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THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION: Can We Do Without It?

An AJET Editorial

Theological Education conjures up all kinds of images in the minds of some people: an education for the elite who are detached from the common man; an education which is moribund with a curriculum and educational philosophy that is western and out-of-date; an education that ignores the pressing social issues of contemporary society.

But theological education, properly conceived, does work and is essential for a healthy, growing church. In any discussion of theological education, however, one must recognise that there are different levels of leadership in the church. Ephesians 4:11-13 clearly teaches that the "gifted leaders" (vs. 11) are intended to train lay leadership ("God's people") so that all believers may contribute their gifts in service for the building up of the Body of Christ.

Lay leadership can be trained in many different ways. **Christian Education** programmes in the local church are essential for a healthy, growing church. Christian Education programmes include Sunday Schools, adult Bible studies, Christian teaching among the men, women, youth, married couples, single adults and such like. Ideally, written materials should be available to provide graded and comprehensive instruction.

The traditional mode of training "gifted church leadership" has been residential **Bible schools, theological colleges** and **seminaries**. These have proven their worth over the years, but they can be expensive and require students to be resident in an institutional setting for several years.

Theological Education by Extension (TEE) was begun in 1963 in Latin America as a means of "extending" theological education out from a central theological college to educate untrained church leaders where they were living and working, without requiring them to be resident in an institution. The Theological Commission of the *Association of Evangelicals of Africa* has produced a series of programmed study materials printed by Evangel Press in Nairobi. In some circles TEE is used as the means of training pastors for ordination while other churches use TEE as a means of training lay leaders.

The advantages of TEE are many. Students are not required to leave their employment or families to live in an institution. TEE students are usually more mature and experienced in church ministry and are eager for training even while they are engaged in ministry. TEE, however, is not without limitations. TEE for advanced theological education has yet to be developed in Africa. TEE often lacks the dynamic interaction of the student classroom, the provision of in-depth research and thoughtful reflection, and the opportunity of spiritual formation in a training institution with mentors.

Short Term Institutes (or Training Centres) are attempts to combine the advantages of TEE with residential Bible Schools. Short Term Institutes provide intensive study programmes of several weeks duration, usually in the vicinity where the people are living. Students and teachers live on the same campus for those short terms and develop a close, mentoring relationship. This approach is helpful for those with minimal academic background. But such an approach is limited by the duration of the term of study. Most students cannot have a leave of absence for more than a few weeks in a year.

Other approaches in training of leadership without dislocating a person from his family and ministry include **internships** (guided training in actual on-the-job ministry experience, such as evangelism, church planting and pastoral ministry), **evening Bible schools, seminars, conferences, congresses, camps, retreats, and apprenticeships**.

Any healthy, growing church would be amiss if they would choose to neglect the various training approaches mentioned above. The more trained leaders at all levels which a church has, the more that church will be able to grow. There is no way that high level theological colleges will be able to train all the leaders needed in Africa. The early church in America is a vivid illustration. Before independence in 1776 the largest churches in America were Congregational, Presbyterian and Anglican. However, these churches required their pastors to be trained at seminary level with ability to read Greek and Hebrew. When thousands of immigrants flocked to America and began moving west there was great need for a large cadre of clergy who could meet the pastoral needs. The Baptists and Methodists did not require such highly trained pastors. As a result the Baptists and Methodists were more capable of evangelising and planting churches due to their emphasis on lay leadership and circuit riders. Consequently, by the end of the nineteenth century the Methodists and Baptists were by far the largest denominations in the United States.

We need flexibility in leadership training which educates *all levels*, both lower and upper levels so that they can disciple all believers in the faith.

WHO IS A THEOLOGICAL EDUCATOR?

Scott Cunningham

There is no greater enemy of theological education than poor theological education. Whenever someone who completes his or her theological education is found to be morally unfit, incapable of ministerial skills, deficient in his or her knowledge of biblical truth, or poor in interpersonal skills, there is inevitably a poor reflection on theological education. Development of poor theological education is often due to poor thinking and definitions of theological education. This article helps clarify the parameters of a truly biblical form of theological education which will prepare capable, godly leaders. Dr. Scott Cunningham originally presented this paper at the ECWQA Theological Educators' Conference in Jos, Nigeria, 31 July to 1 August 1997.

THEOLOGY AND EDUCATION

Perhaps the most obvious approach to take in answering the question "Who is a theological educator?" is to analyse the term by breaking it down into its constituent parts. We could, therefore, focus on the meaning of the word "educator" and then its qualifying term, "theological". There is some initial value to this approach for at least we can thereby arrive at some definitional boundaries to our discussion.

Webster defines "educate" as "to develop mentally or morally, especially by instruction." This points us in a helpful direction for education is viewed as possibly an integrative process. It can focus on the development of the mental (or intellectual) aspects of the student, and it can focus on the moral (or spiritual). I would add a third possible focus: the practical. Indeed, for education which can be described as "theological" this is not an either/or proposition, as

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Webster suggests, rather it is both/and. Theological education must be integrative. It must focus on the development of the student's intellectual, spiritual, and practical formation. That is, we are concerned with knowing, being, and doing: what we want our students to know, what we want our students to be, and what we want our students to do.

The *Manifesto on the Renewal of Evangelical Theological Education* underscores this understanding of theological education under the heading, "Integrated programme": "Our programmes of theological education must combine spiritual and practical with academic objectives in one holistic integrated educational approach." And then we are reminded of what is one of our greatest faults as theological educators, "We are at fault that we so often focus educational requirements narrowly on cognitive attainments, while we hope for student growth in other dimensions, but leave it largely to chance."

It is at this point that we see one of the most significant distinctives of theological education in contrast to other types of education. A teacher of history may only focus on the cognitive aspects of his student's development. His purpose is to inform, and the pedagogical emphasis is on transmitting a body of knowledge and information. The teacher of medicine is justifiably concerned not only with communicating a body of knowledge, but also with the use of that knowledge in the development of practical skills. In this case there is a merger of the theoretical and the practical. But it is the theological educator, above all others, who is concerned not only with the communication of a body of knowledge and the development of the practical skills - those of Christian living and ministerial function - but also of the formation of the student's spirituality and his character. There is a joining of the head, the hands, and the heart, as the proper and necessary concern of our training as theological educators. The result will be leaders of the Church who follow in the steps of David, the shepherd of Israel, who is described as one who led "with integrity of heart" [the character], and "skillfulness of hands" [the practical] (Psa 78.72).

To qualify education as "theological", we mean that it is related to theology, the science and study of God. It would be a misperception, however, to believe that this kind of education is "theological" only because it has the study of God as its content of instruction. Rather, it is theological because its philosophical underpinnings and its goals are theo-centric, in addition to its content.

The theological nature of our task has at least three aspects corresponding to three important features of sound evangelical theology. **First, theological education is biblical.** Its content is based on the primary source of man's knowledge of God, the divinely inspired Word of God. This is not to deny

the positive benefits of drawing from other sources of information such as the social sciences. But, when we do, we recognise that its truth is measured against the unerring Word of God, and all that is truth is God's truth given by His general revelation.

Second, good theological education is contextual. It is aware of, sensitive to, and responds to the culture in which it is being conducted. The theological educator must always have one eye on the world of the Scripture and the other on the world of his students; one eye on the text and the other on the context. The unchanging truth of God is clothed in the garments of changing culture, *communicating in the contemporary idiom of the educational context.*

But it is not simply a matter of communicating timeless truth in the language, concepts, and thought-forms of our context; contextual theological education must also respond to the challenges and questions of contemporary society. Much of our theological education today goes to great lengths to answer questions that neither our students nor our churches nor our societies are asking, and the questions that desperately need response are ignored or are treated superficially, leaving our students, and ultimately the Church, to look for answers in other places, having concluded by our silence that we don't know where to find them.

Thirdly, good theological education is practical. I have already made the point that it must be an integrated process incorporating a balance of both the theoretical and the practical. A number of the subjects in the normal theological curriculum are *easily made practical*, such as preaching, counseling, evangelism and church planting. However, to say that theological education must be practical goes beyond preparation for ministerial duties. It must be related to the spiritual lives of the students. Theology is not something that is only memorised for an examination, or only believed; theology is also lived. Theological education, therefore, must be related to the students' spiritual formation and behaviour as Christians. And this must be done deliberately and consistently, not only in a course on Spiritual Life. In short, good theological education should facilitate sanctification.

We propose, then, that it is the intersection of these two great disciplines, education and theology, which give the theological educator his identity and distinctive task, one that is integrative – touching the intellect, spirit, and skill – and one that is biblical, contextual, and practical.

A BIBLICAL EXAMPLE OF A THEOLOGICAL EDUCATOR

A further way to answer this question of the identity and characteristics of the theological educator is to do so through an inductive approach, particularly through a study of biblical examples of those we might agree fit into the category. Undoubtedly, it would be a fascinating and profitable study.

Jesus' training of the Twelve would be an obvious starting point. "For everything that I learned from my Father, I have made known to you" (Jn. 15.15). Moses not only is a receiver of the God's revelation in the Law, but he is its expounder (Deut. 1.5) and teacher (Deut. 6.1). As the law has been once revealed, his concern now is that it be transmitted to future generations. The great confession of Judaism, the *Shema* ("Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one"), including the command which Jesus calls the greatest commandment in the Law (Deut. 6.4-5; cf. Mt. 22.37), contains nothing less than a call for the practice of theological education in the family and society:

These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up (Deut 6.6-7).

This concern for the transmission of spiritual truth, in which the learners then become the teachers, was a central feature of the ministry of the apostle Paul. "And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others" (2 Tim. 2.2).

Perhaps not so well known as Jesus, Moses, and Paul, but equally informative, is the example of Ezra.

Ezra's ministry took place during the time of the return of the Jews to Jerusalem from years of exile in Babylon. Nehemiah, his contemporary, was concerned with the reconstruction of the temple and the city walls. Ezra's concern was the restoration of the people and the worship of God. When Ezra returned, he found that the Jews who had preceded him were already opening themselves up to idolatry through intermarriage with the unbelieving neighboring peoples.

Ezra is described in terms that should characterise every theological educator: "For Ezra had set his heart to study the law of the Lord, and to do it, and to teach his statutes and ordinances in Israel" (Ezra 7.10). In the Hebrew text Ezra's whole-hearted devotion refers to the three tasks of studying, doing,

and teaching the law. Here is a three-fold progression which the theological educator dare not neglect. One cannot really teach what he himself does not know and understand. Second, the knowledge that one gains from the study of Scripture is applied first in the educator's own life. And only then, as a final step, it is taught to others.

The first task, then, to which Ezra was devoted was studying the law. The Hebrew word used means "to seek" or "to enquire" and is most commonly used in this verbal form in reference to seeking after God Himself, as it does a few verses earlier (6.21). Ezra continued in active research and investigation of the Word of God. In contemporary parlance, Ezra doesn't depend on his old notes from his seminary days to teach his classes. A good teacher is, at the same time, a good student. Ezra is described as a man who was "skillful [RSV]" or "well-versed" [NIV] in the Law of Moses (7.6), and "learned in matters concerning the commands and decrees of the Lord" (7.11). Later Jewish tradition had such high regard for Ezra's learning that it was believed that God revealed to him seventy other books which contain "the spring of understanding, the fountain of wisdom, and the stream of knowledge" (2 Esdras 14.47).

Ezra's knowledge of God's law results first of all in his own obedience to it. He is not like the man James describes who looks at himself in the mirror and goes away forgetting what he looks like, but rather is the one who "looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues to do this, not forgetting what he has heard, but doing it . . ." (James 1.25). Ezra's practice of the law is demonstrated in his exemplary character, demonstrated in his godly thankfulness for success (Ezra 7.27f.); his prayerful dependence on God for protection (8.21-23); his grief at the sin of the people (9.3f.); his deep humility and repentance before God (8.5-15); and his brave confrontation against that which was wrong (chapter 10). Ezra can confront the sin of others and exhort the people to "do His will" (10.11) because he himself has obeyed.

Finally, Ezra is one who teaches God's Word to God's people. Later, in the book of Nehemiah, we see Ezra standing before all the people reading the Book of the Law and his Levitical assistants "instructing the people in the Law...making it clear and giving the meaning so that the people could understand what was being read" (Neh. 8.7f.). The 'NIV Study Bible' footnote observes that rabbinic tradition understands this to mean that the Levites translated the reading of the Hebrew Scriptures into Aramaic, the people having lived in exile so long they had forgotten Hebrew and adopted the Babylonian language. In any case, the text clearly gives the idea that there was an explanation in order that the people could understand and apply the law to their situation, which they immediately did through the keeping of the previously neglected Feast of Tabernacles.

Who is a theological educator? One like Ezra, who studies the law of God, practices it himself, and then teaches it to others.

WHO IS A THEOLOGICAL EDUCATOR?

Perhaps we are now ready to give a more systematic definition. I would propose that a theological educator is a servant of God who forms (i) the people of God with the knowledge of God for the purposes of God (ii) and to the glory of God.

A Servant of God

The author chooses the terminology of "servant" to describe the theological educator because a number of its connotations in the Scriptures broadly coincide with ideas that we have already seen and which should be emphasised in defining the role of the theological educator.

(i) The servant is one who owes his allegiance to another. We have noted that Ezra had set his heart on the law of God. If theological education is theo-centric, then the theological educator must also in his service own no other master but God.

(ii) Servanthood has to do with obedience. The theological educator not only obeys the law of God which is the fruit of his own study (like Ezra), but he also carries out his ministry in obedience to the divine command to teach others (Deut. 6.4-9; Mt. 28.20; 2 Tim. 2.2).

(iii) Many of those we see in the Scriptures as fulfilling the role of the theological educators are called "servants of God", particularly in their prophetic function of speaking the words of God. This would include Moses (2 Kings 21.8), Joshua (Jos. 24.29) and Paul (Gal. 1.10).

(iv) The role of the theological educator is not an elitist position. Just as all the people of God may be called "servants" of God (Isa. 65.9; Rev. 2.20), so may all to some measure fulfill the role of theological educator in their families, communities of faith, and societies.

The People of God

Biblically speaking, instruction in the knowledge of God has as its proper focus the entire people of God. The command to Ezra was that he should teach "any who do not know" the laws of God (Ezra 7.25), a command which was fulfilled in his ministry (Neh. 8.1). Deuteronomy, which is really a piece of

theological instruction, was intended to be perpetually read to all the people of Israel (Deut. 1.1; 31.11f.). There is particular concern that the revelation of God should not dead-end with the generation that was its initial recipients; it was to be passed down from generation to generation (Exod. 12.24-26; Deut. 6.7; 11.19; 31.13; Psa. 78.1-8; 145.4). Similarly in the New Testament, all disciples are to be the focus of instruction in the commands of Christ (Mt. 28.20; Acts 2.42) so that the entire body of Christ might mature (Eph. 4.13-16). What Paul receives, he passes on to others (1 Cor. 11.23; 15.3), a pattern which results in the perpetual transmission of the knowledge of God (2 Tim. 2.2).

This emphasis on the entire *laos* of God as the focus of theological education does not invalidate the singling out of a smaller group within the wider body for special attention. Examples of such a concentration in Scripture would include Moses's band of assistant judges (Exod. 18.15-26), Elisha's school of the prophets (2 Kings 6.1-7), and, of course, Jesus's training of the Twelve (Mt. 13.11).

However, such a narrow focus only has meaning within the wider perspective of the theological education of the entire people of God, for its primary purpose is not the establishment of a class of professionals, but the instruction of all the people of God in the knowledge of God (Eph. 4.11-12). We must constantly be on guard against an ivory-tower practice, remembering that theological education must be of the church, through the church, and for the church.

The Knowledge of God

We have already maintained that if the *theos* in "theological" education means anything, it means that the content of our instruction must be the knowledge of God and his relation to the world. For the evangelical theological educator, the self-revelation of God in Scriptures and their witness to Jesus Christ are given a central role. This point need not be belaboured. As we saw in the ministry of Ezra, there is an obvious emphasis on the written Law of God as the witness to the spoken words of God through his prophets and the record of his acts of Israel's redemption. It is the Holy Scriptures which are able to make one "wise for salvation" and are "useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work" (2 Tim. 3.15f. – a concise, biblical definition of theological education). A similar stance is taken with respect to the primacy of the gospel, *i.e.*, the teaching of Christ and about Christ (Mt. 28.20; Jn. 14.21-24; Acts 10.36-43; Rom. 1.1-4).

The Purposes of God

The theological educator fulfills the purposes of God in at least two ways. The Word of God as it is taught and applied accomplishes the divine purpose of personal renewal and transformation. Israel was urged to keep the law which Moses taught "so that it might go well with you" (Deut. 4.1,40; cf. 5.33; 6.1-3), a wellness defined in association with blessing in the promised land. Ezra's reading of the law resulted in confession of sin, worship of God, and the enactment of a self-imposed covenant to follow the ways of God (Neh. 8--10).

This linkage between the applied knowledge of God and personal transformation is no less evident in the New Testament. For Paul, the goal of his labour of proclamation, admonishing, and teaching the word of God is that "we may present everyone perfect in Christ" (Col. 1.28). Knowledge of God's will, wisdom, and understanding are to result in a life lived in a manner worthy of the Lord and pleasing him in every way (Col. 1.9-10).

This goal of individual transformation finds a corollary in the corporate growth of the Body of Christ. The maturing of the Body of Christ until it reaches the fullness of the stature of her Lord is a result of the gifted individuals in the Body doing the work of theological education, equipping others to do the work of ministry (Eph. 4.11-16). It is as the Body matures that it will be able to carry out its witness to the world of God's redemptive work in Christ.

