

Preaching for Tomorrow

Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary

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Many churches today are simply going through the motions of worship, meetings, bible study, and Sunday school without a larger vision – a vision for what the reign of God on earth can be and what their role in making it a reality could be. By studying diverse eschatological views, pastors and preachers may be able to infuse their congregations with enthusiasm and a new sense of purpose. Very often when we think of eschatology we envision an apocalyptic, catastrophic, divine in-breaking into human history. While this is one view, we must broaden our thinking. Eschatology is not just about how humanity will be judged on the last day, but how we live our lives every day. Eschatology is not just about the fate of the earth as we know it but how we treat the earth and all of its living treasures each and every day. Eschatology is not simply about our ultimate destruction but rather how we construct and conduct our human existence daily.

Students will engage a range of eschatological perspectives and employ biblical exegesis to develop and preach sermons. Students will also further develop their own eschatological perspectives.

Note: *Basic preaching is a prerequisite for this course.*

By the end of the course (course objectives):

- 1) Students will understand how eschatological perspective is related to worldview, culture, and authoritative understandings of the bible.
- 2) Students will identify their own eschatology by engaging the course readings and analyzing sermons.
- 3) Students will understand how their eschatological perspectives shape their preaching.

Course Requirements:

1. Student will facilitate one class discussion of assigned readings. Guidelines for classroom facilitation are on this syllabus. (25%)
2. Student must complete critical reviews of three assigned readings. Critical reviews are due on the day the reading is assigned on the syllabus. The review must respond to each of the questions outlined on this syllabus. Student must also read additional readings when complete critical review assignment. (15%)
3. Each student will submit a 7-10 page exegetical paper on a scripture passage of choice. The passage chosen should be the same passage to be used to develop the sermon. Guidelines for the exegetical paper are included with this syllabus. (20%)

4. Each student will also preach one 15-20 minute sermon. Along with the sermon, each student must submit a manuscript or outline of the sermon along with a statement clearly identifying her/his eschatology according to the available categories given in class. (40%)

Spring 2018 Weekly Schedule

Week 1` Reading on Dispensationalism (*Mumford*)

Additional Reading:

Darby, John Nelson. "The Rapture of the Saints and the Character of the Jewish Remnant." *Stem Publishing* (Accessed September 13, 2017).

<http://www.stempublishing.com/authors/darby/PROPHET/11007E.html>.

Week 2 Reading on Feminist Theology (*Mumford*)

Additional Reading:

Schüssler Fiorenza, Elisabeth. *In Memory of Her: A Feminist Theological Reconstruction of Christian Origins*. 10th anniversary ed. New York: Crossroad, 1994. Chapter 4.

Week 3 Reading on the Social Gospel (*Mumford*)

Additional reading:

Rauschenbusch, Walter, Anthony Campolo, and Paul B. Raushenbush. *Christianity and the Social Crisis in the 21st Century : The Classic That Woke up the Church*. 1st ed. New York: HarperOne, 2007. Chapters 2 & 7.

Week 4 Reading on Womanist Theology (Mumford)

Additional reading:

Townes, Emilie Maureen. *In a Blaze of Glory : Womanist Spirituality as Social Witness*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1995. Chapter 6.

Week 5 Reading on Black Liberation Theology (*Mumford*)

Additional Reading:

Cone, James H. *God of the Oppressed*. Rev. ed. Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1997. Chapters 8 & 9.

Week 6 **Research and Study**

Reading on the Beloved Community (*Mumford*)

Additional Reading:

King Jr., Martin Luther. *Where Do We Go from Here : Chaos or Community?* Boston: Beacon Press, 1968. Chapters 3 & 6.

Week 7 Reading on Mujuerista Theology (*Mumford*)

Additional Reading:

Isasi-Díaz, Ada María. *La Lucha Continues : Mujerista Theology*. Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 2004. Chapters 4 & 5.

Week 8 **Facilitation of Reading**

Week 9 Reading on Presentative Theology (*Mumford*)

Additional Reading:

Moltmann, Jürgen. *Theology of Hope : On the Ground and the Implications of a Christian Eschatology*. San Francisco, CA: HarperSanFrancisco, 1991. Chapter V.

Week 10 Reading on Disability Theology (*Mumford*)

Additional Reading:

Eiesland, Nancy. *The Disabled God: Toward a Liberatory Theology of Disability*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1994. Chapters 1, 2 & 6.

Week 11 Reading on LGBTQ Theology (*Mumford*)

Additional Reading:

Cheng, Patrick S. *Rainbow Theology : Bridging Race, Sexuality, and Spirit*. New York: Seabury Books, 2013. Part One.

Week 12 **Sermon Presentation**

Facilitation of Review of Readings (25%)

Each student is required to facilitate one classroom session during the semester. Students should develop a handout or handouts for classmates that summarize the main points of the reading(s). Students should find creative ways to engage the class in a discussion of the

readings. Students will have forty-five minutes of classroom time within which to lead the discussion. Points that should be included in the presentation are:

- 1) Summary of the readings. What topic(s) were covered in the reading? What are the most important points the author makes?
- 2) What is the social location of the author? (denomination, education, teaching environment, etc.)
- 3) How is social location of the author or view reflected in the writing? (For example is the bible interpreted literally? Is the author's view of the text liberating or traditional?)
- 4) What did you find most helpful about the reading?
- 5) How would implementing the main points of the reading affect a preacher's eschatology?

