

Biblical Communication

Dr. Keith Johnson, Professor of Record

Course Facilitators: Kim Swanson, M.Div. and Clay Harris, M.Div.
Institute of Biblical Studies
July 5 – July 12, 2024

Course Purpose

The Institute of Biblical Studies exists to help develop Christ-centered missionaries who possess the biblical and theological competencies they need (head, heart, and hands) to live out the Great Commandment and help fulfill the Great Commission through the ministry of Cru. As an organization, we are passionate about connecting people to Christ. To fulfill our global missionary mandate, we need to be growing in our understanding and experience of the good news about Christ revealed in the Scriptures and increasing in our understanding of people (as created, fallen, and redeemed). Biblical Communication exists to develop your ability to communicate in a Christ-centered way that contextualizes the message of the Scriptures for culturally diverse audiences.

Course Description

Communicating biblical truth requires a deep understanding of God's word and an ability to relate God's word to your audience so they may experience transformation. Building upon the Biblical Interpretation class, experienced communicators will help you become a worshiping communicator, as well as develop audience-sensitive skills that ensure your message finds relevant true-to-life application. Through lectures and workshops, this course will equip you to lead diverse generations to conviction and repentance of their sin and to growing belief and adoration of Christ.

Prerequisite: Biblical Interpretation

Learning Environment

This course is designed to facilitate your learning in a way that marries practical skills with deep learning. As such, you will have daily opportunities to develop your skills through coaching groups as well as lectures. All of your learning will be in-person and face to face.

Learning Outcomes

Cognitive (Knowledge and Thinking Skills)

1. Grow in your understanding of the good news of the gospel so you are better able to convey it to culturally diverse audiences as you launch and build movements of Christ-followers.
2. Learn a simple process for structuring a Christ-centered message from a narrative passage of Scripture.
3. Help others hear the music of the gospel by learning to identify the “Fallen Condition” and “Redemptive Solution” in a passage and relate it to the cultural context of your audience.
4. Learn how to consider the fallen conditions and heart longings of an audience.

Affective (Attitudes, Motivation, and Character)

1. Deepen your confidence in the gospel and motivation to share it as you see how it addresses the deepest longings of your heart.
2. Embrace the five values of Christ-centered communication in your biblical teaching
 - Formative Intent
 - Obvious from the passage
 - Related to the Fallen Condition and Redemptive Solution of the hearer
 - Christ-centered and connected to the biblical storyline
 - Engaging the heart and mind in culturally relevant ways
3. Develop a deeper appreciation for the importance of community (learning together, sharing, being vulnerable, receiving feedback, etc.) as a key means of growth.

Behavioral (Personal and Ministry Skills)

1. Grow in your capacity to communicate biblical narratives.
2. Grow in your capacity to convey Christ from the Scriptures by developing a Christ-centered large group message which you will deliver and on which you will receive constructive feedback.
3. Improve your delivery skills by practicing and receiving feedback from a coach and peers
4. Learn how to ask good questions in a variety of contexts but especially in the context of helping people better understand the Bible.

Class Interaction Assessments

Within the coaching groups (made up of no more than 11 students per coach) the coach will evaluate the following:

1. **MBI** – The students will work through a process in class where they develop a statement of the Audience Focused Message Big Idea (MBI) for their passage, either Luke 7:36–50 or Genesis 22. Once the students develop an MBI, the coach will provide immediate feedback evaluating the quality of their MBI.
2. **Gestures** – The students will tell a short story in front of their peers. The purpose of the drill is for the students to practice using appropriate and meaningful gestures while speaking. The coach will give the students feedback based on their use of gestures.
3. **Launch** – As part of the preparation for the delivery of their message, the students will deliver the launch portion of their message. The goal of this drill is to continue practicing their appropriate and meaningful gestures and present a draft version of their launch. The coach will give immediate feedback.
4. **Message Delivery** – The students will deliver a 25-minute Large Group message. The goal is to put into practice all of their speaking skills as well delivering a Christ-centered, exegetically sound message based on their passage using the FORCE values. The coach will give immediate feedback.

Required Texts (All books can be physical or digital, if available)

Chan, Sam, and Malcolm Gill. *Topical Preaching in a Complex World: How to Proclaim Truth and Relevance at the Same Time*. Zondervan Academic, 2021. [ISBN: 978-0310108870](#). We are excited to give you a resource that staff have been requesting for years. This course is a course on teaching stories (narratives) and there are many ways you can do that. This book will give you some insight on how to do that from a topical framework. This book has a lot of benefits that we can glean even if we aren't doing topical messages and so it will help you as you prepare any kind of message.

Redmond, Eric C., ed. *Say It!: Celebrating Expository Preaching in the African American Tradition*. Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2020. [ISBN: 978-0802419200](#).

