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## PART FOUR

### TEACHING MISSION

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## 8 TEACHING MISSION TO CHURCHES

**Don Ford**

### INTRODUCTION

Understanding mission today implies a study of both the scriptures and of the church across the world. Any attempt to teach mission in our churches must begin here. But more than this, to be effective such teaching must bridge the gap from knowledge to application, involvement and action. A true vision for world mission underlines the purpose of the church, and emphasises the urgency of the task and our part in it.

On the world scene this century has witnessed unprecedented growth in the worldwide church of Christ. A truly amazing transformation has taken place. William Temple referred to the existence of the worldwide church as 'the great new fact of our time'. The growth of the church in Latin America illustrates this. At the turn of the century there were very few evangelicals; but by 1936 there were about 1.7 million and today the evangelical community numbers over 30 millions. The same pattern has been repeated in other areas of the world. Ralph Winter refers to the '25 unbelievable years' following World War 2, when the church expanded on every continent. David Barrett believes that by AD 2000 out of a total African population of 800 millions, 300 millions will be Christians.

Yet in spite of this evident growth worldwide, interest in and support of world mission in UK churches generally has shown a marked decrease. A survey of evangelical churches in the UK (1969) revealed that 23% regarded involvement in world mission as an optional extra for those who have time; 21% considered such involvement a duty, though rather a nuisance; and 16% stated that it was no longer the concern of the Western church. Evidently 60% of evangelical churches at that time held a

defective view of world mission. Additionally only 16% of evangelical churches mentioned a missionary topic each Sunday, and no teaching on world mission had ever been given in 78% of those churches.<sup>1</sup>

Current statistics of missionaries from the UK serving overseas illustrate our diminishing involvement. In 1972 there were 7,000 UK Protestant missionaries serving overseas. By 1986 this had diminished to 5,724. In 1972 none of the overseas personnel were registered as 'short termers', whereas today 25% come within this category.

Were a survey to be taken of the average age of the congregations attending the missionary conferences and missionary meetings organized in our churches, it would certainly underline the faithfulness of the older generation and probably the comparative lack of interest among the young in world mission as it is currently presented. While this may say more to use about the methods we use and the image we project, it also underlines the declining interest and commitment already referred to, which, if not reversed will become critical in tomorrow's church.

However, it is encouraging that the number of books being published in the UK on world mission has increased, as if in recognition of the need to highlight a subject in danger of vanishing from the church's agenda. While they stimulate us to consider teaching it in the local church, the titles also illustrate the tensions being experienced: *Missions in Crisis*, *Myths about Missions*, *Odd Man Out*, *Cinderella with Amnesia*, *Shaking the Sleeping Beauty*, *We Believe in Mission*, *Rough Edges of His Ways*, *Don't Just Stand There*, *The Eleventh Commandment*, *What on Earth are You Doing?*, *Turning the Church Inside Out*, *Love Your Local Missionary*. But there is something artificially strident about this appeal: they demand our attention lest we fail to take notice of them.

While much has been accomplished in the last 15 years and many fellowships have a greater awareness of the world scene, not much progress appears to have been made in teaching mission in any systematic way. In 1971 The Evangelical Alliance report stressed that 'A massive re-education job has to be done' at the home end. It still needs doing, but with even greater urgency today.

#### THE IMPORTANCE OF TEACHING MISSION TO THE CHURCH

There was no doubt in the minds of the early church: 'The Gospel must first be preached to all nations'. (Mark 13:10) It was an essential part of the apostolic doctrine and practice. The early church was conscious that it existed to expand. And where it forgot this truth the Lord forcibly squeezed it until it moved out (Acts 8:1, 4). The worldwide outreach that began at Pentecost moved like waves of blessing spreading ever outwards to reach new generations in every corner of the world's society. Max

Warren saw those Christians as 'men rushed off their feet with hearts aflame, all consumed with a tremendous certainty of a transforming power'.<sup>2</sup>

That description could scarcely be applicable in our churches today, for we no longer regard world mission with the same priority. It has become marginalized, watched over by a ginger group of committed enthusiasts. Most common is the false perspective that missionary work is some kind of appendix, an optional extra, rather than being at the hub of the church's life. Harold Rowdon has expressed it thus: 'For too long mission has been regarded as the province of individual enthusiasts . . . the church has become institutionalized, with very limited goals, often consisting of little more than maintaining the machinery of worship, largely unchanged; providing something in the way of teaching, fellowship and local evangelism, but little else.'<sup>3</sup>

World mission as a less important activity can be seen at different levels. Theological colleges artificially divide training programmes: the pastoral and the missiological are often mutually exclusive. University and college Christian unions often relegate world mission in the agenda to a minute corner of the programme. Not long ago a senior UCCF staff worker admitted that very few of the 500 college CUs even have a missionary/international secretary on their committee. Many local churches follow a similar pathway, concentrating their missionary interest over a special weekend conference once or twice a year, or the occasional visitor from abroad who is on leave.

Michael Griffiths warns us to look again at the importance of teaching mission to the church: 'Any church which relegates Mission to being the peripheral activity of a lunatic fringe of enthusiasts is doomed to self-destruction. Emil Brunner had it right when he said that "The church exists by Mission as a fire exists by burning" . . . The church which has lost its concern for Mission is down to its ember days amid the institutional ashes. It needs the fresh breath of the Spirit of God to fan its dying embers back into life.'<sup>4</sup>

#### FUNDAMENTAL PERSPECTIVES: WHAT IS MISSION?

If we are adequately to teach mission in the church we must define what we mean by it.

#### **The nature of mission**

The problem is its different usage and meanings. What is mission? An evangelistic crusade (eg Mission England; Mission to London) or a series of meetings held in a university or church for a few weeks? Is it a Christian

organization specializing in a type of outreach at home (eg LCM, SGM) or abroad (eg BEM or OMF)?

Mission in the New Testament is amply displayed in the Acts of the Apostles. It is the Holy Spirit empowering the church to go out and make disciples of all peoples. Strictly speaking it is not used of an organization but an activity; it is God on the move spreading the good news through his people to all peoples. The early church was a missionary church. Moreover the activity of mission does not have a time limit but continues 'to the very end of the age' (Matt 28:20).

The first missionaries were the ordinary church members, the unnamed believers scattered by persecution (Acts 8:1, 4) who spread the message wherever they went. Some started the Antioch church which became the launch-pad of the early church's missionary activity (Acts 11:19–21). Later on, the work of mission was taken up by gifted church leaders like Paul and Barnabas who responded to God's call by making it their life's work to plant churches and nurture them across the Roman empire.

### **The focus of mission**

#### *Mission as evangelism*

The more traditional view equates mission with proclaiming the gospel (and not much else!) as virtually the only priority of the church. In 1888 R N Cush argued that 'missionary money was collected for the purpose of converting a soul, not sharpening an intellect'.<sup>5</sup> But this is clearly inadequate: Christ died for whole people not simply for 'souls'. Mission does involve evangelism but as Matthew 28:18–20 emphasises it is much more than that. Conversion is not all that is involved; mission must also include making disciples, planting and nurturing churches across the world.

#### *Mission and social renewal*

Ecumenical churches linked with the WCC often adopt this interpretation. The 'missio dei' is the establishment of peace and social harmony: 'shalom'. For them it includes opposing apartheid, improving industrial relations, promoting rural development and Christian ethics in business. In short, the world provides the agenda for the church. So mission becomes everything the church does!

