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AFRICA JOURNAL OF EVANGELICAL THEOLOGY

Purpose: *AJET* is published twice a year by the staff of Scott Theological
College, Machakos, Kenya, in order to provide African evangelical theological
educators and students with articles and book reviews related to theology and
ministry.

Publisher: Scott Theological College, the publisher of *AJET*, has been
accredited by ACTEA since 1979 and has been awarded a Charter in November
1997 by the Commission for Higher Education in Kenya to become a private
university recognised by the Kenyan government. Scott offers university level
theological education with concentrations in Pastoral Studies, Christian
Education and Missiology.

Cover: The emblem of Scott Theological College, shown on the cover, features
the Mumbu Tree, a historic and cultural landmark on the College grounds. The
Mumbu Tree is used by *AJET* as a symbol of the gospel in Africa. The good
news of Christ, like the Mumbu Tree, is ageless, enduring and firmly rooted in
African soil.

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EMPTY HEARTS and EMPTY MINDS

An AJET Editorial

Preaching is the divinely ordained means of declaring the good news of saving grace (I Cor. 1:18-21) and has been characteristic of Christianity from the time of Jesus Christ who "came preaching" (Mk. 1:14). No other religion has made preaching the prominent feature of regular worship by the multitudes of people. Judaism did have prophets but preaching was not part of the temple worship. Greek religions did have philosophical orators, but preaching was not central in their religions. African Traditional Religion did have their prophets and diviners but preaching played no part in the ritual of worship. But in the Christian Church powerful preaching has always accompanied the expansion of the church and has always been associated with periods of revival. So powerful were the sermons of Martin Luther that the German language was shaped and moulded through his preaching as the gospel of salvation by grace through faith alone spread throughout the nation.

But alas, so much *preaching* today falls short of biblical standards. There are two perils of preaching which threaten the effectiveness and power of preaching. *Empty hearts* and *empty minds* cannot declare the riches of God's grace and glorify God. While the message of the cross is foolishness to the unbeliever (I Cor. 1:18), the *empty hearts* and *empty heads* of preachers often make the preachers themselves foolish and their preaching mere folly.

"Preaching is the communication of truth by man to man. It has two essential elements, truth and personality... It must have both elements... It is in the absence of one or the other element that a discourse ceases to be a sermon and a man ceases to be a preacher," according to Phillips Brooks.

Preaching must be *heart centred*. As D.L. Moody said, "That which comes through the heart will reach the heart." Preaching is not a dry lecture on exegetical interpretations of the Bible. Preaching is not a mere academic exercise. God must first speak to a preacher in his own heart before he can preach to the hearts of those who listen. A preacher cannot lead his hearers beyond his own experience with God. Preaching is always from the presence of God. Therefore, before any powerful preaching can take place, the preacher must experience deep communion with God.

The problem with so much preaching today is that it is a dry recitation of old sermons, a telling of funny stories, a speech full of words without engaging

the heart. So much preaching is a formality learned by professional training and experience. Such preaching is a peril to everyone. Only when God through his Word speaks to the heart of a preacher, can he then communicate with the hearts of those listening. Preaching must be through personality.

But preaching must also be the communication of divine truth and this requires the use of the *mind.* Preaching is Bible centred, declaring the good news of God as revealed in the Word of God. Preaching is authoritative, declaring "Thus saith the Lord." Preaching is not mere human interpretation and opinion. Without the experience of the reality of what is preached in the heart, and without the Scriptures, all preaching lacks authority.

A lot of preaching today is not biblical preaching. The use of a Scriptural text is sometimes a mere pretext to take off on some political or social discourse. Some preachers do not make any serious effort to exegete the Scriptures. They only lift the verse out of its context in order to make political or social pronouncements.

Biblical preaching necessitates a prepared mind. An *empty mind* cannot be a vehicle of divine grace any more than an *empty heart.* This requires faithful, diligent study of God's Word. This demands preparation in advance. Limiting sermon preparation to Saturday for a Sunday sermon can only lead to disaster. This is sheer laziness. Other preachers do not prepare their mind before hand because they depend on the Holy Spirit to teach them what to say. Such preachers only delude themselves. Their theology is faulty.

There is simply no substitute for powerful preaching of the Word of God which engages both the *heart* and the *mind.* Powerful preaching is not measured by raspy voices shouting into a microphone. Powerful preaching is only made possible by the Holy Spirit as both heart and mind are engaged in the faithful proclamation of the Word of God.

Where are the powerful preachers today? Perhaps the lack is due to *empty hearts* and *empty minds.* Preachers are unwilling to commune with God in prayer and in the meditation of God's Word. They have not gone deep with God. They are not living epistles of the written Word but instead are living hypocrites, saying one thing and doing another. Or perhaps they are just too lazy to fill their minds with God's Word. They do not take enough time to prepare thoughtful and thought provoking sermons. Pastors may be paid sitting allowance for attending committees. But whose salary is based on the time devoted to sermon preparation? Being an instrument of God to proclaim the Word of God is a holy and solemn privilege and responsibility. We are assured that God who sees all and knows all will reward the faithful.

THE KEY TO THE AFRICAN HEART:

RETHINKING MISSIONARY STRATEGY

IN AFRICA

Paul Kisau

*The heart is the deepest and most illusive part of mankind. Unless we understand the heart we cannot understand the "real you." Yet how difficult it can be to search the depths of the human heart. Back in 1928 Willoughby explored this question in his book, **The Soul of the Bantu**. How much better for an African himself to explore and understand the heart of the African.*

In this article Pastor Paul Kisau reflects on the African heart as he wrestles with an old question, "How deep has the gospel been planted in the heart of the African?" This article reflects on the successes and failures of missionary evangelisation in Africa. More than that, he poses a question, "What is the key to planting the gospel deeply within the heart of Africa?" He concludes by recommending ways in which partnership can be established for missionary strategy.

INTRODUCTION

There has been in the recent months and years a quest to re-evaluate theology in Africa. This quest, however, is not limited to Africa. The emergence of a post-modern worldview has given birth to post-modern theologians, who claim to be different from those of yesterday. There is therefore a search for

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authentic theology, one that shuns both extremes, that is not being fundamentalist neither liberal. In Africa, this has come out in the form of a search for right theological education. Articles featuring in the *Africa Journal of Evangelical Theology,* volumes 16.1 and 16.2 clearly show this kind of quest.[1]

This paper seeks to provide a voice in the midst of many other voices, a voice that is borne out of the missionary encounter of the author. This voice is an attempt to interpret and apply Romans 10:9[2] to the African situation. The passage provides the essential element of the intended subject: the heart.

The heart is the most significant element in Christian theology, whether this theology is evangelical or otherwise. The Bible speaks of the heart as being the source of life and the place where the Lord dwells. The basic question before us is, has the gospel reached the African heart? The gospel here requires two steps. The first step is that of confessing Jesus as the Lord. This is coupled by the second step of believing in the heart that God raised Him from the dead. In other words, the mouth confirms what the heart has believed or is in the process of believing. The question we are addressing in this paper is, has the African believed by the heart what has been confessed by the mouth? What kind of evidence is there to point either way?

In order to answer the questions raised above, the following points will be investigated in some detail. That is, the African heart and Christianity, and the missionary activity in Africa. After this preliminary investigation, we shall give some recommendations as to what could be the key to the heart. The suggestions offered here do not by any means pretend to provide all the answers to this most difficult topic, but are an attempt to stimulate a discussion. Therefore, they may prove to be helpful to those who are willing to listen to an African voice in these matters, since there have been many voices from elsewhere.

THE AFRICAN HEART: A WORKING DEFINTION

The working definition that is going to be provided here is solely based on the author's understanding and experience, and may not be something that has been proven academically. However, this paper proposes that a simple understanding of a human heart does not require academic ratification.

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[1] *Africa Journal of Evangelical Theology,* vol. 16.1 & 16.2 (1997)

[2] KJV Romans 10:9 "That if you shall confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus, and shall believe in your heart that God has raised him from the dead, you shall be saved."

Nevertheless, a biblical definition of the human heart will be given later in the section dealing with the interpretation of our primary text.

In order to draw up a working definition of the African heart, the heart has been divided into four layers. These layers will form the basis of discussion here as a way of defining the African heart. That is, *the conditioned layer, the religious layer, the accommodating layer* and *the decision making layer*. Our proposal is that these four layers make up the real heart of every person, and unless we have a working understanding of each layer, it would be extremely difficult to communicate the gospel to the real person.

The Conditioned Layer: African Cultural Values

The Rev. Dr. Richard Gehman in his book *Doing African Christian Theology* rightly says "in the communication of the gospel we need to be oriented to the cultural heritage of the receivers if we are to communicate most effectively".[3] Every heart has a culturally conditioned layer and this is the first layer that comes out in all peoples. This layer determines what one wears and eats; where one goes, and how one responds in a relationship; how one talks and how one perceives things. That is, those things which are normality and abnormality to an individual. The African too has this layer which has been conditioned over the years by the culture around him. If this layer should come through after one has become a Christian, it is only because the layer is there and one cannot get rid of it. The cultural values that one learns after birth become a part of life and to do away with them is to do away with the person. This layer defines the person among other persons and therefore is an important component of person-hood. Through this layer, we can speak of an African and a European, a Mkamba and a Masai. This layer has been deeply affected by various things since the advent of western culture in Africa.[4] The conditioned layer works as an expression of our next layer, that of African spirituality, so much that every action is coloured with spiritual input.

The Religious Layer: African Spirituality

Closely related to the conditioned layer is the religious layer. This layer defines the spirituality of the person. Nearly everything is done in a religious

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[3] Richard Gehman, *Doing African Christian Theology: An Evangelical Perspective*, (Nairobi: Evangel Publishing House, 1987), 1.

[4] E.G. Parrinder, *African Traditional Religion*, (London: Sheldon Press, 1962, Revd. edition, 1974), vii. Parrinder notes rightly here that, "far deeper changes affect African life at every level. Commercial, industrial, technical, educational and urban influences have demanded great and rapid adjustments."

way, so that many people who are not Africans may not understand the place of spirituality to an African. From birth to death, an African life is celebrated in a religious way. Religion is part of African life. That is, it is almost impossible to separate one from the other.[5]

Africans are aware of the divine presence in such a vivid way that often times the fear of the spirit world can be very overwhelming. The concept of the Supreme Being has been proved a dominant factor in the shaping of African life.[6] Mystical powers, magic, witchcraft and sorcery are some of the elements that add to the fear of the spirit world.[7]

The spirituality layer forms an important part of the African heart and any attempt to convert an African without addressing it may not produce the best results. There is need to understand this layer and consider it, otherwise there could be a danger of unhealthy accommodation, where the gospel is accepted alongside African traditional beliefs. This leads us to the discussion of the third proposed layer, that is, the accommodating layer.

The Accommodating Layer: African Adaptability

The advent of other cultures in Africa and the enslavement of African people did allow the expression of another layer in their hearts, the accommodating layer. This layer accommodates those things that in a sense are foreign to the two layers described above, yet the African person has very little power over them. A Swahili proverb may shed some light on this layer, *mkono usiowesa kuukata, ubusu* ("a hand that you cannot cut, kiss"). That is, if you cannot change the situation nor do anything about it, accept it. However, this acceptance does not mean that the already existing value system is replaced. On the contrary, room is created for the new concept so that accommodation occurs.

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[5] Read any book in African life, and there, find religion intermingled with every day life. See any books by John Mbiti and any other writer on African Christianity and theology.

[6] See the discussion by John Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy* and Richard Gehman, *African Traditional Religion in Biblical Perspective.*

[7] Some post-modern Africans may not accept the fear of the spirit world, yet a careful look at their life style may reveal a deep seated aspect of this kind of spirituality. This statement may be validated by the number of cases that are reported in most churches of people visiting the witch doctors in secret.

The harsh climate and many other factors may be to blame for this layer, since there are many natural calamities in African life. Sarafina, the star actor in the musical film, *Sarafina*,[8] says that, "we do not need to seek for trouble because our life is trouble." This layer has played an important role in giving African people a sense of inferiority, since the outside cultures have been very overwhelming. However, there is no need to blame the layer, since what is wrong is the exploitation of it by foreign ideologies.

Western writers have contributed a great deal to the state of despair in African life. One example will suffice here. Parrinder set out to write about African Traditional Religion in order to expose the African. He calls these Africans a 'surging people.' The purpose cf this exposure is to give the western world the idea of how to predict or even control the African's future. Parrinder sees religion as the tool of power and as such must be understood and cut down.[9] The African has been used and is still being used. The hurtful thing is that, they are used as disposable items, so that after use, they are disposed of. A close look at African leadership in the colonial and independent Africa will show glaring evidence of this usage.

The western church, too, is not innocent of this kind of corruption. The pictures that are presented in fund-raising events testify to this misuse of African hospitality. Consequently, the west only knows Africa as a continent plagued with famine and death. There is famine and death, but there are good points too. Like any other place, the African continent is not spared the adverse outcome of human sin.

