



THE HISTORY AND THEREFORE FUTURE OF BIBLE AND THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION IN THE AFRICAN CHURCHES (AN ACADEMIC AND PERSONAL REFLECTION)

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A. INTRODUCTION

1. PROBLEM STATEMENT: IS THE 21st CENTURY GOING TO BE DEFINED AS THE ERA OF THE FINAL DECLINE OF SCRIPTURE AND ITS AUTHORITY?
 2. TOGETHER WITH THIS IS A NEW VIEW ON DIFFERENT RELIGIONS DEVELOPING: UNIVERSALISM?
 3. IF SO, WHAT WILL THE IMPLICATIONS IN LIGHT OF THE HISTORY BE FOR THE CHURCH IN AFRICA, AND ESPECIALLY WITH REGARDS TO TEACHING THE BIBLE AND THEOLOGY
 4. BECAUSE HISTORY IS ABOUT THE PRESENT AND FUTURE AS WELL
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B. THE PAST

1. MANY DIFFERENT HISTORICAL SOURCES
 2. ONE OF BEST PERSPECTIVES ON THE PAST OF THEOLOGICAL TRAINING (PROF MARTIN PAUW)
 3. INITIALLY BOTH PROTESTANT AND CATHOLIC MISSIONS TAUGHT EVANGELISTS, CATECHISTS AND TEACHERS
 4. STANDARDS GRADUALLY IMPROVED
 5. THIS WAS THE SO-CALLED MISSIONARY ERA OF THEOLOGICAL TRAINING
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C. THE PRESENT TIMES

1. NEW DEVELOPMENTS SINCE 1960
 2. RENEWED EMPHASIS ON THEOLOGICAL TRAINING
 3. NOT ONLY STANDARDS OF ADMISSION BUT ALSO THAT OF TRAINING IMPROVED
 4. GROWTH OF ECUMENICAL IDEAL LED TO JOINT TRAINING SCHOOLS
 5. JOINT BOARDS AND THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION BY EXTENSION DEVELOPED
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1. NEW ECUMENICAL BODIES IN AFRICA (AACC AND AEAM) ENCOURAGED THEOLOGICAL TRAINING
2. VARIOUS THEOLOGICAL INSTITUTIONS DEVELOPED LIKE ASATI AND WAATI AND ALSO EATWOT AND ACTEA (ACCREDITATION BODY)
3. AFTER THIS PHASE, MORE AND MORE STATE UNIVERSITIES AND STUDIES ABROAD WITH DIFFERENT EMPHASES

D. NEEDS AND CHALLENGES

1. PERSPECTIVES ON THEOLOGISING:
CONTEXTUALISE AND INCULTURATE ITS CHRISTIAN HERITAGE
2. THE DIFFERENT NEEDS OF THE CHURCH FOR HOLISTIC THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION:
UNDERSTAND AND REALISE ITS ECCLESIASTICAL PLURALISM + MINISTER TO NEEDS OF PEOPLE:
AIM=KINGDOM ORIENTED AND A SENSE OF MISSION
3. GENERAL THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION: CENTRAL TO AFRICAN THEOLOGY IS SCRIPTURES: J POBEE (STRONGLY SUPPORTED BY PARRATT AND KWESI DICKSON) SAYS THAT THE BIBLE IS DEFINITELY THE PRIMARY SOURCE FOR AFRICAN THEOLOGY

PRESENT SITUATION (CHALLENGES): MY VIEWS

1. SECULARISATION
 2. POST MODERNISM
 3. FUNDAMENTALISM: SHARP REALITY
 4. LIBERALISM: ALSO SHARP REALITY
 5. BACK TO THE WORD OF GOD
 6. BACK TO THE APOSTOLIC CREED AND THE CONFESSIONS OF FAITH
 7. BECOMING A TRULY BIBLICAL AND CONFESSING CHURCH AGAIN: NOT RESISTING AGAINST DEVELOPMENT
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F. THE FUTURE IN LIGHT OF THE PAST AND PRESENT SITUATION: MY VIEWS

VERY BRIEF CASE STUDY: DRC THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION IN HISTORY

A) THE HISTORY AS FROM 1859 ONWARDS


B) THREE OFFICIAL THEOLOGICAL
FACULTIES IN THE COURSE OF HISTORY

C) WHERE IT WENT WRONG WITH
APARTHEID THEOLOGY SINCE 1948


D) WHERE IT WENT WRONG WITH LIBERAL
THEOLOGY SINCE 1986

E) REALITY OF UNBIBLICAL CHURCHES?


