



FOUNDATIONS OF ADULT MISSIONS DISCIPLESHIP

EDUCATIONAL PURPOSE

APPLYING AIMS AND OBJECTIVES TO TEACHING ADULTS

Adults will explore with growing understanding the nature and implications of the gospel and God's missions purpose and respond in personal commitment and obedience.

1. Knowing the truth about the gospel and God's missions purpose—biblically and historically
 - Study in depth God's love for all people and His plan for saving them
 - Discuss with others New Testament teachings about the mission of a church
 - Search for evidence of God's purpose in missions and secular history
 - Hear and view presentations on the progress of missions
2. Understand ways God's missions purpose is being fulfilled in contemporary settings
 - Read accounts of how God's love is being shared with non-Christians
 - Explore ways Christians are participating in fulfilling God's missions purpose today
 - Observe the changing role of missionaries
 - Seek the implications of God's purpose in the everyday world
 - Discover types and places of missions frontiers today
 - Interpret social, political, economic, and religious factors that influence missions
3. Personalize the implications of God's missions purpose
 - Observe the work of individuals involved in missions in and through character and/or case studies
 - Explore ways Christians commit themselves to missions
 - Evaluate information gathered in formal studies based on contemporary missions
 - Determine personal missions frontiers
 - Assimilate and appropriate the personal implications of God's missions purpose
4. Respond in personal commitment and obedience
 - Express God's missions purpose through daily living
 - Express personal commitment and obedience through giving
 - Express personal commitment and obedience through prayer
 - Involve oneself in ministry and witness
 - Share the Christian message with non-Christians
 - Arrange personal priorities in order to obey the missions mandate
 - Maintain a missions lifestyle
 - Volunteer for short-term mission service

SCOPE AND SEQUENCE

CHRISTIAN CONCEPTS FOR THE MISSIONS DISCIPLESHIP OF ADULTS

I. The Biblical and Theological Basis of Missions

The Old Testament

- God created the world and loves all His creation. He created men and women in His image. He loves all people equally.
- God created people as free agents. Each person can choose to obey or disobey Him. Disobedience is sin. Sin separates people from God and results in eternal death. Despite sin, God loves His creation and provides a means of redemption.
- The nation of Israel provides an example of God's plan for His people. When the Israelites obeyed God, they were blessed. When they disobeyed, punishment resulted. When they were slaves in Egypt, God freed them from bondage.
- Through patriarchs, priests, poets, and prophets, God continually sought out His people and advanced His plan of freedom.

The New Testament

- God completed His plan of redemption by sending His Son, Jesus Christ, into the world. He fulfilled the Old Testament prophecy of a Messiah. He was tempted as we are, yet He lived a sinless life, being fully human yet fully divine. He demonstrated a servant attitude, ministering in love to all persons, regardless of race, age, or gender. He redeemed lost persons when He died on the Cross. His Resurrection brings the good news of abundant and eternal life through believing in Him.
- The Gospels record the four missionary commissions (Matthew 28:18–20; Mark 16:15–18; Luke 24:46–49 [supplemented by Acts 1:8]; and John 20:21). The risen Christ sent His disciples to go, to witness, to preach, to teach, and to baptize. This work was bound only by the ends of the earth and the end of time.
- Pentecost was the first great event in the new age of redemption after the death and Resurrection of Christ. Pentecost depicted a universal outpouring of the Spirit of God. Ever since Pentecost, the Holy Spirit has empowered the church for prophecy and witnessing.
- Christians are a priesthood of believers with equal access to God through His Word and through prayer. All are empowered and equipped to witness as the Holy Spirit enables each.
- The church in Jerusalem expanded to cross significant cultural, racial, traditional, religious, and agnostic barriers. Christians today follow the early church's example in crossing barriers as they minister and witness.

Basic Theological Premises of Missions

- The authority for the Christian mission is the revelation of the living God in Jesus Christ. The concern for world evangelization is rooted in the character of God, who came to us in Jesus. The Bible is the authoritative witness to the living God. God has given us the privilege of sharing His mission.
- The basic motive for the Christian mission is grateful response to the living God, who has revealed Himself graciously in Jesus Christ. Christians seek to do His will because He alone is worthy of our full devotion. We love Him because He first loved us, and we love the world because He created it and loves it.
- The goal of missions is pointing a lost world to the kingdom of God. The kingdom of God envisions a transformed universe in which redeemed persons relate to their

environment with love, respect, and reverence because it was created and sustained by God.

