

Executive Certificate in Cross-Cultural Ministry:
Strategies for Cross-Cultural Change Agents
CCM 591 – Contextualized Communication of the Cross

Instructor: Mark Naylor
Fall 2010 – Spring 2011 – 3 Credit hours

Course Description

Fellowship International personnel will explore and develop contextualized ways of communicating the significance of the cross within their context of calling. Through interaction with other cross-cultural workers and critical scholarship, as well as exposure to examples of contextualization developed by others in intercultural ministry, the participants will work through a process that will enable them to articulate, evaluate and hone their presentations of the atonement. The aim is to ensure relevance, resonance and impact of the gospel message for the people with whom the participants work. Participants will be expected to articulate, through written correspondence, their evaluation of a variety of presentations according to contextual validity, biblical integrity and transformational impact. In addition, they will do research in the area of contextual exegesis resulting in a practical and contextualized presentation of the significance of the cross. Graduate credit for this course is offered by ACTS Seminaries (Trinity Western University) in partnership with Fellowship International through the ACTS Centre for Ministry Excellence.

Course Objectives

Participants will demonstrate their understanding of the principles of contextualization through the development of a biblically valid and culturally appropriate presentation of the significance of the cross. They will provide constructive critique of each other's attempts at contextualization with the goal of developing healthy and encouraging support for each other in the common goal of working towards gospel impact.

Specifically, this course intends to lead each participant toward mastery of cross-cultural contextualization as seen through four different, though complementary, domains. This course will lead the participant...

Knowledge ...to be able to understand and speak knowledgeably about strategizing for cross-cultural communication of the atonement within their specific ministry context, demonstrating an awareness of metaphors and images of the cross that are contextually viable as well as biblically, theologically and missiologically legitimate.

Research ... to become conversant with influential scholarship and perspectives on the contextualization of the significance of the cross, and be able to apply key issues and theories constructively to their setting. They will develop a stronger capacity to think critically and analytically about contextualization within their ministry context.

Skills ... to develop their own culturally sensitive expression of the atonement that reflects genuine engagement of their context through the application of emerging skills that apply theory to

practice including listening skills, self-critique, problem solving, and cultural sensitivity. They will develop an appreciation for the integration of skills, disciplinary concepts, and the development of a contextualized gospel message.

Character ... in the development of those characteristics of personal mastery that will enable them to focus creatively and imaginatively on their context of calling while deepening their commitment to biblical truth. They will form personal conclusions and convictions concerning the value and practice of cross-cultural contextualization.

Textbooks and Resources (* signifies availability as download from “course materials” + indicates books that the participant will need to purchase.)

Contextualization Theory

* Covell, R. Buddhism and the Gospel Among the Peoples of China in *International Journal Of Frontier Missions*, Vol10:3 July 1993, 129-138.

* Dye, TW. The Eight Conditions of Scripture Engagement: Social and Cultural Factors Necessary for Vernacular Bible Translation to Achieve Maximum Effect in *International Journal Of Frontier Missions*, Vol 26:2 Summer. 2009, 89-98.

Harries, *Biblical Hermeneutics in Relation to Conventions of Language Use in Africa: (Pragmatics applied to interpretation in cross-cultural context)*. See Website:
<http://www.jim-mission.org.uk/articles/biblical-hermeneutics.html>

* Hesselgrave, D. Contextualization that is Authentic and Relevant in *International Journal Of Frontier Missions*, Vol 12:3 Jul.-Sep. 1995, 115-119.

* Hiebert, Paul G. Conversion and Worldview Transformation in *International Journal Of Frontier Missions*, Vol 14:2 Apr.-June 1997, 83-86.

+ Kraft, Charles H. *Communication Theory for Christian Witness* (Rev. Ed.). Maryknoll: Orbis 1999.

* Moreau, AS. The Human Universals of Culture: Implications for Contextualization in *International Journal Of Frontier Missions*, Vol 12:3 Jul.-Sep. 1995, 121-125.

