

Lesson 2

Love your enemies and love the lost:

(that means the Romans, Goths, Celts and heretics!)

100 – 500 AD



Mission Representative of the Period



Patrick – 389-461 British Missionary

Patrick was captured at age 16 by Irish raiders but returned to England after six years of slavery. In 432, a vision led him to return to Ireland as a missionary bishop. Later heralded as the patron Saint of Ireland, he is credited with bringing Christianity to Ireland.

“Belonging precedes believing”

The essence of Patrick

Belonging precedes believing

Large holistic approach of seeker churches

Immersed in culture – use existing bridges as ambassadors for God not culture

We must leave behind our identities and be a part of the community as well

You must build the bridges with people through relationship and cross them (addressing the heart)

Provide fellowship where people can express their new faith.

Highlight's of Patrick's Story

Birth 389 AD

Kidnapping at age 16, in Ireland for 6 years

Escaped to France in 411,

Heard God's call (established a mission career)

Monastery in Gaul (20 Dark years)

Observing the Celts and accepted Druid social and political order and did not follow Roman style – accused of compromise

Ministry to Irish heathen in 432 (not the first to visit), returned as a Missionary Bishop

The Confession

Died in 461 with much of Ireland converted (Having established 200 churches and performed over 100,000 baptisms)

Historical Highlights 100-500

| | Book Text: Antiquity | Graphics from the World History Chart | blue words = links (for example: India) |
|---------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| America | Peru : Tiahuanaco, ceremonial center (Lake Titicaca) evolves | Mochica culture (northern coast) | Paracas Necropolis and Nazca culture (southern coast) |
| | City of Teotihuacan (Valley of Mexico) emerges | Early Maya period | Maya Empire evolves in city states ruled by priestly hierarchies |
| Europe | b. of Teutoburg Forest | Teutonic tribes inhabit Germany | Confederacies of Burgundians, Alamanni & Franks emerge |
| Roman Empire | Augustus proclaims world peace | ROMAN EMPIRE Julio-Claudians, Flavians, Good Emperors, Severi, Soldier Emperors | Germanic Invasions, Christian persecution, Constantine adopts Christianity, Empire divided |
| | Loss of Germania, Conquest of Britain, Pantheon | Roman Empire at its peak, Plague, Military Despotism, Civil Wars, Marcomanni wars | Germanic and Gothic wars, Hunnish Empire from the Caspian Sea to the Rhine and Baltic |
| Roman Asia | Palestine part of the Roman Empire | Diffusion of Christianity from Antioch, Alexandria and Rome | Council of Nicaea |
| | Crucifixion of Jesus, Jewish revolt, Conquest of Asia Minor, Jewish diaspora begins, Wars with Parthia | Rome defeats Persia in Syria and Armenia | Persia repulsed, Mesopotamia lost |
| Middle East | Parthia (cap. Ctesiphon) | Rebellion of Persia against Parthia | Sassanides (cap. Ctesiphon) |
| | Conflicts with Rome weakens central authority | Neo-Persian Empire (until 650) | Revolt of Mazdak, Hunnish Incursions |
| Egypt | Roman Province Egypt | Christian community established in Alexandria | Monasticism evolves in Egypt, Egypt part of the East Roman Empire |
| | B.C. 1 | A.D. 100 | 200 |
| India | Yueh-chi from Central Asia conquer Bactria (N' India) | Yueh-chi establish the Kushana Empire | Kushana kings reduced to vassalls of Persia, 100 years of disorder |
| S'India | Mission of St. Thomas | Emergence of Tamil culture around city of Madurai | Gupta (cap. Pataliputra), Golden Age of Hindu civilization, Hunnish Invasion, Gupta Empire breaks up under impact of Hunnish invasions |
| China | Western Han reforms | Eastern Han (cap. Lo-yang), Re-newed flowering of the empire, Buddhism reaches China over the silkroad | 3 Kingdom Period (Wei, Wu, Shu), Temporary unification by the 'Chin', Mongol Juan-juan confederacy in Central Asia |
| Japan | Yamato kingdom in Japan evolves | Japan dominated by Korea | Wa-ni introduces Chinese writing to Japan |
| Africa | Kdm of Axum in Abyssinia | Trans-Saharan camel trade stimulates growth of sub-Saharan states: Kdm of Ghana (4-13th century) | |

Mission Highlights 100-500 AD

165 - Persecution of Christians

Roman Empire Structure

Favorable Conditions: 1) widespread political unity 2) a common language (Greek) 3) dispersion of Jews led to spread of monotheistic worldview 4) philosophical and spiritual vacuum among pagan communities 5) improved roads, travels, and communication. By the end of the third century, "there was no area in the Roman Empire which had not been penetrated to some extent by the gospel."

