllabus.*		Rubric ➢ Strong ➢ Moderate ➢ Minimal ➢ None	Mini-Justification
Articulation (oral & written)	Broadly understands and articulates knowledge, both oral and written, of essential biblical, theological, historical, and cultural/global information, including details, concepts, and frameworks.	Strong	Major assignments require oral presentations to the class.
Scripture	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	Major assignments require analysis and explanation of scripture.
Reformed Theology	Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice, with emphasis on the Westminster Standards.	Moderate	Sermon requirements reflect Reformed distinctives of preaching. When Reformed distinctives arise in assigned scripture passages students are required to address them.
Sanctification	Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student's sanctification.	Moderate	Preparation of sermons & preaching before classmates requires significant personal vulnerability & dependence upon the Holy Spirit. Self-knowledge & self-awareness required by the assignments also call for progress in sanctification.
Desire for Worldview	Burning desire to conform all of life to the Word of God.	Moderate	Requirements to apply Scripture through oral presentations call for analysis of the world of listeners & speaking effectively & insightfully into it.
Winsomely Reformed	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.)	Strong	Preaching is persuasion, meaning the sermons must be persuasive.
Preach	Ability to preach and teach the meaning of Scripture to both heart and mind with clarity and enthusiasm.	Strong	Core competencies of preaching make up all requirements.
Worship	Knowledgeable of historic and modern Christian-worship forms; and ability to construct and skill to lead a worship service.	Moderate	As part of public worship, the preaching of assigned sermons is a critical component.
Shepherd	Ability to shepherd the local congregation: aiding in spiritual maturity; promoting use of gifts and callings; and encouraging a concern for non-Christians, both in America and worldwide.	Moderate	Preaching requires pastoral instincts to be brought to bear in the assigned sermons.
Church/World	Ability to interact within a denominational context, within the broader worldwide church, and with significant public issues.	Moderate	Sermons must address real=world as well as church issues which affect listeners.