

MI 432 Integral Mission

Winter Semester, 2012

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COURSE WEIGHT: 3 credit hours

SCHEDULE: Thursdays, 8:30 AM – 12:15 PM

DESCRIPTION:

A holistic study of God's mission in the world and how God's mission is being expressed in a variety of global contexts.

OBJECTIVES:

Through this course the participants should develop a deepening understanding of the biblical perspective of the mission of God. Towards this end the participants should:

- 1) gain an understanding of the biblical scope of the Reign of God;
- 2) be engaged in discussion concerning some of the issues of mission theology and practice, especially as these are expressed in the local church;
- 3) establish a personal, biblical perspective on the missional church and integral mission.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS:

Ott, Craig, Stephen Strauss and Timothy Tennent. *Encountering Theology of Mission: Biblical Foundations, Historical Developments, and Contemporary Issues*. Baker Academic, 2010.

Newbigin, Lesslie. *The Open Secret: An Introduction to the Theology of Mission* (Revised Edition). Eerdmans, 1995.

A compendium of eight articles accessible on our course web site.

Taylor Seminary Guide for Research and Writing may be accessed on our course web site.

REQUIREMENTS OF THE COURSE:

1. Reading and Book Report

By following the schedule in the course outline, students will read through the required texts as well as eight assigned articles.



“It’s not the Church of God that has a mission in the world, but the God of mission who has a Church in the world”
– Rowan Williams, Archbishop of Canterbury

In addition to the assigned readings students will select and read one of the books from the list on pages 9-10 of this syllabus. Students will submit a 3–4 page book review of the selected book, following the template included on page 11 of this syllabus. **Due February 23**

2. Reading Responses

Students will submit written responses to pre-determined questions based on the assigned readings. **These are due at class time each week.**

3. Attendance and Participation

A major part of the learning for this course is structured to take place in classroom lectures and small group interaction. Students who are on time for class and are thoughtfully engaged in talking about the assigned readings will receive full marks in this section.

4. Congregational Analysis

In a 5-8 page paper describe the congregation that you are engaged in as a leader, participant, member, or adherent. The description should give a very brief history, its tradition, its form(s) of worship, its means of leadership choice/appointment, its population by number and demographics and its mission statement and key focus. Respond to the following questions:

1. Does the congregation have a well developed understanding of the community it is seeking to reach?
2. Does the congregation have a sense of being “on a mission with God” to reach this community?
3. Does the congregation’s sense of mission reflect the broad concerns of the kingdom of God?
4. What suggestions would you make (if any) for re-focusing and kindling a more biblical sense of congregational mission? **Due March 15**

5. Integrative Essay

Write an 8 – 12 page paper supporting or refuting the statement, “A biblical understanding of the *Missio Dei* requires the church to embrace a broad definition of Christian mission.” Your essay should demonstrate a significant grasp of relevant biblical material, the two texts, assigned articles, elective book review and lectures. All references to these materials should be duly footnoted. This is an opportunity for the student to articulate a philosophy of ministry and mission as well as to reflect upon and integrate what has been learned in the course.

This essay should follow the Taylor Seminary Guide for Research and Writing. **Due April 19.** Students will prepare a 10 minute summary to share with classmates on the same date, **April 19.**

Grading for this assignment will be calculated with the following criteria in mind:

1. Clear organization and formulation of ideas	7
2. Integration with course materials	15
3. Spelling, grammar and sentence construction	4
4. Format/Taylor Guide	4

EVALUATION:

Assignment	Date Due	Weight	Workload
Reading/ Responses	Various	16%	42 hrs
Book Review	February 23	20%	8 hrs
Attendance and Participation	Regular	10%	
Congregational Analysis	March 15	24%	20 hrs
Integrative Essay	April 19	30%	20 hrs
TOTAL =			90 hrs

EXTENSIONS:

Extensions for course work will only be granted in exceptional circumstances. These must be negotiated with the instructor prior to the deadlines.

