

# **Charis Discipleship Course Part 2**



**CHARIS**  
MINISTRIES AFRICA

## **Transformational Mission 2**

**God's mission**

**Transformed to be transformers!**

## **Transformational Mission 2 - Transformed to be transformers!**

1. Called to be witnesses in my generation.
2. The role of the Holy Spirit in mission.
3. What is mission?
4. What is culture?
5. Cross-cultural mission
6. What is my part? Well done good and faithful servant..I have run the race...etc

## **Transformational Mission 3**

A case study – Mission in ACTS

## 7. Called to be a witness in my generation - Pass on the Good News!

Imagine finding a cure for a terrible disease like Covid. You take the miracle cure but then do not share it with anyone else and people around you remain sick and continue to die.

Does that sound fair? Or does it sound selfish and cruel?

The gospel of Jesus Christ can be compared to this analogy, because through Jesus' sacrifice on the cross we have been healed and our spirits made alive again. The barrier to God and eternal life has been lifted. We have been restored to our original place – perfect oneness as God's child forever!

Think about a computer that goes wrong. Sometimes it gets stuck, sometimes everything goes out of sync, sometimes it crashes. But you can restore the settings to a past date, which will solve the problem. This is similar to what happens to us when we come to Jesus. He restores us to how we were created to be in the garden of Eden, to a perfect relationship with our God.

But what if you keep all this secret about the cure that is found through Jesus and all your neighbours, friends, family remain stuck in lives that are going wrong? They have no hope except this temporary life. They desperately seek to make the best of things but when the computer crashes - when their lives crash, they are left powerless to do anything.

Jesus spoke to his disciples before he left to return to heaven and said 2 things:

*'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore, **go and make disciples of all nations**, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely, I am with you always to the very end of the age.'* (Matthew 28:18-20)

*'You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and **you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.**'* (Acts 1:8).

Of course, Jesus did not just come for me and you or a few people but **for EVERYONE, for the WORLD!**

John 3:16-17 says: *'For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world but **to save the world** through him.'*

The miracle cure is not ours to hide, it is ours to share. The name of the cure is – **Jesus**. We are to run with it far and wide offering him to everyone we meet. Jesus came all the way from heaven to bring us this cure and it was costly. Evil men did not believe him and killed him and nailed him to a cross. But because Jesus is God, death has no power over Him, and he rose from the dead after 3 days and triumphed over Satan and all that is evil.

After Jesus left, his disciples who themselves had received the cure, also received a special gift from heaven, the Holy Spirit, who filled them with power and equipped them to travel throughout their known world with the news that Jesus saves.

Because of their hard work in sharing the good news many thousands also received the cure, who in turn shared with others and so over 2000 years and many generations later we too have received the news of the cure – Jesus.

And so, what should we do with what we have received in our generation?

**Yes! Share it!**

2 Corinthians 5:18-19 says we have been given a **ministry of reconciliation**. We are **Christ's ambassadors, his representatives** who are sent out into every corner of the world to persuade people to listen to the good news about Jesus, who brings us back to our special place with God.

Think about an ambassador who comes from a foreign country to live in another one. He represents his home country.

When we receive Christ we receive a new citizenship, a new place of belonging which is the kingdom of heaven.

*Philippians 3:20 – 'But our citizenship is in heaven.'*

We are strangers (foreigners) on earth now. This is no longer our true home, because our true home is in heaven. Whilst we are here temporarily on earth our hearts long for our home in heaven. Just like an ambassador from Mozambique who goes to the UK to represent his country there, will be home-sick and miss his real home.

Jesus came to earth to represent God. Hebrews 1: 3 says- *'The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of His being.'* And he did it perfectly!

**And so, our calling is to represent Jesus as best we can.**

*'Whoever claims to live in him (God) must live as Jesus did.'* (1 John 2:6)

*'And we all who with unveiled faces contemplate/reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.'* (2 Corinthians 3:18)

*'For we are God's handiwork created in Christ Jesus to do good works which God prepared in advance for us to do.'* (Ephesians 2:10)

Like an ambassador we are given our orders, a task to do, representing our home country which we love and respect, and we want others to feel the same, because we are proud of our home and love our King. We avoid anything that will bring disgrace upon our country and our King, so we live good lives always remembering we represent our country, our people, and our King. When we return home, and we report back to the King we want to be able to walk in head high, not ashamed, and hear these words: *Well done good and faithful servant! Come receive your reward.* (Matthew 25:21)

## Task

- Read the parable of the pearl merchant in *Matthew 13:45-46* and discuss its meaning.
  
- Find the restore button in settings on your computer. Think about this: when you mess up or things go wrong on your laptop you can press the button and restore to a time before it went wrong. Now imagine your friend is having a major problem with his computer are you going to tell him about the Restore button??

Compare this to when Jesus forgives and restores us and all the bad stuff we have done (sin) disappears and it is as if we have never sinned.

Read Psalm 103:2-4/8-12. This is amazing news. Are you going to share this with your neighbour or keep it to yourself?

- If you know Jesus, he calls you to be his daily witness and represent him in everything. How can you do this?  
List different ways you can represent Jesus well, be a good ambassador and please him.

List different ways that would not please him and bring him shame.

## **8.The Role of the Holy Spirit in mission** **We do not do it alone!**

The task of being Christ's witnesses and reaching the world with the Good News of Jesus is a big one and God has provided us with someone special to accompany, help, empower and equip us. The Holy Spirit, the 3<sup>rd</sup> person of the Godhead is central to God's mission in the world.

Just imagine you are the ambassador of your country commissioned to work in a foreign country far off. You have to make a very long journey then settle in a foreign land with a foreign language. You know very little about the country where you are going and to be honest feel very afraid. But then you are told that you have been assigned an assistant, who is actually from the country and is familiar with its language and ways. He/she will accompany you and show you everything you need to know and remain with you for as long as you are in the role. What a relief! Now you feel excited and no longer afraid.

Jesus told his disciples they would be his witnesses to the ends of the earth but when he told them he would be leaving them they were afraid... how could they go to the ends of the earth and be his ambassadors without him?