This kind of approach should stop and an alternative method devised. This of course is the main point of this paper and some suggested methods will be provided shortly. This then leads us to the fourth suggested layer, the decision making layer.

The Decision Making Layer: African Touch

This layer makes the decisions on the course of action that the person is to undertake. The rest of the layers play a large role here, since they filter the information received before this layer makes the final decision. The decision made by this layer sometimes is confused because while not wanting to offend any of the three layers, a decision has to be made. This decision in effect may try to accommodate all the layers although the course of action may be in favour

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[8] A South African musical film which was a hit in Nairobi and around the world a couple of years ago.

[9] Parrinder, 9.

of one layer. This is when the hide and seek game begins. What is said may not be what is done, reflecting the life of the two boys in Jesus' parable (Mat. 21:28-31). In this parable, the first son promises not to do what the father sent him to do, but eventually does the job. The second son on the contrary sets out to do it, but eventually does not do the job. The African person may promise to do something, only to realise that it is against another layer, and hence only obey the higher layer at that point. The decision layer is therefore in conflict with the three layers mentioned above. However, the cultural layer has a great deal to contribute when it comes to decision making. The community is a most important aspect for the African person, hence what others in the community think contributes immensely to the decision making layer.[10]

The decision making layer is the African touch, that which determines the actions taken. Yet, this layer does not exist in isolation as we have endeavoured to show above.

In short, these four layers make up the African heart and determine what course of action is taken and when it is taken. These layers have been drawn from experience of one who is an African, and one who has been struggling with life in Christ, since the Christian life brings with it new demands for the already burdened heart. This then leads us to the discussion of African Christianity in light of western evaluation. That is, the notion that African Christianity is a "mile long and an inch deep" will form the single motif for the discussion of this section.

AFRICAN CHRISTIANITY: A MILE LONG AND AN INCH DEEP?

There has been plenty of material attempting to give a history of Christianity in Africa. Dr. Mark Shaw's book[11], which gives a short history of African Christianity, comes at a time when a real history of the Christian faith in Africa is most needed. Shaw is justified to note that the previous works have

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[10] The book by Erasto Muga has highlighted the result of some African decisions under the pressure of western Christianity. These Africans could no longer bear the yoke of the missionaries and therefore broke loose to form African Independent Churches. This situation could have (may be) been avoided if the missionaries were willing to listen to Africans. See Erasto Muga, *African Response to Western Christian Religion: A Sociological Analysis of African Separatist and Political Movements in East Africa*, (Kampala: Nairobi: Dar es Salaam: East African Literature Bureau, 1975), 19-23.

[11] Mark R. Shaw, *The Kingdom of God in Africa: A Short History of African Christianity*, (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Books, 1996), 1 - 328.

tended to come from two particular points of view and thereby are not comprehensive enough. One point of view represents the eyes of the missionaries in Africa, what Shaw calls 'missionary historiography'.[12] He rightly points out that, as valuable as this kind of history is, it falls short of telling the whole truth. It only shows one side; the part played by the missionaries and those Africans who have shown allegiance to them.[13] The other point of view represents Africans who write as a response to the writings of the missionaries, namely, 'nationalist historiography'.[14] The 'nationalist historiography' emphasises the role of African Christians, and in essence is an attempt to highlight the African achievement in planting indigenous churches in Africa. This reaction results in down playing western missionary activity in Africa.[15] The book by Mark Shaw becomes significant here because it attempts to draw the picture of Christianity in Africa from the very beginning. It attempts to go beyond western missionary activity in Africa, as far back as to the Ethiopian eunuch who was converted just after the day of Pentecost. For this reason, this book should be read by those who long for a less biased history of the Church in Africa.[16]

African Christianity in Pre-Modern Missionary Activity in Africa

In Acts 8:26-39 a story is told of how the Ethiopian eunuch receives the gospel and after conversion is baptised. This Ethiopian man held a high office in the Ethiopian kingdom, and could have been the first evangelist to African people. The implication of this story perhaps is that African Christianity dates back to the first century AD.[17] In the years following this conversion are Christian centres in the north of Africa. These centres played an essential role in the shaping of the Christian movement in the theologies of the church fathers. Mark Shaw traces the story of the first missionaries who ventured down south, to the

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[12] *Ibid.*, 12.

[13] *Ibid.*, 12.

[14] *Ibid.*, 13.

[15] See Mark Shaw's book for examples of these two approaches in writing the story of the Church in Africa.

[16] This book is less biased compared to other books on African church history in that the author has attempted to give an objective story. His use of the 'kingdom of God' as a story line which has given him the much-needed ground that gives the story some objectivity. See particularly pages 18-20.

[17] Howard Marshall, *Acts: An Introduction and Commentary*, p. 160. Marshall notes here correctly that, 'The story is included ... because it forms part of the gradual progress of the church towards the Gentiles.' Africans are undoubtedly part of God's plan of salvation.

lands of Ethiopia and Nubia.[18] We go with his conclusion that the kingdom of God was in triumph in these lands.

In the Middle Ages Islam came along from the middle east and almost shocked off the Christian faith from north Africa, thereby cutting off the life-link of the African Church from the Roman Church.[19] Whether or not there was a near total extinction of Christianity in Africa, the point being made here is that Islam played a major role in repressing it.

At the same time, the Europeans were beginning their exploration of the new worlds, for which a demand for slaves was created. Prince Henry the Navigator of Portugal sought for new lands. There was a demand to destroy Islam economically, geographically and militarily.[20] This quest brought with it a struggle to control Africa. The Arabs fought to remain in Africa due to the trade and labour that they were getting from there, while the Europeans scrabbled for the colonisation of Africa. The African became a commodity to be fought for and this complicated the reception of the Christian faith. Slavery and exploitation of the natural resources became the schemes of every day. This kind of climate further repressed Christianity which was almost wiped out already.

African Christianity in Modern Missionary Times

This period overlaps with the struggle to colonise Africa and to use every resource available in Africa, including her peoples. Yet, this period saw a growing Christianity as many people came to faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Many Africans were sent to Europe for education and while there embraced western Christianity. It is reported that as early as 1500's Afonso, the king of the Congo, sent his sons to Europe to read Theology.[21]

African Traditional Religion (ATR) did not give in to Christianity that easily. There was a real struggle to root the Christian faith in Africa.[22] Yet, ATR

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[18] See Shaw, 21-70.

[19] See Shaw's argument that there is evidence for some Christianity in Africa even after the advent of Islam. The Ethiopian Church did weather the storm of Islam. *The Kingdom of God in Africa*, pp. 75-106.

[20] *Ibid.*, 107.

[21] *Ibid.*, 113.

[22] *Ibid.*, 113.

was not such a great threat[23] as was the foreign domination that overwhelmed the African people. The clash of western culture with African life left a permanent mark. There was an attempt to cut off the values that held African people together. Chinua Achebe, a prominent Nigerian writer, interpreted this succinctly when he wrote the novel, *Things Fall Apart*. In this novel, the champion of the village, Onkonkwo, dies a shameful death, after stating that western culture had cut off the chords that held them together.[24] Tite Tiénou laments the fact that the problem of African Christianity is 'underdevelopment'. This underdevelopment is to be blamed on the way the gospel was brought to Africa. Tiénou puts it thus,

> Christianity came to the continent in the garments of western cultures. This western imprint on Christianity has had a negative effect on the development of African theology.[25]

To add to what Tiénou brings out here would be an overstatement since he has said it all. Western imprint has continued to haunt African Christian Theology for a long time. There is, therefore, need for an African tailor made outfit of authentic and Bible based theology. This then leads us to the modern African Christianity.

African Christianity Today

Now it is time to enter the discussion of whether African Christianity is a 'mile long' and an 'inch deep'. This statement has been used as both a compliment and a criticism of African Christianity. It is a compliment in that it sees African Christianity as having seen an enormous growth in the past several decades, with most African countries being mostly Christian. This growth in numbers has however not been accompanied by spiritual depth, thus the conclusion that African Christianity is only an inch deep. The question before us here is whether this statement can be justified or not. Is African Christianity really so broad without any depth? What evidence is there for both its length and lack of depth? To answer these questions, this statement shall now be analysed

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[23] This point will be addressed in the section dealing with the suggested methodology of reaching the African heart with the gospel.

[24] See the discussion by Tite Tiénou, 'The Right to Difference', *AJET* vol. 9.1 (1990), 24ff. In this article, Tiénou gives a short survey of the struggle of Africans to have 'the right to difference' and surveys the various reactionary developments in African Christian Theology. We are in agreement with Tiénou's conclusions.

[25] *Ibid.*, 31.

separately, beginning with the numerical growth and concluding with its lack of qualitative growth.

Is African Christianity a 'Mile Long'?

There is a reported steady growth of the number of Christians in Africa from 8 million (10% of the population) in 1900 to 275 million (57% of the population) in 1990.[26] This is confirmed by the fact that most of African nations have Christianity as the major religion.[27] Due to this significant growth of African Christianity in comparison to the rest of the world, one may be justified in seeing African Christianity as being a mile long. The question is, "Is it true that Christianity in Africa is a mile long?" It does seem to be longer than a mile, since there must be a comparison. If African Christianity is to be compared with western Christianity today, then there will be jubilation in Africa over the success of the Christian faith in this vast continent. The presence of the Kingdom of God in Africa today is undeniable.

If one were to look at several nations south of the Sahara for the presence of the Christian faith, he/she would be amazed by the numbers of people who attend Church every Sunday morning. Christianity has over 50% of the population of many countries in Africa today.[28] So, there could be some truth to the statement that 'African Christianity is a mile long'. However, this growth is alleged to be in numbers only, since it is assumed to be an inch deep. Although we are agreeable that African Christianity has shown a significant growth, we are not sure whether the same can be said about African Christian spirituality. To the question of the quality of African Christianity we now turn.

Is African Christianity an 'Inch Deep'?

The statement that 'African Christianity is a mile long' does not stop there, since it concludes by claiming that this same Christianity is an 'inch deep'. Is it true that there is a depth in African Christianity? Yes, a western evaluator would consent, "but not too deep". This same evaluator would seem to imply this

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[26] Patrick Johnstone, *Operation World*, (Carlisle, UK: OM Publishing, 1993), 37. This translates to the growth of the number of churches and church members from 12% in 1960 to about 17% in the 1990s in comparison with the rest of the world. Patrick Johnstone, *World Churches Handbook*, (London: Christian Research, 1997), 15.

[27] Patrick Johnstone, reports that, 'Christians are in a majority in 30 countries'. This is a very significant statement since there are 55 countries in the continent of Africa. *Operation World*, 33 and 36.

[28] See Operation Mobilisation book *Pray for the World*.

by saying that African Christianity is an 'inch deep'. If African Christianity is not deep enough, who is to blame? Do we blame the African Christian or the missionary by whom the gospel came to Africa?

The depth here refers to the quality of African Christianity. To say that it is an inch deep is to imply that Africans in general have not allowed the gospel to control every part of their life. Various examples have been given in support of this assertion. One of these examples being that Africans accept the gospel but still cling to African traditional beliefs. A prayer item in *Operation World* sums up the argument that African Christianity is only an inch deep:

> There are many big challenges for African Christians to confront in the '90's. 1. *Rapid growth* with an inadequate discipling. So great has been the harvest that non-Christian customs, worldviews and attitudes have invaded the Church. *Syncretism* is a major problem in many areas. Thoroughgoing repentance and renunciation of sin and the works of darkness is often lacking and many Christians are not free from the fear of witchcraft and evil spirits.[29]

This prayer request may have some truth in its description, but it seems to put the blame on the rapid growth of Christianity in Africa. However, we are of the opinion that the problem lies in the way the gospel was brought to Africa. Hence the proposal for a rethinking of the missionary strategy to Africa. The solution could be found in the grounding of Christianity in Africa. The question to ask here is whether Christianity has found room in African soil.

If Richard Gehman is right in his conclusion that, "the Christian faith has been Africanised" (that is, "African believers are making their unique imprint on the Christian faith in the continent),"[30] then this same Christianity cannot be an inch deep. Gehman makes this conclusion in a response to John Mbiti's claim that, "Christianity has Christianised Africa, but Africa has not Africanised Christianity."[31] These two scholars may be right if only they are to be understood in the context of the claim that 'African Christianity is a mile long and an inch deep.' Perhaps Gehman is emphasising the fact that Christianity has taken a grip on Africa in a vast way, with which Mbiti agrees. However, Mbiti notes that this Christianity has not gone deep enough within African life. There is room for further improvement, after which maybe whoever it is who sits in judgement

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[29] Johnstone, *Operation World*, 37.

[30] Gehman, *Doing African Christian Theology*, 109.

[31] *Ibid.*

about this Christianity can add one more inch to its depth. This sort of argument adds some weight to the thesis of this paper, that there is need to rethink missionary strategy in Africa.