OUTLINE/SCHEDULE OF THE COURSE:

January

19 - Intro to Course. What is *Integral Mission*?

26 - Integral Mission: Biblical Foundations

Read: Ott and Strauss, Introduction, Cha. 1

Newbigin, Cha. 1, 2

February

2 - Integral Mission: Mission in the Way of Jesus

Read: Ott and Strauss, Cha. 2- 3

Newbigin, Cha. 3-5

Article: Santos Yao, *The Table Fellowship of Jesus with the Marginalized: A Radical Inclusiveness*

9 - Integral Mission: The Kingdom

Read: Ott and Strauss, Cha. 4-6

Newbigin, Cha. 6

Article: Jack Deere, *Prayer Meetings Can be Dangerous*

16 - Integral Mission: Motivation for Missions and Missional Churches

Read: Ott and Strauss, Cha. 7, 8

Newbigin, Cha. 7

Article: Gregory Leffel, *Churches in the Mode of Mission: Toward a Missional Model of the Church*

23 - Integral Mission: Liberation and Social Justice

Read: Ott and Strauss, Cha. 9, 10

Newbigin, Cha. 8

Book Review due

March

1 - Integral Mission: Contextualization

Read: Ott and Strauss, Cha. 11
Newbigin, Cha. 9

8 - Integral Mission: Mission and the Encounter with Other Religions

Read: Ott and Strauss, Cha. 12
Newbigin, Cha. 10

Article: Norman Thomas, *The Gospel Among the World Religions*

15 - Integral Mission and Post-Christendom

Read: Ott and Strauss, Cha. 13

Article: Kenneth R. Ross, *Old Church and New Evangelism: A Scottish Perspective on Christian Mission in Today's Europe*

Congregational Analysis due

22 - Integral Mission and Development

29 – No Class – Spring Break

April

5 - Integral Mission as Healing

Article: Jacques Matthey, "Faith, Healing and Mission – Santiago de Chile October 2003 Introduction and Summary of Process"

12 - Integral Mission as Care for Creation

Articles: Allan Effa, *The Greening of Mission*.

Brian McClaren, *Consider the Turtles of the Field*

19 - Challenges in Global Mission Today; Sharing of Integration Papers

Integrative Essay Due and Sharing of Papers with Classmates

READING RESPONSE QUESTIONS

January 26

Ott and Strauss, Intro and Chapter 1

1. In the first two pages of the introduction the authors raise a number of critical questions concerning mission today. Select one that is of greatest interest to you and explain why you chose it.
2. Consider the four definitions of mission in sidebar 1.1. Which do you think most accurately reflects a biblical understanding of mission, and why?
3. Ott and Strauss agree with the majority of OT scholars that Israel did not have a specific mandate to “go” to the nations, but to be a holy presence, drawing the nations to worship the true God. If you were to develop a counter-argument, what biblical evidence would you offer to support the notion that Israel was commissioned to take its faith to the nations?

Newbigin, Chapter 1, 2

1. Why does Newbigin suggest that the NT paradigm of mission is more suitable to today’s church than the paradigm of the recent centuries of colonial expansion? How have you seen this to be true (or false)?
2. Newbigin suggests that concerns for social justice are usually embraced by agencies while emphasis on personal conversion is the focus of congregational life. What are some of the consequences of this dichotomy, according to Newbigin? Have you seen this kind of separation in your experience of church and agency?
3. How, according to Newbigin, does the doctrine of election give justification to our right to preach Jesus as Lord among the nations?
4. Choose one sentence or group of sentences from Newbigin’s discussion on the question of authority that you found to be particularly insightful. Why did you choose it?