Required Reading

Book Chapters

[Read ch. 1 in Alcántara](#) (33pp)

[Read ch. 2 in Chapell](#) (18pp)

Read chs. 1-10 in *Topical Preaching in a Complex World: How to Proclaim Truth and Relevance at the Same Time*. (223pp)

Sermons and Videos

[Read “Of Figs and Grapes” in González and Jiménez](#) (6pp)

[Read ch. 11 in Jabbour, *Crescent Through the Eyes of the Cross*](#) (7pp)

Read chs. 1, 5, and 9 *Say It!: Celebrating Expository Preaching in the African American Tradition*. ISBN: 978-0802419200 A great overview of expository preaching with several wonderful examples. (31pp)

[Watch 3D Gospel Worldview Video](#)

[Watch Young Life Dr. Tanita Maddox Gen Z Video](#) (Watch 32:00-50:00. If you are unfamiliar with the culture and values of Gen Z, you might want to watch section 5:40-18:30 first.)

Watch FORCE Lecture (will be available via Google Classroom the week before class)

Here are the [Reading Journal](#) instructions and a [helpful checklist](#) for all of the pre-work.

Recommended Texts

Alcántara, Jared E. *The Practices of Christian Preaching: Essentials for Effective Proclamation*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2019.

Chapell, Bryan. *Christ-Centered Preaching: Redeeming the Expository Sermon*. 3rd ed. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2018.

Eswine, Zack. *Preaching to a Post-Everything World: Sermons That Connect with Our Culture*. Baker Books, 2008.

Goldsworthy, Graeme. *Preaching the Whole Bible as Christian Scripture*. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2000.

Keller, Timothy J. *Preaching: Communicating Faith in an Age of Skepticism*. New York: Viking, 2015.

Llyod-Jones, Sally. *The Jesus Storybook Bible: Every Story Whispers His Name*. Grand Rapids: ZonderKids, 2007.

Millar, Gary and Phil Campbell. *Saving Eutychus: How to Preach God’s Word and Keep People Awake*. Matthias Media, 2013.

González, Justo L., and Pablo A. Jiménez. *Pulpito: An Introduction to Hispanic Preaching*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2005.

Wax, Trevin. *Gospel-Centered Teaching: Showing Christ in All the Scripture*. Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 2013.

Learning Tasks

1. **Reading:** You will engage with several chapters, articles, and videos that will aim to give you a well-rounded perspective on biblical interpretation philosophy and methodology and an overview of various biblical genres and the redemptive storyline of scripture. Not all of the required readings will be discussed during the course, but each needs to be completed before the first class. *You must read 70% of the readings to pass the course.*
2. **Preparation for the First Class:** Before the first class you need to complete all required reading and videos. You will need to respond to the [reading journal](#) for each reading included in the guide. In addition, you will watch the “FORCE” Lecture, which will be available via Google Classroom the week before class starts.
3. **Participate in Coaching Group:** Biblical communication is not something you learn merely by hearing lectures and reading books. You learn by practicing and receiving feedback. Much of the learning in this class will take place in a small group context. You will be assigned to a coaching group with 8–11 of your peers. *You may only miss two coaching groups to pass the course.*
4. **Landing Points**
 - i. **Audience Analysis // MBI:** Building on your work from Biblical Interpretation, you will identify the fallen conditions, false beliefs, heart longings, and questions that your audience are asking. Then you will determine three versions of a Message Big Idea (MBI) that encapsulates the essence of what you believe God wants to communicate through your message.
 - ii. **Initial Message Outline:** Here you will take a first pass at putting together your message. You will incorporate the material you worked on in Biblical Interpretation and your audience analysis to help build toward your MBI.
 - iii. **Questions:** One of the most significant skills any communicator can learn is how to ask good questions. You will craft questions to help your audience engage with the passage. After feedback and refinement, your questions can be adapted for a small group study, devotional, narrative evangelism and/or discussion questions for your large group message.
 - iv. **Launch and Close:** You will write out a word for word a launch and close using our predetermined criteria. Your coach will give you feedback and you will practice one or both of these during your coaching group.
 - v. **Expanded Message Outline:** This assignment is the culmination of all your hard work in the course. You will revise your initial outline and add the remaining elements for a final outline that you will use to deliver your large group message.
5. **Large Group Message Delivery:** You will deliver a 25-minute large group message. This will be done live in front of your coaching group and will be graded by your coach. Your message will be evaluated based on the FORCE values. *This assignment must be completed to pass the course.*

Course Grading Scale

Reading	20 %
Small Group Study	15 %
Large Group Message Outline	15 %
Evangelistic Conversation	15 %
Large Group Delivery	35 %

Total	100%
-------	------

Grading Scale:

94–100 A	80–81 C+
92–93 A-	74–79 C
90–91 B+	72–73 C-
84–89 B	65–71 D
82–83 B-	0–65 F

****Note: You need a C- or better to pass the class. You can only miss two sessions and pass the class.**