

DC 945 Exploring the Missional Church
Contexts Elective. Three Hours

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PLEASE NOTE:

THIS IS A HYBRID COURSE WHICH MEANS THAT THERE ARE ON CAMPUS AND ONLINE REQUIREMENTS AND FEATURES TO THIS COURSE. Successful completion comes from participation in both elements, online learning as well as attendance in your traditional class. Hybrid courses allow professor and students to stay connected and engaged during the month-long intervals between classes. Below you will find an Online Discussion Rubric which lays out my expectations for your online posts. Your grade will be based upon your adherence to the rubric. Information about how the hybrid class operates is presented at the first class session.

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.

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.

Required Course Textbooks

NOTE: Students are required to secure their own copies of required textbooks. As a convenience, the seminary offers a bookstore portal on the website at <http://www.erskineseminary.org/bookstore.html>. There you will find links to familiar vendors, and can compare prices and place orders. The Erskine Campus Bookstore will stock a small number of each required text and book orders can be placed through the Campus Bookstore.

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.

Course 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
93-94	A-
91-92	B+
88-90	B
86-87	B-
84-85	C+
80-83	C
78-79	C-
0-77	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, please contact the Registrar's Office. According to institutional policy, professors are not permitted to notify students of their grade in a course. Only the Registrar's Office can issue grades.

Course Sequence

Session # 1 Monday, September 14

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

Students will read through this text with the instructor and participate in structured dialogues and discussions about its content in light of the instructor's missional model which will be presented in class. Students must come prepared for the first class session 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 in the first class session, 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 September 25th by 5:00 p.m.**

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 Hybrid 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.

Between class sessions: Participate in online discussions.

Session # 2 Monday, October 12

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

Students will be asked to locate one article from those provided in the Hybrid 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. See "Missional Church Article Depot." Come prepared to the second class session to give 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 class presentation.

Assignment # 2 Based upon your reading of *Missional Church* and the material presented in class session # 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 October 23rd by 5:00 p.m.** Follow the same procedure outlined above for submitting your assignments.

Between class sessions: Participate in online discussions.

Session # 3 – Monday, November 9

Exploring Missional Churches (*Treasures in Clay Jars*, Lois Barrett, et al.)

Students will be asked to identify a missional church (not one in the book) and present it as a case study for the class to consider. You will need to post your case study to the "Case Study Depot" for other class members to see in order to avoid duplication. Be prepared to compare and contrast the case study example you present with those offered in *Treasures in Clay Jars*.

Session # 3 Assignment For presentation in Session # 4, identify what you think are essential ingredients in leading a traditional church to become a missional church. Use your current church as a concrete example of how this might be done.

Between class sessions: Participate in online discussions.

Session # 4 – Monday, December 7

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. Come prepared to 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 present their strategy for transitioning to a missional church approach based upon the local church in which they are currently serving.

Session # 4 Assignment **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 Friday, December 11 by 5:00 p.m.**

Participate in online discussions.

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 session the goals for that particular session will not be met.

Online Discussion Rubric

	Laudable A	Commendable B	Acceptable C	Unacceptable D	Deplorable F	Score
Stays on Task:	The student follows teacher's instructions and guidance.	Occasionally the student gets off task and gets back on task without the need of the teacher's assistance.	The student is on task most of the time and is responsive to guidance meant to bring the student back on task.	The student starts out following the specific instructions of the assignment but rapidly moves off subject.	The student is unresponsive to instructor guidance.	
The student participates in the discussion in timely and substantive ways.	The student posts to the online discussion weekly or more times with posts that are on task and contribute in a sustentative way to the posted question.	The student posts to the online discussion 3 times with posts that are on task and contribute in a sustentative way to the posited question.	The student posts to the online discussion 2 times with posts that are on task and contribute in a sustentative way to the posted question.	The student posts to the online discussion 1 times with a post that is on task and contributes in a sustentative way to the posted question.	The student has not participated in ways that are on task and contribute in a sustentative way to the posted question.	
The student demonstrates a knowledge base from assigned texts.	The student's posts are clearly built on familiarity with and comprehension of assigned materials.	The student's posts are clearly built on familiarity with and limited comprehension of assigned materials.	The student's posts are clearly built on some familiarity with and comprehension of assigned materials.	The student's posts are built on some familiarity with and limited comprehension of assigned materials.	The student's posts demonstrate a lack of familiarity with and comprehension of assigned materials.	

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Relevant Institutional and Class Policies

Drop/Add/Withdrawal: 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 prior to the drop/add deadline during the second week of the semester or term. If one wishes to withdraw from the course after the drop/add deadline, one must complete a withdrawal form, and tuition will be refunded on a pro rated basis. 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.

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").

Conduct in Theological Discussions

Erskine Seminary is committed to the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church, and it expects its students to show respect for all who identify with that one Church. In all written work, oral presentations, and discussions both inside and outside the classroom, the Seminary expects students to conduct discussions of controversial issues in a context of respect for those with whom one disagrees. Please see the Community Life Statement in the Catalog for more information.

Incompletes

The grade of “I” or incomplete is given at the discretion of the professor. A grade of “I” is normally given when a student has substantially completed the requirements for a course but has been prevented by extraordinary circumstances from completing the remainder of the course requirements. A student who wishes to request an incomplete should normally complete an incomplete form prior to the end of the semester and ask the professor to grant the request. (Under unusual circumstances, the student may communicate with the professor by phone or email rather than in person, and the professor may then agree to fill out the form at the student's request. Under exceptional circumstances, the professor may initiate the process by filling out the form on the student's behalf.) If the professor grants the request, he/she will sign the incomplete form and turn it in with his/her final grade report. An “I” in any course must be removed by March 1 for the Fall Term, April 1 for the January Term, August 1 for the Spring Term, and November 1 for the Summer Term. Only the Dean may grant extensions of incompletes beyond the established completion date. Otherwise, these grades

automatically become “F.”

1. Any late project will be automatically reduced by one letter grade regardless of reason. *Please make this class a high priority and keep ahead of projects in order to compensate for the exigencies of ministry and life.*
2. My normal office hours are posted on my office door in Room 14 Reid Hall 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 (379.8748)
3. 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.