Critical Review of Articles/Readings (15%)

Each student must complete critical reviews of three assigned readings. Critical reviews are due on the day the reading is assigned on the syllabus. The review must respond to each of the following questions:

- 1) Summary of the readings. What topic(s) were covered in the reading? What was/were the author's main point(s)?
- 2) What is the social location of the author? (denomination, education, teaching environment, etc.)
- 3) How is social location of the author or worldview reflected in the writing? (For example is the bible interpreted literally? Is the author's view of the text liberating or traditional?)
- 4) Critique. What do you feel was missing from the reading? Are there points in the reading with which you disagree? Why do you disagree with the author?
- 5) What did you find most helpful about the reading?
- 6) How would implementing the main points in the reading affect the preacher's eschatology?

Guidelines for the Exegetical Papers (20%)

Each student must submit two 7-10 page exegetical paper on one of text options offered (see small group assignment sheet). Students will select text from options provided by instructor. In *The Witness of Preaching*, Thomas Long presents a brief method of exegesis for preaching. Details about what is required in each section are contained in the reading. The reading is posted on the course website. The paper must include each of the following sections:

- I. Getting the Text in View
 - a. **Selecting the text (clearly indicate how you determined which text to use)**

- i. Why did you select your particular text from among the texts you were given?
 - b. Consider where the text begins and ends (**indicate chapter and verses that will be used for the paper**)
 - c. Establish a reliable translation of the text (indicate which translation of the biblical text you will use, **compare at least three translations of the text to help make your decision or make your own translation. Indicate which translations you used for comparison and why you made your particular choice by citing examples from the three translations you compared**)
- II. Getting Introduced to the Text
- a. Read the text for basic understanding (**look up important terms and phrases in bible dictionaries, bible encyclopedias, or lexicons**)
 - b. Place the text in its larger context (**determine what is happening in the text surrounding the passage selected for exegetical work and how the selected passage fits within it**)
- III. Attending to the Text
- a. Listen attentively to the text
 - i. Ask penetrating questions of the text (write in paragraph form rather than list)
 - ii. Examine the text using number 3, 4, 5 or 6 of Long's proposed approaches (section III of the paper should be at least 2 pages in length)
- IV. Testing What is Heard in the Text (**pursue at least two of the questions you raised in "Attending to the Text" using extra biblical sources and biblical commentaries**).
- a. Explore question by the socio-historical/cultural, literary or theological (God in relation to humanity) character of the text
 - b. Explore text in commentaries. (ex. Do commentators address your questions? Are there issues or concerns raised by commentators you did not consider but find intriguing? Are there issues and concerns that commentators ignored that you need to explore elsewhere?)
 - c. "Moving Toward the Sermon:" State the claim of the text upon the hearers and preacher
- V. Sermon Theme
- Write a sermon theme that is twelve words or less**
(should be a declarative statement)

Sermon Content Evaluation

Preacher _____

<p>Reach/Trim Amount of biblical/exegetical material need to make the sermon understandable to hearers. Just enough exegetical material to illuminate the point/theme of the message. Interprets scripture critically and imaginatively. List specifics of exegetical material.</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>
<p>Introduction Arouses interest of the listeners and is related directly to the theme. List specifics about the introduction.</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>
<p>Transitions Are transitions from one part of the sermon to the next smooth and easy for hearers to follow • Introduction to the main body • Between parts of the main body • Main body to the conclusion. List examples of transitions.</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>
<p>Theology Is the theology consistent throughout sermon and easy to understand? Does it reflect the views of faith community being addressed? Does preacher demonstrate understanding of multiple theological perspectives (historical and contemporary)? Is preacher able to clearly articulate what she/he believes? List examples of theology.</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>
<p>Language Appropriateness Uses language that lay people can understand and is appropriate for the occasion. Sermon given color and life by descriptive speech. List examples of appropriate language.</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>
<p>Application How is main theme of sermon relevant to lives of hearers? Use concrete examples of how the main theme of sermon makes a difference to the listeners. Does student demonstrate consciousness of multiple forms of oppression and injustice? List concrete examples used in sermon.</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>
<p>Conclusion End sermon by issuing a challenge, posing questions, or encouraging celebration all related to the sermons central theme. List specifics of how the sermon was concluded.</p> <p>_____</p>
<p>Theme There is one theme only and it is easy for listeners to follow. Write what you believe the theme is.</p> <p>_____</p>

Sermon Delivery Evaluation

Preacher _____

Body (hands, feet, posture) _____

Movement in/around designated preaching space

Eye Contact and Facial Expressions

How did preacher use elements of speech (rate variance, use of pause, inflection, stress and arrangement of words)
Circle One)

Excellent Good Fair Poor

What was the general Sermon Flow/Structure? Did student demonstrate ability to reason, read, write and speak clearly (Expository, Homiletical Loop, Four Pages, etc.)

