Preaching Old Testament Narratives
Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary
Rev. Dr. Winfred Omar Neely
The 2014 Sams Visiting Professor of Preaching
Jan. 6-10, 2014

Course Description

Students will learn to respect the way that God has communicated His word in story. Therefore students will develop and hone their interpretive and homiletical skills as storytellers. They will learn how to communicate the message of an Old Testament Story by relating and reliving that story with creativity, exegetically informed imagination, tension management, and by the memorable statement and restatement of the story’s theology and by relating that theology to the lived experience of people today.

Learning Objectives:

At the end of the successful completion of this course, the student will:

1. Have the basic interpretive, literary, and homiletical skills required to move from an Old Testament story to a message;
2. Be able to develop messages in two narrative formats (third person narrative message format and first person dramatic narrative format) and present those messages with creativity, drama, imagination, tension management, and passion;
3. Be able to relate and relive an Old Testament story;
4. Be able to state, restate, and apply the story’s big idea/moral/theology to the contemporary world in a thoughtful and relevant manner;
5. Have an improved message delivery;
6. Have a fresh appreciation of the life transforming power of story.

The Professor

Rev. Dr. Winfred Omar Neely is an ordained minister of the gospel, credentialed by the Christian and Missionary Alliance and the Baptist General Conference. He is serves as Professor of Preaching and Pastoral Studies at the Moody Bible Institute in Chicago. In addition to his work in and out the classroom with aspiring students for the ministry, Winfred, along with seven students from Moody, planted Living Hope Community Church in South Holland, IL. Prior to joining the faculty at Moody, Winfred served churches in the Chicago, his home town. Winfred brings to his ministry a global perspective, having served as a missionary/pastor in Senegal, West Africa for nine years, and continuing to preach and teach across the globe. A past-president of the Evangelical Homiletics Society, he continues to serve as a member and
site coordinator of the 2014 EHS conference at the Moody Bible Institute. He speaks at conferences and other events across the country and the world.

Winfred has been married to Stephne Neely for thirty-seven years. They have four adult children, and are the proud grandparents of six grandsons, and two granddaughters.

Winfred takes classes in “Acting” and “Voiceover” from time to time, is an ardent fan of science fiction films such as Star Wars and Star Trek. He loves the Lord of the Rings trilogy with it creative use of language, and thinks the film Gravity is very good!

Winfred loves contemporary gospel music and when he is alone in his car, he lets the CDs and the bass blast!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Required Textbooks


Optional Supplementary Books:


Course Requirements

Essay on the Power of Story

Prior to the first day of class on Jan. 6th, please read, if possible, all of the required textbooks in their entirety. On day one, submit a four paged double spaced, 12 point font essay entitled: The Value of Preaching OT Stories in the 21st Century. Discuss the nature and power of story, the impact of story on 21st century postmodern culture, and the role OT stories can and should play in our communication of God’s word to our contemporary world. Document your paper.
Also, at the end of your paper indicate how much of the reading you have done. The Essay is due on Jan. 6th, 2014

Exegetical Paper

Prior to class, select one of the following texts for your messages: Gen. 37:2-36; Exo. 14:1-31; Exo. 16:1-36; Jos. 2:1-24; 1 Sam. 15:1-15, 1 Sam. 25:2-42; 2 Sam. 13:1-39; 1 Kings 17:1-16. Using the tools in Mathewson's book (chapters 3-10), write an exegetical/homiletical paper on the text of your choice:

1) write out story’s plotline with the appropriate verse designations; state the story’s plot motif, i.e., comedy, tragedy, etc;

(2) state in writing the roles of each character in story (protagonist, antagonist, foil), and their development – flat, round, agent;

(3) state in writing the story’s exegetical, theological, and sermonic idea, along with the story’s purpose. Write out your purpose statement in a way that is measurable. In this assignment also include the story’s narration time and narrated time (See Mathewson chapters 7-10);

(4) submit the sermonic idea to the three developmental (functional) questions (see: Mathewson, The Art of Preaching Biblical Narratives, pp. 93-102). Please show me your work. I want to see in writing your answers to the developmental questions. Your application to contemporary life must be specific, vivid, and concrete;

(5) Write out the sermonic outline, the introduction, and the conclusion.

The exegetical/homiletical paper is due on the last day of class.

Student Presentations

Each student is required to give a brief presentation of their work, and present the introduction to their sermon. The presentation will also take place on Friday, the last day of class.

Three Manuscripts

The student will submit three full manuscripts to Dr. Neely, using the format discussed in class. The manuscripts must be based on one of the chosen texts. The student will prepare three message manuscripts from the selected story: One from the narrator’s point of view (Third Person Narrator Approach), and one from a major character’s point of view, and one from a
minor or implied character’s point of view (First Person Point of View Format). The Due date for these assignments is February 3rd, 2014

Live Preaching Event Outside of Class

One of sermons must be preached in a live setting outside of class. Please make sure the message is recorded. After your record the message, view it, write a double-spaced, 12 font, page and a half evaluation of the sermon, and send the manuscript, the recorded message, and your evaluation to Dr. Neely. The due date for this assignment is February 3rd, 2014

Peter Marshall’s Message The Grave in the Garden

We will interact with this message during the week. I will distribute the sermon on the first day of class. Please read it in preparation for our discussion on Thursday.

Course Schedule

Our class will meet each morning (Monday through Friday, January 6-10) 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM and each afternoon, 1:00-4:00 PM. A Saturday session is provided for in case a snow day is declared for one of our scheduled class days.

Day One

• The Power of Story
• Narrative Hermeneutical, Exegetical, and literary principles and strategies

Day Two

• Narrative Hermeneutical, Exegetical, and Literary Principles and Strategies
• Exegetical, Theological, and Sermonic Ideas

Day Three

• The Use of Developmental Questions
• Purpose Statements
• Illustrations and Examples in Narrative Messages
• Move Development in Narrative Messages

Day Four

• Move Development in Narrative Messages
• Reliving and Relating a Story
• The Use of Imagination in biblical storytelling
• Owing the platform space
• Manuscripts – Peter Marshall *The Grave in the Garden*
• DVD viewing

**Day Five**

• Neely will preach
• Student Presentations

**Course Grading:**

My grading scale is as following:

- 100-93=A
- 92-86=B
- 85-76=C
- 75-70=D
- 68=C-
- 69 and below is failing and is unacceptable for course credit.

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<td>Essay</td>
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<td>Exegetical/Homiletical Paper</td>
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