



The Transcendent Task: Realizing the Gospel (Outline for Lecture 2): *Nyvall Lectures*¹

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Lecture 2 - The Transcendent Task: Realizing the Gospel

The Task: *Establishing a credible witness that will bring people to Christ*

The Gospel speaks to all of human need:

“Good news for the poor” crosses all lines. (Luke 4, Isaiah 61)

Global Church is a Biblical norm:

Theological grounding from Genesis onward: redemption of humankind.

Global Church must be intercultural:

Specific New Testament precedents: Multi-cultural, international events of the nativity; breadth of Jesus’ ministry, for example at Sychar (John 4); the Great Commission; the participants in Pentecost manifestations; intercultural problems in the Jerusalem Church—deacons needed; the scattered evangelizers; international, intercultural missions.

Evangelization (bringing people to Christ) requires cultural context:

Paul’s learnings in Athens are a model (Acts 17:16-34:) coming to terms with evil; seeking insights from culture (the synagogue, the marketplace;) acknowledging and using God’s pre-built bridges; restraining the impulses to offend.

The disciplines of culture learning are intended as Church-based learnings:

1. *Jerusalem*: Where we are now: coping with the handicapped as first lesson in humility; honoring parents (crossing into generational sub-cultures;) accepting difference as preferable to splitting.
2. *Judea*: The larger nest and extended family: expanding horizons to affiliate with near neighbors; acknowledging the validity of socio-economic differences.
3. *Samaria*: The abhorrent step outward: slowing down the hurried excursions; interacting and, thus, building facility and skill; overcoming the “hang-ups” that tend toward withdrawal and defeat.
4. *Ends of the Earth*: Breaking free into world involvement: fulfilling the model of Christ’s unlimited incarnation; accepting the whole mission of the Church; continuing a life-style of continual learning; living beyond one’s legacy of cultural limitations.

Requisites:

1. The attitude of Christ. (Philippians 2:5-11)

¹ Nyvall Lectures, North Park Theological Seminary, Chicago, Illinois, April 4, 1989. Overall Theme: The Gospel and the Cultural Context

2. A credible presence based on an evident contribution to the society of the people we are called to serve.
3. Conversion to the poor. (See three conversions, p. 17 in Donal Dorr's, "*Spirituality and Justice*." (Orbis, 1984)
4. The life-style of a culture learner.

“Do you love me? Feed my sheep.” (John 21:17)