- Some Christians are called and sent forth as missionaries; all are called to share God's mission. Christians involve themselves in missions through personal witnessing, mission action, and mission support. The body of Christ has many members with diverse gifts, all sharing the church's life and service.

II. The Historical Development of Christian Missions

Eras of Christian Missions

- Christianity spontaneously expanded in a hostile environment (AD 33–323). In the first-century church, Christianity spread through the efforts of Paul, Barnabas, Simon Peter, Silas, and others. As a result of persecution and suffering, Christianity spread.
- Christianity continued to expand (AD 328–800) amid controversy and chaos. Christianity was transformed from a persecuted sect to the religion of the Roman Empire. Christian merchants trading beyond the borders of the empire carried the gospel to the Western world. Strong missionary centers developed in the British Isles.
- European Christianity developed before the discovery of America (AD 800–1492). Imperialistic missionary agencies, sometimes accompanied by the sword, spread the gospel across Europe and other areas.
- Christianity spread to the New World (AD 1492–1650). The Protestant Reformation in 1517 restored the true substance of missionary preaching, although it was generally anti-missionary.
- The world prepared for a change in missions (1650–1792). The British colonies in North America provided a challenging field for Protestant missions. In 1792 William Carey founded the Baptist Missionary Society in England.
- Christianity spread through missions work (AD 1792–1910). The Southern Baptist Convention was organized in 1845. The Baptist Foreign Mission Board was established in 1845. The Home Mission Board was established in 1845. Protestants came into predominance in missionary work. Women played an increasingly large role in the support and in the actual work of missions. Christianity spread to diverse cultures and interdenominational cooperation increased. Adoniram Judson (AD 1788–1850) became a pioneer American Baptist missionary to Burma. Hudson Taylor, David Livingstone, Lottie Moon, and others pioneered missions work and inspired sacrificial giving to missions. Central committees and other women's mission societies sprang up in the United States. Annie Armstrong and other missions-minded women led in the formation of Woman's Missionary Union.
- Prominent ecumenical organizations emerged in a period of devastating wars, economic uncertainty, and theological controversy (AD 1910–1947). In a period of two world wars and the Great Depression, the Edinburgh World Missionary Conference and the Whitley Conference of the International Missionary Conference were established. Christianity became for the first time a truly worldwide fellowship.
- The young church emerged in the non-Western world (1947–1965). The older colonial empires were replaced by newly independent nations in Asia, Africa, and the Caribbean. The nuclear age brought new possibilities and threats to the world. A new emphasis on lay involvement and women's roles in the church and society developed.
- As the Southern Baptist Convention grew phenomenally, home and foreign missions continued to develop and expand (1965–present).

III. The Contemporary World Environment of the Christian Mission

Baptists live in a world of religious diversity.

- Fellowship within the diversity of Baptists is promoted by the Baptist World Alliance.
- Many other churches/denominations/groups are classified as Protestant.
- Ecumenical movements attempt to bring Christians together across the lines that divide.
- In the United States, some international organizations seek to facilitate cooperation in the work of missions.
- Some world religions of long history and tradition have exerted considerable influence upon a relatively large segment of human beings and their cultures.
- Innumerable religious groups have originated in the modern era.
- A wide array of cults and sects—some nominally Christian, others influenced by non-Christian cultures and religions—are active in America.
- Secular trends affect some people's response to the gospel.
- Societies are dominated by various ideologies. Christians must often live out their faith in the context of secular ideologies (such as communism, materialism, secular humanism) that may hinder the spread of the gospel.

IV. Christian Missions in the Contemporary World

Christianity has become the most universal religion in history.

- Christians are more numerous and are found in more countries than ever before.
- This century has seen the emergence of Christianity in developing countries.
- A vast Christian missionary movement is in process.

The Christian mission must be accomplished in a world with right and wrong ethical choices.