Nevertheless, before going further, it is now time briefly to survey briefly the missionary activity in Africa.

MISSIONARY ACTIVITY IN AFRICA: SUCCESS OR FAILURE?

This paper does not intend to give a full account of missionary work in Africa, but a short working history.[32]

Success of Missions in Africa

The fact that there is a church today in Africa is a mark that western missions were a success. There were many missionary societies formed in the early part of the 19th century, which were enriched by young Christian scholars who were willing to leave the comfort of life and venture into what was known as the 'dark continent'. Towards the end of 19th century, several churches were planted and many Africans baptised.[33] Although many of these missionaries died as soon as they set foot on African soil due to malaria and other diseases, others did not hesitate to follow. The prospect of death for the missionary was so serious that Africa was considered the 'white man's grave'.[34]

Africa will forever be grateful for the selfless sacrifice of the lives of these missionaries. Many churches were planted, many hospitals and schools were established. The Bible was put in the language of many African languages and African could hear God speak to them in their mother tongue. This was a great achievement, and it did help stamp Christianity firmly in African soil.

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[32] There are numerous books on the history of western missions in Africa. Any reader who wants to know beyond the brief account given here should feel free to consult these books.

[33] See Shaw's book for a fuller account for this successful adventure.

[34] See Dick Anderson, *We Felt like Grasshoppers*, 23, for details of the founder of the Africa Inland Mission, Peter Cameron Scott, who died one year after his arrival (31st December, 1896) and after walking over 2,600 miles in Kenya. The largest church in Kenya, the Africa Inland Church, was born out of the efforts of this dear missionary. This is only one example of many other western missionaries who sacrificed their lives for the sake of the gospel to reach African heart. The question is, did the gospel really reach the African heart?

Failure of the Missionaries in Africa

While not wanting to dwell on the failures of yesterday, these could be of great value in providing the vital lessons for today. The God for whom the missionaries worked always reminded His people of the deeds of yesterday as reminders for what He wants to do for them today. In the same way, the failures of the days gone-by should help in the process of re-thinking mission strategy to Africa and other cultures.

The first failure was a colour prejudice on the part of the African. That is, because the white man enslaved the African, any white man was identified as the enemy. The white missionary found himself in trouble caused by his fellow countryman. The missionary should not be blamed for this difficulty, since it was created by another person. Mark Shaw, however, reports of some missionaries in the Congo who participated in the slave trade.[35]

Missionaries appeared to collaborate with the fellow white man to colonise Africa due to their acceptance to administer on behalf of colonial governments. This was a serious mistake on the part of the missionaries, since Africans could not differentiate between the colonial masters and the missionaries in many cases. They should not have agreed to compromise their position as the ministers of God's Word by becoming administrators for the colonial governments. Sadly, however, this point does not need a burden of footnotes to prove. The raising in arms of Africans against the colonial masters was in many cases interpreted as a revolt against the missionaries in Africa.[36]

Some missionaries were not always a good example. Shaw again gives an account where missionaries were a distress to African Christians. He writes of Afonso as follows,

> The Congo King wrote to King Manuel of Portugal, 'Today our
> Lord is crucified anew by the very ministers of his body and
> blood.'[37]

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[35] "The priests even joined with the slave-trading Portuguese settlers to oppose Afonso." Shaw, 113.

[36] It should be noted here that. many missionaries fought their own countries and countrymen for the sake of Africans. Moreover, in many cases those who became leaders in independent African nations had been sent abroad by the missionaries.

[37] *Ibid.*, 113.

Dr. Dick Anderson in his book, *We Felt Like Grasshoppers*, reports of missionaries and missions that could not work together.[38] The infighting between the missionaries left Africans puzzled, since these people had come to preach the same Jesus. Most of the missionary organisations carried their differences from home to the mission field. There was lack of a united front, instead as the political governments scrabbled to colonise Africa, the missionary societies scrabbled to plant their particular church denomination in Africa. Africa became a war zone and African Christianity was thus undermined.

In the fight for control, Africa was fought on all fronts. The nationals were not spared either, since the missionaries collaborated with the trusted nationals to unseat other nationals.[39] This kind of behaviour created unnecessary opposition, as the nationals were made to fight each other.

This led to missionaries making a value judgement on African culture without adequate knowledge. After conversion the African was removed from his home to the mission station, supposedly for his protection. This African was to be protected both from African culture and from his fellow Africans. "Wittingly or unwittingly, missions in Africa contributed to the making of the Black man into the White man."[40] African culture was replaced by the European culture. after which the African was considered to be fully converted. If there was such an achievement, this could have been the greatest failure. This could have been such a scandalous thing because to change someone's culture is to make such a person into a slave.

Lastly, when it was time for the missionaries to hand over places of responsibility, the trusted Africans were the beneficiaries of such posts. It did not matter whether these Africans were qualified for such jobs, the one all-important qualification was trust. Africans had to look trustworthy so that they could benefit from the missionaries. They were willing to pretend if only to achieve their goals. The missionaries could not listen to some nationals who knew each other well. This failure led to substandard leadership in the newly established churches. In addition. those nationals who were not satisfied with the activities of the missionaries began to establish the many independent churches that are in Africa today.

If then the African church is 'a mile long', the missionaries are to take the credit for this growth of the church in Africa. At the same time, if it is true that

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[38] Dick Anderson, *We Felt like Grasshoppers*, 35f.

[39] *Ibid.*

[40] Tite Tiénou, 31.

African Christianity is an inch deep', then the missionaries are to accept graciously the blame for this lack of depth. However, this does not mean that we should heap all the blame upon the missionaries, since the African church has a part to play in its own growth. Nevertheless, the first teacher is very important, such that, what the missionaries planted in Africa is still being felt today. Therefore, there is a need to rethink our missionary strategy in Africa, for the sake of reaching the African heart with the gospel in an effective manner. To this rethinking, this paper now turns, with a repeat of the earlier warning that there are no 'quick-fix' answers to the issue.

THE KEY TO THE AFRICAN HEART:

A PREGNANT STATEMENT

This is the section which the paper is mainly concerned to address. What is the key to African heart? The African heart was defined earlier while African Christianity and missionary activities were briefly assessed. Now three main things will be dealt with in an attempt to suggest a possible key to the African heart.

The Heart of the Matter: Romans 10:9

Romans 10:9 presents the way of salvation. The first thing being that of confessing Jesus as Lord, followed by an act of believing in the heart that God raised Him up from the dead. Verse 10 goes on to clarify what is actually meant by the ninth verse. What is being confessed by the mouth should be what has already been believed in the heart. However, occasionally the mouth may confess what the heart has not really come to terms with, thereby making the confession ineffective. For Christianity to be an inch deep, would inevitably imply that what African mouth has confessed has not found room in the heart.

The term 'heart'[41] appears in the New Testament (NT) over 149 times and some of these occurrences may be of help in the understanding of the importance that the heart plays in salvation. Jesus emphasised that only the

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[41] καρδία, ας, ἡ *heart;* in the New Testament, *the inner self* (1) viewed as the seat of physical vitality (AC 14.17); (2) viewed as the innermost man, the source and seat of functions of soul and spirit in the emotional life (AC 2.26), the volitional life (2C 9.7), the rational life (AC 7.23); (3) viewed as the human dwelling place of heavenly beings and powers (RO 5.5; 2C 1.22; EP 3.17); (4) fig. of the depths of the earth *interior, center* (MT 12.40). Taken from: *Bible Works Softw-----*

pure in heart shall be able to see God (Matt. 5:7), because the heart is the seat of sin. Sin is planned in the heart, so sinful deeds are already committed in the heart before they are exposed (Matt. 5:28; 9:4; 11:29; 12:34;15:18; 24:48; Mk. 7:21; Acts 8:21,22).

The heart is perceived in the NT as being where the treasure of the individual is located. Hence the advice by Jesus for his hearers to consider where the treasure was, since there their heart was (Matt. 6:21; Lk. 12:34). The heart is also the door (gateway) to the person (Matt. 13:15, 19; 22:37; Acts 2:37). God does open the heart so that the message of the gospel can come in (Acts 16:14). The Holy Spirit makes the love of God clear to the heart (Rom. 5:5).

This same heart can be far even when the mouth is in the process of praising God (Matt. 15:8; Mk. 6:52; Lk. 21:34). This is because in the heart originates all the doubts in the human life (Mk. 11:23). Therefore, the heart needs both the peace and the Word of Christ if it is to overcome these doubts (Col. 3:15,16).

Lessons from the Working Definition: All Layers Approach

From both the New Testament and the proposed working definition in this paper, the obvious point is that the heart plays a very significant role in salvation. Four layers were given above as a means of understanding African heart and now these layers will be applied to the communication of the gospel in Africa.

The first layer speaks of ability of the African heart to be conditioned by culture. The Lord has to deal with this layer since He only can open the heart for the gospel to enter (Acts 16:14). As the Lord opened the heart of Lydia in Acts, He is able to do the same to the African heart. God has already opened many conditioned layers of the African heart. The second layer as Mark Shaw notes in his book,[42] instead of being in conflict with the gospel, aids it to come into African heart.[43] The African, being religious by nature, provides fertile soil for the gospel to germinate in his heart since God is not far from him.

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[42] Mark Shaw makes an important point here thus: "The reality is that . ATR... cultivated a widespread longing for the kingdom of God and for the sacred king that eventually led millions of Africans to seek their fulfilment in the redemptive reign of Christ." *The Kingdom of God in Africa*, 76.

[43] Richard Gehman's fears, on the place of African Traditional Religion in the theology of African scholars over against the gospel, may be valid. Nevertheless, John Mbiti may be right in seeing ATR as being preparatory to the

The myth, which existed in the beginning of this century, has been proved wrong repeatedly. In this myth, the African was perceived as not being able to comprehend God, since God is a philosophical concept.[44] Whether God is a philosophical concept or not, the African heart is aware of Him all the time. The Supreme Being is very much a part of the life of the African person.[45] African heart is to be influenced by the indwelling Christ (Eph. 3:17) to forsake those beliefs that are contrary to the gospel.[46] These two layers are not to be forsaken or even replaced, since to do so is to kill the personality and identity of the person. The gospel does not come to destroy the person, but to restore him. To restore is not the same as to replace. The cultural and religious conditioning is to be taken advantage of in the communication of the gospel to the African.

The third layer is to be exploited too, since there are times when certain things are not necessarily harmful, yet not useful. It is important to have an accommodating heart, since many times there will be need to accommodate the views of others without resorting to war. The community lifestyle of an African enables him to develop this part of the heart, where others are accommodated regardless of whether they are acceptable or not. Paul tells the Corinthian believers to accommodate each other in order to build a Christian community (1Cor. 9).[47] However, there has to be a limit as to what can be accommodated. Syncretism is to be avoided at all costs.[48]

The fourth layer if fed with the right doctrine will make the right decisions. The gospel has to remove the blindness that this layer may contain in

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gospel. See Gehman's discussion in *Doing African Christian Theology: an Evangelical Perspective*, 44-75.

[44] Edwin W. Smith gives a very interesting clip of an encounter with Emil Ludwig. In this encounter Ludwig wondered how 'the untutored African can conceive of God' since to him 'Deity is a philosophical concept which savages are incapable of framing.' *African Ideas of God: A Symposium*, p.1.

[45] See the discussion in Richard Gehman, *African Traditional Religion in Biblical Perspective*, (Kijabe, Kenya: Kesho Publications, 1989), pp. 189-224.

[46] Alfred Muli's suggestion for African theology in his two-part article in *AJET* vol. 16.1 and 16.2 (1997) is very helpful in helping this part of African heart to be ruled by Christ.

[47] Paul gives his own life style where he has tried to be all things to all men for the sake of winning some to the kingdom of God. He must have had a big heart to accommodate the Jew and the Gentile, the weak and the strong (!)

[48] Gehman, *African Traditional Religion*, 270-283.

order to respond according to the standard of the gospel (Eph. 4:18). It is God who establishes His purposes in the hearts of the believers, and Africans are not an exception to that rule. Anybody interested in the health of African Christianity is to pray that the Lord would direct their hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ's second coming (2Thess. 3:5). The decision making layer is to be the utmost aim of the gospel, since if the gospel takes full control of this layer all other layers will be kept in order. This is the home of the Holy Spirit and all African Christians must of necessity make sure that this is so (Eph. 5:18). As with the Psalmist in Psalm 119:11, every believer is to make sure that the Word of God is firmly kept in this innermost layer.[49]

Rethinking Missionary Strategy to Africa: A Partnership Approach

Writing in 1932, Rev. Alexander Hetherwick[50] gave a very interesting account from which the topic of this paper has been formulated in addition to Romans 10:9. It was a sunny day and Rev. Hetherwick, in the company of his friend, were making their way in African style, in a single file. For their comfort, several Africans had been gathered to shoulder the luggage. He describes these Africans in a most intriguing manner:

> Accompanied by our gang of native carriers bearing our travelling equipment... in front of us tramped a burly native porter, bearing his load of fifty pounds, handling it as if it were little heavier than a football, now resting it on one shoulder, now lifting it on to the other, now raising it on to the grass pad he carried on his head... All the while he sang, and danced from foot to foot, keeping time with his song, and stopping, every now and then, to give his burden a friendly tap... Sinewy and lithe in his every movement and gesture, he gladly moved ahead of us...[51]

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[49] Wilbur O'Donovan's book, *Biblical Christianity in African Perspective*, (Carlisle, UK: Paternoster Press, 1996) gives a commendable method of teaching theology in Africa that may achieve what is being proposed in this paper. It does address all the four layers of African heart and would be very helpful if only it had academic annotations for further study.

