

Introduction

All-Nations Bible Translation developed this course in response to requests from partnering churches for resources to equip them and their field members. In accordance with one of its core principles, All-Nations does not provide oversight to church planting efforts. Therefore, we have designed this course to be descriptive rather than prescriptive; to engage rather than to direct.

Some of the material was produced specifically for this course, while some comes from other sources. Parts of the resources are less relevant to the work of All-Nations teams, but overall, the scope of the content provides a framework for planting a church in an unreached area.

We hope this material will help you, both as senders and sent, prepare for this eternally significant work. There is much to learn and consider, and we offer this course as a resource in the journey we are on together.

A Note about the Content

All-Nations Bible Translation seeks to align itself with the faith and practice of the historic pilgrim church. We partner with like-minded churches in sending church-planting teams, and this course was developed with such churches in mind. As we understand the teachings of Jesus Christ, Lord of the church, key identifying factors of the pilgrim church revealed in the Scriptures include the following:

- Redemptive discipline in the local church
- Love for enemies and returning good for evil
- Separation from politics, patriotism, and war
- Submitting to one another in the brotherhood
- Marriage as one man and one woman for life
- God's headship order and the woman's veiling

For ourselves and the churches we partner with, this identity finds expression in conservative Anabaptism. Our goal is not to promote one particular denomination, but rather to promote the establishment of churches that align with the pilgrim church throughout history.

For more details regarding Anabaptist doctrine and practice, see **Appendix B: All-Nations Statement of Faith and Practice**.

Though not all presenters or authors are fully aligned with our faith and practice, we have included their teaching for its value in the areas they address. Some may refer to things less relevant to our partnering churches. Some doctrinal and practical differences may be evident. We acknowledge these differences while appreciating the value we receive from the presenters or authors.

Bangladesh Case Study

Six modules include recorded conversation about a movement that some American Anabaptists have been involved in since Cyclone Sidr relief efforts in 2007. We thank those who allowed us to visit and record some observations about what God is doing there.

Beyond what is shared in the recordings, we have also heard these brothers reflect on the cultural journey between Western Anabaptist practice and the context in Bangladesh, especially regarding modest dress. The brothers involved have wrestled with this for many years.

They continue to affirm that many who are coming to faith and baptism are already dressing modestly within their own culture. They have not required believers to adopt Western Anabaptist clothing. Instead, their guidance has focused on the following principles:

- Maintaining clear modesty
- Practicing the principle of veiling
- Removing jewelry (a significant hurdle in that culture)
- Encouraging men to avoid worldly styles and fashions

They have seen this approach bear good fruit and believe it has been wiser than imposing Western forms.

Many more lessons have been learned throughout the journey, which we have attempted to draw out in the recordings. We hope you find these helpful and inspiring. To God be all the glory!

Course Material

Material for this course can be accessed in two ways:

- **The course manual**, available for each participant. Includes articles.
- **The course website**, at cpcourse.allnationsbt.org

Each component is available in multiple formats:

- **Presentations and messages** to watch. Audio and transcripts are available on the website.
- **Books and articles** to read. Audio narrations are available on the website. (*Exception: We are not able to provide audio of several books due to permissions issues.*)

Some participants will not have time to complete the eight to eleven hours of content for each module. To facilitate their involvement, each module contains, on average, two hours of core content. This is the minimum content necessary to complete the course.

- **Core content:** 2 to 2.5 hours per module
- **Comprehensive content:** 8 to 11 hours per module (includes core content)

The time listed for each activity is based on *actual watching or listening time*. In the case of books and articles, we listed the length of the audio narration. By reading these yourself, you may spend less time. However, the time spent in any module will depend on how much processing you do.

Each of the eight modules includes the following:

- **An introduction** to each module and its components
- **A study guide** with simple questions related to core content
- **A discussion guide** for group discussion at the end of each module

The Transcript book

We've collected transcripts of all presentations and messages in a book. This opens up two possibilities:

- Highlighting and marking the transcript for your group discussions or for future reference.
- Reading the transcript instead of watching the presentation online.

Using the Course

Do It with Others

This course is intended for a group rather than an individual. You may watch, read, or listen to the various components on your own, but a module is not considered complete until the group has gathered to discuss it.

Recruit some people from your church to journey with you!

For our partnering churches, we recommend that the whole support team join the All-Nations member in taking the course, along with some church leaders and anyone else interested. The All-Nations member and at least one or two others work through all the content. Others may only be able to commit to the core content, with occasional pieces from the comprehensive list.

- **Core content:** The entire support team, some church leaders, and other interested persons
- **Comprehensive content:** The All-Nations member and one or two of the above (minimum)

Boost Your Focus

Your level of engagement and commitment to the course will determine what you get out of it. When possible, set aside undistracted time and space to watch the presentations, rather than simply listening while doing other things.

- **Core content:** Have the study guide with you while watching or reading. The questions are generally simple, but they can help you focus.
- **Comprehensive content:** After each piece, send a brief response to the group.
 1. *Take notes.* Mark up your transcript book and other books. Make note of tidbits you want to share with the group.
 2. *Write a paragraph summary or response* and send it by email. Or send a 3-minute audio message to the group. Some in your group will not get to benefit from this content unless you share a little about it.

Discuss Each Module

At the end of each module, the group gathers to discuss the content. The group leader or an appointed discussion leader may use the questions in the discussion guide or develop his own. These gatherings include time for united prayer.

Note: Consider assigning a person at the end of each discussion to come to the next discussion with an initial response to each question. This approach could help the group stay focused during discussion time.

Set Aside 8 to 12 Months

One module per month is probably the fastest you will be able to complete the course. However, your group may choose to schedule more time; for example, at six weeks per module, the course will last a year.

Getting Started

- 1. Schedule a planning meeting.**
 - a. Include the entire support team and some church leaders.
 - b. Announce this meeting to the whole church for anyone interested.
- 2. Introduce the course.**
 - a. At the meeting, look through the course manual together.
 - b. Read or summarize the introduction to understand the purpose and format.
- 3. Identify participant roles.**
 - a. Comprehensive participants are those doing all 8 to 11 hours of each module.
 - b. Core participants commit to only the first 2 hours (average) of each module.
 - c. Decide on a discussion leader. You may assign different leaders for different modules.
 - d. Decide whether someone is responsible for checking that assignments are completed on time.
- 4. Review your materials.**
 - a. Are there enough course manuals for everyone?
 - b. Does everyone have the books needed for the course?
 - c. Does everyone have a book of transcripts?
 - d. Does everyone know how to access and use the course online?
- 5. Schedule discussions.**
 - a. These fall at the end of every month or module.
 - b. Enter dates on your personal calendars and the title page of each Module.
 - c. The group leader reminds everyone ahead of each meeting date.

Acknowledgements

In its beta version throughout 2023, this course was used by churches who have a partnering relationship with All-Nations. We collected helpful feedback from them and All-Nations members, which contributed to this improved course available to you.

In addition, the following brothers graciously provided feedback for at least one module each, and some for two, or even all eight modules. You will benefit from improvements based on their observations and suggestions.

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