313 Constantine: accepts Christianity resulting in the eventual institutionalization of the church,

325 Christianization of the empire, and unity of church and state - led to diluted and compromised syncretistic faith and a lack of mission fervor.

Great ecumenical councils and formation of doctrinal boundaries of orthodoxy

Rise of Celtic Christianity (highly indigenized and use of lay and clergy – not only clergy -

410 Barbarians Invade Rome (church survives the destruction of Rome, its central city in the west)

Christianity was slowed down during this time by: Judaizers who hindered Paul's work and the rise of heresies

- Gnosticism- mystery to be found in the spiritual realm; low view of body life. Loss of evangelistic fervor/ high amount of syncretism and Institutionalism
- Arianism- Arias Bishop of N Africa – homoousia
- Hellenism- Greek values and philosophy supreme over other thoughts/worldview
- Nestorian- although deemed heretical this stream of Christianity provided outposts (primarily in the East) reached by later Christian missionaries, particularly Orthodox missionaries
- Marcionism – denial of the OT/ low humanity of Jesus as a Jewish man
- Manicheansim – false separation between matter and spirit

Contemporaries of Patrick 100-500 AD

Montanus – c. 172-73 Founder of Montanism (first ‘renewal’ movement 200-900) in Asia minor - ascetic and ecstatic – prophecy , coming of Jesus and the New Jerusalem was focus. The ministry of women recognized

Priscilla and Maximilla – c. 200

- twin sisters who were Montanist prophetesses

Perpetua, Vibia - c. 200 - noble blood – lived in N. Africa - together with her slave girl Felicitas she was put to death

Ulfilas – c. early 300’s - missionary to the Goths for 40 years and later bishop
- preached a mild form of Arianism (Jesus not fully God).
- Although persecuted, he was an effective evangelist
- translated the Bible into the native language of the Goths

Eusebius – c. early 300’s - “father” of church history. Shift from apocalyptic to historical focus - hated Montanism

Uniqueness of the mission period

God calls us to both a mission and to a people.

Although orthodox and creedal (also an innovator) Patrick believed that the institutional church is there for the mission and not the reverse.

Community is more attractive than the institution and must be both established for and open to the lost.

Thread through the Macro mission story

Patrick introduced an effective incarnational approach to missions. He also

Scriptural foundations for Patrick's approach

So the Word became human and lived here on earth among us. He was full of unfailing love and faithfulness. And we have seen his glory, the glory of the only Son of the Father. John 1:14 (NLT)

And all the believers met together constantly and shared everything they had. [45] They sold their possessions and shared the proceeds with those in need. [46] They worshiped together at the Temple each day, met in homes for the Lord's Supper, and shared their meals with great joy and generosity— [47] all the while praising God and enjoying the goodwill of all the people. And each day the Lord added to their group those who were being saved. Acts 2:44-47 (NLT)

We loved you so much that we gave you not only God's Good News but our own lives, too. 1 Thes. 2:8 (NLT)

Further research highlights

From George Hunter's Celtic Way of Evangelism

Celtic monasteries organized to penetrate and not escape culture – seen in communities as mission stations ... Called for missionaries to be in the “real” middle level where people live (pp 28-29)

Celtic Christians had no need to seek out a shaman. Their Christian faith and community addressed life as a whole and may have addressed the middle level more specifically, comprehensively and powerfully than any other Christian movement ever has (p. 28-29)

Five themes suggest what we might learn about “missionary ecclesiology” from ancient Celtic Christian movement

- 1) Incarnational team approach : Celtic Christians usually evangelized as a team – by relating to people of a settlement; identifying with the people; engaging in friendship, conversation, ministry and witness.
- 2) Community prepared for mission – the monastic community prepared people to live with depth, compassion and power in the mission. Through voluntary periods of solitary isolation, soul friend – peer time, small groups, common life participation, and witnessing to pre-Christians
- 3) Imaginative Prayer
- 4) Hospitality: Conversion through community ... establish community ... engage in conversation within fellowship .. as they discover that they now believe, you invite them to commit
- 5) Belonging before believing is “more effective with postmodern Western populations” How he did it – earned the right to be heard. Credibility of commitment, creative communication (pp. 47-53).