[50] Alexander Hetherwick, *The Gospel and African: The Croal Lectures for 1930-1931 on the Impact of the Gospel on a Central African People*, (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1932) pp. 1-176.

[51] Ibid., 1,2.

The two missionaries interpreted this native carrier as being very happy to do the job he was doing, due to his attitude. The friend of Hetherwick at this point expressed a wish to enter inside the heart of this carefree African. Hetherwick was quick to tell his friend and his reader that, for many years he had desired to enter inside the African heart without success.[52] For him to enter African heart meant to think like an African, a thing he could not do, since there was a high wall between him and the African. He openly confesses that, "to think like an African thinks, 'thinking black'... is an achievement impossible to me as a white man."[53] To Hetherwick, African mentality is ruled by influences that are not evident to his western mindset of cause and effect.[54]

In January 1966, a group of African theologians came together at Immanuel College, Ibadan, Nigeria. Their concern was expressed in the introduction to the book that came out of the papers presented. That is,

> It has become increasingly clear, and disturbingly so, that the Church has been speaking in Africa and to Africans in strange or partially understood tongues. We must be thankful to God that in spite of man's weaknesses and short-sightedness, the miracle of grace has been taking place all over Africa. Nevertheless, we realise that both the tools and the method of evangelism as employed in this continent are now calling very loudly for a careful overhauling.[55]

This paper comes out as a small response to this cry, a cry to enter the African heart effectively. This does not imply in any way that there hasn't been an effective ministry in Africa, but that there is need to do a better job, since anything that is worth doing should be done well. What is the best approach then? This is an elusive question; however, some suggestions could be at hand here.

There is a need to see African person as being God's creation and complete, except the part that is marred by sin. The African is a real person, whose dignity should be upheld at all costs. The gospel should not be a means

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[52] To be sure, Hetherwick says for 45 years he had failed to reach the African in the heart. *Ibid.*, 2.

[53] *Ibid.*, 3.

[54] *Ibid.*

[55] Kwesi A. Dickson and Paul Ellingworth, editors, *Biblical Revelation and African Beliefs*, (London: Lutterworth Press, 1969), 9.

of destroying his personality, but a means of giving him full right to life. The ability to help him to realise that he does not need to be another person for the sake of salvation. To be a Christian does not mean to be westernised. There is no need to tell an African Christian or any African what he could have been in the last century.[56]

There should be no reports of racial discrimination among Christians. The missionary should approach the people of other cultures with humility and respect.[57] There is a need to listen to the people before judging their values. If an African were to judge western Christianity today, he may be obliged to say it is less than an inch deep. The African person should be allowed to make a decision after understanding the implications of making that decision. If someone does not believe in the existence of the spirit world, then that person should listen to Africans who experience this world every day in their lives. The African does not need to be tutored in order to accept the existence of God, since to him, God has always been there. Way before the advent of Christian missions, God was already in Africa preparing the hearts of Africans for Jesus. The harvest is ready and ready for reaping.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this paper would urge all those who love Africa and Africans to spend some moment in prayer for guidance on how to reach such a people. It is only in such an attitude that the Holy Spirit is likely to set apart some of us to step out in faith to this vast continent with the news of hope (Acts 13:1-3). If we try by our own human means, the Spirit of Jesus may forbid us as He did to Paul in the region of Galatia (16:6,7).

Finally, there should be a two-sided challenge to both the messengers and the recipients. Let there be no attempts of reaction, where each group merely reacts to the other. The messengers should try their best to understand what really matters to the African heart. Listen carefully to Africans so that the

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[56] A student from Redcliffe College complained of a white Christian telling him that if it were over 50 years ago he could have been a slave. This white brother continued to tell this African student that if he were to exchange his skin with him, he would not take it since he cannot go anywhere with a black skin. Such a student being a Christian in these post-modern days should not have such experiences. There seem to be few missionaries who are still operating with this colour prejudice.

[57] See the discussion on this view by Richard Gehman, *African Traditional Religion*, 285-290.

felt needs are met by the two parties. This calls for partnership in the gospel. Moreover, to Africans, it is now time we flew out of the hatching nests. It is time we determined to rise and teach our own people in languages that they can hear better. It is time we stopped looking to the west to solve our problems. The God, who has brought us Jesus and the Holy Spirit, is the same God who calls to action for His namesake. We should pray for boldness to face up to our problems and prove that our Christianity is deeper than anybody can endeavour to measure.

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A LOOK AT CHURCH LEADERSHIP
IN AFRICA

Paul Kohls

The rapid growth of the church in Africa within the past one hundred years poses many serious problems for thoughtful church administrators, missiologists and theologians. If Christianity in Africa is to flourish and prosper into the next century there must be more than quantitative growth. The previous article on **The Key to the African Heart** *reflects on the need to root the gospel deeper into the African heart. This article reflects on the need for leadership training which is both biblically sound and culturally relevant.*

Paul Kohls paints a graphic picture of the leadership problems within the Christian church in Africa with the African traditional cultural context in the background. He then discusses the need to prepare servant-leaders with appropriate leadership behaviour, both from the biblical and the cultural perspective. This article is provocative for all theological educators who seek to prepare church leaders who can truly lead the church into the third millennium.

INTRODUCTION

In 1964 the All Africa Conference of Churcnes offered the following assessment of the church leadership situation in Africa:

> The Christian Church in Africa is facing a major crisis. The way we deal with it will determine the part that Christians play in the Africa of

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tomorrow. We are not training a ministry that can meet the needs of Africa today. The church has failed to keep pace with the social revolution which it helped create (1964, 2).

Numerous writers since have continued to speak of a "crisis of leadership" in the church in Africa (Owen 1965, Adeyemo 1978, McKinney 1980, Talitwala 1987, Elliston 1988, John 1990). The felt need is widespread and persistent that the Church in Africa should produce its own leadership, and that it should have that leadership trained properly, so that such leaders may be capable of dealing adequately with the problems of a modern African society (Owens 1965, 1).

A survey of some of the discussion on this issue, and of relevant recent research, will help us to ascertain the range of concerns expressed and some of the causes which have been identified, and to arrive at suggestions for leadership evaluation and development.

LEADERSHIP PROBLEMS

Elliston (1988) provides a rather comprehensive summary of the leadership problems commonly found throughout the African Church:

- *GROWTH* is placing unmet demands on leaders in some areas.
- *OVERFUNCTIONING LEADERS* who try to do everything and decide everything is frustrating the church in some areas.
- *NON FUNCTIONING LEADERS* are allowing churches to die.
- *UNDERTRAINED LEADERS* are not leading to their full potential in many churches.
- *OVERTRAINED LEADERS* are discouraged and discouraging as well as frustrated and frustrating to the churches.
- *INAPPROPRIATELY TRAINED* leaders continue to do all of the wrong things in the wrong places, at the wrong times, and in the wrong ways.
- *DROPOUT LEADERS* continue to fill the ranks of government bureaucracies, development agencies, and private business.
- *OVEREXTENDED LEADERS* try to meet all of the pastoral and sacramental functions of multiple congregations and seek to uphold the artificially high western standards of ministry but deny the priesthood of all believers.
- *SPRINGBOARD LEADERS* use church leadership training programmes to jump into suitable positions in business, government, and para-church agencies. (Elliston 1988, 204).

In the following pages we shall survey a number of these and related problems as well as examine the political model and traditional view of

leadership in Africa as it affects the church.

Lack of Trained Leaders

Talitwala (1987) underscores the fact that the church in Africa is still very young, in most cases dating back to less than two hundred years – but that it has grown very rapidly in recent times. Barrett (1982) estimates that at the beginning of this century less than 9% of the population of Africa belonged to the church. However, by the end of this century he projects that over 50% of the population, some 393 million Africans, will be members of the church. The church in Africa is "rated as the fastest growing church in the world" (Talitwala 1987, 12).

While the overall growth of the church is reason for rejoicing, McKinney (1980) states that there is also cause for deep concern because as churches grow so does the need for church leaders. Today, as has been the case for the last several decades, the church in Africa simply does not have enough trained pastors to staff the churches (Talitwala 1987). The examples following illustrate what Underhill terms "a gross lack of ministers" (1975, 242).

Russell, writing in 1966, noted that in Central Uganda among the Anglicans there were approximately 45,000 members divided into 15 parishes, with 16 pastors and about 100 congregations. Thus, in this situation the average pastor had six to seven congregations and some 3000 members to care for. Underhill (1975), focusing on the Africa Inland Church in Kenya, quotes statistics estimating a membership of 130,000 Christians comprising about 1000 congregations.

> Technically each congregation has its own pastor, but in that year there were only 45 men and 66 missionaries [with] few of the latter serving as pastors. The result is either an unordained or even untrained leadership, or an ordained man trying to faithfully shepherd more than 20 flocks and over 750 members at the same time (1975, 242).

From West Africa, John (1990) writing of a small denomination in Ghana, makes a similar, but current projection;

> ...if our present annual growth rate continues we are looking at a church attendance of 11,373 people by 1990, 50 trained full-time workers and 186 churches and preaching points, leaving 136 churches and preaching points without any trained leadership whatsoever (1990 A, 1).

Understandably, Underhill comments, "almost everywhere the flock is too large for the minister to serve adequately" (1975, 242). Meanwhile the church marches on growing by leaps and bounds. But the underside of this dynamic growth that is lacking an adequate leadership is underscored by France (1978) who characterises the church as a credulous church,

> wide open to any appealing new teaching which can quote a biblical verse or a miraculous cure in its support. It needs teaching and direction, from within, not from outside. It needs theology, its own African, Christian theology. Until it has it, while it may continue to grow in numbers, it will not grow in influence on the new Africa, it will be increasingly dismissed as a hangover from the colonial past (1978, 149).

Talitwala (1987) warns that the high growth rate in church membership, accompanied by a scarcity of trained Christian leaders, will lead to problems within the church of secularism, syncretism and fragmentation of the church.

Professionalism

An "inflationary professionalisation of the ministry, poses serious problems for many younger churches and older churches alike" (Elliston 1988, 204). McKinney who decries an "over-reliance of a professional clergy" (1980, 180), faults many pastors for perceiving themselves as being the ministers of the church rather than God's gifts to the church to equip the people of God. In addition, the professionalisation process

> ...continues to exert pressure ror ever higher entrance and exit requirements for our training programmes. The requirements for accreditation and certification (ordination) move ever higher in terms of academic achievement and away from effective ministry experience. One unfortunate result is that many younger churches are left without denominationally recognised leaders. Another result may be seen in the soaring costs for theological edification. These costs are often far beyond what a community of congregations can afford (Elliston 1988, 204).

Elitism

Closely related to the problem of professionalisation is the problem of elitism. Elitism, for the most part, is centred around the growing demand by some for higher standards in academics. Zokoue (1990) terms this problem as one of the traps for the servant of God in Africa. He writes:

The problem does not exist in the same measure in the developed countries, because university degrees impress practically no one, and the church is no longer the centre for the dissemination of knowledge. It is the opposite in Africa where in many countries, the literacy rate is still very low. Elitism is often a handicap to service in two ways. In the first place, Christians themselves discriminate between the poorly educated servant and the one with a higher level of education. They copy this from the world around them, where a degree is equivalent to social promotion. [Hence]... the problem that we encounter here is that some Christians 'dare not' go to see a certain servant of God because they do not consider themselves to be high enough up in the hierarchy to approach him... Let us teach our leaders to find ways to break free from this hierarchy, in order to serve God's people. (Zokoue 1990, 6).

Clericalism

Yet another closely related problem is that of clericalism. Clericalism is the training of a privileged few to be a priestly class. Zokoue (1990), quoting Tite Tienou, is concerned that too commonly "...the pastor directs, and the people follow all that he says, often accepting everything uncritically" (5). Not only is this ingrained from traditional sources of authority in African society, and thus largely acceptable, but in addition from within the church "the pastor is too often conceived of as the one at whose feet all the responsibility lies, because all who work for the church have traditionally been paid for their services" (Underhill 1975, 244). Interestingly, Russell (1965) notes that in Uganda there is no concept or tradition of 'voluntary service' that could be built upon. Unfortunately, he gives no indication of how widespread across Africa this lack of tradition is. However, Underhill states that the East African Revival movement, which began as a movement within the Anglican church, was begun in reaction to "what was seen as formalism and clericalism" (244). By contrast he notes the pattern of ministry there is prominently laity centred.

