

Birmingham Theological Seminary
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Fall 2019

DM9108 Preaching in a Neo-Pagan World

Distance

Professor: Dr. Jim Maples

Class Hours: 3

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COURSE PURPOSE

The purpose of this course is to explore the impact that Neo-pagan culture has had upon the contemporary Church and to better understand the role and effectiveness of expository preaching in combating these forces.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

1. The student will become informed about the current state of culture, particularly as it relates to the ministry.
2. The student will develop an understanding of how Neo-paganism in its various forms has affected the Church.
3. The student will evaluate cultural issues and their impact on society and the Church.
4. The student will gain a greater understanding and appreciation for expository preaching.
5. The student will explore the various approaches in which preaching, especially expository preaching, can be used to counter pagan cultural influence in the Church.

COURSE TEXTS

Required Texts:

Dabney, R. L. *Evangelical Eloquence, A Course of Lectures on Preaching*. Carlisle, PA: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1999.

Kaiser, Walter C., Jr. *Toward an Exegetical Theology: Biblical Exegesis for Preaching and Teaching*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1991.

Lloyd-Jones, D. Martyn. *Preaching and Preachers*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1972.

MacArthur, John. *Right Thinking in a World Gone Wrong: A Biblical Response to Today's Most Controversial Issues*. Eugene: Harvest House Publishers, 2009.

Martin, Albert. *What's Wrong with Preaching Today?* Carlisle: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1997.

McGoldrick, James. *Christianity and Its Competitors, The New Faces of Old Heresy*. Ross-shire, Scotland: Christian Focus Publications, 2006.

Thielicke, Helmut. *The Trouble with the Church: A Call for Renewal*. Trans and ed. John W. Doberstein. New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1965.

Wells, David F. *Losing Our Virtue: Why the Church Must Recover Its Moral Vision*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1999.

GRADING

Book Critiques	30%
Research Paper	25%
Sermon Analysis	20%
Sermon	10%
Biblical Exegesis/Sermon Prep	10%
Annotated Bibliography	5%

REQUIREMENTS FOR DISTANCE STUDENTS

Annotated Bibliography

Submit an annotated bibliography of at least 15 books or journal articles that are relevant for the study of Neo-paganism.

Biblical Exegesis/Sermon Prep

The student will submit a biblical exegesis and sermon preparation outline on an assigned passage.

Book Critiques

Submit book critiques for the following course texts: Dabney, Lloyd-Jones, Martin, McGoldrick, Thielicke, and Wells. The critiques are due on the dates shown in the course outline. They will be discussed in class those same dates. The MacArthur discussion will not be a book critique, strictly speaking, but rather your analysis of their biblical responses to the critical issues.

Research Paper

The student will prepare a major research paper (20-30 pages). The topic must relate to the study of Neo-paganism and expository preaching. Topic must be submitted September 16th. Papers will be evaluated according to the criteria included in this syllabus.

Sermon Analysis

Go to SermonAudio.com and listen to Al Martin's sermon entitled "The Christian's Role in a Wicked Generation #4 Purity," and go to MLJ Trust.org and listen to Martyn Lloyd-Jones' sermon "The Gospel and the Modern World." Evaluate both using the sermon evaluation form emailed to you. You will need to write up your analysis. The form only gives the items to be evaluated. Two additional sermons will be assigned for evaluation on October 28th.

Sermon

Submit an expository sermon on a biblical text which you would use to address one of the issues raised by the authors in the required readings. The sermon should be the full text of what would be preached rather than an outline or notes. The student will deliver the sermon to the class on Nov. 4th.