The Glory of God

If the penultimate goal of theological education is personal renewal and participation in the purposes of God, then the ultimate purpose is, as it should be for every work of humanity, the glory of God. This doxology is not simply something which we tack onto the end of the process by Christian custom. The glory of God really is the heart of the matter, and is a reflection of the theocentric nature of our task. Peter's doxology at the end of his second epistle explicitly associates the results of theological education and the glory of God: "But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever!" (2 Pet 3.18).

And that is the heart-felt cry of every true theological educator, *sol/a gloria deo*.

Missiological Factors Involved in Designing A Curriculum for an Adequately Rounded Theological Training in Africa

Victor Cole

Christian missions is at the heart of the gospel of Jesus Christ, evangelising the lost and discipling the nations. Strange as it may seem, missiology has not always been at home in theological institutions. Following is a discussion paper by Rev. Dr. Victor Babajide Cole, prepared for the Workshop on Missions Training in Africa held at Miango, Nigeria, August 26-30, 1996. Dr. Cole explores the importance of giving prominence to missiology within the curriculum of theological education so that missions permeates the whole educational programme.

INTRODUCTION

The subject of missionary training has come to the fore since the July 1989 Manila conference that brought together 60 or so missionary leaders from 24 countries. The meeting focused on effective missionary training in the Two-Thirds World. Reports from that conference formed part of a wider concern presented in the World Evangelical Fellowship Missions Commission publication (Taylor 1991).

The overall trend points to a phenomenal growth in the two-thirds world missionary efforts in the eighties. For example, the OC Ministries Inc. research into the trend between 1980 and 1988 indicates

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that non-Western missions movement increased by an estimated 22,686 missionaries at an average annual growth of 13.39%, translating into a 248% growth per decade! This growth is reported to be about five times faster than the Western missions movement (Pate, 1991, 33).

Isolating the trend in Africa from the wider global report, it is noted that African missionaries grew by 9,300 to a total of 14,989 (or 235% increase) within the same period from 1980-1988 (Pate 1991, 29). Five of the ten largest missionary sending countries of the two-thirds World in 1988 were in Africa, listed in descending order as follows: Nigeria (2nd place), Zaire (3rd place), Kenya (5th place), Ghana (8th place), and Zimbabwe (9th place). Also, four of the top ten two-thirds World largest missionary sending agencies in 1988 were in Africa (Pate 1991, 33). Among the four, the Church of the Province of Kenya mission arm was in second place, "Forward in Faith Ministries" of Zimbabwe was 3rd; the Evangelical Missionary Society of ECWA, Nigeria was in 4th place, while the Gospel Mission of Uganda was in 9th place.

It is no wonder then that the Association of Evangelicals in Africa's Commissions on Theological and Christian Education, as well as Evangelism and Missions jointly sponsored the Miango workshop from 26th to 30th August 1996 to look into the crucial issues pertaining to the modality for missionary training on the continent. The staggering statistics quoted above point to an urgent need for effective missionary training.

The joint efforts of 15 or so member bodies of the Nigeria Evangelical Missions Association resulting in the mid 1986 in the Nigeria Evangelical Missionary Institute (Fuller 1991) became an answer to the challenge. So is the Africa Inland Church Missionary College in Eldoret Kenya (Hildebrandt 1991). We would equally acknowledge scores of short-term training programmes for African missionaries across the continent. Some of these programmes are formal, others are non-formal while yet others are informal in mode.

What should constitute the content of an adequately rounded missionary training? What is the ideal context in which such a training should be conducted? Should there be special training institutes for missionaries, or should the training be part of the existing programme of theological training? Why have traditional theological institutions not put missionary training at the fore in their curricula? These questions form an aggregate of factors pertinent to the task of designing a missionary training programme that is equally well rounded theologically.

Fuller (1991, 81) had noted that ministerial training schools begun by western missionaries tended for long not to include missions in their curricula, and wondered why this was the case. A good look at the place given to the subject matter back in the homes of the European and American missionaries (as we will attempt shortly) soon reveals that a less than enthusiastic support is accorded the subject matter across the continents. That attitude is thus well reflected in the patterns and models of ministerial training across the Two-Thirds World. It is however gratifying to see recent developments, largely through the springing up of missionary training institutes, an attempt to correct the apparent neglect of missions that has long prevailed.

However, when one looks at the curricular components prescribed for today's cross-cultural missionaries, one cannot but wonder how many training programmes can afford to provide all that is prescribed and how long such a well-rounded training would last. Taylor (1991, 3) for example proposed a six-fold process to include: personal disciplines, local church involvement, biblical/theological studies, cross-cultural studies, pre-field equipping by sending agencies and on-field career training. The curriculum components constitute another important factor in attempting an adequately rounded training programme.

We shall therefore come back to address these components at the end. But to begin with, it is in order to set the topic of discussion in context by looking at the struggles and disillusionment of missiology in the course of the promotion of theological education, the need to reinforce the centrality of missions in our evangelical tradition, and a look at the place of missiology in theological education.

I. The Struggles of Missiology in the course of Promoting Theological Education

The history of modern mission efforts can easily be traced back to the spontaneous rise of mission societies comprising people who were burdened for the lost and were deeply convinced of the missiological dimension of the church "to the nations". Some of these societies were spearheaded by student movements within the four walls of *formal* institutions of learning such as universities and seminaries. But the official positions of the academies seemed to have been marked by apathy, reluctance and outright indifference.

It is noteworthy that missiology as a discipline in its own right has struggled for recognition. O.G. Myklebust provides this historical perspective:

Apart from the United States of America, up to 1950 the study of missions had been admitted, not to the temple of theology itself, but only to what may not inappropriately be described as the court of the Gentiles. In Great Britain, no university had recognised our subject as an independent discipline. With one exception, the same was true of the theological colleges. On the continent of Europe, fifteen institutions of university standard had accorded to this particular subject the right of representation in the *civitas theologica*. In almost all of these, however, missionary science was taught, not as part and parcel of the ordinary work but as an "optional extra" In most universities the subject of missions had no official place in the curriculum [Myklebust: 2 (1955-57), 287-88].

The above provides the Western European perspective. It is to be remembered though, that a number of European missions came to Africa at the start of what we might call the modern missionary efforts to Africa in the 19th century. Is it any wonder that ministerial training institutions from such backgrounds will necessarily omit missions as a formal subject of training?

In 1974 Charles Forman of Yale Divinity School conducted a survey among Seminary students and came to the conclusion that, uncertainty about beliefs prevailed in the seminaries as opposed to the Bible institutes and Colleges of America. Forman reported saying:

It would seem reasonable to expect that where there is uncertainty about belief there will be less interest in making beliefs known and hence less readiness to consider missions. [This is supported by the fact that the Bible schools and colleges which represent on the whole a greater degree of assurance regarding traditional beliefs also represent in their reports a more secure place for the study of missions and clearer determination to maintain the subject in the future.] The insecurity prevails chiefly in the graduate Protestant theological seminaries where there is usually more questioning of beliefs (Forman 1974, 39).

One could infer then from Forman's study that the higher one goes theologically, the "cooler" one becomes missiologically, so to speak! But seriously though, Forman's study deserves attention. Is it any wonder that the questioning of beliefs leads to insecurity of the same? When beliefs are eroded in the name of scholarship and what is fashionable, the gospel is ultimately undermined. This is a lingering lesson of history and of our contemporary world of academia. Both the

European and North American traditions testify to the fact that a training institution could begin well with evangelical fervour, but later on discard what it initially held dear. History testifies to how universities gave way to seminaries because of the erosion of beliefs. Later on a number of those same seminaries gave way to Bible colleges and institutes for the same reason. Of late the trend in North America towards upgrading the institutes is witnessed. We allude to this history because not even special missionary training institutes are immune to the apathy, lethargy, reluctance and indifference that later characterised many of these distinguished institutions of learning.

We are not thereby saying that in the process of learning, we should not ask questions. We should of course ask good questions. We should question what we believe so that we may "know the certainty of the things (we) have been taught" (Lk. 1:4). Questioning that leads to deeper understanding of the faith and concomitant obedience to God is quite healthy. It is self-deluding to say that not questioning preserves faith necessarily, or that not questioning is what preserves evangelical fervour. After all, even so-called Christian beliefs can certainly militate against missions, as William Carey found out in his encounter with those Calvinists of his day who piously resisted his global outlook on missions.

What we are saying here is that missiology as a discipline has undergone some struggles back at the home bases from which the western missionaries brought it to Africa and the rest of the Two-Thirds world. We are thereby putting the present-day state of theological education *vis-à-vis* the subject of missions against that historical background. That background should help us understand in large part why missions as a subject has long been neglected in the course of ministerial training.

What then should be the course enjoined in our efforts at training? We would commend efforts at promoting the emerging patterns and modes of missionary training institutes while sounding the warnings from history as already discussed. We would also challenge the older and more established residential theological training institutions to follow the path of renewal in the evangelical tradition.

In 1982, Harvie M. Conn was appointed professor of missions at Westminster in the USA. At his inaugural address he proposed "a missio-logical agenda for theology, not a theological agenda for missions." He said,

In its times of greatest glory, theology was nothing more than reflection in mission, in pilgrimage on the road among the time-

bound cultures of the world. It was also a reflection on mission, on Jesus as the good news for the world . . . (Conn 1983, 7).

We would do well to remind ourselves of both: missiological agenda for theology (as Conn advocated), and theological agenda for missions (in the light of current movement to “de-theologise” missions).

II. The Disillusionment and Frustration within Missiology

Not only has the subject of missions as a discipline in its own right undergone struggles, but within its own there appears to be a crisis of identity. On this note we would once again take a look at some of what obtains in those regions of the world that have had a longer history of missions training. I quote Harvie Conn on this point when he said,

“too often the professor, electing for his discipline as “practical theology” spins church growth strategy with only the slightest backward glance at “theology” (Conn 1983, 6,7).

In 1962, Leslie Dunstan quoted the frustrations expressed by a missions professor back in 1956 when he said,

We in the field of missions are lost sheep, scattered among the folds of history, theology, comparative religions, and education, wandering from the theological field to the practical field and back again . . . We proclaim in our lectures and sermons that the world mission is the central task of the church, yet we have all too often allowed it to become peripheral in our curriculum (Dunstan 1962, 1).

This writer could also report his encounter with a would-be missions professor who in the eighties had studied missiology at one of the north American seminaries at the doctoral level. Upon completing his programme, he refused to teach the subject as a protest to the type of training he had received. In his own words he said, “my training in missions was a hodge podge of history, anthropology, church growth, etc., touching bits and pieces here and there but really not addressing any of these areas well enough!”. When asked why he had pursued missions studies at the post-graduate degree level, he said, he had discovered the deficiencies too late in the programme.

In light of the above, some of the current discussions on whether theological and biblical studies should be part of or a prerequisite to missionary training comes to the fore. It would seem that most missionary trainers would agree that biblical and theological training is needed by prospective missionaries. Whether the missionary institutes have the resources to provide this needed training is sometimes the

question asked. At times this aspect of theological and biblical training is side-stepped deliberately in order not to "compete" with traditional theological schools who do not generally emphasise missions.

While assuming that the necessary foundational biblical and theological studies are already completed, Taylor (1991, 8,9) proposed in part what the content of a missionary training programme should include on both the formal and non-formal sides.

On the formal side he suggested among others, biblical and theological studies of Old Testament and New Testament bases of missions, New Testament church growth, hermeneutics and contextualisation, spiritual warfare and power encounter, historical studies of the expansion of the Church, history of missions, regional or national historical areas; cultural studies, examining contextualisation, cross-cultural communication, anthropology, sociology, and research methods; specialised studies depending on the candidate's needs such as: linguistics, Bible translation and language learning; targeting unreached people groups; urban studies; university students; tent-making in restricted access countries, Islamics or studies in other world religions. All these were subsumed under the formal side of training.

Then came the non-formal aspects to include: practical courses such as health, agriculture, animal husbandry, schooling of missionary children, motor mechanics and others; discussions about missionary family life and husband-wife relationships in a cross-cultural setting; a series of guided field trips to study cultural or religious phenomenon; a more serious practicum in urban areas, towns and the rural sector under supervision and with the participation of local believers and missionaries, if they are available; and a final serious in-service internship followed by a wrap-up session with the teaching staff.

Taylor's proposal obviously aims at the practical training of field missionaries while the earlier illustrations of frustrations and disillusionment concern missions training in the context of formal theological institutions. A close look though will reveal that a number of the courses listed by Taylor are also taught in the theological institutions' missions programmes. It will also be realised that much of what is proposed by Taylor requires inter-disciplinary and multi-disciplinary approach. One then wonders if the "slightest backward glance at theology" will not be the case here? Or might one not have the feeling of "hodge podge" approach to otherwise multi-disciplinary studies? Or would "wandering" from field to field be the case? But for sure, today's missionary trainee is expected to be all things!

Although new modes of missionary training patterns are reported in the Two-thirds World with various ingenious attempts to be contextually relevant, we do suspect that the western model remains buried underneath. Until and unless missions training assumes a clear identity, reports of frustrations and feelings bordering on identity crisis could persist among trainers and trainees alike - whether in traditional and formal training settings or in the emerging non-formal training settings. The apparent point of distinction lies in the theory versus practice dichotomy. The perception widely adopted in some circles is that formal theological training patterns tend to be theoretical in nature. If trapped into this world of dichotomous perception, one might be susceptible to become insensitive to recognising the possibility of the supposedly non-formal (or practical) mode slowly coming to resemble the formal (or theoretical) mode with time.

We must come back to ask: "What is the place of missiology in the theological curriculum?" "Does missiology have to continue to play a subordinate role to the four main disciplines of the theological curriculum, namely Old Testament studies, New Testament research, History and Doctrine?" Before we turn to these curricular matters it is in order first to re-examine the centrality of missions in our evangelical tradition and consequently by implication, to our training for ministry.

III. The Ministry, Message and Minister of the Gospel

We should not look at missionary training without reminding ourselves of the essence of that propelling force that gave rise to the need for the training in the first place – the gospel that has once for all been delivered to the saints. Three aspects of this distinctive of evangelical tradition are examined below.

a) The Manner of the Minister of the Gospel (2 Cor. 4:1-4).

The great missionary (apostle) to the Gentiles declared in 2 Cor. 4:1 that the gospel ministry is a stewardship from God through God's mercy. As such Christians hold this "deposit" in trust as those who must give account to the Master of the House at the appropriate time. Yet it is only through God's mercy that the minister could be counted trustworthy with this ministry. That glorious ministry demands of God's ministers an above the board lifestyle (manner or conduct) that renounces secret and shameful ways. This understandably is so that the lifestyle of the minister does not speak against the word of proclamation (2 Cor. 4:2a). But as touching the message held in trust, the ministers must renounce the use of deception and distortion of God's word in the course of duty (v.2b).

So then, for those who would obey the command to go with the gospel, there should be no sugar-coating of the glorious message. There must not be the playing of God's love against His justice. For those who would question faith in the wrong way, they are reminded that hell is a stark reality, not a myth. People all over the world are lost in sin whether or not it is fashionable to say. The ministers must conduct themselves in a manner that clearly sets forth (*i.e.* puts to full view) the truth for all to see. If then having set forth (or made plain) the truth and finding the gospel still veiled, it is understandable in view of the activities of Satan (2 Cor. 4:3,4). Satan is the one who blinds people to the light of the gospel. It should not be for lack of clarity on the part of the ministers, but due to a blinding deception of Satan. It should not be due to distortion of the gospel by the minister. Note that when the truth is set forth in plain terms, Satan still attempts to blindfold. How much more then when it is the would-be messenger who deliberately distorts the message in order to appear "presentable", "liberal-minded", and "contemporary".

We bring to view these points because it is in training institutions that bad theology has risen in respect of the gospel message. It is amply demonstrated that bad theology has a tendency to result in missionary decline.

b) The Message of the Minister (2 Cor. 4:5,6)

The minister is a herald of the message. It becomes, therefore, important to be sure of what the message is. The apostle Paul said, the message is not about "ourselves" – whether a group, a denomination, an agency in a human leader. The message is about a person: "Jesus Christ as Lord" (Κυριος Χριστος). This is the message of proclamation.

However, the messenger, too, features somehow in the course of proclamation. This fact is understandable. The ministers ("ourselves") are servants for Jesus' sake (v.5b). The servants have experienced, firsthand, the inner light of the knowledge of the glory of God. It is this fact that makes them qualified in large measure to proclaim the message. When they so do, they speak from personal experience as those who have been transformed from darkness into light. This way, God's all-surpassing power is displayed in lives transformed (vs. 7). The situation is quite clear: The human ministers chosen as ambassadors of Christ are feeble, "in jars of clay". This feebleness demonstrates that it is God's power that is at work in and through the messengers and not "ourselves".

We examine these in part because in the course of training we ought always to keep in view what the message truly is. As it is examined in the course of preparing the ministers, it must remain as it has always been: Κύριος Χριστός. Also, we must keep in mind that even though all efforts at enhancing clarity in terms of understanding cultures and communications principles, should be carefully expended, ultimately, we must recognise and rely upon God's power and Spirit to bring positive results.

c) The Motivation of the Minister of the Gospel (2 Cor. 5:11,14,15).

Two things are involved in motivating the message bearers. The first is the fear (literally terror) of the Lord (2 Cor. 5:11). Unpalatable as this may seem to some, this is the stark reality.

Back in 5:10 the apostle Paul had referred to the reality of *divine judgement*. This is a reference to God's justice upon a rebellious humanity. If the messengers truly believe in the terror of the Lord, that should be motivational in going out to make the proclamation. After all, if one sees that the house is ablaze one has a moral duty to raise an alarm. In this respect, the messenger would plead with the lost to respond to the message so as to avoid the "terror of the Lord". The fear of the Lord as here interpreted is biblical. This truth also must be set forth plainly before a dying world.

