

ASSEMBLIES OF GOD THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

PTH 551 Effective Evangelism and Assimilation

Dr. Steve Lim

Spring 2004

COURSE SYLLABUS

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course examines our changing cultural landscape and the challenges facing the church in this context. Emphasis is placed on understanding the unchurched and how the church can more effectively be a witness, through the application of biblical principles, to reach and assimilate people into the church.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

1. Understand the priority and process of evangelism in the New Testament.
2. Identify the hindrances to evangelism today, and appreciate the challenges of developing more effective evangelism.
3. Understand the generational and cultural contexts in which the Church proclaims the gospel.
4. Comprehend the relevance of the gospel for individual and societal needs.
5. Evaluate the effectiveness of various approaches to evangelism.
6. Enhance the quality of personal witness and corporate evangelism.
7. Identify means for assimilating people into the local church.
8. Design an outreach strategy for a specific ministry context.

TEXTBOOKS

Required:

Mittelberg, Mark. *Building a Contagious Church*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing Company, 2000.

Richardson, Rick. *Evangelism Outside the Box*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000.
Sider, Ronald J., Philip N. Olsen, & Heidi Rolland Unruh. *Churches That Make a Difference: Reaching Your Community with Good News and Good Works*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2002

Recommended:

Hybels, Bill and Mark Mittelberg. *Becoming a Contagious Christian*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing Company, 1994.

McLaren, Brian. *More Ready than You Realize*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2002

COURSE OUTLINE

I. BIBLICAL EVANGELISM: PRIORITY AND PROCESS

1. Jesus
2. Early Church

II. UNDERSTANDING OUR CHANGING CULTURE

1. Generations
2. Worldviews and religions (PTH 622 Comm. Christian Faith in a Pluralistic Society or CCFPS)
3. Cultural mosaic

III. HINDRANCES TO HARVEST IN THE CHURCH

1. Complacency and inward focus
2. Low priority and busyness
3. Flawed understanding of conversion and witness
4. Wrong numbers
5. Ignorance of culture: worldviews, concerns, questions (CCFPS)
6. Incomplete, irrelevant message (CCFPS)
7. Lack of friendliness, friendship, community
8. Lack of servanthood
9. Lack of discipleship

IV. RELEVANCE OF THE GOSPEL

1. Individual needs (CCFPS)
2. Societal needs (CCFPS)

V. MEANS OF EVANGELISM

1. Individual witness: relational, testimonial, intellectual, confrontational
2. Team/community witness
3. Children's outreach
4. Youth outreach
5. Seeker services (Willowcreek, Saddleback)
6. Seeker retreats (IVCF, Young Life)
7. Revival services (Brownsville)
8. Evangelistic studies and discussions (Alpha, IVCF GIGs)
9. Side door evangelism

10. Event evangelism
11. Community events
12. Crusade evangelism (Billy Graham, Luis Palau)
13. Power evangelism
14. Servant evangelism
15. Worship evangelism
16. Recovery ministries
17. Media and literature evangelism
18. Starting new services
19. Planting new churches
20. Targeting specific groups: generational, socio-economic, ethnic
21. Targeting responsive groups

VI. KEYS TO EFFECTIVE EVANGELISM

1. Prayer, spiritual empowering, fullness of the Spirit
2. Friendship
3. Understanding people
4. Understanding of conversion and witness
5. Cultural relevance
6. Welcoming community
7. Positive lifestyle: integrity, servanthood, joy, vulnerability (embodied apologetic)
8. Relevant message addressing felt needs (CCFPS)
9. Personal stories
10. Intelligent response to tough questions and issues (CCFPS)

VII. ASSIMILATION

1. Connecting: friendship, small groups, Sunday school
2. Growing: class for new believers/newcomers, discipling ministry (PTH 650 Building a Disciple-Making Ministry)
3. Involving: opportunities for ministry according to gifts and interests

METHODOLOGY

Class and small group discussions, student presentations, supplementary readings, tapes, videos, and lectures will be used to facilitate learning. A project will be assigned which requires students to integrate the concepts that they learned.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Presessions

1. ***Before the Jan. 30-31 weekend:***
 - a. Read Mark Mittelberg, *Building a Contagious Church* (approx. 385 pp.)

- b. Submit a two page typewritten “Reading Analysis.” Very briefly summarize the essential points (approximately half a page) and point out those that were of most value to you and why. State the overall value of the book to you and assess its strengths and limitations. These are **due at the beginning of the first class session, Friday, January 30**. The value of an intensive weekend class is multiplied when you have had prior opportunity to interact with the material and reflect on it.

2. ***Before the Feb. 27-28 weekend:***

- a. Read Rick Richardson, *Evangelism Outside the Box* (approx. 170 pages)
- c. Read Ronald Sider, *Churches that Make a Difference*, **chapters 1 to 10**. (approx. 240 pages)
- d. Submit a “Reading Analysis” for both as previously described. This is **due at the beginning of the first class session, Friday, Feb. 27**.

3. ***Before the March 26-27 weekend:***

Read supplementary materials designated. (Available in the library on 2 Hour Reserve)

Sessions

1. Attend all sessions punctually. Bring books due to be read and be prepared to discuss them.
2. Participate in class through discussion, small groups, and a brief student presentation (5 to 6 minutes) on a chapter from one of the textbooks and/or one of the supplementary readings..
3. Complete a take home examination by the due date, which will be given in class..

Post-session

1. Complete a take home examination by **Tuesday, April 13, 4:00 p.m.** Turn in to the Faculty Secretary.
2. Design a **comprehensive outreach strategy** for a **specific ministry context and target audience**. This may be a church or ministry with which you have had past or present involvement, or it may be an anticipated ministry in your future. This project should **integrate the insights gained** through your reading, class participation, and experiences in outreach. The length should be 11 to 13 pages.
 - a. Describe the ministry context and target audience in terms of generations, worldviews, and culture. Elaborate on the issues and factors to which you would need to be especially sensitive. (Approximately 2 to 3 pages)

- b. Describe comprehensively the strategies and means of evangelism which you would employ. Explain why you are choosing them and excluding others.

Due: This paper should be submitted to Dr. Steve Lim or the Faculty Secretary no later than **Friday, April 30, 2003 at 4:00 p.m.**

Format: Use Times-New Roman font, 12 point type. Make all margins 1” and place page numbers in the upper right hand corner. Quotes longer than two lines should be single-spaced and indented. Be sure to cite your sources through an attached bibliography and footnotes. If used, lists and summaries longer than a quarter page should be placed in appendices.

Recommendations for Papers. Strive to write at a graduate level, realizing that what may have been acceptable in undergraduate work may not be for master’s degree papers. While the quality of your content is the most important, the use of poor grammar, punctuation, spelling, and style detracts. Deficiencies in these areas will result in a lower grade. (After graduation, they will reflect poorly on your ministry.) If possible, ask several people knowledgeable in English and writing to thoroughly critique your work before submission. Recognize, as all good writers do, that extensive rewriting is a normal part of writing well. Allow time for the process of revision, which may require several drafts.

GRADING PROCEDURE

Reading analyses		10%
Class participation, including class presentation	10%	
Examination	40%	
Post-session paper		40%

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

This will be distributed on the first day of the course.

SPECIFIC DATA

Revised by Dr. Steve Lim, October 29, 2003