

DM8205 Preaching from the Gospels
RTS-O Doctor of Ministry Course
July 6-10, 2026

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"So anyone who thinks that he has understood the divine scriptures or any part of them, but cannot by his understanding build up this double love of God and neighbor, has not yet succeeded in understanding them." ~ Augustine, *On Christian Teaching*

I. Course Description

This seminar focuses on the joys and challenges of preaching well from the Gospels. We will explore the nature of the Gospels, their role in the canon, how they are best interpreted, and how to best use these texts in pedagogical and homiletical ways.

II. Course Goals

As a result of this course, students should be able to:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of basic methodological issues in interpreting and preaching from the Gospels.
2. Develop skills and practice in the narrative analysis of Gospel texts.
3. Develop a working outline for preaching or teaching through all of the Gospel of Matthew.

III. Learning Activities and Assessments

1. Reading Summaries - 60 pts (6 @ 10pts each)

For each of the assigned readings students will be required to produce and turn in a 3-paragraph summary of what they have read.

These assignments are for your (forgetful) future self and to develop the skill of succinct summary, all the while encouraging active reading. This is not meant to be busy-work or overly labor-intensive. The point is to produce a simple, brief document for each item you read. This should be in the following format:

Bibliographic Info (author, date, edition, publication, etc.)

Paragraph 1 = Overview/abstract of main idea(s) – beefy and longest paragraph

Note: For edited volumes with multiple essays this paragraph can be longer

Paragraph 2 = Insights, strengths, "a-ha" moments, curious new thoughts

Paragraph 3 = Your general reaction; concerns or disagreements; remaining questions to be further explored

Total length for each of these summaries should be approximately 1 page.

DUE: These summaries should be completed and uploaded through Canvas by **July 5, 2026**.

2. Narrative Analysis - 75 pts (5 @ 15pts each)

Utilizing the “Gospel Story Narrative Analysis” template (on Canvas), each student will produce a Narrative Analysis of the following 5 passages: Matt 4:1-11; Matt 17:1-8; Mark 6:45-52; Luke 5:1-11; John 2:13-22.

DUE: These NA’s should be completed and uploaded through Canvas by **July 5, 2026**. They will be discussed in class.

3. Ten-Minute Homily – 25 pts

Each student will prepare and present a ten-minute (strict!) message on a text of their choice from the Gospels. These will be presented during the week of class, starting on the second day (**July 7, 2026**).

4. Preaching Outline of The Gospel of Matthew - 100 pts

Students will produce an outline for the preaching or teaching of the entire book of Matthew. This detailed outline will include:

- Description of the preaching situation – e.g., Sunday morning preaching at XX church; weekly prison ministry, etc. Give a one-paragraph description with any relevant demographic and spiritual information.
- Clear break down of which texts will be chosen for each sermon/lecture and how many weeks this will take. All of Matthew should be covered.
- Description of the title and topic/theme to be covered.
- For each passage selected an outline of what the main points/moves within the sermon or lecture that will be made. This does not have to be final and definitive, but it should reflect familiarity with and thoughtful work on the significance of each passage.

DUE: This assignment should be completed and uploaded through Canvas by **Sept 30, 2026**.

IV. Required Texts

- Jeannine Brown, *The Gospels as Stories: A Narrative Approach to Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John* (Baker Academic, 2020). (224pp)
- Daniel Doriani, *Putting the Truth to Work: The Theory and Practice of Biblical Application*. (P&R, 2001). (352pp)
- Joshua Jipp, *Reading the Gospels as Christian Scripture*. (Baker Academic, 2024.) (360pp)
- Chase Kuhn and Paul Grimmond, eds., *Theology is for Preaching: Biblical Foundations, Method, and Practice* (Lexham Press, 2021) (416pp)

- Derek Olsen, *Reading Matthew with Monks: Liturgical Interpretation in Anglo-Saxon England* (Liturgical Press, 2015). (278pp)
- Jonathan Pennington, *Small Preaching: 25 Little Things You Can Do Now to Make You a Better Preacher* (Lexham Press, 2021) (120pp)

DUE: Each of the assigned books must be read in their entirety by **July 6, 2026**.

Other Recommended Resources (not required):

Pennington, Jonathan, *Reading the Gospels Wisely: A Narrative and Theological Introduction*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2012.

V. Grading

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|------------------------------------|-------------------|
| • Reading Summaries | 60 points |
| • Narrative Analysis | 75 points |
| • Ten-Minute Homily | 25 points |
| • Final Preaching/Teaching Outline | <u>100 points</u> |
| | 260 points |

VI. Grading Scale

A	100-97	C	82-80
A-	96-94	C-	79-78
B+	93-91	D+	77-75
B	90-88	D	74-72
B-	87-86	D-	71-70
C+	85-83	F	69-0

VII. Lateness Policy

Assignments are due by midnight on the dates indicated in the schedule. Late assignments will result in reduction by half a letter grade for each calendar day beyond the original due date. In general, extensions are not granted. Exceptions will be made solely at my discretion and must be requested in writing by email.

VIII. Plagiarism

The RTS Doctor of Ministry program has a zero-tolerance policy for plagiarism. Any infraction immediately results in a failing grade for the course at minimum. That includes any form of assistance from Artificial Intelligence platforms. Please carefully review RTS policy on this matter and consult with campus library staff for further clarification or assistance.

Schedule

Date	In Class	Due
July 6, 1:00-6:00pm	Introduction to Gospels	All Reading Summaries (July 5)
July 7, 9:00am-5:00pm	Interpreting the Gospels Literarily, Canonically, and Theologically	Ten-Minute Homily
July 8, 9:00am-5:00pm	Overview of the Four Gospels	
July 9, 9:00am-5:00pm	Overview of the Four Gospels	
July 10, 9:00am-1:00pm	Preaching and Teaching from the Gospels	
Sept 30, 11:59pm	N/A	Preaching Outline of Matthew

DM8205 Preaching from the Gospels
 Professor: Pennington
 Campus: Orlando
 Date: Summer 2026

Student Learning Outcomes

Biblical/Theological Foundations:	Significant knowledge of biblical and theological foundations for pastoral ministry. (This includes interaction with Biblical texts, as well as awareness of Reformed Theology.)	Strong	Focuses on detailed study of the content of the biblical texts
Historical/Contemporary Practices:	Significant knowledge of historical and contemporary practices of pastoral ministry.	Moderate	Some of the readings and discussion put preaching the Gospels into historical context
Integration:	Ability to reflect upon and integrate theology and practice, as well as implementation in a contemporary pastoral setting.	Strong	Whole course is designed to function in the nexus between academic study of the Gospels and their application in ecclesial settings
Sanctification:	Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids in the student's sanctification.	Minimal	Not the focus of this course, though personal devotional responses will be part of the discussion
Hermeneutical/Homiletical Analysis	Demonstrates ability to interpret a text and apply homiletical principles to the text.	Strong	Strong aspect of the course reading and discussion with focus on Narrative Analysis tool

