



IN520: God's Redemptive Mission
University of Dubuque Theological Seminary - August Residential 2020

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Course Description

This four-credit introductory course for all incoming students helps prepare students for their seminary experience and ministry vocations by providing an orientation and overview of the mission of God down through the ages, and exploring what it means for the Church to participate in God's redemption of the world through Christ. The course focuses on the Triune God as a missionary God, the worshipping community as witness to the Gospel, and all Christians as apostolic members of the body of Christ. Furthermore, the course exposes students to practices which nurture a life of discipleship, intimacy with Jesus Christ, and attentive listening to the Holy Spirit, and unify prayer, study, and service as disciples of Christ Jesus in today's world.

Course Fee: \$25 per student (distance, residential and YAMS) for the day retreat, August 10. This will be charged to your student account.

The student who is successful in this course will:

1. Integrate theological learning, discipleship and formation.
2. Build a sense of spiritual community needed to sustain pastoral ministry for years to come.
3. Identify methods of cross-cultural transmission and transformation of Christian faith in the history of the missionary movement.
4. Recognize the changing context of world mission and its implications for mission structures and strategies today and live out the Gospel in wise and winsome ways.
5. Understand God's story of redeeming mission as shown in the canon of scripture and the history of the church, highlighting how immersion in the scriptures has influenced and continues to influence mission.

M.Div. Student Learning Outcomes

1. Nurture habits and disciplines of study, prayer, and reflection that increase their love of God and neighbor and shape their personal and professional lives.
2. Be formed by, live in, and minister out of Scripture and the historical and theological tradition of the Church.
3. Educate and equip individuals and congregations to live and minister joyfully and faithfully as part of their own denomination and the ecumenical church.

4. Lead and nurture congregations to promote peace and justice in the public arena and encourage the witness and service of the church in mission to the world
5. Integrate theology and practice in all areas of life and ministry.

MAMC Student Learning Outcomes

1. Articulate and reflect critically and constructively on the biblical and theological foundations of God's mission to the world.
2. Adopt spiritual practices that nurture their personal lives as faithful disciples and witnesses.
3. Develop skills and capacities for faithful and competent Christian witness.

MACL Student Learning Outcomes

1. Identify and interpret key themes from the Christian scriptures.
2. Articulate key theological affirmations of the church's theological tradition.
3. Apply a coherent philosophy of Christian leadership to a particular context.

Required Texts

- Bible (NRSV)
- Miller, Donald. *A Million Miles in a Thousand Years* - ISBN: 978-1400202980
- Newbigin, Lesslie. *The Gospel in a Pluralist Society* - ISBN: 978-0802804266
- Peterson, Eugene. *Answering God: The Psalms as Tools for Prayer* - ISBN: 978-0060665128
- Robert, Dana. *Christian Mission: How Christianity Became a World Religion* - ISBN: 978-0631236207
- Wright, Christopher. *The Mission of God's People: A Biblical Theology of the Church's Mission* - ISBN: 978-0310291121
- Selected Readings as Assigned

Our Daily Schedule

9:45am-11:00am	Session 1 - Scripture with Dr. Huizenga
11:15am-12:50pm	Chapel & Lunch
1:00pm-4:30pm	Session 2 - Mission with Dr. Lewis
4:45pm-6:00pm	Session 3 - Formation and <i>Compline</i> with Dr. Forshey

Course Requirements

In order to receive a passing grade, students must meet the following criteria:

