

# Understanding Christian Mission Through Biography

TH4013/Em3363  
Fall 2008  
Schlegel 122

Instructor: Frances S. Adeney  
Tuesday 6:00-8:50 p.m.

*This online syllabus should be used to gain a better understanding of the content and focus of a course. The syllabus given out in the class may differ from this online version and its content supersedes that of the online syllabus.*

**Course Description:** Through studying biographies of prominent figures in mission and evangelism, students will learn about calling, motivation, contexts, and purposes of local and global mission. While some contrasts to earlier figures are drawn, the focus of the course this is on late nineteenth and twentieth century persons from various traditions. Each has a distinctive view of mission and follows the call to live out that vision in action.

## **Course Objectives:**

1. Students will learn to articulate and appreciate various goals of Christian mission, e.g. social service, models for Christian discipleship, political and social change, and expansion of Christianity.
2. Students will describe and differentiate different motivations and callings for mission service, relating them to concrete social and historical settings.
3. Students will compare and contrast varying purposes of mission endeavor, relating each to its particular context and sense of community and/or individual calling.
4. Students will analyze the contributions made by mission activities and evaluate their appropriateness and effectiveness in their situated context.
5. Students will explore the usefulness and application of the mission models presented for contemporary church service.
6. Students will develop a sensitivity to mission and its connection to spiritual roots, both communal and individual.

## **Required Texts:**

Andrews, William L. ed. *Sisters of the Spirit: Three Black Women=s Autobiographies of the Nineteenth Century*. Bloomington IN: Indiana University Press, 1986.

Day, Dorothy. *The Long Loneliness*. NY: Harper and Row, 1963.

Elliot, Elizabeth. *Shadow of the Almighty: The Life & Testament of Jim Elliot*. NY: Harper & Row, 1958.

Gaustad, Edwin S., ed. *Memoirs of the Spirit*. Eerdmans, 1999.

Marshall, George and David Poling. *Schweitzer: A Biography*. NY: Albert Schweitzer Foundation, 1971. Printed by Johns Hopkins University Press, 200.

Sheppard, William. *Pioneers in Congo*. Wilmore, KY: Better Publications, 2007.

## **Assignments:**

1. Class attendance, informed discussion of texts, and two in-class essays. More than three absences will affect grade. (15%)
2. Two assigned essays comparing the focus, approach, motivation, and theology of mission of the figures in the course. (Specific assignments will be given.) 5 pages each, typed, double-spaced. (40 %)
3. A research paper analyzing the context of one of the mission biographies (social location, theological influences, church community, political issues, etc) **or** a written biography of a contemporary missionary based on interviews or web site materials. 15 pages, typed, double-spaced. (45%)\*

\*To meet Methodist guidelines for courses in evangelism, students must choose a topic in evangelism for their research paper.