

Exploring the Missional Church Online DC 945Z

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Elective. Three credit hours

In an online course there is an expectation and requirement for students to post frequently (two or three times) every week responding to other students and the professor in the places provided. Students need to post comments weekly and no late postings in a given week will count toward your final posting grade in the course.

Why do we require posting in an online course? Posting is the electronic equivalent of participating in a face-to-face class where you raise your hand and ask a question or make a comment either in response to what the professor has said or to what another student has said. Good online pedagogy strongly encourages online interaction between and among all participants. In addition, our accreditors will only approve the offering of online courses if we can demonstrate that students are interacting and demonstrating through their interactions that they are learning course concepts (see Course Platform below). If you wish to see Erskine continue to offer accredited online courses, your cooperation will go a long way in seeing that this option continues.

Course Description

This course analyzes the biblical theme of mission and its significance for the development of a missional ecclesiology. Students explore missional church models of ministry and consider implications of the models for 21st century church ministry.

Course Objectives

1. Explain the biblical concept of mission and the missional church.
2. Expose students to a representative sample of the literature on the missional church.
3. Encourage dialogue about the salient features and issues of a missional church perspective.
4. Explore the implications for practice of adopting a missional church approach to ministry.

Resources

Students continue to be responsible for securing their own required textbooks. As a convenience, there is a bookstore on the seminary's home page. To access this site and its information, locate textbooks, and compare prices, go to <http://erskine.edu/seminary/bookstore>. The online bookstore will be a portal with links to Amazon, CBD, Barnes & Noble, the Erskine Campus Bookstore, and perhaps others. A limited number of copies of each textbook may be available from the Erskine Campus Bookstore, and copies may be ordered through that Bookstore.

Required Course Textbooks

The Mission of God: Unlocking the Bible's Grand Narrative (2006), Christopher J. H. Wright. Downers Grove: IVP. 0-8308-2571-1

Missional Church: A Vision for the Sending of the Church in North America (1998), Darrell L. Guder (ed). Grand Rapids: Baker. 0-8028-4350-6

Treasures in Clay Jars: Patterns in Missional Faithfulness (2004), Lois Y. Barrett, et al.. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans. 0-8028-2692-X

Breaking the Missional Code (2006), Ed Stetzer & David Putman. Nashville: H&P Publishers. 978-0-8054-4359-2

Recommended Reading on the Missional Church

- *The Ministry of the Missional Church*, Craig van Gelder.
- *The Continuing Conversion of the Church*, Darrell L. Guder.
- *Transforming Mission*, David J. Bosch.
- *Shaped By God's Heart: The Passion and Practices of Missional Churches*, Milfred Minatrea.
- *Bible and Mission*, Wayne Stumme (ed).
- *On Mission with God*, Avery T. Willis, Jr & Henry T. Blackaby.
- *The Mission of the Church in the World*, Roger E. Hedlund.
- *Bible and Mission*, Richard Bauckham.
- *Be My Witnesses*, Darrell L. Guder
- *The Missions of Jesus and the Disciples According to the Fourth Gospel*, Andreas J. Kostenberger.
- *Mission in the Old Testament*, Walter C. Kaiser, Jr.
- *The Earliest Christian Mission to All Nations in the Light of Matthew's Gospel*, James LeGrand.
- *Salvation to the Ends of the Earth: A biblical theology of mission*, Andreas J. Kostenberger & Peter T. O'Brien.
- *The Church's Mission to the Gentiles*, Naymond H. Keathley.
- *Christian Mission in the Modern World*, John R. W. Stott.