But this definition of mission is far too vague; too man-centred. It has little to do with evangelistic concern, with spreading a message of personal sin and disobedience before God, of salvation by faith in Christ and his death alone. While it is true that God does work in society through his providence and common grace, Jesus' mission went far beyond that.

*Mission: both spiritual and social*

In the New Testament it is clear that mission includes both a spiritual and a social dimension. It involves evangelism and discipleship, planting churches, teaching and pastoring them, and seeing them become springboards for world mission. But it also involves a social dimension in its care for the sick, poor and the widows. 'Mission describes everything the church is sent into the world to do. It embraces the double vocation of service, to be "the salt of the earth" and "the light of the world".'<sup>6</sup> Mission therefore involves us in the Great Commission (making disciples of all nations) plus the Great Commandment (loving our neighbour as ourselves—Lev 19:18). It is the sharing of the good news plus the out-working of Jesus' compassion through his people in a world divided by sin.

Such a definition implies that God's plans are for a worldwide church and a worldwide proclamation, a love that is to reach across cultures and languages to all peoples. It implies that all churches are to be sending churches and receiving churches, for the whole body of Christ is to be 'joined and held together by every supporting ligament, growing and building itself up in love as each part does its work.' (Eph 4:16)

**The location of mission**

If mission is the church in action throughout the world then its location must be here and there simultaneously. Jesus' command to his disciples to be 'my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth' (Acts 1:8) was never meant to be a multiple choice exam! Rather it presented them with the challenge of a worldwide vision. Interestingly Jesus' words answered their parochial question about restoring the kingdom to their little nation of Israel. Of course Jesus wanted the Jews to be converted, as many thousands were at Pentecost and afterwards. But the whole point of mission is that it is to be carried forward in a multiplicity of locations at the same time. A Christianity that does not cross cultural and linguistic frontiers as well as social barriers here and abroad denies the worldwide scope and effect of the cross (1 John 2:2).

## WORLD MISSION IN THE LOCAL CHURCHES

Historically Brethren churches have always had a strong international commitment. George Müller is almost as famous for his vision and financial support for overseas mission as he is for the orphanage ministry. For many years *Echoes* has been at the top of the list of Christian agencies with the largest number of missionaries from the UK serving abroad.<sup>7</sup>

## The Missionary Study Class Movement

The formation of the Missionary Study Class Movement in Brethren churches was an important step in developing interest and support. Its roots go back to Dublin in 1889 where a group of young people began to pray for missionaries abroad. The return in 1903 of Mrs Walter Fisher from Kalene to Bristol encouraged the formation of a similar group for prayer and study. By 1905 a note in *Echoes of Service* indicated that two more classes had started in Liverpool. After Dr Rendle Short's return from a visit to Naples, he was even more convinced of the need to encourage groups of young people to meet regularly to study the world missionary scene and to promote effective prayer support. His article in *Echoes of Service* for January 1909 brought together the existing groups giving impetus, direction and cohesion to the growing MSC movement. A missionary information bulletin '*Links of Help*' was started in 1911 for a greater sharing of information among MSCs.<sup>8</sup>

In 1912 Rendle Short began the first joint MSC Conference bringing together members from all over the country. It was initially held at Ellersley School, Malvern, later moving to Monkton Combe where it became an important annual event, continuing until the final Conference in 1985, its 74th year.

Rendle Short's book *A Modern Experiment in Apostolic Missions*, published in 1920, included an appendix containing guidelines for MSC leaders, based on each chapter. It is important to notice that the emergence and growth of the MSC Movement occurred at a time of amazing increase in the number of missionaries being supported through *Echoes*, which had grown from 40 (in 1885) to 320 (in 1900) and reached 700 by 1915, an increase of 1650% in 30 years.<sup>9</sup>

### Missionary conferences

During this period other regional missionary conferences sprang up, some independent of the MSC Movement but similar in aims; many of them still continue today. Assemblies in the Liverpool area obtained Plas Menai, Llanfairfechan, as an MSC holiday home for houseparties and conferences. Annual missionary conferences are still held at Cardiff (where as many as 500 attend), Exeter and Bristol. Others are held at Newport, Swansea, Dublin (Eire), Tyne & Wear, Glasgow and Dundee. Smaller conferences are held at Birmingham, South Staffordshire and Cork (Eire). The Hamilton Missionary Fellowship started through young people from different churches meeting for missionary study and prayer out of which developed the youth centre with a ministry of study, support and outreach. Although the high point of the MSC movement occurred between the

World Wars, a resurgence began in the 1950s, encouraged by Alex Pulleng. The London MSC Conference restarted at the initiative of assemblies in Walthamstow, Ilford and Wimbledon and was held at Easter in Sunbury until the mid-1960s. Another important missionary conference is held for young people biennially in March, and has continued for some 25 years. Held at Boys Village, Rhoose, 12 miles from Cardiff, it is supported by around 120 from assemblies in the Cardiff, Swansea and Bridgend areas.

During the 1950s and 60s the London Missionary Meetings have continued to provide the principal focus for Brethren churches in the south of England. They are important not only because of the information reported but also because issues of missionary principles and strategy are frequently discussed. Moreover the 'October Meetings' have provided the opportunity for Christians from Brethren churches to be together expressing their common roots and identity, and their unity of purpose in world mission. The huge gatherings of 25 years ago had about them an atmosphere of celebration that attracted the crowds. Sadly declining support in recent years, especially among the younger generation, has led to a shorter programme being introduced from 1987.

### **Missionary workshops**

An important contribution to teaching world mission among Brethren churches was made by Hugh Mackay and Don Boak who coordinated missionary workshops as part of the centenary celebrations of *Echoes of Service* in 1972. The workshop held at Cardiff in January launched a series of 26 in regional centres throughout the country that continued until 1974.<sup>10</sup> Young people from up to 20 assemblies in each area came together for a weekend of conference. Numbers varied from 75 to as many as 500 in Stafford and Liverpool. The main Saturday programme included two morning sessions on biblical principles of mission and problems arising from indigenous church situations; two further afternoon sessions dealt with the missionary call and training for missionary work. These were organized as seminars and audience participation was an important feature. The evening session was more practical, eg an experiment reducing an unwritten language to phonetic script, plus a missionary challenge.

In preparation, each church group had chosen either a country or a specialized type of missionary work (eg literature, radio, medicine, Bible translation etc), was supplied with a pack of relevant information, and had prepared a project/display for presentation during the workshop. Hugh Mackay believes that the involvement of each group during the preparing of projects was a key factor. Many learned important lessons they wanted to pass on. Each project was examined and each group interviewed giving the opportunity to share their insights. So successful were the workshops

that they continued to be held in some areas (eg Ipswich and Norwich) for some 5 years. Without doubt these workshops effectively taught world mission and made it come alive to a great many; they promoted real commitment and support, and were the means of calling some to overseas work.<sup>11</sup>

### **Missionary visits to local churches**

Another traditional pattern promoting world mission in local churches is through the visit of missionary personnel on UK leave when a more personal contact can be made, and a more in-depth knowledge communicated, especially if the missionary can stay for some days. Manvers Hall, Bath, has visits from 12–14 missionaries per year; Worcester 6 per year and Ebenezer, Cardiff, receives a visiting missionary every 6 weeks. Such a programme is recognized in these churches as contributing significantly to a continued interest in world mission. Furthermore, where regular local missionary prayer meetings are held (eg Merrion Hall, Dublin; Belmont Chapel, Exeter; Cranleigh Chapel, Bournemouth) and where missionary information can be shared regularly with the fellowship through church newsletters/magazines (eg Manvers Hall, Bath; Worple Road, Wimbledon), a greater exposure to and involvement in world mission is possible. It must be admitted however, that in most instances the support reflected through these programmes usually stems from the middle-aged and elderly, and only rarely involves a higher proportion of younger people.

