Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary—Hamilton
PR601-HA Preaching: Principles and Practice in Preparing Relevant and Biblical Sermons
Syllabus: Spring 2013
Monday 2:00pm—5:00pm

(Note: The first day of class begins on Monday, February 4th.
Please complete all reading/assignments before the first class.)

Dr. Matthew Kim
Office: Library 124
Office Hours: Mon. 10am-12pm; Weds. 9-11am; Fri. 10am-12pm
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I. Course Description

This course is designed to enable the student to construct an expository sermon based upon the skills of exegesis. Students will gain experience explaining, proving, and applying a biblical passage and delivering two biblical sermons without notes. A year of a biblical language and/or NT 502 Interpreting the New Testament is a prerequisite for the course.

II. Course Relationship to the Curriculum

This course is an introduction to the principles of preparing relevant biblical sermons. Lectures and exercises cover a stage-by-stage explanation of how preachers think as they prepare to preach. The aim of the course is to help students understand what is required to preach effectively and to practice what they understand. Recitation sessions provide opportunity for students to preach and have their efforts recorded for playback and critique by the professor.

III. Course Objective

As a result of this course students should be able to deliver a sermon without the use of notes derived from the biblical text. In order to accomplish this, the student will: (A) Have a basic procedure that moves one from the biblical text to a sermon based on that text. (B) Develop skill in constructing a clear outline consisting of full, declarative sentences that relate to a basic idea. The outline should also show transitions in parentheses between the major points and if necessary the supporting points. This will be measured by handing in an outline of the first and the final sermons for grading. (C) Have a working definition of expository preaching. (D)
Understand the basic elements in sermon construction and what they should accomplish—introduction, central idea (based on an exegetical idea), transitions, illustrations, development of the sermon, and conclusion. (E) Begin to develop a skill in writing a sermon manuscript geared to the way audiences listen. (F) Develop an effective filing system for supporting materials used in sermons. This will be measured by a report on the system at the end of the course. Students will collect 75 new illustrations. (G) Watch and listen to 5 assigned video recorded sermons and determine what makes an effective sermon. (H) Read two books on the theology of preaching. (I) Read one book on preaching and plagiarism. (J) Students will measure their ability to interact with the course reading and lectures by sitting a final examination. (K) Listen to Pulpit Talk audio journal for review and reinforcement of class lectures and practice. (L) Preach two sermons. (M) Students will memorize a verse of Scripture.

IV. Course Textbooks

**Required:**

Scott M. Gibson, *Should We Use Someone Else’s Sermon?* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2008).

**DV** 5 sermon evaluations:  
http://www.gordonconwellstore.org/servlet/the-192/PR601-Sample-Sermons/Detail

**PR601 Pulpit Talk set:**  
http://www.gordonconwellstore.org/servlet/the-140/PR601-Pulpit-Talk-Set/Detail

V. Course Requirements and Grading

1. Attendance at lectures and exercises. Students are expected to be *on time* for class. Late work will not be accepted.

2. Develop a filing system for collecting supporting material for sermons. During the course of the semester, collect and file 75 illustrations. Students will place their 10 best illustrations on Cams for the benefit of the entire class.
3. Read Robinson, *Biblical Preaching*. Rather than reading the book in a single sitting or two, you will profit more through reading it section by section as it is discussed in class.

4. Read Willhite and Gibson, *The Big Idea of Biblical Preaching*. Write a 3 page (maximum) single-spaced paper using the following questions: a. Do you think the book has a central idea? What do you think it is? b. Summarize the thrust of the editors’ argument. In light of this, why did Willhite and Gibson select the chapters from other authors to be included in the book? c. Discuss at least three things you learned from reading the book. Please put name and box # on the back of the last page, not on the front page.

5. Read Gibson, *Should We Use Someone Else’s Sermon?* Write a 3 page (maximum) single-spaced paper using the following questions: a. What is the central idea of the book? b. Discuss at least three things you learned from reading the book. c. Explain how you’ll apply what you’ve learned to your preaching ministry. Please put name and box # on the back of the last page, not on the front page.

6. Read Stott, *Between Two Worlds*. Please consider the following: a. What is the central idea of the book? b. What did you find in the book that was new to you? c. With what do you disagree? Why? The assignment should be no more than 3 single-spaced pages. Please put name and box # on the back of the last page, not on the front page.

7. Complete reading for Bounds and Piper.

8. Prepare an outline for the first sermon. The professor will correct the outline and return it to the student. The student will be able to rework the outline before the first sermon is preached. Once the sermon is preached, the correction of the outline for a higher grade is no longer an option.

