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This special issue of Global Missiology - English takes up the multifaceted theme of “Theological Education and Mission.” GME issued a call for papers one year ago, resulting in the five featured articles carried here.

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Theological Education and Mission

Gloria S. Tseng

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Guest Editorial

Theological Education and Mission

Gloria S. Tseng

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> "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction" (Proverbs 1:7).
>
> "Only take care, and keep your soul diligently, lest you forget the things that your eyes have seen, and lest they depart from your heart all the days of your life. Make them known to your children and your children's children…" (Deuteronomy 4:9).
>
> "And Jesus came and said to them, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age'" (Matthew 28:18-20).

An "educational mandate" permeates the Old and the New Testaments. The people of God are called to make him known—to all people in general, and to their children in particular—by instruction. The means of Jesus's announcement of God's kingdom in Roman-occupied Palestine was instruction, in clear contrast to the Roman kingdom, which had been birthed in military conquest. Institutions of theological education play an important role in equipping the people of God to carry out the educational mandate. The articles in this *Global Missiology - English* theme issue on "Theological Education and Mission" examine specific aspects of theological education in a variety of cultural contexts.

"A Giant on Clay Legs" by Christopher Howles considers the challenges faced by institutions of theological education in Africa and argues for a missiocentric paradigm of theological training. "The Role of Formal Theological Education in Missiological Strategies in Honor-Shame Contexts" by Anna Daub explores the cultural component in equipping church elders or overseers to teach in a mission field and calls for a more nuanced understanding of the role of formal theological education in leadership development. "Prophets in the Seminary" by Matthew Hirt examines several Protestant views of the role of prophets in the church based on Ephesians 4:11, as understood and interpreted by believers of New Apostolic Reformation, traditional Pentecostal, and evangelical theological perspectives. He argues that the prophetic function, when properly understood, is essential for institutions of theological education. "Rethinking Reproducibility" by Phil Barnes and Will Brooks critiques the reproducibility model of theological education in mission fields and argues for theological education that develops theological aptitude, a servant attitude, and missional awareness in its students. "Strengthening Spiritual Reconciliation through Theological Education" by Omar Palafox makes a case for collaboration Latinx Catholics, Hispanic Catholics, Pentecostals, and non-Pentecostal Protestants in theological education rooted in community so as to provide "soul-forming education" that results in reconciliation.

While the contexts and dimensions of theological education examined by the authors vary, one sees a consensus emerge, namely, discipleship and spiritual formation for emerging church leaders in the setting of an academic institution. How does one bring about profound and often hidden individual life changes in institutions of higher learning? Are institutions of higher learning

effective instruments in bringing out, or at least setting in motion, spiritual maturity, which takes place over the course of a lifetime in community with the people in one's life, and requires as much mentoring as, if not more than, scholarship? Two things come to mind at the time of the writing of this editorial. First, according to all observers—including the eyewitness accounts carried in this issue—the recent Ashbury revival took place spontaneously; and, this spontaneity required the institution's leaders and administrators to set aside its "normal functioning" to make room for what the students were experiencing. What is the relationship between the education provided by Ashbury and the students' recent spiritual experiences? Second, what is and should be the role of institutions of theological education in North America and Europe, and leadership development for churches in the majority world? The articles in this issue address in one way or another the relationship between formal theological training and spiritual formation and the applicability or adaptability of such training based on the North American and European model in mission fields and non-Western cultures. It is the hope of the editorial team that the current issue may serve the function of "throwing out a brick to entice others to contribute their jade."[1] May the modest offerings of this issue lead to a meaningful and robust conversation on the educational mandate of the people of God.

[1] 抛磚引玉 (*paozhuan yinyu*)—a metaphor for contributing something modest in the hope of encouraging others to contribute something more valuable.

A Giant on Clay Legs? African Theological Education and the Formation of Missiocentric, Missionary-sending Church Leaders

Christopher D. Howles

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Abstract

Many theological educators worldwide recognize the centrality of mission in God's purposes for his Church, and therefore for the ministerial training of church leaders. However, African seminaries are commonly engaging with such issues from a disadvantaged position, having inherited fragmented and mission-deprioritized systems of theological training from Western contexts through processes of colonial and postcolonial transfer—to the extent that Rwandan theologian Tharcisse Gatwa calls Bible colleges the "clay legs" on which the African Church perilously stands. This article utilizes Fohle Lygunda Li-M's "Antioch" model to propose one way that sub-Saharan African seminaries might form missiocentric, missionary-sending church leaders through their theological education programs.

Key Words: Africa, Antioch model, missiocentricity, *missio Dei*, theological education

Introduction

In recent years evangelical theological educators have been required to operate in an almost constant state of flux. Rare are the books or articles about theological education that do not include words like "reforming," "reenvisioning," "reconsidering," "revisiting," "renewing," and "reimagining" in the title. Vigorous discussions are commonplace about new forms and new structures in theological education, yet up to now there is no unanimity emerging concerning their precise nature. Thus Bernhard Ott's comparison of the field of theological education to a construction site (2016, p. xi) hits home, with its associations of movement (or mess?), clutter (or confusion?), disorder (or disarray?), and the unnerving reality of relentless and unsettling change. Those seeking vocational stability and serenity might be better served elsewhere.

However, Ott's "construction site" metaphor for theological education also carries associations of a plan, a design, and a focused purpose: Who builds something without knowing what it is they are building? For many theological educators, "mission" is stamped across their architectural plans and is central to what they are seeking to (re)build. This article outlines some ways in which evangelical academicians are reflecting on the missional basis of theological education, before highlighting how such reflections are being worked out specifically in sub-Saharan African theological education institutions. The article will close by interacting with Congolese theologian Fohle Lygunda Li-M's significant 2016 monograph "Transforming Missiology" with a view to developing the ongoing discourse concerning the formation of missiocentric, missionary-sending local church leaders through African theological education.

Missio Dei and the Theological Task

The causes of recent upheavals so evident in evangelical theological education are wide ranging, but they can be generalized into two broad groupings. The first consists of those forces of change which are common to the broader sphere of higher-education and thus not specific to theological education. For example, Ott identifies how forces of democratization (student-driven education) and commercialization (market-driven education) are having a profound impact across many types

of North American and European tertiary education institutions - including theological institutions (2016, p. 2).

The second grouping (and the focus of this article) consists of those forces of change which emanate from recent discussions amongst Christian stakeholders concerning the nature and purpose of theological education specifically. Central to these discussions is the nature of the relationship between missiology and theology, and thus the place of mission in the curricular and co-curricular activities of theological education institutions (TEIs). Until relatively recently such discussions were uncommon even within the field of mission studies, to the extent that British missiologist Lesslie Newbigin was able to refer to the role of mission in theological education as 'the Cinderella of missions' (Newbigin, 1979, p. 105). But the times have changed: it is striking today to note the high proportion of scholarly voices contributing to discussions about the future of theological education who do so from explicitly missiological backgrounds and perspectives (e.g., Robert Banks, Christopher Wright, Rupen Das, Bernhard Ott, Fohle Lygunda Li-M).

These mission-centered discourses surrounding theological education emanate primarily from the "Copernican revolution" (Duraisingh, 2010, p. 13) that *missio Dei* thinking represents within mission studies and the broader theological arena. Professor of missional theology Darrell Guder coined the term "Trinitarian missiocentricity" to articulate the criticality of trinitarian ontology as a basis of the church's missional activity and nature (2015, p. xv). However, the concept itself can be traced as far back as the International Missionary Council's Willengen conference in 1952, and even to Karl Barth's seminal 1932 paper "Die Theologie und die Mission in der Gegenwart" ("Theology and Mission in the Present Situation"), in which he sought to locate the Church's missionary identity in God's trinitarian being and thus christened the Church as "a human community called to the act of mission" (as cited in Guder, 2015, p. 8). In this line of thinking, the Church's call to mission must be located within the sending nature of God himself. As the Father sends the Son and the Holy Spirit, so the Son and the Holy Spirit join with the Father in sending the Church into the world. Mission is thus identified as a divine attribute before a human endeavor, which in turn recenters the Church's mission onto God's purposes, plans, and perspectives over and above human structures, schemes, and strategies.

The concept of missional ecclesiology derives from *missio Dei* discourse because "God's invitation to participate in that *missio Dei*…gives rise to a mission-shaped church" (Duraisingh, 2010, p. 12). Mission is neither a specialized call for some in the congregation nor a program or task for the entirety of the congregation; rather, is the very identity, character, and vocation of each locally gathered congregation of Christ-followers. "Church" and "mission" do not connote two mutually exclusive spheres of divine activity, but rather the former is called to and formed for the latter. This framework emphasizes God's invitation to collective mission participation across the congregational gathering, a democratization of involvement in contradistinction to the specialist approach that has prevailed since 'the great 19th century of mission' in Europe, where a subset of experts were traditionally set apart from the wider body of God's people and assigned almost exclusive agency in mission (Ma, 2016, p. 93). As such, the local congregation is today commonly considered the primary mission agent, and thus mission must be "the fundamental, the essential, the centering understanding of the church's purpose and action" (Guder, 2015, p. 65).

This missional 'chain of logic' can be carried onward from God, to the church, to TEIs themselves, as per Bernhard Ott's table below (2001, p. 82):

	Dimension	Intention
Missio Dei ⬇	*God's missionary nature*	*God's act of sending his Son and his Spirit*
Ecclesiology ⬇	*The missionary nature of the church*	*The church's specific missionary actions*
Theology ⬇	*The missionary nature of all theology*	*Specific reflection on the church in mission*
Theological Education	*The missionary nature of all theological education*	*Specific, mission-oriented training*

Lesslie Newbigin argued that the Church should have a missionary dimension that infuses its existence even when not explicitly engaged in intentional mission work (1958, p. 21). Bernhard Ott's model incorporates those concepts into his model and demonstrates how the mission-oriented nature of theological education is a product of God's missionary nature. Thus, the essential purpose of TEIs becomes the enablement of churches to participate in the *missio Dei* by encouraging and equipping their students as ministry leaders who serve in light of God's own mission purposes in the world. As such, theological education is not an end in itself, "but rather a means for God's people to be equipped for God's mission," and thus "the formation of the church for mission should be the motivating force that shapes and energizes our theological labors" (Guder, 2015, pp. 14–15). Thus, TEIs must be formational in inclining students toward participation in the *missio Dei* and mobilizational in equipping them to serve the world in mission. This is clearly expressed in the Cape Town Commitment from the 2010 Lausanne III conference: "The mission of the church on earth is to serve the mission of God, and the mission of theological education is to strengthen and accompany the mission of the church" (Wright, 2010).

Mission in African Theological Education

Christianity in Africa has grown from 9.6 million adherents in 1900 to 667 million by the year 2020, a shift described by missiometrician Gina Zurlo as "the most dramatic religious transformation of any continent over the past 120 years" (2022, p. 6). This remarkable numerical growth of Christianity across sub-Saharan Africa has resulted in the rapid multiplication of churches and the accompanying increased demand for theologically trained church leaders and hence training institutions themselves. A substantial number of African churches seek some form of formal theological training for their leaders, especially those churches belonging to "historic denominations" planted by and descended from Western missionaries, so more TEIs with increased capacities are needed to fill ecclesiastical leadership gaps and nurture ministerial effectiveness. TEIs in Africa are normally acknowledged as being highly influential in the spiritual and vocational formation of African church. But to what extent are they founded upon Trinitarian missiocentricity as described above?

Interestingly, many African scholars appear to be pessimistic regarding the current effectiveness of African TEIs in equipping local church leaders for missiocentric and missionary-sending leadership. Rwandan theologian Tharcisse Gatwa warns that African Christianity is fragile due to its "incapacity to affirm its missionary identity," which he attributes to "the weaknesses of its theological education," equating the African Church to a giant standing on the "clay legs" of its own TEIs (2015, p. 85). He argues that these clay legs of missionlessness have resulted in what he terms "ostracism in the pastorate," a disconnect between the church leader and the people of God,

society, and the wider global context due to a "mediocrity in training" (2015, p. 90). Similarly Congolese missiologist Fohle Lygunda Li-M's doctoral research concludes that the DRC and other sub-Saharan countries have become Christianized settings without impactful Christianity due to the failure of missiological education in TEIs, so that many Protestant churches are now "mission-mindless" (2016, p. 221). He even warns that this situation can result in the "euthanasia" of the church (139). Marilyn Naidoo's recent qualitative research in South Africa found similarly that TEIs there "lacked contextual relevance to deal with the spiritual needs of their sociocultural contexts" (2022, p. 227). Quips about theological *seminaries* as theological *cemeteries* abound. In short, many African scholars acknowledge that, although there do exist newer, more contextually-located and missiologically-aware TEIs, many established colleges (often associated with imported Western denominations) are not effectively equipping church leaders to be missionally engaged.

The Developing Relationship between Theology and Mission

In his 1991 magnum opus *Transforming Mission*, South African missiologist David Bosch describes the evolving relationship between theology and mission over time (1991, pp. 489–498). This typology provides important context for understanding why many African theological education institutions find themselves in their present "moment." There appear to be at least six distinct stages to Bosch's schema:

(1) **Instrumental:** Bosch describes how the New Testament was generated from and for a church not resting in comfortable luxury but rather battling to survive and thrive in a minority, sometimes-persecuted, missionary context. Bosch uses Martin Kähler's phrase "mission is the mother of theology" to demonstrate how the theological development of the Early Church took place within the context of engaging with, and expanding within, surrounding dominant religious cultures.

(2) **Invisible:** As Christianity emerged not only as a protected religion following the Edict of Milan in the year 312 but even as the established religion of the Roman Empire following the Edict of Thessalonica seven decades later, the amalgamation of church and state in Latin-speaking Europe swallowed up the explicitly missionary dimension of early Christianity.

(3) **Incorporated:** Influenced by Enlightenment-inspired dualism, Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768-1834) divided the discipline of theology into the fourfold schema of biblical studies, systematic theology, church history, and practical theology. Missiology was incorporated into practical theology as a minor subdivision, considered a "daughter" of theology, and so subsumed and sidelined by the primacy of its "mother."

(4) **Independent:** The response of missiologists during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries to the diminishment of their field was to seek a form of independence from theology. Following the increased Protestant awareness of "foreign mission fields" during global colonization by north European empires, some TEIs accommodated missiology more explicitly as an autonomous "sister" discipline alongside and concurrent to theology. However, such autonomy had an unwelcome consequence: mission studies became an outsider, something isolated from the Church's broader theologizing and thus ultimately a "little sister" to theology.

(5) **Integrated:** Following the decolonizing "winds of change" that blew following World War II and the numerical and theological growth of Christianity across the majority world, it became apparent that mission had ramifications for all facets of theological discourse and could not remain detached as a differentiated, discrete discipline independent of theology. Theologians were required to integrate mission thinking intentionally into their disciplines, and to treat missiology as an equal sibling to theology (a twin sister?). Bosch, however, notes that, despite noble intentions this equal standing is rarely enacted successfully because "teachers of other subjects usually are not sufficiently aware of the innate missionary dimension of all theology" (492).

(6) **Internalized:** Bosch finally proposes a new understanding of the relationship between missiology and theology as part of his "emerging ecumenical paradigm," with the concept of *missio Dei* at the center. Bosch argues that missiology should be considered essential to theological concerns because "theology, rightly understood, has no reason to exist other than critically to accompany the *missio Dei*" (494). This is the context in which he employs his renowned analogy of mission as a "a gadfly in the house of theology, creating unrest and resisting complacency, opposing every ecclesiastical impulse to self-preservation, every desire to stay where we are" (496). Bosch's emerging ecumenical paradigm thus seeks a return to the mindset of the Early Church whereby missiology is internalized into the very fabric of the theological process as the mother of theology.