- Many people in America and around the world hold values in opposition to Christian values.
- Christians often differ among themselves on ethical issues.
- Certain social and moral issues affect contemporary missions work.

Both North American and international missionaries share a comprehensive task that necessitates formulating and following strategies that address the gospel to human needs.

- They seek to minister holistically to each individual.
- They help individuals apply the truths of God within the context of their cultures and guide the indigenous expressions of their faith.
- In cooperation with other Christians, they minister and witness to unreached peoples.
- Christians approach persons of other religions within a framework of witness, respect, fairness, understanding, dialogue, and a theological perspective.
- The gospel of God's free grace in Christ applies to all persons with the call to accept Him as Lord who purposes to redeem all life and make all things new.

God uses men and women in traditional and nontraditional missions endeavors.

- Both lay and ordained Baptists contribute various kinds of short- and long-term service, bivocational and vocational.
- Women make important contributions to missions in varied career settings.
- New technologies have profound implications for Christian missions.
- Missions stands or falls with the local church.

V. Spiritual Development

Accepting Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord

- Jesus Christ is a historical person and God's Son. God, through the Holy Scriptures, reveals the sins of attitudes and actions that separate us from a relationship with God. We recognize our need for forgiveness from God. Jesus Christ's death, burial, and

Resurrection made our personal salvation possible. Our faith in Jesus Christ brings about our personal salvation, and individuals must choose to accept this free gift of salvation. When we accept salvation through Jesus Christ, we make a personal commitment to place the totality of our lives under His lordship and leadership.

- All our spiritual development grows out of this initial experience. Each state of growth reaffirms the lordship of Christ in the believer's life.

Growing in one's relationship to Christ through prayer

- Prayer is communications with God. It is necessary for our spiritual development. Praying brings changes in our lives and in the lives of others. It changes life situations. Prayer includes elements of adoration, thanksgiving, confession, petition, intercession, and commitment. We gain knowledge of the effect of these as we make them a part of our daily living. We pray when we are alone or with others. We understand our personal responsibility to pray for other persons, including missionaries and missions causes, and the people on earth who do not know of God and salvation through His Son, Jesus.

Growing in one's relationship to Christ through Bible study

- The Bible is the written Word of God. It is God's communication with us. Studying the Bible daily is necessary for our spiritual development. It contains principles and guidelines for all life situations. The Bible instructs us to care for other persons and to share the gospel message with all in the world. The Bible establishes the basis for missions.

Growing in one's relationship to Christ through stewardship

- God is the Creator and Giver of all things.
- Stewardship is our responsibility and accountability for all of life: our time, our possessions, our talents. Responsibility for all of life includes the sharing of the gospel message with others through the giving of our lives, our verbal witness, our possessions, and our resources (prayer, talents, etc.) that other persons in the world may know Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. As we pray and study the Bible, we understand our responsibility to recognize and use what God has entrusted to us so that the gospel can be shared.
- We are responsible and accountable to witness verbally and/or through the printed word, with persons in our circle of friends and acquaintances, and to demonstrate God's love and care to persons in need as we respond with actions to meet those needs.
- The stewardship of our resources will result in our indirect witness and ministry as we enable other persons to share the gospel around the world through our offerings and prayers and our ministries to persons who go.
- God calls and enables some persons to move to new places and cultures so that people in every place may have the opportunity of responding to His offer of salvation. His call to "go" may be for a lifetime or for a shorter period of time to meet a specific need.
- Our stewardship includes the responsibility to work with God in the nurturing and enabling of persons to participate with Him in His work in the world.
- The exercise of prayer, Bible study, and the stewardship of life reveals God's missions concepts and the missions lifestyle. Through the work of God's Holy Spirit, His concepts and that lifestyle become our own.

ADULT AS LEARNERS GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

Adults pass through several distinct phases in their growth and development over the years that span from age 21 to 80+. Although these phases make a difference, it is not accurate to generalize that all adults of a certain age, life position, or gender think or act in a similar manner. Varying education levels, health and fitness patterns, and economic levels are among the many factors that influence adults, resulting in behavior and capabilities outside the expected patterns. These patterns, however, can be useful in the broadest sense of curriculum planning.