9. Prepare a manuscript for the first sermon. Due the day you preach. This will be an 8 minute message without using notes.

10. Watch and listen to 5 sermons on DVD and answer the questions thoroughly in Section IX of the syllabus for each sermon. All other sermons will not be accepted.

11. Prepare an outline for the second sermon. The outline must conform to that which has been taught in class. The professor will correct the outline and return it to the student.
12. Prepare a manuscript for a complete sermon that both explains and applies the passage. This will be a 15 minute message without notes. The manuscript and corrected outlines are due the day you preach. The outline must conform to that which has been taught in class.

13. Listen to Pulpit Talk segments to reinforce understanding of course concepts.


15. Students will memorize Romans 1:16.

\textbf{VI. Course Administration}

A. Attendance Policy

Attendance is required for the class. If a difficulty arises, please see the professor. Please make every effort to be at class on time.

B. Due Dates and Late Penalties

See the calendar in the catalog. Late work will not be accepted.

C. Assistance

Please come to see me with your questions.

\textbf{VII. Course Calendar}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading/Assignments</th>
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| Feb. 4 | Course Introduction  
The Worlds of the Expositor  
What is Expository Preaching? | \textbf{Read:} Robinson pp. 1-32. |
| Feb. 11 | What's the Big Idea?  
The Essentials of an Effective Sermon | \textbf{Read:} Robinson pp. 33-46.  
\textbf{Due:} Questions on pp. 47-50.  
\textbf{Read:} Robinson pp. 51-72.  
Follow up: Listen to \textit{Pulpit Talk 4:2} |
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Instructions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Feb. 18</td>
<td>Reading Week – No Class Meeting</td>
<td>Begin thinking about passages for Sermons 1 and 2. Work on DVD sermon analysis and required reading/book reports.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb. 25</td>
<td>Do I Have Anything to Preach?</td>
<td><strong>Read:</strong> Robinson pp. 73-137. <strong>Due:</strong> Exercises on pp. 97-100. Read also: Sunukjian on outlining. <strong>Due:</strong> Select two passages for your two preaching exercises at the end of the semester. The passage for the first sermon will be selected from a list provided by the professor. For the second sermon, hand in the passage on a 3x5 card with your name and box number on the card. <em>You may not preach from a passage on which you've written an exegesis paper or will be writing an exegesis paper. You must select a new passage.</em> Select a short unit of thought. Follow up: Listen to Pulpit Talk 4:3.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mar. 4</td>
<td>Making Dry Bones Live</td>
<td><strong>Read:</strong> Robinson pp. 139-175.</td>
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<td>Mar. 11</td>
<td>All's Well That Ends Well</td>
<td><strong>Read:</strong> Robinson pp. 175-199; 229-245. <strong>Due:</strong> Report – Willhite and Gibson Follow up: Listen to <em>Pulpit Talk</em> 3:3, 1:2 &amp; 3:1.</td>
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<td>Mar. 18</td>
<td>Dynamics of Sermon Delivery</td>
<td><strong>Read:</strong> Robinson pp. 201-224. <strong>Due:</strong> Outline for Sermon 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mar. 25</td>
<td>Reading Week – No Class Meeting</td>
<td>Work on the manuscript for the 8 minute sermon and begin working on the outline for sermon 2.</td>
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<td>Date</td>
<td>Event</td>
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<td>Apr. 1</td>
<td>Eight Minute Sermons</td>
<td>Outline and manuscript</td>
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<td>Apr. 8</td>
<td>Eight Minute Sermons</td>
<td>Outline and manuscript</td>
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<td>Due: Outline for Sermon 2</td>
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<td>Apr. 15</td>
<td>Fifteen Minute Sermons</td>
<td>Outline and manuscript</td>
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<td>Note: Please bring your laptop or USB drive for sermon retrieval.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Apr. 22</td>
<td>Fifteen Minute Sermons</td>
<td>Outline and manuscript</td>
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<td>Note: Please bring your laptop or USB drive for sermon retrieval.</td>
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<td>Apr. 29</td>
<td>Final Examination</td>
<td>Attached Report/Sheet from back of syllabus.</td>
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<td>Due: Report that you have set up a filing system.</td>
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<td>Due today by 4:00pm:</td>
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<td>DVD sermon analysis</td>
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<td>Report – Stott</td>
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<td>Report – Gibson</td>
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<td>Posted on Cams: Select 10 of the best sermon illustrations out of the 75 collected.</td>
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**VIII. Your Sermon Will Be Graded on the Following:**

A. Content  
   a. Is the sermon clear? Is it well organized? Does it flow easily? Does the audience understand you?  
   b. Does the sermon have effective content? Is it based on sound exegesis? Does it have good supporting material and relevant illustrations?