Bosch's entire historical sweep can be summarized according to the table below. The final column of the table shows a quote from recent mission literature describing how each of the different stages of the relationship between theology and missiology can be observed even today.

Relationship of missiology to theology	Theology is	Missiology is	Time Period	Description	Quotation illustrating the model in TEIs today
Instrumental	Daughter to missiology	Mother of theology	New Testament and the early church	Theologizing in the crucible of mission	(See 'Internalized' below)
Invisible	Default (absence of missiology)	Rarely considered	Constantine to post-Reformation	Theologizing in Christendom without mission	"A student can graduate without attending a single course related to missions. These trends show a profound malaise afflicting some of our theological colleges and students feel uneasy. . . to involve themselves in missionary activities" (Patmury 1994, 18–19).
Incorporated	Mother of missiology	Daughter to theology	Nineteenth century	Theologizing with scant recognition of mission	Pastors "have been trained in seminaries with elective courses available about missions, but seldom part of the core curriculum" (Horner 2011, 33)

Independent	Big sister to missiology	Little sister to theology	Late-nineteenth and early twentieth centuries	Theologizing alongside mission	"We have pastors who possess little vision for the global Kingdom . . . we also have missionaries with inadequate theological training" (Wheeler 2015, 153)
Integrated	Twin sister to missiology	Twin sister to theology	Twentieth century	Theologizing with the mindset of mission	"Some theology professors are struggling with the formulation of a theology of mission" (Lygunda Li-M 2016, 218).
Internalized	Daughter to missiology	Mother of theology	Twenty-first century	Theologizing in the globalized context of mission	"A missional curriculum . . . explores how mission will reframe [theological training] to equip the church for mission" (Goheen 2016, 314).

Bosch's emerging ecumenical paradigm (the "internalized" phase) has, since the 1991 publication of *Transforming Mission*, become largely entrenched amongst missiologists. This pervasive influence is exemplified by Peter Phan employing the idiom *extra missiologiam nulla theologia* ("outside missiology there is no theology") at the 2016 Association of Professors of Mission conference before commenting humorously on how he was "preaching to the choir" using a "quasi-infallible pronouncement" (2016, p. 15).

The Relationship Between Theology and Missiology in African TEIs

The apparent consensus among African scholars is that the failure of some African TEIs to effectively internalize mission into their theological education is primarily because, begat from Western mission churches, Western missionaries, and Western denominations, many African TEIs inherited introverted, mission-deprioritized Christendom-based educational paradigms during the eras of colonial (and post-colonial) subjugation. These paradigms reflected Bosch's invisible, independent and/or incorporated stages. Theological education was replicated across Africa in the image of North Atlantic forms, methods, epistemologies, and theologies, leaving them fragmented and dis-integrated, deprived of well-functioning contextualized theological traditions operating effectively under Bosch's "Internalizing" paradigm. As Congolese missiologist Lygunda explains, Western theological curricula were "exported to the majority world by missionaries to serve as the required model in seminaries. As a consequence, ministers most often could go out of theological institutions with an introverted view of the church and its mission" (2016, p. 73; cf. Gatwa, 2015, p. 87; Naidoo, 2022, p. 227).

Toward an Internalized Paradigm of Theological Education in Africa

What then are the possible pathways toward a more integrated, internalized model of theological education for training missiocentric and missionary-sending church leaders in Africa?

Former Professor of Theology at Yale Divinity School David Kelsey theorized that all approaches to theological education can be categorized according to the bipolar division of "Athens" or "Berlin" (1993). The former approach derives from Greek classical epistemology and emphasizes character transformation and the cultivation of godly wisdom. The latter approach originates with Friedrich Schleiermacher's enlightenment epistemology emphasizing the critical,

rational application of theology as a science requiring systematic research by focusing on academic rigor and clerical professionalism. The tension between these historical paradigms is partly responsible for the inherent chasm evident in many TEIs between theory and application, or between theology and mission, not least because neither appears to leave conceptual space for mission.

Fuller Theological Seminary professor Robert Banks attempted to fill this gap by constructing a missional model in response (1999). In his model, named "Jerusalem," mission is the unified, overarching goal of theological education, requiring a more field-based, praxis-oriented, holistic approach. In this way, the pedagogic process is one of "action-reflection" where students reflect on action and act on reflection. Banks argues that we should not just learn theology, but do it (159), not just prepare for ministry, but engage reflectively in it (132), not just consider mission, but insert ourselves into it (161). Banks's model does not only focus on incorporating missiological content into the theological curriculum but rather points to transforming the entire process of theological education toward internalizing engagement with local contexts and global realities.

Some further models have emerged in addition to the Athens, Berlin, and Jerusalem typologies. These include the "Geneva" (Edgar, 2005, pp. 212–214) and "New Delhi" (Cronshaw, 2012, p. 12) models. However, most intriguing for the purposes of this article comes from Congolese missiologist Fohle Lygunda Li-M in his 2016 book *Transforming Missiology*. The book title itself is acknowledged by the author as a riff off Bosch's *Transforming Mission*. Lygunda Li-M's book contains, as with Bosch's, the seeds of two interconnected ideas: that missiology in Africa both requires transformation yet also possesses transformative potential. He argues that the Athens, Berlin, and even Jerusalem models have been formulated primarily from and for Western contexts and are not relevant enough to African contexts or observant enough of African realities. He thus builds upon Banks's model by using qualitative research undertaken with TEIs in the DRC to formulate what he terms the "Antioch Model—named in recognition of the fact that Antioch, more than Jerusalem, serves as the primary multi-ethnic, Spirit-led, intentional sending center in Luke's Acts narrative (2016, pp. 129–134).

Symbol	Antioch
Model	Transforming education
Context	Higher education: Community of learning and serving
Purpose (goal)	Knowing God for his mission Personal development for God's mission Strengthening the church for God's mission Challenging any mission-mindless tradition
Expected outcomes	The production of transformed graduates The production of theoretically aware and practically effective graduates The production of missiophiles (with love for God's mission) The production of graduates who know a nondenominational God
Learning ethos	Personal experience Applied reflection Missional theology Denominational identity in the service of God's glocal mission
Theology is . . .	The process of experiencing God for his glocal mission

	Thinking about God's mission purposes and applying theory to the context Missional (that is for the sake of *missio Dei*) Evaluating and orienting tradition in the light of God's mission
Missiological education is . . .	The process through which the church and its educational institutions prepare learners for God's glocal and holistic mission through theory, training, and practice of mission

This Antioch model appears to reflect Bosch's "internalized" stage, for it is characterized by i) intentional integration of missiology into all aspects of the curriculum, ii) challenging dis-integrated mission-mindless traditions, iii) focused on preparing students for participation in the glocal outworkings of the *missio Dei*, and iv) the centrality of "sentness" in both the ontology of the Trinity and the essence of the local church. As such Lygunda Li-M speaks about seminary training that does not simply study missiology or even merely practice missiology, but rather is transformed through missiological education to produce missiophile graduates. Those graduates will then lead churches that are not only mission-envisioned but will also exist as communities-in-mission, actively participating in God's plans locally and globally.

Interestingly (and *contra* Bosch) Lygunda argues that the "missional church" concept common to many Western evangelical settings is an unwelcome imposition which excludes African churches from global mission participation by calling the African Church to restrict its gaze only to local, monocultural settings, thus overlooking the necessity of crossing cultural and geographical frontiers. He argues that the African Church has a rich history of such culture-crossing, boundary-transcending ministry, and that missional church terminology should not be deployed to limit such ongoing involvements. Lygunda also suggests that some African theologians have purposely deemphasized missiology for fear of being seen as instruments of imperialism, and he thus calls for an African theology that is a missional African theology, attuned to gospel witness in both local and global settings. This call is Lygunda Li-M's directive for African TEIs to cultivate a transformative and transformed missiology.

An Application to a Ugandan Context

My own recent doctoral research (see Howles, 2022) through Fuller Theological Seminary employed a multidisciplinary approach (including Biblical studies, leadership studies, pedagogical theory, missiology, and behavioral science) to formulate an applied model for implementing Lygunda Li-M's "Antioch" approach to my own specific teaching context: Uganda Martyrs Seminary Namugongo (UMSN), a comparatively large Ugandan Anglican TEI where I have lived since 2011. The model's purpose is not only that the Ugandan Church would be self-missionizing (a term coined as a fourth "self" principle by missiologist and current president of Malawi, Lazarus Chakwera: 2000) but also "self-missiologizing" (Taylor, 2000, p. 6), i.e., engaging deeply in contextualized, missiological reflection. The model is a semester-long, voluntary, small-group, co-curricular fellowship based on principles of holistic, integral training. It has been designed to help UMSN students—future local church leaders—to go through a process of intentional missional transformation. The course is structured around a chronological five-stage process:

(1) **Recognition**: Stage 1 focuses on recognizing God's call on his people with a view to educating and exciting UMSN students about the needs and opportunities for our missional engagement in the world today.

(2) **Restoration**: Stage 2 focuses on restoring God's authority over us through Bible study, prayer, and worship to develop greater intimacy with God and his own commitment to and commission of mission activity according to his own "sending" character and being.

(3) **Realization**: Stage 3 is a week-long mission education and discovery trip (not a short-term missions trip) to less-reached parts of Northern Uganda, with a view to enabling students to realize God's mission purposes for their ministries through immersive learning in the practicalities and possibilities of transcultural mission engagement.

(4) **Reflection**: Stage 4 focuses on corporate reflection on God's intentions with us by delighting in God's promises for our participation in his global gospel purposes.

(5) **Re-Formation**: Stage 5 focuses on the re-formation of God's working through his people by implementing action in our lives and ministries that advocates for and advances God's mission plans.

By proceeding as a community of learners through this semester-long, co-curricular program (which has been planned out in detail week-by-week: See Howles 2022, 191–95), the ambition is to internalize missiology and missiocentricity into the heart of the cognitive, affective, and behavioral training taking place at UMSN, such that Ugandan Anglican local church leaders might enjoy transformational discipleship at a TEI steeped in African contextual realities in light of God's global missionary purposes.

Conclusion

Amidst a chorus of agreement amongst African scholars that many African TEIs have inherited Western, fragmented, mission-deprioritized systems and structures of theological training, Fohle Lygunda Li-M's "Antioch" model provides an important starting point in an emerging discourse concerning how the "construction site" of African TEIs can form missiocentric, missionary-sending local church leaders. May African TEIs no longer remain open to the reproach of being the Church's "clay legs" and instead become a strong and stable foundation for the continued growth of an African transcultural mission movement across the continent and around the world. In turn, may God use the African Church to speak more purposefully into fragmented and dichotomized Western theological endeavors to help them also to construct a missiocentric paradigm of theological training.

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The Role of Formal Theological Education in Missiological Strategies in Honor/Shame Contexts

Anna Daub

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Abstract

Missionaries oscillate between overemphasizing theological education and shying away from it. One factor that may play an essential role in determining the importance of theological education in missiological strategies is that of context. This article argues that missionaries working in honor/shame cultures need to consider the possible role of formal theological education in preparing a church elder/overseer (πρεσβύτερος, ἐπίσκοπος) to be able to teach. The article first examines the biblical qualification "able to teach," arguing for a cultural component to it. The discussion then introduces honor, shame, and honor/shame cultures. Finally, it provides specific ways formal education might help build cultural rapport for Christian elders/overseers to teach in these contexts.

Key Words: elder/overseer, formal education, honor, honor/shame cultures, theological education

Introduction

Many majority world cultures emphasize honor and shame. Jayson George's *Culture Test* suggests that "approximately 80 percent of the global population (i.e., Asians, Arabs, Africans, and even Latin Americans) runs on the honor-shame operating system" (Georges & Baker, 2016, p. 19).[1] If true, missionaries must continue considering how these cultural concepts might influence their strategies.

With the growth of the global church, leadership development is an essential component of missions. The International Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention considers it one of six core missionary tasks (*Foundations*, 2018, pp. 94–98). While missionaries rarely debate the need for leaders, they do dispute the role of formal theological education in leadership development. Missiological strategies oscillate between overemphasizing theological education and shying away from it completely.

When planning strategies, missionaries can fall into the trap of searching for a universal key for leadership development. However, each culture comes with its own particularities that missionaries must consider. Context can play an essential role in determining the importance of theological education in leadership development.

This article argues that missionaries working in honor/shame cultures need to consider the possible role of formal theological education in preparing a church elder/overseer—the English translations used here for πρεσβύτερος and ἐπίσκοπος—to be able to teach.[2] The article first examines the biblical qualification "able to teach," arguing for a cultural component to this skill. The discussion then introduces shame, honor, and honor/shame cultures. Finally, it points out specific ways formal educational credentials might assist in building the needed cultural rapport for Christian elders/overseers to teach in these contexts.

Considering Biblical Qualifications

Leadership development in missions strategies requires identifying qualifications and skills of leaders. This section first explores the qualification "able to teach" found in Paul's list of elder/overseer qualifications in 1 Timothy 3:2. Then it examines the corresponding text in Titus 1:9, where Paul encourages elders/overseers to "hold firm to the trustworthy word as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine."[3] It then questions the contextual nature of the skill of teaching, arguing that while "able to teach" primarily specifies knowledge of and commitment to God's Word, it also includes a contextual recognition that a person is a teacher. Because this article specifically focuses on 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 2, it therefore limits the discussion to leadership development to πρεσβύτερος and ἐπίσκοπος.

1 Timothy 3: Able to Teach

In 1 Timothy 3, Paul focuses on character, with the nod to one action or skill: "able to teach" (1 Timothy 3:2). Dave Harvey states, "This is the only nonnegotiable *skill or talent* listed in the eldership requirements [emphasis added]" (Harvey, 2012, pp. 116). By setting this one skill in the middle of a list of distinctly Christian character traits, Paul implies that a leader couples the ability to teach with integrity and uprightness. As all too many examples have shown, a leader who can teach but does not have good character can shipwreck a church.

The question arises, though: what makes someone able to teach? While Benjamin Merkle acknowledges that "there is some debate as to what qualifies as an aptitude for teaching" (Merkle, 2014, p. 181), many scholars and commentaries gloss over the idea. For example, W. Hulitt Gloer describes this attribute as "*an apt teacher*…able to teach effectively" (Gloer, 2010, p. 150). The International Mission Board's *Foundations* document states, "the pastor/elder/overseer must be able to teach the content of the Bible and sound biblical doctrine well" (*Foundations*, 2018, p. 96). These and other examples seem to assume that the various recipients of I Timothy innately know what makes someone able to teach.

Titus 1: Holding Fast to the Trustworthy Word

The corresponding list in Titus 1 provides a fuller explanation. In Titus 1:9, Paul expounds on the idea of being "able to teach," stating that an elder/overseer should "hold firm to the trustworthy word as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine" (Knight III, 1992, p. 294; Towner, 2006, p. 252). The main emphasis shifts from "able to teach" in 1 Timothy to "hold firm" in Titus.

Titus 1:9 has many implications for defining "able to teach." First and foremost, one who is able to teach must hold fast to the trustworthy Word. A teacher is not simply someone with the appropriate skill to teach; he intimately knows the Bible and conveys its message to those he leads. Second, this passage stresses that leaders have learned from others. William Hendriksen and Simon Kistemaker state, "No one, moreover, will be *able to teach* … unless he himself is *taught*." (Hendriksen & Kistemaker, 2002, p. 124). While God can raise up leaders with just a Bible and the Holy Spirit, he often works through the faithful training of other disciple-makers. Finally, elders/overseers must commit to this Word above all else (Mounce, 2000, p. 392). This wholehearted devotion to the Word cultivates the character qualifications in Titus and 1 Timothy, allowing elders/overseers to stand against the winds of cultural comfort and false teachings.