But Jesus reassured them:

*'When he was about to leave, he told his disciples: 'wait in Jerusalem for the gift my Father has promised, which you have heard me speak about. For John baptized with water, but in a few days, you will be baptised with the Holy Spirit.'* (Acts 1:4-5)

*'And I will ask the Father and He will give you another advocate/helper to help you and be with you forever,'* (John 14:16)

**So, who is the Holy Spirit and what is his role?**

- **The Holy Spirit is the eternal 3<sup>rd</sup> person of the Godhead, who was present at the beginning of creation. He is a person not a force.**

*'Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.'* Genesis 1:2

- **The Holy Spirit is sent upon believers in Jesus, from the Father in heaven.**

Jesus asks the Father to send the Holy Spirit upon those who believe in Him, who have turned from their sins and have chosen to follow him.

*Matthew 3:11 – John the Baptist said: 'I baptise you with water for repentance. But after me comes one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptise you with the Holy Spirit and fire.'*

*Acts 2:38 – Peter replied: 'Repent and be baptised every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.'*

*Luke 11:13-‘If you then though you are evil know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him.’*

It is an ongoing process – Once we have received the gift of the Holy Spirit, we need to keep asking the Him to fill us daily with power from on high.

*Ephesians 5:18b ‘Be being filled with the Holy Spirit’*

The tense is continuous..a daily receiving from the Holy Spirit.

- **The Holy Spirit is a SEAL guaranteeing our inheritance in heaven as God’s children.**

*Ephesians 1:13-14: <sup>13</sup> And you also were included in Christ when you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation. When you believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, <sup>14</sup> who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God’s possession—to the praise of his glory.*

*<sup>30</sup> And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Ephesians 4:30*

*Romans 8:14-17 - <sup>14</sup> For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God. <sup>15</sup> The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship.<sup>[a]</sup> And by him we cry, “Abba,<sup>[b]</sup> Father.” <sup>16</sup> The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God’s children. <sup>17</sup> Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.*

- **The Holy Spirit is our Helper/Encourager/Advocate (Parakletos -the One who comes alongside)**

The Holy Spirit becomes our life-long friend and companion. We no longer have to face life alone, but He helps us every day. He comes and makes his home in our hearts. God with us, Emmanuel.

*<sup>15</sup> “If you love me, keep my commands. <sup>16</sup> And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever— <sup>17</sup> the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be<sup>[a]</sup> in you. <sup>18</sup> **I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. John 14:15-18***

- **The Holy Spirit is not limited to one special person or place. He is with all believers continuously everywhere at the same time.**

Jesus stayed with his disciples for 3 years teaching them about the kingdom of God, he was anointed by the Spirit continuously, but he could only be in one place at one time. When he left, the Father sent the Holy Spirit to be *poured out on all flesh*. The Spirit is not limited to one place but amazingly can be everywhere at the same time.

*Acts 2: 17 – ‘In the last days God says I will pour out my Spirit on all people.’*

*John 3:34 ‘For the One whom God has sent speaks the words of God for God gives the Spirit without limit.’*

In the Old Testament the Spirit of God was given for a limited time and purpose. The prophets were anointed like Micah, Jeremiah, the judges like Samuel and Samson and some of the kings like King David and Solomon. But when Jesus came the Spirit came upon him continuously and this is what is also promised for all believers in Jesus.

- **The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of TRUTH, who helps believers follow Jesus and teaches them how to live good, honest lives of integrity that reflect Jesus in the world.**

*John 16:7-8 - But very truly I tell you, it is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. <sup>8</sup> When he comes, he will prove the world to be in the wrong about sin and righteousness and judgment: <sup>9</sup> about sin, because people do not believe in me; <sup>10</sup> about righteousness, because I am going to the Father, where you can see me no longer.*

*John 14:26 says: ‘The Advocate, the Holy Spirit whom the Father will send in my name will teach you all things and remind you of everything I have said to you.’*

*John 16:13 <sup>13</sup> But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come.*

*John 14:16 – ‘I will ask the Father and He will give you another advocate to be with you forever-the Spirit of truth.’*

*Luke 12:12 - <sup>12</sup> for the Holy Spirit will teach you at that time what you should say.”*

- **The Holy Spirit is the source of God’s Word - the bible. The writers of the bible were inspired by the Holy Spirit. The Spirit helps us to understand God’s Word and apply it to our lives.**

*Ephesians 6:17 ‘Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit which is the word of God.’*

*2 Timothy 3:16 - <sup>16</sup> All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, <sup>17</sup> so that the servant of God<sup>[a]</sup> may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.*

*2 Peter 1:21-<sup>21</sup> For prophecy never had its origin in the human will, but prophets, though human, spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.*

- **The Holy Spirit is our transformer. His aim is transformation of our hearts and minds so that we become more and more like Jesus and the transformation of the world around us (our families, friends and communities) that they may know Jesus.**



(2 Corinthians 3:18) - <sup>18</sup> And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate<sup>[a]</sup> the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.'

<sup>14</sup> "You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. <sup>15</sup> Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. <sup>16</sup> In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven. (Matthew 5:14-16)

- **The Holy Spirit is our Guide to a LIFE and righteousness (right living).**

<sup>2</sup> Therefore, brothers and sisters, we have an obligation—but it is not to the flesh, to live according to it. <sup>13</sup> For if you live according to the flesh, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live. (Romans 8:12-13)

<sup>29</sup> Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. <sup>30</sup> And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. <sup>31</sup> Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. <sup>32</sup> Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you. (Ephesians 4:29-32)

<sup>16</sup> So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. <sup>17</sup> For the flesh desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh. They are in conflict with each other, so that you are not to do whatever<sup>[a]</sup> you want. (Galatians 5:16-17)

<sup>22</sup> But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, <sup>23</sup> gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. <sup>24</sup> Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. <sup>25</sup> Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit. (Galatians 5:22-25)

- **The Holy Spirit is LOVE**

The Holy Spirit fills us daily with God's love empowering us to reach out to people with the love of Jesus.

