

# BRIERCREST

## CM/THEO 621 Theology of Mission and Evangelism Spring 2023

Professor: Timothy D. Stabell  
Email: tsstabell@aimint.org  
Phone: (306) 313-4689  
Course Dates: June 19-23, 2023  
Course Delivery Format: On Campus modular course

3 Credit Hours

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

An exploration of some recent thinking about both the centrality and the nature of mission in the teaching of the Scriptures, and an opportunity to reflect on the relevance of a biblically faithful theology of mission for the church's obedience to Christ in our contemporary world.

### COURSE INTEGRATION

If it is in some sense true that “the church exists by mission as fire exists by burning” (oft quoted comment by Emil Brunner), and if, as will be argued, the Scriptures are as much “missio-centric” as they are Christocentric (a point argued for in this course), then a full-orbed biblical vision of God’s mission and our involvement in that mission should be foundational for our biblical hermeneutic, our theology, our preaching, our individual and corporate discipleship, our church programming, certainly for evangelism and other forms of outreach—in short, for every other aspect of our lives and ministries as God’s people.

### COURSE TEXTS

#### Required:

Ott, Craig, Stephen J. Strauss and Timothy C. Tennent. 2010. *Encountering theology of mission: Biblical foundations, historical developments, and contemporary issues*. Encountering Mission. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic.

Goheen, Michael W. 2011. *A light to the nations: The missional church and the biblical story*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic.

#### Recommended:

Bauckham, Richard. *Bible and Mission: Christian Witness in a Postmodern World*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2003.

Flemming, D. *Why Mission?* Nashville, TN, Abingdon Press, 2015.

Harris, R. Geoffrey. 2004. *Mission in the Gospels*. London, UK: Epworth.

Hunter, James Davidson. *To Change the World: The Irony, Tragedy, and Possibility of Christianity in the Late Modern World*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2010.

- Niebauer, Michael. *Virtuous Persuasion: A Theology of Christian Mission*. Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2022.
- Payne, J. D. *Apostolic Imagination: Recovering a Biblical Vision of Mission for the Church's Mission Today*. Grand Rapids, MI, Baker Academic, 2022.
- Schreiner, Patrick. *The Mission of the Triune God: A Theology of Acts*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2022.
- Wright, Christopher J. H. *The Mission of God: Unlocking the Bible's Grand Narrative*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2006.

Students are expected to refer to Briercrest Seminary's Format and Style Guides and Guide for Writing Research Papers, available as PDF documents here: <https://www.mybriercrest.ca/seminary/documents/>.

These texts are available in store and online at the Briercrest Bookstore: <http://briercrest.ca/bookstore>.

Students are responsible for course materials and communication on Canvas (<https://briercrest.instructure.com>; cf. <http://briercrest.ca/online/canvas>) and their myBriercrest.ca email account.

## COURSE OUTCOMES

1. Through the readings, class discussions and written assignments you should...
  - come to a better understanding of what it means to have a missiological hermeneutic of Scripture, understanding its message as not only Christocentric, but also "missio-centric."
  - come to view our involvement in mission and evangelism as an outworking of God's own Trinitarian commitment to reconciling the world to himself in Christ Jesus (2 Cor 5:21).
  - grapple with the question of appropriate human motivation for mission.
  - understand God's missionary purposes for Israel as a light to the nations and the relevance of this insight for a New Testament understanding of the church in mission.
  - Evaluate debates over mission as "proclamation" and/or "demonstration," "go and tell" and/or "come and see," "centrifugal" and/or "centripetal," "missionary sending" and/or "missional" in light of an overview of the biblical story.
  - think creatively about the connections that should exist between a theology of mission and evangelism on the one hand, and the concrete practice of these things in the ministry of a local church on the other.
2. In terms of your personal value-system, you should also seek to...
  - long more deeply for "the earth to be filled with the knowledge of the glory of God as the waters cover the sea."
  - grow in your personal commitment to God's new-creation mission for this world, both in terms of evangelistic proclamation and incarnational representation.
  - develop a growing missionary burden for the peoples of this world, desiring to partner with God's Spirit in his purposes for them.
  - desire to lead God's people into a greater engagement with God's mission in the world.
3. In the area of skill development this course seeks to help you...
  - develop an ability to trace out the story of God's mission through both Testaments of Scripture.
  - build confidence and vision for transforming actual church involvement in mission in a manner consistent with a growing understanding of an overall biblical theology of mission.

**COURSE OUTLINE AND CONTENT**

## Monday

- I. Introduction
  - a. Why think theologically about mission?
  - b. Defining Mission
  - c. The question of theological method for theology of mission
- II. The centrality of mission to the OT story
  - a. Creation and the goal of mission

## Tuesday

- b. Rebellion and grace in Genesis
- c. "Spiritual warfare" in mission
- d. The calling of Abraham
- e. Israel and the nations

## Wednesday

- f. Israel's prophets and mission
- III. Mission in the New Testament story
    - a. *Missio Dei & Missio Trinitatis*
    - b. Jesus and the gentile nations
    - c. Mission in the early church (Acts)

## Thursday

- d. The Pauline mission
- e. "Incarnational" mission and contextualization
- f. The two "moments" in NT mission: "Missions" & "missional" churches

## Friday

- g. Missions and the "unreached"
    - i. Evaluating the HUP principle
    - ii. the urgency of mission
- IV. Concluding reflections

**ASSIGNMENTS**

Please submit all written assignments to Canvas.

***Pre-Course Assignments:***

1. Carefully read the two text books for this course, and then write a comparative review of about 2000 words. You should consider questions like the following:
  - What are the distinctive emphases of each book? How are they different?
  - What is most helpful about each? What are their respective strengths?
  - What weaknesses would you identify from each?
  - Where did you find yourself agreeing or disagreeing with these authors on important points and why?
  - In what ways do they complement each other?
  - To what extent do they present similar or different visions of mission?

