
This work is the first in a projected series of eight texts addressing world missions from an evangelical perspective. Moreau is professor of missions and intercultural studies at Wheaton College Graduate School and general editor of the Evangelical Dictionary of World Missions. Corwin is associate editor of Evangelical Missions Quarterly. McGee is professor of church history and Pentecostal studies at the Assemblies of God Theological Seminary in Springfield, Missouri.

Designed to be an introductory textbook on the topic of contemporary missions, Introducing World Missions offers readers a broad overview of the subject. Though primarily written for prospective missionaries, the authors also wrote for those who would be serving in established pastoral roles. They wrote, “our prayer is that you will have the foundation necessary to make wise decisions about mission service, or if you are not so called, to help you counsel and guide others whom God brings across your path who are seeking his will in reaching the nations” (p. 23).

The work is divided into five major sections. Part one addresses biblical and theological foundations for mission. Here the authors establish the foundation for the rest of the book. They staunchly argue that any theology of mission must have an evangelistic mandate at its center. Within this section, the authors offer a distinction between the commonly used words “missio Dei,” “missions,” and “mission.” Part two
takes the reader on a quick tour of missionary work throughout the last 2000 years. The latter three sections of the book are very practical in their orientation. Part three examines missions from the angle of the missionary candidate. Topics such as the missionary calling and practical realities of getting from one’s home to the field are addressed in this section. Part four discusses the plethora of challenges faced by the missionary. The authors address topics such as personal and family issues, strategic and ministry issues, interpersonal relationships across cultures, and relating to churches and other shareholders. Finally, part five examines contemporary challenges to missions. Here the authors address cross-cultural communication, contemporary mission trends and paradigm shifts and encountering and engaging the religions of the world. The work concludes with an extensive bibliography and subject and Scripture indexes.

To supplement the text, the authors have also provided four unique and excellent aides. First, every text comes with a CD-ROM of the extensive *Evangelical Dictionary of World Missions*. Second, an instructor’s manual is available from Baker Academic to instructors who adopt the book as a require text. Third, most of the chapters of *Introducing World Missions* include a case study designed to assist readers in applying the theory to actual problems faced on the field. These case studies usually pose a missiological dilemma, leaving the reader to think through how they would respond if faced with a similar reality. Fourth, throughout this text, there are numerous excellent sidebars offering deeper thought on specific issues.

There are numerous strengths to this work. The first and foremost is the fact that the authors believe that a healthy missiology must be founded upon a healthy understanding of mission in both the Old and New Testaments. Mission in both
testaments is seen as a divine drama which is best understood in six acts: 1) creation and
the fall; 2) God’s calling and setting apart a people for Himself; 3) God’s work in
rescuing His people; 4) God’s work in sending His people into exile; 5) Saving a people
through the Messiah; 6) God’s gathering a people as His Church; and 7) God’s renewing
all of creation through the consummation.

Second, and closely related to the aforementioned strength is the excellent
approach to mission theology. The authors believe that “mission theology, then, should
be at the heart of the church’s theology” (p. 76). Continuing on, the foundation for a
theology of mission should be the Bible. They noted, “[The Bible] alone provides the
general principles on which a theology of mission must be built and the specific
instructions given to the church by God that inform our view of mission today” (p. 76).
The authors, following John Piper’s lead, see God’s glory and our reflection of His glory
as the guiding theme providing orientation to mission theology. This theme is comprised
of three elements: “1) calling those who do not know Christ through the activities of
evangelism and church planting; 2) growing in the capacity to live God-glorifying lives
through the processes of discipleship and church growth; and 3) reflecting God’s glory to
a needy world through living lives of salt and light” (p. 79).

Third, the latter three sections of the work provide a very practical and helpful
resource to individuals considering serving as missionaries. Much of the section is
devoted to preparing the candidate for what to anticipate in the journey to the field, what
questions to be asking, and training and resources available.

Fourth, in the chapter examining the expansion of the faith between A.D. 1900-
2000, the authors are quick to point out that much non-Western work was occurring. At
the beginning of this chapter, they noted, “The customary course in tracing the history of Christian mission is to progress from the 1910 Edinburgh conference to the institutions that came in its wake. However, this approach perpetuates a Western interpretation of events. It also draws attention away from the rise of indigenous Christian leaders and movements, a maturation that always had been the goal of mission” (p. 137).

Fifth, though this is a textbook, the reader must understand that this is not a soporific work. The sidebars, tables, diagrams, and various quotes from both historical and contemporary missionaries, missiologists, and theologians make for an engaging read. The case studies only stimulate engagement. These sections offer ethical and theological conundrums that are commonly experienced in the trenches. For example, how should the missionaries treat converts who upon baptism will be rejected, ostracized, persecuted, or even killed by their families? Or, how should missionaries respond when offered an alcoholic beverage in a social gathering when to decline the offer would cause the host to lose face and be insulted? The book’s readability is also enhanced by the fact that the work is peppered with stories from the authors’ missionary experiences.

The only limitation of this work that can be mentioned is minor in substance. The chapters devoted to the history of the expansion of the Church are limited to only three, and attempt to discuss 2000 years of Church history in a few pages. Though the authors do a good job for an introductory text, the reader should not come expecting great details regarding the spread of the gospel across the centuries. The authors give the reader the highlights and major characters, including a few lesser-known individuals that should be mentioned in a brief account.
Moreau, Corwin, and McGee have produced an outstanding resource to introduce others to the topic of world missions. This text will be used in classrooms for years to come. One can only hope that the remaining seven texts to be written for this series are as excellent as this work.

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