

Joni Sancken
Vancouver School of Theology
Email: jsancken@vst.edu

Preaching Parables HOM 6/705
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Course Description

PURPOSE: Parables can be challenging for preachers and yet they comprise about 1/3 of Jesus' teaching. How does one bring a fresh word that maintains continuity to this difficult and well-trod territory? This course explores biblical parables and their use in the preaching of Jesus with a focus on contemporary homiletical application. This is an upper-level preaching course which may fulfill denominational requirements or serve as an elective. Biblical preaching is an event that unfolds at the intersections of biblical text and context. It requires self-awareness and leadership on the part of the preacher to make creative and studied choices that lead from text to sermon and empower God's people to wise, caring, and bold discipleship in our world.

PREREQUISITES: HOM500 and either NT500 or HB500

COMPETENCE OBJECTIVES:

Students will

- Engage in the discourse of biblical interpretation of parables across time.
- Sharpen communication and contextual reflection skills.
- Link preaching with broader ministry and discipleship practices.
- Demonstrate deepening spiritual growth and mature self-awareness and self-reflection.
- Critically reflect on their own sermons and growth as preachers.

FORMAT AND CONTENT:

This course meets on Tuesday afternoons from 2-5pm. This course limited to synchronous students.

TEXTS:

Amy Jill Levine. *Short Stories by Jesus* (Harper one, 2014)

Kline Snodgrass, *Stories with Intent* (Eerdmans, 2018)

We will also be using a more homiletics-oriented text—Please wait to purchase. We will start our reading with the other books.

Tom Long has a new book on preaching parables coming out in early 2024, likely February—I'm waiting to hear the publication date. This book is excellent.

Our alternate book is Richard Voeltz, *Preaching to Teach: Inspiring People to Think and Act* (Abingdon, 2019). (This one isn't parables specific, but I think it could be an interesting guide in the move from text to sermon.)

EXPECTATIONS, ASSIGNMENTS AND EVALUATIVE CRITERIA

Full details for all assignments will be provided in the syllabus evaluation will include the following:

Analysis of Artistic Interpretation of Parable

4-5 page written analysis of an artistic or creative interpretation of one of Jesus' parables created after the biblical era. (video, song, visual art piece, etc.) A guide will be provided.

Exegesis Reports

Two 3-4 page informal exegetical reports, one for each parable corresponding to class sermons. Students will consult at least 5 resources. A guide will be distributed for the format and content of these reports.

Sermons on Parables

Students will create two 10-12 minute sermons on parables of Jesus. Students will be able to choose from a group of designated parables. At least one of these will be preached in class depending on enrollment.

Participation and Sermon Feedback conversations

Participate in class activities and discussions. Offer thoughtful, caring, and frank sermon feedback that offers accountability for interpretive moves made in the sermons.

Sermon reflection paper

Taking feedback into account, reflect on how the sermon interacts with course readings and activities related to parables, what worked well, and what might be changed in future preaching.

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Encountering the Parables in Contexts Old and New, eds. Goud, Cousland, Harrison, and Keith, Library of New Testament Studies, (T&T Clark, 2024.) (pending publication date.)

Howard Thurman. *Sermons on the Parables*. Edited by David B Gowler and Kipton E Jensen. Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 2018.

William Herzog II, *Parables as Subversive Speech: Jesus as Pedagogue* (WJK, 1994).

Clarence Jordan and Bill Lane Doulos, *Cotton Patch Parables of Liberation* 25th anniversary edition (Wipf and Stock, 2009.)

Richard Lischer, *Reading the Parables* (WJK, 2014)

Alyce McKenzie, *The Parables for Today* (WJK, 2007).

Glenna S. Jackson "Rebel Soliders as Good Samaritans: New Testament Parables in an African Context *HTS Teologiese Studies / Theological Studies* [Online], Volume 60 Number 1/2 (20 October 2004.)

Selected Biblical Resources for Sermon Prep:

Joseph Fitzmeyer, *The Gospel According to Luke* (Anchor Bible, 1981)

Raymond Brown, *The Gospel According to John* Anchor Bible, 1996)

Jeannine Brown and Kyle Roberts, *Matthew* (Eerdmans, 2018)

Adela Yarbo Collins, *Mark: A Commentary* Hermenia, (Fortress, 2007)

The Jewish Annotated New Testament, eds. Levine and Brettler, 2nd ed. (Oxford UP, 2017)