

'Called to mission: local and global'

Explanation

In this module, the Revd Dr Michael Sheard, an Anglican priest who has also been a Methodist minister, a teacher in Africa, and, for over 20 years, a 'mission director' in the Diocese of Lichfield, England, will encourage participants to explore what it means to be part of God's world-wide mission in the 21st century. He will pose questions such as: What is The Church for? What is God's mission for his people today? If the responsibility of each congregation is primarily mission in its own community, to what extent should a local church be concerned about the wider world? What are the signs of a mature church? Can Christians learn from fellow believers in other countries and cultures? How does the Holy Spirit resource the whole Church?

1 Introduction: Bible, Church and Mission

a) Where we come from – A check-up for the local church

b) Exploring the Bible

- The New Testament model of 'mission'
- Discovering a Biblical theology of Mission

2 'Doing mission' today– Resources for mission and ministry

a) The task of the local church

b) What has been (and is being) tried in the West?

c) How does this compare with what is being done in South East Asia (and other places)?

d) Tools for the job – What can we learn from one another?

3 A Mission Agenda for the 21st century?

a) Summary: The shape of *global* mission today. Where have we come from? Where are we going?

b) Local churches and the bigger picture? (And how big should it be?)

c) How can we share in mission together? Possibilities, pitfalls and practical steps.

d) Conclusions: The Next Step?

A preliminary reading list and other preparation:

It would be most helpful if students could gain access to the works listed below. **Please note: you are not expected to read whole books at this stage. The passages selected are recommended in order to whet the appetite and introduce the topic, though Newbigin and Van Engen are quite easy reading.**

- David J Bosch, **Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission**, New York / Maryknoll, 1991
(*This is a monumental work and undoubtedly a mission 'classic', but don't try to read it all at this stage: you'll get indigestion. For preliminary reading confine yourself to pp 511-519, 'Mission in many modes'.*)
- M Goheen & C Bartholomew, **Living at the Crossroads: an introduction to Christian Worldview**, London / SPCK, 2008
(*Preliminary, if possible, read pp 107-126, 'What time is it? Four signs of our time in Western Society'*)
- Ng Moon Hing, **From Village to Village**, Kuala Lumpur / Diocese of West Malaysia, 2009 (*Please read & reflect on all 93pp*)
- E P Nacpil, 'Mission but not missionaries*', in **International Review of Mission**, vol 60, 1971, pp 356-362 (*prelim., if poss.*)
- Lesslie Newbigin, **The Gospel in a Pluralist Society**, London / SPCK (& Grand Rapids), 1989 (*preliminary: pp 155-197*)
- Charles Van Engen, **God's Missionary People: Rethinking the Purpose of the Local Church**, Grand Rapids / BBH, 1991
(*preliminary, if poss., Parts 1-3, pp 25-58*)

It is also assumed that most students will have some understanding of terms such as *Enlightenment, modernism, post-modernism, metanarrative, inculturation, contextualisation, secularism* and *globalisation*. Participants in the module are *not* expected to be 'experts' in these topics, nor to be able to answer exam questions on any of them, but an understanding of what the terms mean will undoubtedly help with some of the recommended reading. It might, therefore, be a good idea to go 'on line' (eg using *Wikipedia*) to get some sort of grasp of their meaning, if you don't already have this 'at your fingertips'.

Bibliography

Roland Allen, **Missionary Methods: St Paul's or ours?** 2nd edition, 1927. American edition (1962) with foreward by Lesslie Newbigin.

M Booker & M Ireland, **Evangelism – which way now? An evaluation of Alpha ... and other contemporary strategies**, London, 2003

Vincent J Donovan, **Christianity Rediscovered**, 2nd edition, London, 1982

J Andrew Kirk, **What is Mission? Theological Explorations**, London, 2000

Lesslie Newbigin, **The Open Secret: Sketches for a Missionary Theology**, London, 1978

James M Phillips & Robert T Coote (Editors), **Toward the 21st Century in Christian Mission**, Grand Rapids, 1993

Alan Smith, **God-shaped Mission: Theological and practical perspectives from the rural church, Norwich (London) 2008

John V Taylor, **The Go Between God: The Holy Spirit & the Christian Mission**, London, 1972

Andrew Walker, **Telling the Story: Gospel, Mission & Culture**, London 1996

Andrew Walls & Cathy Ross (Editors), **Mission in the 21st Century: Exploring the five marks of Global Mission**, London, 2008

Alan Le Grys, **Preaching to the Nations: The origins of mission in the early church**, London, 1998

A S Walters, **Knowing our Neighbour**, Kuala Lumpur, 2007

Vinay Samuel & Chris Sugden, **Mission as Transformation: A theology of the whole gospel**, Oxford 1999.

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