<sup>5</sup> And hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us. (Romans 5:5)

<sup>22</sup> But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, <sup>23</sup> gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. (Galatians 5:22-23)

- **The Holy Spirit helps us to pray and worship**

<sup>26</sup> In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans. <sup>27</sup> And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the

*Spirit intercedes for God's people in accordance with the will of God. (Romans 8:26-27)*

*<sup>18</sup> And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people. (Ephesians 6:18)*

*<sup>18</sup> Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit, <sup>19</sup> speaking to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit. Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord, <sup>20</sup> always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. (Ephesians 5:18-20)*

*'Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. Do not quench the Spirit. Do not treat prophecies with contempt but test them all; hold on to what is good., reject every kind of evil.' 1 Thessalonians 5:16-22)*

- **The Holy Spirit is the giver of gifts which glorify Jesus.**

*'There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them. <sup>5</sup> There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. <sup>6</sup> There are different kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone it is the same God at work.*

*<sup>7</sup> Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. <sup>8</sup> To one there is given through the Spirit a message of wisdom, to another a message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, <sup>9</sup> to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit, <sup>10</sup> to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues,<sup>[a]</sup> and to still another the interpretation of tongues.<sup>[a]</sup> <sup>11</sup> All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he distributes them to each one, just as he determines. (1 Corinthians 12:4-11)*

**Living the Christian life without the Holy Spirit is like going on the sea in a boat without a sail. The wind blows, but there is nothing to catch it and direct the boat. The Holy Spirit is often likened to the wind. We need our sails (our hearts and minds) to be opened to catch the wind of the Spirit, who will initiate, motivate, inspire, direct, lead and empower our involvement in God's wonderful mission to reveal Jesus to the world.**

## **Task**

1. From the verses below we can see that the Holy Spirit was essential to Jesus' mission.

Read John 1:29-34/ Luke 4:18-19

- Now compare and contrast the actions of Peter in the following passages:

Luke 22:54-62 and Acts 2:1-4/14-21

What/who made the difference? How was he changed?

2. As a believer of Jesus, you need to be anointed by/filled with the Holy Spirit for God's mission? Think about what has he anointed you to do specifically?  
Acts 2:1-4
  - Consider the list of gifts in 1 Corinthians 12:4-11/Romans 12: 3-8 and together with your group prayerfully consider what God is asking you to do. Think about your natural giftings; what fulfils you? what do you enjoy doing?
  
  - Make 2 lists – 1) spiritual gifts and 2) fruits of the Spirit.
  
3. Love is central to the work of the Holy Spirit in and through us. In 1 Corinthians 14:1 it says: 'Follow the way of LOVE'
  - What do you think 'the way of LOVE' looks like? – Read 1 John 4:7-12 and 1 John 3:16-18 and Galatians 5:22-24

## 9. What is mission?

- What do you think of when you hear the word 'mission'?

Perhaps you think of 'missionaries' from afar coming to your country.

Or going on a mission trip to another village or province?

### **But mission is much more than this!**

Think back to the **Whole Story (God's Story)** in Chapter 2. We discover that from the beginning God had a plan and purpose in creating man and woman. His desire was intimate fellowship. When it went wrong because of Adam and Eve's disobedience, God did not abandon them but set in motion His plan of reconciliation and restoration, which found its fulfilment in Jesus coming to earth to die as a sacrifice for the sins, of the whole world. Jesus rose again and returned to be with the Father and then the Holy Spirit was sent upon all those who repented and believed in Jesus. They became the Church commissioned with bringing the Good News of sins forgiven and the gift of eternal life to the ends of the earth.

#### **1. It is God's mission – God initiates.**

- It all started with God. When man messed up at the Fall (Genesis 3) God kickstarted his plan of reconciliation and restoration. (Revelation 13:8 shows God knew what would happen and already had a plan - 'the Lamb, who was slain from the creation of the world.')
- It was/is God's mission to reconcile the world back to Himself and to His original plan. He saves us from sin and the consequences of sin, which is death, and then restores us to our former glory as his children, giving us an eternal inheritance. (1 John 3 1:12/1 Peter 1:3-4/Romans 8:30).
- One day he will make everything new and there will be a new heaven and a new earth and sin, and death will be no more. (Revelation 21: 1-1-5)

#### ***So, what does God's mission look like?***

2. **God's mission is holistic and transformational.** It is complete. God wants to save the WHOLE world, everywhere, every person, rich or poor, black or white, and wants to see every person transformed into the image of Jesus. ( 2 Corinthians 3:18.) It's from everywhere to everywhere!

#### ***What's our role as the Church in God's mission?***

3. **The church is missionary by nature.** God SENDS the church into the WORLD to reveal JESUS and by the power of the Holy Spirit TRANSFORM lives and communities.

### ***How does the Church accomplish its task?***

4. By word and action and kingdom lifestyle. It is not simply evangelism-preaching and making converts. It is word and action working in complete harmony and LOVE is the motivation.
  - Think about a bird with 2 wings. If it only had 1 wing it could not fly. But with 2 wings it can reach to the ends of the earth. So, it is with mission. It is about word and action.
  - Think about a body. It is not just a voice to SPEAK. It has legs to GO and hands to HELP and a heart to LOVE.
  - God's mission is not just for pastors and bible teachers. It is the job of the WHOLE CHURCH taking the WHOLE GOSPEL to the WHOLE WORLD.

### **Discuss the following statements:**

*'The people of God in both testaments are called to be a light to the nations. But there can be no light to the nations that is not shining in transformed lives of a holy people.'*<sup>1</sup>

*'Be what you are. 'A chosen, redeemed community of God committed to the ethical reflection of God's character as perfectly seen in Jesus, walking in the way of the Lord, for the purpose of fulfilling God's mission-to bless the nations and fulfil His eschatological purpose-that the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord.'*

*(Exodus 19:4-6/1 Peter 2:9/Isaiah 11:1-9/Revelation 21:24)*

### **Discuss the following 5 marks of mission (Anglican Consultative Council)**

Do you agree with them?

