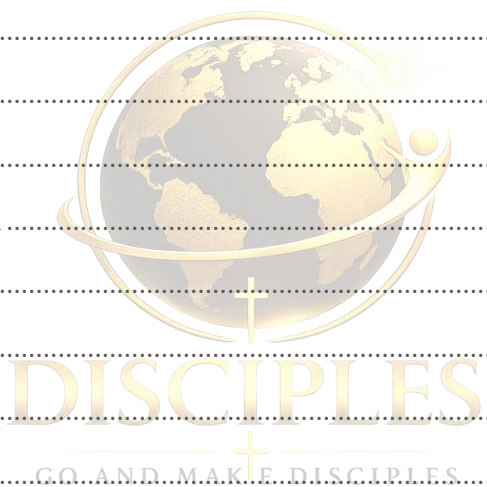


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Contents

Mission and Cross-Cultural Ministry	8
MODULE 1.....	8
Understanding God's Mission.....	8
Learning Objectives.....	8
Introduction.....	8
1.1 What Is Mission?.....	9
Mission Is More Than Evangelism.....	9
Mission Reflects God's Character.....	10
1.2 The Mission of God (<i>Missio Dei</i>).....	10
The Father Sends the Son.....	10
The Father and the Son Send the Holy Spirit.....	11
God Sends the Church.....	11
1.3 God's Global Purpose.....	11
God's Promise to Abraham.....	12
Israel: A Light to the Nations.....	12
The Prophets and the Nations.....	12
The Fulfilment in Christ.....	12
The Vision of Revelation	13
Understanding God's Mission.....	13
1.4 The Church's Role in God's Mission.....	13
Every Church Is a Missionary Church	14
The Church as God's Witness.....	14
1.5 The Missionary Nature of Every Believer	15
Different Ways of Participating in Mission	15

Going	15
Praying	16
Giving	16
Welcoming	16
Encouraging	17
1.6 Mission and Worship	17
Worship Inspires Mission	17
Mission Leads to Worship	18
Practical Application	18
Ministry Application	18
Reflection Questions	19
Classroom Discussion	19
Practical Assignment	19
Personal Mission Reflection	19
Scripture Study	19
Memory Verses	20
Summary	20
MODULE 2	21
The Biblical Theology of Mission	21
Learning Objectives	21
Introduction	21
2.1 Mission in the Old Testament	22
Creation: God's Universal Purpose	22
The Fall and the Need for Redemption	22
God's Covenant with Abraham	23
Election for Mission	23
A Global Promise	23
Israel: A Light to the Nations	23



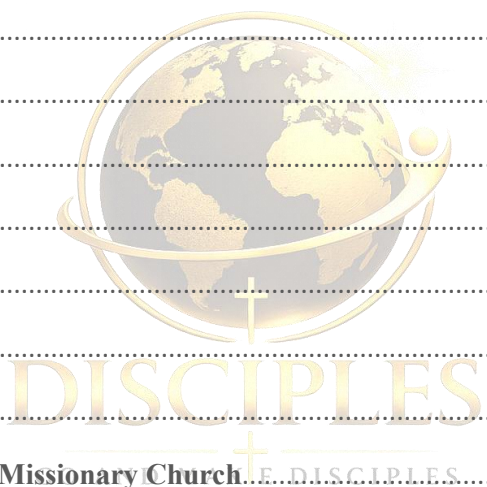
The Missionary Message of the Prophets	23
Jonah: God's Compassion for the Nations	24
2.2 Mission in the New Testament	24
The Incarnation.....	24
Jesus' Earthly Ministry	25
The Great Commission.....	25
Pentecost	26
The Missionary Expansion of the Early Church.....	26
Paul's Missionary Journeys	26
The Biblical Theology of Mission	27
2.3 The Unity of God's Mission from Genesis to Revelation.....	27
Creation	28
The Fall.....	28
Redemption.....	28
Restoration.....	29
Christ at the Centre of Mission.....	29
The Kingdom of God and Mission.....	29
2.4 Lessons from the Early Church.....	30
Dependence Upon the Holy Spirit	30
Bold Proclamation	30
Prayer.....	31
Church Planting.....	31
Leadership Development.....	31
The Bible's Vision for All Nations	31
The Church's Responsibility Today	32
Practical Application	32
Ministry Application.....	33
Reflection Questions	33

Classroom Discussion	33
Practical Assignment	34
Biblical Theology of Mission Research Project	34
Scripture Study	34
Memory Verses.....	34
Chapter Summary	35
MODULE 3.....	36
The Great Commission.....	36
Learning Objectives.....	36
Introduction.....	36
3.1 The Context of the Great Commission.....	37
3.2 The Authority Behind the Commission	37
3.3 "Go"	38
Going Across Cultures.....	38
3.4 "Make Disciples"	39
Converts Versus Disciples	39
3.5 "Of All Nations"	39
3.6 "Baptising Them"	40
The Great Commission.....	40
3.7 "Teaching Them to Obey"	41
What Should New Believers Be Taught?	41
The Importance of Obedience.....	42
3.8 Christ's Promise: "I Am With You Always"	42
3.9 Characteristics of the Great Commission	43
1. Christ-Centred	43
2. Spirit-Empowered.....	43
3. Global.....	44
4. Disciple-Making	44

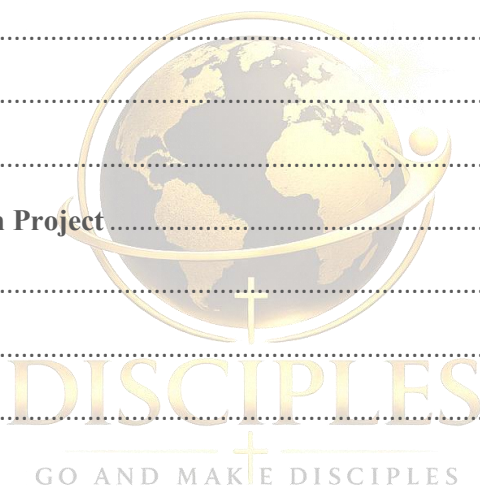
5. Ongoing Until Christ Returns.....	44
Common Misunderstandings About the Great Commission	45
"The Great Commission is only for missionaries."	45
"Mission only happens overseas."	45
"Evangelism is enough."	45
"Numbers alone measure success."	45
Practical Application	45
Ministry Application.....	46
Reflection Questions	46
Classroom Discussion	46
Practical Assignment	46
Great Commission Ministry Project.....	47
Scripture Study	47
Memory Verses.....	47
Summary.....	47
MODULE 4.....	49
The Role of the Holy Spirit in Mission.....	49
Learning Objectives.....	49
Introduction.....	49
4.1 The Holy Spirit: The Divine Missionary.....	50
4.2 The Holy Spirit Calls Missionaries.....	50
4.3 The Holy Spirit Empowers Witness	50
4.4 The Holy Spirit Gives Boldness	51
4.5 The Holy Spirit Opens Hearts.....	51
4.6 The Holy Spirit Guides Mission.....	52
Philip and the Ethiopian Official.....	52
Peter and Cornelius	52
Paul's Missionary Journeys.....	53



4.7 The Holy Spirit Produces Spiritual Fruit	53
4.8 The Holy Spirit Builds the Church.....	54
4.9 Dependence Upon the Holy Spirit in Cross-Cultural Ministry	54
Practical Application	55
Ministry Application.....	55
Reflection Questions	55
Classroom Discussion	55
Practical Assignment	56
Ministry Reflection Paper	56
Scripture Study	56
Memory Verses.....	56
Summary.....	57
MODULE 5.....	58
History of Christian Missions	58
Learning Objectives.....	58
Introduction.....	58
5.1 The Early Church	59
Pentecost: The Birth of the Missionary Church.....	59
The Apostolic Mission.....	59
Peter	59
Paul.....	59
Other Apostles.....	60
Characteristics of Early Christian Mission	60
5.2 Medieval Missions	60
Expansion Across Europe	61
Challenges of the Medieval Period	61
Lessons from Medieval Missions	61
5.3 Protestant Missions.....	61



The Rise of Missionary Societies.....	62
Bible Translation.....	62
Holistic Ministry.....	62
5.4 Modern Missions	63
Global Partnership.....	63
The Digital Age.....	63
Continuing Challenges.....	64
Lessons from Missionary History	64
Practical Application	64
Ministry Application.....	65
Reflection Questions	65
Classroom Discussion	65
Practical Assignment	65
Historical Mission Research Project.....	66
Scripture Study	66
Memory Verses.....	66
Summary.....	66



Mission and Cross-Cultural Ministry

MODULE 1

Understanding God's Mission

Key Scriptures

"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you."

Matthew 28:19–20

"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon 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**

Learning Objectives

By the end of this module, students should be able to:

- Define mission from a biblical perspective.
- Explain the meaning of *Missio Dei* (the Mission of God).
- Describe God's redemptive purpose for all nations.
- Trace God's missionary heart throughout Scripture.
- Understand the Church's role in fulfilling God's mission.
- Recognise that every believer is called to participate in God's global mission.
- Develop a biblical worldview that places mission at the centre of Christian discipleship.

Introduction

Mission is not merely one activity among many carried out by the Church; it is at the very heart of God's eternal purpose. Long before the Church existed, before Israel became a nation, and even before the creation of the world, God had already purposed to redeem humanity through Jesus Christ. The Bible is therefore not simply a collection of moral teachings or historical accounts, it is the unfolding story of God's mission to reconcile people to Himself.

The course outline introduces mission as **God's work of redeeming people from every nation through Jesus Christ and sending His Church to proclaim the gospel and make disciples**. It also introduces the concept of *Missio Dei*, emphasising that mission begins with God Himself rather than with human initiative.

Unfortunately, many Christians think of missions as the responsibility of a select group of missionaries who travel overseas. While God certainly calls some believers to cross-cultural ministry, Scripture teaches that every follower of Christ has a role in God's mission. Some are

called to go, others to send, others to pray, others to give, and all are called to bear witness to Christ wherever God has placed them.

Understanding God's mission changes how believers view the world. Instead of seeing nations merely as political or geographical entities, they begin to see people whom God loves and desires to redeem. Mission is therefore not an optional ministry of the Church, it is the very reason the Church exists.

1.1 What Is Mission?

Mission is the purposeful activity of God in bringing His salvation to the world through Jesus Christ and sending His people to proclaim that message to every nation.

The word *mission* comes from the Latin *missio*, meaning "**to send.**" Throughout Scripture, sending is a recurring theme:

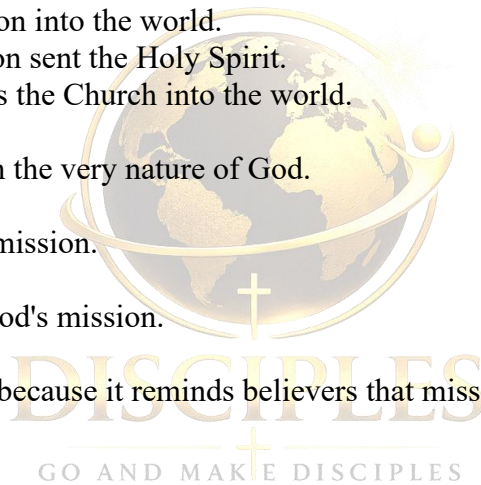
- The Father sent the Son into the world.
- The Father and the Son sent the Holy Spirit.
- The Triune God sends the Church into the world.