- *The Gospel to the Nations: Perspectives on Paul's Mission*, Peter Bolt & Mark Thompson (eds.).
- *The Meaning of "Fishers of Men,"* Wilhelm H. Wuellner.
- *Perspectives on the World Christian Movement* (Third Edition), Ralph D. Winter (ed.).
- *Discipling the Nations*, Richard R. DeRidder.
- *Early Christology and Jesus' Own View of His Mission*, Marinus de Jonge.
- *Yes, God of the Gentiles, Too: The Missionary Message of the Old Testament*, David Filbeck.
- *Jesus' Promise to the Nations*, Joachim Jeremias.
- *A Light Among the Gentiles*, Scot McKnight.
- *Canon and Mission*, H. D. Beeby.
- *From Every People and Nation: A biblical theology of race*, J. Daniel Hays.
- *The New Testament Concept of Witness*, Allison A. Trites.
- *New Testament Witness in Today's World*, Allison A. Trites.
- *Only to the House of Israel?*, T. W. Manson.
- *Gospel and Mission in the Writings of Paul*, P. T. O'Brien.
- *Where the Nations Meet: The Church in a multicultural world*, Stephen A. Rhodes.
- *The Missionary Nature of the Church: A survey of the biblical theology of mission*, Johannes Blauw.
- *The Salvation of the Gentiles: Studies in the Acts of the Apostles*, Jacques Dupont.
- *The People of God in the Old Testament*, H. J. Kraus.
- *Knowing Jesus Through the Old Testament*, Christopher J. H. Wright.
- *A Biblical Theology of Missions*, George W. Peters.
- *Out of Every Tribe and Nation*, Justo L. Gonzalez.
- "Be a blessing" or "So that you will be a blessing." Implications for Old Testament Missiology, Andrew Bowling. Unpublished article.
- "Old Testament Missiology and the Eschatology of Bengt Sundkler and Joachim Jeremias," Andrew Bowling, ETS Regional Meeting, November 17, 1993.

Grading Criteria and Scale

The following grading scale, from the Seminary catalog is used to assign a numeric value to each lesson submitted. All scores are weighted equally. Your final grade is the average of each grade received. A letter grade will be computed on the basis of your average raw score using the following grade scale:

95-100	A	80-83	C
93-94	A-	78-79	C-
91-92	B+	76-77	D+
88-90	B	72-75	D
86-87	B-	70-71	D-
84-85	C+	0-69	F

General grading criteria will conform to the following expectations for all course submissions:

- A Level Work = Exemplary ability to differentiate constituent parts; assess and critique theories, thoughts, ideas, concepts, proposals, and relevant literature; and the ability to reason in a logical and compelling manner.
- B Level Work = Reflects above average grasp of the subject matter; displays a superior ability to use new knowledge in a creative manner; and can demonstrate an above average ability to discriminate among alternative viewpoints.
- C Level Work = Adequate but not exceptional ability to think cogently and clearly; sufficient ability to understand and comprehend subject matter; and a satisfactory ability to integrate and organize course concepts in a logical and coherent manner.
- D Level Work = Inadequate mastery of basic facts and information presented in the course; insufficient or inappropriate use of common terms and language indicating an inadequate grasp of the material; and an inferior ability to analyze and judge proposals, ideas or concepts.

Grades for the course will be processed as quickly as possible. If you have not received written notification of your final grade for the course after a month has elapsed at the end of the semester, please contact the Registrar's Office. According to institutional policy, professors do not notify students of their final grade in a course. Only the Registrar's Office can issue final grades.

Course Components

1. **Presentation Component:** Critical course concepts and precepts will be presented by the professor and students.
2. **Reading Component:** Exposure to the literature of the field relevant to the topic of this course will be accomplished through required readings as specified in this course syllabus.
3. **Reflection Component:** Students are expected to think critically and deeply about the subject matter of this course intellectually (theory) and pragmatically (practice). This is encouraged through a variety of written assignments.
4. **Online Component:** Students are expected to enroll in the online classroom for this course. In order to get a satisfactory grade for this portion of the course, you will need to make weekly postings of your own and respond to my questions and to other student postings. There are plenty of opportunities for you to interact with other students who are

taking this course. You are required to post at least one weekly contribution and to respond to one other student's post each week. No post hoc contributions will count toward your grade for this portion of the course.

5. **Evaluation Component:** Students create a Capstone Assignment that integrates all of the various concepts and models presented in the course through lectures, presentations, and readings. This will count as your final exam for the course.

FAQ's

1. All assignments must be submitted via e-mail attachments unless otherwise notified.
2. Please use Microsoft Word when submitting assignments electronically.
3. All assignments should be clearly marked on the e-mail subject line with the student's last name and assignment number. Failure to include this information will result in a returned assignment.

COURSE PLATFORM

Erskine Seminary is accredited by the Association of Theological Schools (ATS). According to the ATS Standard 10.3.4.3, "Institutions shall ensure that distance education programs provide appropriate opportunity for collaboration, personal development, interaction among peers within a community of learning, and supervised field or internship opportunities when appropriate to the degree program." It is with this stipulation that EDEN has implemented a web-based learning platform which will serve to provide a number of collaborative learning experiences. The learning platform is Moodle and according to their website, "Moodle is a course management system designed to help educators who want to create quality online courses . . . and create effective online learning communities." You will be provided with additional information concerning Moodle tutorials, site information, and the peer mentoring program. In order to meet the online discussion component of this course, you will need:

- A computer (or access to a computer)
- High speed access to the Internet

Course Sequence

Module # 1 First Month

Biblical and Theological Foundations of Mission (*The Mission of God*, Christopher J. H. Wright)

Students will read through this text and participate in structured online dialogues and discussions about its content in light of the

instructor's missional model which will be provided online. Students must prepare for this by reading Part I and Part III of *The Mission of God*.