Contextualized Communication of the Cross and Atonement metaphors

+ *Proclaiming the Scandal of the Cross: Contemporary Images of the Atonement*. Mark Baker (Ed.) Grand Rapids: Baker. 2006. [189 pp]

+ Green, JB & Baker, MD. *Recovering the Scandal of the Cross: Atonement in the New Testament and Contemporary Contexts*. Downers Grove: IVP 2000. [221 pp]

* Greer, B. Toward More Meaningful Interaction: Rethinking How We Articulate the Gospel in *International Journal Of Frontier Missions*, Vol. 26:1, Spring 2009, 16-22.

* Howell, AB. Through the Kaleidoscope: Animism, Contextualization and the Atonement in *International Journal Of Frontier Missions*, 26:3 Fall 2009, 135-142.

+ McKnight, S. *A Community Called Atonement*. Nashville: Abingdon Press 2007. [150]

* Muller, Roland. *Honor – Shame*. [109 pp]

Naylor, M. *Making the Gospel Understandable*. Unpublished, 2010. See website:
<http://impact.nbseminary.com/archives/965>

_____ *The significance of metaphor in communicating the Cross of Christ*. Unpublished, 2010.
See website: <http://impact.nbseminary.com/archives/999>

Ortlund, Dane. Review of McKnight's *A Community Called Atonement*. See website:
<http://dogmadoxa.blogspot.com/2008/01/review-community-called-atonement.html>

* Steinhaus, SP. The Spirit-first Approach to Muslim Evangelism in *International Journal Of Frontier Missions*, Vol. 17:4, Winter 2000, 23-30.

Website

This course will utilize the TWU MyCourse system (<https://courses.mytwu.ca/my/>) which require the TWUPass username and password for access. Technical problems can be addressed to the helpdesk found at <https://www1.twu.ca/support>. All participants will be assigned a TWUPass username and password. This is determined at the time of an online application or can be managed through the computing services help desk or the link on the student portal. A student's email account is available through this portal and is vital for communication about grades, account statements, lost passwords, sign-up instructions, and other such matters.

Course Schedule

Weeks 1-2: Personal descriptions of the significance of the cross
Weeks 3-4: Contextualized Communication
Weeks 5-6: Grids for evaluating valid Contextualized Communication
Weeks 7-8: Metaphors of the atonement
Weeks 9-10: Evaluating contextualized presentations I
Weeks 11-12: Evaluating contextualized presentations II
Weeks 13-14: Listening skills: Evaluating presentations of the significance of the cross
Weeks 15-16: Listening skills: Finding resonance in Romans 5
Weeks 17-18: Cultural exegesis: discovering the felt needs within the context
Weeks 19-20: Atonement presentations
Weeks 21-22: Presentation testing and Evaluation
Weeks 23-24: Course Project / Conclusions

Time expectation for course participation is 4 hours per week.

Assignments and Evaluation

There is no final exam for this course, so your learning process is entirely dependent upon your own ability to take the process seriously. You will be evaluated on your faithfulness to the quality of your online interaction, the details of the research assignments, and the course project. As a rule of thumb, this course should take about 4 hours of work a week (8 hours each session), including readings, postings and written

assignments. If you find the demands of the course are taking up more time than expected, please send the instructor a note to that effect in order to get help to adjust the work to fit the time frame. The assignments have been calculated based on the following expectation of time required:

Posts: 1.5 hrs per post (2 posts per session)

Written assignments: 1 double-spaced page per hour

Research assignments: 3-4 hours

Reading: 25 pages per hour

Assignments will be of three types:

