

Intro to Mission
Institute of Biblical Studies
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Summer 2019
Course Syllabus

Course Description

Our God is a missionary God. From Genesis to Revelation, God is working to create a community of redeemed people from every tribe, tongue and nation for his glory. This class will help you better understand God's mission (*missio Dei*) and the vital role his church is called to play in advancing his kingdom. We will explore cross-cultural mission from four perspectives. First, we will look at what Scripture says about the mission of God (biblical/theological perspective). Second, we will examine culture and how we can more effectively communicate the gospel cross-culturally (cultural perspective). Finally, we will trace the global history of Christian mission from the first century to the twenty-first century (historical perspective).

Course Objectives

1. Biblical

- a. Cultivate a God-centered and Trinitarian view of Christian mission (*missio Dei*).
- b. Develop a greater passion to see Jesus Christ exalted in every nation and among every people.
- c. Beginning with God's promise to Abraham (Gen 12:1-3), trace the biblical basis for mission throughout the story of God from Genesis to Revelation.
- d. Better understand the nature and scope of the Great Commission Jesus gave to the church (Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-18; Luke 24:44-49; John 20:21; Acts 1:8).
- e. Investigate four missiological themes in Acts: the importance of cross-cultural witness, the need for contextualization, the power of the Holy Spirit and reality of suffering in Christian mission.

2. Cultural

- a. Become a humble learner in the area of culture and ethnicity.
- b. Develop greater motivation to cross cultures in bringing the gospel of Jesus Christ to every people group.
- c. Grow in appreciation for the challenge in crossing cultures and effectively communicating the gospel.
- d. Discover tools that enable you to better understand and communicate more effectively with your ministry audience (ethnography).
- e. Consider and personalize how you, as a missionary with Cru, can participate in God's mission to gather a redeemed people for his glory from every nation.

3. Historical

- a. Beginning with the first century, learn how the gospel has spread around the world through the witness of the church.

- b. Discover some of the surprising means God, in his providence, has used to spread the gospel around the world.
- c. Better understand barriers to the spread of the gospel in the history of the church.
- d. Further awareness about the current reality of the gospel among the people groups of the world.
- e. Explore the life and ministry of a cross-cultural missionary.
- f. Understand how Cru, as a religious missionary order, fits into the global story of Christian mission.

Required Texts

Timothy C. Tennent. [*Invitation to World Missions: A Trinitarian Missiology for the Twenty-first Century*](#). Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2010: read everything except chap. 7 and 16.

You may also need to purchase a text for your Missionary Biography Paper (see pp. 4-5, 8-9).

It is recommended that you read both of these texts ahead of time, before the course begins.

However, please wait to start the Missionary Biography Paper until after you've heard at least 2/3 of the lectures, in order to be equipped with the proper hermeneutical lenses to write it.

Required Articles (available on IBS website)

Andrew F. Walls. [*The Missionary Movement in Christian History: Studies in the Transmission of Faith*](#). Maryknoll: Orbis, 1996: read only chp. 1, "The Gospel as Prisoner and Liberator of Culture" (total: 13 pp). This will be provided to you as a PDF (so, no need to purchase the book).

Recommended Texts

Ralph Winter and Steven Hawthorne, eds. [*Perspectives on the World Christian Movement: A Reader*](#). 4th ed. Pasadena: William Carey Library, 2013.

It contains hundreds of short essays addressing key topics in mission.

Timothy Keller. [*Center Church: Doing Balanced, Gospel-Centered Ministry in Your City*](#). Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012. This book is also a required text for other IBS courses so you will be reading more of it in the future.

Ruth Tucker. [*From Jerusalem to Irian Jaya: A Biographical History of Christian Missions*](#), 2nd edition. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2004.

David Livermore. [*Cultural Intelligence: Improving Your CQ to Engage Our Multicultural World*](#). Grand Rapids: Baker, 2009.

John Piper. [*Let the Nations Be Glad: The Supremacy of God in Missions*](#), 3rd edition. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2010.

Arthur F. Glasser. [*Announcing the Kingdom: The Story of God's Mission in the Bible*](#). Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2003.

Christopher J. H. Wright, [*The Mission of God's People: A Biblical Theology of the Church's Mission*](#). Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010.

