I. Course Description

This course is designed to enable you to construct an expository sermon based upon the skills of exegesis. You will gain experience explaining a biblical passage and delivering a biblical sermon without notes. A year of a biblical language and/or NT 502 Interpreting the New Testament are prerequisites 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 you understand what is required to preach effectively and to practice what you understand. Recitation sessions provide opportunity for you to preach and have your efforts recorded on dvd/video 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, you will:

(A) Develop a basic procedure that moves you from the biblical text to a sermon based on that text.

(B) Explain a term or the meaning of a segment of Scripture; or be able to explain how a passage fits into its context; or the implications of a particular text for theology or action. This will be measured by an exercise in class.

(C) 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 explanation exercise and the final sermon for grading.

(D) Have a working definition of expository preaching.

(E) 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. This will be demonstrated in the construction of your fifteen (15) minute sermon.

(F) Begin to develop a skill in writing a sermon manuscript geared to the way audiences listen. This will be measured by the manuscript you use for your final sermon.

(G) 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 at least seventy-five [75] new illustrations.

(H) Watch and listen to five [5] recorded sermons and determine what makes an effective sermon.

IV. Course Textbooks

Required:


Recommended:


V. Course Requirements and Grading

1. Attendance at lectures and exercises.

2. Develop a filing system for collecting supporting material for sermons. The system can
be on 3x5 cards, 4x6 cards, or in a computer. During the course of the semester, collect and file at least seventy-five (75) illustrations. You will report whether you have completed this assignment on the last day of classes, **Thursday, December 9**th, 2010.

3. Read Robinson, *Biblical Preaching*. Rather than read the book in a single sitting or two, you will profit more through reading it section by section as it is discussed in class. Note the recommended pages for each session in the syllabus. You will be quizzed on your reading. Quizzes are not intended to trick you. They are intended to determine if you have read the material and understood it.

4. Read Stott, *Between Two Worlds*. **A report is due on Tuesday, October 19**th.

   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. What do you disagree? Why?

The assignment should be no more than four (4) pages, double-spaced.

5. You will explain a passage or aspect of a passage so that the audience understands it. This will be a six (6) minute explanation without notes.

6. Prepare an outline and a manuscript for a complete sermon that both explains and applies the passage. This will be a fifteen (15) minute message delivered without notes. The manuscript and outline are due the day you preach.

7. Listen to the CD of sermons for 601—answer briefly the questions on page 11 of this syllabus for each sermon. **Due on Tuesday, November 16**th.

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. All late work will be penalized. When you hand in your assignment, please make sure your name and box number are on the first page.
VII. Course Calendar

Tuesday, September 14: Introduction to each other and the Course

Thursday, September 16: The Worlds of the Expositor
Due: Choose two passages: one to preach and the other to explain. Hand in your passages on a 3x5 card.

Tuesday, September 21: DAY OF PRAYER

Thursday, September 23: What is Expository Preaching?
Reading due: Robinson, Preface and chapter 1.

Tuesday, September 28: What’s the Big Idea?
Reading due: Robinson, Chapter 2, pp. 33-50
Do the exercises at the conclusion of the chapter.

Thursday, September 30: The Essentials of a Well-Planned Sermon
Reading due: Robinson, Chapter 3, pp. 51-70

Tuesday, October 5: Six (6) minute explanation exercise*

*Please note: The exercise can be no more than six (6) minutes in which you will explain an element of your biblical passage. (See the supplemental sheet on Explanation Exercises).

Deliver the explanation without notes. Be as enthusiastic as possible as you deliver the message.

Thursday, October 7: Six (6) minute explanation exercise*

Tuesday, October 12: READING WEEK

Thursday, October 14: READING WEEK

Tuesday, October 19: Six (6) minute explanation exercise*

Due: Report on Stott, Between Two Worlds. What is the central idea of the book? What did you find in the book that was new to you? Is there anything you disagreed with? No
more than four (4) pages double-spaced.

Thursday, October 21: Do I Have Anything to Preach?
**Reading due:** Robinson, Chapter 4, pp. 73-96 on the developmental question. Do the exercises.

Tuesday, October 26: Application: The “So What” of Biblical Preaching

Thursday, October 28: The Idea and Why We Preach It
**Reading due:** Robinson, Chapter 5, pp. 101-113

Tuesday, November 2: The Shapes Sermons Take
**Reading due:** Robinson, Chapter 6, pp. 115-137

Thursday, November 4: Outlines: The Skeletons of Sermons
**Reading due:** Robinson, Chapter 6, pp. 139-164

Tuesday, November 9: **READING WEEK**

Thursday, November 11: **READING WEEK**

Tuesday, November 16: Supporting Material
**Reading Due:** Robinson, Chapter 7, pp. 139-162
**Due:** Sermon Analysis

Thursday, November 18: Taking Off and Landing Well
**Reading due:** Robinson, Chapter 8, pp. 165-182

Tuesday, November 23: **NO CLASS**

Thursday, November 25: **THANKSGIVING**

Tuesday, November 30: Fifteen (15) minute sermons

Due: The remainder of Robinson, *Biblical Preaching.*

*Note:* Your final sermon will be recorded. You are to bring to class a DVD-R. You can purchase DVD-Rs at Media Services (third floor, Academic Center).

**Hand in:** Manuscript and outline are due the day you preach.
Thursday, December 2: Fifteen (15) minute sermons

Tuesday, December 7: Fifteen (15) minute sermons

Thursday, December 9: Fifteen (15) minute sermons

Hand in: Hand in a 3x5 card describing what kind of filing system you have set up and that you have collected at least 75 illustrations.