- **Online Interaction**—Online interaction will consist of three parts: (a) a thorough reading and engagement of the instructor’s written post and any additional material (**posted at the beginning of each two-week session**), (b) a clear and concise response to the instructor’s post and all related material **before Monday of the second week**, (c) and a written interaction with the posts of at least three other participants in the course **before Thursday of that second week**. Interaction will be marked primarily by the weight of its content rather than its length, although **300-400 words per post** is recommended (responses to other’s posts may be considerably less than this). Each post must demonstrate that the participant has thoroughly and critically grappled with the content presented by the instructor and other participants. Interaction will be worth **30% of the final grade**. NOTE: Participants are invited to continue the online discussions as they wish, although only the required posts will be marked.
- **Research Assignments** will be an integral part of this course. Because this is a course on contextualization, it is imperative that there is ongoing interaction with the participant’s people group of interest. Detailed instructions for each research assignment will be provided at the appropriate time. **A written report** for each assignment will need to be uploaded on the interaction site by the date indicated and will require a response from other participants. These assignments will be worth **30% of the final grade**.
- **The Course Project of 25-30 pages** will develop out of the course interaction and research assignments. Participants are advised to start the project at the onset of the course and add to their file as assignments are completed. The occasional written assignments flow out of the online interaction and will become part of the course project. The course project should include:
 - Your philosophy of contextualization
 - Grids for determining valid contextualization
 - Contextual exegesis: reports and conclusions from your research
 - Your contextualized presentation
 - Results from your testing
 - A biblical and contextual defense of the validity of your presentation

The course project should be submitted within two weeks from the end of weeks 23-24 and will comprise **40% of the final grade**.

Details for each section:

Important: Each session will have “instructor’s notes” posted in “course materials”. Please read the instructor’s introduction to the course as well as the notes specific to each session before beginning the reading and assignments.

*Note: Important dates for online participation are in **Bold**, instructions are in FULL CAPS.*

1. Personal descriptions of the significance of the cross - Weeks 1-2

READ through the course syllabus and the Instructor's introduction to the course as well as the notes for Weeks 1-2 (in "course materials"). Download and READ the second part of Muller's 3 part book (The Message). Thumb through the texts and consider what benefit you can expect from the course. READ Chpt 1 of McKnight, *A Community Called Atonement*, pp 1-5. In one sitting, READ through the records of the arrest and trial of Lord Jesus Christ, his crucifixion, and his resurrection in the four gospels in a meaning-based translation, e.g., NLT, CEV (Mt 26:36-28:10; Mark 14:32-16:8; Luke 22:39-24:12; John 18:1-20:29).

Interactive assignment: As per the online interaction instructions, **by Monday of week 2**, please POST a statement of personal introduction along with a personal description of how the cross and resurrection of Jesus is significant for you. INCLUDE a paragraph describing any objections and difficulties you think the people in your context would have with this description. Sometime **by Thursday of the same week**, re-enter the website, READ what others have written and POST at least three thoughtful, substantial, and encouraging responses to what your fellow participants have written. Respond directly to the participant, showing your responses as replies to what they have written.

[NOTE: for the next time this course is done, need to include a consideration of the connection between this course and ministry. Need to get people thinking along this path right away and make plans for implementation from the get go. Eg Diego in a church plant involving others in some of the research]

2. Contextualized Communication - Weeks 3-4

READ the instructor's notes, Chapters 1-2 and Chapters 10-12 in Kraft, *Communication Theory for Christian Witness*, Covell, *Buddhism and the Gospel among the peoples of China* (pdf in "course materials"), Moreau, *The Human Universals of Culture: Implications for Contextualization* (pdf in "course materials"), and Harries, *Biblical Hermeneutics in Relation to Conventions of Language Use in Africa*.

Interactive assignment: In a POST, as per online interactions instructions (**by Monday of the second week**), discuss what you understand by "*contextualized communication*." From the reading as well as from your context, provide examples of effective and ineffective contextualized communication that you find particularly instructive. As before, **by Thursday of the same week**, RESPOND to at least three of the postings from other participants.

Written assignment: Submit to the instructor a 3 page description of your philosophy of contextualization by the end of week 4. In addition to the above post, explain how you would approach contextualization while maintaining biblical integrity and contextual relevance (this will become part of your course project. Be sure to make reference to the readings).

3. Grids for evaluating valid Contextualized Communication - Weeks 5-6

READ the instructor's notes, Chapters 3-6 in Kraft, *Communication Theory for Christian Witness*, Hesselgrave, *Contextualization that is Authentic and Relevant* (pdf in "course materials"), Hiebert, *Conversion and Worldview Transformation* (pdf in "course materials"), and Dye, *The Eight Conditions of Scripture Engagement* (pdf in "course materials").

