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And I will give you shepherds after my own heart, who will feed you with knowledge
and understanding. Jeremiah 3:15

ACNA West Presbyteral Exam

Missionary Work of the Church Essay Study Guide

Missionary Work of the Church

ACNA Constitution and Canons Title III.4.2 lists "The Missionary Work of the Church" as the 8th subject of examination required for all persons seeking ordination as Presbyter. This subject is defined as, "How the Gospel has been passed from one language, tribe and nation to another; basic principles of cross-cultural communication; mission strategies; and personal relational evangelism and apologetics."

The ACNA West divides the Missionary Work of the Church into the following subcategories:

- The Biblical Call to Missions
- History of Christian Mission
- Paradigms for Mission
- The Practices of Mission
- Mission in 21st Century North America

Key Terms

Disciple—A follower or apprentice of Jesus Christ

The Gospel—The Good News of the coming reign of God inaugurated through the person and work of Jesus of Nazareth.

The Kingdom of God—The reign of God on earth as it is in heaven manifest in the lives of God's people.

Evangelism—The call and practice to share the Gospel with those who do not know and/or have not heard it, thereby proclaiming the Kingdom of God.

Unreached People Group—Any culture that has not yet heard and received the Gospel. Includes both mission frontiers and dechurched cultures.

Worldview—The cognitive lenses and cultural paradigms through which humans understand our lives and the world around us. Worldview can complicate and be barriers to evangelism and thus be taken into account in any missionary effort.

Contextualization—The process of making the gospel intelligible within a particular culture. Often involves translation into the language of the receiving culture. Proper contextualization is a mean between syncretism and irrelevance.

The Biblical Call to Missions

The biblical call to missions is inherent from the creation of the world, and is especially apparent in God's call to Abraham in Genesis 12:1-4, saying:

“Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. And I will make you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in all the families of the earth shall be blessed.” (Gen. 12:1-3, ESV)

And when the LORD rescued the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob from slavery, He brought them to Mount Sinai and commissioned them to be a missionary people when He made a covenant with the people of Israel, saying, “you shall be a kingdom of priests and a holy nation,” (Exodus 19:6).

King Solomon, at the dedication of the Temple, demonstrated Israel's call to mission when he pleaded with the LORD to “be near to the LORD our God day and night, and may he maintain the cause of his people Israel, as each day requires, that all people of the earth may know that the LORD is God; there is no other.” (1 Kings: 8:59-60, ESV)

Jesus spent His earthly ministry calling and equipping His followers to fulfill their responsibility to be missionaries (Matthew 4:18-25, 28:16-20; Mark 6:7-13; Luke 10:1-23; John 15-17). And one of the last things Jesus did before His ascension was to reiterate this call to missions and evangelism in the Great Commission (Matthew 28:16-20; Acts 1:8), and so emphasizing how important it is to share the Good News and make disciples of all nations.

Revelation 7:9ff gives a description of the ultimate fulfillment of this missionary call, saying that “a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands” praising the LORD. And Revelation 21 and 22 show the ultimate result of missions (see especially Revelation 21:22-26).

Recommended Reading

- *Perspectives on the World Christian Movement, 4th ed., Winter & Hawthorne, editors:*
 - Stott, John R. W. “The Living God is a Missionary God”
 - Kaiser, Jr., Walter C. “Israel's Missionary Call”
 - Stott, John R. W. “The Bible in World Evangelization”
- Wright, N. T., *Surprised By Hope: Rethinking Heaven, the Resurrection, and the Mission of the Church*

History of Christian Mission

From its very beginning, the Christian church has been a missionary movement. As the church encountered different cultures and peoples, missionaries adapted their methods and practices to suit the context. Thus a historical understanding of Christian mission is an essential aspect of the missionary work of the church.

There is often a correlation between missions and revival. The ministry of John Wesley, the Great Awakening, the Welch Revival, the East African Revival, and the charismatic renewal all brought about an increase in followers of Jesus and an expansion of the Church.

Five historical topics are worth particular attention

- Early Church
 - Great commission. “Jerusalem, Samaria, the world...”
 - Acts of the Apostles
- Celtic Church
- Monasticism
- Anglican Approaches to Mission
 - Church of England
 - Charles Simeon
 - William Wilberforce
 - Church Mission Society: [Our story - Church Mission Society \(CMS\)](#)
 - Church’s Mission to the Jewish People (CMJ) [Church's Ministry Among Jewish People - Wikipedia](#); [CMJ Israel](#)
- Modern Missionary Movements
 - Intersociety Christian Fellowship
 - Short term missions movement
 - The story of youth with a mission

Recommended Reading

Goheen, Michael W., *Introducing Christian Mission Today: Scripture, History, and Issues* (IVP Academic, 2014).

