

ASSEMBLIES OF GOD THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

PTH 526 Leading Church Outreach and Assimilation

Dr. Steve Lim

Spring 2003

COURSE SYLLABUS

COURSE DESCRIPTION

A study of our changing cultural landscape and the challenges facing the church within an emerging postmodern context. Emphasis is placed on understanding the unchurched today 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.

Hunter III, George G. *Church for the Unchurched*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1996.

Recommended:

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

McLaren, Brian. *More Ready than You Think*. 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, lectures, and guest speakers will be used to facilitate learning. A project will be assigned which requires students to integrate the concepts that they learned.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Preessions

1. *Before the Jan. 31-Feb. 1 weekend:*

- a. Read Rick Richardson, *Evangelism Outside the Box* (approx. 170 pages)
and George G. Hunter III, *Church for the Unchurched* (approx. 170 pages)
- b. Submit a two page typewritten “Reading Analysis” for each. 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 31**. 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 Mar. 14-15 weekend:*

- a. Read Mark Mittelberg, *Building a Contagious Church* (approx. 385 pp.)
- b. Submit a “Reading Analysis” as previously described. This is **due at the beginning of the first class session, Friday, Mar. 14**.
- c. Read supplementary materials designated.

3. *Before the April 11-12 weekend:*

- a. Read supplementary materials designated.

Sessions

1. Attend all sessions punctually.
2. Participate in class through discussion, small groups, and a brief student presentation (4 to 5 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

Design an **outreach strategy** for a **specific ministry context** (15 to 18 pages typewritten, double spaced, 1” margins, 12 font). 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.

1. Describe the ministry context in terms of generations, worldviews and religions, and the cultural mosaic. Elaborate on the issues and factors to which you would need to be especially sensitive.
2. Describe the strategies and means of evangelism which you would employ. Explain why you are choosing them and excluding others.

This paper should be submitted to Dr. Steve Lim or the Faculty Secretary no later than **Friday, April 25, 2003**.

GRADING PROCEDURE

Reading evaluations	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, December 20, 2002