Course Requirements

1. **Lectures:** Mandatory in-person attendance for the class lectures, as this is the primary mode of delivery of content other than the readings.
2. **Reading:** Please keep up with the reading according to the class calendar. At the end of the course you will submit a report showing how much of the reading you completed.
3. **Cru History Video:** Watch the video on early history of Cru (link posted on the IBS webpage for the ITM course). You will also read a brief history of Black staff in Cru.
4. **Missionary Self-Reflection Assignment:** In the process of cross-cultural transmission of the Gospel, it is important that we not only know who we are aiming to reach, but also who we ourselves are. This assignment aims to help you unpack your various identities. You may or may not have ever had to explicitly articulate your race, gender, social class, age, educational level, nationality, religion, physical or mental ability/disability, sexual orientation, family wholeness or brokenness, etc. and how they impact your interactions with others who are different (cf. John 4, where Jesus and the Samaritan woman explicitly mention that they are different in race, gender, and social standing, and they attempt to navigate these differences). In some of these areas, you may be more powerful than others; in some of these areas, you may be less powerful (identify things in both categories). Often, we are a mix of both. What parts of your identity(ies) do you consider the most primary to who you are? In what part(s) of your identity have you been hurt the most? In what part(s) have you hurt others the most (it could be explicitly or unintentionally)? How do you think Christ calls you to change or repent? What parts of your identity would you like to leverage more for the Kingdom? Are there ways you think you can be more Christlike in how you approach the world based on the position(s) God has placed you in life?
5. **Cultural Learning Experience:** As a missionary and as someone living on mission, cultivating a posture of humility and developing a learner mentality is of prime importance. This is a lifelong journey and we know that you are already on it. This assignment will be one more step and hopefully a significant one. To complete this assignment, you will attend a worship service - at least once, in a church of a culture and ethnicity different from your own. Please note that this should be a new experience, not a reflection on a past experience. Then you will write a short report describing what you observed and upload it to your coach. You will also share what you learned in your coaching group. The Cultural Learning Experience assignment accounts for 25% of your grade and is required to pass the course. Note that this is due the second Monday of the class. Use the report form (which the professor will post separately) to complete your assignment.

6. **Missionary Biography:** "Missionary Biography: You will select a cross-cultural missionary to study. You can either read a biography (minimum of 75pp) or interview someone who has served, or is presently serving, on the mission field in a language and/or culture that is different from his or her own. You will find a list of recommended missionary biographies at the end of the syllabus, along with suggested interview questions on the IBS website. After you finish your reading or interview, you will write 900-1000 words summarizing what you learned. Structure your paper around the following three themes (about 300-350 words per theme): (1) an introduction which describes the historical, cultural and geographic context of the culture in which your missionary served (additional research beyond your book is welcome, though optional), as well as a brief overview of the missionary's life and ministry; (2) positive lessons you learned from this missionary about crossing cultures effectively, and how they may be applicable to your own context, and what you might change about yourself (either cognitively or behaviorally) as a result; and (3) any additional personal or critical insights gleaned from studying the life of this missionary, including (for example): how you might disagree with them, or how you might update what they did for the modern world, or how you might revise them to be more biblical, or anything that surprised you, or any huge takeaway that was a revelation to you. As you reflect on the context of the missionary's audience and the lessons learned by the missionary, be sure to look for and consider the ways God was already at work among this people - individually and collectively - prior to the missionary's arrival. (Theologians call this work of God the *preparatio evangelica*.) Be sure to include a bibliography at the end, listing the sources you cite (include the author, title, city of publication, publisher, date of publication), though footnotes or endnotes are not needed in the body of the paper. You will also share what you learned with your coaching group during one of the virtual meetings."

Missionary Biography Grading Rubric

Category	Questions to Consider	Possible Points
Missionary Context and Characteristics	How well does your report describe the historical, cultural, and geographic context in which the missionary serves (or served)? How well does your report describe (briefly) the life and ministry of the missionary?	30 points
Positive Lessons about Crossing Cultures	How well did you share a positive lesson(s) learned about crossing cultures? How well did you apply this lesson(s) to your own context and determine what you might change about yourself (cognitively, behaviorally) as a result?	30 points
Personal or Critical Insights	How well did you share personal or critical insights into the missionary's life? (See assignment description for examples of what to look for.)	30 points
Quality of Writing	Was your report readable?	10 points
Total grade		100 points

Course Grade

Reading	25%
Missionary Self-Reflection	25%
Missionary Biography	25%
<u>Cultural Learning Experience</u>	<u>25%</u>
Total	100%

Grading Scale

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

Note: A grade of C- or better is required to apply this course toward your IBS requirements