A PERSONAL NOTE: My goal in this course is to do everything I can to help you become an effective communicator of God’s Word. I don’t want the course to be an excessive burden to you and I have done my best to keep the requirements reasonable. Help me to help you by doing the assignments when they are due and do them with some thought and reasonable care.
VIII. Your Sermon Will be Judged 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?
Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary
PR 601 HA & HB
Preaching Principles and Practice
in Preparing Relevant and Biblical Sermons
Fall 2010
Dr. Haddon W. Robinson

Did you attend all classes? Yes_______ No_______
If “no”, how many did you miss? __________ (give number)

How many illustrations did you collect? ________________ (give number)
(deduction will be taken off of final grade for failure to turn in this assignment)

Did you develop a file system? Please describe:

Have you read Robinson’s Biblical Preaching? ________________
How many pages? ________________

Report on Stott’s Between Two Worlds __________________ (grade) 10%
Explanation exercise __________________ (grade) 20%
Quizzes __________________ (grade) 5%
Sermon listening exercise __________________ (grade) 15%
Fifteen minute sermon & manuscript __________________ (grade) 40%
Fifteen minute sermon outline __________________ (grade) 10%

(Late work will be penalized)

Course Grade __________________
EXPLANATION EXERCISE

The explanation exercise is not a sermon. It is simply an exercise that focuses on the explanation of something in a passage. There are several different things you might explain.

1. You might explain the meaning of a term in a passage. For example, you might explain what the reference to the high priest is in the book of Hebrews refers to and why it is significant.

2. You might explain the significance of some incident or action in a passage. For example, why did David pour out the water that three of his mighty men risked their lives to obtain for him.

3. You might explain how a passage in the Bible relates to context. For example, how II Samuel 11:1 relates to the previous chapters and to the incident that follows it.

4. You might explain how a familiar passage of Scripture is sometimes misapplied. For example, Psalm 11:3 is sometimes used in a sermon to urge the congregation to guard the foundations of the faith or of a nation.

You are not limited to any of these. Simply take something that may not be clear and explain it so that it is clear.

This is not a mini-sermon. In your introduction you will want to tell us what you are going to explain and why it is important. Then give us the explanation. Any illustration you use will further the explanation.

A significant skill in expository preaching is to explain the biblical text or parts of the text clearly. The purpose of this experience is to help you to develop that ability.
Format for Sermons/Explanation Exercises

Place your name and box number either on a cover sheet or at the top of the first page.

Text: This is the biblical passage from which you are basing your explanation

Subject: What are you talking about? Don’t forget to use an interrogative who, what, why, when, where, which, how.

Complement: What are you saying about what he is talking about?

Exegetical Idea: Subject + Complement = Main Idea

Purpose: Why are you doing this exercise? (Besides the fact I have assigned it). A purpose is specific and measurable. Obviously your purpose is to explain a term, describe a flow of thought, show the importance of the context, etc.

What follows is your outline. Remember to write your outline in full sentences. Put transitions into parentheses. Outlines should have a complete introduction, conclusion, and transition written out in full. A clear outline will be clear to your listeners and to you. Your introduction will point up what the audience might not know and why it’s important to know it. Your conclusion will summarize the explanation in two or three sentences.

Common Problems with Explanation Exercise Outlines

1. The move/point statements are not full, complete sentences.
   Make sure that all of the sentences in the outlines are full, complete sentences and not sentence fragments, phrases, or questions. Questions are for transitions, not for idea statements.

2. The Explanation idea is not developed clearly.
   Remember, S + C = Idea. Sometimes the idea’s development is not clear. Move/point statements are to build toward the development and clarity of the central idea of the Explanation Exercise.

3. The Explanation idea is not clearly stated and/or restated.
   Stating and restating the idea at least three times will help your listeners get it! At the end of the Exercise you will want your listeners to be able to state clearly the result of your explanations.

4. The Explanation Exercise becomes a mini-sermon
   Remember, the emphasis of this exercise is to deal primarily with the first Functional Question: “What does this mean?”
   You don’t have to apply it, but you do have to explain something.
   You can use illustrations to help explain the idea or the steps toward explaining it.
Explanation Exercise/Some Things to Remember

1. State what you are going to explain and why you need to explain it.
2. Be clear. That is, err on the side of being too clear.
   Vernon Grounds said that he wanted to be so clear in his preaching that he tried to “get it down to being so simple that I am almost ashamed to preach it.”
3. Before reading the passage, give reasons for the reading. Give your listeners why you are looking at this passage. What don’t they know?
4. Use the Greek or Hebrew word only when there is no other way to get the meaning across.
5. Ask yourself, “What words, concepts, context, thought, or development needs to be explained to my listeners?” The question is, “What does this mean? Does this concept or part of it need to be explained?”
   a. Is the author of Scripture explaining an idea?
   b. Is this what my audience needs? Are there elements in the passage that the biblical writer takes for granted that my audience may need to know?
6. Put your explanation exercise together with the understanding that you are not necessarily talking to seminarians, but to average men and women who are in your church.
7. Can you use illustrations? Yes! Illustrations can help to explain.
8. You will have eight (8) minutes for the exercise. Be clear. Be creative. Enjoy! It’s not nearly as difficult as it seems.
Questions to Consider When Listening to or Reading a Sermon

For the CD listening assignment: Please 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.