February 2

Ott and Strauss, Cha. 2, 3

1. Why do the authors suggest that “centrifugal mission” may not be an appropriate descriptor of mission to the nations in the New Testament?
2. The authors emphasize that mission, in the New Testament, is primarily an activity of the Spirit of God. Select one quote regarding the role of the Holy Spirit in mission and briefly write what you like about it.
3. Explain, in your own words, the theological shift that occurred in our understanding of mission as a result of the 1952 International Missionary Conference at Willingen, Germany. Why is it described as a “Copernican revolution in mission”?
4. After reading the Case Study *Mission is Immoral*, place yourself in Charlotte’s shoes and respond to two of the stereotypes of missionaries presented by Amber’s friends.

Newbigin, 3-5

1. Newbigin describes the “working concept of God for ordinary Christians” as quite different from that of the early church fathers. How would you describe the typical Christian understanding of God today?
2. In chapter four Newbigin starts to unpack the concept of the “open secret” in reference to the proclamation of the kingdom of God. Explain how the doctrine of election shapes the messenger as well as the response of hearers to that message.
3. How does Newbigin account for the relative scarcity of “kingdom terminology” in the post-Gospel writings of the New Testament? Why do you agree or disagree with him?

4. Newbigin argues strongly that the church does not “possess” the Spirit nor the kingdom. Rather, he cites evidence for the sovereignty of the Spirit in the mission of the Church. Relate an experience in which the Spirit “took over” and led you (or someone you know) into a dimension of ministry that had been unplanned or unforeseen.

February 9

Ott and Strauss Cha. 4-6 (Select and answer 8 of these questions)

1. Reflect on the section *Doxology as the Purpose of Mission*. What are some trends in church and mission today that might be critiqued or corrected by this theological perspective?
2. “The Church in its mission today must break out of its own small horizon and discover the implications of God’s kingdom horizon. It is then that the reality of the Kingdom of God can become the very dynamic of mission” (Ken Gnanakan, p.89). Outline three things that would change in your local church or denomination if what Gnanakan describes were to happen.
3. “Some evangelicals so emphasize the fallenness of this world and Christ’s return as the only hope that they reject all efforts to work toward the kingdom in history. On the other hand, ecumenical groups in particular have tended to work as if there was “no hope apart from this world, and that human effort could usher in near utopia” (p.92). Which of these two extremes have you encountered most frequently? How have you sought to resolve the tension between hope and action?”
4. In what ways do globalization and the widespread use of the English language negatively affect an incarnational approach to mission?
5. Chapter four concludes with a summative definition of mission. Which concepts in this definition are least understood in the Christian community you are most familiar with?
6. The authors suggest that Christians today may be guilty of unexamined cultural superiority and lack of appreciation for other cultures. How have you seen this demonstrated?
7. How do you respond to the Report I from Nairobi, *Confessing Christ Today*, when it describes the content of the Gospel? Are there elements of this statement that you are uncomfortable with? If so, why?
8. How do you interact with the popular phrase in theology of mission concerning “God’s preferential option for the poor”? Is this priority evidenced in your local congregation or denominational mission efforts?
9. Explain the statement by Bosch, “One’s theology of mission is always closely dependent on one’s theology of salvation.” Where does your church tradition stand in its understanding of soteriology on a spectrum between personal/individual and cosmic?
10. How does the focus on “kingdom communities” help bridge the gap between the creation mandate and the gospel mandate?

Newbigin Cha. 6

1. In the story of Peter and Cornelius, Newbigin sees the Spirit at work in mission, transforming the church itself. How do you see the Spirit at work today, transforming the community of faith?
2. Newbigin contends that the most effective operation of the Spirit in mission occurs when the church is weak and dependent. What implications does this have for the church in North America today?

February 16

Ott and Strauss Cha. 7-8

1. The authors present “condescending pity” as an inappropriate motivation for mission. How would you distinguish between “condescending pity” and “compassion”?
2. Peruse a hymnal and examine the section on “missions” or “service and missions.” What are some of the common motivational themes you encounter in them?