### TEACHING WORLD MISSION

In the past, most local churches were in regular contact with missionaries, attending conferences and receiving visitors. In an era when communications were more difficult and foreign travel comparatively rare, someone with a personal knowledge of a strange land was a considerable attraction to the Christian public. There was thus a teaching of mission through such events that imparted information and stimulated prayer and support.

The aim was 'to see that [believers] are informed of the facts of the missionary situation in various lands', wrote Alex Pulleng. But there was also another more fundamental objective: 'to teach believers the principles governing missionary enterprise, . . . to educate them . . . inspire many to action'.<sup>12</sup> If missionary support in the past was in many ways encouraging there has certainly grown up an indifference and ignorance about direct teaching of the biblical principles of mission. The new reality shows plainly that something has gone wrong. The inspiration that formerly impelled to



action has evidently run out of steam; a new approach is needed to raise the profile of world mission in Brethren churches.

The question needs to be asked: how is world mission being taught today in the churches?

### **Teaching by exposure**

Still, missionary visits, prayer meetings and conferences come and go, although they generate less enthusiasm than in the past. Presenting information about any country or type of work, to be successful, has to be done with greater care. Today, church members are likely to know much more about the political and economic situation in that country through TV news bulletins and documentaries. The traditional presentation of slides that have sometimes been poorly taken, and by a speaker whose communication skills are unsophisticated by comparison with the harsh competition of the UK media scene, explains in part that diminished enthusiasm.

What more can be done? Duke Street Chapel, Sutton Coldfield, frequently gives a missionary emphasis in the Sunday morning family service. Similarly at Belmont Chapel, Exeter, during the Sunday morning teaching sessions there is regular news about one of the missionaries it has sent out. Some fellowships link their missionaries with a mid-week house group (eg Cranleigh Chapel, Bournemouth; Belmont Chapel, Exeter etc). This has worked particularly well in Sutton Coldfield where the 10 house groups receive direct information from and make contact with their 18 overseas missionaries, sending letters, tapes, parcels and magazines and receiving up-to-date news.

Churches need to devise creative ways of giving exposure to missionary personnel on leave, especially those they have commended, over a more extended period of time. In this way the advantages of personal contact can be enjoyed, in an environment where they cannot seem to be competing at communication levels with the professionalism of the modern media. Some churches invite their missionaries to visit each house group in turn; others arrange a rota of afternoon visits to elderly members, and evening visits to families when the personal touch is so appreciated. Moreover, in the informal atmosphere of the home, slides of poorer quality are not so unacceptable! If missionaries can assist in the church's pastoral work for some time, even more in-depth contact can be achieved as they minister to genuine needs in the fellowship.

Where necessary or appropriate, churches can supplement an evening's programme by using good quality audio-visuals. Some missionary organizations have produced films; others are now offering missionary videos for

hire or sale, which can effectively contribute to the teaching of world mission (see appendix 1 for a list of missionary videos currently available).

### **Teaching by involvement**

Teaching about world mission by deliberately exposing the fellowship to people or information from those involved in world mission, may be accepted by the hearer purely passively, so there is a risk that it will be partially forgotten. Some have moved to another dimension of teaching by involvement in a missionary situation, and this has resulted in a much deeper understanding, and in many cases has radically affected the life of the church.

#### *In the home church*

Occasionally some missionaries enliven their presentation by sharing a problem situation, a 'case study', in which sufficient basic information is presented, the problem explained and an attempt made to discover a solution that is both biblical and culturally appropriate. The success of such a presentation relies on people's willingness to participate in small group activity.

Other churches are alert to the presence of overseas students studying in their area, and offer social activities, informal language-learning practice and friendship.

#### *At conferences*

The missionary challenge presented at large conferences like Spring Harvest or Mission '87 in Utrecht, Holland, with around 10,000 present, has led to increased involvement. A group of about 10 attended Utrecht from Cranleigh Chapel, Bournemouth. As a result 2 are going into short term projects and 1 is seriously considering longer term involvement. 'The young people have caught the vision', commented one of the elders.

#### *Moving out*

Tile Kiln Chapel, Chelmsford, has experienced wider missionary involvement and a tremendous increase in giving as a result of 7 years of 'twinning' with the Culte Evangelique in Arras, France. The Billy Graham crusade, Mission France, in 1986 also led to a greater involvement. The fellowship at Wimbledon established contact with churches in the Lille area of France and are making regular visits to learn more about the situation and help where possible. (A French-speaking elder helped by coordinating the Billy Graham relay meetings in the Lille area.)

Still others are becoming involved in short-term visits. A number of summer visits to Senegal coordinated by Brethren from the Dublin and

London areas helped missionaries man a stand at a book fair in Dakar. Other avenues of personal involvement include offers of practical help over short periods being promoted by 'Brass Tacks'.

### *Training programme*

Perhaps the most significant development comes from organizations specializing in coordinating short term summer visits, especially to Europe, placing people in evangelistic situations. Pre-visit orientation with some training is required as essential preparation. Gospel Literature Outreach, based in Motherwell, focuses especially on Brethren churches; Operation Mobilisation and Youth with a Mission are interdenominational. Nearer home, Youth for Christ and London City Mission offer year programmes of evangelistic training for young people, and more from our fellowships are becoming involved.

### **Teaching from the scriptures**

Almost all the teaching on world mission in Brethren churches is given at the level of *exposure* and to a lesser extent by *involvement*. Very few churches offer any Bible teaching on world mission. The principles of our engagement in mission are therefore largely assumed to be assimilated, mostly through the normal programme of missionary visits, conferences, prayer letters and meetings. Magazines like *Echoes of Service*, *Harvester* and the 'Aware Bulletin' which it contains, and books (*Operation World*; *That the World May Know*) also inform of situations of need in the world. The process, however, is largely one of exposure, leading to motivation and some level of involvement.

If, by chance, missionary principles are taught, then they tend to be limited in scope to those which emphasize our Brethren distinctives (eg the missionary's independence from outside control; the duty of sending—churches to give regular support; the lack of guarantees about support levels; the missionary's direct dependence upon God for financial needs etc). Otherwise, the most frequent missionary theme taught concerns guidance and the call of God. But apart from these subjects there is a vast area of scriptural teaching about world mission that is rarely touched upon. Laudably the missionary workshops of the early '70s did offer the right kind of balance between biblical principles and missionary information. But the most that can be said about some missionary conferences is that Bible teaching on world mission is relegated to a corner of the programme, while the major proportion of time available is dedicated to teaching through exposure. It is as if the place of scripture were almost incidental.