- To **proclaim** the good news of the kingdom of God
- To **teach, baptise and nurture** new believers
- To **respond** to human need by loving service
- To **seek to transform** unjust structures of society
- To **strive to safeguard** the integrity of creation and to sustain the life of the earth.

Can you see these 5 marks of mission being outworked in your local church?  
If not, which are missing?

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<sup>1</sup> Wright Chris, The Mission of God, (Intervarsity press, 2006) p. 358

## 5. God's mission starts with us.

Read the story of Peter in Luke 5: 1-11 What can we learn from Peter's call to mission?

- ***Encounter with God leads to worship.***

When Peter saw the miracle of the fish he fell at Jesus' feet in worship. He recognised His Lordship.

*We need a real personal encounter with Jesus as Lord before our hearts can change.*

- ***There is a deep consciousness of personal sin.***

Encountering the power and holiness of Jesus highlighted Peter's own human sinfulness.

'Go away from me Lord I am a sinful man!'

**Compare Isaiah 6:1-8.**

When Isaiah sees the glory of God in heaven he is undone and cries out 'woe is me! For I am a man of unclean lips and I live among a people of unclean lips and my eyes have seen the King, the Lord Almighty.'

*When we see God's glory and holy power our own hearts are seen for what they are. We see how shallow, sinful and inadequate we are.*

- ***Jesus calls and commissions – his grace is the springboard into mission.***

*Romans 2:4 - God's kindness leads us to repentance, a change of direction away from the world towards God.*

Jesus did not condemn Peter but instead he lavished GRACE upon him, giving him a new name to live up to and called him to mission.

*Jesus looks at us and sees what we can become and tells us we too can have a place in his mission.*

*Ephesians 2:10 'For we are God's workmanship created in Christ Jesus to do good works which God prepared in advance for us to do.'*

- ***Sacrifice, commitment, and obedience are necessary – a single purpose for life.***

Peter pulled up his boat. Left everything and followed Jesus. He surrendered his livelihood, plans, ambitions, personal desires and in faith put Jesus and his mission first. It became his sole purpose in life.

*We cannot give a part of our lives to Jesus. He demands obedience and wants our whole life. Mission cannot be part of our life. It IS our LIFE! It is not about doing a mission trip. We are called to 'make disciples' wherever we are. It is a commitment for life.*

*Matthew 28:19-20 <sup>19</sup> Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, <sup>20</sup> and*

*teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely, I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”*

**6. So, what should holistic mission look like for me?**

**Read Luke 4:18-19**

**1. Be - A lifestyle of worship, prayer, fellowship, and sacrificial love.**

- If my life does not reflect Jesus, then everything I do for God is useless.  
Read 1 Corinthians 13:1-3.
- Love should be the motivation for my mission to reach people for Jesus  
Read 2 Corinthians 5: 14-15.
- I need a servant heart - The humility and selflessness of Jesus should characterise my witness.  
Luke 14:25-34/Philippians 2:3/John 13:12-17
- My daily obedience and following of Jesus should be prompted by and fill me with deep joy and peace-it is my true worship.  
Read Romans 11:33-12:2
- My life should be a rhythm of prayer, praise, thankfulness and loving fellowship with other brothers and sisters.  
Read Acts 2:42-47/Ephesians 4:2/1 Thessalonians 5:16-16-18/Ephesians 5:18-20
- I should love fellow believers with a selfless love and seek to keep the unity of the Spirit.  
Read John 13:34-35/Ephesians 4:31-5:2/Romans 12:9-13/1 Peter 4:8-9/  
Ephesians 4:3

**2. Go – an outward movement into the world around us and beyond.**

Matthew 28:18-20/Acts 1:8/2 Corinthians 5 18-20

- I am a pilgrim on a journey in this world. I am a stranger and foreigner on earth looking forward to my heavenly country. But I am a pilgrim with a purpose and a mission.  
Read Hebrews 11:13-16
- My mission is to my family, friends, community and beyond.  
Read John 4:39-42

**3. Act - act justly, love mercy, walk the talk.**

Micah 6:6-8/Isaiah 58:6-10/James 2:14-18,26/James 1:27

- My faith in Jesus should be seen in what I do, especially among the poor and marginalised. Faith without action is dead.  
Read 1 John 3:16-18
- I should have compassion ‘for the one’.  
Read Matthew 25:40

- Whatever I do it should be done/said in love – ‘*the only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love.*’

Galatians 5:6

**4. Speak- testifying to who Jesus is and what he has done.**

Romans 10:14-15

- I am called to share my testimony-what Jesus has done for me.  
John 1:41-42/Revelation 12:10-11
- I am called to be part of making disciples teaching them all that Christ commanded.  
Matthew 28:18-20

**Task**

- Reflect again on these 4 key passages about God’s mission: John 3:16/Matthew 28:18-20/Luke 4:18-19/2 Corinthians 5:11-6:2  
In your own words write a definition of *what is mission?* How has your understanding changed?
- Discuss 2 parables relating to God’s mission - The Great Banquet in (Luke 14:15-24) and The Final Judgement (Matthew 25:31-43) – What do they mean? What is the warning?
- Discuss Revelation 7:9-10 -what is this a picture of? Can you imagine being there? 😊 Draw an illustration of this and then share with the group.



## What is culture?

### Culture

(Taken from Envision course (ANCC)<sup>2</sup>

1. Culture: *'The more or less integrated systems of ideas, feelings, and values and their associated patterns of behaviour and products shared by a group who organize and regulate what they think, feel and do.'*

2. Iceberg model of culture – includes what we see above the waterline, and what is hidden below (often much bigger).



3. Typical visible attributes: dress, hairstyles, greetings, food, parenting, celebrations.



4. Typical hidden attributes: relationships, ideas, values, beliefs, core assumptions.

5. Culture is: - learned – not inherited - shared – by a group – gives identity and security - cumulative and can change – each generation makes its own adaptations - preserved in symbols and language - an integrated system – all aspects are related to one another in some way.

### Values

1. Values cause us to judge another culture based on the standards of our own culture = ethnocentrism. Anything that isn't 'normal' is deemed 'wrong' and 'unacceptable'.