Green, Michael, *Evangelism in the Early Church* (Eerdmans, 2004).

Hunter, George G. III *The Celtic Way of Evangelism: How Christianity Can Reach the West . . . Again* (Abingdon, 2010).

Optional Resources for Further Study

Hopkins, Hugh Evan *Charles Simeon of Cambridge* (Eerdmans, 1977)

Peters, Greg, *The Story of Monasticism: Retrieving an Ancient Tradition for Contemporary Spirituality* (Baker Academic, 2015).

Smither, Edward L. *Mission in the Early Church: Themes and Reflections* (Cascade Books, 2014).

Smither, Edward L., *Missionary Monks* (Cascade Books, 2016)

Stott, John, *Christian Mission in the Modern World* (IVP Academic, 2015)

Paradigms for Mission

The practice of Christian mission presupposes a paradigm. How the missionary thinks about the church (ecclesiology) affects both missiology and strategies. Paradigms for mission have shifted dramatically over the past two centuries resulting in a wide variety of approaches.

Recommended Reading

Bosch, David *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission* (Orbis Books, 2011)

● Missiology and ecclesiology

- Missiology begins with ecclesiology. Candidates should be able to articulate responses to the following questions:

- What is the church?
- What is the purpose of the church?
- What are the sacraments?
- What is Anglican polity?

- Recommended Reading
-

- Alger, Dan, *Word and Sacrament*
- Fenwick, John *Anglican Ecclesiology and the Gospel* (Anglican House, 2016)
- Newbigin, Leslie *The Open Secret: An Introduction to the Theology of Mission* (Eerdmans, 1995)
- Ward, Kevin, "Mission in the Anglican Communion" from *The Oxford Handbook of Anglican Studies* (Oxford University Press, 2018)

- Optional Resources for Further Study
-

- Wright, Christopher J.H. *Mission of God: Unlocking the Bible's Grand Narrative* (IVP Academic, 2006)
- Goheen, Michael W, *Introducing Christian Missions Today: Scripture, History and Issues*
- Wright, N. T., *Surprised By Hope: Rethinking Heaven, the Resurrection, and the Mission of the Church*
- Rommen, Edward, *Into All the World: An Orthodox Theology of Mission* (St Vladimir's Seminary, 2016)

● Mission Strategies

Methods for doing missions vary depending on the culture and time in which missions are done. But there are biblical principles that should shape how we go about fulfilling the Great Commission.

● Recommended Reading

- Allen, Roland, *Missionary Methods: God's Plan for Missions According to Paul* (Aneko Press, 2017).

- Green, Michael, *Evangelism Through the Local Church: A Comprehensive Guide to All Aspects of Evangelism* (Regent College Publishing, 2012)
 - Hunter, George G. III *The Celtic Way of Evangelism: How Christianity Can Reach the West . . . Again* (Abingdon, 2010).
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The Practices of Mission

The missionary work of the church involves practices both communal and personal. These five practices form the basis of the Christian missionary work.

Recommended Reading

Fitch, David, *Seven Practices for the Church on Mission* (IVP Books, 2018). [Seven PracticesHome - Seven Practices](#)

● Evangelism and Apologetics

Evangelism comes from the Koine Greek word εὐαγγέλιον (transliterated as euangelion), which means to proclaim the Good News (Gospel) of Jesus Christ. Evangelism may take place in a variety of contexts: personally (one-on-one), small group, church assembly, or publicly. In the words of Archbishop William Temple, “To evangelize is to present Jesus Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit, that men shall come to put their trust in God through Him, to accept Him as their Savior, and serve Him as their King in the fellowship of His church.”