In addition to their growth and development, adults of each generation are greatly influenced by the world they matured in since a person's preferences and attitudes are often determined during late childhood and teenage years. They carry imprints throughout their lives, making each generation react at a different age in a manner that is quite distinct from the way people of a generation before or after would act when they were that same age. These generational factors need to be considered along with growth and development when planning mission discipleship curriculum.

Young Adults (ages 20–40)

Physical

- Athletic skills that depend on strength, coordination, and endurance peak in this decade.
- Sexual activity increases; may have children.

Cognitive

- If college-educated, relativistic thinking (viewing all knowledge as embedded in a framework of thought) develops as compared to dualistic thinking (dividing information, values, etc. into distinct “right” and “wrong”).
- Upon completion of school, focus shifts from acquiring knowledge to applying to everyday life.
- Creativity increases.

Emotional/social

- Leaves parents' home and becomes independent.
- May make commitment to a partner.
- Constructs a dream, an image of self in the adult world; chooses career and may choose a life partner.
- As relationships shift, loneliness peaks in this decade.

Busters (born 1965–1980)

Influential societal factors

- Roe v. Wade, abortion issue
- High technology, computers
- Video games and television
- The Challenger disaster
- Berlin Wall dismantled, end of the Cold War
- Peer groups important in shaping behavior and opinions
- Music cynical, less restrained, graphic, heavy metal
- Variable economy
- Persian Gulf War—short, cost few lives, supported by public and Congress

- Issues of survival: world hunger, homelessness, AIDS, pollution
- Clinton administration
- Sixties nostalgia in music
- Latchkey kids and children of divorce
- Work part-time while in school

Characteristics

- Reject workaholism of boomers; will not make personal sacrifices for job
- More conservative in values than boomers
- Want practical education that will help them get a job
- Postpone marriage
- Value family
- Will become involved in local causes, want to see results of their action
- Shorter attention span
- Know how to read, but choose not to

Relationship to the church

- Consider slow pace of services boring
- Want faith to meet needs, be practical
- Want less structure
- Don't want to commit to activities that take a lot of time
- Want a clear focus in their church

Optimal age for introduction of these concepts, methods, and activities

- No organizational structure, be able to “come and go” in missions learning and missions activities
- Do not want to read, electronic sources of information are preferable
- Want hands-on, short-term projects where they can see results quickly
- Emphasize these elements of WMU Scope and Sequence:
 - Christian missions in the contemporary world—if focus is on doing
 - Contemporary world environment of the Christian mission
 - Spiritual development of the learner—if focus is on practical concepts that can be quickly put into use

Middle Adults (ages 40–60)

Physical

- Declines in vision, hearing, and skeletal system begin.
- Hair begins to gray and thin.
- Loss of strength and weight gain occur unless headed off by exercise.

Cognitive

- Speed of processing information declines.
- Amount of information that can be retained in working memory diminishes.
- General factual knowledge and procedural knowledge increases.
- Problem-solving skills increase.
- Creativity shifts from focus on generating unusual products to integrating experience and knowledge into unique ways of thinking and acting.

Emotional/social

- Desire to give to and guide the next generation intensifies.
- Reevaluates life structure and tries to change components that are inadequate.

- Introspection increases.
- Coping strategies become more effective.
- May experience “empty nest.”
- Become caregivers for parents.
- Number of friends generally declines.

Boomers (born 1946–1964)

Influential societal factors

- Civil Rights movement
- Vietnam, Watergate, energy crisis
- Peace Corps
- Assassinations: Martin Luther King Jr., JFK, and Robert Kennedy
- Cold War, communism
- Television, transistor radios
- Sputnik and space race
- Rock and roll
- Economic affluence, double-income families
- Media-oriented, values shaped by television shows like *I Love Lucy*

Characteristics

- Well-educated
- Independent, would leave hometown for other places to work
- Cause-oriented, activists
- Question authority
- Quality conscious
- Fitness conscious
- Tolerant of differences

Relationship to the church

- Committed to relationships. See church as a (not “the”) place to build relationships with Christ and each other. People, not programs.
- Not committed to denominations.
- Want to live their faith, be involved in ministry if that ministry involves problem-solving.
- Will experiment with forms of religions.
- Like streamlined structures, quality, multiple options, local ministries, and short-term missions involvement.
- As they move into middle age, they are seeking to grow in spiritual openness.
- Looking for quality in every aspect of “church.”