THEOLOGICAL FACULTIES

1. PHILOSOPHICAL ISSUES: POST MODERNISM HAS LARGELY TAKEN OVER THE DISCOURSE
 2. CHURCH ISSUES: THE ESTABLISHED CHURCHES ARE IN DECLINE AND POSSIBLY IN A DYING PROCESS
 3. THEOLOGICAL ISSUES: CAN THEOLOGY AND THEOLOGICIANS DEVELOP AND PROVIDE A TRULY NEW PARADIGM AND VISION AGAIN OR NOT? I DOUBT IT!
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LESSONS FROM HISTORY FOR BIBLE SCHOOLS (LARGELY SIMILAR)

1. PHILOSOPHICAL ISSUES: POST MODERNISM HAS LARGELY TAKEN OVER THE DISCOURSE: LESSER INFLUENCE
 2. CHURCH ISSUES: THE ESTABLISHED CHURCHES ARE IN DECLINE AND POSSIBLY IN A DYING PROCESS
 3. THEOLOGICAL ISSUES: CAN BIBLE SCHOOLS AND THEIR LECTURERS DEVELOP AND PROVIDE A TRULY NEW PARADIGM AND VISION AGAIN OR NOT? I BELIEVE SO! HOW? SEMINARIES?
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I. SOME GOOD PRINCIPLES FROM THE PAST FOR GOOD THEOLOGICAL TRAINING IN THE CHURCHES IN AFRICA IN 21ST CENTURY

1. A GOOD CHURCH NEEDS GOOD THEOLOGY AND VICE VERSA
 2. .GOOD THEOLOGY IS BIBLICAL THEOLOGY VS LIBERAL THEOLOGY
 3. BIBLICAL THEOLOGY ALSO NEEDS SOUND DOCUMENTS OF FAITH
 4. THEOLOGICAL TRAINING FOR THE CHURCH IS ABOUT ACADEMIC THEOLOGY BUT ALSO ABOUT SPIRITUAL FORMATION OF STUDENTS
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5. THEOLOGICAL TRAINING MUST HAVE RESPECT FOR THE OWN TRADITION BUT MUST ALSO BE ECUMENICAL, INCLUSIVE AND RELEVANT WITHIN SENSIBLE LIMITS

6. CONSOLIDATION OF WELL-BALANCED THEOLOGICAL TRAINING: WE ARE DEFINITELY NOT OLD FASHIONED!!

7. FORMING NEW NETWORKS OF WELL-BALANCED THEOLOGICAL AND BIBLE SCHOOL INSTITUTIONS IN OUR COUNTRIES AND OUR REGIONS

8. CLOSE COOPERATION BETWEEN THESE INSTITUTIONS

J. FINAL CONCLUSIONS: 21ST CENTURY

1. ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT ASPECTS OF BEING THE CHURCH: THE BIBLE AND ITS UNIQUE MESSAGE SHOULD BE CENTRAL!!
 2. IF THINGS GO WRONG AT BIBLE SCHOOLS AND THEOLOGICAL TRAININGS IN 21ST C, THINGS GO WRONG WITH THE CHURCHES
 3. WE NEED TO PRIORITISE IN AFRICA, GET THE BEST STUDENTS AND TEACHERS, AND GO FOR BEST=GOOD LEADERSHIP IN 21ST C!
 4. IN TEACHING THE TRUE GOSPEL, THERE IS SOLID GROUND FOR THE FUTURE IN THE TRIUNE AND ETERNAL LIVING GOD!!
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5. “EX AFRICA ALIQUID NOVI”: FROM AFRICA THERE IS ALWAYS SOMETHING NEW (AND HOPEFULLY HOPEFUL)

6. IN OUTSIDE WORLD IT MAY HAPPEN THAT THE 21st CENTURY WILL BE DEFINED AS THE ERA OF THE FINAL DECLINE OF SCRIPTURE, AND OF A NEW UNIVERSALISTIC FAITH

7. I HOWEVER HOPE AND BELIEVE THAT AFRICA MAY MAKE THE DIFFERENCE: IT IS UP TO YOU AND TO ME THROUGH GOD’S SPIRIT

CONTINUED...

8. THROUGH GOD'S GUIDANCE THIS IS OUR CHALLENGE

9. THIS IS INDEED ALSO OUR CALLING: POSSIBLY A CALL ON TEASA FOR A "DECLARATION OF TSHWANE(2022)"

10. AFRICA AND MY BROTHERS AND SISTERS: WE NEED TO RETURN BACK TO BASICS IN THE TRIUNE GOD!

11. NKOSI SIKELEL I'AFRICA= MAY GOD BLESS AFRICA!!