Due first day of class (**June 19, 2023**) (20%)

2. Read the first section of course notes provided by your professor in order to prepare for discussion during the first day of class.

***Mid-Course Assignments:***

3. Read ahead each day in the course notes provided by your professor so that you are prepared to engage in discussion during class on the material to be covered the following day.

***Post-Course Assignments:***

4. Research paper: Choose one of the following options and write a good quality paper of about 2500 words.
  - a. A biblical-theological analysis of a passage of Scripture with significant missiological implications:
    - i. Choose one of the following passages
      1. Joshua 9-10 (the account of the Gibeonite deception)
      2. Psalm 72
      3. Isaiah 19:18-25
      4. Zechariah 8 (cf. 2:11)
      5. John 12:20-23
      6. Acts 15:13-18
      7. Romans 4:16-18
      8. Romans 15:7-14 or 14-33
      9. 2 Corinthians 5:14-21
      10. 1 Peter 2:4-12
      11. Revelation 5
    12. Another passage that you see as having significant implications for mission(s) (Please be sure to clear this with the prof).

- ii. You should be careful to relate the passage you have chosen to its own immediate and larger context and then to themes from the course that are relevant to this particular passage. Where does this passage fit in the unfolding revelation of God's desire to bless all the nations? How does it relate to earlier and later parts of the story? How does this particular passage contribute to the overall picture of God's purposes for the world?
  - iii. You should consult a range of commentaries and other relevant sources.
  - iv. In your conclusion, you should reflect briefly on the questions: What does your study suggest about the practical outworking of the church's missionary activity?
- b. A treatment of some aspect of one particular topic in the theology of mission. Appropriate topics could include: the significance of a missional biblical hermeneutic, motivation for mission, the balance between evangelism and the pursuit of justice in mission, mission and creation-care, mission and suffering discipleship, contextualization, incarnational mission, the fate of the unevangelized, or the role of local churches in mission as seen in Paul's letters. This is not meant to be an exhaustive list of possible topics, but you are encouraged to discuss your choice and how you plan to approach that topic with the professor. Your paper should include reflection on the question: What does your study suggest about the practical outworking of the church's missionary activity?
- c. Comparative review of two recent books on the theology of mission. The texts suggested/ recommended for this assignment are the ones by Niebauer and by Hunter in the list of recommended texts above. You may, however, suggest a replacement for one of both of these texts for approval by the professor. Niebauer and Hunter represent two contrasting definitions of mission, two very different approaches to the church's mission in the world today. Your paper should present the basic argument of each book, and then evaluate them in light of things you have learned through course lectures and discussion.

Due **August 18, 2023** (eight weeks after the end of the course) (50%)

5. Final exam. After the last day of class, the professor will email you a final exam covering the content of lectures and readings. This will be a take-home, open-book, open-note essay exam (due **August 18, 2023**). (30%)

## SEMINARY CALENDAR

Students are expected to be aware of the policies that govern course work at Briercrest Seminary, all of which are published in the current Seminary Calendar:

<https://www.briercrestseminary.ca/academics/calendar/>.

### *Attendance Policy*

In order to benefit fully from a seminary education, to be good stewards of time and finances, and to be considerate of their classmates and faculty members, students must be in class at every opportunity.

### *Modular Courses*

Students are expected to attend 100 per cent of each modular for which they register. If this is impossible due to extenuating circumstances, arrangements must be made with the course professor before the first day of class. If extenuating circumstances prevent a student from attending class, a maximum of one (1) full day of class can be foregone. If additional time is missed, the student will fail the course unless they first request to withdraw from the course or move the course to an audit.

### *Online Courses*

If extenuating circumstances prevent a student from attending scheduled meeting times, then up to 20% of meeting time can be foregone. Students missing scheduled meeting times should make every effort to inform the course professor prior to any time missed. If additional time is missed, the student will fail the course unless they first request to withdraw from the course or move the course to an audit.

### *Semester-Based Courses*

All students missing more than two full weeks of a particular course from registration to the last day of classes will receive an automatic fail (0%). A student may appeal a course failure due to excessive absences. Successful appeals will be granted only in rare cases where all absences are clearly beyond the student's control. Appeals must be made through the Academic Appeal Process.

### *Course Schedules*

Classes begin at 9:00 a.m. on Monday morning and run a minimum of 30 hours through the course of the week. The schedule is determined by the course professor. Students should check the syllabus for specifics. When the syllabus does not state class times, students are responsible to check with the professor prior to making travel plans.

### *Assignment Submission*

All assignments must be submitted no later than eight weeks after the last day of class as stated in the syllabus. The correct due dates will be clearly noted in the syllabus and each faculty member will state in their syllabus how assignments should be submitted. Assignments submitted within a week after the due date will be accepted with a 10 per cent penalty. For additional information refer to the late assignment policy or the extension policy in the [academic calendar](#).

### *Return of Graded Assignments*

Professors are expected to return graded assignments within six weeks of the due date. If they fail to do so, students may submit an inquiry to the [Seminary](#). If an extension is granted, the professor is no longer obligated to meet this deadline.

### *Academic Honesty*

Students are accountable to perform each task according to principles of academic honesty. Please refer to pages 24-25 in the [academic calendar](#) for more information.

### *Academic Accommodations*

Any student with a disability, injury, or health condition who may need academic accommodations (permanent or temporary) should discuss them with the course instructor after contacting the Academic Resource Centre Coordinator in person (L234 in the Library) or by email ([ntooke@briercrest.ca](mailto:ntooke@briercrest.ca)). Documentation from a qualified practitioner will be required (i.e., medical doctor, psychologist, etc.).

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

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