B. Delivery  
   a. Does your delivery sound as though you really want to communicate? Does your voice have variety? Are you enthusiastic?
b. Does your body support what you are saying? Do you have eye contact that is direct and personal? Do you use gestures?
c. Do you want to be heard? Do you demonstrate conviction and sincerity?

IX. Questions to Consider When Listening to or Reading a Sermon

For the assignment: Write out each question followed by your response. Please be specific — give examples for what is asked.

1. What do you think is the main idea or concept the preacher was trying to get across? Please state it and analyze and comment on it.

2. When through with the introduction, did you want the preacher to go on? Y/N Did it capture interest so that you would want him/her to continue? Y/N How did he/she do? Analyze and comment.

3. Did he/she illustrate? Y/N If so, what did he/she do? — to explain, prove or apply? Did he/she succeed? Y/N Why or why not? Analyze and comment. You must provide specific examples of how the preacher explained, proved, or applied the text.

4. Do you think the conclusion drove home the main idea of the sermon in a way that caused you to want to respond? Analyze and comment.

5. What do you think that you as a listener might do, think or change as a result of hearing the sermon?

6. Do you think the delivery helped or hindered the presentation? What were its strengths? What about weaknesses? Analyze and comment.

7. Do you think that the sermon grew out of the biblical text? Or was it imposed on it? Analyze and comment.

X. Grading

The percentage categories on the back sheet of the syllabus equal 100. However, since this is a skills course, I take into consideration improvement in the student’s performance in oral assignments. Conversely, a digression in a student’s performance is also a factor that goes into grading. If one does not collect all the illustrations required for the course, then the student will lose 5 points. Likewise,
not reading the textbook has point deducting consequences (10 points). This will especially come into play if a student is in-between grades.

*Some students may have their sermons evaluated by a resident PhD candidate in preaching through the A.J. Gordon Guild – a PhD program in partnership with London School of Theology.*

As for all written assignments, I am looking for good use of grammar, interaction with the material, spelling, etc. The *Student Handbook* spells out the rigorous call for excellence in all grading assignments, which will be followed in the course.

**XI. Format for Sermons**

- a. Please remember to place your name and box number either on a cover sheet or at the top of the first page.

- b. At the top of the page will be the following:

  **Text:** (This is the address of the biblical passage from which you are preaching.)

  **Subject:** (What is the author talking about? Don't forget to use an interrogative: who, what, why, when, where, which, how.)

  **Complement:** (What is the author saying about what he is talking about?)

  **Main/Exegetical Idea:** (Subject + Complement = Main Idea)

  **Homiletical Idea:** (This is a pithy statement of your main idea.)

  **Purpose:** (Why are you preaching this sermon? A purpose is specific and measurable.) “As a result of hearing this sermon, I want my listeners to....”

What follows is either your outline or manuscript. Remember to write your outline in full sentences. Put transitions into parentheses. Outlines should have a complete introduction, conclusion, and transitions written out in full. A clear outline will be clear to your listeners.

As for manuscripts, follow the model of the outline by indenting your paragraphs to help you to see the flow of the sermon.
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Kim

(Please turn in this sheet on Monday, April 29th with all of your written work.)

How many class sessions did you attend? ____________ (check if) all, or ____________ (give number).

How many illustrations did you collect? ____________ (give number).

Did you develop a file system? Please describe:

How much of Robinson's *Biblical Preaching* did you read? ____________ (give percentage).

How much of Piper’s *Supremacy…Preaching* did you read? ____________ (give percentage).

How much of Bounds’ *Power through Prayer* did you read? ____________ (give percentage).

Did you listen to *Pulpit Talk*? ____________ (yes/no).

Report on Willhite and Gibson, *The Big Idea* ____________ (grade). 5%

Report on Stott, *Between Two Worlds* ____________ (grade). 5%

Report on Gibson, *Should We Use Someone Else’s Sermon* ____________ (grade). 5%

Outline for the first sermon ____________ (grade). 5%

Sermon DVDs Exercise ____________ (grade). 10%

Eight minute sermon ____________ (grade). 20%

Fifteen minute sermon ____________ (grade). 40%

Final Examination ____________ (grade). 10%

(Late work will not be accepted.)

Course Grade ____________