



Birmingham Theological Seminary
2200 Briarwood Way
Birmingham, Alabama 35243
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PS1945 MINISTRY OF THE WORD I Syllabus

Semester: Fall 2025

Day & Time: Tuesday 5:30-7:20 pm

Professor: Rev. Jackie D. Gaston

Email: jackie.gaston@comcast.net

Course: PS1945 Ministry of the Word I

Room: A201

Credits: 2

Phone: 256-541-4103 (cell)

Course Note: This course, in accordance with the historical theological position held by the mainstream of evangelical churches, is limited to male students preparing for ordination. (Refer to “The Role of Women in the Church a Rationale for the BTS Position”)

Course Description: A foundational course in the preparation and delivery of expository sermons. The course is designed to acquaint the students with the theology of preaching, the selection and analysis of a text, sermon development, explanation, illustration, application, sermon introductions, and conclusions. This course will place emphasis on the practical preparation and delivery of sermons and give each student several opportunities to experience homiletical delivery and evaluation. It is highly recommended to have taken BT1205 - Hermeneutics prior to this course.

Course Objectives:

1. The student will be able to articulate a Biblical theology of preaching based on Biblical texts.
2. The student will be able to craft appropriate illustrations for sermon points.
3. The student will be able to formulate sermon propositions consisting of textual themes and a Fallen Condition Focuses.
4. The student will be able to appropriately outline sermon textual units.
5. The student will be able to exegete sermon text units to truthfully explain the meaning to a congregation.
6. The student will be able to formulate appropriate sermon Introductions and Conclusions for sermon texts.
7. The student will be able to proficiently deliver oral expository sermons of up to 30 minute durations.

Required Texts:

*Chapel, Bryan. *Christ-Centered Preaching: Redeeming the Expository Sermon*, 3rd ed. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2018. (404 pp)

* Gaston, Jackie D. *The Ministry of the Word from the Word: Mediations from Scripture on the Art and Craft of Preaching*. [This is an unpublished work for my DMin dissertation/project, and will be emailed to you.] (181 pp)

*Murray, David. *How Sermons Work*. Carlisle, PA: EP Books, 2011. (112 pp)

*Westminster Larger Catechism Q&A 154-160; Westminster Shorter Catechism Q&A 88-90

Collateral or Recommended Texts:

*Griffiths, Jonathan I. *Preaching in the New Testament: An Exegetical and Biblical-Theological Study*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2017.

Course Requirements and Assessments:

1. Attend all classes
2. Read the following books:

*Chapel, Bryan. *Christ-Centered Preaching: Redeeming the Expository Sermon*, 3rd ed. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2018. (1st or 2nd ed is acceptable)

*Murray, David. *How Sermons Work*. Carlisle, PA: EP Books, 2011.

* Gaston, Jackie D. *The Ministry of the Word from the Word: Mediations from Scripture on the Art and Craft of Preaching*.

*Westminster Larger Catechism Q&A 154-160; Westminster Shorter Catechism Q&A 88-90

3. Reflection Paper of 7-10 pages in length on “The Theology of Preaching” from the passages covered in *The Ministry of the Word from the Word*. Choose 7-10 of the ones most meaningful to your preaching ministry.
4. Book Review and Critique of David Murray’s *How Sermons Work*; 5 pages.
5. Complete in written form the questions for review and discussion and exercises at the end of each chapter in *Christ-Centered Preaching* as assigned for each week. You must write or print the questions and answers and turn them in to the professor each week they are due. This assures that you have done your reading and are keeping up with the concepts being presented.
6. Prepare sermons and other oral presentations as assigned per the weekly schedule. You must dress as you would dress if you were preaching on Sunday in your church, preferably in coat/tie. [previously preached sermons are not allowed; each one must be newly constructed]

Grading:

1. Reflection paper on “The Theology of Preaching” - 15% (Due on last class)

2. Written answers and class discussion on *Christ-Centered Preaching* - 20% (Due after each class)
3. Sermons preached in class - 40%
4. Book Review and Critique of *How Sermons Work* by David Murray - 10% (Due last class)
5. Reading - 15%

BTS Format, Style, and Writing Standards:

All research papers must be formatted in accordance with Turabian Chicago standards including the title page. All papers are to be #12 font Times New Roman and Double-Spaced. Any paper not conforming to these standards will automatically be dropped one letter grade. Please see the BTS Turabian Style Guide for more information on turning in papers and assignments.