2. Values motivate behaviour.

3. Values are shared ideas of what is good, right and desirable. Even if we don't live up to them, they are our ideals.

4. We feel offended if someone else seems to ignore or violate our values. Likewise, we may offend others for the same reason.



5. Opening ceremonies of the Olympic Games are a good example of what a nation considers to be important representations of their values.

6. Values are hard to identify – but we can learn a lot from what parents teach their children.

7. We may share the same values as another culture, but we give them different priorities.

8. Our Christian actions are influenced by our cultural values. This can lead to misunderstandings, especially if we use scriptural justifications.

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<sup>2</sup> Envision short course-All Nations Christian College, Ware, Herts.

## **Ethnocentrism**

We all wear cultural glasses that influence everything we see. Each of us grows up in the centre of our own world. It is normal, it is all we know, and we are taught that its ways are right. The way we greet one another, the way we dress and eat, the way we show hospitality, where we place value and importance, all these are instilled in us from an early age first by our parents and family then by our community and surrounding culture. And so, when we encounter another culture or someone from another culture we experience 'culture shock' and can be judgemental believing our way is best. But actually, it is just different.

### **Think about your culture and answer the following questions:**

- Do you eat with your hands or knife/fork/chopsticks?
- Do you say 'thank you' or do you show appreciation in a different way?
- Do you think it important to arrive on time?
- Do you bring a gift when someone invites you for a meal?
- What do you do if someone arrives/visits when you about to leave your house?
- Is it appropriate to invite your boss/your pastor to your house?
- Do you chat whilst eating?
- Do children sit with adults?
- Is it okay to refuse something to eat?
- Is it okay to leave food on your plate?
- When is it polite to leave?
- Is it okay to wear casual clothes to church?

- Think about weddings and funerals -who are invited? Just close family and friends? When a neighbour dies, do you visit and take a gift? How long should you stay with someone who is grieving?

**What about these?** (Of course, we are generalising here).

- What values are considered VERY important?  
  
(Eg. Respect for authority, hospitality, honesty, punctuality, politeness, generosity, success, education, officialdom etc.)
- What is considered bad/rude behaviour? What is regarded as a major offense?
- What beliefs are strongly held?
- Is family important?
- How do parents teach their children to behave?
- Are rituals important? Think about births, weddings, funerals – who are invited? What are the rules? What happens if you challenge them?
- What are people's greatest fears?
- Who are most respected? (the President, Police? Government? Chiefs? Businesspeople? Pastors? Missionaries? Men? Women? Children? Old people? Witchdoctors?)
- How do you treat foreigners? With suspicion? Or welcome?

**Now think about yourselves as Christians – how do you challenge some of these cultural values, because they clash with the way of Jesus and the values of His kingdom.** (Look back to chapter 6 - Kingdom Lifestyle)

Write down some differences.

## **Cultural Awareness**

Even as Christians, who are seeking to follow the way of Jesus and a kingdom lifestyle, we hold certain cultural assumptions and a worldview that has been instilled in us since birth. This affects how we see the world and other people especially those from different cultures.

1. Our perception of ourselves is not as someone else sees us, and vice versa - like looking through different coloured glasses.
2. We want people to see Jesus; to be salt and light in our words and deeds. But these are not always received as we intend them.
3. Judgements and decisions are either 'rules-based' or 'consequence-based' (where the ends justify the means).



## **Different cultures**

Jayson Georges, in his book *3D Gospel*, discusses 3 different types of cultures – guilt, shame and fear which are 3 distinct cultural outlooks. No culture can be completely characterised by only one and all three dynamics interplay and overlap in all societies. But each culture does tend to lean more towards one of these orientations.<sup>3</sup>

- **Guilt/Innocence cultures**

It is rule-based, moral and individualistic. It is up to the individual to obey the laws/rules and if he/she breaks them is guilty then he/she must confess to having made a mistake and pay the consequences – this is true justice and brings forgiveness and reparation.

- **Shame/Honour cultures**

This has a strong group orientation. Honour is one's social worth and value in the eyes of the community. People think well of you. Harmony in relationships is the highest goal. A person's aim is to avoid bringing shame upon the family or

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<sup>3</sup> J. Georges, *3D Gospel*, 'Ministry in Guilt and Shame and Fear Cultures', pp. 15-33

community. To avoid causing offence and saving face, keeping the peace at all costs. Dishonouring the group might result in leaving it.

- Discuss this scenario-

*A neighbour has come from another country and has got a job, but his visa is not legal. His family live in a poor country and the money he is earning and sending to them monthly is their only lifeline. You find out that he is in your country illegally.*

*-Do you tell the authorities?*

*-Do you think he is doing wrong or because he is helping his poor family does the end justify the means?*

- **Faith/Power cultures**

In fear-based cultures their world is full of spirits which invade and affect daily life and people fear doing something wrong which might offend the unseen powers or ancestors. There is a focus on manipulating these powers by certain rituals or magical techniques to placate them and provide protection. Common practices include using charms, amulets, fetishes, curses, witchcraft.

- Think about your culture-which type of culture applies most?

4. This thinking influences our interpretation of spiritual truths e.g. the Fall and Jesus' actions can be viewed as: guilt and innocence or shame or honour faith and power.

- The Fall and Good News of Jesus as viewed from these 3 different cultures;

Shame/Honour

- a) Mankind dishonoured God and broke the relationship, they were ashamed and hid and were banished from the garden. Jesus came and restored honour to mankind and reconciliation to God.

Guilt/Innocence

- b) Adam and Eve broke God's rules and so God punished them, and the consequence was death. Jesus came to take our place on the cross and took our guilt upon himself and the punishment that should have been ours so that we can go free and declared innocent by God.

## Fear/Power

- c) Satan deceived Adam and Eve and as a result they were cursed and came under his power. But God in Genesis 3: 15 foretold that Jesus as Victor would defeat and overcome Satan and cast him down to eternal punishment. At the cross Jesus said 'It is finished' where he disarmed the powers and authorities and triumphed over them (Colossians 2:15). Christians now have power over Satan and his demons in Jesus' name (Ephesians 6:10-17).