1. **Buy your books** in advance so that you have them **before** preload begins, **July 20**. **The Moodle course page will be opened on June 1 with pre-load assignments. This is 8 weeks before the first writing assignment is due. Please do not wait to begin your pre-load assignments.**
2. **Pre-load Assignments** - These pre-load assignments will prepare you for our class sessions together. Pre-load written assignments must be posted/uploaded by their due date. Unexcused late assignments will not be accepted. If you need to request an extension, please email Susan Forshey, sforshey@dbq.edu, no later than 24 hours before the due date. **Late-arriving books will not be an accepted reason for late assignments; please order your books so they arrive before preload begins.**
 - ☐ **Introduce** yourself on Moodle. Share one joy, one hope, and one prayer request in the designated forum on Moodle.
 - ☐ **Read** Donald Miller's *A Million Miles in a Thousand Years*.
 - ☐ Using Miller's book as guide, **reflect** on the story that you are writing with your life, and that God is writing through your life.
 - ☐ **Writing Assignment #1 – Your Story with God (900 words)** - Describe a specific story that God and you are currently "writing" with your life. We are all living stories of God's presence in the world.

Upload it to the designated dropbox on Moodle by Monday, **July 27**, 11:55pm. Reflect on these questions:

1. Describe the main character (you!) from God's perspective.
2. Who are others woven into your story?
3. What is the *inciting incident* (Miller) that set you on this story's path?
4. What is your hope for the ending of this particular story?
5. What is a scripture story that bears resemblance or provides meaning for your story?

☐ **Read** Eugene Peterson's *Answering God*.

☐ **Writing Assignment #2 – Book Summary (900 words)** – Write a summary of Peterson's *Answering God*. Upload it to the designated dropbox on Moodle by **July 27**, 11:55pm. Use this outline to organize your summary:

1. Summarize the main points of the book; use parenthetical page numbers for citations. *To summarize* is to accurately reflect back what the author says, rather than sharing an opinion about the author's ideas.
2. Describe 1 question or concern that the book provokes in you for your relationship with God and your life of prayer. *How might you resolve this question?*
3. Describe 2 important insights from the book for your relationship with God and life of prayer. *How might you implement these insights into your daily life?*

☐ **Read** Wright's *The Mission of God's People: A Biblical Theology of the Church's Mission*.

☐ **Writing Assignment #3 – Book Review (600-750 words)** - Write a book review of Wright's book. Upload it to the designated dropbox below by Friday, **July 31**, 11:55pm.

Directions for writing the book review:

- Think about your audience. Write as if you are going to submit the review to be published in one of these outlets: (1) The Presbyterian Outlook or another denominational journal, (2) your church's newsletter, or (3) a seminary blog-post. The tone of the review should be formal but personal.
- Reflect on your purpose. You need to describe the book accurately but also in ways that will persuade other people to read it. Why is this book so important? What did you learn from it? What do you want other people to know about it?
- Pull in your evidence. Don't just describe the book in general terms, but use specific (short) quotations that support what you are saying. (References may be inserted after a sentence like this: As Wright says, "... " (137).
- Use these formatting elements:
 - 600-750 words
 - Put the book title and author at the top of the page
 - double-spaced
 - indent first line of paragraphs
 - Times New Roman 12 point type
 - 1-inch margins all around
 - Put your name at the end of the review

☐ **Read** Newbigin's *The Gospel in a Pluralist Society*, chapters 6-11.

☐ **Watch** the Lectures 1 and 2 by Dr. Lewis, posted on Moodle. (These are from an earlier class, so ignore the instructions for answering questions.)

☐ **Writing Assignment #4 – Defining Mission (500-600 words)** - Based upon the Newbigin chapters and the two lectures by Dr. Lewis, write a 2-page paper that answers the question: *What is God's mission, the "missio Dei," and how should it inform our participation in it?* Upload it to the designated dropbox on Moodle by Friday, **July 31**, 11:55pm.

3. **Class Attendance:** Active participation in class, and in chapel, is required in order to build a rich learning community, and cultivate a habit of consistent personal and communal formation.
4. **Daily Assignments:** Students must adequately demonstrate their understanding of the assigned reading materials by **completing reading assignments before class and written work as assigned.**

Post-load Assignment

Please upload your post-load assignment in the dropbox by Friday, August 28 at 11:55 pm. Late assignments will **not** be accepted. If you need to request an extension, there is an "Extension Request Form" (at the bottom, left-hand corner of the Moodle homepage) that must be filled out and approved by the Academic and Student Affairs Committee. Also, please email Susan Forshey, sforshey@dbq.edu, no later than 24 hours before the due date.