Course Schedule – Overview

Date	Reading Schedule	Section	Lesson Schedule
W, 7/3	Tennent, chps. 1-4	Biblical	LESSON 1 – The Missionary Heart of God in the Old Testament
F, 7/5	Tennent chp. 5	Biblical	LESSON 2 – The Gospels and the Great Commission
M, 7/8	Tennent, chps. 14-15	Biblical	LESSON 3 – Missionary Themes in the Book of Acts
T, 7/9	Tennent, chps. 6	Cultural	LESSON 4 – “Jerusalem”: Reaching the University Campus--Millennials and Gen Z <i>Missionary Self-Reflection paper due</i>
W, 7/10	Tennent, chp. 11	Cultural	LESSON 5 – “Judea and Samaria”: Domestic Racial and Gender Reconciliation, LGBTQ
R, 7/11	Tennent, chps. 7, 12-13	Cultural	LESSON 6 – “Ends of the Earth”: Overseas Missions and World Religions (esp. Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism)
F, 7/12	Tennent, chp. 8	Historical	LESSON 7 – Turning Points in Mission History before 1792 <i>Cross-Cultural Learning Experience due</i>
M, 7/15	Tennent, chp. 9	Historical	LESSON 8 – The “Great Century” of Missions (1792-1910); Edinburgh 1910 and ecumenism in the 20 th century
T, 7/16	Tennent, chp. 10; Walls	Historical	LESSON 9 – The Flowering of Global Christianity in the 21 st century
W, 7/17	Cru videos	Integrative conclusion	LESSON 10 – Cru and the future: where do we go from here? <i>Missionary Biography due</i> <i>Reading Report due</i>

Recommended Missionary Biographies

Reading missionary biographies offer several benefits:

1. They inspire us to obey God's call wherever, to whomever, whenever...no matter the cost.
2. They challenge us with those who have gone before as we see their faith and flaws, while recognizing God's grace in it all.
3. They teach us what has been done well in missions history and what may need to be "undone".
4. They help us recognize and wrestle with missiological dilemmas.

Note: An exhaustive list of recommended missionary biographies can be found [here](#).

A Chance to Die: The Life and Legacy of Amy Carmichael by Elisabeth Elliot

Missionary: Amy Carmichael

Missionary's Ethnicity/Nationality: Scottish Irish

Date: 1867-1951

Audience of Gospel: Tamil (India)

Bruchko: The Astonishing True Story of a 19-Year-Old American, His Capture by the Motilone Indians and His Adventures in Christianizing the Stone Age Tribe by Bruce Olson

Missionary: Bruce Olson

Missionary's Ethnicity/Nationality: Scandinavian American

Date: 1941-

Audience of Gospel: Bari (Venezuela/Colombia)

Profiles of African-American Missionaries by Robert J. Stevens

***Missionary:** Multiple

Missionary's Ethnicity/Nationality: African-American

***Date:** 1700-present

Audience of Gospel: Multiple

***Note:** For this biography, select one of the eight eras between 1700 to the present and study the missionaries from that era.

George Liele's Life and Legacy: An Unsung Hero by Various Authors

Missionary: George Liele

Missionary's Ethnicity/Nationality: Black American

Date: 1750-1828

Audience of Gospel: Jamaica

Biography of Elder Lott Cary by J.B. Taylor OR Lott Carey: First Black Missionary to Africa by Leroy Fitts

Missionary: Lott Cary

Missionary's Ethnicity/Nationality: Black American

Date: 1780-1828

Audience of Gospel: Liberia

Rebecca's Revival: Creating Black Christianity in the Atlantic World by Jon Sensbach

Missionary: Rebecca Proppen

Missionary's Ethnicity/Nationality: Antigua(African, European descent)

Date: 1718-1780

Audience of Gospel: African slaves (St. Thomas), Ghana

A Secret Hope by Ria Zebua

Missionary: Ria Zebua

Missionary's Ethnicity/Nationality: Indonesian

Date: Current

Audience of Gospel: Manobo (Philippines)

Samuel Morris: The African Boy God Sent to Prepare an American University for Its Mission to the World by Lindley Baldwin

Missionary: Samuel Morris

Missionary's Ethnicity/Nationality: Kru (Liberia)

Date: 1873-1893

Audience of Gospel: United States

Reading Report

Lecture	Assignment	Assigned Pages	# Pages Completed
W, 7/3	Tennent, chps. 1-4	106	
F, 7/5	Tennent, chps. 5	33	
M, 7/8	Tennent, chps. 14-15	49	
T, 7/9	Tennent, chp. 6	32	
W, 7/10	Tennent, chp. 11	31	
R, 7/11	Tennent, chp. 12-13	55	
F, 7/12	Tennent, chp. 8	26	
M, 7/15	Tennent, chp. 9	29	
T, 7/16	Tennent, chp. 10; Walls	51	
	Total pages	412	