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COURSE DESCRIPTION
Preaching for Growth: A Progressive Approach
Vancouver School of Theology SUMMER 2018

PURPOSE: The divide has long been clear. Evangelicals care about conversion, church growth, and individual salvation. Progressives care about systemic sin, social justice, and Christian engagement with the world. These features, while exaggerated, have impacted the approaches each camp has towards preaching. But what if evangelism was no longer the property of conservative movements, and prophetic preaching no longer the enemy of growth? In this course, we will talk about a progressive evangelical approach to preaching, one that takes seriously both individual salvation and engagement with the larger world.

EXPECTATIONS AND COMPETENCE OBJECTIVES:

- Identify and discuss the barriers to evangelism in progressive churches
- Create a scriptural framework for understanding evangelism and its positive role in church
- Discuss the specific role preaching can play in evangelism and growth
- Identify practical tools and strategies that progressive churches can use to practice evangelism in and out of worship
- Develop a preaching plan designed to reach new people in your context.
- After the course students will understand basic principles of preaching to reach new people and will have the tools necessary to prepare a yearly preaching plan designed for growth in breadth and depth in their context.

REQUIRED READINGS: (Please pre-read prior to the start of class)

Evangelism After Christendom: The Theology and Practice of Christian Witness, by Bryan P. Stone, Brazos, 2007 (Introduction and Chapter 1).

Communicating for a Change: Seven Keys to Irresistible Communication, by Adam Stanley, North Point Resources, 2006.

Unleashing the Word: Preaching with Relevance, Purpose & Passion, by Adam Hamilton, Abingdon Press, 2009.

The Spiritual Lives of Young African Americans, by Almeda Wright, Oxford University Press, 2017.

Beyond Liberalism and Fundamentalism: How Modern and Postmodern Philosophy Set the Theological Agenda, by Nancey Murphy, Rockwell Lecture, 1996 (Chapter 2).

ASSIGNMENTS

1. Students must read all materials prior to the start of the course.

2. Students will submit a daily one-page reflection on the next day's reading. In the reflection, students will react critically to the next day's reading and include at least two questions for class discussion. (The first one-page reflection is due one week before the course begins).
3. Students will submit a final paper which consists of developing a sermon series designed to reach people who don't go to church in the student's particular context. The sermon series must be at least four weeks, and the student will need to provide the name of the series, a synopsis, an outline of the weekly messages including a big idea and scripture for each week, along with any other unique elements of response during worship. The paper should include who you are trying to reach with the series, how you imagine this series speaking to people in your context, and how people in your church might talk about the series with their friends. The final project will also include a video of student preaching one of the messages in the series. **DUE AUGUST 31st**