The missionary perspective of Celtic Christianity: ...their faith that focused on people’s “middle” daily issues as well as the ultimate religious issues. Emotional and imaginal appeal all helped communicate the gospel (p. 76)

The Celtic future of the Christian Movement in the West: Non institutional – “Establishment Christianity always expects its people, pastors and bishops to care for, and fraternize with church people” (p 95).

Relevance to the West today ... New Barbarians – “secular” with no Christian memory

Many New barbarians are addicted and their lives are at least sometimes out of control around some substance ... Postmodern suspiciousness of people and institutions that claim Authority – rediscovering their intuition and they own and trust their feelings more.. We observe the re-tribalism of much of the West – as peer groups subcultures and ethnic groups produce an “I belong, therefore, I am: source of identity once again” (p 96-97).

Community reinforces identity and helps lead to recovery (p 105).

... most postmodern people experience “belonging before believing ... evangelism as a two way conversation not a one way presentation! (p 109).

Mission innovations of Patrick

Patrick's Idea: Belonging Precedes Believing

“ Conversion is not about seeking or embracing an ideology; it is about bringing one's religious behavior into alignment with that of one's friends and family members.” Rodney Stark. The Rise of Christianity

David Bosch “The Christian faith never exists except as ‘translated’ into a culture.

Roman mission is hierarchically oriented

Concentric circles out from Rome (accountable to Rome)

Mission is a military exercise

Goal of mission is church membership – believing precedes belonging

Boundaries. Benedict – long term

Celtic Mission – a fluid boundary from a center

Organized by monastic line

Columban – wandered about – church planting

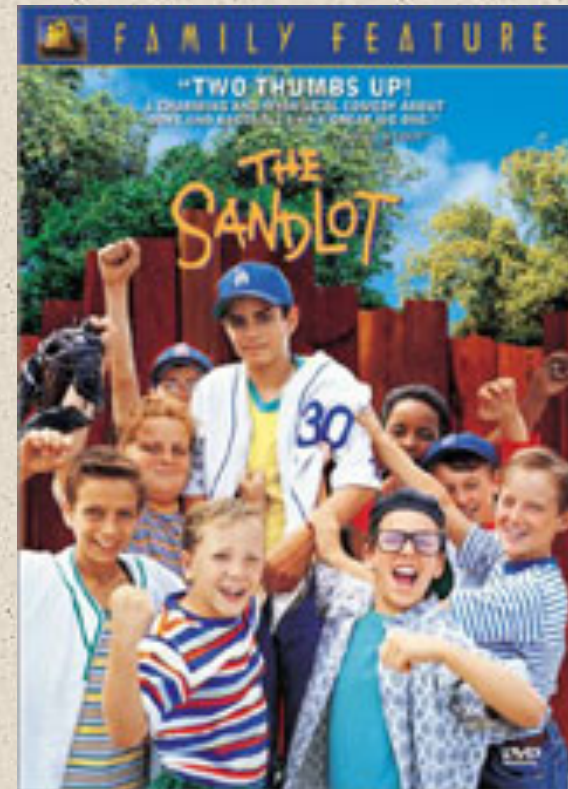
Mission is the essence of being Christian – seeding not conquering

Indigenize the gospel

Movie clip illustrating the principle

Show the scene from the movie Sandlot where Smalls finally catches the ball—

The main character “Smalls” joins a team of sandlot baseball players and by being around them becomes a player – demonstrating the point that belonging is transformational.



How can Patrick's principles be applied to the YoungLife Mission?

We need to create an atmosphere where kids of all types are welcomed into the YoungLife community.

We need to stay de-institutionalized and fluid even as the mission grows.

We need to always remember that we are planting seeds like Patrick not forcing conversions like Charlemagne!

So What and Now What?

In what ways can we create community for teenagers to comfortably enter, remember this is not about an event or a place but about relationships?

How can your Bible study and fellowship group in addition to YoungLife club function in such a way to invite outsiders to join?

Specifically, who best in your school can introduce their friends to Jesus, what questions can they begin to ask?

What can they be invited to in order to explore further and come to a knowledge and practice of the faith?

How can they be recognized as believers when that time comes?
How can they be incorporated into the family of God?

Recommended Reading:

Hunter, George

(2001), *The Celtic Way of Evangelism*,
Abington Press., Nashville, TN