Drawing on what you have learned throughout the entire course, write and upload three separate papers:

- Use your last name and topic designation (scripture, mission, or formation) for the file name. Example: Forshey-Scripture, Forshey-Mission, Forshey-Formation.
- Put your name on each page of the papers in the header or footer.
- A title page is not necessary.
- Double-spaced
- Page numbers
- Chicago Manual of Style formatting
- Citations as footnotes

1. Scripture (500-750 words) - 20 points

Select a Scripture passage studied in one of the morning sessions. This should be a passage that brought you new insight, more energy, and/or a deeper understanding of God's mission in the world. Write a 500-750 word essay: (1) After reading two academic commentaries on your selected passage, note one element about the written composition (vocabulary, sentence structure, or a manuscript variant). Write 3-4 sentences about how this element gave you an insight, question, or even a problem on interpreting the passage. Then write at least 3 more paragraphs (2) describe what you heard in the text and in our discussion, 3) explain how it connects with your own story, and (4) explain what you think God is saying to you in your own context. Put in citations as footnotes and add a Bibliography using the Chicago Manual of Style formatting.

2. Mission (1500-2000 words) - 20 points

We have been exploring how the Good News of the Gospel has "gone global" and how it finds a home in every culture and context. As ones who dwell in the story of the crucified and risen Christ, we are called to participate in the reconciliation of the world through bearing witness to Christ, in word and deed. To do so in culturally sensitive and appropriate ways, one must seek signs of God's presence already at work, listen and learn about the cultural values and world views of the community, and understand the "bigger questions" they are asking. Then, one must ask oneself, "what is the Good News of the Gospel in this context?"

With this in mind, take a close look at your own community. Assess the religious context and identify a group or religious community not your own. Collect some background information on this group by consulting local sources about its history in the community, its membership, its passions and activities, and its relationships within the larger community. Then plan a visit or two so that you can interview one or two of its leaders or members, seeking to understand who they are, how they see God and how they see themselves in the eyes of God, and what, in life, matters most to them. Show curiosity and care for all those you meet, without seeking to proselytize. Friendships are jeopardized when people simply become "missionary projects."

Then, in 1500-2000 words, summarize in the first half of the paper what you have learned about this community, their most essential values, their understanding of God and of the world, their concerns and challenges, their joys and sorrows. What does their religion (if they have one) mean to them? How do they express it? What questions keep them up at night? In the second half of the paper, reflect on what you think God is doing here and how the

Gospel might speak into this context. What would be “good news” for one living in this community? How might it best be received? Conclude with a word or two about how God might be asking you to further engage with ones in this community.

3. Formation (600-700 words) - 10 points

Write a prayer to God, speaking directly to God, about your life of discipleship and this coming year in seminary. Explore the readings, class practices, personality types, and formation lectures, for what insights and ideas they provide you for experiencing God’s steadfast love and sharing from that abundance. Keep in mind and heart that we are often our own worst critics, so imagine how God looks at you with love and grace, even when challenging us to live holy lives.

Assessment and Grading

The breakdown of points--100 possible points:

- #1 - Your Story (with Donald Miller book) - 10 points
- #2 - *Peterson* Book Summary - 10 points
- #3 - *Wright* Book Review - 10 points
- #4 - Defining Mission Essay - 10 points
- In-Class Participation Assignments (Dr. Lewis) - 10 points
- Final - Scripture - 20 points
- Final - Mission - 20 points
- Final - Formation - 10 points

Final grades will be assessed as follows:

