

Standing on God's Truth
Wednesday (10 June)
08h15

Theology that is both Soundly Biblical and thoroughly African

(Dr Siegfried Ngubane)

INTRODUCTION - MODERN TRENDS IN THEOLOGY

- Moving away from an objective theological truth
- Religious experience take the place of Scripripture
- No Bible religion without Scriptures
- The knowledge of God and His truth, in other words, our theology.
- Most decisive theological terms are “revelation” and “inspiration.”
- It is the work of the Holy Spirit to bring a sound theology into focus

As Christian leaders, teachers, and preachers in this continent I want to put it to you that the two main concerns we are confronted with are:

1. Theology that is Biblically Sound and
2. The Context in which we do that theology - in other words the context in which we interpret the content of the Bible in harmony with God's will so as to constitute God's truth.

WHAT IS SOUND DOCTRINE?

- It is the teaching that agrees with the Bible (Allister McGrath).
- “Follow the pattern of the sound words that you have heard from me, in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. By the Holy Spirit who dwells within us, guard the good deposit entrusted to you” (1:13–14)
- We have doctrine of men and the teaching from God through His Word
- According to one definition, doctrine is teaching *from God about God* that directs us *to the glory of God*.

THE SOURCE OF SOUND DOCTRINE

- The triune God is the ultimate source
- He has chosen to minister doctrine to us through His prophets and Apostles
- Doctrine is measured by Holy Scripture
- Warning to truth twisters - (2 Peter 3:16)

THE GOAL AND PURPOSE OF SOUND DOCTRINE

- Christian doctrine has a twofold object
 - The primary object of doctrine is God
 - The secondary object is all things in relation to God
- The pattern of sound doctrine is
 - Trinitarian
 - Creation affirming
 - Gospel centered and
 - Church oriented

THEOLOGY THAT IS THOUROUGHLY AFRICAN

- True faith is based on true knowledge (Rom. 10:17).
- Christian theology evolves out of questions that are asked in a particular situation about how the Bible speaks to that situation.
- Theology as a reflection on God and his creatures is eternal, but some of the questions we ask and our discourse about God are rooted in our experiences, cultural beliefs and worldview. Therefore, our understanding of theology is also rooted in our culture.

Content and Context

- *One of the most important functions any biblically-based theology is its practical effect on the lives of Christians*
- *Kunhiyop maintains that “Scripture is always interpreted within a context; Africa is the context in which I seek the true meaning of Scripture” (Samuel Waje Kunhiyop, pxiii).*
- *Professor Samuel Waje Kunhiyop says: “though I write as one who is convinced that Christianity based on biblical revelation stands above other religions, but my own understanding of Christianity in African context is that it should take African situation seriously while seeking to be true and explicit teachings of the scripture.”*

Dr. Kunhiyop in his book 'African Christian Theology' makes a significant contribution by allowing the Christian Scriptures to speak to African traditional beliefs.

He maintains that Christian theology evolves out of questions that are asked in a particular situation about how the Bible speaks to that situation.

If Christian theology will be relevant to the occasion of any local people, it must take in to consideration the context in which theology will be done, particularly their cultural worldview (Ngugi Moshete's thesis).







African Wedding – White Wedding



What are the Questions that the Biblically Sound Theology Answers in Africa

In 'Issues in African Christian Theology edited by Samuel Ngewa'

Three conflicting worlds for a Christian Theologian in Africa is pointed out:

- Christian faith
- African culture and
- Modern culture

In spite of the commitment of Christian theologians to live by biblical teaching, there is a tendency for them to become involved with issues in their environments, causing tension.

- African religious beliefs are taken seriously and are subjected to the scrutiny of the infallible and inerrant Word of God the Holy Bible, with a view to informing the faith and conduct of African Christians

- Theology that Crosses Frontiers
- Gospel and Church Brought to Shame
- The modern in Africa brings itself to the world with many opportunities exciting and scary. In an attempt to redefine and brew a faith that can easily be accepted and accommodate locally

- Dr Kunhiyop finally discussed the question of what “shapes theology” (Revelation, Experience, Reason, Tradition), and he closes the chapter by pointing to fundamental principles and presuppositions that underlie any evangelical theological enterprise.
- developing his theology from biblical strong foundations in a context of African culture.
- We have heard the many voices that spoke out against issues relating to colonialism and apartheid and their devastating effect on the African continent.

Dr Kunhiyop in African Christian Theology addresses questions that arise from the African context and intended to help others discover how theology affects

- Our minds
- Our hearts
- Our lives

Even in midst of the daunting challenges facing the continent, these men have found courage to bring out theologically what must we do to sustain Christian faith within a society that is grappling with its cultural heritage and opportunities brought by globalization, They have diffused the tension and now its our task to propagate the message of hope to Africa Christian.

CONCLUSION

THE END OF SOUND DOCTRINE

- It delivers us from the snare of false teaching
- It serves God's saving work both inside (1 Tim. 4:16) and outside the church
- It promotes God's glory

Conclusion

Paul makes it crystal clear that 'sound doctrine' involves teaching the whole church from top to bottom how to **be**: how to live good lives in accordance with sound teaching

Titus 2:11-12 For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age...