

Preaching Lab I Syllabus

Reformed Theological Seminary, Atlanta

Fall, 2026

Thursdays 5-9 pm

10/1 (7-9 pm), 10/15, 10/22, 10/29, 11/5, 11/12, 11/19

Instructor: Rev. Aaron Messner

a.messner@wmpca.org

Course Objectives:

1. To reinforce the overarching mission of the church, and how preaching and teaching fits into and serves this larger mission.
2. To reinforce the daunting (dare I say, impossible) nature of the teacher/preacher's task, and the absolute dependence one must have on the supernatural content and power of the Ordinary Means of Grace (particularly for this course, the Word of God and Prayer) if one's teaching/preaching is to be truly fruitful.
3. To reinforce the need for the preacher/teacher to be continually affected and transformed by the Word that is taught/preached; being a person of continual repentance, faith in Christ, and new obedience.
4. To reinforce the fundamental nature of preaching and the calling on the preacher from the Scriptures.
5. To develop greater facility in studying the Bible, so that one can consistently ascertain the basic structure and primary emphasis(es) of a given Biblical text in its larger context.
6. To develop greater facility in seeing how Christ is proclaimed from every text in the New Testament.
7. To develop greater facility in preparing & delivering sermons in which the content and emphasis of the sermon is in conformity with the content and emphasis of the Biblical text, in which Christ is faithfully and organically preached from the text in question, and from which faithful and practical application of the text is made to the lives of the listener.
8. To help students take further steps in "finding their own voice" as a preacher and teacher by exploring various rhetorical styles and modes of presentation.
9. To develop greater facility in listening to sermons, both for spiritual nourishment and for pedagogical considerations.
10. To analyze other's reflections/instruction on preaching and determine the relative value and priority of such instruction.

Course Texts:

Mark

1 & 2 Peter

Psalms

Course Schedule:

October 1 : Listening to/Learning from Sermons

October 8: Fall Break/No Class

October 15: Preached Sermons from Psalms

October 22: Preached Sermons from Psalms

October 29: Preached Sermons from Mark

November 5: Preached Sermons from Mark

November 12: Preached Sermons from 1 & 2 Peter

November 19: Preached Sermons from 1 & 2 Peter

Course Assignments and Grade Structure:

50% Class Participation (Attendance, Contribution/Feedback on Other's Sermons)

50% 3 Sermons

RTS Grading Scale:

A 97-100

A- 94-96

B+ 91-93

B 88-90

B- 86-87

C+ 83-85

C 80-82

C- 78-79

D+ 75-77

D 72-74

D- 70-71

Below 70 = F

Extension Policy:

All assignments and exams are to be completed by the deadlines announced in this syllabus or in class.

Extensions for assignments and exams due within the normal duration of the course must be approved beforehand by the Professor. Extensions of two weeks or less beyond the date of the last deadline for the course must be approved beforehand by the Professor. A grade penalty may be assessed.

Extensions of greater than two weeks but not more than six weeks beyond the last deadline for the course may be granted in extenuating circumstances (i.e. illness, family emergency). For an extension of more than two weeks the student must request an Extension Request Form from the Student Services Office. The request must be approved by the Professor and the Academic Dean. A grade penalty may be assessed. (RTS Catalog p. 42 and RTS Atlanta Student Handbook p. 14)

Any incompletes not cleared six weeks after the last published due date for course work will be converted to a failing grade. Professors may have the failing grade changed to a passing grade by request. (RTS Catalog p. 42)

Course Objectives Related to MDiv* Student Learning Outcomes

Course: Preaching Lab 1 PT5125/1

Professor: Rev. Aaron Messner

Campus: RTS Atlanta

Date: Fall 2025

<u>MDiv* Student Learning Outcomes</u> <i>In order to measure the success of the MDiv curriculum, RTS has defined the following as the intended outcomes of the student learning process. Each course contributes to these overall outcomes. This rubric shows the contribution of this course to the MDiv outcomes.</i> <i>*As the MDiv is the core degree at RTS, the MDiv rubric will be used in this syllabus.</i>		<u>Rubric</u> ➤ Strong ➤ Moderate ➤ Minimal ➤ None	<u>Mini-Justification</u>
Articulation (oral & written)	Broadly understands and articulates knowledge, both oral and written, of essential biblical, theological, historical, and cultural/global information, including details, concepts, and frameworks. Also includes ability to preach and teach the meaning of Scripture to both heart and mind with clarity and enthusiasm.	Strong	Students will deliver multiple full length sermons in which the exposit the Word of God to classmates and instructor.
Scripture	Significant knowledge of the original meaning of Scripture. Also, the concepts for and skill to research further into the original meaning of Scripture and to apply Scripture to a variety of modern circumstances. (Includes appropriate use of original languages and hermeneutics; and integrates theological, historical, and cultural/global perspectives.)	Strong	Students will teach and sit under the teaching of the Word of God. Emphasis will be given to the meaning and emphasis of entire books of the Bible.
Reformed Theology	Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice, with emphasis on the Westminster Standards.	Moderate	A confessional approach to the church and the ordinary means of grace will be modeled. But there will be limited time for explicit instruction on these points.
Sanctification	Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student's sanctification.	Strong	Emphasis will be given to the fact that preaching is not just an effort to "get things right" but God's means to bring about people's salvation and sanctification.
Desire for Worldview	Burning desire to conform all of life to the Word of God.	Moderate	Hopefully, student sermons will bring this out, but again there is little time for explicit instruction on this point.
Winsomely Reformed	Embraces a winsomely Reformed ethos. (Includes an appropriate ecumenical spirit with other Christians, especially Evangelicals; a concern to present the Gospel in a God-honoring manner to non-Christians; and a truth-in-love attitude in disagreements.)	Strong	Emphasis will be place on preaching sermons that embody "Winsome Reformed Theology."

Pastoral Ministry	Ability to minister the Word of God to hearts and lives of both church and unchurched, to include preaching, teaching, leading in worship, leading, and shepherding the local congregation, aiding in spiritual maturity, concern for non-Xns.	Strong	This class is intended to explicitly foster experiential growth in student's ability to minister the Word of God in these ways
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