The second motivational factor is just as compelling. That is, the *love of Christ* (2 cor. 5:14,15). Like the parallel lines of the "truth rail line", God's love must be placed side by side with God's justice as the message is declared. God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son. In so doing God gave His all. That is love! This is why missions is "the heartbeat of God". Since He gave Himself for us - dying on our behalf - we who have been brought to new life must henceforth now live for Him (v.15). Thus His love, properly understood, should induce us to engage in the ministry of reconciliation as it befits Christ's ambassadors (5:18-20).

We have taken a look at these because without a deep inner conviction of these motivational truths, training of the ministers - whether using formal or non-formal modes - is doomed to suffer from the types of apathy, frustrations, disillusionment and plain neglect we have referred to already.

All that we have so far discussed in some ways sets the stage for us to examine what missiological and curricular factors are involved in designing an adequately rounded theological training with missions

consciousness.

IV. The Role of Missiology and Missionary Training in Theological Education Curriculum

Earlier on we raised a number of questions that should form legitimate concerns of curriculum planners in the task of missionary training. We will now take up some of these as well as consider other related matters.

a) How Missiology and Missionary Training Should be Related

So far we have used the terms, "missiology" and "missionary training" interchangeably. However, it might have been apparent that a distinction is often implied in practice. Conn (1983, 6,7) put his finger on the distinction. The assumption in some quarters that "practical" preparation for ministry is mutually exclusive of the theoretical preparation forces the distinction we refer to. In part then, practical missionary training is taken out of the realm of "serious academics" in the traditional formal institutions preparing ministers and placed into Training Institutes with less rigorous demands in the theoretical realm. This way "missiology" would tend to be more of theoretical approach and is usually practised in academic institutions. On the other hand, "missionary training" institutes and programmes would imply emphasis on the practical dimension of training.

This theory-practice dichotomy is detrimental. Someone has said, "There is nothing as practical as good theory." A good theory works. Why then not put good theory into practice? It is recognised that emphasis on practice without a grasp of theory often results in severe limitation of the individual so disposed. A grasp of theory should enable one to vary practice and to innovate. Conversely, lack of theoretical facts limits one to doing things "the way it has always been done".

But it is also fair to ask: "Does missions lend itself to theory or is it essentially a practical thing?" The answer is not quite straightforward. It depends on how you are looking at it. The process involved in proclamation of the message referred to earlier on is necessarily practical. If the messenger does not go and make proclamation, the message is not heard. However, with increasing complexity of cross-cultural demands on missionaries, we have witnessed the immense contribution of theoretical knowledge in helping to enhance the message proclamation. For example, communications theory has increased our understanding, so has the knowledge of cultural anthropology. These theoretical knowledge are practical. At another level though, practical

skills and theory will not suffice because ultimately it is the "power of God" at work and not "ourselves". However, all the above must be factored into the answer we give to the question.

We must however hasten to point out the artificiality involved in a formal schooling environment. Elsewhere, we have discussed the strengths and weaknesses of formal education in the process of leadership training for the ministry (Cole 1991, 33-43). The artificiality of a formal educational setting in a subject area that is practical means that missiology must be deliberately geared to the practical by curriculum makers of theological institutions. It will take a conscious and deliberate effort to make the theory taught to be demonstrated practically. It will require at times getting away from the artificial contexts into the realm of practice. It will involve trainers (faculty) and trainees (seminarians) with heart for what God is doing in reconciling the world to Himself.

That this deliberate and conscious effort at relating theory to practice is possible is increasingly demonstrated in theological training programmes around the world that are attempting innovations (see Ferris 1990, and models of Missionary training reported in Taylor 1991). What curriculum makers of theological schools must constantly grapple with is the tendency to treat theory as though it is impractical. To this end it will be advisable that faculty recruitment should target bringing together a team of practitioners and theorists who can work in concert at training candidates for the ministry. In some cases, the same individuals have had ample experience in combining theory and practice. Such constitute the ideal faculty.

In another way theological schools and missionary training institutes will deliberately seek the assistance of churches and agencies who are successfully practising missions. This is a case where both school and the community of faith ought to join hands in the task of training.

A point about practicums and internships is in order at this stage. These days, more and more theological institutions are requiring a time of practical field experience of their trainees. This includes missionary internships in cross-cultural situations. Such efforts are commended, and they form part of the conscious and deliberate attempt to relate theory to practice.

However a word of caution is in order as well. Our experience at studying practicums points out that they are most profitable when theological institutions carefully draw up the types of training activities on the field that will result in the training outcomes they desire. Unless

this is done and monitored by these institutions, one cannot guarantee that the desired outcomes will necessarily result simply because trainees have been sent out to the field. We bring out this point because of at least two factors.

First, practitioners on the field are often not set up as trainers or educators unless they too have consciously planned to be so. Sometimes a practitioner who is good on the job is lacking in teaching skills. The second point is that, the internship programme in some schools turns out to be no more than the dumping of trainees on the field practitioners to baby-sit them. Rather, the schools must be actively involved in not only articulating the training outcomes they desire from the internship programme, but must also have their own representatives (faculty) out there to encourage the field practitioners in the direction of those outcomes. Where the situation allows faculty to participate in part or fully on the field, this should be vigorously pursued. That will make for a vital modelling of the theory-practice linkage before the students.

b) The Place of Missiology in the Theological School Curriculum

From earlier discussion we mentioned some of the problems of frustration, disillusionment and neglect of missiologists and missions in the context of the theological school curriculum. The question is: "What role should missiology play in the theological school curriculum?" We can re-phrase the question differently in this form: "Does missiology have to continue to play a subordinate role to the four main disciplines of the theological school curriculum?" Three possibilities are seen in practice. They are:

- 1) Missiology is made a separate discipline. In this approach some theological institutions set up a separate department of missions.
- 2) Some theological schools seek to incorporate missions within one of the already established disciplines such as history or practical theology.
- 3) Many simply hope that the other disciplines will from time to time speak for missions and its promotion.

This last possibility alone amounts to the paying of lip service to missions. Harvie Conn (1983) advocates a combination of all three and we agree with this point.

Missions should form the over-riding thrust of the training philosophy in a theological institution that is committed to evangelical tradition and value. By this we do not mean that everyone that is trained should be in cross-cultural mission. Some will answer the cross-cultural

mission call. For such, a missiology department or programme is applicable. This is the case then for missiology as a completely separate discipline in the theological school curriculum. This is the first possible role mentioned above.

However, the challenge of world mission must not be seen as the exclusive burden of those in the missions programme. A missiological outlook should inform the perspectives of the other theological disciplines of New Testament, Old Testament, history and doctrine. The Old and New Testament studies should not be approached in evangelical theological training without calling attention to God's will in salvation for all mankind "unto the ends of the earth". If we pursue the texts and in the process we miss the lone thread that runs through the texts from the proto-evangelium in Genesis to the songs of souls set free in Revelation, we have missed the point of the texts! Equally, if we teach History and in so doing miss the history of salvation, or we fail to excite our students about God's saving acts in history, we have missed the point of history. Along the same line, if in our teaching of doctrine we are not gripped by God's dealings with humankind in salvation, if teachers and the taught alike are not personally affected in their inner being, if they are thereby unconcerned about lost humanity, then we have missed the point of our "so great a salvation".

This then calls for all the four established disciplines of the theological school curriculum to adopt a mission-orientation. This calls for an integrated approach to curriculum that results in mission consciousness throughout all of our training.

To illustrate, the writer recalls the days he used to teach doctrine at the ECWA Theological Seminary in Jos, Nigeria. Although we would have painstakingly inquired about the salvation of each applicant as part of the admissions process, when students came into Theology Proper class, they would be asked for detailed write-up on the topic, "How I came to know God". This would include not only the point of coming to saving knowledge, but also how they have walked with God in their spiritual pilgrimage. Even when the class exceeded fifty, every script was painstakingly read. There were some cases requiring counsel in an attempt to give encouragement in their pursuit of God. The subject of knowing God could be approached purely as an academic exercise or in an esoteric and speculative manner with a sense of personal detachment. On the other hand, the truth of the Word of God can be presented in classroom situations in a manner that will affect life, a manner that will arrest the soul.

Harvie Conn has also proposed that missiology perform a *Gadfly*

role in the theological curriculum. He said,

Missiology in this spirit, seeks to irritate the Herman Ridderboses of this world who can write a 586- page outline to the theology of Paul and not even include the mission of the church in any of its 80 separate headings. It will aim for unrest in a church history department which divides the history of missions from the history of the church or teaches as if the world were still flat. It will rebel against a practical theology department which offers only domesticated information for the church "at home" in white suburbia.

And, while all this is going on, it will continue to ask other equally embarrassing questions of itself as well (Conn 1983, 20, 21).

As a *Gadfly* then, missiology will serve as a constant irritant to remind all the theological disciplines not to sit at ease *vis-à-vis* their missionary task. So then, missiology can be of great assistance to the other theological disciplines and to the church at large. To that end Jerald D. Gort wrote,

It must exert itself in and out of season to help theology - especially Western theology - find its way back down from the upper regions of the towers of academia to the ground floor of human reality By the same token missiology also has a mission to the church. The church too must ever be reminded that its *raison d'être* lies in the gospel of the kingdom The congregation must be called to become what it is in Pentecost, to reaffirm its being and existence by living in mission (Gort 1980, 46).

Overall, we are advocating that missiology take a more active role in the theological school curriculum - not only in an exclusivistic form as would be the case in having a separate department, but also in an inclusive form as would be the case where mission consciousness permeates all the theological disciplines in an integrated approach. This way, missiology will have been shed of its "toolshed appearance" and will have been brought into the "stately mansions" alongside the other disciplines of our theological school curriculum.

CONCLUSION

In this presentation, the attempt has been to look at the issues that have affected the apparent neglect of missionary training programmes in the traditional curriculum of theological schools. That

done, we attempted to look afresh at the essence of the evangelical tradition that puts a high stake on the need of the world for the gospel of Christ. This was in order to understand the message of the gospel and how we should conduct ourselves, whether as learners or trainers, for the ministry. The last major attempt was to examine what should be the rightful place of the subject of missiology in the theological school curriculum that is committed to the evangelical tradition and beliefs.

In grappling with the curricular factors of importance, to have an adequately rounded theological training, a number of issues were considered.

- 1) It is important to promote a linkage between theory and practice. That means that our academic pursuits must translate into practice on the field while the mission field also influences our academic pursuits. We said that the theological school curriculum makers should be involved in partnership with practitioners on the field.
- 2) There is a place for an exclusivistic missions department or programme. In that same spirit, the Missionary Training Institutes are encouraged.
- 3) Missions should also have an inclusive role that permeates all the other theological disciplines. This way missions will be integrated with the other theological disciplines.

A number of warning notes were sounded in the course of this presentation. One is that bad theology results in missionary decline. Another is that asking good and right questions does help to enhance beliefs, while not asking questions is not an antidote to the undermining of faith. Another word of caution is from the lesson of history that shows how well-meaning institutions that started with the right emphasis later discarded what they once held dear. This is a lesson to all forms of training - whether it be the emerging missionary training institutes in Africa or the older theological schools.

If we will keep on course as the years go by, we must take a cue from the great apostle to the Gentiles. Paul never seemed to lose sight of his Damascus experience, for he referred to it time and again - in verbal testimonies and in writing. His personal testimony of how he met Jesus Christ remained aglow in his heart. Whether he talked to great or small, he saw that experience as very precious. He passionately pleaded with Agrippa to "become as I am, except for these chains". We too must not lose sight of that experience of understanding faith in Christ. Like Paul, we must constantly be in deep appreciation of God's

love displayed toward us. That constant realisation of His love for us is bound to form a motivation for revitalising our outlook on missions. Paul never lost sight of the fact that he was "the chief of sinners," but as he himself said, literally, "God mercied me" (1 Tim. 1:13). If our excitement about coming to faith is not kept aglow, if we do not constantly keep in sight God's immense love for us and for the dying world, we are likely not to allow missions to propel all that we do in the theological school curriculum.

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WELCOMING SPEECH
upon
AWARD-OF-CHARTER
to
SCOTT THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE

18 November 1997
Machakos, Kenya

by
Davy Koech
Chairman Commission for Higher Education

On 18 November 1997 Scott Theological College became the fourth private university-level institution to be awarded a charter by the Kenya Government. In recognition of this distinction we are publishing the following speech given on the occasion of the Award-of-Charter by the Chairman of the Commission for Higher Education.

Dr. Davy Koech holds a higher doctorate (*CuD*) in Therapeutic Philosophy (1988) from the World University in the USA; a *Ph.D.* degree in Medical Pathology (1980) from the University of Nairobi; an *MS* in Pharmacology (1977) from Duquesne University of Pittsburg in Pennsylvania, USA; and a *BSc* degree (1974) obtained from the University of Nairobi. He is a member of many professional societies in Kenya, Britain and the United States. During his academic and biomedical research career, in which he has investigated immunological aspects of tropical and infectious diseases, he has published widely with 230 papers in peer reviewed scientific journals. Dr. Koech is the Chairman of *The Davy Koech Foundation*, the Editor-in-Chief of the *African Journal of Health Sciences*, the President of the *African Forum for Health Sciences*, the founder and Chairman and trustee of the *African Medical Services Trust*, and is a member of several other international boards. He has been decorated with many national and international honours. He also serves as the Chairman of the Commission for Higher Education in Kenya.

Your excellency the President and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Kenya, Hon. Daniel Toroitich arap Moi;

The Minister for Education Hon. Joseph Kamotho,

Cabinet Ministers and Assistant Ministers,

The Head of the AIC Church in Kenya, Bishop Dr. Titus Kivunzi,

Staff and Students of Scott Theological College,

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen.

Your Excellency, on behalf of the members of the Commission for Higher Education, it is my very special honour and privilege to welcome you to this ceremony for the award of charter to Scott Theological College.

Your presence here, Sir, is a clear demonstration of your enormous commitment to the promotion of higher education in Kenya. It is also a great source of *inspiration and encouragement not only to us at the Commission for Higher Education, but also to all those involved with the advancement of higher learning in this country*

Your Excellency, Sir, Scott Theological College is the fourth private university-level institution to be awarded a charter by the Kenya Government, and the first private evangelical theological college to qualify for such award.

Unlike the first three private universities to be awarded charters in Kenya, namely, the University of Eastern Africa at Baraton, the Catholic University of Eastern Africa, and Daystar University, which have diversified their academic programmes, Scott Theological College is unique, in that for a start, it is offering only one degree programme, namely the Bachelor of Theology.

Sir, in conformity with your Government's vision in encouraging the development of private universities in Kenya with a view to absorbing some of the candidates who qualify for university admission, the Commission for Higher Education has endeavoured to encourage private degree-granting institutions such as Scott Theological College to diversify their programmes. However, after lengthy discussions spanning over a number of years with the institutions concerned and owing to the rather specialized missions of some of these institutions, the Commission came to the conclusion that instead of pressing these institutions to diversify their academic programmes in fields outside their

missions, and for which they did not have the necessary resources and expertise, they be encouraged to diversify within their own missions.

While this approach enabled the institutions to meet the objectives for which they had been established, diversification within their missions ensured that the programmes were broadened and offered at an appropriate depth, to enable them to produce broadly based graduates, comparable to any other graduates trained in other disciplines from accredited universities.

Sir, the charter you are about to grant to Scott Theological College, is therefore, based on the above premise. Thus, although Scott Theological College opted to remain a theological college instead of becoming a broadly based university, it is a college operating at university level. Its degrees will, therefore, be recognized worldwide, by virtue of having been accredited by the Government of Kenya.

For Scott Theological College, today is momentous, symbolizing as it were, their highly cherished motto of *Growing into Maturity*.

Founded on strong Christian principles, Scott Theological College is an evangelical theological college, with a philosophy based on evangelical orthodoxy. Although their mission is currently very specialized, being limited to the training of the clergy and other personnel for the AIC Church, it is gratifying to report that in conformity with their past practices, the College will continue to offer its facilities to other Christian churches.

Your Excellency, the famous English saying that "*all that Glitters is not gold*" can be truly reworded to read "*all that does not glitter may be gold*" for the case of Scott Theological College. This is so because, if one were to base one's judgment on its external appearance, this College has none of those glittering or awe-inspiring buildings that are normally associated with well-endowed universities. Neither has it got the serene academic atmosphere often associated with the "*absent minded professor*", and a stream of students criss-crossing one another, while gliding their way in the corridors of learning with some trying to emulate their role models.

Sir, with an enrolment of only 78 students during 1996-97 academic year, and a projected enrolment of 200 by the year 2004, this College has none of those external "airs" typical of the great citadels of learning, yet in its own small way, it has cut a "niche for itself" in the world of learning, through adopting quality assurance measures to ensure the quality of education it is offering, as well as through establishing "time honoured tradition in research" which is highly valued in the world of academia.

Sir, Scott Theological College, small and young as it is, can be singled out as a university-level institution in Kenya, that offers a balance between imparting knowledge in their chosen field of theology as well as imparting relevant skills for the world of employment through their Field Education and Learning Contracts programme.

Your Excellency, the concept of Field Education and Learning Contracts is a methodology of training not confined to theology only, but one which can be adopted by other disciplines in higher education as well. One of the biggest challenges to higher education worldwide at the close of the current century, is how to bridge the gap between acquisition of knowledge and imparting and translating that knowledge into relevant practical skills. It is in this regard that the pioneering effort by this College in this field becomes of great interest, not only to the private universities in Kenya, but also to the public universities as well.

I have already made reference to Scott Theological College's contribution to one of the time honoured traditions of universities, namely that of research and scholarship. I am pleased to inform you, Sir, that despite its size, this College is one of the few university-level institutions in Kenya, which has established and consistently maintained over the last 12 years, the production of a journal entitled the *Africa Journal of Evangelical Theology*, with wide continental readership.