Mission is therefore rooted in the very nature of God.

The Church does not invent mission.

The Church participates in God's mission.

This distinction is important because it reminds believers that mission belongs to God. He is both its author and its finisher.



Mission Is More Than Evangelism

Evangelism is central to mission, but biblical mission is broader.

Mission includes:

- Proclaiming the Gospel.
- Making disciples.
- Planting healthy churches.
- Demonstrating Christ's compassion.
- Teaching biblical truth.
- Equipping leaders.
- Serving communities.
- Glorifying God among all peoples.

Every aspect of mission points people toward reconciliation with God through Jesus Christ.

Mission Reflects God's Character

God is a sending God.

His love compels Him to seek the lost.

From the Garden of Eden, where God sought Adam and Eve after they sinned, to the final vision of Revelation where people from every nation worship before His throne, Scripture consistently reveals God's initiative in redeeming humanity.

Mission therefore reflects:

- God's love.
- God's mercy.
- God's justice.
- God's holiness.
- God's desire that people know Him.

Mission begins in the heart of God long before it reaches the hands of His people.

1.2 The Mission of God (*Missio Dei*)

One of the most significant developments in modern missiology is the recovery of the biblical concept known as **Missio Dei**, meaning "the Mission of God."

The course outline summarises this truth by stating:

"Mission begins with God. The Father sends the Son, the Father and the Son send the Holy Spirit, and the Triune God sends the Church into the world."

This concept reminds us that mission is not primarily a human programme or organisational strategy.

Mission originates in the Triune God.

The Father Sends the Son

God the Father demonstrated His love by sending Jesus Christ into the world.

Jesus came:

- To reveal the Father.
- To seek and save the lost.
- To proclaim the Kingdom of God.
- To die for sinners.
- To rise again.

- To reconcile humanity to God.

The incarnation itself is a missionary act.

God crossed the greatest cultural and spiritual divide by entering human history through His Son.

The Father and the Son Send the Holy Spirit

After Christ's ascension, the Holy Spirit was sent to empower believers for witness and ministry.

Without the Holy Spirit, the Church would lack the power to fulfil its mission.

He:

- Convicts people of sin.
- Regenerates hearts.
- Empowers witness.
- Gives spiritual gifts.
- Builds the Church.
- Produces spiritual fruit.

Mission is therefore impossible apart from the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

God Sends the Church

Jesus' final command was not to remain comfortably within familiar surroundings but to go into the world.

The Church is a sent community. **GO AND MAKE DISCIPLES**

Every local congregation exists not only for its own spiritual growth but also for the expansion of God's Kingdom.

Whether believers serve in their local neighbourhoods or among unreached people groups across the world, they participate in God's mission.

1.3 God's Global Purpose

From Genesis to Revelation, Scripture reveals God's desire to gather worshippers from every tribe, language, people, and nation.

This global vision is not a New Testament innovation; it is woven throughout the entire biblical narrative.

The course outline highlights God's call for **people from every tribe, language, people, and nation to worship Him.**

God's Promise to Abraham

God's covenant with Abraham marked a pivotal moment in salvation history.

When God called Abraham, He promised:

"All peoples on earth will be blessed through you."

Israel was chosen not for privilege alone but for purpose.

Through Abraham's descendants, the Messiah would come, bringing salvation to the nations.

From the beginning, God's covenant had a global dimension.

Israel: A Light to the Nations

God intended Israel to display His holiness and righteousness before surrounding nations.

Through their worship, justice, and obedience, Israel was to point the nations toward the one true God.

Although Israel often failed in this calling, God's missionary purpose remained unchanged.

The Prophets and the Nations

The Old Testament prophets repeatedly proclaimed God's concern for all peoples.

Isaiah declared that God's Servant would become:

"A light for the Gentiles."

Jonah's reluctant mission to Nineveh demonstrates God's compassion even for Israel's enemies.

The prophetic books consistently anticipate a day when the nations will come to worship the Lord.

The Fulfilment in Christ

Jesus fulfilled Israel's missionary calling.

Through His life, death, and resurrection, He opened the way of salvation to every nation.

His ministry crossed numerous cultural barriers.

He ministered to:

- Samaritans.
- Romans.
- Greeks.
- The poor.
- The wealthy.
- Men.
- Women.
- Children.
- Outcasts.

Jesus demonstrated that God's Kingdom welcomes people from every background who respond in faith.

The Vision of Revelation

The Bible concludes with a magnificent vision of redeemed humanity.

John saw:

"A great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne."

Mission therefore moves toward a glorious conclusion.

God's mission will succeed.

Christ will receive worship from every people group, fulfilling His eternal purpose.

Understanding God's Mission

Key Scriptures

"As the Father has sent Me, I am sending you." **John 20:21**

"Declare His glory among the nations, His marvellous works among all peoples." **Psalms 96:3**

1.4 The Church's Role in God's Mission

God's mission is accomplished through His Church. While mission originates with God, He has graciously chosen His people to participate in His redemptive work. The Church is not simply a gathering of believers for worship and fellowship; it is a community sent into the world to proclaim Christ and make disciples.

The course outline emphasises that **God sends the Church into the world**, making every local congregation a participant in His global mission.

Jesus did not say, "Wait for the nations to come to you." Instead, He commanded His followers to go. This command remains the Church's mission until Christ returns.

A healthy church is therefore both gathered and sent:

- It gathers to worship God, receive biblical teaching, celebrate the ordinances, and encourage one another.
- It is sent to proclaim the Gospel, disciple believers, serve communities, and plant churches.

When a church loses its missionary vision, it risks becoming inward-focused. Throughout the book of Acts, however, the Church continually moved outward, taking the Gospel across geographical, ethnic, and cultural boundaries.

Every Church Is a Missionary Church

Some churches believe that missions belong only to large denominations or specialised mission agencies.

The New Testament presents a different picture.

Every local church is called to:

- Pray for the nations.
- Share the Gospel locally.
- Support missionaries.
- Train future leaders.
- Plant churches.
- Care for those in need.
- Welcome people from different cultures.
- Encourage members to discover God's calling.



Mission is not an optional department of church life, it is part of the Church's identity.

The Church as God's Witness

Jesus described His followers as:

- The light of the world.
- The salt of the earth.
- His ambassadors.
- His witnesses.

A witness tells others what they have seen and experienced.

Every believer who has experienced God's saving grace has a testimony to share.

Some may preach from a pulpit.

Others may witness through conversations, acts of compassion, hospitality, education, healthcare, business, or community service.

Wherever believers faithfully represent Christ, they participate in God's mission.

1.5 The Missionary Nature of Every Believer

One of the greatest misunderstandings about missions is the belief that only pastors or overseas missionaries are called to missionary service.

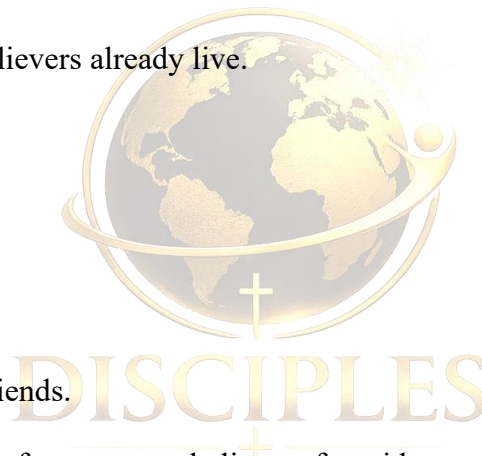
The New Testament teaches that every believer has a role in God's mission.

While God calls some to cross-cultural missionary work, He calls every Christian to live as His witness.

This calling begins where believers already live.

Mission starts:

- In the home.
- In the workplace.
- In schools.
- In neighbourhoods.
- Within communities.
- Among family and friends.



Faithfulness in local witness often prepares believers for wider opportunities in God's Kingdom.

Different Ways of Participating in Mission

Not everyone is called to relocate to another country, but everyone can contribute to the advancement of God's Kingdom.

Believers participate through:

Going

Some are called to serve across cultures and nations.

They may become:

- Church planters.

- Evangelists.
- Bible translators.
- Teachers.
- Medical missionaries.
- Community development workers.
- Theological educators.

Praying

Prayer remains one of the most powerful missionary ministries.

Believers pray for:

- Missionaries.
- Unreached people groups.
- Church planters.
- Persecuted Christians.
- National leaders.
- Open doors for the Gospel.

Prayer prepares hearts and invites God's power into mission.

Giving

Financial generosity enables mission to continue.

Missionary work requires resources for:

- Travel.
- Bible translation.
- Leadership training.
- Humanitarian aid.
- Church planting.
- Discipleship materials.

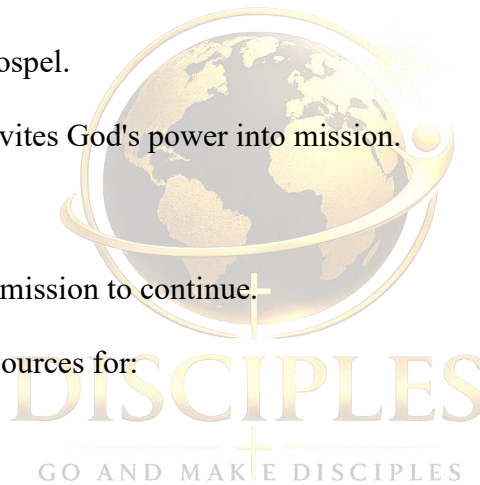
Giving reflects partnership in God's mission.

Welcoming

Increasing global migration has brought the nations to many communities.

Churches now have opportunities to welcome:

- International students.
- Refugees.
- Migrant workers.
- Visitors.
- Families from different cultures.



Hospitality becomes a powerful expression of Christ's love.

Encouraging

Missionaries often face:

- Loneliness.
- Spiritual opposition.
- Financial pressure.
- Cultural adjustment.
- Family challenges.

Regular encouragement through visits, messages, prayer, and pastoral care strengthens those serving on the mission field.

1.6 Mission and Worship

Mission ultimately exists because worship does not.

The course outline concludes by reminding students that God's purpose is to gather worshippers from every tribe, language, people, and nation.

This truth transforms our understanding of mission.

The goal is not simply increasing church membership or expanding organisations.

The ultimate goal is that people everywhere know, love, obey, and worship the living God.

John's vision in Revelation portrays countless believers from every nation praising God together before His throne.

Mission moves history toward that glorious future.

