Course Description

Expository preachers pay attention to what the text says and how it says it. This course takes both content and form seriously. Using a literary/rhetorical approach to the interpretation of biblical narrative, this course unlocks the dynamics of the text and shows how to incorporate those dynamics into our own preaching. Learning experiences include reading, discussion, lecture, practice preaching, listening to sermons, and self-critique.

Course Relationship to the Curriculum

This course provides advanced training in preaching and exegesis. It assumes knowledge of grammatical-historical exegesis as well as the homiletical skills of organization and delivery. The course applies rhetorical and communication theory to the actual practice of ministry, with a view toward helping students communicate well.

Course Objectives

Knowledge:
- Understand a literary/rhetorical method of interpreting biblical narrative.
- Summarize key literary/rhetorical features of biblical narrative.
- Understand models of narrative preaching.
- Critique those models.
- Increase awareness of your strengths and weaknesses in delivery.
- Evaluate narrative sermons.

Skill:
- Exegete biblical narratives using literary/rhetorical methods.
- Preach various styles of narrative sermons (third person, first person, parable, homiletical plot).
- Deliver narrative sermons so that the verbal and non verbal elements reinforce each other.
- Write narrative sermons with clarity and imagination.

Attitude:
- Increase reliance on the Lord while still acting as a faithful steward.
- Gain confidence in your ability to preach.
- Gain confidence in determining the meaning and function of narrative passages.
• Enjoy the variety and artistry of narrative preaching.

**Required Textbooks:**


Reading Packet (PDF in CAMS).

**Course Policies**

• **Attendance and Late Work:** Attendance is required for all sessions. Consult with Dr. Arthurs if this is impossible. Note: *No late work will be accepted*. If you cannot turn in an assignment due to emergency, speak with me.

• **Sermons will be timed.** For every 30 seconds over the time limit, your score will be lowered 3 points.

**Description of Assignments**

• **Storytelling.** Present a cutting from a published narrative (short story, novel, or biography). 2½ pages max (double spaced, 12 pt. font). Present a portion of the narrative in workshop (a time to receive feedback from the class), then present the entire cutting. Use of script is permitted.

• **Third Person Narrative Sermon.** Preach an expository, narrative sermon in the third person from a narrative text. Time limit: ______ mins. Skeletal notes permitted (1/2 page). Bring DVD-R or VHS.

• **First Person Narrative Sermon.** Preach an expository, narrative sermon in the first person from a narrative text. Time limit: ______ mins. no notes permitted. Bring DVD-R or VHS.

**OR**

• **Homiletical Plot/Motivated Sequence.** Preach an expository sermon using Lowry’s Homiletical Plot or Monroe’s Motivated Sequence. Time limit: ______ mins. Skeletal notes permitted (1/2 page). Bring DVD-R or VHS.

• **Parable.** Create and present a parable. Choose a doctrine/idea and decide your purpose, then create a parable to accomplish that purpose. E.g. Doctrine: God’s sovereign guidance; purpose: to comfort. Create a story of getting lost, but arriving at the destination safe and sound. Time limit: 10 mins. no notes permitted. Bring DVD-R or VHS.
• **Reading.** Read assignments as indicated in schedule. Read an additional 100 pp. by the end of the semester.

• **Outside preaching.** Preach one of your class sermons to a group of at least 8 people outside class. After you do so, write a two paragraph report stating (1) where and when you spoke, and (2) what adjustments you made in the sermon.

• **Watching.** Non graded assignment. Watch each of your class assignments by the end of the semester.

*For Th. M. Credit:*

• **Paper.** Choose a topic related to narrative preaching. This topic can have either an applied or theoretical character. Research is required. Present your paper to the class (i.e. summarize it and lead discussion). 10 pp. max. Sample topics:
  - When to use, and not use, costuming for first-person sermons.
  - How to use props.
  - When is it proper and not proper to use biblical narratives as moral exemplars?
  - How to preach Christ in a narrative sermon.

