

The GlobalChurch Project

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Peter C. Phan – Christian Faith and Mission in an Asian Key

College and University Class Resource

This resource is designed to help your classroom discussion. It has specific application questions appropriate to local church ministry contexts. Questions are organized in themes. They are ideal for paired discussions, group-forum style discussions, and personal reflective responses. Consider using a discussion method most suitable to your classroom setting. Select questions most appropriate to your group. Consider isolating particular themes.

Materials

1. Video: Peter C. Phan
2. Theme: Christian Faith and Mission in an Asian Key

Preliminary discussion

1. What were the major themes in Peter C. Phan's responses?
2. How does he describe Christian mission?
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 his 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 and discipling?

Explore and apply

Consider isolating a particular theme of interest for your classroom discussion. You might allocate topics for questions to particular groups or pairs. Or, raise particular questions in a forum style for group responses. Apply the answers to these questions in your own setting.

1. What is inculturation and how does it work?
2. How is inculturation an encounter between the gospel and cultures?
3. How is dialogue "the modality of mission"?
4. What is the "triple dialogue in Asia"? How does this triple dialogue between liberation, cultures/languages, and religions work?

5. How is mission defined by church, and church defined by mission?
6. What does it mean to put the reign of God at the center of the church's mission?
7. In what sense are conversion and discipleship the goals of the church's mission?
8. What are some examples Peter C. Phan gives of how worship and prayer is conducted "in the Asian way"?
9. How can the church do theology in the context of mission?
10. What do we learn from the life and mission of Alexandre de Rhodes?
11. Does cultural and religious pluralism challenge Christian theology today? And, how do Asians do theology in the context of cultural and religious pluralism?
12. What does an Asian biblical hermeneutics look like?
13. How do multicultural and multi-religious contexts make us reassess our approaches to theological education?
14. In "Christianity with an Asian Face," Peter C. Phan describes the Kingdom of God as a theological symbol for Asians. What does he mean?
15. What does Jesus Christ look like with an Asian face? What are some Asian portraits of Jesus?
16. How are Asians exploring new ways of being the church? What does it mean, in other words, to have "The church not in but of Asia: the Asian-ness of Christianity"?
17. In "Being Religious Interreligiously", Peter C. Phan describes the postmodern and pluralistic challenges to church and theology. How do we do theology interreligiously in the postmodern age?
18. How do we talk about God and practice Christian faith, amidst many and diverse cultures and religions?
19. What is the wisdom of holy fools? How is it a way to the love of truth in postmodernity?
20. What is the mission of the church? How does it pursue this mission?
21. How do the reign of God, mission, proclamation, and the church relate to each other?
22. Peter C. Phan writes that instead of a church-centred approach to mission, we need a kingdom-of-God-centred view, in which the Church is made subservient to, though not separate from, the reign of God. How does the reign of God determine the Church and its mission? How does the reign of God determine the shape of mission, proclamation, and church?
23. How can an understanding of the reign of God transform Christian leaders, churches, mission, and theology?
24. What is a "liberation theology of mission"? How does it democratize political-power structures in the church?

Classroom ministry

Facilitate an opportunity for students to respond to the video in light of the classroom discussion. Consider inviting students to write their responses to the following questions.

1. What is God encouraging me, our small group and our community, 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 mission? What do we ask that God would do in our hearts?

Prayer

Spend time in prayer over what you've learnt. You may encourage your class to pray for one another. Or, in light of your discussion, you may choose to pray over your class.

Links

Website: www.theglobalchurchproject.com

Book: Graham Hill, *GlobalChurch: Reshaping Our Conversations, Renewing Our Mission, Revitalizing Our Churches* (IVP Academic, 2016)