Interactive assignment: In a POST, as per online interactions instructions, adapt the insights from Kraft's "Ten Myths concerning Communication" (Chapter 3) and Dye's conditions for Scripture Engagement to develop an *evaluation grid* for contextualizing the gospel. Hiebert's explanation of worldview and Hesselgrave's "seven-dimension grid" indicate some aspects that should be considered. As before, **by Thursday of the same week**, RESPOND to at least three of the postings from other participants.

Written assignment: Submit to the instructor a 2 page outline of your grid to ensure valid contextualization together with brief explanations of the key points by the end of week 6 (this will become part of your course project).

4. *Metaphors of the atonement - Weeks 7-8*

READ the instructor's notes. SKIM Part I of McKnight, *A Community Called Atonement*, pp. 9-31. READ Part II of McKnight, *A Community Called Atonement*, pp. 35-50 and Baker, *Proclaiming the Scandal of the Cross*, 13-36. READ Naylor, *The significance of metaphor in communicating the Cross of Christ*, Green and Baker, *Recovering the Scandal of the Cross* pp. 199-221 and Greer, *Toward More Meaningful Interaction*. REVIEW Muller on *Honor / Shame* (the second part - *The Message* - of Muller's 3 part book), downloaded in session 1.

Research Assignment: Following the instructions in the notes, **during the first week** conduct a minimum of 3 INTERVIEWS with those who are not followers of Christ to discover their understanding of "sin" (the biblical term in the local language or the word most commonly used by Christians when referring to Jesus' work on the cross). Ask the following (or similar) questions:

- What does the average person think of when they hear the word "sin"?
 - Can you give specific examples?
- What do you think of when you hear the word "sin"?
 - Can you give specific examples?
- What does the average person identify as brokenness, evil, twisted or wrong?
- What are the type of actions for which people feel guilt or shame or regret?

Interactive assignment: In a POST, report on the research and reflect on the following:

- Did the answers correspond to your understanding?
- Do you agree with the things that they identify as "sin"?
- How should the responses affect a presentation of the significance of the cross?
- What word resonates most in your context: Liberation? Forgiveness? Acquittal? Purity? Reconciliation?
- What are people seeking? What image of forgiveness / healing / acceptance would make them say, "I wish it were true?"

As before, **by Thursday of the same week**, RESPOND to at least three of the postings from other participants.

5. *Evaluating contextualized presentations I - Weeks 9-10*

READ the instructor's notes, Green and Baker, *Recovering the Scandal of the Cross* pp. 35-152, and Part II of McKnight, *A Community Called Atonement*, pp. 51-78. READ the following contextualizations: Naylor, *Making the Gospel Understandable*, Howell, *Through the Kaleidoscope* (pdf in "course materials"), and THREE other examples (your choice) in Green and Baker, *Proclaiming the Scandal of the Cross*.

Interactive assignment: In a POST, as per online interactions instructions, comment on at least TWO of the contextualization examples. Give your view as to their success in maintaining the "text-context tension."

Do you think these presentations would resonate within your context? Why or why not?

Also, FORMULATE 3 questions to ask people in your context that will reveal what they understand to be the significance of the cross. Add these questions to the bottom of the post.

As before, **by Thursday of the same week**, RESPOND to at least three of the postings from other participants. Comment on the questions formulated as to their suitability in generating the intended response.

6. *Evaluating contextualized presentations II - Weeks 11-12*

READ Part III of McKnight, *A Community Called Atonement*, pp. 81-114. READ the following contextualizations: Green and Baker, *Recovering the Scandal of the Cross* pp. 153-170, 184-198, Steinhaus, *The Spirit-first Approach to Muslim Evangelism*, and THREE more examples (your choice) in Green and Baker, *Proclaiming the Scandal of the Cross*.

Research Assignment: Using the questions formulated in the previous session, **during the first week** conduct a minimum of 3 INTERVIEWS with those who are not followers of Christ.