Potential elders/overseers must be able to teach. This section has demonstrated that this ability primarily encompasses knowledge and commitment to God's Word such that an elder/overseer can instruct and rebuke. In addition, solid character, as described in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1, must accompany this skill.

Teaching in a Contextually Understandable Way

The commitment to and knowledge of God's Word described above is the baseline of one's teaching ability. Without this baseline, no matter how successful or charismatic a leader may be in a context, that person is not meeting the biblical requirements of an elder/overseer. However, as missionaries work to develop leaders across cultural boundaries, they must ask if there is also a cultural aspect to one's ability to teach.

While many commentators gloss over "able to teach," some scholars expound on the phrase. Philip Towner states, "Within the sphere of Christian instruction …, the sense is of practical authoritative teaching that *compels believers* to implement the faith in all aspects of life [emphasis added]" (Towner, 2006, p. 692). William Hendriksen and Simon Kistemaker explain the meaning of both the Titus and Timothy sections, stating, "to the end that every overseer may be by means of his sound teaching *to incline will and heart to the joyful service of God*, and *to expose the errors* of those who rebel [emphasis added]" (Hendriksen & Kistemaker, 1996, p. 349). Both verbs—compel and incline—require disseminating information in a way that is understood and persuades the church to action.

Contextualization encourages the communication of the gospel and the Christian faith in a culturally appropriate way. Tim Keller defines contextualization as "giving people *the Bible's answers*, which they may not all want to hear, *to questions about life* that people in their particular time and place are asking, *in language and forms* they can comprehend, and *through appeals and arguments* with force they can feel, even if they reject them" (Keller, 2012, p. 89). Keller's definition may offer a window into teachers' cultural *je ne sais quoi* ("indefinable attributes"). Someone who is able to teach must be biblically qualified—giving the people the Bible's answers—but they must also have the ability to teach in "languages and forms" the people can understand, through "appeals and arguments with force they can feel." Christian elders/overseers must strive to communicate truth in a culturally impactful manner.

Missionaries need to recognize this cultural element to the ability to teach. Each role in society has cultural assumptions that accompany them. In other words, the role of a capable, equipped teacher has specific traits or qualifications that are often unvoiced but carry cultural weight. What makes someone a gifted teacher in one culture may not make them one in another.

In conclusion, these biblical qualifications and cultural assumptions help build a fuller picture of a Christian elder/overseer in a specific culture. As mentioned before, the biblical qualifications found in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1 form the baseline requirements for elders/overseers. If Christians possess the cultural savvy to be teachers but do not meet these biblical qualifications, they are not fit to serve in this role. These cultural elements, however, can build upon this scriptural baseline, augmenting the force people feel in response to the teacher's words. The Bible, however, does not require these cultural qualifications. Therefore, a person who lacks them is fit to be an elder/overseer but should work to develop the skills needed for people in that society to recognize him as an apt teacher. Together, the biblical and cultural qualifications amplify the elder's/overseer's ability to teach in a specific context.

This section has examined the elder/overseer qualification, "able to teach" in 1 Timothy 3:2, and the corresponding requirement in Titus 1:9 to "hold firm to the trustworthy word." It argued that the main impetus of this qualification is knowledge of and commitment to God's Word. However, it also contested that contextual elements might influence one's ability to teach. While churches should not mandate these cultural elements because they are not biblical requirements, they should recognize and cultivate them in potential elders/overseers.

Theological Education in Honor/Shame Cultures

As shown above, people may innately identify teachers according to specific values, skills, or traits. Missionaries must investigate these cultural assumptions when working in predominantly honor/shame cultures. Marvin Mayers argues, "*Every group has natural leaders*—those who lead it in keeping with the group expectations" (Mayers, 1987, p. 132). The same idea can apply to those who teach.

This section focuses on theological education in honor/shame cultures, asking whether educational credentials help people in these cultures recognize a person as able to teach. To do so, it introduces honor, shame, and honor/shame cultures. Then, it explores some possible implications of formal theological education in honor/shame cultures by delving into education's relationship with honor and collectivism.

Introduction to Honor/Shame Cultures

The motifs of shame and honor have garnered attention in missiology in the last few decades. Some missiologists and anthropologists describe cultures through the markers of guilt/innocence, honor/shame, or sometimes fear/power (See Benedict, 1946; Georges, 2017; Georges & Baker, 2016; Nida, 1954 for examples). Yet, the ideas of shame and honor—and honor/shame cultures—are often clouded, difficult to describe, and sometimes contested. Veli Kärkkäinen admits concerns with some of the early honor/shame scholarship but also argues that people in some cultures do tend to exhibit these distinguishing characteristics (Kärkkäinen, 2020, p. xiv). This section briefly explains shame and honor and then describes honor/shame cultures.

Shame and Honor

Shame and honor are complex concepts. Christopher Flanders and Werner Mischke define shame as "the feeling or condition of being unworthy or defective. … This can occur in public or relational contexts (e.g., embarrassment, social stigma, or scorn); it may also be the private experience of the individual without any audience (simply feeling ashamed or harboring a sense of inadequacy)" (Flanders & Mischke, 2020, p. xx). Honor, conversely, is the "positive recognition of or by a group or individual based upon some type of excellence or norm" (Flanders & Mischke, 2020, p. xx). Scholars often juxtapose shame with guilt and fear (Georges & Baker, 2016, 2016; Nida, 1954).

E. Randolph Richards and Richard James argue that concepts like honor and shame are cultural tools that serve as "a means for enforcing and reinforcing a value" (Richards & James, 2020, p. 129). This distinction paints a slightly different picture than other popular understandings. Instead of honor and shame being the deep values or paradigms of the culture, Richards and James contend that collectivistic cultures have deep values, and honor and shame serve as tools, buckets, or lenses to maintain them (Richards & James, 2020, pp. 129–131).

Honor and Shame Cultures

While people from all cultures experience guilt, shame, and fear, many cultures emphasize one trait more than the others. Georges and Baker state, "'Honor-shame cultures' refers to *collectivistic* societies where the community tends to shame and exclude people who fail to meet group expectations, and reward loyal members with honor" (Georges & Baker, 2016, p. 18). In these cultures, people accentuate honor/shame more than guilt/innocence or fear/power. Just because people in a culture emphasize honor and shame does not mean that they exclude guilt/innocence or fear/power (Georges, 2017, p. 15; Muller, 2000, p. 55; Nicholls, 2001, pp. 233–234; Tennent, 2007, p. 79; You, 1997, p. 57). Also, cultures express these honor/shame dynamics differently, resulting in a symphony of honor/shame cultures. Therefore, while these cultures may share similarities, the honor/shame dynamic is a tool for understanding, not assumption or prejudice.

Formal Education in Honor/Shame Cultures

Because there is no one-size-fits-all description of honor/shame cultures, assessing the role of formal education in these cultures is challenging. This section, therefore, does not intend to prove the necessity of formal education for all honor/shame cultures but instead raises the anthropological question of what qualifications or traits teachers need for others in that culture to recognize them as people who are able to teach. It introduces concepts related to formal theological education that missionaries should consider, particularly questioning education's relationship to both honor and collectivism.

Formal Education and Honor

In honor/shame cultures, missionaries must question the relationship between formal education and honor. First, they need to ask whether educational credentials carry an assumed cultural weight or currency. Jonathan Pennington explains: "In honor-shame societies, honor is like a currency that gives people status and power (much as money does in modern Western societies). Honor is granted according to what the society values" (Pennington, 2022). Therefore, missionaries in honor/shame cultures must discover what bestows honor.

In most cultures, people recognize two types of honor: ascribed honor and achieved honor. Ascribed honor comes with birth or a name and is somehow related to one's family or community. Conversely, achieved honor comes through individual success (Neyrey, 1998, pp. 15–16). Cultures prioritize these two types of honors differently. Some cultures see them as complementary, while others view them as competitive. Honor/shame cultures often highlight ascribed honor but can also have a place for achieved honor.

Formal theological education may provide one pathway to achieved honor. Roland Muller claims that in some shame-based Islamic cultures, "education bestows honor" (Muller, 2000, p. 91). Richards and James start their chapter on honor with the story of an Arabic man who worked for a Ph.D. so "he would be honored by the community with a title that could not be lost" (Richards & James, 2020, p. 133). For people in these cultures, educational credentials can provide a culturally understood weight to the teacher's authority.

Herein lies an important consideration, though. Not all honor/shame cultures value the same things. People from one honor/shame culture might bestow honor for education, while people from another might emphasize other things, such as age or socioeconomic status. Therefore,

missionaries cannot assume a silver bullet approach to the role of theological education, even among cultures identified as honor/shame cultures.

Second, missionaries should also consider what might take away honor or bring a teacher shame. Joseph Henrich states, "People experience shame when they, their relatives, or even their friends fail to live up to the standards imposed on them by their communities" (Henrich, 2020, p. 22). In other words, if people in these cultures expect teachers to have formal education, missionaries, by downplaying its importance, could set up future leaders for painful, shameful experiences when they fail to meet society's expectations.

Formal Education and Collectivism

This section assumes that many honor/shame cultures share collectivist tendencies and therefore explores the possible relationship between formal education and collectivism. Richards and James explain the use of shame in collective cultures, stating,

> Collectivist cultures think collectively. It is not that the community is alarmed that I (as an individual) have moved too far. Their thinking is more alarm that I have pulled *all of us* off center. … My community will use shame to make me aware that I have drifted. The goal—and this is critical to understand—is to *pull* me back toward the center, for everyone's benefit. We have rescued me *and us* (Richards & James, 2020, p. 184).

This description raises a critical consideration for a teacher's ability to teach. Theological education from a respected entity might provide a person with an affirmation that he will keep the collective group centered and will not push the group into shameful territory. In other words, formal theological education may provide a sense of trust or security, and as Craig Ott states, "If you trust the person, you trust the information" (Ott, 2021, p. 146).

Again, the diversity of cultures with honor/shame tendencies provides an important caveat. While people in some honor/shame cultures might put collective trust in credentials, others might disregard or downplay such credentials in favor of relational networks or perceived authority. Again, missionaries need to learn about and understand the role of formal education—and by extension, theological education—in collective honor/shame cultures.

Finally, in collectivist cultures, education might bring collectively achieved honor. James Plueddemann acknowledges that students performing well in school can bring honor to their parents (Plueddemann, 2018, p. 66). He argues the educational aim of collective cultures is "success for the sake of making family proud, avoiding shame, and bringing status and honor *to the community* [emphasis added]" (Plueddemann, 2018, p. 77, Table 8.1). As national Christians pursue formal education, they may simultaneously bring honor to their entire family, tribe, or people. Could the opposite also be true? Is it possible that missionaries unintentionally shame communities when Western workers with formal academic credentials dismiss or downplay national Christians' desire for education?

This section examined formal education's relationship to both honor and collectivism in honor/shame cultures, presenting potential ways education may add cultural weight to teachers in these cultures. These two possibilities represent examples of many other categories to consider for formal education's importance in a person's ability to teach in these cultures. Therefore, missionaries need to work with cultural insiders to understand the role of formal education in their particular culture before deciding whether to emphasize it in leadership development strategies.

Some Problems to Avoid

As with any missions strategy, potential pitfalls threaten from all sides. For example, people who wish to build their own kingdoms may recognize the cultural currency of academic credentials and use them to gain status or demand dominance over others. To avoid this pitfall, leaders must realize that Christ calls them to use their honor for the good of the church, not themselves.

Second, churches can assume formal education implies that potential leaders have the character qualifications mentioned in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1 (Merkle, 2008, p. 122). However, as mentioned earlier, a person who does not have the necessary character traits is not qualified for leadership in the church, regardless of their cultural ability to teach. Formal theological education may help develop these character traits, but it in no way guarantees them.

Conclusion

While discussing eastern views on the atonement, Timothy Tennent states, "Since Western systematic theology has been almost exclusively written by theologians from cultures framed primarily by the values of guilt and innocence, there has been a corresponding failure to fully appreciate the importance of the pivotal values of honor and shame in understanding Scripture and the doctrine of sin" (Tennent, 2007, p. 91). When considering the question of formal theological education in mission strategies, one must ask if missiologists, at times, err similarly. Missionaries can bring their own preconceived notions about the role of education and the value of theological education in general.

This article has argued that missionaries working in honor/shame cultures need to consider the possible role of formal theological education in preparing an elder/overseer to be able to teach. First, it examined "able to teach" in 1 Timothy 3 and the corresponding "hold fast to the Word of the truth" in Titus 1. Though acknowledging a biblical baseline to the skill, it also argued that "able to teach" has a contextual aspect. Next, it examined those contextual aspects, introducing the concepts of shame, honor, and honor/shame cultures contending that education might provide honor or collective trust to a teacher. Though his article focused on the development of πρεσβύτερος and ἐπίσκοπος, the principles could also be applied to other leadership roles.

What, then, is the role of formal theological education in leadership development in honor/shame cultures? First, formal theological education is not a biblical requirement for leadership. The lists in Titus 1 and 1 Timothy 3 do not explicitly state, "Men must have an MDIV" to be an elder/overseer. Basic biblical qualifications focus mainly on character and the ability to teach.

Culture, however, may make the role of formal theological education in leadership development more complicated than first assumed. While the Bible does not stipulate academic credentials as a requirement for elders/overseers, the context might encourage formal theological education as a helpful aid. In an honor/shame culture, formal theological education may play an important and sometimes overlooked role in leadership development. If so, while formal theological education should never be required, it should never be wholly discouraged, either.

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[1] Georges and Baker concede that *The Culture Test* "was developed primarily as a missions training tool, not a social research instrument so results are more suggestive than scientific" (Georges & Baker, 2016, p. 263, n. 19).

[2] Missionaries come from all over the world. "Missionary" in this article mostly refers to a cultural outsider who enters an honor/shame culture, but this use of the word is not meant to neglect or diminish missionaries who come from honor/shame cultures.

[3] This article uses ESV unless otherwise noted.

Prophets in the Seminary: The Prophetic Function as a Means of Maintaining Missional Focus in Theological Education

Matthew D. Hirt

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Abstract

Paul declares that the Lord has gifted some as apostles, prophets, evangelists, shepherds, and teachers (Ephesians 4:11). This article argues that prophets, as defined through a missional hermeneutic, are essential to theological education (TE) institutions maintaining focus on the mission of the Church. The article first reviews four different definitions of "prophets." It then demonstrates the need for the prophetic function in TE institutions by describing two forms of institutional drift. Finally, the article recommends the role that individuals fulfilling the prophetic function may play in calling TE institutions to refocus on the missionary task.

Key Words: APEST, drift, Ephesians, prophet, theological education

Introduction

Prophets have fulfilled an important function among God's people throughout history. While sharing a title with that of the Old Testament prophets (*nābîʾîm*), New Testament prophets after Pentecost (*prophētēs*) were primarily concerned with bearing witness to Jesus (Hill 1979, 48). This new focus marks a fundamental distinction between the prophetic functions in the Old and New Testaments (Heb 1:1–2; Grudem 2000, 28–29 Merkle 2022, 106).