However, the example cited above of the East African Revival movement's laity centred ministry, illustrates the potential for another aspect of the problem of clericalism – that the minister who invariably overseas several churches, is frequently reduced to being regarded primarily as an administrator, or as in the memorable words of Sundkler, "a commercial traveller in sacraments" (1960, 166). This is opposed to the biblical concepts of teacher and shepherd. Miller writes, "The African ordained minister... has fallen heir to the missionary's precedent. He is expected to be an itinerant administrator of both programme and sacraments" (1969, 16). The dilemma and painful frustration of this too common reality is recorded in the statement about a pastor whom Miller quotes, "What I was trained for (teaching-preaching the faith), I can

never find time to do, and for what I actually must do (administer church business and sacraments), I received no specific training" (16). Thus in areas of extensive numerical growth, instead of face-to-face pastoral ministry, the minister too often gets caught up in the centre of the administrative activity.

Under-Educated

In spite of the problems within the church of professionalism and elitism, the pastor generally in African society no longer occupies that privileged place which he was once used to. Before society developed an educated elite, the pastor in those earlier days "was usually the most highly educated member of society and his salary the most lucrative" (Underhill, 242). Educationally, however, the clergy were soon surpassed, and their work was viewed by many as less important and of such that required not much education. Miller (1969) notes that the average educational level of all the ordained men in one major denomination in East Africa was six years of primary school. Though, thankfully, this trend is reversing (Welch, 1962), Wakatama in 1976 laments that "Africa, with over three times the land area and over one and one-half times the population of the United States, does not have one degree granting Christian college except Sudan Interior Mission's Igbaja Seminary in Nigeria, which gives a B.A. in theology" (1976, 64). By 1985, however, the *ACTEA Directory of Theological School in Africa* lists in Kenya alone, 7 Protestant Bible Colleges offering Bachelor degrees in Bible and Theology, and three graduate schools – two offering Master's degrees in theology and the other offering a Master's degree in Christian communication.

In spite of this development in Kenya, and the potential for change that it holds, only a small percentage of church leaders, actual or potential, can qualify and be accommodated in these schools. Underhill and Wakatama are both correct when they state that "the educated have been much in demand elsewhere and with the very poor pay relative to other jobs, even earnest young men are dissuaded from the ministry" (Underhill 1975, 243), and "Because of the lack of trained clergy, many of the young people pouring out of African high schools and universities look down upon the church (Wakatama 1976, 55). Sundkler offers a similar view, "more and more young teachers, secondary school students and graduates refuse to consider the possibility of entering the ministry, since it is generally accepted that theological studies are only for those who have failed to achieve some other academic ambition" (1960, 41).

Thus many pastors today with their meagre educational backgrounds succumb to feelings of inferiority and usually shun any real contact with the intellectual elite. Sundkler offers the generalisation that "The African pastor is a lonely man" (1960, 75). But by way of an important clarification, Owen makes

the following statement:

> Concern about education does not indicate an absence of appreciation by the Church for the work of uneducated pastors. Rather, it is the result of a realisation that the Church is seriously handicapped when it must depend for its leadership upon those who have not been properly trained for their tasks, however much dedication they may have (1965, 5).

For the church, Owen proceeds to articulate, there are three main reasons why educated pastors are needed:

1. The growing African intelligentsia is forming the destinies of African countries... If the church would have a voice in the future of Africa, it needs spokesmen and leaders capable of meeting the members of the education elite at their own level... To continue to be an influence in Africa, the church will need leaders who are capable of speaking with the new leaders of Africa.

2. African church members themselves have been greatly influenced by education. If, after having received an education, they find that their leaders are no longer capable of speaking their language or of understanding their questions, they will search elsewhere for someone who can speak to their present situation clearly and effectively... The level of education within its own membership demands that the Church have a trained and capable leadership.

3. If the church should fail to hold the confidence and respect of its educated membership, particularly its youth, this will contribute to its eventual death as a vital part of African society. It will not be able to recruit capable leadership, either for its trained clergy or among its trained laity. Neither will it be capable of further development as an indigenous African institution... The future strength of the Church in Africa depends greatly upon the Church's ability to produce for itself a highly-trained, capable leadership (Owen 1965, 7-8).

THE AFRICAN CONTEXT

The Chief

In his study of ministry patterns in Africa, Sundkler has concluded that there is something that can be labelled an African pattern. Drawing from society at large he points out that:

a fundamental pattern in traditional African society is the representative character of the chief over against his tribe or people. The representative idea is carried over into the Church and applied to its African office-bearer. [Thus, this] pattern or representation imposes itself on the emerging African Church. (1960, 128).

The significance of this fact is underscored by Pobee (1979) who states that in the hierarchy of traditional society "the chief is the zenith of power" (144). John (1990) reports that in Northern Ghana pastors are actually called Christian chiefs. He notes that in Africa chiefs traditionally were to be representatives of the people; a kind of 'mid-man' who stands among and for the people. John suggests that this is a good picture of a church leader who stands among his people as God's servant. In turn it gave him unmistakable authority in relation to his congregation. However, the flaw in emulating the chiefs is that they are to be strictly obeyed and feared and provided for. Thus, John points out that:

The servanthood of the traditional African leadership seems to have been lost completely. It is this understanding of the leader that is carried over to the church leadership. Instead of the leader-servant of the Bible, we have pastor chiefs. (1990, 2).

The preoccupation in this situation seems to be largely on status. Warren (1964) writes:

Can we... be surprised if in Africa the ministry tends to be preoccupied with questions of status? For status is an ever present preoccupation with a chief, and his people insist on it being so for it has to do with the sacred significance that lies behind the whole traditional understanding of chieftainship. Bearing in mind that in Africa the Church pioneered education, and that the missionary had authority over the teachers who were also often the first evangelists, and frequently the first clergy, it is readily understandable that many African clergy find it very hard to adjust themselves to the modern developments of education. In these the teacher becomes a government employee, and is no longer in any way under the direction of the parish priest, who in other respects has inherited the old position held by the missionary (52).

In spite of the impact of the image of the chief, the fact is that the status and prestige of the chief himself is no longer what it used to be. In many countries the long established institutions of cheiftainship were abolished. For example, with independence, the new government in Tanzania legally 'dethroned' all chiefs in 1963. Though dethroned their influence did not end, especially in the rural areas.

However, it was the post-colonial politicians, who took over the new independent governments, who became the 'new-chiefs' – the men who now had the most power and influence became the new status quo. Though the politicians have come to dominate, little of the traditional African socio-cultural norms have changed. Like the chiefs of old, Okullu says leadership commonly today is still personalised and:

> This personalisation leads to idolisation of the leader to such an extent that people are made to believe their rights come from the generosity of that leader. In Africa every ruler becomes an ungazetted king, sitting in an unimpeachable position, ruling supreme and for life (1978, 54).

This type of political system Jackson and Roseberg (1982) have termed 'personal rule'. By that they mean that personal rule is a distinctive type of political system with operative principles and practices that can be perceived by a political analyst. Personal rule they characterise as inherently authoritarian. Further, they offer the following historical analysis:

> In their quest to monopolise the control of state power following independence, most of Africa's rulers-soldiers and civilians alike - adopted practices of authoritarianism, with the consequence that national public politics withered and a world of largely private power and influence emerged. Politics became a kind of "palace politics" engaged in by privileged members of a ruling oligarchy and sometimes by a wider circle of elites who at most could only tenuously and unofficially represent the broader interests of social groups and classes. In seeking to understand the character of African political systems, we must therefore set aside the preconceptions and categories of institutionalised public politics and consider the older and historically pervasive practices of palace politics that were common in societies prior to the modern democratic revolution. (Jackson and Rosberg 1982, 2).

For example, Jackson and Rosberg maintain that:

> ...personal rulers are seldom subject to constitutional time limits on their incumbency. Like monarchs of old, they stand above their subjects. In all save a very few states not only do they enjoy unrivalled power, privilege, wealth and honour – that is, over public rewards – but also in some cases a kind of political divinity (1982, 22).

Not surprisingly Zokoue (1990) states that African political models often attract church leaders. He notes that political life with its ceremonies and honours exerts a great attraction on church leaders. Thus it is not uncommon to

find in churches similar structures as one finds in political life. Pastors also often like to be closely associated with politicians. Within this association, however, is a startling contradiction:

> ...a minister in the government is not treated as a servant; he is the first to be served. Society has here accomplished a reversal of meaning so that being a "minister" has little to do with service, but implies power and authority. This being true, why does the pastor compare himself with a ministry and ask to be given the same respect? It is because the pastor himself is also hungry for power. It is not that he aspires to political power – even though that is occasionally the case – but that he is hungry to have authority and to be seen as important in society (Zokoue 1990, 5).

Nkoma (Cassidy and Osei-Mensah, 1978), a Zhosa Christian leader from South Africa, speaks of a crisis in character – "unless we can get an incorruptible type of leader who will not be bought with money, with position, with success and with the promise of other things, then Africa will be doomed" (167). Not surprisingly Zokoue (1990) calls for a re-examination of the life of Christ as a servant-leader.

Ethnic Identity and Urbanisation

Ethnic groups originally were societal units whose members considered themselves to be descended from the same ancestor; there were countless numbers of these groups in traditional Africa. Africa then was essentially rural. Thus patterns of living were adapted to rural situations, as were political and social life.

Ethnic-identity has persisted into modern times. However, the ethnic unit as an ongoing social structure, capable of fulfilling the basic needs of its members is disappearing in Africa. The greatest change that has affected the socio-cultural norms of the ethnic group has been the mass migration of people from the rural to the urban areas. "Tribalism, however, in the sense of ethnic identification, psychological commitment, historical membership, or set of shared values remains important everywhere...[but] tribalism today, particularly in the cities, is different that it was in the past" (Markovitz 1970, 56). In contrast to the rural areas, tribalism in the towns is not an organised system of political and other social relations. Instead, in the towns, specific urban-type groupings and industrial associations developed, but nevertheless, ethnic linkages and hostilities do affect the struggles within these new forms of association. As Gluckman (1970) asserts, ethnic ties and attachments still dominate domestic life.

The word 'detribalisation' is commonly used in connection with urbanisation and social change. Shorter (1973) writes, "It usually implies the naive assumption that the African who moves to the town is free from all the restraints on his conduct among which he grew up" (37). To the contrary:

> The African is always tribalised, both in towns and in rural areas; but he is tribalised in two quite different ways. As we see it, in the rural area he lives and is controlled in every activity in an organised system of tribal relations, in the urban areas, tribal attachments work within a setting or urban associations. Hence the African in the rural area and in the town is two different men; for the social situation and tribal home and of urban employment determine his actions and associations, with the major politico-economic system covering both areas (Gluckman 1970, 94).

This will also necessitate a difference of response in the church's ministry to these two areas. The greatest challenges has been for the church to provide its ministry and influence in the urban areas. Migration to the city, which over much of Africa took place very rapidly due to the speed of the industrial revolution, is both a cause and a result of social disruption and change. However, the church has been slow to respond. The primary reasons are due to the leadership crisis cited earlier in this paper: the church traditionally has been rural; it's pastors have been orientated to rural settings; thus it doesn't have adequate numbers of capable leaders to provide the necessary ministry to the urban areas. To provide an adequate ministry, the church's leadership needs to understand the importance of the city as the centre of political, economic, and social change, as well as, what is happening to the people in the city, including their ethnic outlook. For many there is the unsettled feeling of "living between two worlds" (Tienou 1978, 38).

Urbanisation has given the church new responsibilities and opportunities. Shorter concludes that the "Church is simply not organised to deal with the urban scene. The population of the cities is growing rapidly and the church is unable, with her present structure, to keep pace with this growth" (Shorter 1973, 41). Owen concurs, "Urbanisation has thus seriously threatened the church's future strength in Africa because the number of pastors available for the expanding ministry of the church in Africa is becoming every year increasingly inadequate" (28).

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

In light of the leadership crises portrayed in this paper, Elliston (1988) says there are some basic questions that need to be answered that relate to the developing of indigenous leaders. Consequently, he calls for a moratorium on

"the rush to build more western training programmes" (205). Not surprisingly, theological colleges are frequently assailed for training the wrong kind of leaders (Kinsler, 1978). Cole (1982), therefore, raises the question as to who are the real leaders? And what kind of leaders does the church need?

Leadership Defined

From secular literature, Hersey and Blanchard define leadership as "the process of influencing the activities of an individual or a group in efforts toward goal achievement in a given situation" (1982, 83). While this is a very useful definition, Elliston's general precaution is worth noting:

> Secular descriptions of leadership are often both inadequate and inappropriate for both descriptive and prescriptive functions for Christian leadership. Christian leadership values and principles must come from a solid biblical base rather than just from a social science base. The beginning point ought to be revelation rather than management or secular leadership theory (1988, 209).