The experience in many African universities, Kenyan public universities included, is the inability of the universities to sustain the production of academic journals, even where the universities which attempt to do so, are far much better endowed with human and financial resources than this College.

For most of the African universities, the production of academic journals hardly goes beyond the gestation period, with a high mortality rate for those that manage to go beyond the production of the first or second volume. For this College, small as it is, to have sustained the production of the *Africa Journal of Evangelical Theology* for over 12 years continuously is, therefore, a major achievement on its part.

Your Excellency, these achievements are but some of the strengths that have made the Commission for Higher Education recommend Scott Theological College for the award of Charter.

The recommendation to award Scott Theological College a charter is based on 11 years of interaction with the College, during which period, the Commission and its various organs, have not only visited, inspected and re-

inspected the College's physical facilities and scrutinised its curriculum, and all aspects of its operation, but also made a number of recommendations some of which have already been acted upon by the College, while others will, no doubt be acted on within the next few years, as conditions upon which to-day's charter is being awarded.

The famous saying that "*All is well that ends well*", is from the famous English playwright William Shakespeare in one of his many novels. For this College, *all seems to have ended well* with to-day's ceremony, which symbolizes their time-honoured motto, namely "*Growing into Maturity*". The motto is derived from the *Mumbu* tree, estimated to be about 500 years old, and which stands just outside their fence, in front of the Mumbini Church, and which Scott Theological College has adopted for its Logo, and after which, this very site has been named.

Indeed, as the award of charter marks a step towards the maturity of an institution, and as this College enters into that threshold, it is not expected to sit on its past laurels on the assumption that it has attained maturity as is symbolised by their Logo.

The award of the charter is, therefore, not an end in itself, but the beginning of an relentless and venerable challenge as this College struggles to establish a name for itself within the world of higher learning, to justify the honour that shall be bestowed on it by being awarded a charter. Drawing on the example of the biblical mustard seed, we all expect this College to rise from these humble beginnings, gradually and steadily into a *colossus* in the world of learning and scholarship.

As is stipulated in the Universities Act of 1985 and Universities Rules of 1989, Scott theological College shall be required to work under the close supervision of the Commission for Higher Education. As the College begins its new chapter of life, we at the Commission shall give it all the necessary support it needs to realize its dreams of growing into an institution of quality education.

The decision of this institution to retain the term "*College*" instead of "*University*" in its corporate name and image is a demonstration of a philosophy that is clothed with true humility, wisdom and honour. Let this philosophy continue to nurture its vision for the future. I am sure the leadership of this College is aware that God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.

On my part, I wish Scott Theological College continued God's blessings. Thank you.

SCOTT THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE OFFERS QUALITY TRAINING FOR CHURCH LEADERS

Following are excerpts taken from promotional material prepared for the Award-of-Charter Ceremony when Scott Theological College was granted university-level status by the Kenya Government.

THE OUTSTANDING DISTINCTIVES OF SCOTT

1. In 1962 Scott Theological College was founded in order to provide theological training for church leaders at the highest level. The College was named after Peter Cameron Scott, the first director of the Africa Inland Mission. Since 1982 Scott has been training students at university level and awarding the Bachelor of Theology degree through Ontario Bible College, Canada.
2. Scott Theological College in 1979 became the first post-secondary theological college in all of Africa to be accredited by the Accrediting Council for Theological Education in Africa (ACTEA).
3. Although Scott is sponsored by the Africa Inland Church, the students come from many other churches, including, Baptist, Presbyterian, Lutheran, Brethren in Christ, Pentecostal, Redeemed Gospel and Friends (Quaker). Students come from many African countries, including Tanzania, Sudan, Zambia, Malawi, Rwanda, Congo (Kinshasa), Ethiopia and elsewhere.
4. In November 1997 Scott became the first theological institution in Kenya to be granted a charter by the Kenya Government to award degrees as a university-level institution.

A UNIQUE PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION

The philosophy of Scott has grown and developed over the 35 years but has never altered from its original purpose. The purpose of Scott is "to train divinely called Christian men and women in biblical knowledge, Christian character and effective skills for Christian ministry in order to serve the church and associated Christian ministries as pastors, teachers, evangelists, missionaries and other Christian workers."

In addition to the core courses required of everyone, students learn special skills and knowledge for particular ministries. Scott has three areas of

concentration in which students may focus: Pastoral Studies, Christian Education and Missiology. More concentrations will be added in the future. In addition to the Bachelor of Theology degree offered now, Scott plans to develop programmes at the master's level.

Three inter-related emphases of Scott are on Knowledge, Skills and Character. **Knowledge** goals are learned in the class room and include knowledge of Scripture and theology, mastery of the Greek language, an elective of Hebrew, and introduction to many courses in general education.

Skills for ministry include ability to interpret and apply Scripture, ability to evangelize and disciple, to preach and teach, to lead small groups, to counsel and shepherd the church. One strength of Scott is this emphasis on learning skills for ministry. Skills are learned and practiced in field education with staff supervision during weekly field education assignments and the three month Internship when students serve in a ministry context appropriate to their field of concentration.

Various aspects of Scott training mold the **character** of students, including the newly introduced Learning Contracts. Each term students are mentored by teachers on a one-to-one relationship in learning various skills and character traits which are essential for effective ministry.

EXPERIENCED AND PERSONALISED TEACHING

Scott has highly qualified faculty. Of the twelve full time, resident faculty, four have earned doctor's degrees, two are on study leaves for their Ph.D.'s, three have a M.Div. or Th.M. and three have an M.A. They have many years of experience in teaching and in church ministries. One advantage of a small College is the personalised relationships with the teachers.

One unique feature of Scott is the close relationship between the faculty and students. Each teacher works with the students in Field Education. They mentor students personally, one-to-one. Students are divided into small fellowship groups which meet in the homes of teachers. Students freely meet in the homes of teachers for counseling and fellowship.

A GREAT CAMPUS

The 58 acre campus is located just 65 kilometres from Nairobi below the Iveti mountains. Away from the noise, pollution and insecurity of Nairobi, Scott is an ideal area for study in a beautiful climate. The modern two-story library,

housing 18,000 books, is the centre of learning. The modern student centre and classroom block is the centre of the Scott campus where students develop deep, life-long friendships. The ten year plan calls for mammoth expansion of facilities to accommodate 200 students.

PRODUCTIVE GRADUATES

Because of its consistently high level of education, Scott graduates are in great demand and are serving in many strategic ministries. Someone recently said that Scott graduates are "snapped up like *madazis*." Over 70% of Scott graduates are engaged in the ministry of preaching the Word of God full time. A large number are pastors. Seven are bishops of different denominations. A large number teach in Bible Colleges in several African countries, including seven who are Principals. They teach in Daystar University, Nairobi Evangelical Graduate School, Moi University and elsewhere. They serve as missionaries and Christian Education workers. More than 29% of Scott graduates have furthered their studies, including many who have earned doctoral degrees.

QUALIFICATIONS AND APPLICATION OF NEW STUDENTS

Prospective students wishing to apply to Scott Theological College must meet the following qualifications. Students must have: 1) A minimum of C+ in KCSE, or the equivalent; 2) A personal testimony of faith in Jesus Christ; 3) Christian character "beyond reproach"; 4) Recommendation by the church. Persons wishing to apply for admission to study in the Bachelor of Theology degree may write to: Admissions, Scott Theological College, PO Box 49, Machakos, Kenya.

EXTENSION MINISTRIES OF SCOTT

In addition to the basic training of students at the College, Scott is involved in other creative ministries. A scholarly journal entitled, *Africa Journal of Evangelical Theology (AJET)* has been produced since 1982, intended for African theological educators and students.

The A.I.C. Theological Advisory Group (TAG), the research department of the College, is involved in research and publication of books. The latest book is *A Biblical Approach to Marriage and Family in Africa*.

Upon the granting of the Charter, Scott plans to develop an Institute for Church Renewal which will promote the mission of the College through distance learning in various locations throughout Kenya, whereby students can study for a Certificate or Diploma offered by Scott.

THE DRAGON HURLED DOWN

The Victory of Christ Over the Dominion of Darkness

Keith Ferdinando

The nature and limits of Satan's power were presented in the last issue of AJET (16.1 1997) by Dr. Ferdinando. In this second installment of a biblical study of Satan and his kingdom of darkness, Dr. Ferdinando presents the New Testament teaching on the victory of Christ over Satan. He concludes his exegetical study by demonstrating how the biblical truth is indeed God's answer to the fear of evil spirits among many professing Christians today.

The fullness of the redemption accomplished by Christ is communicated in the New Testament through numerous images. Among them is the notion of Satan's defeat and the consequent liberation of his victims. The Old Testament background to this theme may be found particularly in the figure of the divine warrior redeeming his oppressed people by the conquest of their foes and being subsequently acclaimed as king (Exod. 15:1ff.).¹ Christ similarly comes as the warrior to destroy the power of Satan, liberate his captives, and establish his own reign. It is this aspect of his redemptive work that is the focus of the present article, in which four distinct 'moments' of Christ's triumphant warfare are examined.

Dr. Keith Ferdinando earned his MA in history from Oxford University and his BA and PhD in Theology from London Bible College. He is serving as the Directeur General (Principal) of Theologique de Bunia (Bunia Theological Seminary) in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

¹Cf. T. Longman, 'The Divine Warrior: the New Testament Use of an Old Testament Motif', *WTJ* 44 (1982), pp. 290-307

PLUNDERING THE STRONG MAN: CHRIST'S DELIVERANCE OF THE POSSESSED

In the synoptic gospels the expulsion of demons by Jesus identifies him as the one who brings in the kingdom of God, liberating those oppressed by Satan (Mt. 12:28-29; Mk. 3:27; Lk. 11:20-22; cf. Acts 10:38; Lk. 13:16) and bringing the oppressor's power to an end (Lk. 10:18; Matt. 4:8 & 28:18ff.). While there were certainly others at that time who also tried to deliver the possessed, it is clear that Jesus' deliverance ministry was quite exceptional.

On the one hand his technique was totally different from those of contemporary exorcists. Unlike them he expelled demons without naming a power authority, using a talisman, or even praying. He did not use complicated magic spells, or magic words; he did not name the demons in order to expel them; and he did not employ any sort of magic paraphernalia. Instead, as Matthew observes, he cast them out 'with a word' (8:16), operating by the Holy Spirit who had come upon him in unique power and identified him as the promised messiah (Mat 12:28).

At the same time he plainly had a very extensive ministry of driving out demons. Outside the synoptic gospels there are in fact few narrative accounts of exorcism in the first century and even fewer exorcistic figures, and of those known to us almost no concrete evidence about their exorcisms exists.² By contrast the detailed and considerable synoptic material on Jesus' expulsion of demons indicates the exceptional nature of this aspect of his ministry, both with respect to its volume and to its manner. Mark's reference to an exorcist using Jesus' name as a power authority, and that remarkably during his own lifetime, conveys the impression he made on contemporaries (Mk. 9:38-9). Even his enemies were unable to deny the efficacy of his ministry, which is why they tried to discredit him by attributing it to the power of Beelzebul, prince of demons (Matt. 12:22-32; Mk. 3:22-30; Lk. 11:14-23).

² J.M. Hull, *Hellenistic Magic and the Synoptic Tradition* (London: SCM Press, 1974), p. 66; R. Kampling, 'Jesus von Nazaret - Lehrer und Exorzist', *BZ* 30 (1986), p. 240; E. Kirschner, *The Place of the Exorcism Motif in Mark's Christology with especial reference to Mark 3v22-30* (Unpublished Ph.D. thesis, CNAALondon Bible College, 1988), p. 29.

However, while Jesus' exorcisms like his healings showed that the kingdom had come, in that people were being freed from every sort of affliction, in none of the synoptic gospels do they constitute its substance. On the contrary, as the gospels progress the frequency of references to the deliverance of possessed people diminishes, attention being increasingly focused on Jesus' death. Nor do the synoptists seek to establish much connection between his death and the conquest of evil supernatural beings; insofar as they do explain it, as in the accounts of the Last Supper, it is as an offering for sins. Humanity's fundamental enslavement is understood as being to sin, and the narratives accordingly move from the first signs of the kingdom's coming, demonstrated in healings and exorcisms, to its culminating act in Jesus' atoning death. It is not the destruction of demonic activity by overwhelming force that Jesus has primarily come to achieve (cf. Matt. 8:29), but the liberation of Satan's victims from the real, moral source of their bondage.

THE DECISIVE VICTORY: THE CROSS, SATAN AND THE POWERS

Other New Testament writers do however indicate the existence of a relationship between Jesus' death and the conquest of evil supernatural beings, the Johannine writings and Hebrews having Satan particularly in view, the Pauline epistles and 1 Peter the 'powers' (Jn. 12:31; 16:11; Col. 2:13-15; Heb. 2:14-15; 1 Pet. 3:18-22; 1 Jn. 3:8; Rev. 12:1-12). Again there are hints of the divine warrior whose victory is however paradoxically achieved by his own death, thereby also evoking the 'suffering servant' of Isaiah who divides 'the spoils with the strong' (Isa. 53:12). Moreover such passages tend to suggest that it was by virtue of his atoning death for human sins that Christ overcame supernatural evil. Three of them will be discussed here.

Colossians 2:13-15

It is the flow of Paul's argument in Colossians 2:13-15 that strongly suggests that it was by his sacrificial death for sin that Christ overcame the 'principalities and powers'. The text however contains several exegetical *crucis* which must be examined in order to understand the unit as a whole and its significance for the present discussion, although the intention here is not to give an exhaustive exegesis. First to

be considered is the subject of the action taking place in the pericope. The context indicates that God is subject of 2:13 but it has been argued that 'the description of what was accomplished on the cross (vss.14-15) more naturally implies that Christ is the subject.'³ Such an unsignalled change of subject is not impossible for Paul, but the passage can be adequately understood without it and the final words of 2:15, *εν αυτω* (*in him* or *it*), argue against it. The pronoun *αυτος* (*he, him, it*) here is normally understood to refer either to Christ or to the cross, but the former alternative is to be preferred on grounds of rhetorical consistency. It comes as the culminating point of what does 'sound like a refrain'⁴ running right through the pericope. In 2:6,7,9 and 10 *εν αυτω* (*in him*) refers to Christ; in 2:11 *εν ω* (*in whom*) has the same sense; in 2:12 *αυτω* (*with him*) refers again to Christ, and a further *εν ω* (*in whom*) probably also refers to him,⁵ and in 2:13 *συν αυτω* (*with him*) equally refers to him. The final *εν αυτω* (*in him*) therefore almost certainly refers to Christ. Accordingly if in 2:15 *εν αυτω* means 'in Christ', God must be the subject throughout the pericope.

Second, several possible referents have been proposed for *χειρογραφον* (*written code*).⁶ Since it is qualified as being *καθ' ημων*

³ F.F. Bruce, *The Epistles to the Colossians, to Philemon, and to the Ephesians* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1984), p. 107, note 81, takes this view; cf. C.F.D. Moule, *The Epistles of Paul the Apostle to the Colossians and to Philemon* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1957), pp. 100ff..

⁴ P.T. O'Brien, *Colossians, Philemon* (Milton Keynes: Word Publishing, 1987), p. 128.

⁵ So E. Lohse, *Colossians and Philemon* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1971), p. 104, note 73, & O'Brien, 1987, pp. 118-9.

⁶ O'Brien, 1987, pp. 124f., considers three possibilities: that it is a pact of indebtedness between Adam and Satan; an indictment presented at the heavenly court; or a signed acknowledgement of indebtedness. He critiques the view of A.J. Bandstra, *The Law and the Elements of the World* (N.V. Kampen: J.H. Kok, 1964), pp. 158-63, whereby the figure is both a heavenly indictment and the body of flesh which Christ takes, as 'the term is meant to signify too many things at once'. N.T. Wright, *Colossians and Philemon* (Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 1986), pp. 111f., considers the view that it refers to the law. W. Carr, *Angels and*

(*against us*), it is probably best understood in the context as somehow establishing human guilt, which the various proposed referents tend indeed to assume. The idea that it signifies a 'note of indebtedness' is well-attested in both Jewish and Greco-Roman worlds.⁷ In that case τα δογματα (*regulations*) would most likely be the detailed regulations of the law,⁸ 'indicating why the bond or certificate of indebtedness has a case against us.'⁹

Third, holding to the view that God is subject throughout, a) απεκδυσσμενος (*having disarmed/stripped*) must mean that he strips or disarms the powers, taking the participle as a middle voice with an active sense.¹⁰ If a change of subject is presupposed the sense would not necessarily be significantly different, except that Christ rather than God would perform the action; it would still be possible to understand the powers as the object of απεκδυσσμενος. However if one assumes a subject change *and* takes the force of the middle voice seriously, the implication would be that Christ 'stripped himself' of the powers. The Greek fathers held this view but it is not altogether clear what the meaning of such a notion might be. Moule suggests that there may be a reference to Zechariah 3:1ff. where the dirty robes of the high priest, Joshua, are stripped from him, but that would only explain the source of the image, not

Principalities (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), pp. 55-8, suggests it is a stone stele on which a public confession was inscribed, which W. Wink, *Naming the Powers* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984), pp. 55-6, rejects on the grounds that the idea of nailing a stele to a cross is absurd.

⁷ O'Brien, 1987, p. 124; Lohse, 1971, p. 108.

⁸ Cf. Lohse, 1971, p. 110: 'In Hellenistic Judaism the commandments of God are also called "regulations" (δογματα).' In Eph. 2:15 the δογματα are the individual statutes of the law (O'Brien, 1987, p. 125).

