

**Problems in Preaching
Concordia Seminary
Prof. Robert W. Weise**

Course Description (Pre-requisite: vicarage or the equivalent)

Discussion of some key problems in preaching: relating to the Gospel meaningful to life, transposing the text to the present [cultural] situation, defining and confining the central idea, making abstractions concrete. Class criticism of videotaped sermons.

Objectives

This course will provide opportunities and occasions for the student's understanding of:

- a. The hearer in both a liturgical and cultural context.
- b. The variety of problems and possible solutions in proclaiming the biblical text, with a Law and Gospel dynamic functioning in preaching.
- c. The formulation of preaching goal and sermon structure appropriate to the text, as well as contemporary and cultural hearers in the 21st Century.

This course will provide opportunities and occasions for the student's to analyze and synthesize the problems in preaching so that he:

- a. Seeks a theological and practical understanding of the 21st Century Lutheran Christian Congregation.
- b. Resolves his problems in preaching with a pastoral heart and care for those who listen to the weekly sermon and Bible Class.
- c. Relates to the function of the Law and Gospel within the context of the congregation's culture.
- d. Can know his strengths and growth areas so that he can improve his sermonic approach that engages the congregation and brings them into the Biblical narrative and its context.
- e. With humility (Philippians 2), be open to constructive criticism and to evaluate it with humility knowing that all 'preachers' always have more to learn and grow within his vocation.
- f. Be prepared to live the life of Christ as pastor and teacher within the Office of the Public Ministry

Educational Assumptions

The learner will have successfully completed their vicarage and is motivated to synthesize his seminary training into an embodied pastoral theology.

Syllabus Revision Statement

The course instructor may modify the standards and requirements set forth in the syllabus at any time. Notice of such changes will be by announcement in class or email.

Texts (Required)
Problems in Preaching P-431, Spring 2015 (New Course)

Aden, LeRoy H. and Robert G. Hughes, *Preaching God's Compassion*, Fortress Press, 2002, ISBN# 978-080063577

Eslinger, Richard, *Pitfalls in Preaching*, Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1996, ISBN# 978-0802808202

Overdorf, Daniel, *One Year to Better Preaching*, Kregel Ministry, 2013, ISBN# 978-0825439100

Pagitt, Doug, *Preaching in the Inventive Age*, Spark House, 2011, ISBN# 978-1451401486

Other Books of Interest Related to 'Problems in Preaching'

Galli, Mark and Brian Larson, *Preaching that Connects*, Zondervan, 1994, ISBN-13: 978-0310386216

J.A. O. Preus, *Just Words*, CPH, 2000, ISBN-13: 978-0570053781

Johnston, Graham, *Preaching to a Postmodern World*, Baker Books, 2001, ISBN-13: 978-0801063671

Course Outline and Schedule

- March 9 Syllabus and first assignment: bring to the next class 5 pre-eminent 'problems in preaching' that you experience or understand from listening to laity and other pastors.
They should be in 'order of importance' to your homiletic preparation and delivery. Following Submission Policy, these will be turned in at the end of the next class period, March 12th.
- 12 Class discussion on March 9th assignment
- March 16 Class discussion on March 9th assignment, continues.
Beginning March 26th students will lead a discussion on one of each required readings. The following student schedule for discussion is as follows: (1) March 26th and March 30th: Adam, Mark, and Christopher Warren will lead a discussion on: *Pitfalls in Preaching*. (2) April 16th and April 20th: Brandon, Jesse, Wayne, and Brian will lead a discussion on: *Preaching God's Compassion*; (3) April 23rd and April 27th Christopher Paavola, Buck, Andrew and Hunter will discuss: *Preaching in the Inventive Age*. We will discuss the format in class.
- 19 Prof Weise responds to class discussion and assignment on each student's pre-eminent 'problems in preaching'.
- March 23 The problem and solution: the preacher and contextually off-and-on-target with the
the
Biblical text. Is this the biggest concern or would you suggests others?

26 Adam, Mark, and Christopher Warren will lead a discussion on: ***Pitfalls in Preaching.***

30 Discussion continues

April 2 **No class due to Easter Resurrection 'break'**

9 and 13 (Prof Weise is in Apopka, FL at a Pastor's Conference speaking on Marriage and Same-sex unions, and preaching the 12th Winter Garden, FL.)

April 16 Brandon, Jesse, Wayne, and Brian will lead a discussion on: ***Preaching God's Compassion***

20 Discussion continues

April 23 Christopher Paavola, Buck, Andrew and Hunter will discuss: ***Preaching in the Inventive Age***

27 Discussion continues

April 30 Summing up the readings and how these discussions have assisted you in 'solving your problems in preaching'

May 4 Preaching in this 21st Century Biotech World: Challenges and Pitfalls—Weise, continues

7 Preaching in this 21st Century Biotech World: Challenges and Pitfalls—Weise

May 11 Catch up day on previous presentations and class discussions.

14 Trip to Schlafly Bottleworks

18 Back to the basics of 'problems in preaching': The text and its surroundings!

May 21 Class evaluation and 'where do you go from here'?

Book Reviews and Class Discussion Rubrics

I. Book report summaries for class discussion guidelines

1. When each book discussion is scheduled, the following guidelines will be followed:
 - a. The designated group will decide what each assigned student will bring to the class for discussion.
 - b. Each section of a book that you cover should be outlined and handed out to your classmates for discussion (no more than one page per outlined section).
 - c. After your section is summarized via the outline, you are to point out one, but not more than two major points that can be helpful in discovering 'problems in preaching' and reaching a solution(s).

- d. You have two class periods to cover the book.
 - e. Make your summaries brief, bring your major points to the floor for discussion.
2. These outlines are to be turned in after the second-class presentation. Follow the Submission Policy above for guidelines regarding format.

II. Final paper on 'Problems in Preaching' from your personal, vicarage and pulpit preaching

You are to meet with Prof Weise to assess your preaching and identify two pre-eminent 'problems in your preaching'. These meetings will be conducted on Wednesday and Friday throughout March and through April 17th. A sign-up sheet will be submitted in class on Thursday, March 12th.

Following this meeting you are to submit a 3-5-page paper on your analysis and future plan to improve on two of your 'biggest problems' in preaching. The required books may be used to structure your analysis and future sermonic problems(s) in preaching.

The paper must follow the Submission Policy and emailed to Prof Weise, no later than May 15th, by 5 pm.

Every day that it is late, the final grade on the paper will be reduced by one, full letter grade.

Grading

Class Attendance=20%

Book Report Outline=30%

Final Paper on 'Problems in Preaching'=30%

These final percentages may be modified. Any modification depends on class schedule modifications.