Clinton offers the following Christian definition:

> A leader, as defined from a study of biblical leadership, and for whom we are interested tracing leadership development, is a person (1) with God-given capacity and (2) with God-given responsibility to influence (3) a specific group of God's people (4) toward God's purposes for the group (1988, 197).

A qualification is added when Clinton writes, "the central task of leadership is influencing God's people toward God's purposes" (1988, 203). Quoting Ward, Elliston (1981) provides a second Christian definition of leadership:

> ... a leader is one who ministers, a leader serves through the gifts of the Holy Spirit, not in terms of prowess, not in terms of accomplishments or acquired knowledge, but in terms of what God is doing through his or her life. Leadership is the church in servanthood (189-190).

Unquestionably, leadership models for the church in Africa and around the world must be drawn from the Scriptures and evaluated in terms of accountability to the Scriptures, and especially to the life of Christ. But coming to grips with what leadership is, and what it means in a given ethnic area is also essential. Kumah (1990) says Christian leadership must be truly Christian and culturally enlightened – "Leadership must be respected, accepted and trusted in the local communities" (1). Talitwala strengthens this point by stressing, "we

must constantly give attention to the modern African context in which we minister" (1987, 12).

Harder (1984) cites cross-cultural research that indicates that appropriate leadership is not the same in every culture. Cultural values, norms, leader's expectations, and subordinates' expectations collectively create different appropriate leadership practices. "Therefore a leader needs to be understood in the context of a group, realising that different groups demand different approaches" (26). Sogdill (1974) observes that "to a very large extent our conceptions of characteristics of leadership are culturally determined" (82). However, it must be kept in mind that biblical principles or evaluative criteria for Christian leadership are valid inter-culturally and may serve as a normative base for the training of Christian leadership, whereas not all culturally acceptable values of leadership bring desirable results.

Indigenous leadership patterns should be retained except where they come into conflict with the biblical criteria for leadership, and then changed only in culturally appropriate ways which remain culturally appropriate (Elliston, 1981). Thus biblical, cultural and educational criteria must all be used in developing educational models for the African church.

Planning for the Church's Needs

McKinney (1975) offers some very practical advice regarding assessing a church's leadership needs. She builds on four important assumptions:

(1) Trained leaders are essential to the growth of the church; (2) Effective planning for leaders must be systematically planned and executed; (3) Plans for leadership training are determined by (a) the kinds (or categories) of leaders churches need and (b) the number of leaders churches need; and (4) plans for leadership training must be based on accurate appraisals of present leadership needs, and realistic projections of future leadership needs (184).

Educational planners can then build on the answers to the four following basic questions:

(1) What kind of leaders do churches need? (2) How many leaders do churches need? (3) What kinds of leaders will churches need ten years from now? and (4) How many leaders will churches need ten years from now?

As to the question regarding the kind of leaders needed, Elliston (1983), based on research with Maasai leaders in Kenya, developed what he has

described as a paradigmatic model for the development of a "servant-based" leadership among churches (28):

Leadership Paradigm

LEVEL 1 - Non literate, unpaid local leaders who
serve within local congregations

LEVEL 2 - Literate, unpaid local leaders
who serve locally and witness outside

LEVEL 3 - Partially paid leaders
of small churches or groups of
churches, Std. 7 education,
often licensed

LEVEL 4 - Paid, ordained
pastors of town churches
Bible School graduates

LEVEL 5 - National
international
with BA

The concept of the inverted pyramid graphically suggests that each succeeding level is supportive of the other levels and is teaching each of the proceeding levels. The aim quite deliberately is an attempt to move away from status, based on education or power, and move toward increased serving with increased learning.

Leadership Research

Relatively little research information is available on leadership behaviour in present African societies. What is true of society at large, is true also of the church. However, significant research has been done amongst church leaders. The following is a look at the work of Cole (1982) and Harder (1984).

1. Cole - What Kind of Leaders Are Desirable?

Working within the Evangelical Churches of West Africa (ECWA) in Nigeria, Cole set out to determine what constitutes desirable pastoral leadership amongst these people. Research was carried out across three representative church types. They are as follows:

1) Ethno-rural churches - found in rural sectors across Nigeria, using either a major Nigerian language or a local dialect in worship. Membership in this type of church tends to be older and less acculturated.

2) Ethno-urban churches - found in urban sectors across Nigeria using a major Nigerian language in worship. Members are largely migrants, have a fairly balanced proportion of old and young, and both highly acculturated and less acculturated.

3) English-using churches - found in urban sectors across Nigeria, using only English language for worship. The members are largely migrants, but tend to be young and highly acculturated.

The major findings were as follows: the respondents with more formal schooling preferred to describe the pastor as a resource person, while those with little or no schooling preferred to describe the pastor as an authority figure. Consequently, when it came to the matter of planning church affairs, ethno-rural and ethno-urban church types tended to prefer a joint pastor-elder decision. Respondents who were younger and had more formal education wanted the generality of church members as well to be given a say in the decision-making. The English-using churches wanted a participatory form of leadership style far more than either of the other two church types.

As for the personal characteristics desired, ECWA members across all categories chose pastoral experience as the most important qualification. Next was that he should be highly educated and married. The matter of experience was so significant that many respondents indicated reluctance to seek counsel from a pastor who is young, inexperienced and unmarried. Both the ethno-rural and ethno-urban churches preferred a pastor who is over forty years of age and highly educated, though the ethno-rural churches would readily take an older man with little education. However, the English-using churches preferred a pastor who is under forty years of age, though highly educated and experienced. Cole notes "that as a matter of concern for policy makers in the church, these findings would clearly warn against treating the different church types at the same level" (1990, 9). With the push on within ECWA to establish more English-using churches, church leaders will be under increasing pressure to adopt different styles of leadership.

2. Harder - Appropriate Leadership Behaviour

This study was designed to identify perceptions of appropriate and inappropriate leadership behaviour for Africa Inland Church pastors in Kenya. Four different church leader and student groups were interviewed to ascertain

their perceptions. Their perceptions were identified from the ranking of five pastoral leadership styles adapted from cross-cultural leadership studies. Each respondent ranked the five pastoral leadership styles to identify the present practice, the appropriate practice, and the appropriate leadership behaviour for seven different pastoral situations.

The major finding of this research was that "group centred" leadership was the preferred leadership style for the local pastor by all research groups. Secondly, the church leaders and students consistently identified "do-nothing" and "telling" leadership as the least appropriate leadership behaviour.

Harder notes that "the AIC-Kenya pastoral training schools have adopted a western educational approach complete with its tendencies toward individualism. [However] the church leaders' high regard for group-centred leadership calls for the re-examination of the present curricula" (1984, 133). Without close attention to leadership behaviour norms, education could easily create a leadership dysfunction. In this case AIC Bible school students need specific instruction in group-centred leadership.

In Kenya. and virtually all other African countries, there is a great tension between the inevitability of change and the need for stability. Harder maintains that the resolution of this tension is best dealt with in the training of group-centred leaders.

CONCLUSION

Though Barrett's quantitative projections of growth for the Church of Christ in Africa excite many people, others looking through qualitative lenses are more subdued. For example, France writes,

African Christianity is going to need, indeed it already needs, more than numbers. If it is to survive... it must be truly African, speaking to actual African concerns with an authentic African voice. But, if it is to have any *raison d'etre*, it must also be truly Christian, and that means that what it applies to the question of Africa must be the biblical revelation (1978, 143)

The crises facing Christianity in Africa, can be largely ameliorated by giving priority to solving the leadership crises. The patterns of ministry that need to be brought into focus in order to attain a truly biblical ministry in Africa are as follows:

1) While the need in Africa for trained pastors is great, the moral-spiritual standard demanded in the Scriptures (I Tim. 3:1-7 and Titus

1:6-9) cannot be relaxed for pragmatic reasons. True men of God, full of the Holy Spirit, are desperately needed; men, conscious of God's call, and acknowledged to have the requisite gifts for ministry by the people of God.

2) Pastors must recognise that their primary task is as a teacher and preacher of the Word of God and they must be educated to have a servant spirit. Where possible and as much as possible they need to relinquish administrative tasks to others. The pastor must see his ministry in terms of equipping the people of God for their ministries.

3) In terms of training for the ministry, the emphasis must be on biblical exegesis as applied to the African milieu. The need is for pastors to be able to both accurately and convictingly preach the Word, for there is need for both instruction and exhortation. When more pastor-leaders can preach like the Apostle Paul – not simply with words, but also with power, with the Holy Spirit and with deep conviction" (I Thess. 1:5) – then, by God's grace, the spiritual face of Africa, qualitatively and quantitatively, will be that much more transformed. It is for reasons like these that church leaders like Adeyemo (1978) remain hopeful about the future of the church.

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MINISTRY OF WOMEN
IN THE CHURCH:
An Understanding of Some Prohibitions

Juliana Senavoe

"Is the gospel 'good news' for African women?" "Can a woman really understand theology?" "If there is no discrimination in the distribution of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, why should there be discrimination for ministry?" In October 1995 a workshop was organised in Abidjan, Ivory Coast, to deal with such questions. Seven leading and articulate women theologians, together with four men, met together for a week of intensive discussion on the subject of "Women's Ministry in the Church." Six introductory presentations were made in order to stimulate discussions.

Neither agreement nor definitive statements were the object of the workshop, but an attempt was made to raise and face issues realistically. These papers have been published in a book entitled, Women's Ministry in the Church: An African Perspective. The purpose is to help the believer begin to disentangle some of the issues surrounding this big question and to learn how women may be empowered to make their full contribution in the Kingdom of God.

This article by Mrs. Juliana Senavoe is one of the chapters from this book, used by the kind permission of the editor. Though this topic is controversial and leads to many heated disagreements, evangelicals need to interact more and more on this topic so that they can begin understanding the biblical bases for the different positions held. This article is printed with such a purpose in mind, to stimulate thinking and further discussion and study on the subject.

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INTRODUCTION

That women are called to work alongside their male counterparts in society is hardly questioned by anybody today. The countries of India, Burundi, Britain, Israel and the Philippines have had women Prime Ministers. Ireland, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Ceylon presently have Prime Ministers who are women. It is becoming increasingly clear that as women are given opportunities in society their gifts are being manifested in various leadership positions in the fields of medicine, finance, industry, politics, education, law, engineering and elsewhere.

Women have carried their fair share of the world's burden of work over the centuries and recent documentation has revealed that in some cases they have outstripped men in working harder and longer.

In the October-December, 1993 edition of *Together*, a journal of World Vision International, the following statements are quoted from UNICEF's *The State of the World's Children*, 1992:

> The developing world's women bear and care for its children, fetch and carry its fuel and water, cook its meals and shop for its needs, wash its clothes and clean its homes, and look after its old and its ill. It is less widely known that women also grow and market most of the developing world's food, earn an increasing proportion of its income, and work, on average, twice as many hours a day as men.[1]

In some societies the very word, "woman," is a derogatory word. There are such statements as 'women talk' meaning either gossip or trivial talk, 'women's work', which refers to all the tasks considered menial in that society, 'woman's mind' which means shallow thinking, illogical reasoning or the lack of appreciation of important issues. The world's scorn for women in several societies, in modern as in ancient times, is well-known.

Some of society's assumptions about women may not be intentional slights or conscious malice but the fact that some, if not most, of these assumptions are culturally learned behaviour does not make them any more easily accepted.

THE WOMAN IN GOD'S IMMAGE

In the very first chapter of Genesis is the statement that "God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them" (Gen.1:27).

From the beginning, therefore, "man" was 'male' *and* 'female'; not 'male' as against 'female'. Both genders are equal beneficiaries of the divine image. Neither is one inferior or superior to the other in their God-given dignity and worth and in their essential humanity. Woman is not man's slave or

subordinate. She has intrinsic value and worth. The clearest statement of this equality is found in Paul's statement that in Christ "there is neither male nor female" (Gal.3:28).

Equality, however, does not mean 'sameness'. Men and women are different, with complementary roles and functions. Difference in roles does not undermine equality. In our salvation God the Father planned it all and sent the Son who came to die to execute the Father's plan. It is the Holy Spirit who applies the work of the Son to the heart of the individual believer. These differences in the roles of the Persons of the Trinity do not make any of them subordinate to the other. The subordination of the Son was the heresy of the Arians and their present day 'cousins', the Jehovah Witnesses.

This equality in value and status of men and women was however undermined at the Fall. In his condition of alienation from God, Adam turned on Eve and blamed her "for his folly" (Gen.3:12). Conflict, antagonism, exploitation and fear have characterised human relationships, including that between males and females, ever since.

In the male and female relationship exploitation "has been expressed historically in male domination, the use of women for men's selfish ends, denying her essential equality and dignity."[2]

Jesus came to assert the woman's essential dignity and status. He accepted both men and women on equal terms. He healed without discrimination. He taught both men and women, unlike the Rabbis of his day. He had theological discussions with men and women (John 4 & 11) and entrusted spiritual truth to both men and women.