Other Comments

Other Expectations

Mutual Purpose

1. We need to understand about our conversations in class is that we have a mutual purpose. Our mutual purpose is open dialog about our understandings of God and how our various understandings of God shape the ways we all live and believe. We want to make sure all voices are heard rather than proving ourselves rights or someone else wrong.
2. Open dialog does not mean that people can say anything. We must never use language that disparages or demeans other people in any way.

Mutual Respect

1. The key to true open dialog is Mutual Respect. If people perceive that others people do not respect them, the conversation disintegrates. Disrespect can be experienced through words and actions (body language). Signs that mutual respect has been violated include name-calling, loud speech/yelling, threats and negative body language (i.e. eye rolling, finger pointing, back turning, etc.).
2. Mutual respectful actions are difficult to perform when we don't respect people because of their opinions or behavior. To actually achieve a level of mutual respect with people whose opinions we view as radical or extreme, we should try to sympathize and even empathize with their points of view.
3. Mutual respect means we don't just appear to be listening to what someone is saying. We are actually listening.

Written Assignments (points will be deducted to improper formatting)

1. All written assignments should be doubled-spaced.
2. All margins should be **1-inch (left, right, top, bottom)**.
3. All ideas and thoughts that are not original should be footnoted. Each footnote should begin a new line, indented the same as amount as paragraphs. Examples:

(Book)

Milmon F. Harrison, *Righteous Riches: The Word of Faith Movement in Contemporary African American Religion* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 6.

(Journal Article)

² Audrey Smedley and Brian Smedley, "Race as Biology Is Fiction: Racism as a Social Problem Is Real." *American Psychologist* 60, no. 1 (2005): 17.

(Website)

³Oral Roberts: Celebrating the Life of Oral Roberts: The Man Who Obeyed God. <http://www.oralroberts.com/oralroberts/> (accessed March 22, 2010).

4. 12 point font.
5. Spell check all assignments before submitting.
6. Do not include a cover page or place papers in folders.
7. Staple pages of exegetical papers together.
8. Include a header or footer with student name, submission date, and page numbers on each page.

Questions are to be posted on LPTS Preach on the Sunday before the class in which the readings will be discussed. All other assignments are due at the beginning of class.

Assignments submitted late will be penalized twenty five percent per day. The only exceptions for late work being penalized are in cases of medical emergency or death in the family.

Preaching dates are pre-assigned. If there is a conflict with the preaching date, see instructor at least two weeks prior to preaching date. Except in the event of a catastrophe or emergency, failure to preach on the assigned date will result in a grade of "zero" for that sermon.

Inclusive Language (Adapted from LPTS Student Handbook)

In accordance with seminary policy, students are to use inclusive language in class discussions and in written and oral communication by using language representative of the whole human community in respect to gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, age, and physical and intellectual capacities.

The way you phrase a message is often as important as the message itself. The practice of using inclusive language is something more than remembering a list of grammatical and stylistic "things to avoid" - it is a commitment thoughtfully to choose words that will make all people feel welcomed. We want to include not exclude. This is particularly important in preaching when we are communicating the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Why bother to avoid gender-specific language?

Traditionally, writers have used masculine identifiers and pronouns to address the idea of the "Universal Singular" - terms like "mankind," "men of faith" "Master" - and so on. For centuries, the patriarchal systems of many societies were reinforced by the use of the masculine pronoun referent "he." Because of the use of masculine language, women were, in the main, considered less than men or simply not considered at all. **If we believe that all people are equal in the eyes of God, our language must reflect this belief.** Our language shapes our culture-and to be systematically denied recognition has a rather disenfranchising effect on all people affected.

Plagiarism (Adapted from LPTS Student Handbook)

Whether you summarize the ideas of others or use direct quotes, you must document the source. Where citations are required, they shall follow the form of the latest edition of Turabian/ Chicago Manual of Style.

In your research papers, you must document any information that is not "universally known" or that you did not know before your investigation of the subject. Any use of information without proper

documentation is considered plagiarism. Plagiarism is not only unethical but also illegal. Ignorance is not an excuse.

When a professor judges a student's work to have been plagiarized, or to be subject to academic dishonesty, the following steps will be taken:

1. The professor and the student will have a consultation in which the exercise in question and the issue of plagiarism or academic dishonesty will be discussed.
2. If it is clearly determined that a student has plagiarized or used dishonest academic methods in preparing an exercise, **the grade for that particular piece will be judged an "F" or numerical grade of zero. Any opportunity to redo the exercise is left to the discretion of the professor.**
3. The professor will promptly notify the Dean about the incident of plagiarism or academic dishonesty. Such notification will be confidential communication among the professor, the Dean, and the student.
4. **Two incidents of plagiarism or academic dishonesty by the same student will be grounds for dismissal from the Seminary.**
5. A Student wishing to appeal the judgment of plagiarism or academic dishonesty may use the established procedures for appealing grades.