Recommended Reading:

- *Surprised By Hope: Rethinking Heaven, the Resurrection, and the Mission of the Church* by N. T. Wright.
- *The Gospel Precisely: Surprisingly Good News About Jesus Christ the King* by Matthew W. Bates
- Randy Newman, *Questioning Evangelism: Engaging People’s Hearts the Way Jesus Did*

Optional Resources for Further Study:

- Michael Green, *Evangelism: Learning from the Past*
- McDowell, Sean, *Apologetics for a New Generation: A Biblical and Culturally Relevant Approach to Talking About God* (Harvest House Publishers, 2009)
- Teasdale, Mark R. *Evangelism for Non-Evangelists* (IVP Academic, 2016)
- Cham, Sam and Carson, D.A. *Evangelism in a Skeptical World: How to Make the Unbelievable News about Jesus More Believable* (Zondervan Academic, 2018)
- Spurgeon, Charles *The Soul-Winner: or How to Lead Sinners to the Saviour* (GLH Publishing, 2016)
- Packer, J.I. and Dever, Mark *Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God* (IVP Books 2012)

Apologetics, from the Greek ἀπολογία, "speaking in defense," is the discipline of defending the Christian faith and doctrine through rational arguments. In I Peter 3:15, we are told to "always be prepared to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you." Apologetics is an essential part of evangelism because it seeks to show that Christianity is not "irrational" or "unscientific." It seeks to answer difficult questions that secular people often have (e.g. Why would a loving God allow suffering, etc.), which may lead to an explanation of the Gospel.

Recommended Reading:

- Lee Strobel, *The Case for Christ*
- Lee Strobel, *The Case for the Creator*

Optional Resources for Further Study:

- Lee Strobel, *Is God Real?*
- Lewis, C.S., *Mere Christianity*
- Josh McDowell and Sean McDowell, *Evidence That Demands a Verdict: Life-Changing Truth For a Skeptical World*
- Frank Morison and Charles Eastwood, *Who Moved the Stone: 2017 Edition (Christian Classics)*
- Walton, John H., *The Lost World of Genesis One*

● Cross-cultural communication

One of the first missionary tasks is enculturation through language acquisition. Learning the language of a culture not only enables effective communication, but it also elucidates cultural symbols and reasoning.

Recommended Reading:

- Lingenfelter, Sherwood, and Mayers, Marvin K. *Ministering Cross-Culturally: A Model for Effective Personal Relationships* (Baker Academic, 2016).

Optional Resources for Further Study:

- Elmer, Duane *Cross-Cultural Conflict* (IVP Books, 1993)
- Elmer, Duane *Cross-Cultural Servanthood: Serving the World in Christlike Humility* (IVP Books, 2007).
- Elmer, Duane *Cross-Cultural Connections: Stepping Out and Fitting In Around the World* (IVP Books, 2002).

● Contextualization

Mission work must be sensitive to its context. After cross-cultural communication is established, the work of contextualization begins. Contextualization is the process of proclaiming the gospel to a people in a particular culture in a way they

are able to understand and receive. The work of contextualization must avoid two pitfalls: syncretism (the fusion of the gospel with culture) and irrelevance (the failure to relate the gospel to culture). The practice of contextualization enables the church to reengineer from the mission field backward.

Recommended Reading:

- Woodward, JR & Dan White *The Church as Movement: Starting and Sustaining Missional-Incarnational Communities* (IVP Books, 2016)
- Newbigin, Leslie *The Gospel in a Pluralist Society* (Eerdmans, 1989)

Optional Resources for Further Study:

- Rommen, Edward *Come and See: An Eastern Orthodox Perspective on Contextualization* (William Carey Library, 2014)
- Hesselgrave, David J. and Rommen, Edward *Contextualization: Meanings, Methods, and Models* (William Carey Library, 2013)

● Church Planting

Church Planting is the process of forming a Christian assembly in a new context or place. For Anglicans, the goal of church planting is to establish a self-sustaining word and sacrament worshipping community.

Recommended Reading:

- Alger, Dan, *Word and Sacrament*
- Alger, Dan "Sacramental Church Planting" from Anglican Pastor[\[1\]](#)

Optional Resources for Further Study:

- Garrison, David, *Church Planting Movements: How God is Redeeming a Lost World*
- Griffith, Jim, and Easum, Bill, *The Ten Most Common Mistakes Made by New Church Starts*
- Stetzer, Ed and Im, Daniel, *Planting Missional Churches: Your Guide to Starting Churches that Multiply* (B&H Academic, 2016).

● Ministry to Adolescents

Historically by far the majority of effective evangelism has happened among adolescents. This includes the scholarship finding in that the Apostles themselves were largely in their teens when called by Jesus, to the fact that in most modern revival movements the majority of conversions happen among the young. Understanding not only the centrality of reaching the young to the advance of the Gospel, but the techniques and strategies of adolescent ministry is crucial to the growth of the church.