For both men and women who believe in him, their alienation brought about by sin ends with adoption, hostility is replaced by reconciliation, guilt and shame by justification and moral filth by sanctification. The male and female saints are equal sharers in the divine nature, equal recipients of the gift of the Holy Spirit, equally "blessed with every spiritual blessing in Christ", equally co-heirs with Christ and together constitute "a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God." In the salvation offered in Christ there is no discrimination on account of a person's nationality, race, tribe, social class or sex. All the barriers along these lines have been levelled in Christ.

Not only is the male and female equal by creation and in salvation, they are also equal in the rulership "over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground" (Gen.1:28). Their stewardship of God's earth was a shared stewardship from the beginning and any inequalities in the stewardship of the earth between males and females as well as between nations are the result of the out-workings of the fall in human societies.

IS GOD'S IMAGE MALENESS?

Every year I have an interesting time with a new batch of students in my theology class as they try to work through this question. A few cautious ones are hesitant to offer an opinion, but the majority of them unhesitatingly answer "yes."

One of the basic affirmations of the Christian faith is that God the Creator is not part of His creation. He is Spirit (John 4:24) and therefore has no body or such physical parts as eyes, ears, nose, sexual organ or feet. Maleness and femaleness are biological distinctions which God, the Creator, transcends.

In Scripture God is analogically said to be "The Rock that fathered you" and "The God who gave you birth" (Deut.32:18). He is also symbolically presented as the father who lost a son, as well as a woman who lost a coin (Luke 15:8-10). "An analogy indicates that two things are alike in some respects even though they are otherwise dissimilar."[3] In the language of analogies, if the Bible likens God to both a father and a mother it implies that he is dissimilar, as well as similar to both. Human fatherhood and motherhood presuppose sexual distinction between the female and male and the former can only be a mother and the latter can only be a father. God can be both 'father' and 'give birth' because he transcends the biological distinctions of maleness and femaleness.

To use the pronoun 'He', 'Him', 'His' of God is an affirmation of His self-revelation that He is the living God. He is personal, the One with whom we can have fellowship and into whose presence we come. Similarly, the New Testament uses the personal pronoun 'He' of the Holy Spirit to affirm His personality, although the Greek word for spirit is πνυεμα (*pneuma*) which is neuter.

BIBLICAL LANGUAGE

God is a communicating God. In His communication with the prophets of old He spoke to them in their vernaculars. The vernacular of ancient Israel was Hebrew but the vernacular in the Roman Empire during the reign of Octavian Augustus, the Caesar who ordered the first census (Luke 2:1) was *koine* Greek. This was the vernacular in which the New Testament was written. These two major cultures within and from which the biblical writings sprung were highly patriarchal and because 'language is a product of culture', the patriarchal view of reality was reflected in the biblical language.

In an article written by Jack B. Rogers in the June, 1975 edition of *Theology, News and Notes*, he states that "in Hebrew, gender attaches to every word."[4] The Greek language is also gender specific and when referring to a mixed group of men and women the masculine form of the word is

preferred.

The Akan language of Ghana does not share this characteristic of attaching gender to each noun. *'Onipa'* (human being) could be male ("*Obarima*") or female ("*Obea*"). Further, the English language, in which most of the Christian theologies received on the African continent are done, uses the word 'man' both generically to mean humankind and specifically to mean male. This sometimes creates a theological problem, especially when personal pronouns used of God are understood by people to mean 'male' rather than the generic sense of 'person.'

In the present linguistic usage of English the personal pronoun 'she' could not be predicated of God as the word is never used generically but only specifically. To do so would imply, not only that God is personal, which is biblical, but also that God is female, a biological categorisation which is unbiblical. "I am not man" God declares.

Another observation made in Roger's article is that "every verbal statement (in Hebrew) about God conveyed the idea that he was masculine."[5] Most biblical symbols used of Him in His relationship with humans were thus masculine: King, Father, Kinsman, Judge, Shepherd, Husband. In our theological reflections and preaching, the symbol and reality are not clearly distinguished and we perpetuate the erroneous view of God's 'maleness'. Symbolically He is the Father whose children we are, the Kinsman who redeems us, the Husband who loves to the point of dying to save us, and the Judge who will right all wrongs on that Day. Because God is infinite and we are finite we can only speak about Him "in symbols, analogies and metaphors."[6]

Rogers also brings out a scribal practice identified in the Old Testament that whenever a person or thing attained an unusual or high status either on a temporary or permanent basis, feminine words were put in the masculine plural. This was because value and honour were expressed by the use of the masculine gender. An example of this practice was identified in 1 Samuel, chapter 6 where the two milk cows that were made to carry the cart on which the ark of the covenant was placed were immediately referred to in the masculine as soon as they were put to their task.

As we read the biblical material there is the need for a constant reminder that "all our language about God is relative, human and analogical."[7] This, for me, is nowhere more forcefully stated in modern times than in Madam Efua Kumah's *Jesus Of The Deep Forest.* Jesus is the Crab, the River, the Hunter, the Caterpillar, the Chief, the Doctor of the Sick. She re-symbolises biblical truths about Jesus to suit her cultural context. This is what the Hebrew writers did. Biblical truths about God's nature are unchanging; the symbols may change.

WOMAN, A 'HELPMATE'

Much has been made of the words "helper" and "helpmate", as though they indicate that woman was an afterthought created because the discovery was made by God that in Adam's loneliness no animal would do as his companion.   Such an understanding impugns God's omniscience as if woman's creation was an emergency measure to solve a problem which was not foreseen by God. From everlasting to everlasting He is the all-knowing God.

This word, 'helpmate,' is sometimes brandished to buttress arguments prohibiting women's ministry in the church. Our understanding of the word 'helper' is coloured by our cultural "hearing aids" where the concept is usually associated with words like subordinate, apprentice, servant, inferior, second class.

The word in the Hebrew text used of the woman in Genesis 2:18 is never used in the Bible to refer to a subordinate helper but is used in most cases to refer to God. The word has a force of "equal and adequate to." The word has nothing to do with inferiority. Eve was the most appropriate partner to Adam for fellowship, procreation and corporate rulership of the created world.

RULERSHIP OF ADAM OVER EVE

As a result of the fall, God's ideal relationship between husband (Adam) and wife (Eve) was marred as was the relationship between God and both of them.

At one stroke Satan destroyed both relationships.   The love and complementarity between husband and wife, which existed in the original created order, were replaced with animosity and the domination of the wife by the husband.   God's shattered ideal will be fully restored only at the resurrection.   However, in Christ's redeemed society, the husband's domination is replaced by the wife's submission which is the voluntary acceptance of the husband's authority. Subordination and domination speak of a subservient relationship.   Submission and humility are Christ-like qualities; subordination is not.   Mutual submission of all believers to one another, including couples to each other, is one of the distinctive marks of Christianity. Christ's submission to the Father did not make Him less divine.

Nowhere in Scripture is rulership given to all men over all women or the voluntary acceptance of the authority of all men by all women enjoined. A husband has authority of headship over his own wife, not over all women. Authority should not be confused with authoritarianism. The latter is corrupted authority which functions by the assumption that those under authority do not know what is good for them and must be told what to do and be kept in line if

they deviate.

All human authority is delegated authority given for a specific purpose. God, who alone wields absolute authority, never coerces us nor does He exercise His authority over us by bullying us into action. A bully is not exercising authority but 'naked power' when he compels a weaker person (physically, mentally, economically or socially) to do what he wants. God's absolute authority is graciously expressed and lovingly offered and He loves us into loving Him (1 John 4:19). The husband's headship is a headship of love (Eph.5:25).

VOWS

Sometimes the instructions regarding the waiving of vows by fathers and husbands in Numbers 30:1-16 are made to become a principle for subordinating women to men and prohibiting the latter from leadership positions.

Vows did not form part of what was required in Israel's cultic practices. They were voluntary promises that individuals made to God to give something to Him or to abstain from something. If an Israelite young daughter still living at home made a vow, her father could annul it. A husband could do the same to his wife's vow. The regulation, however, did not apply to widows or divorced women even if they were living with their parents or grown sons.

Does this mean that amongst women only widows and divorcees could become leaders? Further, there is nothing in these verses to show that the conditions surrounding these vows were meant for all peoples and for all times. In any case they were never renewed in any form in the new "law of Christ."

CHRIST'S RELATIONSHIP WITH THE CHURCH

The passage in 1 Corinthians 11:3ff is sometimes used to support a rigid hierarchy which implies that all men are one rung or more above all women. This view gives all men an "inalienable" right to give all the commands, with the women generally at the receiving end.

Christ is the Head of the church. In this relationship Christ's power is not used to hold down those under Him, i.e. His flock. Instead, Christ uses His headship to serve rather than to oppress and smother. "Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power, and that he had come from God and was returning to God; so he got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing in order to wash the disciples feet" (Jn.13:3-5). Jesus' knowledge of possessing absolute power was not to hold a club over the heads of His disciples to bring them into line, nor did it prevent Him from doing the most menial task when the need arose. Christ is our model in Christian

relationships. His headship is that of self-giving love instead of "maintaining law and order." The most consistent picture given in the New Testament of Christ's relationship to the Church is that of "laying down his life for the sheep", "giving his life as a ransom", "loving his own unto death", "displaying his unlimited patience." In Christian ministry our model is Jesus Christ.

Although He is known as the Bishop and Shepherd of our souls (1 Pet.2:25), the Teacher (Matt.8:18) who has his disciples, yet He is the same one who dies for the sheep to bring them life, the everlasting Priest whose offering is Himself rather than bulls and goats, and He is the Servant (Rom.15:8; Luke 22:27), known in His serving. Holding up Christ as the standard, the characteristic word of Christian service is διακονια (*diakonia*) which has the general idea of 'table waiter' or any lowly service.

Which Christian is fit by race, gender or class for this type of service? We are primarily servants of God (2Cor.6:4) or Christ (Col.1:7; Gal.1:10). We are all ministers of the new covenant of the Spirit (2 Cor.3:6), we are ministers of the gospel (Col.1:23) and of the Church (Col.1:25). Could women become servants of God, of Christ, of the gospel and not of the Church?

The first human testimony given of Christ's resurrection was by a woman to two "pillars of the Church," Peter and John. Was the testimony 'unsound' because it was given by a woman? For cultural reasons she was not believed by the two apostles but their unbelief did not change the veracity of her testimony just as many people reject the incarnation today but this in no way affects it historicity or its theological significance.

THE RELATIONSHIP OF BELIEVERS
TO EACH OTHER

From Christ "the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work" (Eph.4:16). Each member in the body is directly related to Christ, the Head. There is no chain of command where some members can receive spiritual nourishment from Christ only through others. Each believer has "confidence to enter the most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is his body. . ." (Heb.10:19-20). Christ Himself nourishes each part of the body and each little bit is expected to contribute to the growth of the whole by doing its assigned task (Col.2:19).

This picture is further expanded by Paul in his discourse about spiritual gifts in 1 Corinthians 12-14. According to the sovereign will of the triune God each believer is made a part of the body of Christ and is also assigned a spiritual gift which is to be used for the benefit of the whole Church (1 Cor.12:7). There is no hint or indication that any of the spiritual gifts are

assigned on the basis of race, age, gender, tribe, nationality or social standing. God does not discriminate in giving gifts to His people nor in empowering any of His children for effective service. For effectiveness the exercise of each gift is to be characterised by patience, kindness, humility, courtesy, selflessness, forgiveness, faith, hope and perseverance, i.e. the ingredients of love enumerated in 1 Corinthians 13.

Paul further discusses some ways in which the exercise of spiritual gifts were being abused in Corinth. One particular gift was being emphasised as of more importance than others. i.e. the gift of tongues (1 Cor.14:1-25). There was also disorder in public worship in that some Corinthian brethren were showing off the gift of tongues (14:28), while others lacked self-control (14:30) in the exercise of their gifts and there was disruptive behaviour (14:33-35).

For each of these disorders Paul had an injunction to silence by the use of the Greek word, σιγαω (*sigao*) "keep silent, be silent, stop talking" (1Cor.14:28,30,34), and each of them is conditional, not absolute.

i.   If there should be speaking in tongues in an assembly, then it should be interpreted for the edification of all present. If there is no interpreter, the speaker should keep quiet in the church and speak to himself and God (v.28).

ii.   If a revelation comes to someone sitting down the first speaker should keep silent (v.30) and

iii. If the wives (Greek: γυνη) want to enquire about something from their husbands they should do so at home and not in the assembly (v.34).

Whatever the disruptive, disgraceful behaviour of the wives in the Corinthian congregation was, that does not debar all Christian women from ministering in the church, nor from active participation in the church. All had been given gifts for use in building up the church. In an assembly they could share a hymn, a revelation, a tongue or an interpretation (1 Cor.14:26).