⁹ O'Brien, 1987, p. 125, who takes the dative in a causal sense rather than one of obligation or accompaniment, as does Lohse, 1971, pp. 109ff.. O'Brien and Lohse take the χειρογραφον as a bond, but δογματα could have the same sense if it were a heavenly indictment. If χειρογραφον referred to the law the δογματα might be taken as a dative of accompaniment but again referring to the detailed requirements of the law.

¹⁰ O'Brien, 1987, p. 127; cf. also Lohse, 1971, p. 111.

its meaning, since the high priest's dirty robe signified sin and not evil powers.¹¹ Moreover there is no suggestion in the text, nor anywhere else in the New Testament, that Christ was in fact clothed with the powers. Robinson argues that the object of ἀπεκδυσάμενος is Jesus' flesh which was for the powers 'the sole entry for attack or hope of victory' over him. In laying it aside 'Jesus, like a king, divests Himself of that flesh, the tool and medium of their power, and thereby exposes them to ridicule for their Pyrrhic victory.'¹²

The weaknesses of this view are however, firstly, that there is no mention of Christ's flesh in the immediate context and, secondly, that it seems to depend upon a confusion between the ethical and the purely physical uses of the term. After all, why should his flesh be 'the tool and medium of their power'? Bandstra answers the former criticism by arguing that χειρογραφον should be understood in part as a metaphor for Christ's flesh, but such an identification is itself suspect.¹³ Carr suggests that Christ simply stripped himself in order to put on a victor's robe in the manner of a Roman triumphator, but he fails to explain why no mention is made of the victor's robe and leaves Christ naked, which would be the fate of the captives in a triumphal procession rather than of the triumphator.¹⁴ Moreover he cites no example from Greek literature of the verb used in this absolute way: 'If he [Paul] wanted the readers to take χειρογραφον absolutely, [he] would have been careful not to leave a potential object immediately following the participle.'¹⁵

Thus despite the linguistic difficulty of using ἀπεκδυσάμενος with an active sense,¹⁶ such an interpretation gives the most plausible meaning as well as coinciding with the strong argument for identifying

¹¹ Moule, 1957, p. 102.

¹² J.A.T. Robinson, *The Body* (London: SCM Press, 1957), pp. 40f..

¹³ Bandstra, 1964, pp. 158ff. argues that the χειρογραφον is both a heavenly indictment and the body of flesh which Christ takes; O'Brien, 1987, p. 125, responds that this makes the term 'signify too many things at once'.

¹⁴ Carr, 1981, pp. 59-61; cf. Wink, 1984, p. 58.

¹⁵ C.E. Arnold, 'The "Exorcism" of Ephesians 6v12 in 'Recent Biblical Research', *JSNT* 30 (1987), pp. 79f..

¹⁶ Cf. Moule, 1957, p. 101.

God as subject. Paul is saying that God stripped or disarmed the powers in Christ, and by the flow of the sentence suggests that this act was related to his removal of the χειρογραφον. He may indeed be implying that it was they who held the χειρογραφον, exploiting it to bring about the condemnation of humanity.¹⁷

Fourth, εδειγματισεν εν παρρησια (*he made a public spectacle of them*) speaks of God's exposing the powers' humiliating defeat to the universe.¹⁸ Elsewhere in the New Testament the verb δειγματιζω is only found in Matthew 1:19 where it conveys the idea of exposure to disgrace, as it does too in the Ascension of Isaiah 3:13.¹⁹ The participle that follows, θριαμβευσας (*triumphing*), is linked with this notion; its 'life-situation' is the 'triumphal entry of a military hero into the city of Rome'.²⁰ The most striking element of such processions was the defeated enemy 'dragged through the streets and exposed to public ridicule', who frequently therefore appear as the direct object of the verb θριαμβευω.²¹

Fifth, 'αι αρχαι και 'αι εξουσιαι (*the powers and authorities*)

¹⁷ The idea that the powers hold the χειρογραφον is quite possible regardless of its precise identity: they might equally be understood to hold a certificate of indebtedness, or a heavenly indictment, or to exploit the law to secure the condemnation of human beings.

¹⁸ Cf. O'Brien, 1987, p. 128.

¹⁹ Cited by Lohse, 1971, p. 112, note 139. Carr, 1981, p. 63, claims the word is neutral and means 'publicise', but Arnold, 1987, p. 80, notes that 'normal usage of this term demonstrates the contrary.'

²⁰ L. Williamson, 'Led in Triumph: Paul's Use of θριαμβευω, *Interpretation* 22 (1968), p. 322.

²¹ L. Williamson, 1968, p. 322. *Contra* Carr, 1981, pp. 61-3, the object of θριαμβευω is never triumphant armies but always defeated foes. Eph. 4:8, while not using θριαμβευω, conveys the same idea of vanquished foes led in procession. In 2 Cor. 2:14 Christians are paradoxical objects of θριαμβευω, overcome by God and now his slaves, always part of his victorious procession: cf. K. Dahn & H.-G. Link, 'θριαμβευω', in C. Brown (ed.), *NIDNTT*, vol. I (Exeter: Paternoster Press, 1980), p. 650; G. Delling, 'θριαμβευω', in G. Kittel (ed.), *TDNT*, vol. III (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1965), pp. 159-160; L. Williamson, 1968, p. 326.

should be seen as evil and rebellious supernatural powers associated with Satan; attempts to identify them as good angelic beings must be judged unsuccessful.²² In the Pauline epistles the very terminology, 'αἰ ἀρχαὶ καὶ αἰ ἐξουσίαι, carries connotations of rebellion against God and hostility towards the church. Moreover the immediate context implies precisely the defeat of enemies: they are stripped, exposed and led as enemies in triumphal procession, and the whole theme resembles that of other Pauline texts which exploit the imagery of Psalm 110 and in which the powers are clearly enemies to be subjugated (1 Cor. 15:24; Eph. 1:21).

Finally it is necessary to consider the pericope as a whole. In 2:13 Paul describes the Christians' condition prior to being raised with Christ as one of death 'caused by their trespasses and sinful nature'.²³ The forgiveness of sins mentioned at the end of the verse is therefore fundamentally related to being 'made alive'. In 2:14 he explains *how* sins are forgiven, namely through Christ's own death. The *χειρογράφων*, however it is understood, was nailed to his cross thereby signifying the removal of the sinners' indebtedness which enabled them to receive forgiveness. Moreover in Christ God simultaneously disarmed the powers. The close juxtaposition of the two themes clearly implies a link between the removal of the *χειρογράφων* and the stripping of the powers. There is an 'essential connection between forgiveness of sins and victory over the powers and principalities'.²⁴ Christ's death, by removing the *χειρογράφων*, the debt of sin, broke the power of the dark forces over their captives.

There is therefore much to be said for the view that it was indeed the *χειρογράφων* itself, understood as a record of human guilt, of which the powers were stripped thereby breaking their power. 'The context of Colossians 2:15 demands that we understand the removal of power or authority which the principalities exercised over the lives of men by

²² Carr, 1981, p. 52ff..

²³ O'Brien, 1987, p. 122; cf. Eph. 2:1,4.

²⁴ Lohse, 1971, p. 106f.: 'Both affirmations form an indissoluble pair: on the cross of Christ the certificate of indebtedness is erased; on the cross of Christ the powers and principalities are disempowered.'

holding the certificate of indebtedness in their grip.²⁵ Such an understanding would clearly identify the 'principalities and powers' 'as servants and subjects of Satan in the role of accusers', who parasitically exploit human guilt to maintain their tyranny.²⁶ The cross removed the grounds of accusation, the bond which symbolised 'mankind's slavery to the powers',²⁷ and thereby 'exposed and left empty-handed the satanic accusers' and provided freedom for their captives.²⁸

Revelation 12:7-11

Revelation more than any other New Testament book interprets Christ's work in terms of victory. In Revelation 5 the victory motif is prominent, but the victory is clearly paradoxical. 'ὁ λέων ὁ ἐκ τῆς φυλῆς Ἰουδα (*the Lion of the tribe of Judah: 5:5*) is also ἀρνίον ἑστηκός ὡς εσφαγμένον (*a Lamb, looking as if it had been slain: 5:6*), whose triumph and the resulting kingdom are understood in terms of the shedding of his own blood (5:9f.) which brings freedom 'from sins' (cf. 1:5) and thus purchases 'men for God'.

Nevertheless the notion of victory over Satan is not explicitly present until Revelation 12. In 12:1-6 the dragon is defeated only, apparently, in that it fails to devour the child, but in 12:7-9 Michael drives it from heaven. It is initially surprising that 'the heavenly warriors are not led into battle by Christ',²⁹ but comprehensible in the context of the passage as a whole.³⁰ The battle scene follows immediately upon the

²⁵ O'Brien, 1987, p. 127.

²⁶ Bandstra, 1964, p. 166.

²⁷ A. Hanson, *Studies in Paul's Technique and Theology* (London, SPCK, 1974), p. 11.

²⁸ Bandstra, 1964, p. 166. Bandstra emphasises the importance of the law to the accusing powers: 'It is just the law and flesh that are their instruments and that whereby they operate against us' (pp. 166-7).

²⁹ G.R. Beasley-Murray, *Revelation* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978), p. 201, who argues that 'this feature of the story can hardly have been instigated by a Christian writer', and attributes it to Jewish influence. However this fails to explain why the author nevertheless incorporated it in his text.

³⁰ The theme of Michael's victory has been variously understood.

reference to the child's rapture, which signifies the completion of his work and frustration of the dragon's designs. The sequence thus suggests that it is what has occurred on earth, the child's life which the dragon sought to destroy, that has somehow precipitated the dragon's expulsion from heaven. 'Satan loses his position in heaven because of Christ's incarnation and its consequences.'³¹ The words spoken subsequently by the heavenly voice (12:10ff.) confirm and clarify this understanding: εβληθη 'ο κατηγορω των αδελφων 'ημων, 'ο κατηγορων αυτους ενωπιον του θεου 'ημων 'ημερας και νυκτος (*the accuser of our brothers, who accuses them before our God day and night, has been hurled down*).³² It is precisely as 'the accuser of our brothers' that the dragon is expelled, and expulsion therefore means that his power to arraign them before God has been eliminated.

Consequently the 'brothers' whom he accused have now overcome him, and they have done so δια το αιμα του αρνιου και δια τον λογον της μαρτυριας αυτων και ουκ ηγαπησαν την ψυχη αυτων αχρι θανατου (*by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death*: 12:11). The blood of the Lamb undoubtedly refers to Christ's sacrifice for sins. It is because he has removed their sins by his death that Satan can no longer accuse, the basis of accusation having been annulled: 'By virtue of the death of Christ he is unable successfully to lodge a charge against God's elect (Rom. 8:33-4).'³³ The expulsion metaphor is thus a means of describing the breaking of Satan's power over the redeemed by Christ's death, a power which was based upon

R.H. Charles, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Revelation of St. John*, vol. I (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1920), p. 320, argues that Satan storms heaven in pursuit of the child, but neither the text itself nor the rest of the New Testament sustain this approach.

³¹ J.M. Court, *Myth and History in the Book of Revelation* (London: SPCK, 1979), p. 113

³² P. Prigent, *Apocalypse 12: Histoire de l'exégèse* (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1959), p. 146, emphasises the importance of the hymn of 12:10-12 for understanding the meaning of the heavenly combat.

³³ R.H. Mounce, *The Book of Revelation* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1977), p. 243; cf. W. Hendriksen, *More than Conquerors* (London: The Tyndale Press, 1962 [1940]), p. 141.

those human sins for which Christ has now atoned. Moreover the dragon's expulsion by Michael rather than Christ is explicable from this perspective. The primary victory, liberation from sins (cf. 1:5; 5:5ff.), is won on the cross and it is Christ who wins it there. Satan's expulsion is a secondary consequence which takes place simultaneously in heaven and thus, in the terms of the narrative, while Christ is still on earth. Caird makes the point clearly:

Some commentators express surprise that it should be Michael and not Christ who is God's champion. The point is, however, that, when this victory is won in heaven, Christ is on earth, on the Cross. Because He is part of the earthly reality He is not part of the heavenly symbolism. The heavenly chorus .. explains that the victory has been achieved 'by the sacrifice of the Lamb' .. Michael, in fact, is not the field officer who does the actual fighting, but the staff officer, who is able to remove Satan's flag from the heavenly map because the real victory has been won on Calvary.³⁴

Galatians 1:4

In Galatians 1:4 Paul describes Christ as 'ο δους 'εαυτον 'υπερ των 'αμαρτιων ημων, 'οπως εξεληται 'ημας εκ του αιωνος του ενεστωτος πονηρου (*he who gave himself for our sins to rescue us from the present evil age*). Implicit here is the Jewish apocalyptic notion of the two ages, the present age being evil in contrast with that which is to come.³⁵ One of the factors characterising the present age and contributing to its nature as evil, is its subordination to evil powers, especially Satan whom Paul names 'ο θεος του αιωνος τουτου (*the god of this age*: 2 Cor. 4:4; cf. Eph. 2:2; 6:12).³⁶ However Paul's approach and

³⁴ G.B. Caird, 'On Deciphering the Book of Revelation', *ExpT* 74 (1962-3), p. 13.

³⁵ Cf. F.F. Bruce, *The Epistle to the Galatians* (Exeter: Paternoster Press, 1982), p. 76; H.D. Betz, *Galatians* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1979), p. 42, note 58.

³⁶ Cf. the 'Freer logion', cited by Bruce, 1982, p. 76: 'This age ('ο αιων 'ουτος) of lawlessness and unbelief is subject to Satan'; also R.Y.K. Fung, *The Epistle to the Galatians* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988), pp.

that of the New Testament in general differs from the traditional Jewish conception with the belief that, while temporally the age to come is still future, yet 'spiritually, believers in Christ have here and now been made partakers of it, because they share the risen life of Christ'.³⁷

Thus, in Galatians 1:4 believers are already delivered from 'the present evil age' and thereby also from its evil spiritual rulers, and that deliverance was accomplished by Christ's giving himself 'ὑπερ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν, for the expiation or forgiveness of sins'.³⁸ Relating deliverance to forgiveness in this way is clearly significant. It implies that people belong to this age because of their sins; they are not simply enslaved victims of spiritual powers but are morally responsible for their condition. Thus forgiveness is the prerequisite of deliverance. Moral culpability must be dealt with to secure emancipation from the objective spiritual slavery imposed by the powers. Christ therefore gave himself 'ὑπερ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν, thereby securing forgiveness and *consequently* freedom from this age and the powers that control it.

Thus, to conclude this section, since it is sin that gives Satan his dominion over humanity, it is the removal of sin which breaks that dominion. Accordingly the object of Christ's death was not primarily the defeat of Satan or of the powers, but the rescue of their victims from their own disobedience and its consequences.³⁹ He died to secure forgiveness, and the defeat of Satan and the powers by that death is thus incidental to its principal thrust. Christ's death removed the χειρογραφον by making atonement for sins, thereby disarming the 'the powers and authorities' (Col. 2:14-15) and securing the expulsion of the accuser from heaven (Rev. 12:7-11): both images mean essentially the same thing.

40f.

³⁷ Bruce, 1982, p. 76.

³⁸ Cf. Bruce, 1982, p. 75; Betz, 1979, pp. 41-42.

³⁹ The suggestion of J.B. Russell, *The Devil: Perceptions of Evil from Antiquity to Primitive Christianity* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1977), p. 229, 'if the power of the Devil is dismissed, then Christ's saving mission becomes meaningless', is wrong and results from an over-emphasis on the cosmic aspect of Christ's work. That aspect is central in no New Testament interpretation of his death, which is nevertheless not to deny its importance.

Consequently by experiencing forgiveness the believer receives in practice deliverance from the 'present evil age' and from the powers that tyrannise it (Gal. 1:4; cf. Col. 1:13f.; Eph. 2:1ff.).

Such an understanding explains why Satan and the powers were not simply destroyed by *force majeure*, by overwhelming divine might. Satan could indeed have been trounced by the infinite and invincible power of God, as the New Testament affirms that he finally will be, but that would not have dealt with the fundamental human problem of sin. Satan merely attaches himself to human sin and exploits it as a parasite; the destruction of the parasite would not remove the corruption of sin upon which it feeds. Accordingly it is primarily sin that must be dealt with, and in so doing Christ simultaneously overcame Satan as a necessary, but basically secondary, consequence.

It is here moreover that the approach of Aulèn in *Christus Victor*⁴⁰ is weak in that it 'threatens to view sin and redemption in terms of a dualistic power struggle in which God in Christ simply conquers enemy territory by an invasion from heaven. In this scheme, sin is less a responsible guilt that must be forgiven than a power that must be eradicated.'⁴¹ Nor did Christ's death increase God's already absolute power over Satan, to which the Bible repeatedly testifies. Rather it removes the moral and spiritual basis of Satan's enslavement of rebellious humanity.

CHRIST'S PRESENT REIGN: ESCHATOLOGICAL TENSION AND SUPERNATURAL EVIL

In their demonology the New Testament writers demonstrate the same eschatological tension which characterises their understanding of salvation. Satan and the powers are defeated and yet remain active while they await final judgement (Rev. 20:7-10; Rom. 16:20; 1 Cor. 15:24; Matt. 25:41), echoing somewhat postbiblical Jewish ideas of a two-stage defeat of the powers of evil.⁴² Moreover there is some suggestion that the same

⁴⁰ G. Aulèn, *Christus Victor* (London: SPCK, 1931).

⁴¹ J.C. Beker, *Paul the Apostle: The Triumph of God in Life and Thought* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1980), p. 209.

⁴² B.J. Bamberger, *Fallen Angels* (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication

Christ who triumphed over them by his death will also crush them in the climactic act of salvation and judgement (1 Cor. 15:25; Rev. 19:11ff.). Meanwhile the present period between Satan's two judgements is characterised by a tension between Christ's reign and Satan's hostility towards the church.