Interactive assignment: In a POST, report on the research including:

- The interview experience in general and difficulties encountered
- The success of the questions in generating helpful responses
- Correspondence of the answers to your expectations

Also, comment on ONE of the contextualization examples as per last sessions instructions.

As before, **by Thursday of the same week**, RESPOND to at least three of the postings from other participants.

7. Listening skills: Evaluating presentations of the significance of the cross - Weeks 13-14

READ the instructor's notes, Naylor's *Significant Conversations: Onion model of Culture*, and chapters 7-9 in Kraft, *Communication Theory for Christian Witness*.

Research Assignment: Following the instructions in the notes, **during the first week** conduct a minimum of 3 INTERVIEWS with those who are not followers of Christ to discover their response to a commonly used presentation of the gospel (e.g., the "bridge tract"). NOTE: this is a research assignment rather than an evangelism opportunity. Those interviewed should be asked to provide their opinion, reaction and objections to the presentation for research purposes. That is, your posture is not one of an evangelist looking for a personal decision from the interviewee, but of a researcher curious about the other's reaction and opinion.

Interactive assignment: In a POST, as per online interactions instructions, share the questions you used and summarize the findings from your interviews. Use Kraft's 5 practical steps in relating to receptors (pp 151-153) to evaluate the impact of the gospel presentation.

As before, **by Thursday of the same week**, RESPOND to at least three of the postings from other participants.

Written assignment: Submit to the instructor a 3 page REPORT of the three sets of interviews regarding the meaning of "sin," the significance of the cross and response to a commonly used gospel presentation.

Include a description of the gospel presentation that was used, the questions you asked, an overview of the answers and a reflection on the results that would have implications for a contextualized presentation (this will become part of your course project). Transcripts of the actual interviews are NOT necessary.

8. Listening skills: Finding resonance in Romans 5 - Weeks 15-16

READ the instructor's notes, and Greer, *Toward More Meaningful Interaction*.

Research Assignment: Following the instructions in the notes, **during the first week** conduct a minimum of 3 INTERVIEWS with those who are not followers of Christ to discover their response to a reading of Romans 5.

Interactive assignment: In a POST, as per online interactions instructions, share the questions you used and summarize the findings from your interviews.

As before, **by Thursday of the same week**, RESPOND to at least three of the postings from other participants.

Written assignment: Submit to the instructor a 3 page REPORT of the interviews. Include the questions you asked, an overview of the answers and a reflection on the results that would have implications for a contextualized presentation (this will become part of your course project). Transcripts of the actual interviews are not necessary.

9. Cultural exegesis: discovering the felt needs within the context - Weeks 17-18

READ the instructor's notes

Research Assignment: Following the instructions in the notes, **during the first week** conduct INTERVIEWS with those who are not followers of Christ to discover spiritual felt needs in the community.

Interactive assignment: In a POST, as per online interactions instructions, share the questions you used and summarize the findings from your interviews.

As before, **by Thursday of the same week**, RESPOND to at least three of the postings from other participants.

Written assignment: Submit to the instructor a 4 page REPORT of the interviews. Include the questions you asked, an overview of the answers and a reflection on the results that would have implications for a contextualized presentation (this will become part of your course project). Transcripts of the actual interviews are not necessary.

10. Atonement presentations - Weeks 19-20

READ the instructor's notes

Written assignment: PREPARE a 5 page detailed presentation (contextualization) of the significance of the cross given in a form that can be presented to the people group you are living among. This can be in any form that will be particularly effective, e.g., a sermon, dialogue, a drama, pictures (with explanations), a song, etc.

Interactive assignment: UPLOAD your presentation so that **by Monday of the second week** it is available to the other participants.

By **Thursday of the same week**, READ half of the presentations and RESPOND to at least three of the ones you read.

11. Presentation testing and Evaluation - Weeks 21-22

Research assignment: As per Session 7 make your contextualized PRESENTATION to at least 3 people and get their feedback. Do not let the interviewees know that this is your own presentation so that they will respond freely.