1. Pre-Load: 40%

2. In Class participation and written work: 10%

3. Post-Load: 50%

A+ = 100-97%

A = 96-93%

A- = 92-90%

B+ = 89-87%

B = 86-83%

B- = 82-80%

C+ = 79-77%

C = 76-73%

C- = 72-70%

D+ = 69-67%

D = 66-63%

D- = 62-60%

F = 59% or below

Administrative Information

1. Late policy – Postings and papers must be completed when assigned. Exceptions to this policy may be made with *prior* permission of the professors.
2. Plagiarism – Please consult the current UDTs Student Handbook, www.udtseminary.net, choose “Current Students,” then “Student Handbook” for definitions and consequences.
3. Inclusive Language – Every effort will be made to use non-gender specific language. Please refer to the current UDTs Student Handbook (see #2 above) for a more thorough explanation.
4. Academic Support – Students needing tutoring, writing assistance, or other academic help should contact the professor or make arrangements with the Academic Success Center at (563) 589-3262.
5. Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Statement – Any student with a disability that might affect his/her performance in this course should consult with the professor during the first week of preload. All such consultations are confidential.
6. Subject to Change Clause – This syllabus, course calendar, and other attending documents are subject to change during the semester.

TUESDAY, AUGUST 4

Session 1: Introduction

Read: Psalm 19; II Tim. 3:10-4:8; Wright, Chs. 1, 2

Session 2: Chosen-The Story of God and the *Missio Dei*

Review: Newbigin, Chs. 6-11

Session 3: *Prosoche*-Paying Attention (class ends at 5:30pm for dinner/lecture)

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 5

Session 1: Creation and Blessing

Read: Genesis 1-3, 12; Romans 4:1-12; Wright, Chs. 3, 4

Session 2: Jesus-Mission in Christ's Way

Read: *Turn to the Living God* (Downloadable PDF on Moodle)

Session 3: *Lectio*-Reading Life

THURSDAY, AUGUST 6

Session 1: Exodus and Redemption

Read: Exodus 1, 2, 14; Titus 2; Huizenga, "Slavery in the Roman World" (PDF); Wright, Ch. 6

Session 2 & 3: **No class** – Fall preview sessions and advisor meetings.

FRIDAY, AUGUST 7

Session 1: Worship and Mission

Read: Psalm 96; Revelation 7; Wright, Chs. 8, 14

Session 2: Pentecost-The Birth of the Church

Read: Newbigin, Chs. 12, 15; Walls, "The Gospel as Prisoner and Liberator of Culture" (PDF)

Session 3: *Leitourgia*-Prayer, Personality, and Myers-Briggs

MONDAY, AUGUST 10

9am – 4pm – Retreat Day (off-campus; required; location TBA)

TUESDAY, AUGUST 11

Session 1: Loyalty and Witness to God

Read: Deuteronomy 6; Acts 2; 1 John 1; Wright, Chs. 9, 10

Session 2: Mission, Monastics, and Monarchy

Read: Robert, Ch. 1, 6

Session 3: *Glossolalia*-Life Languages and Naming God

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 12

Session 1: Sent by God

Read: Jeremiah 1; Luke 4; II Corinthians 5; Wright, Chs. 11, 12

Session 2: The Gospel Goes Global

Read: Newbigin, Chs. 16, 17; Robert, Ch. 2, 3

Session 3: *Assiduitas*-Your Brain on Grace

THURSDAY, AUGUST 13

Session 1: The Everyday World

Read: Romans 13; I Thessalonians 4; Isaiah 60; Revelation 21; Wright, Ch. 13

Session 2: The "Unexpected Christian Century"

Read: Robert, Chs. 4, 5; Allen, *Missionary Methods: St. Paul's or Ours?* Ch. 12 (PDF)

Session 3: *Regula*-Rule of Life

FRIDAY, AUGUST 14

Session 1: The Journey Ahead

Read: Matthew 28; Wright, Ch. 15

Session 2: The Story Continues. . .

Read: Newbigin, Chs. 13, 14, 18, 19

Session 3: *Mystagogy*-The Road from Emmaus