Introduction to Missions
Dr. Michael Payne
Reformed Theological Seminary
Professor
Jackson
Fall 2005

Course Description: This course is designed to introduce the student to the subject of Missions both in terms of its biblical dimensions and its historical application. As the church enters the 21st century, there is a need to reconsider exactly what is required of the church in order that it fulfill its God given mandate to preach the gospel to all the nations. How has this question been answered in the past and how might we answer the call to world mission more effectively today? These are among a few of the challenges that confront us as we begin the process of discovery toward our goal of being better stewards of God’s grace in the days ahead.

Course Objectives:

1. To gain a better understanding of what the biblical principles are that govern our practice of mission.
2. To develop a greater appreciation of how the church has attempted to fulfill its mandate to preach the gospel to all the nations.
3. To challenge the student to expand his/her understanding of what mission means and how each individual fits into the missionary work of the church.
4. To consider the challenges that stand in the way of the church fulfilling its mission.

Course Requirements:

1. The student must complete all the required readings for the course prior to the end of the semester.
2. The student must attend all lectures and participate in class discussion.
3. The student must pass a final exam (40%).
4. The student must complete all written assignments (on time) required for the course.

Written Assignments:

1. The student will write a discussion guide for each of the three films listed below. Each guide should be at least 5 pages in length. [See directions below] (5% for each guide/ 15% total). [Due October 28]
2. The student will write a major paper on the following topic: Provide a Biblical-Theological explanation for why the “confusion of tongues” in Gen. 11:7 was not part of a curse placed upon the people, but instead, a reassertion of a prior mandate that was ignored by those attempting to build the Tower. How is this confirmed at Pentecost in the book of Acts? What are the missiological
implications for seeing the Gen. 11 episode and Pentecost this way? What is there about “unity in diversity” as part of God’s mission that is expressed in this episode and elsewhere in the Bible? (25%) [Due November 30th ]

3. The student will write a book review/analysis of the following:

Engels/Dyrness (20 %) 5 pages in length of the book in its entirety. [Due: November 11th ]

Course Materials:

3. Films: *Rabbit Proof Fence, Smoke Signals* and *Osama*

Directions: Discussion Guide/ The discussion guide should be written for a specific audience (you may use the same audience for each film/guide). Please describe your audience at the beginning of the guide. The guide should be a series of discussion questions prompted by specific episodes in the film being discussed. These should not be informational questions but questions that lead the discussant to the heart of the matter, to the real core of the issues that drive the film. There should be some biblical references that accompany each question so that discussion could be directed back toward the scriptures and away from mindless chatter. You might even reference other works, e.g., philosophers, historians, novels, poets, etc.