The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary
24989 CT: Biblical Studies Elective – Expositional Hermeneutics
Fall 2014

PROFESSOR(S)
Robert L. Plummer, Ph.D.
rplummer@sbts.edu

Garrett Fellow
Raymond Johnson (Ph.D. student in New Testament)
rjohnson@sbts.edu

The professor(s) have full confidence in and communicate consistently with their Garrett Fellow. If you have questions regarding due dates, course expectations, or particular assignments, email the Garrett Fellow.

COURSE DESCRIPTION
This course focuses on the intersection of hermeneutics and exposition. The class will address this question: What does it mean for a preacher to be faithful to the meaning of the Biblical text?

COURSE OBJECTIVES
At the end of this course, the student should be able to:
(1) Describe and practice a method for careful verse-by-verse analysis of a biblical text (Piper).
(2) Describe a traditional author-oriented hermeneutical approach to exposition (e.g., Walt Kaiser).
(3) Describe a Christocentric hermeneutical approach to exposition (e.g., Tim Keller/Ed Clowney).
(4) Compare and contrast the approaches of Walt Kaiser and Tim Keller.
(5) Evaluate the biblical faithfulness of sermons based on the skills taught in the “Look at the Book” conference and course readings/audio lectures.

WHY TAKE THIS COURSE
This course provides a unique opportunity that brings together practical application and academic rigor. You will fulfill your face-to-face class
requirements by learning from renowned conference speakers at Desiring God’s *Look at the Book* Conference and by fulfilling additional post-conference readings and audio assignments, directed by Dr. Plummer. To fulfill the academic requirements, you will read books, compose a 10-15 page double-spaced critical comparison of Kaiser and Keller/Clowney, hermeneutically evaluate five sermons, and participate in class discussion on Moodle (online class portal). These academic assignments are designed to build practical pastoral skills for the task of hermeneutically-faithful biblical exposition.

**GETTING STARTED**

1) If you are **not** a current student at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, but would like to take a conference class, complete the Conference Course Application digitally and email it to admissions@sbts.edu. Then, register for the conference here [http://www.desiringgod.org/events/2014-national-conference/overview](http://www.desiringgod.org/events/2014-national-conference/overview).

2) If you **are** a current student at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, register through [http://moodle.sbts.edu](http://moodle.sbts.edu). Register for 24989 CT with Dr. Robert L. Plummer. Obtain a login name and password for the Moodle courseware from campustechnology@sbts.edu. Login to the course at [http://moodle.sbts.edu](http://moodle.sbts.edu).

3) Purchase the required textbooks from the bookseller of your choice.

4) Listen to the additional audio messages by Keller & Clowney and complete the assigned work as scheduled after the conference takes place and upload completed work using the links for the course in the Moodle courseware.

**FINDING HELP**

If you have questions related to course expectations, assignments, or due dates, contact the Garrett Fellow for the course: Raymond Johnson, rjohnson@sbts.edu.

If you have difficulties or questions related to the Moodle courseware, contact Campus Technology: campustechnology@sbts.edu.

If you have questions specifically related to the content of the course, email the professor.

**REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS**

- *40 Questions About Interpreting the Bible* (Kregel, 2010), by Rob Plummer. Students may skim this introductory Hermeneutics text. Other texts must be read “word for word.”

Toward an Exegetical Theology (Zondervan 1998), by Walt Kaiser.

“Preaching Christ in a Postmodern World” – Thirty-five audio lectures by Tim Keller and Edmund Clowney.

“Preaching the Gospel in a Postmodern World” (Tim Keller’s notes that accompany audio lectures).

SBTS Style Manual. Download:

ATTENDANCE
This course is a compressed experience scheduled in coordination with the Desiring God “Look at the Book” Conference, September 26-28, Minneapolis, MN. No other face-to-face class time is required. As a result, attendance is not optional. Students are required to attend the entire conference. Attendance for all class-related events is mandatory.

GRADING SCALE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>96-100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>93-95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>90-92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>85-89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80-84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>75-75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70-72</td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>65-66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D-</td>
<td>60-62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WP</td>
<td>Withdrawed Passing, (Granted only if all assignments due prior to withdrawal have been completed.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WF</td>
<td>Withdrawed Failing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>Incomplete (No grades of incomplete will be issued for this course except in extreme circumstances as determined by the professor.)</td>
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- Paper comparing and critiquing Kaiser and Keller/Clowney: 50% of grade
- Discussion Board interactions: 25% of grade
- Five sermon evaluations: 25% of grade

COURSE SCHEDULE
September 26-28, 2014: Conference in Minneapolis, MN.
September 29: Participate in online forum #1 (see rubric below).

October 7, 2014: Participate in online forum #2 (see rubric below).

October 17, 2014: Participate in online forum #3 (see rubric below).


November 3, 2014: Participate in online forum #4 (see rubric below).

November 10, 2014: Submit five one-page, single-spaced sermon evaluations. Each sermon evaluation must also have a completed “Rubric for Sermon Evaluation” (see end of syllabus).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grading Rubric for Discussion Board Posts</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Needs revision</strong> (5pts = 50%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Timeliness</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Addresses Questions</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Replies</strong></td>
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**COURSE Requirements**

1) **Attendance and Class Participation.** Each student is expected to attend and participate in class-specific lectures, panels, and events at the Conference. There will be at least one gathering of all students in the conference course at the Desiring God National Conference in Minneapolis, MN. Details are forthcoming.

2) **Reading Assignments.** Each student is required to read all assigned readings.

3) **Comparison/Critique Paper** (50% of grade). Students will complete a 10-15 page double-spaced paper in which they compare and critique the hermeneutical methods of Walt Kaiser and Keller/Clowney. The paper must be uploaded to Moodle on or before October 23, 2014. The paper should be written in conformity with The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary Style Guide.