Which of the above 3 approaches fits best with your understanding?

**We all make assumptions about people, but they might be false. Here are some ways that might help us better relate to people especially those from other cultures.**

5. ABC for cross-cultural dilemmas: A – Awareness – know when a clash of opinions may be taking place B – Breath – Pause and take a breath. Don't react – think before responding. C – Cultural indicators – what do you need to ask or look for to find out more?

6. Practice before ending up in a dilemma - make simple observations around etiquette and entertaining. All actions are underpinned by cultural values.

7. Improved observation and analytical skills lead to better understanding and appreciation of deeper values. This ensures responses are more appropriate and effective.

8. Cultural difference isn't just ethnic difference – but also socio-economic, generational (e.g., between older generations and the 'Millennials' who 'listen with their eyes and think with their feelings').

- Generational changes in culture

Think about your grandparents. In what ways do you think and behave differently from them?

What values that they hold important do you consider less important?

How has your culture changed?

9. Understanding culture is important when we are part of the cultural majority. It is essential when we're in the minority and trying to integrate.

10. Learning from others shows our interest and respect and builds our confidence. Within this context it is easier to share our faith.

### Task

- In your opinion what are some things about your culture that are good? and not good? Why?
  
- Think about a time when you have met someone from another culture. Did you experience any clashes? What about? Why do you think this happened? Have you worked in a cross-cultural team or group-what was your experience?
  
- Stereotypes – we are brought up with beliefs about certain people groups. What are some of your cultural understandings and typical stereotypes? Eg. Americans, Chinese, South Africans.


How has your encounter with someone from these groups confirmed or changed your opinion?

- As Christians belonging to a global body, who all belong to Christ and united by the one Holy Spirit, how should this change our attitudes and behaviour? Read again Revelation 7:9

## Cross Cultural Mission

**Aim** Biblical transformation of lives and communities in different cultures.

### How?

As those sent out into the world to testify to who Jesus Christ is, we cannot go like parrots simply repeating scriptures we have learned in our own contexts and expecting to see conversion and transformation of hearts and lives. The world is made up of different people groups, different socio-economic groups, different cultures, different languages, different generations all with different worldviews and understandings. We need to learn how to effectively communicate the truth of the Gospel to all. We need to be learners of culture first, listeners of our audience, so that we can understand the way they see the world. We need to put on their glasses to view the world as they see it so we can communicate the powerful truths of the gospel in language they understand. 

It is true that God's Word is powerful and transformative- 2 Timothy 3:15-16 says - *'and how from infancy you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. <sup>16</sup> All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness.'* But we need to apply God's Word to make it relevant and understandable to those to whom we witness, preach and teach alongside living Christ-like lives.

**Jesus is our Example** The Scriptures are the unfolding of God's self-revelation and Jesus Christ is His final revelation and fullest self-expression of who He truly is.<sup>4</sup>

Hebrews 1:1-3 *1 'In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways, <sup>2</sup> but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom also he made the universe. <sup>3</sup> The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven.'*

**The Holy Spirit is our Helper** The Holy Spirit is the key Counsellor and Guide to the global community of Christ which seeks to interpret Scripture. 'Knowing is a profoundly communal act'<sup>5</sup> And this community is made up of believers from every tongue and tribe and nation.

*John 16:13 <sup>13</sup> But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come.*

*John 14:26 says: 'The Advocate, the Holy Spirit whom the Father will send in my name will teach you all things and remind you of everything I have said to you.'*

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<sup>4</sup> Hebrew 1: 3

<sup>5</sup> P. Palmer *To Know as we are Known. Education as a Spiritual Journey.* p. xv



## Reminder of our message - God's Story & His plan of redemption

- The metanarrative of the bible contains 6 acts: Creation, Fall, Covenant and Israel, Jesus and Redemption, Church, New Creation. It is the grand story of God as loving Creator wooing His rebellious creation back from the abyss of self-harm and self-destruct, through covenantal costly love, which culminates in the great I AM emptying himself and stepping out into the cold of a hostile world to confront and defeat the devilish arch agitator and satisfy a Holy God on a makeshift cross at a particular time, in a particular place in eternity in Palestine.
- The gospel is the story of Jesus and the kingdom of God of whom he is the king. This became the message and mission of the church, to see God's kingdom come on earth as in heaven, proclaiming forgiveness, reconciliation, peace, freedom, righteousness, and justice, anticipating the full realisation of Christ's kingdom in the new heaven and earth to come.

**In a nutshell** 'The kingdom of God is Christ-likeness universalised,'<sup>6</sup>

When Christ came, the kingdom of God came, because the kingdom is present and active in Christ. The reign of God, the new age, has broken into the world through Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit. Now Christ manifests himself through his body, the Church, which becomes 'an outpost of the transcendent kingdom of heaven within the ordinary world of men.'<sup>7</sup>

**The church** in one sense is a community like other human communities, a living reality fleshed out in the concrete human relationships and experiences of life. In another sense it is a unique community because *it is a community of the Spirit*, a gathering in which God is at work (Phil 1:1-11).<sup>8</sup> The centre of the Church is Christ and it is a community founded on love drawn from every tongue, tribe, nation who have been spiritually joined together to form one unique family where harmony, selflessness, goodness and hope are the central virtues.



**The Church has a task** and that is to bear witness to God and His great plan of salvation through speaking, acting, and suffering, following Christ as the Suffering Servant.<sup>9</sup> It has a distinct identity and that is to be a united, missional, loving worshipping community in the presence of a watching world. Called to be 'salt' and 'light' purifying and refining the culture from within.



Matthew 5:14-16 <sup>14</sup> "You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. <sup>15</sup> Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead, they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. <sup>16</sup> In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.