How strange, then, that Brethren churches, which have always revered the Word of God and maintained uncompromised loyalty to its inspiration

and infallibility, should (albeit unconsciously) now pass by the very main-spring of world mission revealed in Holy Writ. With a few well-used exceptions (eg Genesis 12; Isaiah 6 and Jonah) how rarely is the Old Testament consulted about world mission! (See appendix 2 for abbreviated biblical outline studies on world mission.)

However, there is light on the horizon. Recently at Cranleigh Chapel, Bournemouth, on 4 consecutive Sundays a series was dedicated to world mission. At Belmont Chapel, Exeter, a conscious effort is being made to include once more the teaching of world mission at the heart of the church's programme, with a series of 8 studies. These have covered God's purpose for the nation; God's sending the Son, the Spirit and us; the selecting and sending of missionaries in the New Testament; Jesus at the centre of world mission. Furthermore, the fellowship has produced a missions booklet for the congregation which includes these Bible themes as well as information about its own missionaries.

Without doubt, wherever a missionary presentation is closely linked to scripture or is a biblical exposition with missionary illustration, not only is the mind inspired and the heart warmed, but the soul is fed. It is this element of the opening-up of the scriptures that provides deep spiritual nourishment and true heart motivation for a lost world. It is time that we in Brethren churches took God's Word more seriously in its teaching on mission. It is time once more to place world mission at the heart of our church's teaching programme. (See appendix 3 for a suggested outline syllabus that can form the basis for teaching world mission in our churches, together with references from helpful books on each theme.)

#### CONCLUSION

How to counteract the downward trend in world mission? By placing the teaching of mission once more at the heart of the church's programme. Wrote J R Mott: 'Systematic instruction as to world-wide missions will do much to overcome such faults to church life and efficiency as selfishness, narrowness of view, contracted sympathies, and indifference and apathy concerning the Kingdom of Christ.'<sup>13</sup>

That is surely what we long to see in our local churches.

- 1 *One World, One Task*. Report by Evangelical Alliance's Commission on World Mission (Scripture Union 1971) 88.
- 2 Max Warren, *I Believe in the Great Commission* (Hodder & Stoughton 1976) 26.
- 3 Harold Rowdon, *Turning the Church Inside Out* (BMMF Interserve 1982) 17.
- 4 Michael Griffiths *Shaking the Sleeping Beauty* (IVP 1980) 12.
- 5 J R W Stott, *Christian Mission in the Modern World* (Falcon 1975) 15.

- 6 Ibid, 30.  
 7 *UK Christian Handbook 1987/88* (MARC Europe/EA/Bible Society) 336, 353, gives the following statistics: *Echoes* 359; CMS 335; OM 282; OMF 282; WEC 270; USPG 228; BMS 211; Salvation Army 205; Methodist Church 180; WBT 165; YWAM 153.  
 8 From historical material from Donald Boak.  
 9 A Rendle Short *A Modern Experiment in Apostolic Missions* (W B Harris 1920) 20.  
 10 16 were held in 1972; 8 in 1973 and 2 in 1974—information from Mary Boak.  
 11 From information provided by Hugh Mackay and Don Boak.  
 12 A Pulleng *Go Ye therefore*, (Paternoster 1958) 32.  
 13 Ibid.

## APPENDIX 1

### WORLD MISSION – A SELECTION OF CHRISTIAN VIDEOS

TITLE	SUBJECT/SPEAKER	TIME/ TEXT SOURCE
<b>1 ABROAD</b>		
Assignment Gola	Liberia	0:22 SIM
Between Two Worlds	Colombia	0:25 Wycliffe
Bringers of Happiness	Lesotho	0:30 Leprosy
But I'll be Eaten Up by Lions	Interviews with missionaries	0:23 Wycliffe/ SIM
Called to Serve	Gospel Barge Ministry in Flanders/Leslie Message	0:40 BEM
Cinderella Comes of Age, A	Australian Aborigines	0:09 Wycliffe
Cliff in Kenya/India/Water, Water	Tear Fund Projects/Cliff Richard	0:54 Tear Fund
Come by Here	Papua New Guinea	0:33 Wycliffe
Eye of the Storm, The	Tear Fund Projects	n/a Tear Fund
Faces of India:		
1 Northern India	OMS International in India	0:50 CTA
2 Southern India	OMS International in India	0:37 CTA
Focus—On Africa/It's natural for me/Doing what God wants	Bible translation in Africa	0:45 Wycliffe
Focus on Spain	OMS International in Spain	0:30 CTA
Forbidden lifestyle	The suffering church	0:35 Open Doors
It makes a team	Papua New Guinea	0:25 Bible TA
It's a small world	Tear Fund in Haiti/Cliff Richard	0:32 Tear Fund

It's a wider world	The meaning of mission	0:10	BCMS
More than conquerors	Guatemala	0:25	Wycliffe
More than meets the eye	The suffering church	0:25	Open Doors
More than pigs and fish	Papua New Guinea	0:07	Wycliffe
Nagaland in focus	Nagaland/Chuba Ao	0:30	Impact
New hope in the Middle East	Christianity in the Middle East/John Anscombe	0:21	BMMF
No unreachable	Africa & South America	0:26	SIM
People, like us	Argentina/Bishop Leak	0:17	SAMS
Question of Lebanon, A	'Where is Jesus' project	0:22	CMS
Trained to serve	Zaire	0:22	Leprosy M
Turn of the tide	Irian Jaya	0:20	Leprosy M
Unsheathed	Guatemala	0:29	Wycliffe
What it takes	West Africa	0:26	SIM
What to do when the flood comes	Nigeria	0:28	SIM

## 2 WORLD RELIGIONS

Islam—Unlocking the door	—	n/a	OM
Islam:			
1 Introduction	Jack Budd	1.00	OM
2 Allah, is he the same as God	Jack Budd	1.00	OM/STL
3 Trinity, son of God and virgin birth	Jack Budd	1.00	OM
4 A brief survey: Adam to Judgement	Jack Budd	1.00	OM
5 Scripture, wine, prayer and fasting	Jack Budd	1.00	OM
6 How to witness to a Muslim woman	Jack Budd	1.00	OM
7 Through the centuries and the challenge of today	Jack Budd	1.30	OM
8 Deity of Christ	Jack Budd	1.00	OM
9 Death & resurrection of Christ	Jack Budd	1.00	OM

### Islam:

Communicating the truth about Jesus Christ, part I	Charles Marsh	1.00	OM
Communicating the truth about Jesus Christ, part II	Charles Marsh	1.00	OM
The power of the occult in Islam	Charles Marsh	1.00	OM
Understanding Islamic beliefs	Charles Marsh	1.00	OM
Understanding Muslim practices	Charles Marsh	1.00	OM

