

The GlobalChurch Project

www.theglobalchurchproject.com



Al Tizon

Local Church Small Group Resource

This resource is designed to help your small group discussion. It's shaped to inspire you to consider new ways for understanding the mission of the church. Questions are organized in themes. Consider choosing the themes appropriate to your small group context. You don't need to cover all the questions. Allow for a time of response.

Small Group Preparation

1. Video: Al Tizon, 31 minutes.

- **Radical Evangelicalism**
- **Mission as Transformation**
- **Local-Global (Glocal) Theology & Mission**
- **Missional Themes in Scripture**
- **Missional Preaching**
- **The Church Needs the Mission of God – The Mission of God Needs the Church**

2. Scripture reference: Acts 13:13–52 & Acts 17:16–34.

3. Participants are encouraged to bring their own journals or writing materials.

Beginning the conversation

Consider the questions suggested below to start the conversation for your small group. They'll consolidate the content of the video, after you've viewed it.

1. What were the major themes in Al Tizon's responses?
2. How does Al Tizon describe mission as transformation, and missional preaching?
3. Discuss the difficulties of the content. What was difficult to understand? Was there anything you would like to clarify with the group?
4. Theological method: How is Al Tizon's theology informed and shaped by his practical ministry? What approaches does he take in understanding God in the context of his day-to-day experiences, teaching, and discipling?

Going Deeper

Explore the major themes raised in the video. Critically engage with Al Tizon's theology. Consider the questions that respond to the issues raised in your preliminary discussion.

1. **Radical Evangelicalism:** How does Al Tizon define "Radical Evangelicalism"?
2. **Radical Evangelicalism:** How does radical Evangelicalism seek to return to the wholeness of the gospel? What does it mean to "return to the wholeness of the gospel"?
3. **Radical Evangelicalism:** Why do we need to reclaim terms through adjectives? Do they help?
4. **Mission as Transformation:** How does Al Tizon describe the background of the phrase "Mission as Transformation"?
5. **Mission as Transformation:** Al Tizon says that "Mission as Transformation" is synonymous with "integral mission" and "holistic mission." Assuming they are synonymous, what do these terms mean? See the Micah declaration on Integral Mission here:
http://www.micahnetwork.org/sites/default/files/doc/page/mn_integral_mission_declaration_en.pdf
6. **Mission as Transformation:** What theological difference does "Mission as Transformation" seek to convey? How does it get rid of dichotomies, and what dichotomies does it remove?
7. **Mission as Transformation:** Discuss the example Al Tizon gives from the Philippines. What do we learn from this example?
8. **Mission as Transformation:** Why is such mission (holistic, integral, transformational mission) always located in context?
9. **Local-Global (Glocal) Theology & Mission:** How does Al Tizon describe the relationship between local and global theology and mission?
10. **Local-Global (Glocal) Theology & Mission:** According to Al Tizon, how is "the local in the global" and the "global in the local"?
11. **Local-Global (Glocal) Theology & Mission:** Why does the power and authority for conversations need to happen at the local level (even as it engages and shapes global conversations, and vice versa)?
12. **Local-Global (Glocal) Theology & Mission:** What advantages does "diffusion" offer Protestantism, in hearing what's happening through local voices?
13. **Local-Global (Glocal) Theology & Mission:** What happens when global theologies and voices seek to dictate and police local conversations? How does prioritizing and privileging local conversations stop this problem?
14. **Local-Global (Glocal) Theology & Mission:** According the Al Tizon, how does Scripture shape our understanding and practice of "integral mission" ("Mission as Transformation")?
15. **Local-Global (Glocal) Theology & Mission:** Why is it the case that "every interpretation and theology is local"? How is there something transcultural about Scripture?
16. **Missional Themes in Scripture:** Al Tizon describes three missional themes that are present in Scripture, which shape our mission in the world. These are: integration, incarnation, and commitment to the poor. How is "integration" an alternative to "dichotomies"? How does "integration" see human beings as a "body-soul unity in community"? What difference does this integrated view of the human being make to our theology and mission and church life?
17. **Missional Themes in Scripture:** Why is it the case that "if we see human beings as whole, then our mission must be whole"?
18. **Missional Themes in Scripture:** What does it mean to do "incarnational" mission and ministry? The alternative is aloof, arms-length, parachute ministry. Why is incarnational ministry preferable to such aloof ministry?