Assignment # 1 Based upon your reading of Parts I and III of *The Mission of God* and based upon the material presented online, write a 3-5 page paper entitled "Contours of the Mission of God" in which you sketch out the main concepts and ingredients for your emerging understanding of the Mission of God. **Due last Friday of first month.**

NOTE: Post all assignments **in two places**. Send all assignments to me via email attachment using the email address provided above. Post your assignment to the proper location in Session # 1 in the online classroom for this course. There other students will respond to your paper and you will respond to at least one other student's paper. This procedure applies to all assignments for the course. See below for uploading instructions.

Between class modules: Participate in online discussions.

Module # 2 Second month

Defining a Missional Church (*Missional Church*, Guder)

Students will be asked to locate one article from those provided in the online classroom on the missional church. You will need to post which article you plan to read and report on to the online classroom so that we avoid duplication (if there are other students taking the class at the same time). See "Missional Church Article Depot." Provide a brief summary and critique of the article as it compares or contrasts to that of Guder in *Missional Church*, Wright in *The Mission of God*, and Lowe in his lecture materials.

Assignment # 2 Based upon your reading of *Missional Church* and the material presented in Module # 2, write a 3-5 page paper entitled "Contours of a Missional Church" in which you lay out your present understanding of the essential elements of a missional church from both a biblical and practical perspective. **Due last Friday of the second month.** Follow the same procedure outlined above for submitting your assignments.

Between class modules: Participate in online discussions.

Module # 3 Third month**Exploring Missional Churches** (*Treasures in Clay Jars*, Lois Barrett, et al.)

Select one of the churches in the *Treasures in Clay Jars* book as a missional church that you think is on track and reflects good practices regarding missional church principles.

Assignment # 3 Explain why you selected this particular church and explain how you think it models good missional church principles by comparing and contrasting it to the Guder, Wright, and Lowe models. You will need to post your case study to the “Case Study Depot” for other class members to read and react to. **Due last Friday of third month.**

Between class modules: Participate in online discussions.

Module # 4 Fourth month**Transitioning to Missional Church Ministry: from Maintenance to Mission** (*Breaking the Missional Code*, Ed Stetzer and David Putman)

Students will examine the practical application of a missional perspective to local congregations. Please consider and discuss the ministry ingredients necessary to forge a missional church from the building blocks of a traditional church. **Students will be asked to post online their strategy for transitioning to a missional church approach based upon the local church in which they are currently serving.**

Assignment # 4 **Capstone Assignment:** Students will take all of the ingredients of the course (lectures, discussions, and readings) to construct “My Vision of a Missional Church.” Your vision paper will lay out (1) your biblical understanding of the concept of mission; (2) your concept of what constitutes a missional church; and (3) your strategies for developing a missional church either from scratch in a new church plant or from the building blocks of a traditional church. The paper will run between 10-15 pages in length following Turabian style and the D.Min. style manual and be free from typos, misspelled words, and grammatical mistakes. **Due Monday of final exam week.**

Each of the four phases of the course will be informed by one of the required texts for the course. Students will be expected to stay up with their reading as

assigned by the instructor in order to make the course work as it is structured. Without student preparation for each class module the goals for that particular module will not be met.

*Steps to upload your assignment:

1. Find the discussion forum in the online classroom.
2. Click on that link and you will find the assignment listed there.
3. Click on "Add a new discussion topic" and this will take you to the upload area
4. Type in your name and introduction title (i.e. Joe Smith) in the subject line.
5. Type a BRIEF explanation in the message section (i.e. Introduction)
6. Click on the "browse" feature at the bottom of that paper and find your paper.
7. Double-click on your document and select "post to forum" shown at the bottom of the screen.

Steps to download (or read) others' assignment:

1. Find the discussion forum in the online classroom.
2. Click on that link and you will find student postings listed.
3. Click on the title of the student posting listed under Discussion.
4. Click on the Word document in that posting.
5. Select "open" to read the document instantly or "save" to save the document to your desktop folder.
6. Post your comments related to the paper by hitting "reply" on the discussion board. Enter your comments in message section. Hit "post to forum" when finished.