As witnesses to Jesus, prophets serve an important function in the context of the local church. Ephesians 4:11–13 is a *locus classicus* for describing the order of functions in the Early Church, especially as those functions relate to the mission of the Church (Barth 2008, 478). Theological education (TE) institutions, as partners with local churches in the mission of the Church, may benefit from incorporating all five (or four: see Merkle 2016, 127–128) functions into their faculty and administrative structures. More specifically, the prophetic function is particularly beneficial for TE institutions to provide missional focus and prevent institutional drift.

This article first reviews four different understandings of prophets in contemporary global theology and builds on the evangelical idea of "prophetic function" as opposed to that of the prophetic *role* or *office* held by traditional Pentecostals and the New Apostolic Reformation (NAR). Second, two different forms of institutional drift common within TE institutions are briefly surveyed, demonstrating the need for the prophetic function in TE institutions. Finally, the potential impact for TE institutions will be assessed.

Prophets: Four Views

The discussion about prophets and the role of prophets in churches has been a resurgent topic in the last three decades (Hamon 1987; Wagner 1999; Grudem 2000). This conversation has often been unclear as individuals with different emphases and theological distinctions have brought their own definition of prophets to the table without explaining their meaning. The core of the conversation revolves around how "prophets" should be understood in the context of Ephesians 4:11–12: "And he himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, to build up the body of Christ." At least

four branches of thinking have emerged related to the understanding of prophets: New Apostolic Reformation, traditional Pentecostal, and two different evangelical understandings. In evaluating these different views, it must be emphasized that the purpose of these gifted people is to prepare Christians to engage in various aspects of the missionary task. Ephesians 4:12 is clear that the various individuals are called to work together to build up the Church to prepare them to carry out the mission of the Church (Silva 2014, 270).[1] Furthermore, Ephesians 4:13–15 does not indicate any kind of hierarchy among these gifts. Instead, the individuals are called to work together in unity and love towards equipping the saints to fulfill the Great Commission.

New Apostolic Reformation

C. Peter Wagner insists that the New Apostolic Reformation (NAR) is "an extraordinary work of God at the close of the twentieth century, which is, to a significant extent, changing the shape of Protestant Christianity around the world" (Wagner 1999, 5). Wagner further insists that the changes are not doctrinal, "But the quality of church life, the governance of the church, the worship, the theology of prayer, the missional goals, the optimistic vision for the future, and other features, constitute quite a change from traditional Protestantism" (Wagner 2011). One of the defining features of NAR is a method of church governance based on Ephesians 4:11–12 with apostles at the top of a "divine order" followed by prophets (Hamon 1997, 54; Dent 2019, 24–26).

Wagner bases his understanding of the role of prophets on Amos 3:7 and 2 Chronicles 20:20. He explains that "Every apostle needs alignment with prophets and every prophet needs apostolic alignment" (Wagner 2011). In a more critical treatment, Geivett and Pivec explain that those who hold to the NAR view "affirm the existence of prophets comparable to the great Old Testament prophets and who possess extraordinary authority extending to individuals, churches, and nations. NAR leaders hold that these prophets govern the church and reveal new truths, which are often described as strategies for advancing God's kingdom" (Geivett and Pivec 2014, 99).

Apart from arguing for a radical departure from traditional Protestant doctrine, the NAR understanding of prophecy raises at least one significant problem for theological education: prophets (and apostles) hold unquestionable authority when they speak. Even if a so-called prophet were to teach something that is in error or contrary to Scripture, the prophet is placed in a position of authority that cannot be corrected or even questioned. Haman explains: "One of the quickest ways to get in trouble with God is to falsely accuse one of Christ's true prophets. When we do that, we are touching the very nerve of Heaven, and we are sure to receive a negative reaction. God says in His Word, '*Do My prophets no harm'* (1 Chron 16:22)" (Hamon 1987, 160). Hence if NAR prophets were in a seminary classroom—either as a student or professor—their presence would significantly undermine the educational process which requires developing critical thinking skills, proper hermeneutical method, and contextual application. A prophet making authoritative declarations regarding the interpretation of Scripture allows for little or no room for critical thinking and raising crucial questions to the teacher. It is outside the scope of this article to completely refute the NAR understanding of prophets, but the NAR view of prophets would mean that prophets have no role to play in TE institutions in preparing students to engage in the missionary task.

Traditional Pentecostal

The traditional Pentecostal view noticeably differs from the NAR position, and many traditional Pentecostals have sought to distance themselves from the NAR (Prophetic Standards Statement

2022; NAR and Christian Nationalism Statement 2022). While Pentecostals similarly tend to see Ephesians 4:11 referring to specific ministry roles or offices, at least some assert that the emphasis in Ephesians 4:11–12 is on the work of ministry given to all the saints (Assemblies of God Position Paper 2001). Some Pentecostals also see a distinction between the office of prophet and gift of prophecy. For example, The Assemblies of God (AG) largely define the apostolic function as relating to what many would call missionary activity.

The traditional Pentecostal view is carefully nuanced. While there is a desire to remain open to the possibility of new direct revelation from God, there is also much more interest in focusing on the prophecy as proclamation of Christ. The AG position paper explains that "the theme of Acts is that every believer receives the power of the Holy Spirit to be a prophetic witness to the risen Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 1:8)" (Assemblies of God Position Paper 2001). Craig Keener further explains that the Book of Acts "portrays the broader activity of christocentric testimony (Acts 1:8) as inspired speech, undoubtedly one reason that 'the word of the Lord' in Acts, as in Paul, normally refers to the good news" (Keener 2012, 910).

This Pentecostal Christocentric focus on gospel proclamation has relevance for theological education. In particular, students receiving theological education need to see how each subject they study should propel them to proclamation of the gospel. Prophets may "bring correction, instruction, and directional clarity to the Body, but not independent of other leaders, and therefore different from the model of the independent Old Testament prophet" (Prophetic Standards Statement, 2022). This application of the traditional Pentecostal definition of prophecy is helpful for TE institutions, and it overlaps with some of the implications of the evangelical views below. However, the aspect of the traditional Pentecostal definition that allows for ongoing direct revelation from God has little relevance for formal theological education. Even if one holds to the traditional Pentecostal view, the revelatory function of prophecy primarily belongs to the context of the local church (Keener 2012, 910; Thiselton 2000, 1134). Since seminaries and Bible colleges are not churches, the revelatory function would be out of place in TE institutions.

Two Evangelical Views: Preaching and Function

A distinguishing characteristic of the evangelical view is that Ephesians 4:11 is a list of gifts rather than of roles or offices (Merkle 2016, 127). However, some Evangelicals differ on the specific nature of these gifts especially as it relates to the gift of prophets. Some Evangelicals hold to the view that prophecy in the New Testament is primarily related to expositional preaching. Dever draws this correlation asserting, "The Old Testament prophets and the New Testament apostles were given not a personal commission to go and speak, but a particular message to deliver. Likewise Christian preachers today have authority to speak from God only so long as they speak his message and unfold his words" (Dever 2021, 46). MacArthur similarly argues that apostles and prophets continued to operate through the duration of the Church described in the New Testament, but "as they continued to serve the church, the evangelists and pastors and teachers did pick up the baton from the first generation apostles and prophets" (MacArthur 1986, 142). Despite some positive aspects to the arguments from Dever and MacArthur, other Evangelicals argue that expository preaching and prophecy are not synonymous (Knights 2018, 79).

An alternative evangelical definition is offered by Frost and Hirsch. They include the prophetic function within their APEST model. APEST is an acronym using the first letter of the five functions in Ephesians 4:11: apostles, prophets, evangelists, shepherds, and teachers (Frost & Hirsch 2013, 205–223). Within the model, they explain that the "prophetic function discerns the

spiritual realities in a given situation and communicates them in a timely and appropriate way to further the mission of God's people." Frost and Hirsch further indicate, "We would see a prophet as one who knows the mind of God on issues affecting the church and who speaks into the community eliciting transformation and growth." Furthermore, they do not limit these functions to church leadership but emphasize that all five functions must be practiced by the whole church (Frost & Hirsch 2013, 210-211).

Specifically relevant for TE institutions is how someone fulfilling the prophetic function "disturbs the status quo and challenges an organization to move in new directions" (Frost & Hirsch 2013, 214–216). TE institutions need individuals on the faculty and in administration who fulfill the prophetic function to avoid drift from the missionary task. TE institutions tend to seek stability (e.g., financial, enrollment, faculty, administrative) and will usually resist change in favor of the status quo. The prophetic function may thus be as unwelcome in theological education as it often is in the local church. Frost and Hirsch reflect, "We know numerous highly talented (APE type) people who felt a call to ministry and were told that they had no future in ordained, local church ministry…. We need to reiterate our belief that our current decline and malaise is directly linked to this loss of missional-apostolic leadership" (Frost & Hirsch 2013, 221). One of the major strengths of the APEST model is that it is firmly established on the foundation of a missional hermeneutic (Payne 2021, 3). For their long-term health and existence, institutions dedicated to theological training need to find a place for the prophetic function within the APEST model to prevent losing focus on the missionary task.

Institutional Mission Drift

Individuals filling the prophetic function in TE institutions are necessary because every institution, including one providing theological education, faces the risk of drifting from its original purpose. Historically, many TE institutions have in fact drifted from their original purpose (Greer & Horst 2014, 15, 17). Other seminaries and Bible colleges have formally discontinued their religious affiliation, while some have remained formally affiliated but practically indifferent towards any religious affiliation (Finn 2018, 39–40).

TE institutions tend to drift away from a missionary focus in at least two ways. First, TE institutions tend to drift towards producing scholars as an end to itself. Second, TE institutions tend to drift toward an inward focus and institutional preservation.

Drift Toward Scholarship

Scholarship is not inherently bad. In fact, there is good reason for seminaries to produce scholars. Theological scholars have made significant contributions to both the global Church and global missions over the centuries. However, scholarship can never be accepted as an end to itself. The emphasis of theological scholarship must always, and first, seek to advance the mission of the Church. Martin Kähler insists that theological development originated in the missionary task (Kähler 1971, 190). As Christianity spread to different cultural contexts, new questions were raised within these contexts. Theologians responded to these questions not as an academic exercise speaking to an isolated community of scholars but as the front edge of missionary advancement.

Furthermore, Kähler argues that omitting missions from any expression of Christianity does significant harm (Kähler 1971, 106). TE institutions are simultaneously expressions of Christianity and transmitters of Christianity to a new generation of leaders. Each generation of leaders must

learn how to serve faithfully in its own ever-changing cultural context and then also equip the next generation to do the same. This process is disrupted when institutions merely seek to produce scholars that are primarily interested in speaking to others in the academic community. Relegating missions, evangelism, and apologetics to their own disciplines outside the traditional theological disciplines does significant harm to both theology and missiology. As discussed elsewhere, "Theological education should lead to missional engagement, which, in turn, should result in new and deeper theological reflection" (Hirt 2021, 174). Both emphases need to be held together for both processes to be complete.

Drift Towards Institutional Preservation

In the realm of theological education, financial challenges seem to be ubiquitous. The financial struggles are even more pronounced in the Majority World. Greer and Horst observe that the combination of funding pressures, bad leadership decisions, and poor mission management are sometimes major contributors to a drift away from an institution's purpose (Greer & Horst, 2014, 68). Bellon similarly perceives that "Many theological institutions, strapped by financial pressure, operate under the premise that adding students alone will increase their revenue" despite the strong evidence that this presupposition is almost never true (Bellon 2017, 26). This volatile combination of factors leaves TE institutions particularly prone to drift towards institutional preservation at the expense of preparing students to fulfill the missionary task. TE institutions face the temptation of assuming that, because they may have received God's blessing in the past, they will continue to receive God's blessing despite shifting away from God's plan for the nations to preserving their own institutional structures. God makes no promise to bless his people in these circumstances, and, in fact, he often withdraws his Spirit when institutions and their leaders refuse to repent (Hirt 2021, 171–172).

The Prophetic Function in TE Institutions

With the risk of drift away from a missional emphasis in TE, individuals fulfilling the prophetic function as defined by Frost and Hirsch could help TE institutions prevent drift and maintain their external focus at least three distinct areas. First, they can provide missional focus for the institutional leadership. As mentioned above, TE institutions tend to drift towards an inward focus of either an exclusive emphasis on scholarship or towards institutional preservation. Those fulfilling the prophetic function can urge institutional leaders to regain a central focus on preparing students to fulfill the Great Commission with an emphasis on gospel proclamation, discipleship, church planting, and leadership development. Institutional administrators may be tempted to drive the focus of theological education toward developing gifted scholars or to simply prepare pastors to serve in existing churches. The global Church needs people to serve in these important roles, but this emphasis alone is too small of a vision. Scholars, regardless of academic discipline, need to be aware of global missions and that the Great Commission is no longer being fulfilled exclusively by Western Christians. Christian scholars can no longer assume that they are speaking into a predominantly Western conversation. Christian scholarship is a global conversation involving issues of cross-cultural communication and contextualization. Institutions interested in training scholars need to have faculty and administrators reminding them about this global conversation that is happening in the context of cross-cultural missions. Institutional leaders can be served by those fulfilling the prophetic function speaking into matters of curriculum design and core competencies. If a TE institution is not consistently called back to an outward missional focus, the trend is for them to drift toward internal focus and institutional preservation.

A second area where the prophetic function may provide missional focus is among the faculty through inter-department dialogue. All areas of theological study are essential to the development of a robust orthodoxy in any context. A missional hermeneutic of Scripture is essential as every discipline engages in the theological process (Payne 2021, 3). One of the most significant ways that the prophetic function may urge various theological disciplines to retain a missional focus is by frequently asking the question "So what?" In other words, what are the practical and contextual implications of theological conclusions? Kähler observes that this practical element is generally lacking in systematic theology, and this oversight has been to the detriment of systematic theologians (Kähler, 105). A missional focus prompted by those exercising the prophetic function in TE institutions will help faculty in all departments avoid scholarly pursuits isolated from the missional context in which they are being developed. Furthermore, the various theological disciplines will be confronted with the real contextual issues that arise rather than pursuing theoretical matters that may not have any relevance outside of the academy.

The third potential area where the prophetic function can provide missional focus is by guiding students to be sharply aware of the global mission of the Church. TE institutions exist for the purpose of preparing students for service in the local church and global missions. While there is room for advanced scholarship, institutions must not lose sight of this primary purpose. To that end, students likewise need to be reminded that they are called to be engaged in the Great Commission regardless of whether they serve in a pioneer missions context or in an established local church. Ashford and Whitfield insist, "The purpose of [Christian theology] is to equip the people of God to know and love God and to participate in his mission in the world" (Ashford and Whitfield 2014, 3). Leading students to engage in the theological process should include teaching them that the theological process is not complete unless there is a missional focus and application.

Conclusion

While much confusion persists around the definition and function of prophets in the Church, significant clarity can be achieved when a missional hermeneutic is applied in the interpretation of Ephesians 4:11–12. The five functions listed work together to equip all believers to carry out the ministry and mission of the Church. They are called to "speak the truth in love" to encourage one another to grow in Christlikeness (Eph 4:15). Christlikeness includes seeing the world as he sees it—as a field ready for harvest in need of laborers (Matt 9:37; Luke 10:2; John 4:35). Individuals fulfilling the prophetic function in TE institutions can serve as a powerful means of resisting institutional drift while simultaneously providing vitality to the institution, faculty, and students.

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[1] *Ergon* in the Pauline Epistles often carries the connotation of the missionary task. The following verses use *ergon* in reference to the missionary task: 1 Cor 9:1; 16:10; 2 Cor 1:24; 9:8; Phil 2:30; 1 Thess 5:13; 2 Thess 1:11; 2 Tim 2:15, 21; 3:17; 4:5.