19. **Missional Themes in Scripture:** According to Al Tizon, “commitment to the poor” is critical to integral mission. Do you agree that “God is on the side of the poor”? And, what does this mean?
20. **Missional Preaching:** What inspired Al Tizon to write a book on missional preaching? What have mission and preaching been unhelpfully separated for so long? How can we better integrate them?
21. **Missional Preaching:** Al Tizon talks about themes that drive missional preaching. Discuss the meaning of these themes, and how they shape missional preaching:
 - (1) Preaching for inculturation;
 - (2) Preaching for the alternative community;
 - (3) Preaching for holistic transformation;
 - (4) Preaching for life and peace;
 - (5) Preaching for justice and reconciliation;
 - (6) Preaching the universality and uniqueness of Christ in a religiously pluralistic world.
22. **Missional Preaching:** How does missional preaching help us make disciples, and shape the life of the preacher?
23. **The Church Needs the Mission of God – The Mission of God Needs the Church:** Explain why Al Tizon believes that the church needs God’s mission, and God’s mission needs the church?
24. **The Church Needs the Mission of God – The Mission of God Needs the Church:** Why is it liberating that we don’t need to come up with our own mission?
25. **The Church Needs the Mission of God – The Mission of God Needs the Church:** How and why does God invite us to take part in his mission in the world?
26. **The Church Needs the Mission of God – The Mission of God Needs the Church:** Do you agree that “without mission we are not the church, we are something else”? Why does the church need God’s mission to genuinely be the church?
27. **The Church Needs the Mission of God – The Mission of God Needs the Church:** How and why does God invite us to take part in his mission in the world?
28. **The Church Needs the Mission of God – The Mission of God Needs the Church:** Do you agree that the church cuts mission and service when money is tight? How do we stop that tendency?
29. **The Church Needs the Mission of God – The Mission of God Needs the Church:** Can you think of ways to frame and express your church’s activities through this motto? “The whole gospel for the whole world through whole persons.”

Application

Ensure the discussion is specifically drawing on your local setting. Make sure the discussion is relevant to the lives of faith for your small group. Encourage relevant and thoughtful examples from each participant.

1. **Radical Evangelicalism:** What are some ways that you are seeking to express the wholeness of the gospel, in your life and ministry?
2. **Mission as Transformation:** Read this link on “integral mission”, and discuss the implications of this kind of mission for your church and ministry and individual discipleship:
http://www.micahnetwork.org/sites/default/files/doc/page/mn_integral_mission_declaration_en.pdf
3. **Local-Global (Glocal) Theology & Mission:** How is your church and ministry intentional about developing local forms of theology and mission? How are you putting these local theologies and local expressions of mission into conversation with global themes and trends? What needs to change?

4. **Missional Themes in Scripture:** Consider the three missional themes that are present in Scripture, which shape our mission in the world. These are: integration, incarnation, and commitment to the poor. How will you and your team seek to cultivate these things in your church over the next 12 months? Or, if you're thinking about these things individually, how will you develop a life that's committed to integration, incarnation, and commitment to the poor?
5. **Missional Themes in Scripture:** How does your life reflect God's "commitment to the poor" and that "God is on the side of the poor"? What would it mean for you to hear God among the voices of the poor, and to join with God in bringing justice, equality, and the eradication of poverty?
6. **Missional Preaching:** Al Tizon talks about themes that drive missional preaching. Think about your preaching, teaching, and communication. How will these themes shape such communication in your life and ministry?
 - (1) Preaching for inculturation;
 - (2) Preaching for the alternative community;
 - (3) Preaching for holistic transformation;
 - (4) Preaching for life and peace;
 - (5) Preaching for justice and reconciliation;
 - (6) Preaching the universality and uniqueness of Christ in a religiously pluralistic world.
7. **The Church Needs the Mission of God – The Mission of God Needs the Church:** Are you convinced that the church needs God's mission, and God's mission needs the church? How does this shape your vision of mission and church, and the way the two are integrated?
8. **The Church Needs the Mission of God – The Mission of God Needs the Church:** Are you convinced that God is inviting you to take part in his mission in the world, as an individual and in Christian community? How are you responding to this call?
9. **The Church Needs the Mission of God – The Mission of God Needs the Church:** What would change about your discipleship, mission, community, ministry, and/or worship, if you lives by this motto? "The whole gospel for the whole world through whole persons."

Informing community

Facilitate the space for your group to respond to the discussion. You might consider this section as a personal time of written journal responses to the following questions.

1. What is God encouraging our small group and me, to do?
2. In response to the issues raised in the video, what are areas I want to ask God for forgiveness in? How do I need to change? What does God want me to stand up for?
3. How do I need God to minister to me and my community, for us to better engage with the contextual issues of our community?
4. How can I gain a better understanding of missional preaching, and mission as transformation? What do we ask that God would do in our hearts?

Prayer

Spend time in prayer over what you've learnt.

Invite the ministry of the Holy Spirit to clarify, heal, and inspire change for your participants and communities.

Links

Website: www.theglobalchurchproject.com

Book: Graham Hill, *GlobalChurch: Reshaping Our Conversations, Renewing Our Mission, Revitalizing Our Churches* (IVP Academic, 2015)