CRITERIA FOR GRADING BOOK CRITIQUES

1. Grammar and style—spelling; sentence and paragraph development, punctuation; conformity to Turabian (25 points)
2. Summary—a fair, concise presentation of the book's content. (25 points)
3. Evaluation—a balanced, critical assessment of the book's strengths and weaknesses. (25 points)
4. Insight—awareness of the book's interpretive significance and place in the genre's literature (25 points)

CRITERIA FOR GRADING RESEARCH PAPERS

1. Form – Grammar and Style: Spelling, sentence and paragraph development; punctuation; and conformity to the latest edition of Turabian. Organization; logical development; overall sense of the paper. (20 points)
2. Research: Bibliography; type and variety of sources (primary, secondary, monographs, journal articles, etc.) most bibliographic entries should be accompanied by footnote citations. (40 points)
3. Content: Factual accuracy; awareness of historical connections (i.e., continuity/discontinuity, cause/effect; relationships/comparisons); sensitivity to historical context; awareness of the historical impact of a person, movement, or organization. Going beyond the mere reporting of facts to include explanation, evaluation, and interpretation of the material researched. A strong and insightful conclusion. (40 points)

Papers

BTS has made the decision to adopt the Turabian style of writing format for all papers, clinicals, dissertations (DMin) and reports. Also, all papers are to be double spaced, 12-point font and Times New Roman script. This will bring consistency and less confusion for both students and professors. In this technological age, information is readily available; make sure that you understand about giving reference sources the proper recognition.

Course Outline

- Sept 9th - Review Syllabus, Review of Exegesis/Expository Preaching **Read Kaiser**
- Sept 16th – Response to Stanley, Present Paper Topics **Read Dabney, Martin**
- Sept 23rd – Scripture Exegesis Presentation, **Critique of Dabney, Martin; Read Thielicke**
- Sept 30th – The Neo-pagan World **Read Lloyd-Jones**
- Oct 7th - Neo-pagan Influence in the Church **Read Wells, McGoldrick**
- Oct 14th - **No Class Fall Break**
- Oct 21st - Sermon analysis Martin, Lloyd-Jones **Critique of Lloyd-Jones**
- Oct 28th - Sermon Analysis Hodges, Stanley **Critique of Wells**
- Nov 4th - Sermon Presentation
- Nov 11th – **Critique of Thielicke, McGoldrick**
- Nov 18th - **Critique of MacArthur**, Discussion of Assigned Topics
- Nov 25th - **Paper Presentation**
- Dec 2nd - **Final Paper Due**, Assessment

Further Reading

- Brown, Harold O. J. *The Sensate Culture, Western Civilization Between Chaos and Transformation*. Dallas: Word Publishing, 1996.
- Carrick, John. *The Imperative of Preaching: A Theology of Sacred Rhetoric*. Carlisle: The Banner of Truth Trust, 2002.
- Davis, John Jefferson. *Evangelical Ethics: Issues Facing the Church Today*. Phillipsburg: P and R Publishing, 1993.

- Eswine, Zach. *Preaching to a Post-Everything World*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2008.
- Greidanus, Sidney. *The Modern Preacher and the Ancient Text, Interpreting and Preaching Biblical Literature*. Grand Rapids: Williams B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1988.
- _____. *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament: A Contemporary Hermeneutical Method*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999.
- Jones, Peter. *The Gnostic Empire Strikes Back*. Phillipsburg: P and R Publishing, 1992.
- Myers, Kenneth A. *All God's Children and Blue Suede Shoes: Christians and Popular Culture*. Westchester: Crossway Books, 1989.
- Piper, John. *The Supremacy of God in Preaching*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1993.
- Robinson, Haddon W. *Biblical Preaching: The Development and Delivery of Expository Messages*. 2nd ed. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2001.
- Smith, Robert, Jr. *Doctrine That Dances: Bringing Doctrinal Preaching and Teaching to Life*. Nashville: B and H Academic, 2008.
- Spurgeon, Charles H. *Lectures to My Students*. Reprint. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1995.
- Veith, Gene Edward, Jr. *Postmodern Times, A Christian Guide to Contemporary Thought and Culture*. Wheaton: Crossway Books, 1994.