Every person who hears the Gospel and places their faith in Christ becomes another voice in the eternal worship of God.

Worship Inspires Mission

Those who truly worship God develop hearts that reflect His compassion for the lost.

Isaiah first encountered God's holiness in worship.

Only afterwards did he respond:

"Here am I. Send me!"

Likewise, genuine worship naturally produces missionary obedience.

The more believers know God, the more they desire others to know Him also.

Mission Leads to Worship

Every faithful missionary effort seeks to establish communities of worshippers.

Healthy churches become places where people:

- Hear God's Word.
- Worship Christ.
- Grow as disciples.
- Serve one another.
- Share the Gospel with others.

Mission therefore creates multiplying communities of worship that continue until Christ returns.

Practical Application

Understanding God's mission should transform both personal discipleship and church ministry.

Believers should:

- Pray regularly for the nations.
- Learn about unreached people groups.
- Share the Gospel with people around them.
- Support missionary work financially and prayerfully.
- Welcome people from different cultures.
- Develop a heart that reflects God's compassion for the world.

Churches should intentionally cultivate a missionary culture in which every member understands that they have a role in God's global mission.

Ministry Application

Church leaders should continually remind believers that missions are not reserved for a few specially gifted individuals but are central to the life of every congregation.

Leaders should:

- Preach regularly on God's heart for the nations.
- Include missionary updates in worship services.
- Encourage short-term and long-term mission involvement.
- Equip members to share the Gospel confidently.

- Develop partnerships with missionaries and church planters.
- Foster a culture of generosity, hospitality, and prayer.

When the Church embraces God's mission, it becomes a powerful witness to the world.

Reflection Questions

1. What is the difference between God's mission (*Missio Dei*) and human missionary activity?
2. Why is mission central to the identity of the Church?
3. How does God's covenant with Abraham reveal His concern for all nations?
4. In what practical ways can every believer participate in God's mission?
5. How does the vision of Revelation encourage the Church's missionary task today?

Classroom Discussion

Discuss the statement:

"Mission is not something the Church invented; it is God's work in which the Church has the privilege of participating."

Using Scripture, explain how this understanding changes the way Christians view evangelism, discipleship, and global ministry.

Practical Assignment

Personal Mission Reflection

Write a **2,000-word essay** entitled:

"My Place in God's Global Mission."

Your essay should include:

- A biblical definition of mission.
- An explanation of *Missio Dei*.
- How God's mission is revealed throughout Scripture.
- Practical ways you can participate in God's mission.
- Personal goals for becoming more actively involved in local and global outreach.

Scripture Study

Read and study the following passages:

- Genesis 12:1–3
- Psalm 67
- Isaiah 49:6
- Matthew 28:18–20
- Acts 1:8
- Revelation 7:9–10

Summarise what each passage teaches about God's heart for the nations and explain how it contributes to a biblical theology of mission.

Memory Verses

- Genesis 12:3
- Psalm 67:1–2
- Matthew 28:19–20
- Acts 1:8
- John 20:21
- Revelation 7:9–10

Summary

Mission begins with God. The Father sent the Son, the Father and the Son sent the Holy Spirit, and the Triune God now sends the Church into the world to proclaim the Gospel and make disciples. From God's covenant with Abraham to the vision of redeemed people from every tribe, language, people, and nation in Revelation, the Bible consistently reveals God's desire to gather worshippers from all nations. The Church exists not only to worship and nurture believers but also to participate in God's redemptive mission through evangelism, discipleship, church planting, compassionate service, and faithful witness. Every believer has a role to play, whether by going, praying, giving, welcoming, or encouraging those engaged in mission. Ultimately, the goal of mission is the glory of God, as people from every culture and language come to know Jesus Christ and worship Him forever. As believers embrace God's missionary heart, they discover that participating in His mission is both a privilege and a responsibility, bringing hope to the nations and honour to His name.

MODULE 2

The Biblical Theology of Mission

Key Scriptures

"For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea." **Habakkuk 2:14**

"For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost." **Luke 19:10**

Learning Objectives

By the end of this module, students should be able to:

- Explain that mission is woven throughout the entire Bible.
- Trace God's missionary purpose from Genesis to Revelation.
- Describe the missionary significance of the Old Testament.
- Explain how Jesus fulfilled God's redemptive mission.
- Examine the missionary expansion of the early Church.
- Develop a biblical theology that places mission at the centre of God's redemptive plan.
- Apply biblical principles of mission to contemporary ministry.

Introduction

DISCIPLES

Many people mistakenly believe that missions begin in the New Testament with the Great Commission. However, the Bible reveals that God's concern for the nations begins in Genesis and continues uninterrupted until Revelation. Mission is not a separate doctrine added to Christianity; it is one of the central themes that unites the entire biblical narrative.

The course outline states that **mission is woven throughout the Bible**, highlighting God's covenant with Abraham, Israel's calling, the ministry of the prophets, the incarnation of Christ, Pentecost, Paul's missionary journeys, and the growth of the early Church.

The Bible tells one grand story: God created humanity for fellowship with Himself, humanity rebelled through sin, and God initiated His plan of redemption to restore people from every nation into relationship with Him through Jesus Christ.

Understanding this unified story transforms the way believers read Scripture. Rather than seeing isolated accounts and disconnected events, they begin to recognise one continuous mission unfolding through God's sovereign plan.

2.1 Mission in the Old Testament

The Old Testament is often misunderstood as being concerned only with the nation of Israel. While Israel occupies a central place in God's redemptive plan, God's ultimate purpose has always extended to every nation on earth.

The Old Testament lays the theological foundation upon which New Testament missions are built.

Creation: God's Universal Purpose

The biblical story begins with creation.

God created humanity in His own image and entrusted mankind with the responsibility of stewarding His creation and reflecting His glory.

From the beginning:

- God was Creator of all people.
- Every human being possessed equal dignity.
- Every nation ultimately belonged to Him.

Because God created every nation, He also desires every nation to know Him.

Mission therefore begins not with human need but with God's sovereign purpose.

The Fall and the Need for Redemption

Genesis 3 records humanity's rebellion against God.

Sin brought:

- Separation from God.
- Spiritual death.
- Broken relationships.
- Suffering.
- Corruption.
- Death.

The effects of sin extended to every culture, language, and nation.

Because all humanity fell, all humanity needs redemption.

Mission exists because the world desperately needs the salvation found only in Jesus Christ.

God's Covenant with Abraham

The course outline identifies God's covenant with Abraham as one of the foundational moments in biblical mission.

When God called Abraham in Genesis 12, He promised:

"All peoples on earth will be blessed through you."

This promise reveals several important truths.

Election for Mission

God chose Abraham, not simply to bless him personally, but so that he would become a blessing to the nations.

Israel's election was never intended to produce isolation.

It was intended to advance God's redemptive plan.

A Global Promise

The covenant anticipated the coming of Jesus Christ.

Through Abraham's descendants, the Messiah would bring salvation to people from every nation.

Thus, from Genesis onward, God's plan was always global in scope.

Israel: A Light to the Nations

God called Israel to represent Him among surrounding nations.

Through their worship, obedience, justice, and holiness, Israel was to demonstrate the character of the living God.

Isaiah records God's words:

"I will also make you a light for the Gentiles, that My salvation may reach to the ends of the earth."

Israel's national life was intended to point the nations toward God's glory.

Although Israel often failed in this calling, God's missionary purpose never changed.

The Missionary Message of the Prophets

The prophets repeatedly proclaimed God's concern for all peoples.

The course outline identifies **the ministry of the prophets** as a vital part of biblical mission.

Isaiah envisioned nations streaming to worship God.

Micah proclaimed that many peoples would seek the Lord.

Zechariah anticipated nations joining themselves to God.

These prophetic visions reveal that God's Kingdom would extend far beyond Israel.

Jonah: God's Compassion for the Nations

One of the clearest missionary books in the Old Testament is Jonah.

God sent Jonah to Nineveh, the capital of Israel's enemy.

Jonah resisted because he did not want God's mercy extended to those people.

Yet God's compassion reached even Israel's enemies.

The book teaches profound lessons:

- God's mercy extends to all people.
- No nation lies beyond God's concern.
- God's servants must share His compassion.
- Obedience is essential in mission.

Jonah challenges believers to examine whether their hearts reflect God's love for every nation.

2.2 Mission in the New Testament

The New Testament reveals the fulfilment of God's missionary promises.

Everything anticipated in the Old Testament reaches its climax in Jesus Christ.

The Incarnation

The course outline begins New Testament mission with **the incarnation of Christ**.

The incarnation is the greatest missionary event in history.

God entered human history.

Jesus crossed the infinite distance between heaven and earth to reconcile humanity to God.

He did not merely send a message.

He came personally.

The incarnation demonstrates:

- God's love.
- God's humility.
- God's identification with humanity.
- God's commitment to redemption.

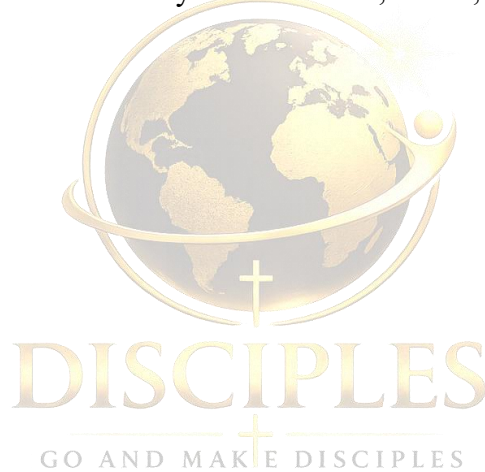
Every missionary today follows the example of Christ by entering the lives and cultures of others with humility and love.

Jesus' Earthly Ministry

Throughout His ministry, Jesus consistently crossed social, ethnic, and religious boundaries.

He ministered to:

- Samaritans.
- Romans.
- Gentiles.
- Tax collectors.
- Lepers.
- Women.
- Children.
- The poor.
- The wealthy.



His ministry demonstrated that God's Kingdom welcomes all who believe.

Jesus continually challenged cultural prejudice while remaining faithful to God's truth.

The Great Commission

Following His resurrection, Jesus entrusted His followers with the responsibility of continuing His mission.

The course outline highlights the Great Commission as central to biblical mission.

The Great Commission includes several essential responsibilities:

- Going intentionally.
- Making disciples.
- Baptising new believers.
- Teaching obedience to Christ.

- Trusting Christ's continual presence.

The command remains the Church's primary mission until Christ returns.

Pentecost

Pentecost marked the birth of the missionary Church.

The Holy Spirit empowered believers to proclaim Christ boldly.

People from many nations heard the Gospel in their own languages.

This event demonstrated that God's salvation was for every people group.