Rethinking Reproducibility:
An Equipping Model for Missionary Theological Educators

Phil Barnes and Will Brooks

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Abstract

Reproducibility has often been reduced to the ability to simply replicate what has been taught. However, true reproducibility is the ability to produce or create something new in a new context. This article argues, then, that the central task of theological education in missionary contexts should be to locate, equip, and empower God-called individuals with theological aptitude, servant attitudes, and missional awareness to carry on the task of the Great Commission.

Key Words: character, competency, mobilization, reproducibility, theological education

Introduction

When church-planting missionaries are sent out, they enter a new cultural context in which they seek to share the gospel, disciple believers, plant churches, and then train leaders for those churches. The long-term goal for cross-cultural missionaries is typically not to lead the churches they plant but to raise up indigenous believers to lead those churches. For a variety of reasons, the missionary will not stay among the people forever. These reasons include lack of long-term visas, security issues, family pressure, health challenges, declining health of parents, and even interpersonal conflict (Pearce, 2022).

To speak of missionaries in this sense does not only envision U.S.-Americans going to other places. In today's world there are Chinese reaching Pakistanis, Brazilians sharing the gospel in India, Malaysians planting churches in North Africa and the Arabian Peninsula, Nigerians sharing Christ in North America, and in several of these examples (and in many others) these missionaries are sent for a time to reach people, plant churches, raise up leaders, and then eventually leave.

This missionary's need to exit should shape how the missionary approaches each aspect of the missionary task. For example, since the missionaries know they will eventually exit, they point these new believers to the Bible when they have questions instead of directly answering their questions. They train these new believers to read and interpret Scripture without the missionaries' guidance so they know how to answers questions that arise long after the missionaries leave. Thus, the missionaries' plan for discipling believers or training leaders must consider the real possibility that the indigenous leaders will be leading the church without the missionaries nearby.

How, then, does a missionary train leaders in such a way that prepares them for the reality that the missionary will not always be around? Some have argued that creating simple and reproducible training materials is the way to accomplish this goal (Anderson, 2022; Culbertson, n.d.; Watson & Watson, 2014). In other words, making the training curriculum simple and providing the materials in a way that disciples can quickly and easily pass them on to others will ensure that indigenous leaders have material to teach others if the missionary exits.

When it comes to theological education and leadership training, though, this article argues that this type of reproducibility is not the most helpful standard of evaluation and that one-size-fits-all programs come up short of producing mature disciples. Instead of focusing on how quickly

indigenous trainees or students can disseminate the content created by the missionary teacher, missions sending organizations and their missionaries should utilize an equipping model that provides nationals with the exegetical skill and theological ability to produce their own content. Instead of asking "Is it reproducible?" missionaries should ask of a training plan, "Does it equip them with the theological and exegetical skills they need?" A second question is, "Do these new leaders have the attitude and awareness they need to carry on the task of the Great Commission after the missionary returns to Malaysia, India, Nigeria, or wherever 'home' might be?"

Toward that end, this article argues that missionary teachers should recognize three realities about theological education and training. First, developing theological aptitude is more important than disseminating previously developed theological formulations. Second, seeking out and fostering students with a servant attitude is more important than finding students with charisma and natural leadership abilities. Finally, promoting missional awareness of the unfinished task of world missions is more important than crafting one-size-fits-all missions strategies to be used in any and all places in the world.

Theological Aptitude

First, developing theological aptitude matters more than disseminating pre-determined theological formulations. When considering the issue of how to train leaders for a newly planted church, there are two extremes to be avoided. On one hand, the missionary may want to keep the training as simple as possible so that, as a result of its simplicity, the training may be shared with others quickly. Anderson argues for this approach when he states, "If your disciples cannot immediately teach what you teach to others, you need to simplify" (Anderson, 2022).

At the other extreme, when training leaders for a newly planted church, missionaries may feel that these leaders need an extensive amount of *information* to lead effectively. As a result, they prepare a curriculum with excessive content. Some missionaries still see this approach as reproducible, though, since they give the leaders their notes at the end of the course and expect them to use those notes to teach others. However, this approach confuses the ability to teach with the ability to mimic. Benjamin Bloom developed a model known as Bloom's taxonomy which demonstrates that this kind of mimicking is at the lowest level of learning and that educators should strive to create learners who can do more than merely understand and even apply. Bloom believed that the highest level of learning and comprehension was demonstrated when the learners became creators themselves (Armstrong, 2010; Brooks, 2019, pp. 182-183).

An element of truth lies in both extremes: missionaries do need to train leaders in a way that equips them to teach others without an endless equipping, and leaders for these newly planted churches do need adequate content. The problem lies in an understanding of reproducibility where the missionary determines how much content is necessary, unilaterally teaches that content and determines how long the equipping process should continue, and then encourages the sharing of that content in the specific way he/she has prepared it. This approach has a low view of indigenous believers where all they are expected to do is learn the missionary's pre-packaged content and disseminate it to others.

In fact, at the beginning of the twentieth century, Roland Allen lamented the same type of attitude in the missions strategies of his day. He wrote,

> If the first converts are taught to depend upon the missionary, if all work, evangelistic, educational, social is concentrated in his hands, the infant community learns to rest passively upon the man from whom they receive their first insight into the gospel.... A tradition very rapidly grows up that nothing can be done without the authority and guidance of the missionary, the people wait for him to move, and the longer they do so, the more incapable they become of any independent actions.... The fatal mistake has been made of teaching the converts to rely upon the wrong source of strength (Allen, 1962, p. 81).

Allen's point, though, should not just be applied to consider how quickly the indigenous leader is given the freedom to disseminate the pre-determined content. It should also be applied to the question of who determines the message to be shared.

In contrast to traditional understandings of reproducibility, genuine reproducibility sees the indigenous leaders as equal partners and *contributors* to the global theological discussion. Training leaders in missionary contexts means equipping leaders to think theologically, to interpret Scripture on their own, and to apply the truths of Scripture that are significant to them and their churches (and not just those questions the missionary thinks are important). Instead of simply giving leaders "the answers" to important theological questions, they need to be equipped to do theology on their own. In other words, missionaries should aim for the highest level of Bloom's taxonomy and strive not for content disseminators but content *creators*.

One biblical example of the need for theological aptitude comes from Acts 20 and Paul's speech to the Ephesian elders. On one hand, Paul emphasizes several times how much he taught them, for example, "I did not shrink from declaring to you anything that was profitable" (20:20) and "I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole counsel of God" (20:27). Clearly Paul did not shy away from teaching or providing content that was helpful for the Ephesian leaders. At the same time, Paul knew a day was coming in which "none of you among whom I have gone about proclaiming the kingdom will see my face again" (20:25). He thus taught in a way that equipped them with the necessary skills and abilities to lead the flock in his absence—hence he could say, "I commend you to God and to the word of his grace" (20:32).

On a personal level, even though I (Will) am a missiologist, I mainly teach biblical studies in Asia. Even still, the missionary vision of raising up indigenous theologians drives how I teach biblical studies in this context. For example, I often teach a class on 1 Peter, but instead of teaching in a way that says, "Here's what 1 Peter means, now go and share that with others," I equip them with the exegetical skills that they can answer the question, "What does this text of 1 Peter mean" for themselves. Doing so also equips them to ask and answer the same question when they study other NT epistles. Clark Sundin makes a similar point in his article concerning developing leaders by teaching theological processes (Sundin, 2022). Perhaps what is most exciting about this whole process is seeing former students of mine who have become the teachers of this course and others. Moreover, even though they learned from me, they are developing their own teaching materials and sometimes coming to different conclusions about the text than I do.

Additionally, one significant problem with the one-way information transfer approach where the missionary determines what must be taught and shared is that in these contexts formerly untouched by the gospel, missionaries themselves have much to learn from indigenous believers. For example, in thinking theologically about the context, indigenous leaders will need to consider from a biblical perspective a host of issues in their context such as polygamy, ancestor veneration, bribery, fear of the spirit world, drinking of blood, and use of tattoos. While the missionary may

assume knowing the biblical content that addresses those issues, the indigenous leaders will know the context better. To adequately address these issues, the missionary must first learn from the indigenous leaders and then work together with them as partners.

Seeing indigenous leaders as valuable contributors to this process or to the larger process of contributing to the global theological conversation requires them to have a high theological aptitude. Thus, disseminating or reproducing the missionary's pre-determined content is not enough. Indigenous church leaders and theologians must be equipped to think theologically about their context and the world.

Servant Attitude

"But what we suffer from today is humility in the wrong place. Modesty has moved from the organ of ambition. Modesty has settled upon the organ of conviction; where it was never meant to be. A man was meant to be doubtful about himself, but undoubting about the truth" (Chesterton, 2022, p. 39).

An overemphasis on reproducibility has the potential to overvalue the cognitive and competency aspects of a leader and miss the character traits that Scripture emphasizes—such as humility and a spirit of service. Thus, in addition to emphasizing theological aptitude, missionary theological educators should focus on seeking out and fostering students with a servant attitude and a humble spirit. As indicated by the above quote from G. K. Chesterton, humility, however, has often been misunderstood to lack conviction. Theological educators should *not* seek to promote a lack of theological conviction in their students. Instead, they should seek to promote faithfulness to Christ and his Word. In a world obsessed with celebrity and measurable results, theological students need to train themselves to be faithful and humble.

In somewhat of a rebuke against some traditional goal-setting concepts, Plueddemann writes, "Traditional high-context cultures ignore formal evaluation, preferring intuitive value judgments, but learning in context is too unpredictable for SMART objectives" (Plueddemann, 2018, p. 133). SMART goals are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound. They are typically used by businesses to ensure that they are connecting with the world in tangible and practical ways. Plueddemann has the issue of measurability in view when he writes, "Measurement is important for the pilgrim educator, even though it is seldom quantifiable" (p. 134). Plueddemann goes on to give examples of some of his learning objectives and then writes, "Notice that none of my learning objectives meet the criteria of SMART goals or Mager's standards for instructional objectives. It would be easy for me to write SMART objectives for the course, but I'm aiming at something more profound and important" (p. 139).

The eleventh chapter of Hebrews teaches that the metric of Christian ministry is faithfulness, not measurable results. Focusing on faithfulness is what it means to be a servant of Christ. Verses 32-35a recount the stories of great results. Faith conquering kingdoms. Mouths of lions being shut. Promises being obtained. A temptation is to stop right there in the middle of verse 35 and define ministerial faithfulness by these results. Some insist that faithfulness will always yield the kind of results described in those verses. Indeed, the glorious truth is that faithfulness does *sometimes* yield these results. However, the text does not stop there. In verses 35b-37, we see some other faithful ministers who did not see lions' mouths shut nor foreign armies put to flight. These verses teach an inconvenient and uncomfortable truth for those who promote a reductionistic understanding of missions and evangelism. Ministerial faithfulness sometimes results in people being stoned and

sawn in two. These individuals are just as faithful and true as the others who received their dead back to life. The primary metric of Christian ministry being faithfulness rather than outward results is consistent throughout the NT.

An initial pair of examples to consider are the "Sons of Thunder"—James and John. When first reading the Gospels, one might assume that these two individuals will play significant roles in the Early Church. These two brothers are frequently mentioned alongside Peter as part of a group of three who are especially close to Jesus. However, these two men of God do not have the same experience. In fact, James is killed in Acts 12:2—his ministry is very short-lived. Despite being part of Jesus's inner circle along with Peter and John, James dies a violent and tragic death before the gospel really begins to go to the ends of the earth. Meanwhile, James's brother John writes five of the 27 books of the NT and is probably the only one of the Twelve who does not die a violent death. John not only writes these five books: he also plays an important mentoring role in the Early Church. His disciples and in turn their disciples help to form the Early Church and its theology.

Second are the examples of Stephen and Philip. One chapter after being put forward as a servant of the church, Stephen preaches a wonderful sermon which basically outlines the history of the children of Abraham and points out a pattern of disobedience and lack of faith throughout their history. As a result, Stephen is stoned to death. Stephen is not killed in spite of his faithfulness. He is killed *because* of his faithfulness. A less faithful sermon would likely not have resulted in his death. Meanwhile, his fellow deacon Philip serves the Lord for many years—having a long ministry in Samaria. Acts 21:8 records that he even has four daughters who enter the ministry. Philip's faithfulness results in another generation of evangelists. Meanwhile, Stephen's faithfulness results in a bruised and blooded corpse. The outward results of faithfulness are not guaranteed.

A final example is another set of brothers—Peter and Andrew. While one might think that Peter was the first to meet Jesus, in fact, as recorded in John 1:4-42, Andrew is the one who brought Peter to Jesus. Despite being the first Apostle to have met Jesus, Andrew is a relatively unknown figure in the Bible. Peter becomes the first among equals as the leader of the Twelve and as the Apostle to the circumcised.

In each of these pairings, the more famous was not more faithful just because he is more well-known. More famous does not equal more faithful. This brief survey of these pairings leads to that conclusion—as does Hebrews 11:38-39. While the "them" in verse 38 is clearly referring to the second group (the ones who suffered and were killed), the "of these" is equally clearly a reference to both groups (including all the way back to the beginning of the chapter where Abraham, Moses, and the others that were named). Noteworthy is how the higher praise is for those who suffered and died. Furthermore, there was something missing among all of these—something left for "us," or all of Christ's followers throughout the succeeding generations.

Hebrews 11:40 speaks of the benefit of these earlier servants' faithfulness to later generations. Those of us living after Jesus's First Coming can see now that we are in a privileged position. These earlier heroes described in Hebrews are made perfect by us their successors—the ones who have inherited the promise. In Hebrews 12:1-2, equippers of Christ's servants are given at least two applications for perfecting the earlier saints' example of faithfulness. First, those of us who teach must train our students to avoid sin and hindrances (which are not always the same). Such training and growth may seem obvious, but, as John Owens said, "if we are not killing sin then sin

will be killing us" (John Owen, *The Works of John Owen*, ed. William H. Goold, 24 vols. (Edinburgh: Johnstone & Hunter, 150-1855; reprint by Banner of Truth Trust, 1965, 1991), 6:9). One way that both teachers and students might sin (or at least be easily entangled) is by comparing our lives and ministries to others—this is always a trap. Second, we must train our students to keep their eyes in Jesus (v.2), for two reasons. First, Christian servants seeking to be faithful need Christ's indwelling presence. Looking to Jesus is in keeping with his promise in the Great Commission in Matthew 28 to be with his people always, as well as Jesus's promise in Acts 1:8 to empower his witnesses. Second, all of us who are Christ's servants inevitably fail to be perfectly faithful and must remember our identity in Christ. For those of us who are in Christ, the Father does not look at us with our own righteousness but as we are clothed in the righteousness of Christ.

During my (Phil's) time in Sub-Saharan Africa, I had the opportunity to train many different men and women for ministry. A few of them are thriving in ministry, have seen their churches grow, have planted new churches, or have moved into positions of influence and power in their respective areas. However, this kind of measurable and objective success is not the case for most of them. Instead, the majority are *faithfully* laboring in churches but are not seeing thousands of individuals converted or hundreds of churches planted. Instead, they are simply ordinary pastors and servants of Christ in ordinary places. Others have gone to their graves serving in humility and faithfulness. Each one of these will be told, "Well done, good and faithful servant." Our task as theological educators is not to locate and/or motivate the extraordinary. Our task is to faithfully serve those who will faithfully and humbly minister wherever the Lord plants them.

