

# Mission of the Church

## Table of Contents

**Introduction** 5

**Chapter 1 God's Desire for a Relationship:  
The Metatheme of Scripture Revealed in God's  
Creative Purpose** 7

The Creation Narrative 7  
Theories About God's Purpose in Creation 8  
Genesis 1-3: God's Desire for a Relationship 10  
    Genesis One 11  
    Genesis Two 12  
    Genesis Three 14  
    Theological Support 16  
Summary 17  
Reflection and Discussion Activities 18

**Chapter 2 God's Desire for a Relationship:  
The Metatheme of Scripture Revealed in the  
Establishment of the Old Covenant** 19

Covenant in Old Testament Theology 19  
What is a Covenant 20  
Covenantal Analysis 24  
    How Many Covenants Were There 24  
        Adam 25  
        Noah 27  
        Abraham 29  
        Israel 33  
Summary 37  
Reflection and Discussion Activities 37

**Chapter 3 God's Desire for a Relationship:  
The Metatheme of Scripture Revealed in the  
Symbolic Language of the Old Testament** 38

Names of God 39  
Metaphors About God 41  
    What Are Metaphors 42  
    Comparing God to a Husband 44  
    Comparing God to a Father 46  
    Comparing God to a Shepherd 49  
    Comparing God to a King 50  
Summary 54  
Reflection and Discussion Activities 55

**Chapter 4 God's Desire for a Relationship:  
The Metatheme of Scripture Revealed in the  
Incarnation and Ministry of Jesus** 56

The Purpose of the Incarnation 56  
A Living Declaration 59  
The Ministry of Jesus 62  
    What Jesus Said About Himself and His Ministry 63  
        Matthew 20:28 63

Luke 4:42-43	64
Luke 19:10	67
John 3:17	68
John 12:47	69
John 18:37	69
Luke 4:16-21	70
How Jesus Went About the Task of Ministry	71
The Calling and Training of Jesus' Disciples	71
A Specific Ministry Task	72
A Ministry of Humble Service	72
Jesus' Relationship with the Father	73
The Great Commission	73
Summary	74
Reflection and Discussion Activities	75

**Chapter 5 God's Desire for a Relationship:  
The Metatheme of Scripture Revealed in the  
Establishment of the New Covenant** 76

What God's Covenants Accomplished	76
The New Covenant	77
Additional Revelations About God in the New Covenant	78
Confirming an Existing Relationship	80
Summary	82
Reflection and Discussion Activities	83

**Chapter 6 God's Desire for a Relationship:  
The Metatheme of Scripture Revealed in  
Paul's Ministry of Reconciliation** 84

Paul's Ministry	85
What is Reconciliation	86
Paul's Teaching on Wrath, Enmity, and Reconciliation	87
Jesus and Reconciliation	91
Summary	92
Reflection and Discussion Activities	93

**Chapter 7 God's Desire for a Relationship:  
The Metatheme of Scripture Revealed in the  
Symbolic Language of the New Testament** 95

New Testament Metaphors Rooted in Relationship	96
The Vine/Branches Metaphor	96
The Father/Children Metaphor	97
The Bride/Bridegroom Metaphor	98
The Head/Body Metaphor	98
The Metaphor of God's Household	99
The King/Subjects Metaphor	100
The Shepherd/Sheep Metaphor	101
The Temple Metaphor	102
The Master/Slave Metaphor	102
Summary	103
Reflection and Discussion Activities	104

**Chapter 8 Theology and Mission Theology in Light of  
the Relationship Metatheme** 106

Mission and Theology in the Ministries of Jesus and Paul	106
Jesus' Mission and Theology	107
Paul's Mission and Theology	110

Theology and Mission: A River in a Riverbed	113
Biblical Theology and Mission Theology	115
Getting the River Back into the Riverbed	115
What is Mission Theology	117
A Theology Of Mission Rooted in God's Desire for a Relationship with All People	121
One's Own Relationship with God	122
The Relationship One Sustains with those to whom God's Message is being Re- Communicated	123
The Relational Nature of the Message and the Response it Prompts	124
Summary	125
Reflection and Discussion Activities	127
<b>Conclusion</b>	128
Works Cited	129