3. How do you respond to J. Hudson Taylor's sermon when he says that "all of us are commanded to go, unless we have a special call to stay at home"?
4. Do you agree with the author's statement that the church today has lost the sense of urgency about mission and Christ's return? If so, what do you think are two or three major reasons for this development?
5. The authors open this chapter seeking to make a strong case for the missionary identity of the church. This is because many churches do not prioritize this as a self-identity. What are some of the main "competitors" around which churches have formed their primary identity?
6. How do you respond to the author's five cautions concerning the "missional church" movement? Which of the five do you think are the most serious?

Newbigin, Cha. 7

1. In this chapter Newbigin seeks to address the scandal of election, particularly as it grates the ears of postmodern sensibilities. Summarize the main points he makes. Do you think he has successfully articulated this teaching in a way that postmoderns can grasp and accept?
2. How we view the goal or end of human history affects the way we define our mission. Briefly summarize in a sentence or two your understanding of the *telos* or goal of human history. Draw at least three implications for mission from that statement.

February 23

Ott and Strauss, cha. 9 - 10

1. How do you respond to the observation that, when we advocate that "every Christian is a missionary," the importance and urgency of cross-cultural mission to the nations is diminished?
2. Carefully read M. David Sills' description of a "missionary call." Reflect in a few sentences on the ways you have wrestled with the missionary mandate as you have sought to find your ministry vocation.
3. Do you think the term "missionary" is still meaningful? Can it be rehabilitated or should we find a new expression?
4. In the West we find a wide range of attitudes toward spiritual power; on one side are perspectives shaped by modernity, rationalism and scientific naturalism. On the other side are almost animistic perspectives (believing that spiritual power operates through animals and objects). How has your perspective changed during the past 5 – 10 years?
5. Choose one significant quote from the section on "prayer and mission" and write it here. Why did you select this quote?
6. How much do you agree or disagree with the author's assessment of the SLSW strategy for mission? Why do you think the SLSW has become so popular in North America?

Newbigin, Cha. 8

1. Newbigin levels some strong criticism at free market economic systems and the urgent missional need to address the idolatry that governs them. Offer a brief response (aye or nay) to some of the concerns he raises.
2. In Chapter eight Newbigin offers an expanded interpretation of the hope of Jesus' resurrection in ways that go far beyond the individual human person. Share one of those consequences that you had not thought much about previous to your reading of this chapter.

March 1

Ott and Strauss, Cha. 11

1. If possible, give an example of an experience of reading a portion of the Bible and gaining new insight into the text because you were in a different cultural context.
2. Reflect on the cultural context you are most familiar with. How deeply has the gospel been contextualized in your context? Which felt needs remain unaddressed? In what ways is syncretism (blending with cultural elements that are not compatible with the Gospel) taking place in your expression of Christianity?

Newbigin, Cha. 9

1. What kind of reaction did Newbigin's discussion of conversion and ethics in chapter 9 provoke from you? What kinds of situations have you seen that support or refute what Newbigin is talking about?
2. How has your reading of the biblical text been challenged or stretched by listening to a Christian from another cultural group interpret that same text?
3. How does Newbigin account for the fact that there are several Christologies in the New Testament writings?

March 8

Ott and Strauss, Cha. 12

1. How has this chapter challenged your thinking about other religions? How would you articulate where you stand toward non-Christian religions?
2. Do you think the authors' proposed new nomenclature for positions of theology of religions is an improvement over the Classic and Knitter models? Defend your answer.
3. How is the shift of Christianity's centre to the non-western world affecting the church's approach to interfaith dialogue?

Newbigin, Cha. 10

1. Why does Newbigin insist that taking a "confessional stance" is integral to true interfaith dialogue and truth-seeking? How is it possible to be both confessionally committed, yet open to the discovery of truth in other faiths?
2. Relate an experience when you came to a deeper understanding of truth through an encounter with someone from another faith.
3. Why does Newbigin condemn the arrogant attitude that presumes to know, in advance, the outcome of Judgment Day?
4. Newbigin concludes with his diagram of the cross and the staircases. What are the pitfalls that can be avoided by taking on the mantle of humble witness when we are engaged in dialogue with people of other faiths?