The assertion of the present reign of Christ is found in virtually every strand of the New Testament, frequently being affirmed through the citation of or allusions to Psalm 110:1 (Acts 2:33; 1 Cor. 15:24f.; Eph. 1:20f.; Heb. 10:12-13; 1 Pet. 3:22). It echoes the archetypal expression of the divine warrior theme in Exodus 15, in which the conqueror is acclaimed as king by those whom he delivers (15:18). In Christ's case his reign is understood, for example in Matthew 28, as the precondition of the worldwide advance of the gospel, for it means that Satan can no longer hold those whom he formerly enslaved (cf. also Jn 12:31-32). Similarly in Acts 2:33-35 the coming of the Spirit, which is the precondition of the apostolic proclamation, is a direct consequence of Jesus' enthronement at the right hand of God. Accordingly, as Acts records the spread of the gospel there are the same signs of the coming of the kingdom of God as are present in the synoptic gospels, including the expulsion of evil spirits. Christ continues to be the bearer of the kingdom with all that that means for Satan's power, but now he works through the apostles and the church. Moreover, in both Ephesians and Colossians, his reign assures his people of both the security of their salvation and the availability of divine resources in their conflict against hostile powers, for it is precisely they which have been subjugated (Eph. 1:21-22 & 2:6; cf. Col. 2:15 & 3:3).⁴³

The New Testament writers thus believe Christians to have experienced a liberation from the tyranny of evil powers, which is understood in primarily spiritual terms. In the Pauline epistles it means that they need no longer be controlled by Satan's insidious and evil direction and inspiration (cf. Eph. 2:2; 2 Cor. 4:4, and also 1 Jn. 5:19), nor

Society of America, 1952), p. 18; B. Noack, *Satanás und Sotería. Untersuchungen zur Neutestamentlichen Dämonologie* (Kobenhavn: G.E.C. Gads Forlag, 1948), p. 40

⁴³ In Revelation too references to Christ's rule in heaven interspersed with prophecies of plague and persecution, convey an impression of the ultimate certainty of salvation despite the apparent chaos and wickedness on earth.

spiritually blinded by him (2 Cor. 4:4). Most important however is the fact that guilt has been removed and thereby the basis of accusation by Satan and the powers, by which they seek to secure the judgement and consequent damnation of the accused.

Nevertheless supernatural evil beings remain active and still entrenched in the world (2 Cor. 4:4; 1 Jn. 5:19; Rev. 12:12-13:18). They resist the gospel's progress (Matt. 13:19,39; 1 Thess. 2:18), and make the church their particular target (Rev. 12:12ff.; Eph. 6:10-12). Their purpose is to lure believers back into sin, so reclaiming those liberated from them precisely by the forgiveness of their sins. Consequently they tempt to moral evil as repeated New Testament warnings testify (Acts 5:3; 1 Cor. 7:5), try to introduce error into the church (2 Cor. 11:13-15; 1 Tim. 4:1; 1 Jn. 4:1ff.; Rev. 16:13f.) and inspire persecution, the significance of which lies not so much in the physical suffering it causes as the danger that it may lead to apostasy (1 Pet. 5:8-9; Rev. 2:9-11).

It is not clear therefore that Christians are expected to be free from the physical aggression of evil spirits. By inspiring persecution Satan may injure, even kill, believers through human agents. Since that is so, and in the absence of any indication in the New Testament to the contrary, it seems likely that evil spirits would also have been considered able to injure believers without the intervention of human mediators, if not to possess them.

In fact the New Testament says nothing about the possibility of Christians being possessed. In that the agent of possession belongs to Satan's kingdom (cf. Lk. 11:18, par.), it is Satan who controls the demoniac. From this perspective his state may be seen as an extreme form of the situation of anybody unredeemed from 'the dominion of darkness'; the difference lies in the fact that Satan's control is no longer unobtrusive, exercised through the individual's own will, but overt and direct. Consequently it does seem unlikely that the New Testament writers would have believed that an individual redeemed from Satan might nevertheless still be enslaved to the most extreme expression of his tyranny. Moreover, although there are frequent allusions to Christians laid low by illness, nowhere does the New Testament consider the situation of a believer possessed by a spirit, which might have been

expected were it a real pastoral problem.⁴⁴

However that may be, in the face of possible *physical* attack by evil powers there are significant differences in the believers' situation. First, they have access through Christ to divine resources which enable them both to resist and to endure attacks made upon them (cf. 2 Cor. 12:8-10; Rev 2:10). Second, death itself no longer has the same dread for them. While the undoubtedly unpleasant experience of dying remains, it is robbed of its horror as the enduring spiritual penalty for sin. For Paul its 'sting' is removed (1 Cor. 15:55f.), and it gives access to the presence of Christ himself (Phil. 1:21). Similarly in Revelation 2:10f. it is not death that is the real danger for the believer but unfaithfulness, death being in fact the means of victory. Physical suffering thus loses its absolute importance for the believer. And thirdly, the notion of Christ's exaltation and reign implies that it is he who sovereignly permits and limits whatever Satan, powers and demons might do to his people.

This does not mean that Christ will necessarily always veto their physical aggression, any more than he vetoes their inspiration of persecution. However, it suggests that believers are delivered from the futile arbitrariness of demonic malevolence. A persistent New Testament theme is that the believer's sufferings take on positive value (Rom. 5:3f.; 8:28-39; Jas. 1:2-4; 1 Pet. 1:6-7); from this perspective the identity of the immediate source of affliction is *relatively* unimportant. It becomes clear in the New Testament, and supremely in references to the devil's inspiration of Judas to betray Jesus, that even in the climactic moment of his wickedness Satan advances the Father's will and, in so doing, brings about his own destruction (Lk. 22:3-4,53; Jn. 13:2,27f.; 14:31; Rev. 12:4-5). This is the final truth about his hostility towards the church, that it is futile and self-defeating. Not only do the New Testament writers suggest that God will accomplish his good purposes for the church and for individual believers despite what Satan, powers and demons may attempt to do against them, but that he will accomplish those purposes even through their malevolent operations.

⁴⁴ Cf. the varying views of F.S. Leahy, *Satan Cast Out: A Study in Biblical Demonology* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1975), pp. 95f.; D.M. Lloyd-Jones, *Healing and Medicine* (Eastbourne: Kingsway Publications, 1987), pp. 162f.; M.F. Unger, *What Demons Can Do To Saints* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1977).

SATAN'S FINAL JUDGEMENT

In the Old Testament Isaiah 24:21-23 and 27:1 both look forward to the final defeat of every enemy of God, including supernatural foes. The reference to the slaughter of Leviathan in 27:1, 'the gliding serpent .. the coiling serpent .. the monster of the sea', evokes the great supernatural adversary of God elsewhere identified as Satan,⁴⁵ and it is implied in 24:21 that human kings are allied with 'the powers in the heavens above' in a conspiracy against God which will finally be crushed. The New Testament writers take up the same theme in texts such as Matthew 25:41, Romans 16:20 and Revelation 20:7-10, and similarly anticipate the ultimate destruction of Satan's power and that of all the forces that are subject to him.

In 1 Corinthians 15:24f. Paul refers to this final decisive judgement of the powers: εἰτα το τέλος ... 'ὅταν καταργησῇ πᾶσαν ἀρχὴν καὶ πᾶσαν ἐξουσίαν καὶ δύναμιν (*then the end will come .. when he has destroyed all dominion, authority and power*). However Berkhof argues that the verb, καταργεῶ, refers to their 'dethronement' rather than their destruction, which is consistent with his view that they are part of creation and have the positive purpose of undergirding it. Hence according to his interpretation Paul is describing the restoration of the powers to their proper function within Christ's lordship.⁴⁶ However καταργεῶ always has a negative sense and never refers to the restoration of something to its proper function, and in 15:26 death is also the object of καταργεῶ.⁴⁷ Although Berkhof claims that this means that death loses its power as *an enemy*, for Paul death is τὰ ... ὄψωνιά της

⁴⁵ In Ancient Near Eastern mythology the sea was seen as a primal force of chaos and evil: Mounce, 1977, p. 249.

⁴⁶ H. Berkhof, *Christ and the Powers* (Scottsdale, Pennsylvania: Herald Press, 1962), pp. 32-4. J.G. Gibbs, *Creation and Redemption: a Study in Pauline Theology* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1971), p. 146, also argues that καταργεῶ refers only to their dethronement, implying they have a role in the age to come.

⁴⁷ Cf. W. Bauer, W.F. Arndt & F.W. Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1957), p. 418; J.I. Packer, 'καταργεῶ', in Brown (ed.), vol. I, 1980, p. 73.

‘αμαρτίας (*the wages of sin*: Rom. 6:23), as it is throughout the Bible. To speak of it losing its power as an enemy is totally incongruous, for it exists only as an enemy. Thus, if καταργεω implies destruction when used of death, it must be understood to have the same force when used of the ‘other’ powers.

The words δι’ αὐτου [i.e. Christ] αποκαταλλαξαι τα παντα εις αυτον (*through him to reconcile all things to himself*) in Colossians 1:20 might nevertheless be understood to envisage an ultimate universal salvation, to include not only people but also powers.⁴⁸ Such an interpretation however encounters several difficulties. In the Pauline epistles the concept of reconciliation normally refers to ‘God’s laying aside of his wrath and judgement against mankind’.⁴⁹ It is thus concerned with a change in God’s disposition towards humanity which occurs independently of any human response. God himself is the subject and Christ’s atoning death the means, while the realisation for human beings ‘depends on acceptance of the gospel and faith’.⁵⁰ The terms in which reconciliation is described in Colossians 1:20ff. are largely consistent with this understanding. It is God who makes reconciliation through Christ’s death, and 1:22-23 indicates that the believers’ ultimate appropriation of its benefits depends upon their perseverance in faith. Thus, with respect to the human race alone, αποκαταλλαξαι τα παντα (*to reconcile all things*) does not necessarily entail the actual salvation of every human being.

Equally therefore it does not imply the universal salvation of the powers, even if it were argued that it makes possible the salvation of some of them. However there is no indication in the New Testament, that the option of a saving response to Christ is even available to the powers. On the contrary, it is they *from whom* people are saved, and who continue indeed to attack the church. Moreover whenever Christ’s death and resurrection are specifically related to the powers, it is in terms of their subjugation. As Bruce observes, ‘It is contrary to the analogy of Scripture

⁴⁸ This is the view of J.Y. Lee, ‘Interpreting the Demonic Powers in Pauline Thought’, *NovT* 12 (1970), p. 66. Cf. too N.T. Wright, 1986, p. 77.

⁴⁹ I.H. Marshall, *Jesus the Saviour: Studies in New Testament Theology* (London: SPCK, 1990), p. 271, cf. pp. 258ff..

⁵⁰ I.H. Marshall., 1990, p. 268.

to apply the idea of reconciliation in the ordinary sense to fallen angels.⁵¹

The notion of the universal reconciliation referred to here is therefore best understood in the light of Paul's description of the powers' defeat in Colossians 2:14-15. The cancellation of the χειρογραφον *through Christ's death* broke their authority over humanity whom they can no longer hold enslaved, and so neutralised them.⁵² It is in this sense that even the powers are reconciled δια του 'αιματος του σταυρου αυτου (*through the blood of his cross*: 1:20). It is not that Christ's death saves them, but that by atoning for the sins of human beings it breaks down their rebellious domain, disarming them and thus terminating their defiance of divine sovereignty. 'The universe has been reconciled in that heaven and earth have been brought back into their divinely created and determined order .. the universe is again under its head and .. cosmic peace has returned.'⁵³

The notion in Ephesians 1:10 of uniting all things in Christ may be similarly understood: ανακεφαλαιωσασθαι τα παντα εν τω Χριστω, τα επι τοις ουρανοις και τα επι της γης εν αυτω (*to bring all things in heaven and on earth together under one head, even Christ*). The verb ανακεφαλαιω means 'to sum up', as in Romans 13:9, and thus here 'Christ is the one .. in whom he [God] restores the harmony of the cosmos.'⁵⁴ No more than in Colossians 1:20 does this imply the final salvation of the powers, but only that they are brought under Christ's dominion: 'No hostile heavenly power can thwart God's purpose in Christ.'⁵⁵

These interpretations of Colossians 1:20 and Ephesians 1:10 are

⁵¹ Bruce, 1984, p. 75.

⁵² R.P. Martin, *Reconciliation: A Study of Paul's Theology* (London: Marshall, Morgan & Scott, 1981), p. 54; cf. Bruce, 1984, p. 75.

⁵³ Lohse, 1971, p. 59.

⁵⁴ A.T. Lincoln, *Ephesians* (Dallas, Texas: Word Books, 1990), pp. 33-34. Lightfoot, quoted by C. Brown, 'Head', in Brown (ed.), vol. II, 1976, p. 163, refers to 'the entire harmony of the universe, which shall no longer contain alien and discordant elements, but of which all the parts shall find their centre and bond of union in Christ.'

⁵⁵ Lincoln, 1990, p. 34.

consistent both with the anticipation of the powers' destruction in 1 Corinthians 15:24ff., and with that of the 'crushing' of Satan in Romans 16:20. Significantly in the latter text it is the 'God of peace' who 'will soon crush Satan under your feet'. Peace is accomplished not by Satan's redemption but his defeat; the reconciliation or summing up of all things similarly does not mean the powers' salvation but their subjugation to Christ's rule.

Finally two references in Revelation confirm the conclusiveness of God's final triumph. In 20:14 death encounters the same fate as the devil when it is 'thrown into the lake of fire'. Although the consequence of sin, death is also the instrument of Satan as destroyer (Rev. 9:11) and accuser (Rev. 12:10). Throwing death into the lake of fire therefore emphasises the definitive termination of his tyranny and all that it involves. Second, the new heaven and new earth contain no sea (Rev. 21:1). In Ancient Near Eastern mythology the sea was seen as a primal force of chaos and evil, and such ideas are sometimes exploited in the Old Testament as they are also in Revelation (12:17-13:1). Hence the affirmation, 'ἡ θάλασσα οὐκ ἐστὶν ἐτι (*and there was no longer any sea*), means that every conceivable evil or source of evil is definitively banished from the new creation: the Lamb's victory is complete.⁵⁶

CONCLUSION

Certain implications for the preaching of the gospel in Africa may finally be drawn from the above. First, as was noted in the preceding article, the gospel is always first and foremost a message of deliverance from sin. It is *primarily* about forgiveness of sins rather than deliverance from Satan and evil spirits, and it confronts people initially as sinners rather than victims. This is not to deny that other dimensions of the New Testament message should also be emphasised according to the hearers' circumstances and concerns. In Colossians and Ephesians greater prominence is given to the theme of Christ's triumph and exaltation over the powers than is the case elsewhere in the Pauline corpus, presumably because the addressees' situation required it; however even in those epistles redemption from sin is still identified as the core of the gospel.

Similarly, in an African context it is certainly necessary to proclaim

⁵⁶ Caird, 1962-3, p. 104.

the relevance of Christ's death with respect to supernatural powers, and more so than might perhaps be the case in a western milieu. However, if the proclamation is to reflect New Testament priorities, it would still be necessary to concentrate on Christ's death 'for sins', since it is through salvation from sins that deliverance from Satan, demons and powers takes place.

It is significant that in the primitive Christian creed which Paul had communicated to the Corinthian believers and which in 1 Corinthians 15:3-5 he drew again to their attention, what was 'of first importance' (εν πρωτοις) was the death of Christ *for sins* ('υπερ των 'αμαρτιων), his burial and his resurrection; however no mention is made of the powers. Paul introduces the powers where there are particular pastoral reasons for doing so; otherwise the relationship of Christ and his work to them is not mentioned, or mentioned only incidentally as in 1 Corinthians 15:24ff.. The gospel is essentially about sins rather than about Satan.

It has however been suggested that in the African context a message of deliverance from supernatural powers might be substituted for that of salvation from sins:

Each culture perceives Jesus Christ through the spectacles of its own needs. Western cultures, for example, tend to be guilt ridden and so are greatly attracted to Jesus as the sacrifice for sin. ... another culture which focuses more on enhancing life forces because of fear of being overcome by evil powers will perceive that same Jesus as a long sought after protective shield.⁵⁷

It is indeed of fundamental importance to address the existential concerns of the hearers if they are to appreciate the relevance and sufficiency of the gospel. However if *felt* needs determine the heart of the proclamation the result is a pluralistic relativisation of the gospel. It was by nailing the χειρογραφον to the cross that the powers were disarmed (Col. 2:14-15), and through the blood of the Lamb that the accuser was overcome (Rev. 12:9-11). Without salvation from sin there is no salvation

⁵⁷ D. Jacobs, commenting on C.R. Taber, 'Is there more than one way to do theology?', *Gospel in Context* 1.1 (1978), p. 24.

from 'evil powers' either.

Moreover putting the accent on deliverance from spiritual powers means that those to whom such a message is brought are identified as victims rather than guilty sinners, their condition being caused by forces over which they have no control rather than by their 'own deliberate fault'. In moral terms the dimension of human responsibility for sins and consequent guilt is undermined, the consistent New Testament stress on repentance becoming irrelevant. It would moreover be to move towards a cosmological dualism, if not necessarily entailing it. Supernatural evil would assume a much greater significance than the Bible grants it, in that redemption would be concerned not primarily with the human moral condition but with a great cosmic adversary which has somehow enslaved humanity. Of course, as soon as that enslavement is understood as a consequence of human sins, the relatively secondary importance of Satan, demons and powers and their fundamentally parasitic nature are conceded.