4) **Discussion Board Forums** (25% of grade): Students must respond directly to the questions in the four discussion board forums. Also, students are required to interact with at least two classmates in each
forum. See the grading rubric above. Discussion Board forums are set for: September 29, October 7, October 17, and November 3. Students must post and respond during the week of the assigned forum.

5) **Sermon Evaluations** (25% of grade): Students must hermeneutically evaluate five sermons. See the sermon evaluation rubric at the end of the syllabus for the questions students should be asking. For each of the five sermons, students must (a) fill out a rubric, and (b) write a one-page, single-spaced evaluation. Sermon evaluations are due November 10.

**HONOR CODE**

All students are required to affirm their academic integrity when submitting all course work and assignments, with the following statement, signed by the student on the front of the course work:

*On my honor, I have neither given nor taken improper assistance in completing this assignment.*

**COURSE VALUES**

Your professor holds without reservation and without apology to the doctrinal commitments of the Abstract of Principles (1859) and the Baptist Faith and Message (2000) as accurately representing biblical truth. The professor’s understanding of the nature of Scripture is summarized in these confessional documents and in the Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy (1978). This course will be taught within the context of this set of confessional convictions as the professor joyfully submits himself to the accountability of Holy Scripture, of the churches of the Southern Baptist Convention, and of the administration and leadership of the Seminary. Additional readings and speakers may or may not differ in some secondary doctrinal matters.

**COURSE PROTOCOLS**

**Late assignments:** Points received for any late assignment will be radically reduced by 50%, and it is unlikely that the student will receive a final grade above C. Unless every assignment is completed, you will receive a failing grade for the course.

**Respect for divergent viewpoints:** Students and faculty are to show appropriate respect for each other even when divergent viewpoints are expressed in the classroom. Such respect does not require agreement with or acceptance of divergent viewpoints.

**Student email and courseware:** Students are responsible to check their students.sbts.edu email account daily; students are responsible to login to courseware site (moodle.sbts.edu) at least once per week. Failure to do so will result in a failure to obtain needed information. All assignments must
be uploaded to the appropriate Moodle portal by the date indicated in the syllabus and on Moodle.

**Plagiarism:** Plagiarism is the theft or unattributed use of the intellectual property of another. *Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary* provides the following definition of the word “plagiarize”: "To steal and pass off (the ideas or words of another) as one's own— to use (a created production) without crediting the source— to commit literary theft— to present as new and original an idea or product from an existing source." Educators have a traditional concern that material be credited properly as a part of the learning process. To this concern, the Christian adds a commitment to the worth of persons, to the importance of the search for truth, and to the integrity of belief and behavior. The prohibition of theft, at least as old as the Ten Commandments, extends to the misrepresentation of an individual's most personal property: words and ideas. The Southern Seminary community considers plagiarism to be conduct inappropriate to a minister. It also identifies plagiarism as an offense against the community and, as such, cause for disciplinary action. At its core, plagiarism is at once an act of pride, covetousness, theft, and sloth— pridefully setting oneself up as having formulated an idea that belonged to someone else, desiring to possess that idea for oneself, ultimately stealing that idea for one's own purposes, and thereby avoiding a God-given opportunity for meaningful labor. This professor(s) will deal firmly with any form of plagiarism. If there is any doubt or even potential doubt as to whether an idea comes from you or from someone else, note and reference the “someone else”! In less formal situations, it may be sufficient to say or write, “As ___ said ....” In formal writing there are standard formats for documenting sources. The guide to this type of documentation at Southern Seminary is *The Southern Seminary Manual of Style*. If you are uncertain of the original source, please note that there are provisions for the citation even of unknown sources. Specific citations and references are necessary not only when a source is quoted or paraphrased but also when an idea was influenced by a particular source or group of sources. Whenever the professor requests that sources be utilized in an assignment, it is expected that the student will reference the source through explicit citations.

**Special needs:** Because each individual has been created in the image of God, each individual is inherently valuable. It is, therefore, the desire of this institution and of this professor to work with students to the full degree that is possible, regardless of physical or mental challenges. If this includes special accommodations—for example, the use of a recording device, adaptive equipment, or special note taking—please contact the professor prior to the first day of class.

**Grievances and grade disputes:** the professor’s Garrett Fellow may grade some assignments (in some cases, all of the assignments). The professor
has full confidence in this individual's ability to evaluate students' work. If a student has a concern about a grade that he or she received, the student is expected to request clarification from the Garrett Fellow via email. If the student still has significant concern, he or she may discuss the matter with the professor, but please note that only in the most unusual and extreme circumstances would the professor ever change the original grade assigned by the Garrett Fellow. If consultation with the Garrett Fellow and with the professor still does not resolve the grievance, the student may contact the Dean of the School of Theology and Senior Vice President for Academic Administration at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

**FINAL NOTE ABOUT THE SYLLABUS**
The professors reserve the right at any time to alter the syllabus at their own discretion.
Rubric for Sermon Evaluations
(students are also required to write a one-page, single-spaced hermeneutical evaluation/critique of each sermon)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reviewed by: ___________________</th>
<th>Preacher: ___________________</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date: ________________________</td>
<td>Sermon text: ______________</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1 Does Not Meet Expectation s</th>
<th>2 Partially Meets Expectations</th>
<th>3 Meets Expectations</th>
<th>4 Exceeds Expectations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sermon is rooted in the inspired author’s conscious intent</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preacher applies genre-specific interpretive methods</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>Preacher demonstrates competence in literary analysis.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preacher connects the text to redemptive history and its climax in Christ</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preacher discusses modern-day implications/applications</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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</tbody>
</table>