

UNIVERSITY OF DUBUQUE THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
MN633; Preaching from New Testament Books
Fall 2024

Instructor: Timothy M. Slemmons

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Credits: 3 hours

Grading Options: Either letter grade or pass/fail.

Prerequisite: Proclaiming the Word (MN640) or Expository Preaching (MN642).

Course Description:

This elective course in preaching builds on skills and knowledge acquired in Proclaiming the Word (MN640). In particular, it examines a complex of interpretive, theological, and homiletical considerations that attend preaching faithfully from the New Testament epistles. Students will be expected to reflect on the exegetical, theological, Christological, paracletic, and practical issues at stake in New Testament preaching; gain a working knowledge of a selected epistle or epistles and the place their role in the functional canon of the church; engage the homiletical approaches of pastors and scholars who are distinguished in the field of preaching; and produce original sermonic material (sermons, sermon outlines, a preaching plan or devotional material) that faithfully communicate the good news of Jesus Christ as revealed in these epistles.

Course Objectives:

In particular, this course aims to provide:

- Practice in exegesis, interpretation, theological reflection, and preaching based on select New Testament epistles.
- Exposure to biblical scholarship and homiletical literature with particular focus on select epistles.
- Collegial assessment toward the development and formation of homiletical skills.
- Engagement with the theology and preaching of distinguished preachers/scholars who exemplify faithful and effective communication of the gospel.

Course Requirements:

Successful completion of this course will be based on the following criteria for assessment:

- An online quiz on the content of the Johannine epistles — (15%)
- Two sermons (each submitted in a 5 pp. Word file; the sermon should not exceed 4 pp., plus a 1 p. sermon outline, with each part consisting of a complete sentence); distance students will also submit each sermon by video; residential students will preach each sermon in class – (50% total or 25% each)

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- Final Project (approx. 12 pp. total): Write a (5 pp.) exegetical survey of the Johannine epistles: their structure, argument, and theology, concluding with:
 - **either** (min. 7 pp.) a proposed teaching or preaching plan for interpreting the Johannine epistles in their entirety (in so many sermons/lessons over so many weeks); each sermon or lesson plan (consisting of 1 p. per proposed sermon or lesson) should identify (1) the primary biblical/theological claim; (2) a focus statement (what the sermon will be about), (3) a function statement (what the sermon hopes to achieve), and (4) the key points that will form the main sections or divisions of the sermon (a sermon outline);
 - **or** (min. 7 pp.) seven devotionals (1 p. each) based on texts from the Johannine epistles— (25%)
- Attendance, class participation, discussion, and peer review – (20 %)

Bibliography:

Required Texts:

- Augustine, *Homilies on the First Epistle of John: The Works of St. Augustine*, transl. Ramsey (Hyde Park,, NY: New City Press, 2008); ISBN: 978-1565482832 (cloth) or 978-1-56548-289-0 (paper).
- Robert Candlish, *1 John* (Geneva Series) (Edinburgh, UK: Banner of Truth, 1994) ISBN: 9780851516622
- Karen J. Jobes, *1, 2, and 3 John* (Zondervan Commentary on the New Testament) (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Academic, 2014) ISBN: 978-0310244165
- Johannes Oecolampadius, *Sermons on the First Epistle of John (A Handbook for the Christian Life)*, transl. Timothy Matthew Slemmons. Independently published, 2017) (ISBN: 978-1668519998 (cloth by Barnes & Noble Press) or 978-1975892029 (paper by Kindle Direct).
- Timothy M. Slemmons, *Groans of the Spirit: Homiletical Dialectics in an Age of Confusion* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2010), ISBN: 978-1606089040

Other readings (.pdfs) may be added to the reading list, along with video/audio links (URLs).

Recommended Texts:

- Colin G. Kruse, *The Letters of John (The Pillar New Testament Commentary)* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000) ISBN: 978-0802876676
- D. Moody Smith, *First, Second, and Third John: Interpretation: A Biblical Commentary*

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for Teaching and Preaching (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1991)
ISBN-13: 978-0804231473

- N. T. Wright, *Early Christian Letters for Everyone* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2011) ISBN: 978-0664227982