Missional Awareness

A third reality of theological education and training is that students need missional awareness more than pre-packaged strategies. When I (Phil) taught Introduction to Missiology in Africa, the students' first assignment was to read Conrad Mbewe's article on "Seven Lies I Once Believed about Missions" (Mbewe, 2017). In this article, Mbewe introduces and refutes seven presuppositions about missions that he, as an African Christian, once believed. The first among those falsehoods is the idea that "We Africans were at the end of the process of missions." Mbewe bemoans the sad truth that, overall, African churches are not expected to participate in global missions. From Mbewe's experience, there was a gap in expectations when it came to African churches being involved in missions. The missionaries did not expect African churches to become intercultural missionaries to unreached peoples and places. Whether implicitly or explicitly, Western missionaries have often communicated this false and destructive idea to our brothers and sisters in the Global South. It is time for Western missionaries to emphasize that *all* believers in *all* churches have been given the wonderful honor to take part in the Great Commission. Being involved in intercultural missions to unreached peoples and places is not something that churches do once they have evangelized their owns towns and villages. It is not something that churches get around to once they have sorted out all their theological questions and conundrums. The task of making disciples of all nations is a task for all believers and all churches everywhere. One shining example of a Global South mobilizer is Rev. Reuben Cachala of the Assemblies of God in Malawi. Rev. Cachala travels around Malawi and teaches a course that he designed that challenges and encourages Malawian churches to be involved in frontier missions—telling Malawian church leaders that they are expected to a part of reaching the unreached with the gospel.

In addition to the gap in expectations, there is also a gap in information. Many of my (Phil's) theological students in Malawi were shocked to find out that there were places where it was illegal

to tell someone else about Jesus. They were grieved to discover that becoming a Christian can be a death sentence for individuals in some places. They had no idea that hundreds of millions of people have never even heard the name of Jesus or know what the Bible is. Creating missional awareness became one of my central goals during my time in Sub-Saharan Africa. The African-led Movement for African National Initiatives (MANI, 2018) is an encouraging example of how Global South churches can and will develop and implement missionary strategies for how they will be involved in taking the gospel to unreached peoples and places in places like North Africa, North Korea, and North Carolina. However, before they can do that, they must be *aware* of the tragedy of lostness around the world. One of our central tasks as theological educators and missionaries from the West working among Global South churches is to raise awareness of these opportunities to proclaim the glory of Christ. The sheer number of believers in the Global South positions the churches there to have almost unlimited potential (Perbi & Ngugi, 2022, p. 90).

Conclusion

Reproducibility, as it is often understood, is not always a valuable tool used to measure what it takes to find and train mature Christian disciples who are ready to lead their churches. Speed should not be the primary metric when evaluating how profitable a certain method of training is. Instead, missions sending organizations and their missionaries should create and implement a model that gives priority to theological aptitude, exegetical skill, humility, and missional awareness. In doing so, the missionary's goal is clarified to be faithful to Christ, his Word, and his mission.

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Strengthening Spiritual Reconciliation through Theological Education: A Soul-Forming Conversation

Omar Palafox

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Abstract

Today, the Church carries out the Christian mission in different geographical, cultural, and social aspects. God's mission requires a transformation of the individual minister. Consequently, Liberation Theology, Integral Mission, and Pentecostal-Charismatic affiliations contribute to a solid theological education, as they all have a constructive and mutually beneficial influence. An adequate epistemology of faith education should be based on rationality, senses, or judgment. Theological education strengthens conversations while harmonizing with the Spirit of God. This educational process offers a dynamic, soul-forming dialogue between students and teachers. The spiritual welfare of students is essential for reconciliation. Reluctance to take direct instruction from the soul-forming process can lead to slow spiritual growth and distorted relationships. Church leaders, pastors, preachers, missionaries, and teachers still struggle when accepting direct instruction for deep spiritual practices.

This article addresses specific theological education issues and discusses aspects of *missio Dei*. Caring for soul-forming education is necessary for the Church to achieve its mission. A method for following the Spirit of God will enhance the spiritual formation and the proper involvement of students in theological education. Inquiry into how epistemology, curriculum, instruction, and ministry may influence meaningful collaboration for the soul is needed. A model of this kind of process should be capable of responding to the spiritual needs of students, forming them wholistically.

Key Words: *En Conjunto*, *Mission of God*, theological education

Introduction

Theologically speaking, reconciliation between God and humans, as well as between humans, can be achieved through trusting in the person and work of Jesus Christ, adhering to God's divine laws, living as Jesus did, and being guided by the Holy Spirit. Despite many religious scholars' and students' best attempts in theological education for reconciliation today, the question remains: *how can a healthy soul-forming education be nourished during theological studies?* Theological education needs to focus on the preparation of ministers. This article explores the idea that theological education can help foster the spirit, which could contribute to reconciliation between God and people and among human beings. A Latino-described collective approach may enhance the dialogue between God and diverse people to achieve this goal. This approach focuses on developing and nurturing the soul-forming education of everyone to foster connections with the divine in relationships with others. The absence of Latino characteristics in theology would hinder its potential to bring about a significant transformation in theological education by neglecting the holistic nurturing of the individual.

Concerns for Theological Education

Experts in the field of theological education are giving attention to the development of students. The *Association of Theological Schools* (ATS) and the *Association for Hispanic Theological*

Education (AETH) are significant entities in the United States, providing essential insight into this area. This latter organization has been promoting the strengthening of faith since 1992, including in various countries throughout the Americas. Recently, conversations have occurred about building a reliable and successful theological education framework considering knowledge comprehension, curricula organization, pedagogy, and ministry engagement.

In his book *Beyond Profession* (Aleshire, 2021), Daniel Aleshire, the former executive director of ATS, identifies spiritual formation in theological education as an issue of primary concern. He presents a theological model that focuses on the development and importance of the church, culture, and higher education (Aleshire, 2021, p. 7). Aleshire notes that, since 1996, ATS formation has mainly encompassed spiritual awareness and moral sensitivity. This formation is incorporated into the educational process to achieve a specific goal (Aleshire, 2021, p. 79). However, Roman Catholics diverge from the conventional ATS definition as the preparation for sacraments is not factored into the standard formation definition. Aleshire explores the ATS and Roman Catholic views of formation, advocating for a change in the system.

The intersection of Catholic, Protestant, and other beliefs within the field of theological education calls for increased attention in contemporary curricula. In his encyclical *Born from the Heart of the Church: On Catholic Universities*, John Paul II extolled Catholicism as a source of truth and inspiration for today's theological education (John Paul II, 1990a). This historical recognition has led to increased awareness of the role of theology in promoting human reconciliation. Nevertheless, Daniel Salinas cautions against a uniform approach in Latin America, where Vatican II reforms have been met with opposition by Evangelicals (Salinas, 2017, p. 182). Suppose churches are to collaborate successfully with theological educational institutions. In that case, there must be a balance between respect for local context on all sides and an emphasis on an individual's profound experience with God. This issue has been addressed by Aleshire's model of theological education, which emphasizes process and purpose.

Elizabeth Conde-Fraizer, president of AETH, has observed a meeting of two eras in theological education and has suggested that collaboration could lead to a fresh educational design suitable for this one-of-a-kind period. According to her, theological education must emphasize love for God, people, and the world around us and enable multi-faceted pedagogies. Furthermore, it must impart the understanding of God that inspires loyalty in our living, joining theology and practice with a trust-based attitude (Conde-Frazier, 2021, p. 127). Therefore, a viable solution may be to craft a cooperative program emphasizing the elements already existing in theological education, for instance, associating convictions with individuality and friendliness with collaboration. This strategy has been applied before, for example, by providing theological education to attend to the soul through an energetic involvement in current globalism.

According to Aleshire and Conde-Fraizer, theological education requires a new approach. Aleshire is committed to conceptualizing a teaching framework suitable for all students to understand the means and the end of formal learning. On the other hand, Conde-Fraizer argues that we must introduce collaborative practices in Christian and theological education to complement the new teaching models and perspectives.

The Integrity of the Mission of God

Theological education concerns college students, who often feel disconnected from their purpose and identity post-graduation. Therefore, establishing relationships with God and a vital mission

from the Church is critical for fostering unity and inclusivity between Catholic, Protestant, and Pentecostal communities. Collaboration based on the Trinity is critical to making this task achievable.

Orlando E. Costas (1979) emphasizes the importance of understanding mission through totality and integrity in the *Integrity of Mission*. Reaching this understanding, collaboration is encouraged in various realms, such as theological, historical, cultural, and practical, developing an all-encompassing approach to the church's mission. Moreover, as collaboration reinforces the integrity of the mission, it can potentially increase the effectiveness of the church's mission.

I believe in the importance of forming a unique mission. For Catholics, Gustavo Gutierrez's notion of *Liberation Theology* sparks a fresh outlook on how we can be restored to God and others. He proposes that true reconciliation begins with one's soul formation. After exploring the works of Bartolomé de las Casas, the 16th-century Spaniard who witnessed and challenged his fellow compatriots' maltreatment of Indigenous people in the Americas, Gutierrez formulated a new notion of liberation through spirituality. This sense of liberation guarantees the value and integrity of underprivileged or poverty-stricken people. Henri Nouwen views this style of approach as an incomparable experience embedded in the knowledge of God in religious figures such as St. Benedict, St. Francis of Assisi, and St. Ignatius Loyola (Nouwen, 1975).

As a former missionary, Samuel Escobar (2013) explores the Church's duty to propagate the message of Jesus Christ without discrimination of geographical, cultural, or social boundaries. Escobar draws knowledge from the Bible, theological and historical studies, and the social sciences to better comprehend the Church's missionary function. Through insightful and thought-provoking studies, he has immensely contributed to the global evangelical debate on the contemporary mission and its future. The *Lausanne Covenant* discussed the conflict between dominant cultures and social justice (Lausanne Movement, 1974). To ensure that the gospel remains complete and wholesome, René Padilla endorsed the *misión integral* (wholistic mission) as highlighted in the Bible (Padilla, 2010). Wholistic Mission claims that evangelism and social responsibility are not conflicting. Instead, these are connected to Christ's peace for the oppressed and the disadvantaged. Indeed, more than 600 mission and relief organizations currently use the integral mission as an authorized term and method for their work (Kirkpatrick, 2019, p. 142). We must put all aspects of life under the leadership of Jesus and proclaim that evangelism and social responsibility are indispensable for delivering his peace to those in need (Kirkpatrick, 2019).

Pentecostal movements face numerous social and cultural obstacles, causing an ongoing discussion surrounding the distinct historical origins and evolution of ideas that form part of the mission's integrity (Medina & Alfaro, 2015). Oscar Garcia-Johnson explains this discussion in his book *Spirit Outside the Gate*, which emphasizes reframing a focus on how the Holy Spirit has been experienced and understood within the cultures and histories of the American global south (García-Johnson, 2019). Odina González and Justo Gonzales have collected this experience in their complex perspectives on life and society in Latin America (González 2014, p. 2). Amos Yong asserts the need to understand various theological beliefs to foster a favorable and unified relationship (González, 2014, p. 201).

Engagement in theological learning can be improved by recognizing the different traditions in *Liberation Theology, Integral Mission*, and the *Pentecostal-Charismatic movements*. In his book *The Brown Church*, Robert Chao Romero explores the practical nature of partnerships and collaborations between diverse groups and the spiritual richness of Latinx and Hispanic cultures.

The author uses the term "unions" to refer to these partnerships, emphasizing their gainful nature for all involved parties (Romero, 2020, p. 10).

The Impetus behind *Missio Dei*

The fundamental objective of *missio Dei* is to restore harmony between God and people and people with one another. To reach this purpose, the missionary must be wholly committed and adequately trained in theology. According to David Bosch, the heart of the *missio Dei* is a continuous change between salvation's immutable and physical aspects (Bosch, 2011). William Burrows reveals in his foreword to the 20th-anniversary edition of Bosch's *Transforming Mission* that Bosch puts to ease the difficulties linked with changing thoughts about God's mission and involving oneself in it as an experience, transforming the beliefs of believing missionaries (Bosch, 2011). Christopher Wright perceives the power of *missio Dei* to be found in participating in the setting and every generation (Wright, 2013, p. 535). In missiologist Gailyn Van Rheenen's point of view, theological learning is associated with the import of *missio Dei*, the crucifixion and resurrection, and the realm of God, provoking contemplation (Van Rheenen, 2014, p. 107). These points might lead missionaries to become apathetic about seeking out incentives to participate in the mission of reconciliation. With the objective of this mission in mind, Van Rheenen endeavors to spark a spiritual awareness in which ministers comprehend that they cannot accomplish this mission on their own (Van Rheenen, 2014, p. 47).

To achieve the mission of God, the transformation of an individual missionary who delivers God's message is critical. Aiming for such transformation creates a way of educating missionaries that works towards mending the divides that have grown in our increasingly globalized world. Therefore, theological education must prioritize preparing students with the knowledge, developing their inner selves, and how they fit into their faith communities.

Theological Education and Church

According to John Paul's encyclical *The Mission of the Redeemer* (John Paul, 1990b), the mission of the Church, in Latin known as *missio ecclesia*, is to spread God's redeeming grace to every person in the world, as outlined in Scripture. This missional ecclesiology is an opportunity for individuals to share the story of Jesus with the world through spiritual practices that shape the soul. This perspective emphasizes that even those who cannot participate in *missio Dei* can still be involved with God. To strengthen this approach, missionary studies prioritize theological training to prepare individuals for missionary work. By promoting a unique collaboration between the Church and its clergy, missional ecclesiology highlights the Church's role in supporting the development of missionaries.

To reach an in-depth understanding of the church's distinctive histories, theologies, and futures, pastors, preachers, teachers, and other church leaders need to have direct instruction in the spiritual practices necessary to cultivate spirituality. Collaboration, or partnerships and cooperation between diverse groups, is paramount to progress in theological education, as it promotes reconciliation and implements the tasks God assigns us in his mission. While institutions training missionaries face many difficulties, a well-constructed collaborative relationship may result in improved curriculum and instruction. The statistics show that the Hispanic population in the United States is quickly increasing, drastically altering the country's social, economic, and religious conditions (Sanchez, 2006). Considering this collaborative reality, there is an urgent need

for a new approach to training missionaries in theological education that incorporates biblical principles, is culturally aware, and relates to the present day.

According to Willie James Jennings, the key objective of theological education is to teach students how to foster a sense of belonging (Jennings, 2020, p. 10). Jennings endeavors to innovate theological learning by bringing to light a novel platform rooted in a craving for what God has ordained. Encouraging inclusion delivers chances for freedom and life that bridge disparities and lead to a struggle in the theological field. For this reason, it is indispensable to bring forth a collaborative practice to theological education for persons hindered by whiteness and those removed from the dialogue at the outskirts of society. To Jennings, cooperation is a method of inhabiting the world to generate intellectual and physical edifices, such as rephrasing the gospel's message.

Latin American women have a theological perspective that embraces principles and acknowledges the importance of fundamental assumptions. Such a perspective arises from, for example, their roles as mothers, grandmothers, and nurturers of life. They believe that individuals are deeply connected to the historical context in which they live. This contextually aware perspective aims to transform or affirm change in how individuals deal with each other. Maria Pilar Aquino argues that Latin American women are no longer content to wait for others to guide them merely; they are taking the initiative (Aquino, 1996).

Similarly, they no longer want others to define their experiences but actively participate in the definitional process. They want to express, communicate, and articulate their journeys. Because certain opportunities and particular topics are often male-oriented and discriminatory, Latin American women must be cautious about participating in such as these can lead to self-alienation (Goizueta, 2001, p. 81). Roberto S. Goizueta proposes a theology of presence that considers the preferential option for marginalized groups, including the marginalized group of Latin American women. This theology of presence engages life's ethical, political, and aesthetic dimensions and offers a spiritual focus (Goizueta, 1995, p. 211).