Second, much attention has been given in recent years to the supposed importance of 'power encounters' in the propagation of the good news. However in New Testament practice it is always the proclamation that is primary in evangelism. Insofar as that provoked what was understood as supernatural opposition, such opposition was in various ways confronted and overcome (cf. Acts 8:9-24; 13:4-12; 19:13-20). However, in that Satan, powers and demons tyrannise humanity in consequence of human sin, the preaching of the gospel of forgiveness of sins itself constitutes the supreme encounter with those powers without directly addressing them at all, and response to that gospel means their defeat.

Recently certain missiologists have also been drawing particular attention to the alleged role of what they term *territorial spirits*, which supposedly dominate specific geographical areas and prevent their inhabitants from responding to the gospel. On this view a necessary preliminary to the proclamation of the gospel is the *binding* of the powers in question, which may initially entail establishing their identity and numbers.⁵⁸ However there is no indication in the New Testament that

⁵⁸ Cf., for example, C.P. Wagner, 'Territorial Spirits', in C.P. Wagner and F.D. Pennoyer (eds.), *Wrestling with Dark Angels* (Eastbourne:

evangelism was preceded by some sort of preliminary occult research followed by skirmishes with the demons thus identified, with a view to expelling them from the particular territories they held. While Satan's power must not be underestimated nor should he be given *more* importance than the New Testament accords him. It is again of vital importance to maintain and affirm the priority of proclamation in the mission of the church. In Revelation 12:11, along with the blood of the lamb and the willingness to endure death, it was by 'the word of their testimony' that Satan was overcome. To allow the primacy of word to be superseded by other concerns is to exchange the gospel for something less.

Finally, in the light of Satan's continuing animosity towards the church, the New Testament calls upon believers to arm themselves in order to resist him. In view of the preoccupation in some quarters with novel and exotic approaches to 'spiritual warfare', it is important to recognise that for the New Testament writers such warfare was *primarily* understood as resisting Satan's attempts at moral and spiritual seduction by which he sought to re-establish his tyranny, a tyranny always dependent upon human sin. Thus when in Ephesians 6:10-20 Paul specifically discusses the struggle against the forces of darkness, the context suggests that it is above all else a moral conflict. The passage concludes a lengthy section of moral exhortation of which it is the summary or climax: 'The *tau loipou* linking phrase in 6:10 .. joins a parenthetic summary to previous parenthesis.⁵⁹ Thus the exhortation to put on the divine armour serves to explain how the Christian might carry out the injunctions of the preceding verses in the face of diabolical temptation to the contrary:

The fight with the powers was understood by the author of Ephesians as intimately involved with such things as working with one's hands (4:28), avoidance of evil talk of various sorts (4:29-30), and concern for the due relationships of the human

Monarch, 1990); J. Dawson, *Taking our Cities for God: How to break spiritual strongholds* (Lake Mary, Florida: Creation House, 1989).

⁵⁹ R.A. Wild, 'The Warrior and the Prisoner: Some Reflections on Ephesians 6:10-20', *CBQ* 46 (1984), p. 298. Cf. C.E. Arnold, *Ephesians: Power and Magic* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), p. 103; Lincoln, 1990, p. 438.

household (5:22-6:9). .. The individual who engages in productive work or who speaks the truth or who loves his wife is successfully resisting and standing his ground in the fight against the powers.⁶⁰

Moreover, the weaponry itself 'is in part specified in terms of certain virtues: truth, justice, faith, etc..⁶¹ This does not mean that the readers are simply being told in moralistic fashion to improve themselves, for the armour is God's, both that which he gives as well as that which is 'in some sense his own' and which he wears as divine warrior (cf. Isa. 11:4-5; 59:17).⁶² Rather they are being exhorted to take up truth, righteousness and so forth as God's gift to them: 'The believers are only able to prevail through the protection and power of God himself.'⁶³ However with that protection they do stand, even on the 'day of evil'.

The New Testament proclaims that Christ has already decisively overcome all the forces of darkness through the full and perfect redemption he accomplished on the cross. Because of her union with Christ his victory belongs also to the Church: in Christ she is seated even now 'in the heavenly realms' (Eph. 2:6), and so finds herself also far above 'all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every title that can be given' (Eph. 1:21). Nevertheless she must face the hostility of Satan and his forces and wage warfare against them as she seeks to live in a way that pleases Christ and to bring the gospel of salvation to every nation. What is vital is that she should have a proper biblical estimation of the nature of the threat that Satan presents and of the character of the warfare in which she is engaged. It is on that basis that she will engage in appropriate combat, taking up the weapons made available to her, and triumphantly stand her ground (Eph. 6:14-18).

⁶⁰ Wild, 1984, p. 298.

⁶¹ Wild, 1984, p. 297.

⁶² Cf. Lincoln, 1990, pp. 436, 442.

⁶³ Lincoln, 1990, p. 442; R. Schnackenburg, *The Epistle to the Ephesians* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1991), p. 272.

THE MODERN QUEST FOR AN AFRICAN THEOLOGY REVISED IN THE LIGHT OF ROMANS 1:18-25

Part II

IMPLICATIONS FOR AFRICAN THEOLOGY

Alfred Muli

Pastor Alfred Muli in Part I of this article, published in the last issue of AJET (16.1), examined the biblical text of Romans 1:18-25, touching on the moral defect of sinful human nature. In this article the author draws some pertinent conclusions which provide important theological presuppositions for the development of an African Christian Theology.

INTRODUCTION

A wrong analysis of sickness leads to defective prescription of therapy and may, all too often, lead to death. Similarly a wrong understanding of the moral condition of fallen mankind, results in faulty presuppositions, leading to a defective theology.

Pastor Alfred Muli earned his B.Th. from Scott Theological College and his M.Div. from the Nairobi International School of Theology. He is currently a lecturer at Scott Theological College in Machakos, Kenya.

African evangelicals should be deeply concerned that this appears to be the case with a vast majority of the non-evangelical theologians who are aggressively engaged in the modern quest for an African Theology. Their proposals reflect some striking theological pitfalls. They demonstrate a defective understanding of the moral condition of fallen mankind.

Kato has strong words in describing the quest for an African Theology which disregards the foundational doctrine of the moral condition of fallen mankind. Such an effort, he says:

Is a funeral march of Biblical Christianity and a heralding of syncretism and universalism. It has for its funeral directors the undiscerning theologians who fail to see the spiritual issues at stake because of their unguided enthusiasm for projecting African personality (Kato, *Pitfalls*, p.55).

The objective of this section is to develop a Christian theological reflection for the African situation. This will be accomplished by drawing theological conclusions from Paul's teaching about the moral condition of fallen mankind and evaluating the non-evangelical proposals for an African Theology in light of Romans 1:18-25. In both cases various authors will be examined in order to provide a cross-section view. At the end a proposal for methodology toward a Christian Theology for the African context is included.

THEOLOGICAL CONCLUSIONS AND EVALUATION

1. Fallen men and women are sinners (vs. 18). They are guilty before God. This is evident in their ungodly and unrighteous nature (v.18), a serious predicament which can only be canceled through the revealed righteousness received by grace through faith in Jesus Christ (1:16-17 cf. Eph. 2:8-9).

In the modern quest for an African Theology it is important to embrace this teaching as a fundamental presupposition.

African evangelicals approach theology from this presupposition. The late Dr. Byang Kato viewed sin as the basic human predicament. He said, "All human tragedies, be they sickness, poverty or exploitation, are mere symptoms of the root cause, which the Bible calls sin (ie. original not individual sin).... Man's fundamental dilemma is alienation from God" (Kato, *Biblical*, p.16-17).

Adeyemo, the General Secretary of the Association of Evangelicals in Africa, AEA, has a radical view of man's sinful condition. Due to the nature of

sin (Jer. 17:9; Ps. 51:5) he asserts: "No one is qualified since all by birth inherit a sin nature... Scripture says all were dead in trespasses and sins. What can a dead man do to procure his salvation "(Adeyemo, "The Salvation Debate," *EAJET*, p.16).

Dr. Richard Gehman who has lived in Africa for long as an AIM missionary has written much about African Theology from an evangelical view point. He makes an interesting parallel between the effect of sin on man and on man's culture. He says, "The effects of sin on culture is analogous to the effects of sin on man" (Gehman, *Doing*, p.94). So if man's culture has not been transformed by the gospel, it remains corrupted by sin. This is not an absolute corruption though. But we need not exalt our culture at the expense of the gospel.

Professor J.N.K. Mugambi is a contemporary non-evangelical African Theologian. He is one of the leading philosophical exponents of Christian theology in African scholarship. He commands a growing influence among modern intellectuals of Africa and abroad. However, he has a defective view of the biblical teaching on the moral condition of man. This is implied in his understanding of the concept of salvation.

He says, "salvation may be defined as the ultimate hope of realization and self-fulfillment which transcends the finitude of natural and historical processes" (Mugambi, *African*, x). He then defines liberation as:

the penultimate process of eliminating dependence (which is dehumanizing) and enhancing integrity and independence (which are humanizing) in every aspect of socio-political life both for individuals and for society as a whole (Mugambi, *African*, x).

With those definitions in mind he then asserts:

"In the African context and in the Bible, salvation, as a theological concept, cannot be complete without liberation, as a socio-political concept... Liberation is the objective task of contemporary African Christian Theology" (Mugambi, p.12).

According to Mugambi man's basic problem is socio-political. It is oppression, exploitation, and poverty. Salvation is a removal of those factors, giving way to a realisation of personal integrity and political independence, a utopian state which can be achieved by man's own effort. This clearly goes

counter to the sound teaching of the Bible about the moral condition of fallen mankind. The only hope he has is in Jesus Christ.

2. Fallen men and women are under God's wrath, the righteous and selfless indignation of God, because of their rebellion against God (vs. 18).

Therefore, every non-Christian African, whether religious or irreligious, and in whatever socio-political and economic situation, is under the wrath of God.

O'Donovan, an evangelical western missionary in Africa, has written a popular book on African theology from an evangelical perspective. He firmly embraces this view. He points out that God is the Judge of what sin is, irrespective of the human situation. He asserts: "God is the Judge, and has decided what is right and what is wrong without reference to any culture or tradition." (O'Donovan. *Introduction to Biblical*, p.90).

In describing hope for the oppressed people in South Africa, Bishop Tutu says: "Oppressed peoples must hear that, according to the Bible, God is always on the side of the downtrodden" (Tutu, "The Theology of Liberation," *African Theology En Route*, p.166). This is a correct statement. But in view of the wrong emphasis of Liberation Theology on socio-political salvation as the essence of the gospel, caution must be taken. Whether oppressed or not, man without Christ is under the wrath of God.

3. Fallen mankind has access to experiential knowledge about God (vs. 19). This knowledge is limited in extent and depth to that which is knowable about God as revealed in the visible created order, namely General Revelation (vs. 19).

This goes counter to the contention of some African theologians that Africans have always truly known God. Idowu is one of these African theologian. He believes that Africans gained unlimited knowledge about God through General Revelation. In his words, he writes.

If revelation indeed means God's self disclosure, if he has left his mark upon the created order and his witness within every man, then it follows that revelation [general] cannot be limited in scope and that it is meant for all mankind, all rational beings irrespective of race or color (Idowu. *African Traditional Religion* . p.56).

For sure, it is rather naive and myopic to think that Africans, before the coming of Christianity, never had experiential knowledge about God at all (cf

For sure, it is rather naive and myopic to think that Africans, before the coming of Christianity, never had experiential knowledge about God at all (cf Acts. 14:17, 17:26-27). However, the extent of their knowledge is much limited. A lot of truth about God remained unknowable through nature.

A more comprehensive knowledge of God is only possible by means of Special Revelation. Furthermore, the knowledge gained through General Revelation is "completely distorted though not obliterated" (Kato, *Pitfalls*, p.11).

4. The knowledge about God is not a product of man's own initiative but God's self manifestation (vs. 19).

Therefore, the little spark of knowledge that the Africans have about God is not to be attributed to their religious piety. It is God's own initiative and grace.

5. The revealed truth about God manifests the totality of divine attributes to the extent that they are knowable through General Revelation (vs. 20). However, fallen mankind has limited ability to perceive this truth through the responses of his mind and conscience (vs. 20)

Some African theologians fail to recognize the limitations of fallen man's ability to perceive divine things through General Revelation. An example is Muzorewa. He stretches the African's knowledge and perception of God too far. He contends that Africans had a trinitarian concept of God even before the historic event of incarnation. With that presupposition in mind he asserts: "The significance of the African concept of a trinitarian God prior to Christianity is that it renders the Traditional African Religion Christian in a peculiar way" (Muzorewa, *The Origins*, p.84). Hence the logical conclusion is that the African who believes and worships God in the traditional religious way is saved and has no need of the gospel. But Adeyemo provides a clear distinction between the means of revelation and the means of salvation. He correctly says:

Beginning from the created order to man's unique nature and including all God's activities in history as well as man's religious activities, all that man perceives is that there is a God. But such knowledge does not automatically save him (Adeyemo, *The Salvation*, p.6).

It must be noted that General Revelation is limited and cannot give salvific truth.

6. Fallen men and women, notwithstanding, continue to suppress the revealed truth about God in their wickedness (vs. 18b).

Although the Africans had a spark of knowledge about God before the coming of Christianity, the tragedy of the matter is that they suppressed it. Dr. Tite Tienou, one of the leading contemporary evangelical theologians in Africa, observes the ambiguity of seeking God in non-Christian religions like ATR. He says such an act of seeking is "at the same time a deformation of the knowledge of God, for men like to domesticate God" (Tienou, *Theological Task*, p.25)

The late Professor Okot P'Bitek is an example of African scholars who have gone to the extreme position in the suppression of truth about God. He advises Africans to be proud of their god as unique from the Christian God. He believes in the death of the Christian God. In his words:

The first duty of an African scholar is to remove these rusty Greek metaphysical dressings as quickly as possible, before African deities suffocate and die inside them in the same manner as the Christian God had perished. Because, now, when Christian theologians try to break open the Hellenistic coffin in which the Christian God was imprisoned, he is no longer to be seen. Fritz Mautherner has proclaimed God is dead, the time has come to write his history (P'Bitek, *African Religions*, p.105).

We need to be aware of the author's theological presupposition when we read their works.

7. Fallen mankind has ignored the revealed truth about God and does not glorify him (vs. 21).

The non-Christian religious piety found in ATR is actually a turning away from the known truth about God to idolatry.

Schoffeleers rightly observes that some African theologians think ATR is "a valid preparation and pre-figuration of the biblical message which had been brought to Africa by the missionaries" (Schoffeleers, "Black and African Theology" *Journal*, p.100). Ntetem is a good case in point. He believes that conversion is a process of turning away from half light into the fullness of light.

"The mixture of truth and error is an indispensable presupposition of the acceptance of the gospel" (Ntetem, "Initiation," *A Reader*, p.104).

This is a misconception of the biblical teaching that fallen man, in his false religiosity, is turning away from the true God. The tragedy of the matter with these African theologians is that "only the facts which agree with socio-religious experiences are taken into consideration at the expense of God's revelatory pronouncements" (Adeyemo, p.5). In other words truth is drawn from experiential observations. It is wrong to ignore God's Word in favor of experiences.

8. All the faculties of fallen men and women are corrupted and devoid of any true knowledge of God, resulting in a spontaneous tendency towards idolatry (vs. 21).

Therefore the modern idea of dialogue between Christianity and ATR must be rejected. The kind of dialogue being proposed assumes no superiority of knowledge of the truth. It is a kind of a compromise. Such a dialogue undermines the distinctive foundations of orthodox Christian beliefs, robbing Christianity of its unique and exclusive claim of truth.

The Christian party will have to pretend that the ATR party is a brother and a spiritual equal. Such a dialogue clearly ignores the moral condition of fallen mankind.

ATR proponents advocate for such a dialogue between Christianity and ATR. Shorter believes that: "Syncretism is the absence of dialogue or perhaps the failure of dialogue" (Shorter, *African Christian Theology*, p.6). The overriding theme of the book is dialogue. In the same tone, Pobee asserts: "The days of militant propaganda in [Christian] theology should give way to dialogue and a recognition of the religious pluralism of the world" (Pobee, *Towards*, p.42). Finally Mpagi says, "Christianity must promote a living dialogue with the African cultural setting" (Mpagi, *Christian Worship*, ACS, p.1994).

But due to the nature of fallen man's knowledge of God there is honestly no room for such a religious dialogue. There can never possibly be a meaningful dialogue. We can only inform them about God and salvation.

9. Fallen mankind pretends to be wise. But, the fact of the matter is that he is foolish in regard to divine things, which is evident in his religious idolatry (vs. 22).

Despite the claim and appearance of wisdom in the religious piety of the African, he remains ignorant in the things of God.

10. In his false religiosity fallen mankind exchanges or substitutes the glory of God for images or idols and worships the creature rather than the Creator (vss. 23, 25a).

Therefore, all the worship of "God" in ATR amounts to nothing but idolatry. We don't mean that everything in ATR is idolatry, but the act of worship itself is idolatry.

This theological conclusion creates a great bone of contention among African theologians. Mbiti believes that Africans have truly worshipped God in ATR.

He defines worship as, "man's act or acts of turning to God" and says, "Sacrifices and offerings constitute one of the commonest acts of worship among African people" (Mbiti, *Concepts*, p.179). Idowu finds the view that ATR worship is idolatrous as unfair. He rationalizes that the images and symbols used in ATR were given spiritual quality and in themselves were meaningless. He says, "It is the divine entity, that is represented by the material object, to whom worship is rendered" (Idowu, p.125). But once again it is important to bring in here our definition of idolatry as represented by Hodge. "Idolatry is meant to include not merely the worship of false gods, but the worship of the true God by images" (Hodge, *A Commentary*, p.39). This view contrasts with Idowu's view.