Study Guide

Historically by far the majority of effective evangelism has happened among adolescents.

- About 85% of American Christians make the decision to follow Jesus as Lord before the age of 22.
- Studies show that the median age of adult conversion (after puberty) is about 15.
- George Barna says that the chance of an American non-Christian coming to Christ after the age of 22 is only 6%.

This includes the scholarship finding in that several of the Apostles themselves were largely in their teens when called by Jesus

- Jesus was 30 when he began his ministry. It would be normal for a rabbi to attract followers that were younger than he was.
- In that time it was tradition for Jewish boys to find a rabbi to follow around the age of 13.
- John lived to write the book of revelation in AD96, more than 60 years after Jesus' death, which suggests that he was very young when Jesus called him.
- Matthew 4:18-20 suggests that James and John were still working with their father when they were called.
- There were several Apostles that we know were probably at least young adults: Matthew who already had a profession as a tax collector. Peter, who was already married, since he had a mother in law.
- A related musing is the gospel accounts that suggest that Mary may have been as young as 14 when she gave birth to Jesus.

In most modern revival movements the majority of conversions happen among the young.

- Adolescents are more likely to respond to the appeal of evangelists than older adults.

How is ministry to adolescents different from ministry to children?

- Adolescents are in the life stage where they question everything. The church needs to provide safe places for them to do that.
 - During puberty, the human brain develops the ability to think abstractly and put oneself in another's shoes. This new mental hardware helps them to see things through adult eyes for the first time.
 - Childhood faith is largely based on parents. Adolescent faith is largely based on peers. Ministry that shapes the faith of peer groups is particularly important for adolescents.
 - The existence of a distinct American "youth culture" means that ministry to adolescents will always be a cross-cultural endeavor for the adult church in a way that ministry to children is not.

Understanding not only the centrality of reaching the young to the advance of the Gospel, but the techniques and strategies of adolescent ministry is crucial to the growth of the church.

Recommended Resources:

- Mark DeVries, *Sustainable Youth Ministry* (Intervarsity Press)

- Thomas, Syler and Tighe, Steven *A small group leaders quick guide to everything* (Group Publishing)
- Unger, Andrew, Shepson, Don, Tighe, Steven, *Oaks of Righteousness* (Anglican house)

Mission in 21st Century North America

Each particular culture offers its own unique challenges for the missionary work of the church. Missionaries in Contemporary North America are confronted by a variety of challenges including urbanization, postmodernism, globalization, consumerism, and secularization.

Recommended Reading:

- Winter, Ralph D. and Hawthorne, Stephen C. *Perspectives on the World Christian Movement: A Reader* (William Carey Library, 2013)

● Missional Implications of Technology

Any new mission work in 21st century North America requires critical and theological reflection on the use of technology. How would you implement technology for the sake of the mission? What are the opportunities and challenges posed by different technologies? How is technology influencing your church?

Recommended Reading:

- Gay, Craig *Modern Technology and the Human Future: A Christian Appraisal* (IVP Academic, 2018)

Optional Resources for Further Study:

- Crouch, Andy *The Tech-Wise Family: Everyday Steps for Putting Technology in Its Proper Place* (Baker, 2017)
- Postman, Neil *Technopoly: The Surrender of Culture to Technology* (Vintage, 1993).
- Turkle, Sherry, *Reclaiming Conversation: The Power of Talk in a Digital Age* (Penguin Books, 2016).

● Post-Christian North America

As the legacy of Christendom wanes, Christians will be subject to increasing hostility. With the church losing prominence in culture, many Christians may be tempted to reclaim or reassert the privileges of our established past. However, this current moment offers exciting opportunities for mission and new ways to be faithful.

Recommended Reading:

- Hauerwas, Stanley and Willimon, William *Resident Aliens: Life in the Christian Colony (Expanded 25th Anniversary Edition)* (Abingdon Press, 2014)

- Newbigin, Leslie, *Foolishness to the Greeks: The Gospel and Western Culture* (Eerdmans, 1998)

Optional Resources for Further Study:

- Guder, Darrell L., *Missional Church: A Vision for the Sending of the Church in North America* (Eerdmans, 1998)
- Hauerwas, Stanley, *A Better Hope: Resources for a Church Confronting Capitalism, Democracy, and Postmodernity* (Brazos Press, 2000)
- Smith, James K. A., *How Not to be Secular: Reading Charles Taylor* (Eerdmans, 2014)