Understanding Muslim women	Charles Marsh	1.00	OM
Understanding the Muslim	Charles Marsh	1.00	OM
Understanding the Muslim view of Jesus	Charles Marsh	1.00	OM
Understanding the basis of Islam	Charles Marsh	1.00	OM
Understanding the convert Muslim awareness (6 tapes)	Charles Marsh Ron George	1.00 6×0.55	OM OM
<b>3. BIOGRAPHIES</b>			
Bitterman, Charles	Chester Bitterman	n/a	Wycliffe
Luther, Martin	This is my body?	0.40	LBC
<b>4. MISSIONARY ORGANIZATIONS</b>			
Climb every mountain	Leprosy Mission	0.25	Leprosy M
Fivefold vision of OM	Operation Mobilisation/ George Verwer	1.00	OM
JAARS	Jungle Aviation and Radio Service	0.24	Wycliffe
Johan Lukasse	Belgian Evangelical Mission/ Johan Lukasse	0.30	BEM
Life in all its fullness	Tear Fund/George Hoffman	0.26	Tear Fund
Logos and Doulos Story	Logos & Doulos	0.35	OM
The Net	CARE	0.24	Leprosy M
People like you—I	Wycliffe Bible translators/ Peter Kingston	0.40	Wycliffe
People like you—II	Wycliffe Bible Translators	0.15	Wycliffe
Send the Light Tour	Send the Light/Dave Armstrong	1.00	OM
The Uniqueness of OM's work (4 sessions)	Operation Mobilisation/ George Verwer	1.20	OM

**GUIDE TO CHRISTIAN VIDEO, SECOND EDITION**  
 Published by Jay Books, 1986. Available from The Evangelical Alliance.

## APPENDIX 2

## BIBLE STUDY OUTLINES ON WORLD MISSION

[Abbreviated from BIBLE THEMES published by Scripture Union, in 1978, 'The Mission of the Church' by the Rev Colin A Grant]

**The missionary purposes of God in the Old Testament***Boundaries of blessing (Gen 12.1-3; 22:15-1)*

Why did God choose so small a tribe as Israel? Because God has chosen men to reach men. In Abram he chose Israel. 'Election is for service' (H H Rowley); 'All the families of the earth' and 'All the nations of the earth' symbolise everything else in the OT relating to mission, and foreshadow the great 'alls' of the NT.

*Consequences of election (Deut 10:12-19; 1 Kings 8.33-43)*

Israel was proud of being 'the chosen people of God' but they had to learn that there was a clear 'requirement' (Deut 10:12) built into this privilege. It demanded whole-hearted devotion to God in reverence, obedience and loving service. But godliness was to be accompanied by a concern for others, particularly 'the sojourner' (Deut 10:19), especially as they has been 'sojourners' in Egypt for 400 years. The world into which God sends us begins with 'the sojourner', the person living, studying, working, shopping, spending his leisure alongside us.

*Conquests of kingship (Psa 2)*

After the angry turbulence of the nations in rebellion against God (vv 1-3) we are pointed to God's vindication through the resurrection (Acts 13:33) and the enthronement (Heb 1:5; 5.5) of his son (vv 4-7). God's king is enthroned for his people (Eph 1:22 and Matt 28:18 f). The appeal on grounds of impending or future judgement is not unusual (eg Luke 3:7; Acts 17.30 f). Our presentation of the gospel to the world will only be effective as it presents Christ as the saviour of believers and judge of all men.

*Patterns of righteousness (Isa 2: 1-4; 11:1-10)*

The Lord, represented by the elevating of his dwelling place over the lesser peaks of human achievement and pride (2:12-16) is a precursor of the 'flowing' of the nations to him (v 2) that they may submit to him (v 3). In Isaiah 11 the promised one of David's line will be equipped for his ministry by the enduing of the Spirit, and relationships within the natural order will be transformed by him (v 6 f—Rom 8:19-23).

*Purposes of grace (Isa 10)*

Israel's deceitful and undependable neighbour is scheduled for judgement on its religion, unity, confidence, independence, natural resources and rural industry (vv 1-9). Yet a more glorious day is envisaged for Egypt, when there will be a



community there who honour and serve the Lord (v 18). That God would reveal himself to Egypt must have been startling for Israelite ears. Nothing could be clearer regarding God's purpose to reach the Gentiles; in the NT through Christ they become 'fellow heirs, members of the same body, and partakers of the promise' (Eph 3:6).

#### *Characteristics of Christ (Isa 42:1-13; 49:1-7)*

These first two Servant Songs prophetically feature the coming messiah (Matt 11:3). 'My servant' applies elsewhere to the whole nation (cf 41:8 f; 44:1 f). Here is someone who not only fulfilled but far exceeded all that the nation of Israel was meant to be and do. The ministry of the servant was to be unique in character (42:1; 49:1 f), global in extent (42:1, 4; 49:1, 6), exemplary in quality (42:2 f; 49:2 f), tenacious in purpose (42:4; 49:4), and enlightening in results (42:5 f; 49:6). Little wonder that the peoples of the earth sing for joy (42:10-12; cf Psa. 96:11 f).

#### *Dissatisfactions of idolatry (Jer 16:14-21; Zeph 3:8-10)*

Idolatry is a human tragedy. Jeremiah reminds Judah that God sees it (v 17) but that it is a 'sham' (v 19 NEB). There is no comparison between what idols offer and the security God gives to those who 'from the ends of the earth' turn to him (v 19). Zephaniah warns of God's judgement on Judah and her neighbours, then focuses on his final judgement of the nations (v 8). Yet he who judges promises renewing power in men's hearts (v 9). Ethiopia, so distant for Israelites, symbolises the worship the Gentiles would bring (v 10).

#### *Patterns of discipleship (Jonah 1 and 2)*

Nineveh, the Assyrian capital, was the concentrated expression of heathenism and evil to the people of Israel. God commissioned Jonah for mission against it (1:1) but Jonah was unwilling for God to show them his message. But God does not allow Jonah to escape, but humbles him and brings him to the place of thanksgiving (1:12; 2:9). This reminds us of the problem of Christian disobedience to the fulfilling of the Great Commission. (Rom 2:4).

#### *Principles of mercy (Jonah 3 and 4)*

Persistently God spoke a second time. While Jonah's outward actions indicated obedience his reactions afterwards (eg 4:1 f) showed a grudging spirit. Jonah's failing was 'the sin of pretending to be more careful of God's glory and more qualified to advance it than God himself' (Hugh Martin), and it led him to offer a confused prayer (4:2 f) and to slink away embittered (4:5). God finally spoke through an acted parable.

## **Mission and the Son of God**

#### *Focus of the prophets (Luke 4:16-30)*

Our Lord responds to the invitation usually given to a travelling rabbi (cf Acts 13:15 f and read from Isaiah 61:1-4). He left his hearers in no doubt as to the one of whom Isaiah wrote (v 21). Jesus would bring in the long-awaited New Age of deliverance. No wonder the audience was 'infuriated' (v 28 NEB) and took

measures to kill him (v 29 f). Whatever the consequences, Jesus would uniquely fulfil God's purposes, refusing to be party to false parochialism.

*Seeker of the lost (Luke 15)*

Jesus here ministered to those who misunderstood and criticized. The first two parables (vv 4–10) show God's patient seeking for the lost, and point to the redemptive joy of God. It is this joy that the Pharisees ought to have been sharing. Our traditional focus on the prodigal son (vv 11–32) tends to overlook its main teaching about the loving father, such a contrast to the stand-offishness of the Pharisees. Their hard hearts are contrasted with the father's mercy, even reaching out to the elder son (v 28).

*Saviour of the world (John 4:1–42)*

Jesus set aside Jewish prejudices of sex and race to reach a Samaritan, foreshadowing the bringing of the gospel to them by the early Christians (Acts 8:1 f). The woman recognized something of Jesus' stature through his exposure of her life, preferring to turn the conversation away (v 20). But true worship is not a matter of geography but of spiritual understanding (vv 21–23). Such will focus their faith on the Lord (John 14:6; Mal 1:11; Acts 10:35; John 6:37) and never be cast out. Jesus used this incident to urge the disciples to use every opportunity, rather than remaining inactive 'because the time is not yet ripe' (v 35 f).