**Grading**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Storytelling</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Third Person Sermon</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>First Person or Hom. Plot Sermon</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Parable</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Outside preaching</td>
<td>5%</td>
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### Schedule

Note: Schedule will probably have to be revised once enrollment is finalized.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic/activity</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sept. 11</td>
<td>Intro to Course</td>
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<td></td>
<td>How to study for a narrative sermon</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept. 18</td>
<td>How to study for a narrative sermon</td>
<td>Reading packet:</td>
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<td></td>
<td>How to preach a narrative sermon</td>
<td>• Graves, <em>Sermon as Symphony</em>, 3-25.</td>
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<td>• Borden, “Is There Really One Big Idea?”</td>
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<td>Sept. 25</td>
<td>How to preach a narrative sermon</td>
<td>Reading Packet:</td>
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<td>• Miller, “Narrative Preaching.”</td>
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<td>• Mathewson, “Bringing Bible Stories to Life.”</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>• Arthurs, “Performing the Story.”</td>
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<td>Oct. 2</td>
<td></td>
<td>Speaking due: Storytelling workshop.</td>
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<td>Oct. 9</td>
<td>How to preach a narrative sermon,</td>
<td>Speaking due: Storytelling performance.</td>
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<td>samples.</td>
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<td>Oct. 23</td>
<td></td>
<td>Reading Week</td>
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<td>Speaking due: Third person sermons.</td>
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<td>Oct. 30</td>
<td>The Homiletical Plot.</td>
<td>Speaking due: Third person sermons.</td>
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<td>Robinson, “Preaching as</td>
<td>Reading: Lowry done by this date.</td>
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<td>Listeners Like It.”</td>
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<td>How to tell a parable.</td>
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<td>Nov. 6</td>
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<td>Speaking due: First-Person or Homiletical Plot</td>
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<td>sermons.</td>
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<td>Nov. 20</td>
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<td>Reading Week</td>
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<td>Speaking due: First-Person or Homiletical Plot.</td>
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<td>Nov. 27</td>
<td>Th. M. papers</td>
<td>Speaking due: Parables.</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Reading Packet:</td>
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<td>• Chapell, “When Narrative Is Not Enough.”</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>• Lischer, “The Limits of Story.”</td>
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<td>Dec. 4</td>
<td>No Class.</td>
<td>All work due: outside preaching, reading report,</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>watching self on video.</td>
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</table>
Selected Bibliography on Narrative Hermeneutics, Exegesis, and Preaching

Evangelical Grammatical/Historical Interpretation


Literary/Rhetorical Interpretation


**Narrative Preaching**


Arthurs, Jeffrey D. “Performing the Story: How to Preach First Person Narrative Sermons.” *Preaching* (March/ April, 1997): 30-35.


Reading Report  
PR 721: Narrative Preaching

Name: ________________________________  
Box: ____________________

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<tr>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Number of pages possible</th>
<th>Number of pages you read</th>
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<tr>
<td>Arthurs, <em>Preaching With Variety.</em></td>
<td>220</td>
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<tr>
<td>Edwards, <em>Effective First Person.</em></td>
<td>181</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lowry, <em>Homiletical Plot.</em></td>
<td>138</td>
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<td>Reading Packet.</td>
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<td>Total</td>
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Number of class sessions you attended (10 possible).  ________  

Did you watch each of your oral assignments on video?  ________
Evaluation Sheet: Storytelling
PR 721, Arthurs

Name: ____________________________________    Time: _____
Selection: _________________________________    Grade: _____

Introduction

______________________________________________________________________________

Use of Voice

Vocal Variety (pitch, pause, pace, punch)

Clarity/projection

Conveys thought through subordination and phrasing

Conveys emotion/mood

______________________________________________________________________________

Use of Body

Posture

Eye Contact

Gestures

Facial Expression

Dress

Movement/Proxemics

______________________________________________________________________________

Overall Effectiveness

Poise

Projection of emotion and ideas
Evaluation Sheet: Third Person Sermon  
PR 721, Arthurs

Name: ____________________________________    Time: _____
Text: ___________________________________     Grade: _____

Structure

Use of intro and/or conclusion (if appropriate)

Plot/organization

Exegesis

Application (direct or oblique)

Use of Language (vivid, concrete, conversational)

Delivery
Evaluation Sheet: First Person Sermon OR Motivated Sequence
PR 721, Arthurs

Name: ____________________________________    Time: _____
Text: ___________________________________     Grade: _____

Structure

Use of intro and/or conclusion (if appropriate)

Plot/organization

______________________________________________________________________________

Exegesis

______________________________________________________________________________

Application (direct or oblique)

______________________________________________________________________________

Use of Language (vivid, concrete, conversational)

______________________________________________________________________________

Delivery
Evaluation Sheet: Parable
PR 721, Arthurs

Name: ________________________________  Time: ______

Topic/summary: ____________________________  Grade: ______

Content:

Communication of truth (direct/oblique?)

Imaginative

______________________________________________________________________________

Use of Language:

Vivid/concrete

Conversational

______________________________________________________________________________

Delivery:

Voice

Body

______________________________________________________________________________

Rhetorical Effect:

Cause us to ponder?

Rebuke/comfort/confirm, etc?

Engage the imagination?