Optimal age for introduction of these concepts, methods, and activities

- Keep plans streamlined, easy to follow
- High quality in everything, from look of product to results of projects
- Provide missions opportunities, both local and international
- Don’t emphasis program and meetings, but emphasize relationships such as mentoring
- Emphasize these elements of WMU Scope and Sequence:
 - Christian missions in the contemporary world—if focus is on doing
 - Contemporary world environment of the Christian mission
 - Spiritual development of the learner
 - Biblical and theological basis of missions

Older Adults (60+)

Physical

- Declines in vision and hearing continue with increased sensitivity to glare.
- Touch sensitivity declines in hands.
- Declines in cardiovascular and respiratory function unless prevented through exercise.
- Decline in functioning of immune system; increased risk for illness.

Cognitive

- Processing speed continues to decline.
- Amount of information that can be retained in working memory diminishes further.
- Use of external aids for memory increases.
- Information is more likely to be remembered in terms of “gist” than details.
- May excel at wisdom.

Emotional/social

- Comes to terms with life; may engage in reminiscence and life review.
- Faith and spirituality may advance to a higher level.
- Size of social network and amount of social interaction decline.
- May be widowed, retire—greater tendency to live alone.

Builders (born prior to 1946):

Influential societal factors

- World War II, the Great Depression, rationing
- First automobiles, radio, big bands
- Slower pace of life in their formative years
- Items purchased for their value, not because of trends or brand names
- People fixed things that were broken, did not discard things readily

Characteristics

- Frugal, hard workers, savers,
- Loyal, respectful, dependable
- Less tolerant of people who are different from them

Relationship to the church

- Built the church, loyal to the denomination
- Strong sense of obligation to serve the church and be involved in formal activities
- Committed to missions and missions giving
- Give financially sacrificially

Optimal age for introduction of these concepts, methods, and activities

- Value frugality over “slick” materials
- Need larger print for failing eyes
- Provide definite denominational link
- Want structure, meetings, formal activities
- Emphasize these elements of WMU Scope and Sequence:
 - Christian missions in the contemporary world
 - Contemporary world environment of the Christian mission
 - Spiritual development of the learner
 - Biblical and theological basis of missions
 - Historical development of Christian missions

References

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METHODOLOGY

TEACHING ADULTS

Although adults are capable of self-direction in their learning activities, most adults benefit from the stimulus of a leader and other learners to guide them in the process. The actual activities used by the leader are dependent on many factors, including the following:

- The objective of the session of study
- The nature of the subject matter
- The interests, experiences, and developmental state of the learners
- The learning style of the learners
- The kinds of learning involved (knowledge, attitude, or action)
- The size of the facilities
- Time availability
- Number of learners

Learning activities include:

Observation (listening/viewing)

- Lecture
- Lecture/rhetorical questioning (Pause frequently, ask preplanned questions)
- Guided listening (Learners are given key components to listen for.)
- Storytelling
- Videos/recordings
- Resource persons (testimonies, panel, interview)
- Object lessons

Group discussion

- Descriptive (What happened?)
- Purpose (What was the purpose of . . . ?)
- Procedures (How was this done?)
- Possibilities (What else could . . . ? Brainstorming)
- Prediction (What will happen next?)
- Justification (How can you tell?)
- Rationale (Why?)
- Generalization (What is the same about . . . and . . . ?)
- Definition (What does . . . mean?)

Writing

- Duplicated worksheets (puzzles, opinionnaires, tests, etc.)
- Creative writing (stories, letters, poems, songs, etc.)

Creative art forms

- Sculpture (wire, clay, etc)
- Paper forms (tearing paper, drawing, collage, poster, etc.)
- Music
- Drama (role-playing, monologue, dialogue, pantomime, skits, etc.)

Reflection/meditation

Experiences (field trips, projects/service)