March 15

Ott and Strauss, Cha. 13

1. Why do some theologians prefer to speak of "conditionalism" rather than "annihilationism"? How is conditionalism explained?
2. Do you think the authors convey the urgency of mission in a compelling manner in this concluding chapter? Why or why not?

List of Choices for Elective Reading

Clairborne, Shane. *Jesus for President*. Zondervan, 2008.

[An examination of the *Missio Dei* over against cultural Evangelical Christianity in the USA (especially its political allegiances), by a prominent American advocate of the “new monasticism”].

Dyrness, William A. *Let the Earth Rejoice! A Biblical Theology of Holistic Mission*. Crossway Books, 1983.

[Professor at Fuller, former missionary to Philippines. Dyrness traces a biblical theology of holistic mission from Creation to the Consummation].

Edwards, Denis. *Ecology at the Heart of Faith: The Change of Heart that Leads to a New Way of Living on Earth*. Orbis, 2006.

[Denis writes as a Roman Catholic and is Australia’s foremost theologian addressing the ecological implications of faith and mission].

Éla, Jean-Marc. *My Faith as an African*. Orbis, 1989.

[A Cameroonian Roman Catholic priest seeks to forge an authentic expression of Christian theology that is culturally African and also speaks to the problems of poverty and oppression].

Elizondo, Virgilio. *Galilean Journey: The Mexican-American Promise*. Orbis, 1983.

[A theology of mission from the perspective of the contributions the experience of marginalization can make to the church of the dominant culture].

Guder, Darrell L. (1998). *Missional Church: A Vision for the Sending of the Church in North America*. Eerdmans, 1998.

[A compendium of essays by an ecumenical team of missiologists who participate in the Gospel and our Culture Network. It offers a perspective of North American as a mission field].

Guder, Darrell L. *The Continuing Conversion of the Church*. Eerdmans, 2000.

[A development of a theological framework for the emerging understanding of the missional church].

Hunsberger, George R. & Craig Van Gelder. *The Church between Gospel and Culture: The Emerging Mission in North America*. Eerdmans, 1996.

[A compendium of essays that helped set in motion the Gospel and our Culture Network, seeking to apply the writings of Lesslie Newbigin to the missionary situation in North America].

Kirk, J. Andrew. *What is Mission? Theological Explorations*. Fortress Press, 2000.

[British evangelical, former missionary to Argentina, explores the relationship of mission to theology and discusses seven key contemporary issues in mission].

Kraybill, Donald. *The Upside Down Kingdom*. 25th Anniversary edition. Herald Press, 2003.

[A radical Anabaptist reading of the Sermon on the Mount as it applies to contemporary culture].

Padilla, C. René. *Mission Between the Times: Essays on the Kingdom*. Langham Monographs, 2010. (Revised and expanded from the 1985 edition)

[Baptist theologian from Argentina – explores spiritual conflict, particularly the areas of consumerism and materialism].

Piper, John. *Let the Nations Be Glad: The Supremacy of God in Missions*. 2nd ed. Baker, 2002.
[Baptist pastor and professor in the Calvinist tradition. Has a strong emphasis on worship, prayer and suffering].

Rauschenbusch, Walter. *A Theology for the Social Gospel*. Abingdon, 1978.
[The most famous North American Baptist theologian, father of the social gospel movement of the early 20th century. Takes the classic systematic theology themes and asks larger questions with implications for society as a whole].

Song, Choan-Seng. *Third-Eye Theology*. Orbis, 1991.
[Roman Catholic/inculturation perspective. An exploration of the possibilities of a theology that takes its point of departure from the cultures of Asia].

Book Review Template

Name _____ Box _____

Title of Book Read _____

Author(s) _____

Total Number of Pages Read _____

1. Statement of the Author's controlling purpose in writing this book.

2. Brief Survey of the Topics Covered

3. Critical Assessment

4. Application to Ministry

This should be 3-4 pages in length