The BTS Turabian Style Guide and other resources are available on the BTS Writing Center webpage: <https://www.btswritingcenter.net/>

In addition, the Writing Center runs 2-3 Writing Workshops every semester. They are very helpful and highly recommended.

BTS Plagiarism / Generative AI Policy

In addition to the BTS plagiarism policy, BTS is implementing a new Generative AI policy. Unless clearly directed by the instructor, the students should submit their own work, independent of artificial intelligence tools. Use of generative AI to write papers or to write significant portions of assignments is considered an ethical violation of our Student Code of Conduct and to be a violation of general academic integrity, which could result in a zero on the assignment and/or a lowered letter grade for the course by the professor. If determined to be an egregious violation, it could lead to further sanctions administered through the Academic Committee, including expulsion from BTS.

Course Schedule: Homework Assignments due the next week/class (subject to change based on number of students)

Class 1 – 9/2/25: Outline texts for preaching in 1 Peter with a statement of the theme of each section; Read Chapel CCP chapters 1-3 and answer study questions on chapters 1-3. On one written sheet prepare your **Testimony** and explain your **Call to the Ministry** including the person, the event, and the Scripture passage that has most influenced your call. You will orally present your testimony and call to the class next week. (5–10-minute presentation)

Class 2 – 9/9/25: Develop Fallen Condition Focus (FCF) on Sermon Texts in 1 Peter; Read Chapel CCP chapter 4 and answer questions; Prepare to give a 5–10-minute **Devotional** on one of the texts in 1 Peter next class.

Class 3 – 9/16/25: Develop a two-to-four-point outline from the English text of 1 Peter without the use of helps for each of the sermon texts in 1 Peter;
Read Chapel CCP chapter 5 and answer questions

Class 4 – 9/23/25: Select five texts from 1 Peter, exegete and develop based on the principles in chapter 5; Read Chapel CCP chapters 6-7 and answer the questions;
Prepare to present an **Illustration** based upon a theme from any passage in 1 Peter next week in class.

Class 5 – 9/30/25: Read Chapel CCC chapter 8 and answer the questions;
Write ten applications for each of the five texts;

Determine which of the five chosen texts you will use for:

- 1) a one-point exposition
- 2) a twenty-five minute sermon
- 3) a thirty minute sermon
- 4) a thirty-minute final sermon

Class 6 – 10/7/25: Outline the five texts based upon the principles found in chapter 6;
Read Chapel CCC chapter 9 and answer the questions;
Prepare to present an **Introduction** and **Conclusion** based on one the five texts next week in class.

Class 7 – 10/14/25: [this class may need to meet via Zoom as Professor will be out of town; or will find another professor to cover]

Read Chapel CCP chapters 10-11 (and Appendix 1 & 12) and answer questions

Prepare a **one-point exposition** consisting of: a statement of the text, a statement of the proposition, a statement of the point; development of the point through explanation, exegesis, expansion, illustration, application, and conclusion of point.

Fill out sermon evaluation forms in class.

BTS FALL BREAK INCLUDES 10/21/25 - we will not meet

Class 8 – 10/28/25: Read Appendix 2,3,4,5.

Prepare a **twenty-five minute sermon**

Fill out sermon evaluation forms in class.

Class 9 – 11/4/25: Read Appendix 6&7.

Prepare a **twenty-five minute sermon**

Fill out sermon evaluation forms in class.

Class 10 – 11/11/25: Read Appendix 8,9,10.

Prepare **thirty-minute sermon**

Fill out sermon evaluation forms in class.

Class 11 – 11/18/25:

Prepare a **thirty-minute sermon.**

Fill out sermon evaluation forms in class.

Class 12 – 11/25/25

Prepare a **thirty-minute sermon**.

Fill out sermon evaluation forms in class.

Class 13 - 12/2/25

Prepare a **thirty-minute sermon**.

Fill out sermon evaluation forms in class.

Class 14 - 12/9/25: Final Class; Turn in Reflection Paper on your Theology of Preaching, and Book Critique on *How Sermons Work* and finish all reading by 12/12/15. Complete final course questionnaire.

Deliver final sermons.

Fill out sermon evaluation form in class.

Attendance Policy:

Students are expected to demonstrate punctuality and attend all class sessions. Any absences should be communicated to the professor beforehand. Students may miss up to three classes with impunity. It is extremely important to be present in class, since you will be making oral presentations and preaching with time and schedule constraints, if you know that you will be absent notify the professor ASAP.