<sup>6</sup> E. Stanley Jones, *The Unchanging Person and the unshakeable Kingdom*. p.34

<sup>7</sup> L. Newbiggin, *What is the Gospel* p. 27

<sup>8</sup> Hiebert, *Transforming Worldviews*, p. 281

<sup>9</sup> Newbiggin, *The Relevance of Trinitarian Doctrine for Today's Mission*. pp. 41-42



**Warning!** There is an enemy and a force of evil who is bent on destruction of all that is intrinsically good. But Satan and his powers are not equal to God and are in fact rebellious created beings still dependent on God. Evil is the perversion of good. It is darkness, deceitfulness, and the source of death. It is broken relationships, idolatry and rebellion against God, alienation, and worship of self.<sup>10</sup>

God is holiness, light, love, and truth. The heart of his gospel is shalom. God's primary passion and mission is reconciliation of all things to their right and proper relationship with himself and with others.<sup>11</sup> God's goal is to turn evil to good by loving our enemies, forgiving our persecutors, bending their swords to ploughshares and countering Satan's methods of deceit, fear, violence and hate with the power of love, truth, peace, life and light.



Romans 12:17-21 <sup>17</sup> *Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everyone.* <sup>18</sup> *If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.* <sup>19</sup> *Do not take revenge, my dear friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: "It is mine to avenge; I will repay,"<sup>[a]</sup> says the Lord.* <sup>20</sup> *On the contrary: "If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head."<sup>[b]</sup>* <sup>21</sup> *Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.*

**How this biblical culture is outworked in each human culture** will depend on Spirit-filled communities in each particular context seeking humbly to see this Jesus culture permeate their surroundings through real lives, which seek to imitate Jesus and his counter cultural kingdom of selfless love and holiness through word and action.

So we know the aim is transformation of lives and communities, but what does this process look like in different settings? What should we expect, hope for, insist upon in conversion to Christ?

- Hiebert says there must be conversion or transformation at 3 levels: beliefs, feelings and norms.<sup>12</sup>

Our core beliefs need to shift from self or idolatrous worship to the worship of Jesus Christ as Lord of all and of our lives believing in His provision of full salvation by his death on the cross and his resurrection and his coming again to set up his kingdom of peace and righteousness. Then by the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit, God works His righteousness in and through us changing us into Christlikeness little by little.

**Read** Colossians 3:1-17 = True conversion or Transformation

Our conversion leads to a living relationship with Jesus which can vary in intimacy. Mary Magdalene's closeness and great love for Jesus is demonstrated in the

<sup>10</sup> Hiebert, *Transforming Worldviews*, p. 303

<sup>11</sup> Hiebert, *Transforming Worldviews*, pp. 303-304

<sup>12</sup> Hiebert, *Transforming Worldviews*, p. 312

washing of Jesus' feet with her tears and wiping them with her hair.<sup>13</sup> Conversion is a turning away from, to or back to our Lord. There is a pivotal point, a turning around, a change in direction and a commitment to follow Jesus but then it is also a series of decisions that choose to follow Jesus. Putting Him first in our lives.

Matthew 6:33 '*Seek first his kingdom and his righteousness.*'

Luke 9:23 '*Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me. For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will save it.*'

Conversion without ongoing discipling and bible teaching can lead to Christopaganism, empty religion. A Christianity which is little more than a veneer over the old life which remains alive and well. Instead, there needs to be a dying of the old and a new birthing and growth of a new kingdom lifestyle. We need a full head and a full heart<sup>14</sup> that lead to transformed attitudes and actions. Holiness needs to be outworked in real lives in the midst of real community.

As we seek to share our faith in Jesus in different cultures, we need to look for signs of real conversion and transformation, as opposed to surface level lip service, whilst continuing with deeply held traditional beliefs.

*For example - those who go to church but still visit the witchdoctor in times of trouble. Or those who say they trust God for their future, whilst actually trusting in their own riches to bring security.*

**We need to critique our own cultures** to see what conflicts with Christ's values. There needs to be a radical reconfiguration of our worldviews and how we see reality. We need to examine the worldview in which we live and the cultural values and compare them against the biblical worldview and transform them in the light of kingdom Christ-centered values. In one sense we need to become 'outsiders' in our own culture and look at it through new eyes. Christians who spend time in another culture then return home are better able to critique their home culture.<sup>15</sup>

Hiebert says: Christian transformation calls for a paradigm shift in which God is known to us through Christ and replaces ourselves or any other god as the centre of our lives. The outworking of this takes a whole lifetime and affects every part of our lives, which is expressed in many different ways, eg,: 'for the rich, give all and follow Christ; for the poor turn from old feelings of being a victim and be proactive in living in a Christlike way.'<sup>16</sup>

**The transformed Christianity community becomes transcultural**, living by a different set of values and is counter cultural subverting human systems which oppose the kingdom of God, seeking to transform unjust structures, areas of greed,

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<sup>13</sup> Hiebert, *Transforming Worldviews*, p. 309

<sup>14</sup> Hiebert, *Transforming Worldviews*, p. 312

<sup>15</sup> Hiebert, *Transforming Worldviews*, p. 321

<sup>16</sup> Hiebert, *Transforming Worldviews* p. 320

hatred, oppression, replacing them with compassionate, merciful and reconciling systems.<sup>17</sup>

### **Communicating cross-culturally**

We need to remember that we as, missionaries/messengers/witnesses, have received the Christian message in the context of our own cultures and so when we communicate to another culture, we need to first understand the biblical culture to communicate it correctly, and then apply it to the culture to whom we go.

I read recently: *'A friend of mine joined a tour of the Holy Land. While walking under a tree in the Jordan valley, the guide picked up some fruit, peeled away the husk and ate the fruit. He turned to the group and said: According to the Bible, John the Baptist's diet consisted of this fruit and wild honey. This is the locust. The group gasped in astonishment.'*<sup>18</sup>

The group had always understood locusts to be grasshoppers, which in fact is possible, but in Israel locust can also refer to the fruit.

- **We can look to Jesus as our Example of a brilliant communicator.**

**Jesus' teaching was provocative, relevant and designed to challenge the worldview of the people.**

Jesus dwelt among us (John 1:14) and did not start his ministry until he was 30 years old. He understood the culture and spoke with understanding and relevance.