Loida I. Martell-Otero employs the concept of *Teología en Conjunto*, which emphasizes the collaborative and diverse nature of Latino theology. Her approach emphasizes explaining that theological inquiry is a dialogical process (Martell-Otero et al., 2013, p. 127). Martell-Otero amplifies the voices of the silenced, sharing theological insights from the oppressed community. Samuel Escobar notes that Ephesians 4:13 provides a framework for preparing future missionaries through education and formation geared toward continuous transformation (Escobar, 2002, p. 171). He stresses that such preparation must occur within a communal context, as it cannot occur in isolation. A comprehensive mission arises from the realities of Latin America and is characterized by interdisciplinary action. Fernando Bullón offers essays on the observations from the fifth Latin American consultation of the Alliance for Higher Education. He notes that Christian higher education does not have a directed approach toward social change and fails to engage with activities and topics that reflect the struggles of the present era (Bullón, 2014). The failure to supplement theology with Latino characteristics would impede its ability to significantly transform theological education by holistically not nurturing the individual.

When churches and universities form meaningful partnerships, they create mutually beneficial opportunities for growth by exchanging insights on academics and church leadership while strengthening church missions. By establishing a close relationship with Christ through active

engagement with the Holy Scriptures, believers can access spiritual gifts that the Holy Spirit guides. They can then work together and contribute to a shared communal vision.

Agents of Sound Collaboration

In the New Testament, Hebrews 13:12 presents an excellent portrayal of Jesus as the perfect facilitator of productive collaboration. Orlando Costas, in his work *Christ Outside the Gate* (2005), and later Oscar García-Johnson in *The Spirit Outside the Gate* (2019), both focus on the idea that Jesus' suffering took place "outside the gate," representing the margins of suffering and alienation from the urban core. To prioritize the soul-forming 's well-being, there may have been deficiencies in theological education, which quantitative and qualitative research should evaluate. Throughout this article, theological education must look beyond the confines of academia and embrace a spirit of successful collaboration. Costas challenges us to become "agents of mobilization of a servant church" and offers us a fresh perception of redemption and a fuller understanding of our mission (Costas, 2005, p. 194).

Drawing on words from Hebrews and other theologians, theological education for non-clergy begins with a collaborative effort of soul-forming education. Multiple aspects are considered during this challenging process, such as epistemology, curriculum, instruction, and sustaining the missionary mission of reconciliation. The AETH's members have started *Red de Entidades Teológicas, Ashrei Centro de Formación Espiritual* - a spiritual formation center located in Mexico City - to enable a portable church platform for joint work in practice. Furthermore, *Neighborhood Seminary* recently presented an alternative approach to seminary education.

With the assistance of others, theological organizations are trying to promote a constructive union for the contemplation of soul-forming education to attain harmony. This involves going beyond Catholic, Pentecostal, or Protestant tradition and not confining the epistemological dialogue to scholastic ideals disregarding participants' mental and physical well-being. While joining these alternative methods is strenuous, a commitment to God's purpose binds them, looking at the collaboration between the church and higher education. In addition, liberation is highlighted through the provision of arenas for reconciliation and communication. The church remains part of the operation, and the congregation contributes to community outreach activities.

Agencies have developed collaborative networks that come together monthly as small units to foster successful teamwork. This collective serves as a place to store and access their combined knowledge to be utilized in their unique contexts. The membership includes people of Catholic, Protestant, and Pentecostal faith to provide integrity to the mission of God. This theological association is a non-profit multicultural entity to contribute to, engage in, and converse with one another. *Ashrei*, a Mexican spiritual formation institute, also works to advance collaboration by offering valuable resources to individuals and communities. This establishment is devoted to connecting spiritual formation to communal efforts to create transformation in English and Spanish. Moreover, the Neighborhood Seminary strives to make God's healing, restoring, forgiving, and liberating love a reality within neighborhoods through the local church.

Conclusion

The development of a fresh approach to theology from an outside perspective presents a valuable opportunity for students in both theological academia and the church to form relationships that further the mission of both institutions. We must also consider the implications of globalization

and take a new perspective that considers the spiritual needs of students while still considering past truths that have enabled liberation. To effectively collaborate and work towards reconciliation, academia, and the church must unite and recognize their complementary relationship.

Theological education offers an opportunity to strengthen spiritual well-being and open a path to reconciliation. Developing a collective approach that encourages collaboration between faith-based entities and their agents can empower individuals to nurture their soul-forming s and help others forge connections with God and their environment. Through this process of liberation, integral, and Pentecostal missions, the minister becomes more accessible to those on the journey towards realizing the *missio Dei*. To answer the question, how can a healthy soul-forming education be nourished during theological studies? The answer, then, is that the *Teología en Conjunto* is a significant demonstration of appreciation for both the Bible and the valuable resources provided by others. We miss God's gift for soul-forming education and reconciliation when this unity is impossible. Therefore, theological education must prioritize spiritual needs ahead of academics to help young learners work cooperatively.

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Eyewitness Accounts of the "Asbury Outpouring"

Compiled by the *Global Missiology – English* Editorial Team

Featuring Lalsangkima Pachuau and Craig S. Keener

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In light of this issue's emphasis on "Theological Education and Mission," the *Global Missiology – English* (GME) editorial team thought it important to include something about the widely known events that began in early February following a regularly scheduled Asbury University chapel service in Asbury, Kentucky, USA. The editorial team also determined that it was too early to offer any analyses or evaluations and that the focus should be on trustworthy eyewitness accounts. Perhaps GME will carry articles in a later issue that will seek further understanding of what has been taking place.

Many GME readers will have already read, viewed photos and videos, discussed with others, and even formed opinions about what has been variously termed the "revival," "awakening," or "outpouring" at Asbury. For the purposes of this GME contribution, the editorial team suggests first visiting the "Asbury Outpouring" section on the Asbury University website at https://www.asbury.edu/outpouring/. Statements by Asbury University President Kevin J. Brown are available there, along with other pertinent information. An appropriate next visit would be two early blog posts by Asbury Theological Seminary President Timothy Tennent: "Thoughts on the Asbury Awakening (February 14: https://timothytennent.com/thoughts-on-the-asbury-awakening/) and "Asbury Awakening Continues" (February 21: https://timothytennent.com/asbury-awakening-continues/).

Two Asbury Seminary faculty members—while fielding avalanches of other outside requests for their viewpoints on what has transpired—have graciously provided to GME their own eyewitness accounts. In response to inquiries from friends and colleagues in his native Mizoram in Northeast India, Dr. Lalsangkima Pachuau, who is John Wesley Beeson Professor of Christian Mission and Dean of Advanced Research Programs, composed in Mizo a report about the Asbury events. Pachuau has provided a slightly modified English translation of that report for publication here. Also, Professor of Biblical Studies Dr. Craig Keener has offered his own account and observations. Included as well is a link to Keener's February 23 YouTube video account, "Reflections on the Outpouring."

Following Dr. Pachuau's and Dr. Keener's observations are a few additional links to other eyewitness accounts and one particularly pertinent article for those involved in higher education.

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Lalsangkima Pachuau
John Wesley Beeson Professor of Christian Mission
Dean of Advanced Research Programs
Asbury Theological Seminary

As soon as the news spread about what was happening here at Asbury, reaching even my remote corner of Mizoram in Northeast India much faster than I had expected, several friends asked me about the "Asbury revival." Because the demand first came mostly from my Mizo friends and

colleagues in Mizoram, I quickly wrote about it in the Mizo language and posted it on Facebook. As I have said there, I'd feel much better to call it "awakening," however, because it has been called "revival," I will mostly use that term. Some of the requests came because of my close academic connection with "revivals." I have studied, written, and reflected on the topic, including in my doctoral dissertation. And so here, I will mix my experience, academic viewpoints, and observations of this (Asbury) revival. Let me first say a few things about my personal background related to it and a few of my assumptions:

1. I came from a church that is largely defined by its history of "revivals" (or more appropriately "awakenings"), starting with the so-called "first wave" in 1906 which was clearly influenced by the 1904 Welsh revivals through the missionaries via a similar movement in the nearby Khasi hills. My church, the Mizoram Presbyterian Church, was planted by missionaries of the Welsh Calvinistic (Presbyterian) Mission. I came to my personal commitment to ministry through one such movement in the early 1980s, yet, quite apart from it too! Inspired and challenged by the movement then, I eagerly sought what I'd later call "a spiritual renewal" in the revival, but could not get anything from it! However, the search led me to an affirmation of the Lordship of Christ for my life in one of the most unusual church events, the Wednesday evening meeting. I immediately changed the course of my life to be in Christian ministry.

2. I view revivals or awakenings as those momentary experiences coming at specific times. They come and go; they are neither ongoing nor perpetual. Because the Asbury awakening coincided with "Transfiguration Sunday" (February 18 for Protestants), I was reflecting on it also in connection with the sermon I prepared and preached on the topic in a nearby Presbyterian Church. The Transfiguration was a very special manifestation of the divinity of our Lord Jesus, and the experience of one recipient, Peter, was so profound that he suggested pitching a tent then and there. However, Peter together with Jesus and his other disciples had to return to the normal grind of daily life. Of course, that experience would surely have had a profound impact on Peter and his two friends. Perhaps, what's most important is how such an experience impacts life beyond it. As long as we are mortal, spiritual awakening will have to come only as a momentary experience. Even the first believers had to move on from the Pentecost experience.

3. Revival experience is a unique one involving a profound realization of God's presence in one's life, yet as a temporal experience prone to much misunderstanding and misgiving. Many of its recipients often overemphasize it and its significance. Proponents often try to manufacture it according to their imagined idea of what it should be. On the other hand, there are those who would suspect such experience as anything but divine. Such opponents continually look for its shortcomings to condemn it. Perhaps while presenting an opportune moment for some to encounter and relate with God, it also gives room for those (proponents and opponents alike) who would put themselves and their experience or ideas above and beyond God's.

What has come to be called the "Asbury Outpouring" started on Wednesday, February 8, after one weekly worship service in the University chapel. Briefly and simply described, it came as an uninhibited praise and worship of God. It did not actually start during the service itself but at the closing of it. Some students could not have enough of singing praise to God, and it took off from there. More joined in, and they experienced inner renewal in the form of repentance and reconciliation. Some reported experiencing a deeper longing for and encountering God resulting even in the alleviation of mental and psychological issues they had. And so they persisted in

singing praise to God, offering prayers, and sharing testimonies. The service went on without coming to a formal close. And I believe it went on until a brief pause was made on the 17th of February.

I personally learned of the revival the day after on Thursday (February 9) during the Seminary chapel service. When I entered the chapel that day the atmosphere was different, and the community seemed expectant. Mentions about a special awakening among University students in the chapel just across from our chapel were made prayerfully! We then prayed together and offered special prayers in the direction of the University chapel where the wondrous work of God was made known. (The Asbury University chapel, Hughes Auditorium, and the Seminary's Estes chapel face each other across the campus, divided by a street and an open space in between). Being so inspired, we had a wonderful time praising God and offering prayers during that service. After lunch, I ventured out toward the University campus wondering if I might see anything. Yes, it was a beautiful day and this was also my normal route for afternoon walks. When I reached the chapel, I found the main door closed and only a couple of students sitting nearby chatting. I decided that the service might have ended, and there was nothing going on anymore. I worked from home the next day (Friday) and didn't visit Wilmore again throughout the weekend. I live in Lexington, and our campus in Wilmore is some 10 miles away from my home.

I reached my office at midday on Monday and was immediately engrossed in preparations for my departmental meeting (Advanced Research Programs) scheduled for 1 pm. Just before the meeting, one of the members of the committee, Tom (Prof. Thomas McCall), told me that he may have to leave the meeting if he gets a call in connection with "what's going on across the street." That's when I realized that things had not ended as I thought they were. The meeting took quite a long time, and afterward I had to take care of several related matters. I then went home straight away.

That evening, I finally learned something definite about the revival. My wife, who attended the "revival worship" at Hughes with a friend from work that afternoon reported with great excitement her experience and what she saw. What she witnessed, she said, was nothing short of the wondrous works of the Spirit of God. When I reached my office on Tuesday, the next day, there was no mistaking what was going on. I looked towards the University chapel, and there were people lining up to enter the chapel. Even the worship in our Seminary chapel was quite lively. Tom and I chatted briefly after the service, through which I came to a fuller sense of what was happening. I could see that there were a few like Tom who were working hard behind the scenes, and was possibly quite exhausted by now. (Here is the link for those interested in reading what Tom wrote in *Christianity Today* about the Asbury awakening: https://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2023/february-web-only/asbury-revival-1970-2023-methodist-christian-holy-spirit.html?fbclid=IwAR1RlpL5KaL2-1Id3fSOqoK4PLsrnPA1orAWFJTOTwiiO1uZRGkCHh0BU3I).

I reached the University chapel after lunch around 1 o'clock on Tuesday. Though I did not get a seat right away, I was glad to be inside to see and experience it personally. I was not familiar with many of the contemporary devotional songs they sang, yet I was able to have a profound encounter with God in prayers through those songs. The lyrics became my prayers as I joined along! I could hardly keep my eyes open due to the bliss I was experiencing and was not too sure of those around me! When I finally did look around more closely, it was no longer the African-American student at the piano who was leading the music anymore. It was our Seminary students,

who were music leaders in our chapel the previous day, leading us with guitars and drums. Though I initially felt that I would not have time to take part beyond an hour, almost two hours had already elapsed.

I'm not good at singing and do not always enjoy newer songs. Being brought up in a hymn-singing church, I have done enough to like traditional hymns. That day I did not sing much, though I was able to join a few songs. Yet the contemporary Christian songs they sang touched me as they became my prayers. Looking back, I feel that I participated fully in the singing as I was in deep prayers most of the time. The sensation, I believe, is somewhat similar to how it would be if one were led to drift along by a gently flowing stream. Was it my openness that helped me experience what I did? I do not know. Afterward, I did wish to be back in the same chapel and to experience it again, but I could not find another opportunity except for being a part of the overflow in one of our Seminary chapels. Meanwhile, more opportunities were also given to youth and visitors from elsewhere for sharing the experience. One beautiful thing about this revival was that it was led and owned by students.

I believe it would be most beneficial if each one who came here and encountered the work of God's Spirit did so in a way that spoke most profoundly to each. I am sure such experience could help one grow stronger and firmer in being a disciple of Christ. I've learned that there's quite a lively discussion on social media about what we were experiencing. Some of my students showed me some of the debates. I remember reading some comments saying things like, "It will spread further and wider if it's genuine," "They will be known by their fruits," and some listed out how it should fan out if it were indeed an authentic revival. I've decided to shut myself out of these comments as they become distracting and disturbing. I simply do not have the audacity to see more of such comment, even though I know that there are also many positive and meaningful comments.

I do not think the Asbury community took pride in the revival as such. If I understand the mood rightly, we humbly received it as it came. We do not seek to own it or intend to make anything out of it other than hoping to be transformed into Christlikeness. We meekly yet joyfully receive what we see and hear. We would not even know how to spin glorious yarns about it. Personally, I can hardly differentiate between what I've experienced here and what I've often experienced in the past occasionally with, for instance, how I feel when I listen to a well-prepared and eloquently delivered sermon on a Sunday morning. In such instances, I'd be reminded of God's glory and the depth of God's grace, of His care and concern for us, and would be filled with immense joy. I have no idea how this revival phenomenon came and will develop. I receive it with joy while it lasts, as I cannot expect it to stay for long. What stays, I pray, is a deeper commitment to follow him and to serve others.