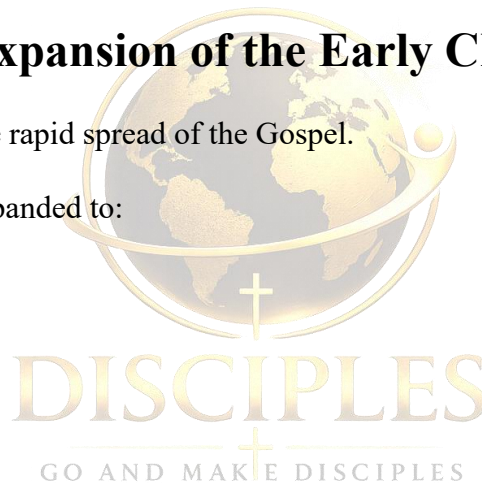
The Holy Spirit united believers across cultural and linguistic barriers, reversing the divisions introduced at Babel and pointing toward the unity of God's global Church.

The Missionary Expansion of the Early Church

The book of Acts records the rapid spread of the Gospel.

What began in Jerusalem expanded to:

- Judea.
- Samaria.
- Syria.
- Asia Minor.
- Greece.
- Rome.



Despite persecution, imprisonment, and opposition, the early Church remained committed to proclaiming Christ.

Their faithfulness reminds modern believers that God's mission advances even through hardship.

Paul's Missionary Journeys

The course outline identifies **Paul's missionary journeys** as a key example of biblical mission.

Paul travelled extensively, planting churches and strengthening believers throughout the Roman Empire.

His ministry illustrates several missionary principles:

- Dependence upon the Holy Spirit.
- Team ministry.

- Contextual communication.
- Church planting.
- Leadership development.
- Perseverance amid suffering.

Paul did not merely seek converts; he established healthy churches capable of continuing the mission.

The Biblical Theology of Mission

Key Scriptures

"Declare His glory among the nations, His marvellous works among all peoples." **Psalm 96:3**

"This gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come." **Matthew 24:14**

2.3 The Unity of God's Mission from Genesis to Revelation

One of the most remarkable truths revealed in Scripture is that the Bible tells one unified story. Although written over approximately 1,500 years by more than forty human authors, its central message remains consistent: God is redeeming a people for Himself from every nation through Jesus Christ.

The course outline teaches that students should understand **the unity of God's missionary purpose throughout Scripture.**

Rather than viewing the Bible as sixty-six unrelated books, believers should recognise one continuous story of redemption.

This story unfolds in four major movements:

- Creation.
- The Fall.
- Redemption.
- Restoration.

Mission is woven into every stage of this story.

Creation

God created humanity to know Him, worship Him, and reflect His glory throughout the earth.

Every human being bears God's image.

This truth provides the theological foundation for Christian mission.

Every culture possesses equal dignity because every person has been created by God.

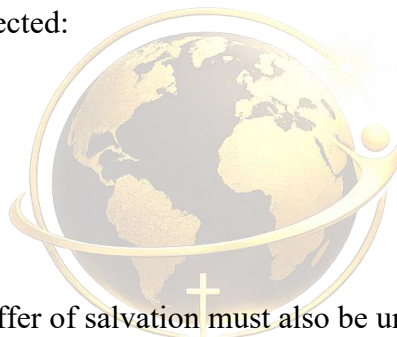
Mission begins with recognising the value and worth of every human life.

The Fall

Sin shattered humanity's relationship with God.

The consequences of the Fall affected:

- Individuals.
- Families.
- Communities.
- Nations.
- Cultures.



Because sin is universal, God's offer of salvation must also be universal.

Mission exists because the world desperately needs reconciliation with God.

Redemption



Throughout history, God progressively revealed His plan of salvation.

He called Abraham.

He formed Israel.

He spoke through the prophets.

He sent His Son.

He poured out His Spirit.

He established His Church.

Every stage of redemption moves toward the gathering of people from every nation into God's Kingdom.

Restoration

The Bible concludes with God's complete restoration of creation.

John's vision in Revelation reveals believers from every tribe, language, people, and nation worshipping before God's throne.

Mission therefore has a glorious destination.

The work of evangelism, discipleship, and church planting points toward the day when Christ's Kingdom is fully established.

This future hope gives believers courage and perseverance in present-day mission.

Christ at the Centre of Mission

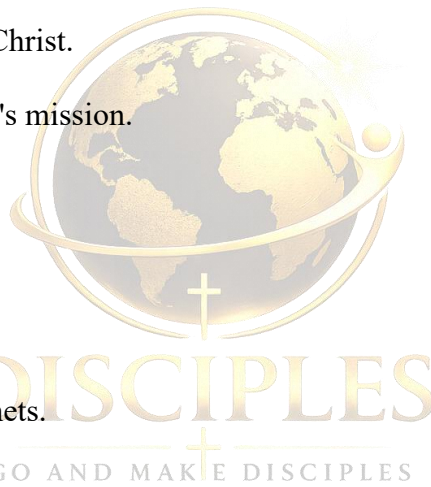
The entire Bible points to Jesus Christ.

He is not merely one part of God's mission.

He is its centre.

Jesus fulfilled:

- The promise to Abraham.
- The hope of Israel.
- The message of the prophets.
- The sacrificial system.
- The Davidic Kingdom.
- God's plan of redemption.



Everything before Christ anticipated Him.

Everything after Christ proclaims Him.

Mission therefore centres upon the person and work of Jesus.

Christian mission is not the promotion of culture, politics, or civilisation.

It is the proclamation of Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour.

The Kingdom of God and Mission

One of Jesus' central themes was the Kingdom of God.

The Kingdom refers to God's sovereign reign over all creation.

Mission proclaims that through Jesus Christ, people are invited to enter God's Kingdom by repentance and faith.

The Kingdom transforms:

- Hearts.
- Families.
- Communities.
- Churches.
- Nations.

Mission therefore announces both personal salvation and the coming reign of God.

Believers live as ambassadors of that Kingdom while awaiting its complete fulfilment.

2.4 Lessons from the Early Church

The book of Acts demonstrates how God's mission continued after Christ's ascension.

The early Church became a model for missionary ministry.

The course outline identifies **Pentecost, Paul's missionary journeys, and the growth of the early Church** as key expressions of biblical mission.

Several important principles emerge from their example.

Dependence Upon the Holy Spirit

Before beginning their ministry, the disciples waited for the promised Holy Spirit.

Pentecost reminds believers that mission depends upon God's power rather than human ability.

Every successful missionary movement throughout history has relied upon the empowering presence of the Holy Spirit.

Bold Proclamation

Despite persecution and opposition, the apostles boldly proclaimed Christ.

Their confidence rested not in themselves but in the risen Lord.

Modern missionaries likewise proclaim the Gospel with humility, courage, and faithfulness.

Prayer

Prayer shaped every stage of the Church's missionary work.

Believers prayed:

- Before sending missionaries.
- During persecution.
- For boldness.
- For healing.
- For guidance.

Mission advances through prayer as believers seek God's direction and power.

Church Planting

The apostles did more than win converts.

They established local churches where believers could worship, grow, and become disciple-makers.

Healthy churches became centres for further missionary expansion.

This pattern remains central to biblical mission today.

Leadership Development

Paul invested deeply in developing leaders such as Timothy, Titus, and many others.

Mission is sustainable only when mature local leaders are equipped to shepherd God's people.

Leadership multiplication ensures that the Gospel continues spreading long after missionaries move to new fields.

The Bible's Vision for All Nations

The course outline consistently emphasises God's concern for every nation.

Throughout Scripture, God repeatedly declares His desire that all peoples know Him.

This vision includes:

- Every tribe.

- Every language.
- Every ethnicity.
- Every culture.
- Every generation.

No people group lies outside God's love.

No culture is beyond His saving power.

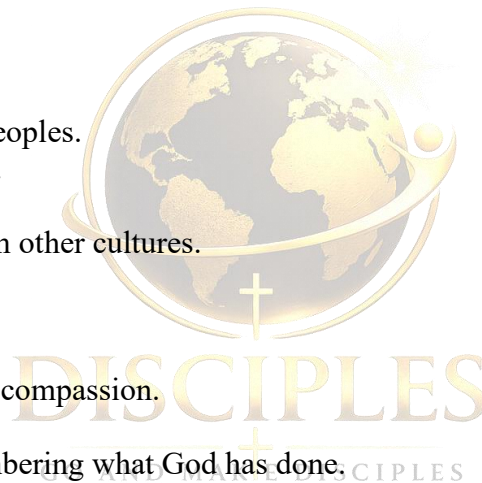
The Gospel transcends every human barrier while transforming people from within their own cultural contexts.

The Church's Responsibility Today

Because God's mission continues, the Church today inherits the same responsibility entrusted to the apostles.

Believers should:

- Pray for unreached peoples.
- Support missionaries.
- Share Christ locally.
- Welcome people from other cultures.
- Train future leaders.
- Plant churches.
- Disciple believers.
- Demonstrate Christ's compassion.



Mission is not simply remembering what God has done.

Mission is participating in what God continues to do.

Practical Application

Understanding the biblical theology of mission changes how believers read Scripture and live their faith.

Christians should:

- Read the Bible with God's global purpose in view.
- Develop compassion for those who have never heard the Gospel.
- Support missionary work through prayer and generosity.
- Look for opportunities to share Christ in everyday life.
- Appreciate the diversity of God's global Church.
- Seek to reflect God's heart for all nations.

Ministry Application

Church leaders should help believers understand that missions are rooted in the entire biblical narrative rather than being limited to a few New Testament passages.

Leaders should:

- Teach the missionary theme of Scripture.
- Encourage congregations to pray regularly for the nations.
- Integrate missions into discipleship and leadership training.
- Promote partnerships with missionaries and mission organisations.
- Raise future generations with a passion for God's global purpose.

When believers understand the Bible as one unified story of God's redemption, mission becomes a natural expression of faithful discipleship.

Reflection Questions

1. How does the story of Scripture reveal God's concern for all nations?
2. Why is the covenant with Abraham foundational to biblical mission?
3. How did Jesus fulfil the missionary promises of the Old Testament?
4. What missionary principles can be learned from the early Church?
5. How should understanding God's global purpose influence your personal ministry?



Classroom Discussion

Discuss the statement:

"The Bible is one continuous missionary story from Genesis to Revelation."

Using examples from both the Old and New Testaments, explain how God's redemptive purpose unfolds throughout Scripture.

Practical Assignment

Biblical Theology of Mission Research Project

Write a **2,500-word** research paper entitled:

"God's Mission from Genesis to Revelation."