Jesus told the story of the Good Samaritan where he challenges the concept of 'Who is my neighbour?' and commends a hated Samaritan as a true neighbour to the injured Jew.<sup>19</sup> He touches and heals an untouchable leper; he allows disreputable women into his inner circle; he goes to eat at the house of a hated tax-collector; he challenges the empty pomp of the religious establishment and blesses the virtuous actions of an invisible widow.

When Jesus went about doing good and teaching about the kingdom, he often told stories which were packed with meaning and relevance for his audience.

### **Read Luke 15:11-27 The Parable of the Lost Son**

From this parable (a fictitious story which illustrates a moral attitude or religious principle) we can learn a lot about how Jesus taught about the values of his kingdom in a shame/honour context

This parable teaches us about GRACE – undeserved love.

The younger son asked for his share of the estate whilst his father was still alive not only showing greed but also a real contempt for his father's authority, who should have been the one to initiate it.

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<sup>17</sup> Hiebert, *Transforming Worldviews* p. 322 and Newbiggin, *Truth to Tell*, p. 157

<sup>18</sup> D. Hesselgrave, *Communicating Christ Cross Culturally*, (Zondervan, 1978) 'The Role of Communication in Culture'.

<sup>19</sup> D. Burnett, *Clash of Worlds* p. 228

- The younger son spent all the money on wild living ending up feeding pigs which in the Jewish culture were unclean animals which was a great humiliation and demonstrated the depths to which he had fallen.
  - The son set out to return to his father to offer himself to work as his servant, but the text says: *Whilst the son was still a long way off the father ran to meet him and filled with compassion threw his arms around him and kissed him.* In the culture of the day for a father to run towards a rebellious son was shocking. But this father was watching for his lost son, waiting for him, longing for him, and so when he finally saw him, he was overjoyed. The parallel picture is of our heavenly Father longing for, watching, seeking his children, whom he created to return to him. He is not a judgemental God, but a loving Father, who loves us so much he sent His only Son Jesus to die for us, so that we can be reunited with him.
- **Paul was also a competent cross-cultural communicator.**

### **Read 1 Corinthians 9:19-23**

*19 'Though I am free and belong to no one, I have made myself a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible. 20 To the Jews I became like a Jew, to win the Jews. To those under the law I became like one under the law (though I myself am not under the law), so as to win those under the law. 21 To those not having the law I became like one not having the law (though I am not free from God's law but am under Christ's law), so as to win those not having the law. 22 To the weak I became weak, to win the weak. I have become all things to all people so that by all possible means I might save some. 23 I do all this for the sake of the gospel, that I may share in its blessings.'*

Paul like Jesus understood that communicating the gospel was more than just spouting words, it was about initiating relationships and entering another's culture as a listener to see how he could make God's word and the gospel relevant. Walking in their shoes.

A good example of this is found here:

### **Read Acts 17:22-31**

In Athens Paul was greatly distressed to see all the idols in the city. His response was not to judge but he felt a deep compassion for their lost state and blindness. Motivated by love (2 Corinthians 5:14) and anger at Satan who blinds people, he looked for ways to share about Jesus, the only Way, Truth and the Life. He cleverly took what was there and from this common ground, he was able to share the truth about who God is.

*'For as I walked around and looked carefully at your objects of worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: To an unknown god-so you are ignorant of the very thing you worship-and this is what I am going to proclaim to you' (Acts 17: 23)*

- **Word+action+lifestyle =holistic transforming mission**

Paul and the disciples did not only share Gods word with the people to whom they went they shared their lives. Like Jesus, they lived among them shining the light of Christ by their daily lifestyle, actions as well as words.

*1 Thessalonians 2:8 <sup>8</sup> so we cared for you. Because we loved you so much, we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God but our lives as well.*

## Task

Think about the statement and then answer the questions below.

As transformed people who are allowing the Spirit and Word of God to change us socially, psychologically, physically and spiritually we learn to think differently, act differently and speak differently in the midst of our human cultures and so bear witness to another King and His transcendent kingdom working to see all areas of society transformed by His great powerful love.

- What attitudes, values, customs need to be challenged in our western secular worldview/African holistic worldview today in the 21<sup>st</sup> century that conflict with the kingdom of God?
- What stories do we need to be telling that show a different way?
- What lifestyles will provoke a response in our neighbours?
- Imagine a scenario of sharing cross-culturally-to a different generation, or a different people group/nationality or different socio-economic group.  
Choose a bible passage that you think is relevant and what you would share.

## What is my part?

### Becoming more intentionally missional.

Discuss the following statement:

- What is a missionary?

'A missionary is not someone, who crosses the sea, but someone who sees the cross.'<sup>20</sup>

As followers of Christ:

- We are called to take up our cross and deny ourselves. (Luke 14:25-34)
- We are called to obey Jesus' command to go into all the world and make disciples (Matthew 28:18-20).
- We have been chosen, called, justified, glorified (Romans 8:29).
- We are God's beloved children led by His Spirit (Romans 8:14).
- We are God's handiwork created in Christ Jesus to do good works which God prepared in advance for us to do.' (Ephesians 2:10).
- We are an integral part of Christ's body (the Church) (Romans 12:5).
- We are the hands, feet, voice, heart of Christ. (1 John 3:16-18)
- We have been given gifts to serve in the kingdom (Romans 12:6).
- We are Christ's ambassadors sent out with a message of reconciliation (2 Corinthians 5:18-20).
- We carry the light of Christ and demonstrate our faith by our holy lives and good deeds (Matthew 5:14-16, James 1:27).
- We are called to love all people, even our enemies (Matthew 5:44-45, John 13:34-35).
- We are called to do justice, show mercy, and compassion and proclaim freedom from the power and consequences of sin through Christ (Luke 4:18-19).
- We are called to serve in love (1 John 4:16, John 13: 14-17, 34-35).

### Task

- Think about your response – what can you do in God's mission?

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<sup>20</sup> Revd. J. John

What is God calling you to do? Do you feel called to any particular people group or part of society? (Homeless, widows/orphans, children, old people, the poor, the rich, another province, another country).

- How can you use your particular skills/gifts for God's kingdom?
- How can you become more missional in your family, community? Give real concrete examples.
- What have you learned from this course? How has your faith been challenged and transformed?