*Friend of the needy (Matt 15:21–28)*

The Phoenician towns of Tyre and Sidon (v 21) 'were not places where Messianic works were destined to be performed' (R V G Tasker; cf 11:21). Yet Jesus once more ministers to another Gentile woman whose people were outside the Jewish tradition. Jesus' initial reluctance (vv 23, 26) expressed his prior sense of purpose to the Jews, who should have been prepared for his coming (cf 10:5 f; Rom 15:8 f). He was unwilling to become caught up during his early life in a large-scale mission among Gentiles. His statement of intent (v 24) caused her open-hearted plea unmoved by Jesus' apparent rejection. Once more Jesus marvelled at a Gentile's great faith (v 28; cf 8:5–13). God's Spirit moves in the most unexpected of places and the most surprising of people.

*Shepherd of the sheep (John 10:11; 11:47–53)*

Jesus the Good Shepherd proves the genuineness of his credentials not only by faithfulness and personal sacrifice for them (vv 10, 11–15) but by his compelling purpose to gather those 'sheep' still outside of his fold (vv 10–16). 'The sheep not of this fold are non-Jewish Christians. Only when all have responded to the Gospel will the ideal of one flock under one shepherd be a reality' (R V G Tasker). Christ's mission drove him to seek and save the lost (Luke 19:10) but, more, to offer his life in a substitutionary death, that would form the basis for the worldwide 'gathering' that was to follow in which both Jews and Gentiles would both come to God (11:52, cf 1:12; Gal 3:26 f).

*Victor of the cross (John 12:20–36)*

'The world has gone after him,' scoffed the Pharisees (v 19), but Jesus' universal appeal was more effectively illustrated by the enquiry of the Greeks (v 20 f). The

Lord was aware that 'His hour' was upon him (vv 23–27; cf 2:4; 7:30 etc) and part of the glory would be the 'rich harvest' (v 24 NEB) following his death. Those Greeks symbolized a greater turning to Christ from the Gentile world of which he had already spoken (cf 10:16). Jesus' earlier victories (Matt 4:8 f; 16:22 f) were portents of that greater victory over Satan gained on the cross itself, which gave our Lord the right and power to 'draw all men' to himself (v 32, cf 6:44). The 'all' means 'all without distinction', men from every nation.

## Mission and the Holy Spirit

### *Empowering for Mission (John 5:22–16:11; 20:19–23)*

The translation 'Comforter' (15:26) goes back to Wycliff when it meant the giving of strength and courage. Jesus was speaking of the Spirit as enabler and empowering companion (cf Eph 3:16). All true power in mission is to be found in the working of the Spirit in men's hearts (16:8). Later Jesus appointed his disciples for service in the Spirit's power (20:21 f). He breathed on them, probably in symbolic anticipation of Pentecost (Acts 2:2 f).

### *Categories of salvation (Luke 24:44–53)*

The Jewish mind was closed to a suffering messiah, so the frightened disciples (v 37) needed thoroughly opening up (v 45). Not only was Jesus' suffering, death and resurrection predicted but also the world-wide proclamation of the good news (v 46). The message centres on two truths. First repentance, *metanoia*, that turning from self to God through sorrow at our rebellion, so prominent in the message of Jesus and the early church (Matt 4:17 etc; Acts 2:38 etc). Second forgiveness, *aphesis hamartiōn*,—God stops reckoning a man's misdeeds against him and counts him guiltless. Jesus emphasized it (Matt 6:12 etc), as also the early church (Acts 5:31 etc). The disciples would now be sent forth (v 49), an act of obedience (v 52) later rewarded (Acts 5:32).

### *Enduement for service (Acts 1:1–11)*

Jesus ministered through the Holy Spirit (v 2; Luke 4:1, 14), through the Spirit offered up his life (Heb 9:14) and was vindicated as Son of God through resurrection (Rom 1:4; 1 Tim 3:16). So his promises to them (v 4) match the pattern of his own life. 'To baptize' means figuratively 'to overwhelm, to plunge into a new realm of experience'. This described the disciples' impending encounter with the Spirit (cf Luke 24:49—to clothe). Only the Spirit can enable the church to reach the geographical limits of its task. We can grieve and quench the Spirit (Eph 4:30; 1 Thess 5:19) in mission as well as other aspects of Christian living.

### *Experience of promise (Acts 2)*

Pentecost was one of three great Jewish festivals to which every Jew within 20 miles was bound to come. The supernatural signs of wind and fire were those frequently linked with the power and presence of God (cf Psa 104:4; Exod 19:18). The Spirit's 'filling' was not a static 'topping-up' but a dynamic taking-possession-of (cf 3:10; 5:3, 17; 19:29). The main purpose of the Spirit's coming was to inaugurate an era when men could call on the Lord and be saved (v 21). So is he available today to those who are 'afar off' (v 39).

*Crossing of boundaries (Acts 8)*

Persecution spread their witness (vv 1, 4) and Philip enters Samaritan territory with the gospel (v 5, cf John 4:4 f). Evidently those who are baptized (vv 6, 8, 14) were truly born again by the Spirit and indwelt by him. (Rom 8:9–11; 1 Cor 3:16). What Simon saw (v 18) and wanted to reproduce himself (v 19) was a Samaritan pentecost. The Spirit then directed Philip to an individual need (v 26, 29). The Ethiopian's conversion (v 36 f) 'marks a further advance towards the evangelization of the Gentiles' (F F Bruce).

*Fulfilling of prophecy (Acts 10)*

The great moment! Peter had already preached to semi-Gentiles (vv 8, 14 f). Now came the major break-through to the wholly Gentile world. While the Spirit is only mentioned selectively (vv 19 f, 38, 44 f, 47) he is evidently at work throughout the narrative. God had to show Peter (v 9 f) that wherever he is at work men must not disdain (v 15). Peter pointed his hearers to Christ and his forgiveness (v 43). Cornelius was not saved through religious sincerity (vv 2, 35) but personal trust in Christ (v 47). The Spirit's coming on them before water baptism showed God's approval lest Peter hesitate any further. Now Jew and Gentile become 'fellow citizens . . . of the household of God', members of the same body, 'all one in Christ Jesus' (Eph 2:19; 3:6; 3:6; Gal 3:28). So from the ruins of Jewish traditionalism there arose the new church of Christ.

*Establishing the principles (Rom 15:7–21)*

Paul delights to present Christ as the inaugurator of God's blessings to Jew and Gentile alike (v 8 f) and shows how his Spirit can make the believer 'overflow with hope' (v 13, NEB). To describe his service 'to the Gentiles' (v 16), he describes himself as a priest, his ministry as priestly service and the Gentiles as the priestly offering he presents (v 16). Yet Paul's only glory continues to be in Christ. Only through the Spirit's power could he have demonstrated the divine origin of the gospel (cf Acts 19:11) preaching in every major centre in the Eastern Mediterranean (v 19).