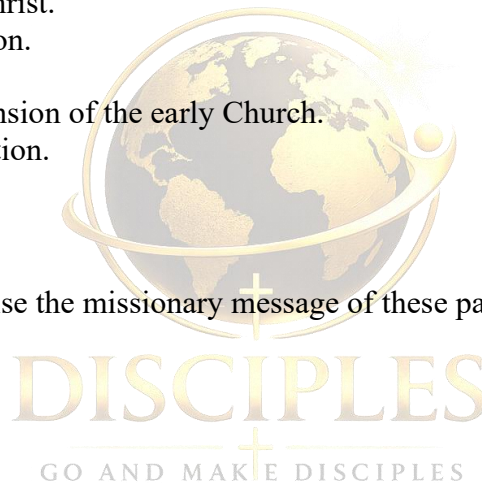
Your paper should include:

- The missionary significance of Creation.
- The impact of the Fall.
- Abraham's covenant.
- Israel's calling.
- The ministry of the prophets.
- The incarnation of Christ.
- The Great Commission.
- Pentecost.
- The missionary expansion of the early Church.
- The vision of Revelation.

Scripture Study

Carefully study and summarise the missionary message of these passages:

- Genesis 1–3
- Genesis 12:1–3
- Psalm 67
- Isaiah 49:6
- Jonah
- Matthew 28:18–20
- Acts 1–2
- Acts 13
- Revelation 7:9–10



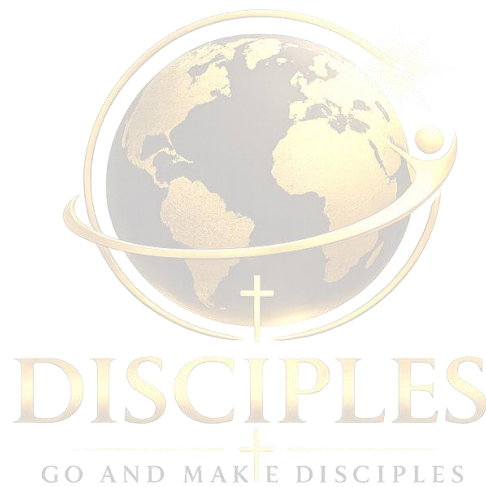
Explain how each contributes to a biblical theology of mission.

Memory Verses

- Genesis 12:3
- Isaiah 49:6
- Matthew 24:14
- Matthew 28:19–20
- Acts 1:8
- Revelation 7:9–10

Summary

The Bible presents one unified story of God's mission to redeem humanity through Jesus Christ. From Creation to the new creation, Scripture consistently reveals God's desire to gather worshippers from every tribe, language, people, and nation. The Old Testament lays the foundation for mission through God's covenant with Abraham, Israel's calling to be a light to the nations, and the prophetic vision of worldwide salvation. The New Testament fulfills these promises through the incarnation of Christ, the Great Commission, the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, and the missionary expansion of the early Church. The ministry of the apostles, especially Paul's missionary journeys, demonstrates that the Gospel is for all people and that healthy churches should be established in every culture. This biblical theology of mission challenges believers to see the entire Bible through the lens of God's redemptive purpose and to participate faithfully in His ongoing work of making disciples among all nations. As the Church joins God's mission, it anticipates the glorious day when people from every nation will worship the Lamb together before His throne.



MODULE 3

The Great Commission

Key Scriptures

"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." **Matthew 28:19–20**

"As the Father has sent Me, I am sending you." **John 20:21**

Learning Objectives

By the end of this module, students should be able to:

- Explain the biblical meaning of the Great Commission.
- Understand the authority upon which the Great Commission is based.
- Examine each command given by Jesus.
- Distinguish between making converts and making disciples.
- Recognise the global scope of Christ's commission.
- Appreciate the role of the Holy Spirit in fulfilling the Commission.
- Apply the Great Commission in local and cross-cultural ministry.

Introduction



The Great Commission is the Church's marching orders. It is Christ's final command before His ascension and remains the primary mission of the Church until He returns. Every ministry, whether local or international, should ultimately contribute to the fulfilment of this divine commission.

The course outline summarises the Great Commission by highlighting Jesus' commands to **go, make disciples, baptise, teach, and obey His commands**, while emphasising that it is **Christ-centred, Spirit-empowered, global, disciple-making, and ongoing until Christ returns**.

The Great Commission is not merely a call to increase church attendance or gain converts. It is a command to make mature disciples who know Christ, obey His Word, and in turn make disciples of others.

The Commission belongs to every believer. Whether serving in one's neighbourhood or among unreached people groups, every Christian participates in Christ's mission.

3.1 The Context of the Great Commission

The Great Commission was given after Jesus' resurrection.

For forty days, Jesus appeared to His disciples, confirming His victory over sin and death and preparing them for their future ministry.

Before ascending into heaven, He entrusted them with the responsibility of continuing His work.

This commission appears in several passages:

- Matthew 28:18–20
- Mark 16:15–18
- Luke 24:46–49
- John 20:21
- Acts 1:8

Each account highlights different aspects of Christ's final instructions, together presenting a complete picture of the Church's mission.

3.2 The Authority Behind the Commission

Before giving His command, Jesus declared:

"All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me."

This statement establishes the foundation of Christian mission.

The Church does not engage in mission based on human authority, organisational power, or personal ambition.

Mission is carried out under the supreme authority of the risen Christ.

His authority extends over:

- Heaven.
- Earth.
- Nations.
- Governments.
- Cultures.
- Spiritual powers.
- History itself.

Because Christ possesses all authority, believers can serve with confidence, knowing that their mission rests upon His sovereign rule.

3.3 "Go"

The first command is:

"Go therefore..."

The course outline identifies **"Go"** as the first responsibility in the Great Commission.

Going involves intentional movement toward people who need the Gospel.

For some believers, this means serving overseas.

For others, it means reaching neighbours, colleagues, classmates, or immigrant communities nearby.

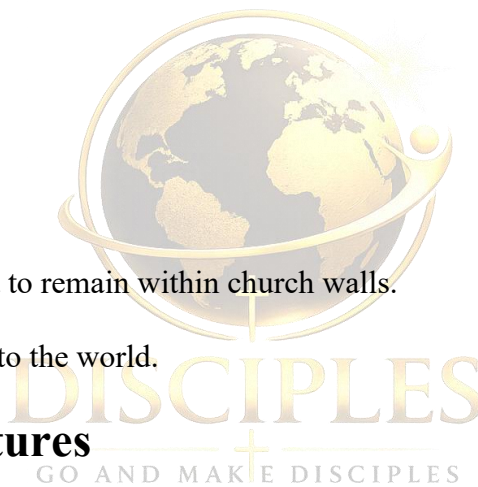
Going requires:

- Initiative.
- Courage.
- Obedience.
- Compassion.
- Sacrifice.

The Gospel is never intended to remain within church walls.

Christ sends His followers into the world.

Going Across Cultures



Mission frequently requires crossing barriers.

These may include:

- Language.
- Ethnicity.
- Religion.
- Social class.
- Economic status.
- Traditions.
- Worldviews.

Jesus consistently crossed such barriers during His earthly ministry.

Likewise, missionaries today seek to communicate Christ faithfully while respecting the people they serve.

3.4 "Make Disciples"

The central command in the Great Commission is not merely "go."

It is:

"Make disciples."

Evangelism introduces people to Christ.

Discipleship helps them become mature followers of Christ.

A disciple is someone who:

- Trusts Jesus.
- Learns His Word.
- Obeys His commands.
- Grows spiritually.
- Serves others.
- Makes other disciples.

Healthy churches focus on lifelong discipleship rather than short-term decisions.

Converts Versus Disciples

A convert may profess faith.

A disciple demonstrates transformed living.

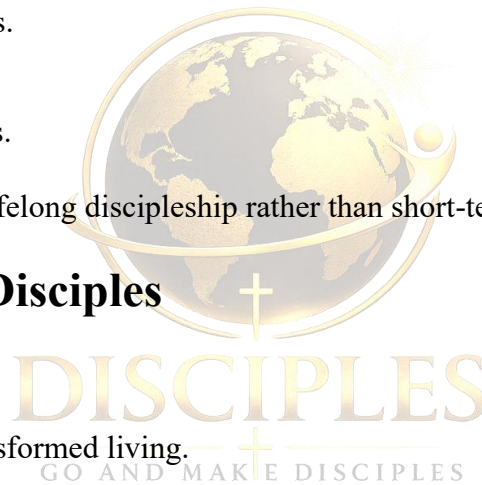
Disciples continue growing in:

- Faith.
- Character.
- Holiness.
- Prayer.
- Love.
- Service.
- Biblical understanding.

The goal of mission is not simply numerical growth but spiritual maturity.

3.5 "Of All Nations"

Jesus specifically commanded His followers to make disciples **of all nations**.



The course outline highlights the **global** nature of the Great Commission.

The Greek word *ethnē* refers to peoples or ethnic groups rather than modern political states.

This reminds believers that God's concern extends to every culture and language.

Mission therefore includes:

- Major cities.
- Remote villages.
- Indigenous communities.
- Refugee populations.
- University campuses.
- Digital communities.

No people group should be overlooked.

The Church must continually ask:

"Who has not yet heard the Gospel?"

3.6 "Baptising Them"

Jesus instructed His disciples to baptise new believers:

"In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."

Baptism publicly identifies believers with Christ.

It symbolises:

- Repentance.
- New life.
- Union with Christ.
- Membership within the body of Christ.

Baptism does not save a person.

Rather, it publicly declares the salvation already received through faith in Jesus Christ.

Throughout the New Testament, baptism follows genuine repentance and faith.

The Great Commission

Key Scriptures

"Teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." **Matthew 28:20**

"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be My witnesses..." **Acts 1:8**

3.7 "Teaching Them to Obey"

The final command in the Great Commission is:

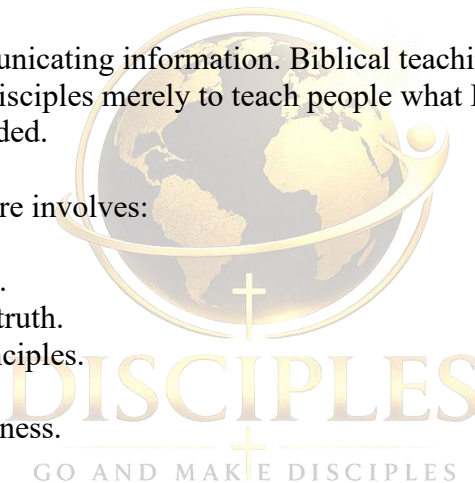
"Teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you."

The course outline identifies **teaching** and **obedience to Christ's commands** as essential elements of the Great Commission.

Teaching is more than communicating information. Biblical teaching aims at transformation. Jesus did not command His disciples merely to teach people what He said but to teach them **to obey** everything He commanded.

Christian discipleship therefore involves:

- Knowing God's Word.
- Understanding God's truth.
- Applying biblical principles.
- Living in obedience.
- Growing in Christlikeness.



The goal is not simply educated Christians but obedient followers of Jesus.

What Should New Believers Be Taught?

Healthy discipleship includes teaching believers:

- The character and nature of God.
- The Gospel of Jesus Christ.
- Prayer.
- Worship.
- Bible study.
- Fellowship.
- Christian ethics.
- Stewardship.
- Spiritual gifts.
- Evangelism.
- Servant leadership.