Interactive assignment: In a POST, **by the end of the second week**, share the questions you used and summarize the response you received concerning the presentation.

By **Thursday of the same week**, READ the remaining uploaded presentations and RESPOND to at least three of the ones you read.

Written assignment: PREPARE a 3 page report of the results from the presentations you made. Include the questions you asked, an overview of the answers and the reasons (biblical and contextual) why you chose the metaphor that you used in your presentation.

12. Course Project / Conclusions Weeks 23-24

Interactive assignment: READ the participants' posts concerning their presentations and RESPOND to at least three of the ones you read.

Course Project: Using the written assignments, the readings and responses from the interaction with other participants, PREPARE a 25-30 page detailed description of development of your contextualized presentation. This should be submitted within **two weeks from the end of weeks 23-24**.

Contact Information

The instructor is available to respond to issues related to the course via email: mark.naylor@twu.ca or by telephone: 250-652-6226.

Transcription of Credit and Letters of Permission to Transfer Credit

Upon completion of this course, a transcript can be made available for the purpose of transferring this credit to another institution. Whether such an institution will accept such credit is solely at their discretion. A student may wish to seek a “letter of permission” (LOP) from the alternate school in advance of taking the course in order to assure the applicability of this course to a given program.

Bibliography of Supplemental Materials

Please contact the instructor directly for any supplemental material required.

Classics on biblical exegesis of the Atonement

Hengal, Martin, *The Atonement: The Origins of the Doctrine in the New Testament* (trans. John Bowden), Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1980 (1981 trans).

Morris, Leon, *The Apostolic Preaching of the Cross (3rd Ed.)*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1965.

Murray, John, *Redemption Accomplished and Applied (Part I)*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1955.

Stott, John, *The Cross of Christ*. IVP, 1986.

Communication Theory

Kraft, Charles, H. *Communication Theory for Christian Witness* (Revised), Maryknoll: Orbis, 1991.

Guidelines for Writing, Research, and Evaluation

Scholarly insight & higher order thinking

Your papers should include your own thoughtful analysis of the topic and contribute to a substantive understanding of the subject. Papers should relate to the topic at hand, and should be developed around an analytical framework that most effectively communicates your ideas. Use higher order thinking skills and critical analysis to write your papers. Your papers should reflect your original ideas and creativity.

Theories and ideas

Through your research, you will find differing perspectives and theories. Carefully choose the theories and ideas that you will include in your paper and explain them thoroughly. Ensure that your explanation of facts, arguments and conclusions is logical and consistent.

Language, grammar and editing

In your writing, use simple, straightforward language. Avoid using jargon or a complex sentence structure that detracts from the intent of your message. Please use standard Canadian English, and ensure that spelling and grammar is correct. Before submitting a paper, edit it yourself and ask colleagues to review it as well. Rewrite any sections that are problematic.

Structure and presentation

The structure and organization of your papers should mirror the practices of other scholarly works in your field of study. Ideas and quotations taken from other sources must be cited as plagiarism is intellectual theft and will not be tolerated. When referencing sources, use Turabian (= Chicago) format. The following websites give general guidance regarding bibliography and footnote formatting:

<http://www.ucc.edu/NR/rdonlyres/A9F0CE7B-C355-4966-9628-D5F2248A355A/0/Turabian.pdf> or
www.dianahacker.com/resdoc/.

For discussion questions and forum postings you do not need to follow formal academic style, but you should still be careful to give credit to others when you utilize their ideas or words.

Late Assignments

Late assignments will be subject to a substantial deduction in grade (as much as one full letter grade).

Assignments more than one week late will not be accepted. Exceptions to this general principal must be requested in advance and in writing to the professor of record.

Grading

Evaluation of this kind of work cannot help but be subjective, at least to some degree. In general, grades in the "A" range are reserved for exceptional work. If your work is average in content, or simply meets the professor's general expectation without evidence of extra effort or accomplishment, then you can expect a grade in the "B" range. Work that is passable, but less than average and less than the professor's general expectation will earn a "C" range grade. Substandard and insufficient work will be rewarded with an "F."