

EMP5325 RHETORIC AND POETICS FOR PREACHING

Fall 2017 Classes Wednesdays: 11:00-1:00

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Please email or phone during the day or evenings to consult or to make an appointment.

Course Purpose

The purpose of this course is to provide an introduction to rhetoric and poetics as they relate to preaching. Rhetoric is concerned with the art of persuasion/ identification; it is concerned with oral ways of ordering thought; with words used well and effectively. Poetics is concerned with literary character, plot, metaphor, stories, and the like, and with ways of constructing what we say to maximum effect. What we may learn from ancient and contemporary sources can enhance our creativity and communication skills.

There were five ‘canons’ in ancient rhetoric: Invention (discovering what to say); Arrangement (how to order it most effectively); Style (how to best express it—elocution, figures of speech, etc.); Delivery; and Memory. We will mainly concentrate on the first three; poetics will be handled through literary theory.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

Students successfully completing this course will be able to demonstrate the following learning outcomes:

(a) in respect of general academic skills

Use language in a way that enhances its persuasive ability. Speak in ways that encourage identification of the hearer with the subject matter. Gain the ability to critique using different literary criticisms and perspectives.

(b) in respect of the understanding of the content of one or more theological disciplines
Help students to understand theology as intentional discourse with planned effect.

(c) in respect of personal and spiritual formation

Students will find their spirituality deepened through greater awareness of the role and action of God in religious discourse.

(d) in respect of ministerial and public leadership

Students will develop skills with preaching.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Photocopied materials *plus*:

Bonnycastle, Stephen. *In Search of Authority: An Introductory Guide to Literary Theory*.
Third edition. Peterborough, ON: Broadview Press, 2007.

Resner, Andre. *Preaching and Cross: Person and Message in Theology and Rhetoric*. Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1999.

REQUIREMENTS

- 1) Class attendance.
- 2) Assigned weekly readings. Come to class prepared to discuss them.
- 3) A 500 word book review of Resner, *Preaching and Cross*, due October 11.
- 3) Two (10 min. max.) sermons, one preached (with written copies for the class) and a second one handed in as per the sign-up sheet:
 - a) One will utilize rhetorical theory and will be submitted before reading week *along with a brief rhetorical analysis of your sermon*.
 - b) The second sermon will be deliberately poetic and imaginative, *submitted with a brief poetics analysis of your sermon*.
- 4) Evaluation of class sermons using class theory.
- 5) A 15-20 page essay on an aspect of rhetoric or poetics, the topic to be decided with the instructor, *employing at least eight of the books on the bibliography*.
- 6) Students from other than Christian traditions are welcome in this class: some of the readings, or other requirements may be adjusted in consultation with the instructor to best meet your needs.

COURSE OUTLINE

- 1) Sept 13 Introduction. Advertising. Schemes & Tropes
- 2) Sept 20 **The Basics of Rhetoric; Persuasion & Identification**
 Long, “And How Shall They Hear?”
 Corbett, “Five Canons of Rhetoric,”
 Sermon: Charles G. Adams, “Faith Critiques Faith”
 Burke: *Traditional Motives*, 49-65. (Note that subsequent pages will be read in subsequent weeks.)
 Be prepared to discuss this sermon in the following categories: Subject matter (What is it about? What is said about it?); Congregation (note details from the sermon that indicate to you who the preacher is addressing). Whom does the preacher exclude?); Character of the preacher (Do you like this person? Do your feelings toward the preacher change?); Authority of the Sermon (What supports the preacher’s claims—eg. Scripture, the office of preacher, experience, church tradition, doctrine, etc.); use of schemes.
- 3) Sept 27 **Ethos, Pathos, and Logos; Formal Appeal**
 Corbett, “Discovery of Arguments” pp. 80-94.
 Craddock, “Is There Still Room for Rhetoric?”
 Corbett, “Three Kinds...” + “Relevance....” 28-31.
 Sermons: Coffin, “Alex’s Death”
 Theissen, “Life—A Hymn to God...”

Burke: *Traditional Motives*, 65-78.

Be prepared to discuss the sermons according to schemes, ethos and pathos.

- 4) Oct 4 **Logos: The Canons of Invention and Arrangement; Imagination**
 Aristotle, *Rhetoric* (photocopied selections)
 Burke: *Traditional Motives*, 78-90.
 Troeger, "Imagining a Sermon"
 Carolyn Ann Knight, "When All Hell Breaks Loose"
 Read the sermons with a view to:
 a) Definition, Comparison, Relationship, Circumstances, Testimony.
 b) Three Kinds of Appeal—Persuasion; Syllogism; Enthymeme.
 c) Introduction, Statement of Fact, Confirmation, Refutation,
- 5) Oct 11 **Seminar on the textbook:** Andre Resner, *Preaching and Cross: Person and Message in Theology and Rhetoric*. Come to class a 500-word review of this book with a question you are prepared to discuss in relation to the book.
- 6) Oct 18 **Class Sermons:** demonstrate your use of rhetoric:
Due: First Sermon (preach and hand in with a rhetorical analysis of it).
 Preachers: 1) 2) 3) 4)
- READING WEEK: Begin writing your essay – consult with the instructor beforehand.
- 7) Nov 1 **Poetics: Metaphor, Simile, Analogy, Allegory**
 Hawkes, *Metaphor*
 David Reid, "The Problem with Allegory in Preaching"
 Sermons: Fred Craddock, "Have You Ever Heard John Preach?"
 Barbara Brown Taylor, "Bothering God"
 Be prepared to discuss the sermons according to tropes (refer to class 1 materials).
- 8) Nov 8 **Poetics & The Canon of Style:**
 Aristotle, *Poetics* (photocopied selections)
 Danesi, Marcel. *Poetic Logic*, 19-52.
 Sermons: Tom Troeger "Rising River" (preaching an image)
 Alyce McKenzie on preaching Proverbs (preaching a verse)
 Be prepared to discuss the sermons according to poetics theory to date.
- 9) Nov 15 **Poetics: Performance and 'Proclamation' Language + Literary theory**
 Bonnycastle, *In Search of Authority*, Part One
 Sermons: Barbara Lundblad, "After Emmaus"
 Vashti Murphy McKenzie, "Same No More"
 Be prepared to discuss the sermons according to poetics theory to date.

- 10) Nov 22 **Poetics: Types of Literary Criticism**
 Bonnycastle, *In Search of Authority*, Part Two.
 Sermons: Charles Rice, “Sermon for Easter Day”
 Fleming Rutledge, “The Trinity in the Last Ditch.”
 Be prepared to discuss the sermons according to poetics theory to date.
- 11) Nov 29 **Poetics: Types of Literary Criticism**
 Bonnycastle, *In Search of Authority*, Parts Three and Four.
- 12) Dec 6 Class Sermons
 Preachers: 1) 2) 3) 4)

FINAL EVALUATION

Class preparation, attendance, informed participation

	and book review:	20%
Essay:		40%
Sermon 1:		20%
Sermon 2:		<u>20%</u>
Total:		100%

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