- Holy living.

Teaching is a lifelong process. Spiritual maturity develops as believers continually grow in the knowledge and application of God's Word.

The Importance of Obedience

Knowledge without obedience produces spiritual immaturity.

Jesus declared:

"If you love Me, keep My commandments."

True disciples demonstrate their love for Christ through faithful obedience.

Obedience includes:

- Loving God.
- Loving others.
- Forgiving those who offend us.
- Living holy lives.
- Sharing the Gospel.
- Serving faithfully.
- Walking in humility.



The Great Commission calls believers to transformed living, not merely religious activity.

3.8 Christ's Promise: "I Am With You Always"

DISCIPLES
GO AND MAKE DISCIPLES

After giving His command, Jesus concluded with one of the greatest promises in Scripture:

"Surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

Mission is never carried out alone.

Christ Himself accompanies His people.

His presence provides:

- Courage during persecution.
- Wisdom in difficult situations.
- Strength in weakness.
- Comfort in loneliness.
- Guidance in uncertainty.

- Confidence in ministry.

Missionaries throughout history have testified that God's presence sustained them through hardship, opposition, illness, and sacrifice.

The promise of Christ's presence remains true for every believer engaged in His mission today.

3.9 Characteristics of the Great Commission

The course outline identifies five defining characteristics of the Great Commission: **Christ-centred, Spirit-empowered, global, disciple-making, and ongoing until Christ returns.**

1. Christ-Centred

The Great Commission begins and ends with Jesus.

He possesses all authority.

He gives the command.

He defines the message.

He promises His presence.

Mission is about making Christ known, not promoting personalities, denominations, or cultures.

Every faithful missionary ministry points people to Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour.

2. Spirit-Empowered

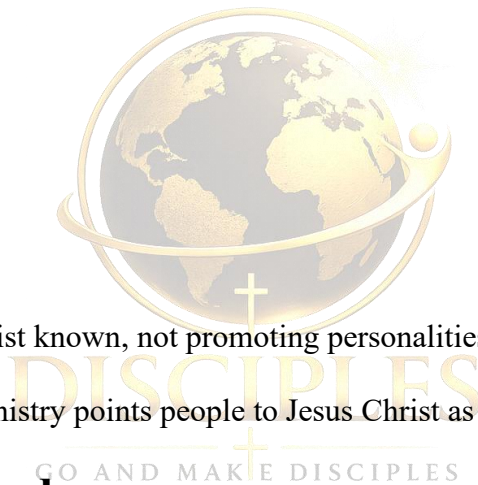
The Church cannot fulfil the Great Commission through human ability alone.

Jesus instructed His disciples to wait for the Holy Spirit before beginning their ministry.

The Holy Spirit:

- Empowers witness.
- Gives boldness.
- Opens hearts to the Gospel.
- Produces spiritual fruit.
- Guides missionary decisions.
- Builds the Church.

Effective mission depends upon God's power rather than human effort.



3. Global

Jesus commanded His followers to make disciples of **all nations**.

This means:

- Every ethnicity.
- Every language.
- Every culture.
- Every generation.
- Every people group.

No nation is excluded from God's redemptive purpose.

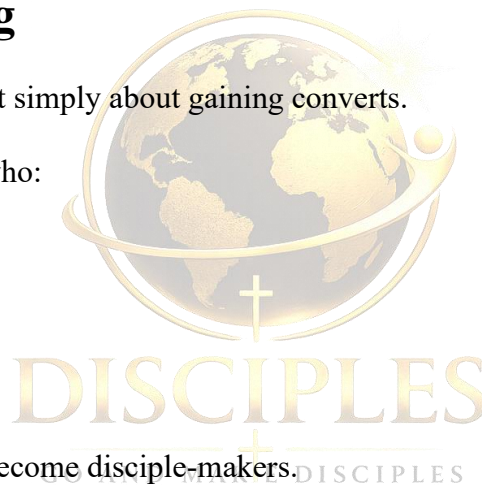
The Church must continually seek opportunities to reach those who have never heard the Gospel.

4. Disciple-Making

The Great Commission is not simply about gaining converts.

Its goal is mature disciples who:

- Love Christ.
- Obey Scripture.
- Serve faithfully.
- Grow spiritually.
- Make other disciples.



Healthy disciples naturally become disciple-makers.

This multiplication ensures the continued spread of the Gospel.

5. Ongoing Until Christ Returns

The Great Commission has never been withdrawn.

It remains the Church's mission until Jesus returns.

Every generation inherits this responsibility.

Until every nation has had the opportunity to hear the Gospel, the Church continues praying, sending, serving, and proclaiming Christ.

Common Misunderstandings About the Great Commission

Several misunderstandings can weaken the Church's missionary effectiveness.

"The Great Commission is only for missionaries."

False.

Jesus addressed all His disciples. Every believer has a role in God's mission.

"Mission only happens overseas."

False.

Mission begins where believers already live.

Cross-cultural ministry may occur in one's own city due to increasing cultural diversity.

"Evangelism is enough."

Incomplete.

The Great Commission calls believers to make disciples, not merely decisions.

Discipleship requires ongoing teaching, mentoring, and spiritual formation.

"Numbers alone measure success."

False.

Faithfulness to Christ is the primary measure of ministry.

Healthy discipleship values both spiritual maturity and numerical growth.

Practical Application

Every believer should prayerfully consider how they can participate in fulfilling the Great Commission.

Practical steps include:

- Sharing your faith with others.
- Mentoring new believers.

- Supporting missionary work through prayer and giving.
- Participating in local outreach programmes.
- Welcoming people from different cultures into your church and home.
- Continually growing in your own discipleship.

The Great Commission is fulfilled one obedient step at a time.

Ministry Application

Church leaders should intentionally build ministries that produce disciples rather than spectators.

Healthy churches should:

- Prioritise biblical teaching.
- Equip members to evangelise.
- Establish discipleship programmes.
- Train future leaders.
- Support local and global missions.
- Encourage every believer to discover and use their spiritual gifts in God's mission.

A church that embraces the Great Commission becomes a multiplying church, reproducing disciples, leaders, and congregations for the glory of God.

Reflection Questions

1. Why is Christ's authority essential to the Great Commission?
2. What is the difference between making converts and making disciples?
3. Why is obedience central to Christian discipleship?
4. How does Christ's promise of His presence encourage believers in mission?
5. In what practical ways can your local church fulfil the Great Commission?

Classroom Discussion

Discuss the statement:

"The Great Commission is not merely a command to go—it is a command to make disciples."

Using biblical examples, explain why discipleship is essential to fulfilling Christ's mission.

Practical Assignment

Great Commission Ministry Project

Prepare a **3,000-word ministry strategy** entitled:

"Implementing the Great Commission in My Community."

Your project should include:

- A biblical explanation of the Great Commission.
- The role of evangelism and discipleship.
- Practical outreach opportunities in your community.
- A strategy for mentoring new believers.
- Leadership development and church involvement.
- Methods for measuring spiritual growth rather than numerical success alone.

Scripture Study

Study the following passages:

- Matthew 28:18–20
- Mark 16:15–18
- Luke 24:46–49
- John 20:21
- Acts 1:8
- 2 Timothy 2:2



Explain how each passage contributes to the Church's understanding of the Great Commission.

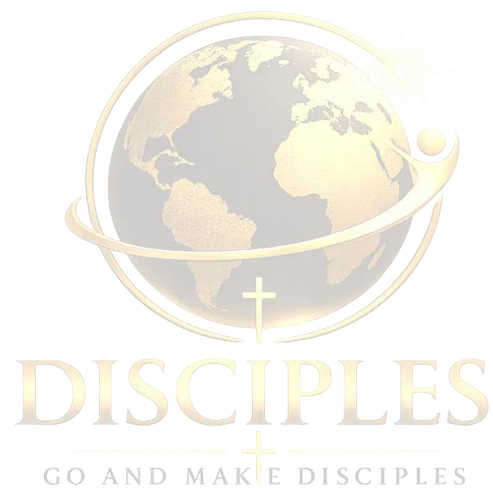
Memory Verses

- Matthew 28:18–20
- John 20:21
- Acts 1:8
- 2 Timothy 2:2
- Hebrews 13:20–21

Summary

The Great Commission is the Church's enduring mandate and the foundation of Christian mission. Given by the risen Christ, it is grounded in His universal authority and empowered by His abiding presence. Jesus commands His followers to go intentionally, make disciples of all nations, baptise believers, and teach them to obey everything He has commanded. The Commission is Christ-centred, Spirit-empowered, global in scope, focused on lifelong discipleship, and remains in effect until Christ returns. Every believer has a role in fulfilling this mission through prayer, evangelism, discipleship, giving, hospitality, and faithful service. The Church fulfils the Great Commission not

merely by increasing numbers but by developing mature disciples who themselves become disciple-makers. As believers obey Christ's command and rely on His presence, they participate in God's redemptive work among all peoples and anticipate the day when every nation will worship the Lamb.



MODULE 4

The Role of the Holy Spirit in Mission

Key Scriptures

"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon 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

"Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit," says the Lord Almighty. Zechariah 4:6

Learning Objectives

By the end of this module, students should be able to:

- Understand the indispensable role of the Holy Spirit in God's mission.
- Explain how the Holy Spirit calls and sends missionaries.
- Describe how the Holy Spirit empowers believers for effective witness.
- Recognise the Holy Spirit's guidance in missionary work.
- Appreciate the Spirit's role in producing spiritual fruit and building the Church.
- Apply biblical principles of dependence upon the Holy Spirit in cross-cultural ministry.

Introduction

No missionary movement can succeed apart from the work of the Holy Spirit. While strategies, education, financial resources, and organisational structures have their place, they can never replace the power and guidance of God's Spirit. From the beginning of the Church in the Book of Acts until today, every genuine missionary advance has been initiated, empowered, and sustained by the Holy Spirit.

The course outline teaches that **the Holy Spirit empowers mission by calling missionaries, empowering witness, giving boldness, opening hearts, guiding ministry, producing spiritual fruit, and building the Church.** It also highlights biblical examples including **Pentecost, Philip and the Ethiopian official, Peter and Cornelius, and Paul's missionary journeys.**

Jesus understood that His disciples were incapable of fulfilling the Great Commission through their own strength. Before sending them into the world, He instructed them to wait in Jerusalem until they were clothed with power from on high. This demonstrates a timeless principle: God's work must be accomplished by God's power.

Mission is therefore not merely human activity, it is a partnership between the Holy Spirit and obedient believers. The Spirit prepares hearts, opens doors, convicts sinners, equips the Church, and ensures that the Gospel reaches people from every nation.

4.1 The Holy Spirit: The Divine Missionary

The Holy Spirit is not simply an influence or an impersonal force; He is the third Person of the Trinity, fully God and actively involved in God's redemptive mission.