Kato believes ATR worship was idolatrous. He correctly comments:

While it is recognized that adherents of ATR are not devoid entirely of the knowledge of God, it is evident that they have distorted that knowledge. They have turned that knowledge into idol or spirit worship (Kato, *Pitfalls*, p.113).

11. Despite the human neglect, God rightfully retains and deserves the sovereign blessedness forever as His divine prerogative.

Therefore, even though the African in ATR worship neglects the true God, the God of the Bible remains the only true object of worship as a divine prerogative.

12. The result of all this is that fallen mankind is without excuse for his ungodliness. Therefore, men and women are justly under the wrath and judgement of God.

Worship in ATR is idolatrous and a demonstration of ungodliness for which the participants are without excuse. They rightly deserve God's judgement.

CONCLUSION

In summary we have seen that the moral condition of fallen mankind is guilty of sin and that all his thoughts and conduct are corrupted by sin. This corruption is not in an absolute sense. Fallen mankind is not as evil as he could possibly be. The nature of the moral condition of fallen mankind is that he is in an urgent need of the saving grace of Jesus Christ.

We must note that the purpose of this article is by no means to undermine wholesale the non-evangelical effort toward an African Theology. The aim is to point out some serious theological defects arising from faulty biblical presuppositions, particularly of the effects of sin on man's heart.

As a matter of fact, the writings of these non-evangelicals voice out important issues that the evangelical church of Africa needs to address. We will point out these issues and also provide proposals for a methodology toward an African Theology.

Issues for Evangelicalism

The evangelical church must wrestle with the issue of communication. How can we communicate effectively the Christian faith in the African cultural milieu? The socio-political and economic situations in Africa must be thoroughly studied. The African cultural customs and values need to be investigated. The beliefs and practice of ATR must be learned. African languages must be studied. African thought patterns, idioms and categories should be utilized for the formulation of an African Christian Theology. The cultural and religious concepts should be used as eye openers, redemptive analogies or points of contact.

Once this has been done, the socio-political and economic concerns of our people will be addressed in a more meaningful and persuasive way.

The evangelical church must also deal more exhaustively with the issue of the reality of General Revelation than has been done before. What is the extent of it? Is it salvific? These questions have been considered in this paper but not exhaustively.

Once all these issues have been dealt with the end result will be an effective communication of biblical Christianity in the African situation.

Concluding Proposal for Methodology

We will propose a theological methodology for a Christian Theology in the African context. This is a situational approach where the issue arises from the situation and then it is addressed from the word of God.

1. Critically analyze the situation.
2. Carefully determine the root issue.
3. Examine biblical teaching on the root issue from a proper hermeneutical procedure, that is, Grammatico - Historical method of exegesis.
4. Draw theological conclusions.
5. Apply those conclusions to the African issue in question.
6. Make use of the principles of effective communication as stated above.

This way we can develop a Christian theology which is relevant for the African situation, without undermining the sound teaching of the Bible. The result of our quest is then a Christian theology which is both authentically biblical and authentically African.

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BOOK REVIEWS

Ephesians: Power and Magic. The Concept of Power in Ephesians in the Light of Its Historical Setting

by Clinton E. Arnold
Cambridge: CUP, 1989

During a recent term I read through Arnold with three of my MTh New Testament students at Nairobi Evangelical Graduate School of Theology. And I can report that this text "works". First, it works as an example of a proper British PhD thesis done at Aberdeen under Howard Marshall (1986). Reading the book was certainly helpful for students who were wondering about doctoral studies, since they gained a feel for the scope and level of the research required.

Secondly, the book actually breaks new ground. The students got to see research making its case and establishing a new position. Arnold argues that the current "consensus" that Ephesians was written to combat problems of Gnosticism at Ephesus is incorrect. He argues in detail in his first chapter that Ephesus was a centre for magical practices, citing the "*Ephesia Grammata*" consisting of six magical words which "seem to be laden with apotropaic power, that is, in the warding off of evil demons." They were used "as written amulets or spoken charms". When my students, from three different parts of Africa, read this section, they all began to speak at once about its relevance to what their grandfathers knew! Which meant that a third objective of reading Arnold had also been accomplished.

Arnold links the magic of Ephesus with the spirit world, using evidence from the Greek magical papyri of Egypt, which he argues is linked to Ephesus. The focus of Arnold's research is not the secret knowledge of the intellectual elite (i.e. the Gnostics), but the common knowledge of ordinary people. Arnold here reflects the influence of Berger and Luckmann's *Sociology of Knowledge* (not cited), with their concern for "common knowledge." Both the *Ephesia Grammata* and the evil spirits find a locus in the Ephesian Artemis (Diana). So a fourth point emerged from reading Arnold: the importance of sociological tools for investigating the background of the biblical text. The final touch to this syncretistic soup is the astrology bit; all of this was taken as a way of

manipulating the "powers". For me, this was the most stimulating part of Arnold's study, fulfilling his sub-title: "The Concept of Power in Ephesians in Light of Its Historical Setting." And it would have become even more relevant for the African context if he had explored the nature of animism.

The phrase "Power and Magic" in the title gives the focus of the book as a whole. Chapters three through five provide a detailed and sometimes tedious exegesis of the key texts in Ephesians concerning "power". Chapter six brings the exegesis together in a biblical theology of Ephesians concerning Christology, cosmic powers, eschatology and ecclesiology. Arnold fulfils his stated goal: "The goal of this book is to acquire a more complete understanding of the nature of and motivation for the inclusion of the power-motif in the epistle by studying the author's development of the theme against the backdrop of the spiritual environment of western Asia Minor in the first century AD" (p.2).

Arnold interacts with those previous interpreters who have grappled with the definition of "powers" in Paul: MacGregor (astral spirits); J Y Lee (Jewish apocalyptic [fallen angels behind the state] and the Gnostic astrological point of view [astral spirits]; Benoit (the term cannot be defined!); Carr (pure angelic hosts surrounding the throne); Wink (a demythologised view of "powers", first presented by Schlier and Berkhof). Against all of the views that take the "powers" as "structures" rather than as "evil spiritual beings", Arnold makes the telling point, based on what he has already demonstrated, that the Ephesian reader "would think of evil spiritual beings" when reading Ephesians and not of social structures (p. 50).

One agrees with his defence of this position; but what of structures? Arnold returns briefly to the topic in connection with his exegesis of Ephesians 2:2-3, stating that "it is precisely at this point that the question of structures of existence, institutions and -isms should come into the discussion" (p. 134). Holding firmly to the existence of "personified evil spiritual powers", he admits that "nevertheless, these created entities [i.e. institutions] can be considered 'demonic' since they have been inspired by the spirit 'power'." Then amazingly he declares, "At this juncture I have broached a hermeneutical topic extending beyond the scope of my purpose" (p. 134). I for my part have been helped by the explanation given by S C Mott in *Biblical Ethics and Social Change* (Oxford: OUP, 1982), who argues that the evil spiritual beings have captured part of the universe and converted it into "cosmos", social institutions organised in opposition to God. That is to say, evil spiritual beings do have a relation to social structures. Or, more bluntly, a cause of poverty is the working of evil spirits!

Arnold's study would be useful as a text for a course on the cultural world of the New Testament, illustrating a skilful use of background materials. It could also serve a course in Greek exegesis, offering detailed exegesis of key texts in Ephesians. A New Testament Introduction course would find useful its argumentation that Ephesians is Pauline. It could also function as a model for doing biblical theology based on understanding a book as a whole interpreted in light of its background. And certainly it would make a useful textbook for a "Power Encounter" course that needed a theological grounding.

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African Nonformal Theological Education Research Project

by Fremont and Sara Regier

North Newton KS: Commission on Overseas Mission of the
General Conference Mennonite Church, 1994

This publication is a 64-page report (plus 16 unnumbered pages of appendices and endnotes) prepared for the Pew Charitable Trusts in the United States. The stated purpose of the research project was "to study the state of the art in non-formal [theological] education" in Africa and "to suggest implications of these findings." More specifically, "the study was designed to assess various educational models . . . to explore ways to encourage different kinds of integrated and regional projects . . . and to make recommendations for the development of effective and self-sustaining non-formal programs for Christian leadership education" (p.2). The study was intended to concentrate "mainly on adult learning processes other than formal education" (p.28). Chapter headings and some subheadings include pithy one sentence quotations; for example, "In Africa information is not given but related."

Ten percent of the content is taken up with a review of literature on adult education. However, most of the literature quoted is dated, and Western in its orientation. The authors bemoan the meagre reference to African educational writers (p.10) and that "no where did we observe situations where serious thought had been given to the specific question of how Africans learn" (p.28). If they had given attention to this, which was their stated focus--"adult learning processes"--the report could have been a major significant contribution to theological education in Africa.

The social environment (political, economic, social, religious) in which theological education is being done in Africa is very briefly described. The greatest impact of non-formal education, such as TEE, is "the change in personal lives" (p.21). The material on programmatic priorities of non-formal education is worthy of note, (though other publications give greater in-depth analysis, such as Holland and Snook). Financial sustainability of the programmes, acceptance of the programmes by the church, contextualization of methodology and content, and obtaining published materials are major issues facing TEE programmes in Africa today. The suggested ways to solve these major issues, listed in Chapter 9 for the churches and TEE programmes and in Chapter 10 for donor agencies, are helpful. One wishes that concrete examples had been given of how these issues could be addressed at the practical level. Administrators of TEE programmes are, for the most part, keenly aware of these issues, and they are seeking practical help on how to overcome the difficulties represented.

The overall assessment of this book must be that the research done does not match the quality of, nor go beyond, current literature on TEE. It is a non-formal way of describing non-formal education in Africa. Normal methods of collecting and analysing data were not evident. While reading many of the statements made in the book, one asks where is the data or evidence for making such a statement. For example reference to a source is not given for "900 Christian non-government organisations in Kenya," or that the AIC churches are the "fastest growing churches in Sub-Saharan Africa." The denominational bias of the authors can be implicitly detected; for example, the Maserete Kristos Church in Ethiopia is mentioned four times in the report. An implicit emphasis is indicated by the constant positive reference to African Instituted Churches, "the least educated and the most ridiculed and feared of the church groupings," and negative remarks about TEE programmes of evangelical churches (AEA's TEXT-Africa project is belittled by comparison to AIDS programmes). Though the Church of Christ in Nigeria's TEE programme is named in the report, no description is given of this outstanding model of African administered and church financed TEE programme of over 2,500 students. If clear answers were given to the nine "questions addressed by the ANTERP study" in annex B, the book could have been of great value to TEE personnel in Africa.

The list of abbreviations in the preface does not include all the acronyms used in the text. References cited in 36 endnotes are not listed in the bibliography. A number of errors were detected. Contrary to what is stated, for example, ACTEA has not accredited any TEE programmes as yet (p.34); ACTEA was established in 1976 (p.46); the Christian Learning Materials Centre (CLMC) in Nairobi was established in 1980, and CLMC does not prepare TEE material nor conduct TEE staff training courses (p.46). This reviewer would concur with the authors' concluding chapter that the beneficiaries of the project were the authors themselves by their exposure to non-formal education in Africa.

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The Message of Proverbs

by David Atkinson

Leicester, England: Inter-Varsity Press, 1996

As Atkinson observes in the preface to this addition to 'The Bible Speaks Today' series, the themes dealt with in Proverbs are of continuing relevance in every age: 'It puts a mirror up to our behaviour and says, "Are you like this? Is there a better way to live?"' However he also draws attention to what he sees as the difficulty any commentator on Proverbs must encounter, that of bringing 'its apparently disorganised mass of material into some sort of accessible form'. In dealing with this problem he refrains from employing a simple verse-by-verse commentary and tries instead to shape the structure of his exposition to the particular literary characteristics of the book of Proverbs itself.

In an introductory chapter Atkinson stresses the relationship between the Wisdom portrayed in Proverbs and Christ, the supreme revelation of God, and then briefly considers the authorship, intended readership, literary forms and purpose of Proverbs. In the subsequent exposition, which constitutes the bulk of the book, he distinguishes two principal sections in Proverbs. The first is chapters 1-9 where Wisdom is personified and portrayed; and then in chapters 10-31 what he describes as 'Wisdom's Values', the moral teaching of the book, are to be found. Thus the first two chapters of his exposition, which he calls Part 1 and Part 2, deal with Proverbs 1-9, and Parts 4-6 treat Proverbs 10-31.

His exposition in the first two Parts, on Proverbs 1-9, does not follow the arrangement of the text found in the book of Proverbs itself but adopts a more thematic approach. Thus in Part 1 he identifies a number of 'sketches of Wisdom' found in the first nine chapters and comments on them: 'the town crier (1:20-33)', 'Wisdom needs to be searched for (2:1-9)', 'A winsome personality (2:10-15)', 'Wisdom celebrates life (3:13-18)', and so on. In Part 2, which he entitles 'Wisdom's instructors and Wisdom's detractors', he returns to the same section of the book and looks at the messages Wisdom conveys. In the first section he identifies and briefly discusses 'Ten fatherly talks', all of which follow a more or less similar pattern in their communication of moral instruction. The second section passes to 'Wisdom's Detractors' and discusses the warnings given in this part of the book against gang violence, sexual promiscuity, laziness and so on, many of which are themselves drawn from the 'fatherly talks'.

In Part 3, entitled 'Wisdom's methods', Atkinson deals with 'some

questions about how its [i.e. Proverbs'] writers go about their work'. The chapter is of an introductory nature but he places it in the middle of the book rather than at the beginning as he sees it as an introduction to the second half of Proverbs, although some of what is said here is applicable to chapters 1-9. In an initial section he identifies the dominant philosophy of Proverbs 10-31 as one of 'learning from experience' and seeks to establish links between such a methodology and that advocated by liberation theology and some recent educational and pastoral approaches. At some points in his discussion he seems to risk making experience an autonomous source of knowledge; as in some other passages of the book there is a certain ambiguity as to what exactly is being said. As he himself notes later however, Proverbs insists that 'the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom'; experience can therefore only be rightly interpreted in the light of all that Scripture reveals of God's character and works.

Sections 4 and 5 both deal with chapters 10:1-22:16 and are organised thematically. Section 4, entitled 'Wisdom's values: Foundations', seeks to 'uncover the moral values on which [the] practical teaching is based'. Atkinson identifies three such values, the fear of the Lord, love and justice, and shows how they persistently recur in the aphorisms, or *gnomes*, of this part of Proverbs. The point briefly discussed towards the end of the chapter, that experience sometimes seems to contradict the assertions made by certain proverbs, is an important one and should perhaps have been treated in one of the introductory sections. Part 5, 'Wisdom's values: The practical dimension', looks at the particular practical concerns of Proverbs 10:1-22:16, including family, marriage and parenthood; diligence, creativity and hard work; health; security and safety; material sufficiency; the importance of appropriate speech, and a few others.

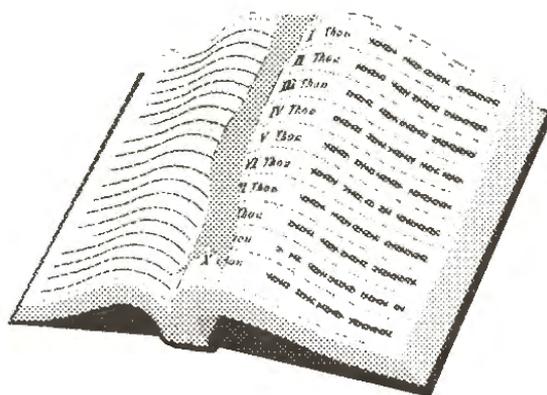
A final chapter, Part 6, 'Wisdom's values: The words of the wise', deals with the remainder of the book, no longer using a thematic approach but dealing with the text section-by-section. The comments here are brief as many of the ideas found in this part of Proverbs have come up earlier and already been discussed, although in this chapter Atkinson quotes most of the biblical text itself at length. He understands the conclusion of Proverbs, 31:10-31, as not only a portrait of the ideal wife, but also a representation 'of what the life of Wisdom herself would look like, were she to manage the home'. Finally in his own concluding chapter, 'Godliness in working clothes', he stresses the ordinary, everyday nature of the Wisdom that Proverbs communicates, and goes on to point out that for the Christian it is in Christ that Wisdom is found, and that it is communicated along with the power to live it out through the Spirit.

Careful study of *The Message of Proverbs* will undoubtedly enrich the

reader's appreciation of the book and of its continuing relevance, as well as draw attention to some of its profounder resonances which are not so obviously apparent on the surface of the text. Some of the applications made are more relevant in a western, specifically a British, context than in an African one, as when Atkinson discusses the British national lottery, although the principles involved can often be extended by the reader to his own situation. The author quotes from a wide variety of sources, some of which are more illuminating and appropriate than others. The structure he has adopted for the book does however entail certain drawbacks. While the author's use of a thematic approach has its advantages, and particularly in the exposition of such a book as Proverbs, it limits the value of his work as an aid in the systematic study of the biblical text. It also means that the book of Proverbs is not interpreted in its own terms, in the form which its editors gave it, and in consequence Atkinson's own preoccupations may at times impose themselves on the exposition and shape its direction more than is desirable. Moreover his arrangement of material can be difficult to follow; simply finding where he discusses a given passage or text of Proverbs is not always easy. Indeed he occasionally discusses the same passage twice under different headings; an exhaustive Scripture index would enhance the usefulness of the book. In general the expository comments on particular texts are relatively brief and more attention to straightforward exposition might have been expected, although the author does give greater attention to what he identifies as key sections of Proverbs. However the reader who is looking for detailed explanation of the text and the clarification of obscurities will frequently be disappointed. The structure of 'The Message of Proverbs' means that it is best read right through, rather than treated as an occasional work of reference. It is perhaps more a book about Proverbs than an exposition of Proverbs, and those wanting straightforward commentary or exposition really need to look elsewhere.

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