Class Policies and Procedures:

- BTS highly recommends using handwritten note taking methods in class and keeping computer usage to a minimum.
- Other electronics should be used sparingly.
- All assignments must be submitted by email by 11:59 (CDT/CST) on the due date.
- Late assignments will incur a -3-point deduction per weekday after the due date, except in cases of emergency communicated to the professor.
- Missed tests/exams may only be made up with an excused absence, preferably in advance of class. Excused absence tests/exams must be made up before the final day of the semester.

Course Bibliography / Extended Bibliography

Adam, Peter. *Speaking God's Words: A Practical Theology of Preaching*. Vancouver: Regent College Publishing, 1996.

Adams, Jay. *Preaching With Purpose*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1982.

Akin, Daniel L, David L. Allen, and Ned L. Mathews. *Text-Driven Preaching: God's Word at the Heart of Every Sermon*. Nashville: B&H Publishing, 2010.

- Beeke, Joel R. *Reformed Preaching: Proclaiming God's Word from the Heart of the Preacher to the Heart of His People*. Wheaton: Crossway, 2018.
- Andrew W. Blackwood. *Doctrinal Preaching for Today: Case Studies of Bible Passages*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1956.
- Broadus, John A. *On the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons*. Birmingham: Solid Ground Books, 2005.
- Capill, Murray. *The Heart is the Target: Preaching Practical Application from Every Text*. Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing, 2014.
- Chapel, Bryan. *Christ-Centered Preaching: Redeeming the Expository Sermon*, 2nd ed. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2004.
- Chapel, Bryan. *Christ-Centered Sermons: Models of Redemptive Preaching*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2013.
- Chapel, Bryan. *The Hardest Sermons You'll Ever Have to Preach*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2011.
- Chapel, Bryan. *Using Illustrations to Preach with Power*, rev. ed. Wheaton: Crossway Books, 2001.
- Clowney, Edmund P. *Preaching Christ in All of Scripture*. Wheaton: Crossway Books, 2003.
- Davis, Dale Ralph. *The Word Became Fresh: How to Preach from Old Testament Narrative Texts*. Scotland: Christian Focus, 2006.
- Goldsworthy, Graeme. *Preaching the Whole Bible as Christian Scripture: The Application of Biblical Theology to Expository Preaching*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000.
- Gordon, T. David. *Why Johnny Can't Preach: The Media Have Shaped the Messengers*. Phillipsburg: P&R Publishing, 2009.
- Griffiths, Jonathan I. *Preaching in the New Testament: An Exegetical and Biblical-Theological Study*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2017.
- Hughes, Jack. *Expository Preaching with Word Pictures*. Great Britain: Christian Focus, 2001.
- Johnson, Dennis E. *Him We Proclaim: Preaching Christ from All the Scriptures*. Phillipsburg: P&R Publishing Co, 2007.
- Kaiser, Jr. Walter C. *Toward an Exegetical Theology: Biblical Exegesis for Preaching and Teaching*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book, 1981.
- Keller, Timothy. *Preaching: Communicating Faith in an Age of Skepticism*. New York: Viking, 2015.

- Koller, Charles W. *How to Preach Without Notes*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1964.
- Lloyd-Jones, D. Martyn. *Preaching and Preachers*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1971.
- Logan, Samuel T. *The Preacher and Preaching: Reviving the Art*. Phillipburg: P&R Publishing Co., 1986.
- MacArthur, John. *Rediscovering Expository Preaching: Balancing the Scene and Art of Biblical Exposition*. Dallas: Word Publishing, 1992. [Now the title is *Preaching: How to Preach Biblically*, 2005.]
- McDill, Wayne. *12 Essential Skills for Great Preaching*. 2nd ed. Nashville: B&H Publishing, 2006.
- Millar, Gary and Phil Campbell. *Saving Eutychus: How to Preach God's Word and Keep People Awake*. Sydney: MatthisMedia, 2022.
- Mohler, Jr. R. Albert, et al. *Feed My Sheep: A Passionate Plea for Preaching*. Orlando: Soli Deo Gloria Publications, 2002, 2008.
- Murray, David. *How Sermons Work*. Carlisle, PA: EP Books, 2011.
- Perkins, William. *The Art of Prophesying*. London: Banner of Truth, 1996.
- Piper, John. *Expository Exultation: Christian Preaching as Worship*. Wheaton: Crossway Publishing, 2018.
- Piper, John. *The Supremacy of God in Preaching*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2004.
- Robinson, Haddon and Larson, Craig Brian. *The Art and Craft of Biblical Preaching*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005.
- Robinson, Haddon. *Biblical Preaching*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academics, 2001.
- Ryle, J.C. *Simplicity in Preaching*. Peterborough: H&E Publishing, 2019.
- Spurgeon, C.H. *Lectures to My Students*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1980.
- Spurgeon, Charles H. *An All-Around Ministry: Addresses to Ministers and Students*. Bala Cynwyd, PA: Ichthus Publications, 2014.
- Stott, John R.W. *Between Two Worlds: The Art of Preaching in the Twentieth Century*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982.
- Van Mastricht, Petrus. *The Best Method of Preaching*. Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books, 2013.

