

Module 3 Key Ideas and Objectives

Key Ideas

1. Throughout history, God inexorably advances his Kingdom by empowering apostles to bring the Gospel to new areas and peoples.
2. The essential task of the Church in God's plan is to spread knowledge of Him and His Kingdom (rule) to all peoples in partnership with God's Spirit. Sometimes this happens voluntarily and sometimes involuntarily.
3. God uses two structures to accomplish the task: communities that focus on the discipleship of believers and communities that focus on advancing the gospel into unreached people groups.
4. The mission task is to extend the Biblical faith and heart obedience to Christ, not a particular cultural expression of the Gospel. This task is aided by training in global history and anthropology.
5. God prepares special "bridges" such as bicultural individuals, "men of peace," and redemptive analogies in order to aid the spread of the Gospel from one culturally distinct people group into another.
6. Jesus left His Holy Spirit, giving Spiritual gifts to His believers and empowering them for the expected Spiritual warfare.
6. Satan influences cultures with perversions of truth. Thus, the spread of the Gospel always encounters some resistance, and new believing communities face suffering and persecution.
7. Within cultures, the Gospel spreads primarily through established social structures and relational networks.
8. To effectively transform their culture, disciples of Jesus must both remain active in their non-believing communities and be committed to studying the Word together.
9. To encourage the spread of the faith in a culture and its authentic expression, communities of believers in a culture need Scripture in their vernacular language from which they develop their own theology, religious forms, leadership training methods, and patterns of outreach.
10. The resilience of a gospel movement in a culture, especially in the face of opposition and suffering, depends largely on having Scripture in the vernacular language of that culture.
11. New forms, or ways of expressing faith in Christ, will break out when the gospel enters new cultural contexts. Believers in other cultures often find these forms strange and unacceptable.
12. The new patterns of worship and religious forms that develop when the gospel is viewed through a new culture are crucial for the new church to evangelize, grow, and impact their society.
13. When Christianity becomes institutionalized, particularly in combination with temporal powers, diversity can be seen as a threat and leaders may push for uniformity and conformity, or even persecute non-conforming believers.
14. When the Christian faith becomes highly identified with one cultural sphere, it will be greatly hampered from spreading into oppositional cultural spheres. (e.g., between Ancient Rome & Persia, between the European West and the Islamic Middle East, between Han Chinese and Chinese ethnic minorities, etc.)

15. The Holy Spirit often works in unexpected ways to convince people of sin, righteousness, and judgment, whether in renewal movements or in the mission movements that often follow.
16. Renewal/revival movements, in areas where the church is established already, are almost always initiated or accompanied by new religious forms.
17. Jesus Christ has impacted global history to an unacknowledged extent; virtually everything that is happening today is either different because of Him or understood differently through His eyes.
18. By studying how God has worked in the past through His sovereignty and direct action, it is possible to discern more clearly how He is working today.

Content Objectives

By the end of Module 3, you should be able to:

1. Describe and assess the contributions of the monastic movement to the survival and spread of Christianity, and compare its function to the Church's in accomplishing God's purposes on earth.
2. Articulate the role Celtic Christianity played in the spread of the Gospel, and explain the main obstacles the Celts had to overcome in order to accomplish this task.
3. Identify significant doctrinal disputes within Christianity and appraise what effect this had on the unity of the Body of Christ and the spread of the Gospel.
4. Discuss and defend the need for adequate cultural understanding in communicating the Gospel cross-culturally, and provide historical examples of misunderstanding due to the lack thereof.
5. Illustrate how God used the Barbarian invasions and later the Viking invasions to further his purposes. Explain what effects the Vikings had upon Europe and what effects Europe had on the Vikings.
6. Explain and evaluate the spread of Nestorian Christianity and its impact on the regions that it encompassed.
7. Articulate the core beliefs, practices and worldview of Islam and the Qur'an.
8. Reconstruct the spread and development of Islam as it overcame the Christian churches in its midst, and communicate the Western church's perspective on the rise of Islam.
9. Identify the main personages along with the motivations and results of the Crusades while assessing how it diverged from and/or maintained biblical faithfulness.
10. Discuss the life of the Mongol Empire, characterize its rise to power, expansion, and demise, and illustrate its interaction with various world religions.
11. Describe the causes and impact of the European Renaissance.
12. Discuss the influence and contribution the late medieval and Renaissance period had upon the Reformation.
13. Formulate the political, religious, and social implications of the Reformation, along with the chief individuals who initiated and contributed to it.
14. Identify the causes and consequences of the age of discovery; assess the advance of God's Kingdom into the New World.

15. Provide the reasons for the outcomes of the counter-reformation (Catholic) as well as the “radical Reformation” (Anabaptists).
16. Articulate the political, cultural, economic, and religious changes transforming Europe during the 17th Century.
17. Show how the continued rise of empiricism, science and technology during the Renaissance affected philosophy, theology, and religion.
18. Contrast Platonic dualism with humanism while outlining their contradiction of biblical teaching.
19. Trace the shift from theism to deism to naturalism, establishing how they differ.
20. Describe the contributions of the Pietists and Puritans to missions.
21. Discuss and appraise the contributions of the Enlightenment on politics and religion and critique the Church’s involvement and response to it.
22. Assess the impact of the Evangelical Awakening on subsequent political and religious events and demonstrate what part it played in a much larger phenomenon.