WRITING THEOLOGICAL PAPERS

The seminary has produced a *Writing Theological Papers* document that guides a student through the process of producing a high quality theological paper. It is included as part of the materials for this course located in the online classroom and is part of your Student Handbook provided by the seminary.

Please edit your paper for typographical errors, misspelled words, stylistic miscues, and grammatical mistakes. The paper should be double-spaced and constitute original work written for this course only and cannot include material previously used in another course or for another purpose. Please read over the notation regarding the seminary policy on plagiarism included at the end of this syllabus. Your use of the work or thoughts of another without proper citation and acknowledgement constitutes plagiarism. **Content found at an Internet web site is construed to be copyrighted material written and produced by another person.** Undocumented wholesale use of words from an Internet web site passed off as the student's own work in a research paper of this sort

constitutes plagiarism and will be considered a violation of the seminary plagiarism policy. Students who are determined to have violated the seminary's policy on plagiarism will receive a grade of zero for the paper, will not be allowed to re-submit another paper, and will have a written record of the violation added to their permanent student record. Further violations of the seminary's plagiarism policy could result in temporary or permanent dismissal from the seminary.

Relevant Institutional and Class Policies

(Please read carefully)

Conduct in Theological Discussions

- 1. Language about God and Humanity:** Although God transcends the distinction between male and female, the Bible and the Church's historic creeds and confessions use masculine language in reference to God. Thus, the Seminary encourages all students to retain this masculine usage when speaking and writing about God. Furthermore, the Seminary recognizes that all human beings, male and female, are created equally in the image of God (Gen. 1:26-27), and believers of both sexes are fellow heirs of the grace of life (1 Pet. 3:7). Accordingly, whenever students are speaking and writing about males and females, they should use language that clearly includes both men and women (for example, by saying/writing "humanity" rather than "man" or "people" rather than "men").
- 2. Registration:** Once a student has completed, signed, and submitted his/her registration to the Registrar for this class, it is a binding contract, and billing will be based on this registration. If the student decides not to take this class, he/she must complete a "drop/add" form and secure the appropriate signatures. Failure to withdraw from the class properly will result in the student's receiving a grade of "F" for the course, and full tuition charges will apply. No exceptions will be made to this policy.
- 3. Late or Incomplete Work:** Any work not submitted by the due date will be assessed a late penalty. The final deadline for submitting all late work is noon on the Monday after the end of exam week. Any work not received by this deadline will be given a grade of "0," unless the student has made **prior** arrangements to take an incomplete for the course. Incomplete (I) marks will be handled in accordance with policy statements in the Catalog. In particular, one should note that the student does not automatically have the privilege of taking an incomplete. Rather, it is the professor's prerogative to give an incomplete, and only when the student has completed most of the work for the course and has been providentially hindered from completing the remainder. Note that there is a processing fee associated with "Incompletes," and that "Incompletes" must be completed by the stated deadline or they automatically become an "F." Only the Dean may approve extensions of deadlines for "Incompletes." **For further details, please read the current Seminary Catalog. The Seminary imposes a fee for Incomplete grades.**

4. My normal office hours are posted on my office door for each semester. However, there are times when I will not be in my office during those posted hours. If you need to see me or speak with me, please send me an email (slowe@erskine.edu) or leave me a voice mail on my office phone (864.379.8748).
5. Typically theologians prefer the Turabian or footnote style of citation. Educators as well as others in the social sciences prefer the American Psychological Association (APA) in-text citation style. The Seminary allows either at the graduate level. I allow students who use either style in my classes. My only requirement is that you do not mix the two citation styles. Choose either APA (my preference) or Turabian (the Seminary's preference).
6. Plagiarism, defined as the representation of the words or ideas of another as one's own in any academic exercise, is a clear violation of the Erskine Seminary Honor Code as set forth in the [Student Handbook](#) and *Seminary Catalog*. It is also a clear violation of the will of God in regard to taking something that belongs to someone else without his/her permission. The penalty for an infraction of the plagiarism policy is severe and may potentially result in the permanent dismissal of a student from the seminary. If you have any questions concerning the appropriate use of referenced sources, please contact me prior to submitting your work for grading.

Please visit these websites for more information about plagiarism:

<http://www.plagiarism.org/>

http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/research/r_plagiar.html