Wiersbe, Warren and David Wiersbe. *The Elements of Preaching*. Wheaton: Tyndale House, 1986.

GRADING CRITERIA AND ASSESSMENT RUBRIC

A to A-	B to B-	C to C-	D to D-
Correct spelling and grammar/punctuation	Minor errors in spelling or grammar/punctuation	Multiple errors in spelling or grammar/punctuation per page	Difficult to read due to English writing errors
Smooth writing that provides for effective and efficient reading	Writing is acceptable, but not as organized and coherent	Writing is not smooth, sometimes confusing and inconsistent	Writing lacks clarity, focus, structure, and is incoherent
Person and format are proper for assignment	Person and format are inconsistent	Person and format are not appropriate	Person and format are totally inappropriate
Scripture, paraphrases, quotes, and summaries are appropriately used, cited, and clearly supports main argument	Scripture, paraphrases, quotes, and summaries are appropriate but need more depth and use of critical thinking	Scripture, paraphrases, quotes, and summaries are inadequate for main argument and do not reflect understanding	Scripture, paraphrases, quotes, and summaries are improperly used, over used, under used, or cited in error
Paper completely conforms to Turabian's <i>Manual for Writers</i>	Paper generally conforms to Turabian's <i>Manual for Writers</i>	Paper somewhat conforms to Turabian's <i>Manual for Writers</i>	Paper does not conform to Turabian's <i>Manual for Writers</i>

BTS Outcomes Evaluation

Please rank each outcome on a scale of 1-5

1: this outcome is not covered in this class

2: this outcome is only touched on in this class

3: this outcome is discussed in conjunction with class material

4: this outcome lightly assessed as part of course assessment (one assignment)

5: this outcome is fully integrated into the assessment of this course (multiple assignments)

1. Scripture: Students will effectively articulate the truth of Scripture and Scripture as truth, engaged with learning biblical knowledge and reformed principles of the supremacy of Scripture as God's word.
2. Reformed Theology: Students will be able to engage and reproduce the primary and essential elements of Reformed Theology.
3. Local Church: Students will be engaged in applied ministry projects in the local church
4. Wisdom: Students will grow in character; increasing in their demonstration of wisdom and its fruits.
5. Discipleship: Students will be able to understand and articulate the nature and importance of discipleship—both ordinary (means of grace) and extraordinary (biblical counseling).
6. Communication: Students will grow in the efficacy of their communication (articulation, teaching/speaking, and preaching—respective to various departments) both in content knowledge and rhetorical strategies.
7. Worldview: Students will demonstrate a growing ability to apply God's word to all spheres of life, evidenced through class discussion and other assigned assessments.
8. Leadership: Students will grow in their understanding of godly leadership and ability to lead others in service of the local church.

Outcome	Rank	Rational (one sentence)
Scripture	5	Expository preaching entails explaining the truth of the Biblical passage; the expository preacher has no authority but that which comes from Scripture's authority as God's Word.
Reformed Theology	5	Interpretation and explanation of Biblical texts within the boundaries of Reformed theology (i.e. Westminster Confession of Faith) is expected.

Local Church	3	Students will be encouraged to accept preaching opportunities in the local church during and after this course.
Wisdom	5	Critique and feedback on your preaching promotes wisdom for both the preacher and the congregation.
Discipleship	5	Preaching is the primary means the pastor utilizes in discipling his congregation.
Communication	5	We will be preaching 4-5 full length sermons and speaking in other capacities.
Worldview	5	Real life application in preaching is essential in promoting growth in holiness.
Leadership	5	Preaching is leading the congregation in the worship of God.