**Mission and the church***Men needed (Luke 9:1–6; 10:1–20)*

Being with Christ means personal commitment to his purposes, being available for mission. NB the sequence of call: empowering and sending out (vv 1, 2). This is the biblical pattern for Moses (Exod 3:4, 10 f) and the prophets (Jer 1:5–9) as well as the early church (Luke 24:48 f) and Paul (Acts 26:16 f). They were appointed to herald triumphantly that God's kingly rule had begun on earth (v 2), demonstrated in the defeat of Satan's power (vv 1, 6, cf 10–17). The commissioning of seventy (10:1) could well have had a wider ministry in view, yet they could only touch part of the need. So Jesus urges prayer (Matt 9:37 f; John 4:35).

*Men transformed (Matt 16:13–28)*

The conviction to which Peter came concerning the person of Christ (v 16) was divinely inspired (v 17). The confession of Christ as Son of God would be the material on which he would build the spiritual edifice he called 'his church'.

*Ekklesia*, translated 'church', literally means 'that which is called out', and was used to describe a local assembly of Romans. It was clearly suitable to denote the new community that Jesus was forming (1 Cor 1:2; 1 Thess 1:1), as well as the wider, all-inclusive fellowship of believers (eg Acts 20:28; 1 Cor 10:32). God's salvation is not only to be experienced personally but corporately.

*Men invited (Matt 22:1–14)*

Some critics consider this parable to be a duplicate of Luke 14:16–24, but why should our Lord not have used the same theme with variations on different occasions? Luke emphasizes the gracious inviter; Matthew the solemn responsibility of the one invited. The invitation went on to be offered to others without regard to status or manner of life (v 9 f) and such invitees responded readily and in ample numbers (v 10). Few Jews would have misunderstood the message! In spite of the wide invitation and the appropriate robe one man disregarded the high honour of the occasion (v 11 f). Evangelism involves persuasion and proclamation. Those who reject, especially through rejection as here, will be held responsible.

*Men challenged (John 21:1–19)*

A weary night's fishing was transformed by miracle at daybreak and ended with a lakeside breakfast (vv 1–14). Peter's brave promises of loyalty (13:37; Matt 26:33) had been shattered by a serving maid in the temple courtyard (Matt 26:69 f). Our Lord gently probes Peter about the comparative nature (v 15), genuineness (v 16) and basic quality (v 17) of his love. Jesus had already spoken as the Good Shepherd (10:1–30), and now disclosed the responsibility of the under-shepherds (Acts 20:28; 1 Pet 5:2). The church's mission today needs more genuine pastoral care for those both within and without its fellowship (Eph 4:11; Phil 2:1 f).

*Men commissioned (Matt 28:16–20; Mark 16:14–20)*

Our Lord's life was an expression of divine authority (Matt 11:27; John 3:35; 13:3; 17:2) including forgiving sins (Matt 9:6) and complete control over his earthly life (John 10:18). The sovereignty that had once been subtly but only partially offered by Satan (Matt 4:8 f) had now been given to him by the Father (Matt 28:18). This universal authority is the basis for the church's universal mission (28:19). The Great Commission has strongly motivated the missionary movement. True motivation can never consist of mere obedience to a command; it must spring from the energies of the Spirit who writes God's law on the believer's heart (Jer 31:33; John 16:14 f). This is what lay behind Peter's 'we cannot but speak' (Acts 4:20).

*Men responsible (1 Cor 2:1–23)*

The cult of personality in Corinth evidenced spiritual immaturity and carnality (vv 1–4). Paul then moves away from human workers to the true worker (v 5) the one who caused spiritual life to grow (v 6). Christians are to be junior partners with God in his work (v 9). His servants then are 'site-building supervisors' (v 10), *architectōn*. The NT emphasizes this prospect of the final accounting day when our service will be tested (cf 1 Cor 9:27).

*Men converted (1 Thess 1)*

The gospel was presented not with customary oratory (cf 1 Cor 1:17; 2:4) but with

spiritual power and exemplary conduct (v 5; cf 2:10). By the Holy Spirit's ministry (John 16:8 f) the Thessalonians accepted the gospel with joy (Gal 5:22; Rom 14:17) in spite of persecution (v 6). Such a birth led to outstanding growth. This could not happen without there being an overflow from Greece (Macedonia and Achaia) to a variety of other places (v 8). We discern Paul's strategy: 'a church in every community and thereby the gospel to every creature'. Unless we nurture local churches with greater seriousness worldwide evangelism will be outweighed with 'professional' missionary endeavour and lose its momentum.

### **Paul the missionary**

#### *Called by the Spirit (Acts 13:1–12)*

Paul had received early notice of his life's mission (22:15, 21; 26:16 f; Gal 1:16). Barnabas recognized his spiritual potential and brought him to Antioch (11:23–26) where they taught the new believers. During worship and fasting (14:23) the Spirit selected them. 'The world ministry which thus began was destined to change the history of Europe and the world' (E M Blaiklock). God calls his servants in different ways. Sometimes through persecution (8:1, 4; 11:19 f); at other times individually (8:5, 26, 29 f). Beware of individualizing guidance and not relating it to the local church!

#### *Emboldened with the word (Acts 13:42–14:7)*

Three major features of Paul's ministry emerge: 1 Forthright proclamation (13:44, 46, 48, 49; 14:3; 14:7). 2 Fierce opposition, especially from the Jews (13:45) and later the community at large (13:50; 14:2, 5). It came in different ways—open contradiction (13:45), poisoning personal attitudes (14:2) and hostile active rejection (13:50; 14:5). NB how God uses persecution against his people to become a means for spreading the gospel (14:6 f; cf 8:4, 11, 19). 3 Fruitful consequences in conversions (13:42, 44, 48) in a worldwide ministry (13:47; Isa 49:6).

#### *Caring for the churches (Acts 15:36–16:10)*

Paul not only planted churches but continued to nurture them (v 36), bringing new strength to the congregations (15:41, 16:5), through teaching and sharing the guidelines from Jerusalem (15:23; 16:4). Overseas missionaries involved today in such nurturing among younger churches are just as strategically engaged as those in pioneer church planting. Paul needed colleagues (he had been chosen by Barnabas—11:25). While his first choice was not instantly successful, Paul's second choice of Silas was wise (15:22, 23). It was good to read of Paul's subsequent esteem of Mark (2 Tim 4:11). Paul's selection of Timothy (16:1 f) was more straightforward, and encouraged him daily in caring for all the churches (2 Cor 11:28).

#### *Preaching to the Greeks (Acts 17:16–34)*

Note the sequence of Paul's actions at Athens: the spiritual impact of what he saw (v 16) which prompted positive action (v 17 f). This was 'Paul's first major exposition of the Gospel to an audience without a background of OT theology or Jewish thought' (E M Blaiklock). It is important to see that Paul did not set out to identify their unknown God but declared his intention of announcing God's truth

to them in view of their confessed ignorance about it. He spoke of God as creator (v 24), self-sufficient (v 25), and sovereign so that all should respond to him in worship (v 26 f). He openly challenges them to put aside all their pretensions, to repent and believe in the risen Son of God (v 30 f). No worship outside biblical Christian worship could possibly satisfy men or be acceptable to God. Only in Christ is the true meeting point to be found.