Throughout Scripture, the Holy Spirit is seen:

- Empowering God's servants.
- Speaking to His people.
- Revealing God's will.
- Convicting hearts.
- Transforming lives.
- Equipping the Church.
- Advancing the Kingdom of God.

The missionary work of the Church is, in reality, the missionary work of the Holy Spirit carried out through willing believers.

4.2 The Holy Spirit Calls Missionaries

Mission begins with God's call.

While churches recognise and commission missionaries, it is ultimately the Holy Spirit who calls individuals into ministry.

In Acts 13, while the church in Antioch was worshipping and fasting, the Holy Spirit said:

"Set apart for Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them."

This passage teaches several important principles:

- Mission originates with God.
- The Holy Spirit chooses His servants.
- Calling is confirmed within the local church.
- Prayer and fasting prepare believers to hear God's voice.

A genuine missionary calling is therefore both personal and affirmed by the body of Christ.

4.3 The Holy Spirit Empowers Witness

One of the Holy Spirit's primary ministries is empowering believers to proclaim Christ.

Jesus declared:

"You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be My witnesses."

The Greek word translated "**power**" is *dynamis*, from which the English word **dynamic** is derived. It refers to divine ability rather than human strength.

The Holy Spirit enables believers to:

- Proclaim the Gospel boldly.
- Overcome fear.
- Endure persecution.
- Demonstrate Christlike love.
- Speak with wisdom.
- Minister with compassion.
- Persevere through hardship.

Without the Holy Spirit, mission becomes human effort.

With the Holy Spirit, ordinary people accomplish extraordinary things for God's Kingdom.

4.4 The Holy Spirit Gives Boldness

Fear has always been one of the greatest obstacles to evangelism.

The disciples themselves struggled with fear after Jesus' crucifixion.

However, after Pentecost they boldly proclaimed Christ despite threats, imprisonment, and persecution.

Boldness does not mean arrogance.

Biblical boldness is:

- Confidence rooted in Christ.
- Faithfulness under pressure.
- Courage motivated by love.
- Dependence upon God's strength.

Missionaries often face rejection, opposition, and hostility. The Holy Spirit gives them courage to remain faithful.

4.5 The Holy Spirit Opens Hearts

No person is saved through human persuasion alone.

Only the Holy Spirit can convict people of sin and lead them to repentance.

Missionaries faithfully proclaim the Gospel, but God alone gives spiritual understanding.

A beautiful example is found in Acts 16, where Lydia listened to Paul's message.

Scripture says:

"The Lord opened her heart to respond to Paul's message."

This reminds believers that successful mission depends upon God's work in human hearts.

Missionaries sow and water.

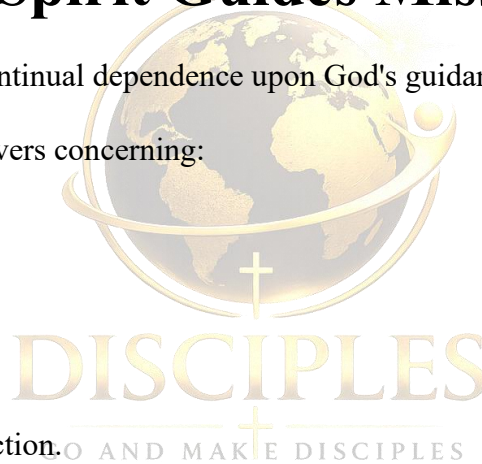
God gives the increase.

4.6 The Holy Spirit Guides Mission

Missionary work requires continual dependence upon God's guidance.

The Holy Spirit directs believers concerning:

- Where to serve.
- When to move.
- Whom to approach.
- What to say.
- When to wait.
- When to persevere.
- When to change direction.



The course outline highlights several examples of the Spirit's guidance.

Philip and the Ethiopian Official

The Holy Spirit instructed Philip to leave a successful ministry in Samaria and travel to a desert road.

There he encountered the Ethiopian official, explained the Scriptures, proclaimed Christ, and baptised him.

This encounter demonstrates that God often leads His servants to individuals who are spiritually prepared to receive the Gospel.

Peter and Cornelius

Peter initially hesitated to enter the home of a Gentile because of Jewish customs.

The Holy Spirit challenged his prejudice and revealed that the Gospel is for all people.

As Peter preached, the Holy Spirit fell upon Cornelius and his household, confirming that God's salvation extends to every nation.

This event transformed the early Church's understanding of God's global mission.

Paul's Missionary Journeys

Throughout Acts, Paul repeatedly experienced the Spirit's guidance.

At times the Holy Spirit opened doors.

At other times He closed them.

One notable example is Acts 16, where Paul was prevented from preaching in certain regions before receiving the vision of the man from Macedonia.

This teaches that God's guidance includes both open and closed doors.

Believers must remain sensitive to the leading of the Holy Spirit.

4.7 The Holy Spirit Produces Spiritual Fruit

Effective mission depends not only upon spiritual gifts but also upon spiritual character.

The Holy Spirit produces the fruit described in Galatians 5:

- Love.
- Joy.
- Peace.
- Patience.
- Kindness.
- Goodness.
- Faithfulness.
- Gentleness.
- Self-control.

Missionaries who possess remarkable gifts but lack godly character damage their witness.

People are often drawn to Christ because they first observe His character reflected in His followers.

The fruit of the Spirit strengthens relationships, promotes unity, and enables believers to minister effectively across cultural differences.

4.8 The Holy Spirit Builds the Church

The ultimate goal of mission is not simply evangelistic decisions but healthy, mature churches.

The Holy Spirit builds the Church by:

- Bringing people to faith.
- Distributing spiritual gifts.
- Raising leaders.
- Producing unity.
- Strengthening believers.
- Guiding church growth.

Throughout the Book of Acts, church growth is consistently described as the work of God.

Missionaries plant and water.

The Holy Spirit gives life and growth.

4.9 Dependence Upon the Holy Spirit in Cross-Cultural Ministry

Cross-cultural ministry presents unique challenges:

- Language barriers.
- Cultural misunderstandings.
- Religious opposition.
- Loneliness.
- Spiritual warfare.
- Physical hardship.
- Emotional exhaustion.

Human wisdom alone cannot overcome these challenges.

Missionaries must cultivate daily dependence upon the Holy Spirit through:

- Prayer.
- Bible study.
- Worship.
- Obedience.
- Humility.
- Sensitivity to God's leading.

The Holy Spirit enables believers to communicate the unchanging Gospel in culturally appropriate ways while remaining faithful to Scripture.

Practical Application

Every believer should intentionally cultivate a deeper relationship with the Holy Spirit.

Practical steps include:

- Begin each day in prayer, seeking the Spirit's guidance.
- Depend on the Holy Spirit rather than personal ability.
- Pray for boldness when sharing the Gospel.
- Listen attentively for God's direction.
- Walk in obedience when the Spirit leads.
- Develop Christlike character through daily surrender.
- Pray regularly for missionaries serving around the world.

Ministry Application

Church leaders should encourage believers to rely upon the Holy Spirit in every aspect of ministry.

Healthy churches should:

- Prioritise prayer before planning.
- Encourage sensitivity to the Holy Spirit's leading.
- Discern and affirm missionary callings.
- Pray for boldness and wisdom in evangelism.
- Equip believers to use their spiritual gifts.
- Emphasise both spiritual gifts and spiritual fruit.
- Support missionaries through prayer, encouragement, and pastoral care.

A Spirit-filled church is a missionary church, empowered to proclaim Christ with courage, compassion, and faithfulness.

Reflection Questions

1. Why is the Holy Spirit essential to Christian mission?
2. How does the Holy Spirit call and prepare missionaries?
3. What lessons can be learned from Philip, Peter, and Paul regarding the Spirit's guidance?
4. Why is spiritual fruit as important as spiritual gifts in missionary work?
5. How can believers become more sensitive to the Holy Spirit's leading in ministry?

Classroom Discussion

Discuss the statement:

"The success of Christian mission depends more upon the power of the Holy Spirit than upon human ability."

Using examples from the Book of Acts, explain how the Holy Spirit directed, empowered, and sustained the early Church in fulfilling God's mission.

Practical Assignment

Ministry Reflection Paper

Write a **3,000-word paper** entitled:

"The Ministry of the Holy Spirit in Christian Mission."

Your paper should include:

- The Holy Spirit's role in calling missionaries.
- Empowering believers for witness.
- Giving boldness in evangelism.
- Guiding missionary work.
- Producing spiritual fruit.
- Building healthy churches.
- Practical ways believers can depend upon the Holy Spirit today.

Scripture Study

Study and summarise the following passages:

- John 14:16–17
- John 16:7–15
- Acts 1:8
- Acts 2
- Acts 8:26–40
- Acts 10
- Acts 13:1–4
- Acts 16:6–10
- Galatians 5:22–23

Explain how each passage contributes to the biblical understanding of the Holy Spirit's role in mission.

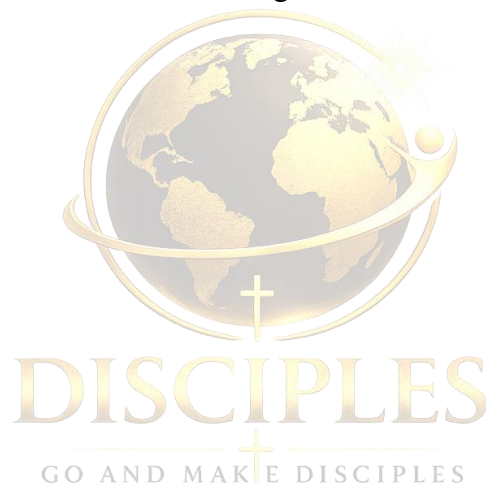
Memory Verses

- Acts 1:8
- Zechariah 4:6

- John 14:26
- Acts 13:2
- Galatians 5:22–23

Summary

The Holy Spirit is the divine agent of Christian mission. Every missionary movement begins with His initiative, is sustained by His power, and succeeds through His guidance. The Holy Spirit calls missionaries, empowers believers to witness boldly, opens hearts to the Gospel, directs ministry, produces Christlike character, and builds healthy churches. The examples of Pentecost, Philip and the Ethiopian official, Peter and Cornelius, and Paul's missionary journeys demonstrate that effective mission depends upon continual sensitivity to the Spirit's leading. While careful planning and faithful preparation are valuable, they can never replace dependence upon God's Spirit. As believers walk in obedience, cultivate the fruit of the Spirit, and rely on His power, they become effective witnesses of Jesus Christ among people of every culture and nation. The Holy Spirit remains the Church's greatest resource for fulfilling the Great Commission until Christ returns.



MODULE 5

History of Christian Missions

Key Scriptures

"You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon 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

"Remember the days of old; consider the generations long past." Deuteronomy 32:7

Learning Objectives

By the end of this module, students should be able to:

- Understand the historical development of Christian missions.
- Describe the missionary expansion of the early Church.
- Examine the growth of missions during the Medieval period.
- Explain the significance of the Protestant missionary movement.
- Appreciate the growth of modern global missions.
- Learn valuable lessons from the lives and ministries of faithful missionaries.
- Apply historical insights to contemporary missionary work.