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Craig S. Keener
Professor of Biblical Studies
Asbury Theological Seminary

Nomenclature is always a problem, since the title "revival" never appears in the modern sense in Scripture and events called "revivals" historically vary considerably in character. Naturally many attached the popular label of "revival" to the February 2023 experience at Asbury from its association with previous "Asbury revivals" in 1905, 1908, 1950, and 1970. These experiences

each averaged a week or two, and it seems likely that various occasions derived symbolic significance partly from the historical memory of their predecessors.

The biblical template for the present event seems to fit the title "outpouring" often preferred by spokespersons at the university: a collective experience of God's Spirit resembling some of the occasions in Acts. The focus in Acts is empowerment for mission (Acts 1:8; cf. 4:31), which fits the previous "Asbury revivals" along with many other college revivals. A key fruit of such collective experiences at Asbury historically, albeit one measurable only over a long term, has been renewed commitment to mission reflected in a surge in new workers.

Since I am writing shortly after the end of the public phase of the meetings, the present essay offers merely a meditation on some of the experiences based on some first- and secondhand participant observations. The university's chapel normally meets three mornings per week for 45 to 50 minutes. Occasionally a few students linger after chapel to share another song or two. On Wednesday, Februrary 8, however, the gospel choir continued to worship after the closing song, and the crowd of a few students spontaneously grew over the course of the day to hundreds. Far from being an event planned by the university, the event caught administrators off guard, requiring them to make decisions about how to adapt to a rapidly changing situation.

Although participation was student-led and spontaneous, historical precedent undoubtedly led the administrators to recognize and respond supportively to what was taking place, balancing recognition of student initiative with a degree of guidance and oversight to prevent the event from being coopted by external actors. During this period, school leaders such as campus chaplain Greg Haseloff, dean of students Sarah Baldwin, president Kevin Brown and many others poured themselves tirelessly into servicing the event, often investing long days and nights praying with students at the altar. Students were confessing and repudiating various practices such as pornography and seeking healing from fears and traumas.

Outsiders often evaluate such events against the template of other events traditionally called revivals, but it seems also germane to weigh them against recent experiences in Asbury's history. In my 12 years at the nearby seminary (which is administratively independent but derived historically from the same institution), I have witnessed nothing like this, and colleagues who experienced the 1970 outpouring (such as the seminary's Robert Coleman and the university's Anna Gulick) have reported nothing comparable at the institution for some 50 intervening years. Many, including myself, have prayed for revival with reports of the 1970 outpouring in mind, but we (or at least I) were caught off guard when the event actually happened, and especially by its unanticipated scale.

The students' worship focused on the awesomeness and holiness of God, and student leaders and administrators labored to preserve the "sanctity" of this experience by what they called "radical humility." This stance meant that worship leaders focused attention on Jesus, rejecting celebrity status of singers or speakers. As word spread, students remained at the fore, without introductions or giving access to "big names" from outside. The worship protocol was relatively simple, and Jesus alone was to be honored.

In light of my past experiences with movements of the Spirit, I am prepared to say that I witnessed and experienced something beyond human manufacture. Although I witnessed others being touched on a deep level, I also felt the palpable sense of God's presence both within and outside Hughes Auditorium (the site of the main meetings). I did not experience this at all times,

but the times that I did were spontaneous and unexpected. Consecration, being set apart for God, seemed to flow naturally from the sense of God's holiness. This sense of holiness did not entail legalism (insofar as I and some others I know experienced what has transpired) but appreciation for God's gracious gift of welcome and empowerment. Adoration of God's holiness relativized human honor and any significance typically attached to it. Worship was central, but the long periods of singing (revival historian Michael McClymond compares this practice to songs at the Welsh revival of 1904-1905) were interspersed with periods of Scripture reading, preaching, and testimony, the last often sifted to keep the focus on God.

The focus on Jesus also entailed unity among his worshipers, transcending ethnic and denominational differences. Regional demographics facilitated larger initial arrival of white participants, but the initial impetus arose from the largely African American gospel choir plus a chapel speaker (Zach Meerkreebs) of Jewish descent. The rotating worship teams generally continued to reflect the initial experience's multiethnic composition. I have known Lena Marlowe, an African American senior involved in the gospel choir, since she was a freshman. She has always exuded a vibrant spiritual life while also embracing the value of academics and a vision for social transformation. She notes that the outpouring's first days focused on repentance, but within a few days the mood among students shifted to joy.

The social dynamic of the outpouring necessarily shifted over time. The event began as students experienced an unanticipated sense of God's holy presence. The university administration, engaged in the meetings, showed little interest in promoting the events externally, but social media posts (unintentionally including my own) and Asbury's past history naturally led to media attention and ultimately the pilgrimage of thousands. The Asbury and local communities responded sacrificially to extend hospitality. Some visitors may have come as spectators or to accumulate new spiritual experiences, but workers who prayed with seekers testify that many were simply desperate for a deeper relationship with God. The influx of outsiders, however, left some students feeling overwhelmed and somewhat displaced. Given the strain on the small community's resources, as well as the recognition that God is not limited to one locality, the leaders seeking to steward the outpouring announced the close of the meetings' public phase. The main meetings, which had featured continuous worship for more than 360 hours, returned to a focus on the younger generation, while the seminary chapels and other venues continued to provide overflow room for other visitors.

This public phase closed on the previously scheduled Collegiate Day of Prayer on February 23. In view of Asbury's history, the national organizers had chosen Asbury University as the host campus months earlier. This event was not in the minds of the gospel choir as their worship simply ran over on February 8. It nevertheless provided a fitting climax for a transition in which the university sought to disperse the movement, recognizing that many other campuses had also begun reporting similar experiences of student-initiated collective prayer and worship.

[See as well Keener's February 23 "Reflections on the Outpouring" @ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2RX3Ugw5KM0 – ed.]

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While reports and analyses abound about what has occurred recently in Asbury, the GME editorial team would like to commend three further eyewitness accounts. All three accounts were given by outside visitors to Asbury and have already appeared elsewhere:

- "Short Report from Asbury" was a February 24 post on the *Missio Nexus* website as an account by that network's President, Ted Esler: https://missionexus.org/short-report-from-asbury/ .
- "Fire Fall Down: The Asbury Revival" is by Husezo Rhakho, a Baylor doctoral student from Nagaland. His account was a March 2 guest post authorized by Philip Jenkins: https://www.patheos.com/blogs/anxiousbench/2023/03/fire-fall-down-the-asbury-revival/ .
- "At Asbury, the Bible, Prayer, and Jesus Were in Focus" is by Robert Cunningham, Director of Christ for Kentucky, a public theology and strategy ministry, and an ordained minister in the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA). Cunningham's account was posted on March 6 on the PCA magazine *byFaith* website: https://byfaithonline.com/at-asbury-the-bible-prayer-and-jesus-were-in-focus/ .

Finally, Sara Weissman's "The Aftershocks of the Asbury Revival," published March 2 on the *Inside Higher Ed* website, also seems appropriate for this April GME issue on "Theological Education and Mission": https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2023/03/02/asbury-revival-comes-close .

As always, reader comments are welcome at GlobalMissiologyEnglish@gmail.com.

Call for Papers:

"Revivals around the World"

For Publication in *Global Missiology*, www.globalmissiology.org, April 2024

The theme of the April 2024 issue of *Global Missiology - English* will be "Revivals around the World." The following topics are examples of requested articles:

- Review of recent literature on Revivals
- Contemporary Case Studies
- Historical Case Studies
- Biblical-theological Analyses
- Missiological Analyses

Proposed titles with approximately 100-word abstracts are due July 31, 2023. Full manuscripts of approved paper proposals will be due January 31, 2024. Manuscript guidelines, including a template for formatting, can be found on the *Global Missiology* website at http://ojs.globalmissiology.org/index.php/english/about/submissions#authorGuidelines.

Please address all submissions and questions to globalmissiologyenglish@gmail.com.

Book Review

Jim Harries, *How Western Anti-Racism Harms Africa and How We Can Do Better*

Reviewed by Mary C. Cloutier

Published in *Global Missiology*, www.globalmissiology.org, April 2023

Harries, Jim (2021). *How Western Anti-Racism Harms Africa and How We Can Do Better.* Chichester: Faithbuilders, 206 pp., £12, ISBN: 978-1-9131-8164-2.

Introduction

Dr. Jim Harries has long been a scholar, thinker, and "vulnerable missionary"—living and serving incarnationally in both Zambia and Kenya since 1988. Since 2011 Harries has published numerous books pertaining to the African church and intercultural Christian ministry, communication, development, and secularism. While Harries encourages Christian partnership and mutual learning, he strongly opposes well-meaning foreign generosity that can undermine African ingenuity and promote dependency. In this book, Harries argues that secular, Western "anti-racist" efforts, while appearing to support African independence and identity, instead communicate cultural condescension, paternalism, and dependence on foreign funding and power. Harries confronts contemporary anti-racism writers, exposing both the weaknesses and hypocrisy of their arguments, as secular solutions to peoples who are naturally rich in faith and culture. Harries argues that only the gospel of Jesus Christ can address current African needs and problems, as well as point Africans to lasting peace and prosperity.

Summary

In his introduction, Harries acknowledges that challenging the "anti-racist" narrative can give the mistaken impression that he is racist—yet he is willing to tackle this highly sensitive topic. His purpose is to show that Western secularism undermines development in sub-Saharan Africa by concealing the need for the gospel. He argues that the anti-racist narrative, in attempting to achieve racial impartiality, overlooks historical and cultural differences as well as assumes the universality of the Western secularist view. In promoting colorblindness and political correctness, that view chooses willful ignorance of true cultural and racial diversity, presuming upon secular commonalities which do not exist. As Harries builds his argument, he points his readers to the works of the French scholar René Girard (1923-2015) and other contemporary scholars, who both draw correlations between cultural ways and prosperity and see the gospel as the solution to suffering and poverty.

In Chapter One, Harries describes the modern version of Western domination of indigenous peoples through interventions "for their own good." Prevalent use of English language captures the hearts and minds of young people, drawing them away from their indigenous culture. Harries argues that liberalism and secularism are neither necessary nor normative. Non-western peoples are not blank slates; their history and culture inform their current life experiences, so different from those of the West. Harries warns of Western secular hegemony which assumes Africans to be fellow (or future) Western secularists. Many of the anti-racism arguments are really about culture, and not race. A healthier view of cultural difference can help us to love others as they are, not as superior or inferior.

In Chapter Two, Harries critiques the Western secularist tendency to use English when communicating with non-Westerners as well as to ignore the biblical origin of the Western worldview. Harries attributes much of the suffering and poverty in Africa to a pervasive trait of envy, and he asserts that a biblical orientation can best address poverty and suffering, as it promotes productivity, independence and self-reliance. Western secularists would likely dismiss this view as racist, however. The use of English correlates to levels of pay and promotion, hence devaluing the local language and culture.

In Chapter Three, Harries correlates African witchcraft and envy. Western romanticism views man as basically good, ignoring the reality of sin and the need for God's grace. Sinful hearts envy and kill, and use innocent people as scapegoats, to bring about peace. This tactic is Satan's deception and is resolved only by Christ's atoning death on the Cross. Harries theorizes that witchcraft allows one to "kill" or protect by mystical means and may provide some relief from the cycle of revenge and violence. Fear of witchcraft may increase prosperity, as those envious of another's prosperity are less likely to steal or kill for gain.

In Chapter Four, Harries recommends a transformational approach to witchcraft, alleviating human suffering through Christ's love and mercy. Because anti-racists tend to dismiss witchcraft as superstition, they would likely criticize this approach as "racist." Yet, by ignoring the cultural "burdens" in others, they only perpetuate them. Harries sees this approach as bigoted selfishness.

In Chapter Five, Harries argues that anti-racism protects secular ideologies from exposure to truths about the human condition. Anti-racist ideology presumes the "assumed norm" and superiority of Western secularism. Harries asserts that the anti-racist despises anyone who does not do things, or see things, as white Westerners do. Such an anti-racist posture is a form of white Western chauvinism. If anti-racism is undermined, then secularism will also lose its power.

In Chapter Six, Harries shows the futility of anti-racist endeavors to unify and equalize diverse peoples through one universal secularist ideology. Western education, once fully grounded in Christian thought, is now secularized. Harries argues for a return to holistic, de-secularized education in the local languages. Western powers are currently embedded within African institutions so as to avoid the appearance of "re-colonizing" and accusations of racism. Western education rewards African people for conforming to Western ideas; this system reinforces foreign dominance and discourages indigenous thought, ingenuity, and development. Harries recommends that the West release its control over Africa by acknowledging the reality of cultural difference and differing outcomes. Westerners should live as learners and participants in the African context, without introducing foreign wealth or control. This "vulnerable mission" can undermine anti-racist ideology and the negative impact of Western secularism.

In Chapter Seven, Harries links people's ways of life to their level of wealth or poverty. Those who adhere to gospel teaching are more likely to generate wealth and maintain well-being. The Western secularist desires equality but denies that cultural differences directly impact prosperity. For this reason, they attempt to alleviate suffering and poverty through generous aid, which both perpetuates dependency and prevents the recipients from addressing the issues at the root of their suffering. In the past, biblical literacy and knowledge transformed Western peoples and increased their prosperity. Though many cultures have access to the Bible, the dominant influence of Western secularism robs them of this same transformation. Only a common faith in Christ, not secularism, can unite humans. Christian biblical teaching can address Africa's problem of envy plus the related

violence and destructiveness. Witchcraft serves as a stopgap, but the gospel of Christ brings transformation, peace, and prosperity.

In Chapter Eight, Harries argues that anti-racism only "papers over" deep divides in human communities, rather than offering a resolution. It reinforces prejudice, promotes victimization, and falsely claims that it is "not being racist." Harries observes that anti-racism ideology is very similar to its opposite: *white supremacy*. In fact, there is a blurring of the line between racism and anti-racism. Political correctness and fear of being considered racist have caused many Westerners to remain quiet and not question inconsistencies and overt deceptions in international relationships and power dynamics. While many secular projects fail, churches in Africa seem to grow in influence, perhaps due to the centrality of the Bible and its teachings. This difference tells the truth: that God is sovereign and righteous, and that only He can bring peace and prosperity to mankind. Western secularism, by contrast, is devoid of life-giving truths.

In Chapter Nine, Harries compares the Ethiopian Church and African Indigenous churches, whose common trait is that they have never been secularized. This, he claims, confounds and embarrasses anti-racists. Harries defines and illustrates, at great length, the term "racist" and how anti-racists apply it selectively to various religious and secular traits.

In Chapter Ten, Harries suggests that Westerners can best relate to Africa if they throw off secular anti-racism ideology in favor of anti-racism rooted in grace. By embracing the Gospel, we can promote and celebrate cultural difference, while also addressing issues of sin and injustice, for lasting peace and prosperity, through Christ. Harries suggests a four-prong response to anti-racism: *expose what is going on; live vulnerably in relation to the non-Western world; live God's love and grace, guided by the Spirit, following the Gospel; divest anti-racism of its tendency to ignore culture.*

Conclusion

Dr. Jim Harries lives out his faith in Christ among a people he dearly loves, serving humbly and wholly. His deep respect for African ways and his commitment to the African church community resonate in his writings. This particular work can be easily misunderstood, as it addresses controversial intercultural issues pertaining to race and racism, using contemporary terms which are defined and understood differently by persons with opposing views on the subject. The title may, in itself, be off-putting, but begs for serious engagement. Harries is neither a provocateur nor zealot. However, he speaks boldly and honestly against what he considers an insidious and harmful ideology.