#### *Engaging the conflict (2 Cor 10)*

Relationships between Christian workers and the churches where they work are of great importance. Paul had his problems! He was accused of a divided approach (v 1), worldly motives (v 2) and of a lack of authority to teach (v 8). Paul could only overcome by modelling himself on the Lord. There had to be his gentleness and magnanimity (John 8:1–11) with firmness and consistency (vv 2, 11; cf Matt 21:12 f; 23:13 f). There were also other external battles against the entrenched strongholds of evil in men's hearts (v 4 f). Victory could only be gained by spiritual means (Ps 20:7; Eph 6:12 f). In the conflict Paul knew he was being directed by the Lord (v 13) and was ever challenged to reach the 'land beyond' (v 16; cf Rom 15:20). But he knew he must first build up the faith of the newly born church (vv 8, 15).

#### *Protesting for the truth (2 Cor 11)*

As the founder of the Corinthian church Paul was burdened for its healthy growth and doctrinal purity. He had to face false apostles (v 13), preaching a different gospel (v 4; Gal 1:6 f). So he urges the Corinthians to consider two aspects of his ministry: first the sources of his financial support (vv 7–11) showed he was not seeking mercenary gain. Second he mentioned the suffering and risk to life itself (vv 22–33) and the inward burden of love on his heart (v 28). In world mission a servant's ministry stands or falls by the quality of his or her life.

#### *Captured by the gospel (Phil 1:1–18)*

Paul had started the Philippian church (Acts 16:12 f) and nourished it (Acts 20:1 f) under its own leadership (v 1) and to be partner with him (v 5). He longed that they might aim for and attain the highest in holy living (v 10) as evidence of Christ within them (v 11, cf John 15:4 f; Col 1:10). It is remarkable that he wrote thus from a Roman prison (v 12) chained to the leg of one of his captors. If love was not bound in such circumstances neither could the gospel be. It can break out of every circumstance and when it does, is thus a measure of the Christian's spiritual maturity and effectiveness in service.

#### *Setting out the standard (1 Thess 2:1–16)*

Here some of the leading characteristics of Paul's ministry shine forth. In all that he had suffered (Acts 16:19–24), he showed a divinely given courage (v 2); his preaching was with integrity (vv 3, 5); he presented the gospel responsibly (vv 2, 8 & 9); he showed a spirit of selflessness (v 6) and compassion (v 7) as well as hard work (v 9) and godliness (v 10). The demands of the ministry are great; only Christ can give the strength (2 Cor 3:5 f).

*Building up the faith (1 Thess 2:17–3:13)*

Paul's longing was that they should be healthy and grow: his primary concern—their faith (mentioned 5 times). News of their firm stand in the gospel encouraged him greatly (v 8). If he feared for them (3:5) it was lest they become discouraged by opposition. In any case suffering for Christ was an essential accompaniment to following him. The chief means of nourishment for faith is a ministry of establishing and exhortation (John 14:16, 26), in the light of Christ's return (2:19; 3:13). Wise parental care and a balanced spiritual diet are essential to good growth.

**Motive for mission***Sharing Good News (2 Kings 6:24–7:20)*

Because of starvation conditions in beleaguered Samaria (6:25) the four lepers' only hope of survival was an unlikely show of mercy from the enemy Syrians (7:3, 4). So, leaving the forlorn Israelites shut up to despair, they enter an unbelievable experience of deliverance and abundance (7:7 f). Suddenly shame and guilt overtook them for their selfishness (7:9). 'Come let us go and tell . . .'. A personal experience of Christ and the inescapable sense of obligation blend to form a dominant motive for Christian witness (1 John 1:1). This desire should be irrepressible (Acts 4:20). If some do not believe (7:12 f) but wish to remain imprisoned, they only have themselves to blame (John 3:36).

*Indebted to men (Rom 1:1–17)*

Paul's apostleship was by divine choice (v 1; cf 1 Cor 1:1; 9:17), to reach all nations (v 5). So he ministered under a sense of obligation (v 14). Only through the gospel was the power of God available (v 16 f) for the educated Greeks and rough-hewn Barbarians. The Jews met the gospel with hostility because it identified Jesus as the Messiah; the Gentiles reacted with contempt because to vaunt death on a cross as triumph was stupid (1 Cor 1:23). Yet Paul gloried in the cross (Gal 6:14) and preached it everywhere (v 16; 2 Cor 10:16).

*Proclaiming salvation (Rom 10)*

In spite of much personal suffering Paul's concern for their salvation was irresistible (v 1). It sprang from his grasp of God's great grace forgiving believers through faith (vv 4, 9 f). Paul grieved that the Jews' zeal could never bring them to a right relationship with God (vv 2 f). From the principle of salvation in Christ alone, clearly messengers were needed to proclaim it (v 14). So Paul was gripped with urgency; his feet moved swiftly to preach the good news (v 15; Isa 52:7). The responsibility of 'the watchman' is unaffected by their response (Ezek 33:1 f).

*Stewarding responsibly (1 Cor 9:13–27)*

Paul's motivation lay not in expecting financial reward for a job he had personally chosen (v 17) but because of an inner compulsion (v 16). As God's man he was committed to responsible stewardship (v 17). At that time a steward had to use rightly what another had entrusted to him (1 Cor 4:1 f) and this meant sharing God's grace with them (Eph 3:2, 7 f). The responsibility was two-way: towards



God (1 Tim 1:11) and towards men (Acts 26:17). So deep was the motivation, Paul would go to any lengths (v 19) without compromising the gospel (Gal 2:11 f). Such dedication demanded single-mindedness (v 24). This passage is about service rather than salvation; he feared being set aside in preference for others more usable.

*By love constrained (2 Cor 5:10–21)*

Christian mission cannot be pursued by a 'take or leave it' attitude, hence Paul's appeal (v 11; Acts 18:4; 28:23). His inner motivation was the love of Christ (v 14) which left him no choice (cf same Greek verb in Luke 8:45; 12:50 and Acts 18:5). Paul saw that God's love embraced 'all', 'that innumerable company of those who would enjoy the benefits of redemption', (R V G Tasker). This passage clearly blends experience with theology in healthy balance. When we try to divorce them mission becomes distorted and troubles multiply!

*Completing the course (Acts 20:17–38)*

Because of the divine commission Paul's passion was to witness to God's grace (v 24). This required humility (v 19), perseverance (v 31) and involved suffering (vv 19, 23), hard physical effort (v 34) and costly self-giving (v 31). Christ's ministry was similarly characterized (Matt 4:8–10; Luke 9:51; Heb 12:2) and embodied tenacity of purpose (Isa 42:4). Those who make their lives count for God press forward with singleness of purpose despite discouragement. C T Studd: 'If Jesus Christ be God and died for me, then no sacrifice can be too great for me to make for Him.'

*Anticipating the finale (Rev 5:1–14; 7:9–27)*

Revelation speaks of anticipated glory, the culmination of God's redeeming purposes affecting his church. Through the acclamation of the Lamb by the living creatures and elders (5:8) then the vast crowd before the heavenly throne (7:11), John is given a vision of the redeemed from all ages and segments of human settlement on earth. This throng is dressed in white (v 9), symbolizing Christ's imputed righteousness. No turn of history can ever change God's good purposes for his church (Matt 16:18; Rom 8:28–30). In the knowledge that Christ's church is built among 'all nations' God's servants can face their worldwide task with much expectation (Luke 10:20, 12:36), knowing that by God's grace they too will share in it.

## APPENDIX 3

### A SUGGESTED SYLLABUS WITH BIBLIOGRAPHY

#### Introduction—Terminology and Scope

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