Introduction

The history of Christian missions is the story of God's faithfulness through ordinary men and women who responded to His extraordinary call. Since the day of Pentecost, believers have crossed geographical, linguistic, cultural, and political boundaries to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

The course outline traces this history through **the Early Church, Medieval Missions, Protestant Missions, and Modern Missions**, helping students appreciate God's faithfulness across generations.

Studying missionary history is far more than learning dates and names. It reveals how God has preserved His Church, expanded His Kingdom, overcome persecution, and fulfilled His promise that the Gospel would reach the nations.

Missionary history also reminds believers that every generation inherits the responsibility of continuing Christ's mission until He returns.

5.1 The Early Church

The history of Christian missions began immediately after the resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ.

Following Pentecost, the Holy Spirit empowered the apostles to proclaim the Gospel with boldness.

The course outline states:

"The apostles carried the gospel throughout the Roman world."

Although the early Church faced intense persecution, the Gospel spread rapidly throughout the Roman Empire.

Pentecost: The Birth of the Missionary Church

Pentecost marked the beginning of organised Christian mission.

People from many nations heard the Gospel proclaimed in their own languages.

This miraculous event demonstrated that:

- The Gospel is for all people.
- The Holy Spirit empowers mission.
- The Church exists to proclaim Christ to the nations.

From this moment onward, Christianity became a missionary movement.

The Apostolic Mission

The apostles faithfully obeyed Christ's command to make disciples of all nations.

Among the most influential were:

Peter

Peter preached boldly in Jerusalem and later ministered to Gentiles, including Cornelius, demonstrating that the Gospel is for every nation.

Paul

Paul became Christianity's greatest missionary.

His three missionary journeys established churches across Asia Minor and Europe.

His ministry demonstrated:

- Church planting.
- Leadership development.
- Discipleship.
- Cross-cultural evangelism.
- Perseverance under persecution.

Paul's letters continue to strengthen the Church today.

Other Apostles

Church tradition records that other apostles travelled widely, taking the Gospel to various regions beyond the Roman Empire.

Although historical details vary, their willingness to obey Christ's command illustrates the missionary passion of the early Church.

Characteristics of Early Christian Mission

The early Church demonstrated several qualities that remain essential today:

- Dependence upon the Holy Spirit.
- Bold preaching.
- Prayer.
- Church planting.
- Discipleship.
- Compassion.
- Perseverance during persecution.
- Commitment to biblical truth.

These characteristics contributed to the remarkable growth of Christianity despite severe opposition.

5.2 Medieval Missions

The course outline states:

"Missionaries spread Christianity across Europe and beyond."

The Medieval period, extending roughly from the fifth to the fifteenth century, witnessed both challenges and opportunities for Christian mission.

During this era, missionaries travelled to regions where Christianity had not yet been established.

They introduced the Gospel while also contributing to education, literacy, agriculture, and community development.

Expansion Across Europe

Missionaries preached among various tribes and kingdoms throughout Europe.

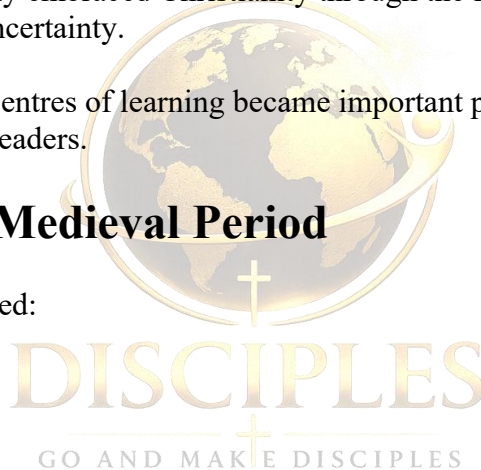
Many people groups gradually embraced Christianity through the faithful witness of believers who endured hardship and uncertainty.

Churches, monasteries, and centres of learning became important places for preserving biblical teaching and training future leaders.

Challenges of the Medieval Period

Missionaries often encountered:

- Dangerous travel.
- Political instability.
- Language barriers.
- Cultural resistance.
- Limited educational resources.



Despite these obstacles, the Gospel continued to spread.

Lessons from Medieval Missions

The Medieval period teaches believers that:

- Mission requires perseverance.
- Long-term commitment often produces lasting fruit.
- Christian education strengthens communities.
- Faithfulness is more important than immediate results.

5.3 Protestant Missions

The course outline highlights:

"The eighteenth and nineteenth centuries saw renewed missionary movements."

The Protestant missionary movement is often called the beginning of the modern missionary era.

Following the Protestant Reformation, renewed emphasis on Scripture inspired believers to carry the Gospel beyond Europe.

Churches increasingly recognised that Christ's command applied to every generation.

Mission societies were established to support evangelism, Bible translation, education, healthcare, and church planting.

The Rise of Missionary Societies

Christians organised themselves to send missionaries throughout the world.

These societies helped by:

- Training missionaries.
- Raising financial support.
- Publishing Bibles.
- Translating Scripture.
- Establishing schools.
- Providing medical care.



The partnership between churches and mission organisations greatly accelerated global evangelism.

Bible Translation

One of the greatest achievements of Protestant missions was translating the Bible into local languages.

People could now read God's Word in their own language.

Bible translation remains one of the Church's most significant missionary ministries today.

Holistic Ministry

Many Protestant missionaries recognised that the Gospel addresses both spiritual and physical needs.

Their ministries often included:

- Education.
- Literacy programmes.
- Medical care.
- Agricultural training.
- Community development.

These acts of compassion demonstrated Christ's love while supporting faithful Gospel proclamation.

5.4 Modern Missions

The course outline explains:

"Global mission now involves believers from every continent, with growing leadership from Africa, Asia, and Latin America."

One of the most significant developments in modern missions is the global nature of Christianity.

Mission is no longer carried primarily by one region of the world.

Today, believers from many nations serve as missionaries both within their own countries and across international borders.

This reflects the fulfilment of God's desire to gather worshippers from every tribe, language, people, and nation.

Global Partnership

Modern mission increasingly involves cooperation between churches from different cultures.

Mission partnerships now include:

- Prayer support.
- Leadership development.
- Theological education.
- Humanitarian assistance.
- Church planting.
- Digital evangelism.

Believers work together while respecting cultural diversity and maintaining biblical unity.

The Digital Age

Technology has transformed missionary communication.

Missionaries now utilise:

- Online Bible studies.
- Social media.
- Livestream worship.
- Digital discipleship.
- Podcasts.
- Online theological education.

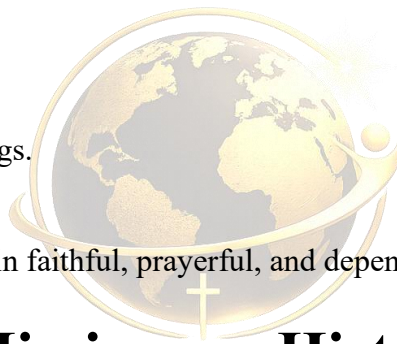
These tools create opportunities to reach people who may never enter a church building.

Continuing Challenges

Despite tremendous progress, significant challenges remain.

Missionaries continue to encounter:

- Persecution.
- Religious opposition.
- Political restrictions.
- Poverty.
- Language differences.
- Cultural misunderstandings.
- Spiritual warfare.



The Church must therefore remain faithful, prayerful, and dependent upon the Holy Spirit.

Lessons from Missionary History

Studying history provides valuable principles for contemporary ministry.

Missionary history teaches that:

- God remains faithful throughout every generation.
- The Holy Spirit empowers ordinary believers.
- Prayer sustains missionary movements.
- Churches are central to God's mission.
- Faithfulness often requires sacrifice.
- Cultural humility strengthens Gospel witness.
- Discipleship produces lasting fruit.
- God's mission continues despite persecution.

History reminds believers that they are part of an ongoing story that began with Christ and continues until His return.

Practical Application

Every believer can learn from those who faithfully served before us.

Practical applications include:

- Read missionary biographies regularly.
- Pray for missionaries serving around the world.
- Support Bible translation projects.
- Learn from both historical successes and failures.
- Develop perseverance in ministry.
- View yourself as part of God's continuing missionary story.

Ministry Application

Church leaders should intentionally teach missionary history as part of discipleship.

Healthy churches should:

- Celebrate missionary testimonies.
- Introduce members to historical missionary movements.
- Encourage prayer for unreached peoples.
- Support missionaries financially.
- Inspire young believers to consider missionary service.
- Emphasise God's faithfulness throughout history.

Understanding the past strengthens the Church's vision for the future.

Reflection Questions

1. Why is the Book of Acts foundational for Christian mission?
2. What characteristics made the early Church effective in spreading the Gospel?
3. What lessons can modern believers learn from Medieval missions?
4. How did the Protestant missionary movement reshape global Christianity?
5. Why is global partnership important in twenty-first-century mission?

Classroom Discussion

Discuss the statement:

"Missionary history is the story of God's faithfulness working through ordinary people."

Using examples from the early Church, the Medieval period, Protestant missions, and modern missions, explain how God has continued to fulfil His missionary purpose throughout history.

Practical Assignment

Historical Mission Research Project

Write a **3,000-word research paper** entitled:

"God's Faithfulness Throughout the History of Christian Missions."

Your paper should include:

- The missionary expansion of the early Church.
- Missions during the Medieval period.
- The Protestant missionary movement.
- Modern global missions.
- Lessons contemporary churches can learn from missionary history.

Scripture Study

Study and summarise the missionary significance of:

- Matthew 28:18–20
- Acts 1–2
- Acts 13–20
- Romans 10:13–15
- Revelation 7:9–10

Explain how these passages relate to the historical expansion of the Gospel throughout the world.

Memory Verses

- Matthew 28:19–20
- Acts 1:8
- Romans 10:14–15
- Revelation 7:9–10



Summary

The history of Christian missions demonstrates God's unwavering faithfulness in fulfilling His redemptive purpose among the nations. Beginning with the apostles and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, the Gospel spread rapidly throughout the Roman world despite persecution. During the Medieval period, missionaries carried Christianity across Europe and beyond, often enduring hardship with remarkable perseverance. The Protestant missionary movement of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries renewed the Church's commitment to global evangelism through Bible translation, education, healthcare, and organised missionary societies. In the modern era, Christian mission has become increasingly global, with believers from Africa, Asia, Latin America, Europe, and North America partnering together to proclaim Christ. Advances in technology have created new opportunities for digital evangelism while also presenting fresh

challenges. Throughout every period of history, God has remained faithful, using ordinary men and women empowered by the Holy Spirit to advance His Kingdom. The history of missions encourages today's Church to continue proclaiming the Gospel with courage, humility, perseverance, and unwavering confidence that God's mission will ultimately succeed.