Women prophesied with the disciples and others on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2). Philip's four daughters had a public ministry of prophecy in the church, and it is assumed in 1 Corinthians 11 that the women with this gift would use it as well as pray in the public assembly of believers. Paul's prohibitions were given to the Corinthian church to curb disruptive, disorderly behaviour in their public worship. If similar conditions prevail in our assemblies then we need to hear his cure for such ecclesiastical malaise.

Gifts given by God are to be used in His service, in the context of the whole church. "If (a person's gift) is serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach; . . . if it is encouraging, let him encourage and if it is leadership, let him govern diligently" (Rom.12:6). When Christ ascended on high He gave gifts to men (Eph.4:8). The Greek word for "men" used in this passage is

ανθρωπos (*anthropos*) which means "human kind," i.e. men and women. Any inflexible fixing of position without regard to God's gifting but solely on the basis of gender is a serious undermining of God's wisdom in His sovereign distribution of gifts.

THE CHURCH

The word, "church," evokes different pictures and emotions for various people. To some the word is synonymous with pews, hymn books, solemn singing and ministers. To others it is associated with the most beautiful building in town or a place where pretty clothes instead of work-a-day clothes are taken on Sundays. To still others the picture may be that of a place where men and women sit apart and the men do all the talking and women are passive observers. Some younger and urban adherents of the faith on the other hand associate the church with boisterous singing and dancing accompanied by electronic guitars and pianos.

Which mental picture of the church is true? The New Testament concept of the Church is a dynamic and not a static one. Christ is building his Church on every continent, and in a variety of cultures. No one culture is the standard culture for all others (Matt.16:18).

The concept of the Church involves a calling by God (Eph.4:1) from sin and death through the blood of Jesus Christ. It is also a call for covenantal relationship and fellowship with Christ (1 Cor.1:9) as well as a call to belong to God's family - a family in which we are all "brethren", "saints", "disciples" and our unity is expressed as being "one flock", "God's holy nation", "a building of God", "the body of Christ", "a people belonging to God", the "bride of Christ."

Our unity is however not 'sameness'. There is infinite diversity within the family - a diversity on account of role, tribe, spiritual gifts, training, age, gender, culture, etc. The differences do not undermine our essential unity in Christ nor our interdependence.

In this family, both men and women exercise the prophetic and priestly functions (Acts 2:17-18; 21:9; 1 Cor.11:5; 1 Pet.2:5,9). The characteristic word for their function or service, which is chosen rather than any other, is διακονια (*diakonia*) which, as previously pointed out, has the general idea of 'table waiter' or any kind of lowly service. Any arrogant, self-assertive way of ministering in the body of Christ is at variance with the Spirit of the Lord of the Church. Christian ministry is "unto the Lord", for whatever we do we are to do it as to the Lord and not to man (Col.3:23).

In the same vein sin is basically directed against God. Were women committing sin when they ministered for the edification of the church? Nowhere in Scripture is the public ministry of women in the church included in the sin lists (cf. Col.3:5-11; Gal.5:19-21; 1 Tim.6:3-5; Rev.21:8). Some of the

evidence of women's ministry in the early church includes the fact that some women were leaders of house churches, the only type of Churches in existence at the time of Paul, either alone e.g. Nympha (Col.4:15) or with their husbands e.g. Apphia (Phlm.2).

Priscilla and Aquilla, mentioned several times in the New Testament (Acts 18:2; 18:18,26; 1 Cor.16:19; 2 Tim.4:10) as travelling with Paul, had believers meeting in their home and together instructed Apollos. What is significant is that in spite of the general cultural position of women in the Roman Empire in the first century, especially married women, Priscilla was usually mentioned first before her husband, against the convention of the time.

Phoebe was a διακονος (*diakonos*), and since there was no feminine term for 'deaconess' in first century Greek, the word used with reference to Phoebe meant that she was a servant or minister of the church. David M. Scholer has this to say on Phoebe's leadership:

> Paul also calls Phoebe a προστατις. This is the only occurrence of the term in the New Testament. The masculine form of the noun does not occur in the New Testament either. In the Greek of the New Testament period, the term was a relatively strong term of leadership and was used in both pagan and Jewish religious circles. The verbal form of the term (προιστημι) occurs only in Paul's writings in the N.T. Apart from two instances (Titus 3:8,14) Paul uses the verb in connection with leadership in the Church (Rom.12:8; 1 Thess.5:12; 1 Tim.3:4-5,12). Phoebe was probably a leader in the Church."[8]

In Romans 16:7 the name of Junias is mentioned together with Andronicus. They were said to have been outstanding among the apostles. Because the word is a direct object of the verb 'greet,' the form is the same in Greek whether it is masculine or feminine ('Ιουνια)_. There is no evidence, however, that Junias was ever used as a male name, although Junia was a common Latin female name in the Roman Empire. Andronicus was also found to be a common Latin male name. Scholer quotes Bernadette Brooten in his article that "the first commentator to understand Junia as the male name Junias was Aegidius of Rome (1245-1346)", and since this time Junias as a male form has been the usual translation. The King James Version, the New Revised Standard Version and the REB have restored her identity as a lady apostle.

This is a clear illustration of the fact that translations of the Bible are forms of interpretation, as translators choose between meanings of words and phrases. The Greek word, γυνη (*gune*), is used universally to mean a woman of any age whether a virgin, married or widow. Modern renderings will include lady and girl. The word is also used specifically to mean a wife, e.g.

Ephesians 5:22.

In 1 Corinthians 14:34-35, the mention of husbands (whose Greek form, ανηρ [*aner*], also means man) would suggest that "wives" instead of "women" should be the preferred translation. This double meaning of the Greek word γυνη (gune) has very real possibilities for our understanding of 1Timothy 2:11-15, a passage which Patricia Grundy considers

> . . . the most effective weapon to keep women from active and equal participation in the Church. It has been interpreted to mean everything from 'women cannot speak at all in Church' to 'women cannot teach adult males' to 'women cannot teach their own husbands'. It is cited to bar women from the pastorate and deny them access to the pulpit. All evidence that women did preach and teach in the early Church is ignored to so apply this passage. [9]

Ralph P. Martin stresses the point that "every section of the New Testament must be interpreted in the light of the larger context of the overall purpose and plan of the book of which it forms a part, and according to the purpose for which it was intended." [10] From the first few verses of Paul's first letter to Timothy we gather that the Ephesian church was plagued by false doctrine as well as disorderly conduct. The interpretation of 1 Timothy 2:11-15 should therefore be placed within this context. The woman in verse 11 could well be translated a wife, who in agreement with other parts of the New Testament, is to submit to the headship authority of her husband. No commentator is certain about the real meaning of verse 15.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

In general discussions on the ministry of women in the church we tend to focus on society and what it thinks and feels, how it reacts to the issue, instead of on Jesus Christ, what He said and did.

Jesus Christ is the Son of God who calls us and redeems us from "the elemental spirits of this world" and gives us a new identity as children of God, bringing us into His family in which "there is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female" (Gal.3:28). He reverses the curse of the Fall, and our partially lost nobility is restored as He continually works to make us bear the fruit of the Holy Spirit. In all our activities, Jesus Christ is the Owner whose servants we all become. He gives each one of us gifts that fit us to serve Him in the family, His Church, as well as in society. The basic condition for acceptable service is love for God and others. The power for the task of ministry is from the Holy Spirit who is given as a gift to every believer. The gifts and abilities are not gender-specific.

Christ is the eternal High Priest and all believers together form the "royal priesthood", His own people who bear each other's burden for growth

and ministry. Jesus Christ is the Truth, the source of all good and perfect gifts. Who should be barred from declaring Him in word and deed? The Holy Spirit speaks and acts through each of His children in order to portray Christ. We come to learn, think and speak that truth in love as we become Christ-like.

Jesus Christ is the Head of the Church, the foundation of all wisdom and knowledge. All other relationships are to be perceived from Christ's lordship. In Christ's new community the old barriers which divided Jew from Gentile, rich from poor, learned from the unlettered, male from female are all broken down. A new relationship of love and mutual submission is established.

Jesus Christ is the Creator, the source of every ability and opportunity. With the gifts He has given us we become His hands, feet, eyes, ears. The hands cannot tell the feet "you are not needed in the body." Such an attitude is an affront to the one who made the "eyes", "ears", "feet", "hands" and all the other parts for the proper functioning of the body. Burying our gifts will meet with His disapprobation.

Jesus Christ is the Healer. He heals our brokenness, He comforts us in our distresses and frustrations and He gives us joy in spite of pain - mental, emotional, social. We share in His sufferings, He who was rejected and despised. In our weaknesses He perfects strength so that much work is accomplished to confound the strong and proud. He is the resurrection whose coming alone will bring complete wholeness - in bodies, relationships and structures. His Holy Spirit births in us "endless patience" in His service as we labour for justice, and righteousness in a broken world.

Christ is the Lamb of God who was slain and by whose blood we have been redeemed. He alone is worthy to receive honour, praise, dominion authority and power, and idolatry is to ascribe any of these to another being or thing.

What does Jesus Christ think of women in the ministry of the Church? He accepts them, He teaches them and He empowers them and sends them out as His witnesses.

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THE REFUGEES
AND THE DISPLACED IN AFRICA:
A CHALLENGE TO CHRISTIANS

Michael T. Katola

*Michael Katola presents a sober picture of the refugees and displaced in Africa and the world who cry for a Christian response of compassion. He clearly points out from the Scriptures that God is deeply concerned about the suffering among aliens. This humanitarian task belongs to the Christian church. As Paul taught the Galatian Christians, "Therefore, as we have opportunity, **let us do good to all people**, especially to those who belong to the family of believers" (Gal. 6:10). Herein is real challenge for Christian churches in Africa and the world.*

INTRODUCTION

Population mobility in Africa has been in existence for many centuries. People migrated to find security in the face of marauding neighbours or famine. Occasionally this gave rise to the subordination of some ethnic groups by others (Kibread 1983:11). It was also common for people to move from one place to another, practising shifting cultivation or in search of grazing areas and potable water both for human beings and livestock. Another major cause for mass movement was slavery. One is therefore led to state that the refugees and the displaced have always existed in Africa although history has not known refugee problems of such magnitude as during the present century.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Report (UNHCR 1993) and Maloney (1995) give statistics showing the number of refugees in various countries of the world. The data presented shows that there are about 18.2 million refugees in the world. This implies that an average of 10,000 people become refugees in every single day throughout the year. The UNHCR

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further shows that some 24 million people are displaced within the borders of their own countries. Once this painful sum is added to that of the refugees, roughly one in every 130 people on earth has been forced to flee. This situation leads one to agree with Malander et. al. (1978:11) that the refugees and the displaced persons in the world constitute one of the biggest political and humanitarian tragedies of our time.

Kibreab (1983:23) shows that the number of African refugees was estimated at 4,000,000 in 1964. This number has drastically increased over time to about 20 million refugees including 15 million internally displaced persons (Kanyandago 1992:171).

The plight of refugees is a global problem. However, UNHCR (1993) observes that the refugee problems in Africa are the worst and the least known in the entire world. Aseka (1996) also says that some of the largest and most serious refugee problems of the world are found in Africa.

The African refugees are as varied as African people. They range from the good to the bad, from the educated to the uneducated, from the genuine ones to the liars, from poor nomads to presidents. In spite of these differences, all types of refugees are human beings with a right to life. They all need a chance to regain the dignity of being self-reliant and make a contribution to the development of their respective countries.

Eriksson et. Al. (1981) has classified refugees into seven groups. These groups can be narrowed down into two principal categories in the present-day Africa. The first category includes political refugees who are mostly urban dwellers and to a greater or lesser extent educated people. In the past, most of the political refugees came from the countries which were still under colonial yoke. But the political and social upheavals in independent Africa have now also contributed to the number of political refugees. The second category consists of men, women and children fleeing from war, from racial, religious or natural disasters.

For a number of refugees, the problem from which they are fleeing is a temporary one. Sometimes it may be a matter of months until they can go back home. But although all refugees initially expect to return home at some time, some of them find it almost impossible to return even after many years.

In situations where neighbouring countries import and export refugees, internally displaced people often intermix with refugees and suffering citizens who have not been forced to flee. The Hartishelk refugee camp in Eastern Ethiopia clarifies our argument. According to UNHCR (1993:25), the camp had

become one of the largest refugee concentration camps in the world with a population of 250,000 by 1993. The camp and the adjacent areas had Somalis and Ethiopians who had escaped the violence and disorder in their countries. The Ethiopians had been refugees in Somalia and were sent back home when conflict in Somalia reached alarming proportions after the crumbling of the Mengistu Mariam's regime. This diverse mix of refugees , returnees, internally displaced, drought affected locals and ex-soldiers faced harsh conditions of extreme deprivation and similar needs for assistance (UNHCR 1993:28).

A number of conferences to discuss the plight of the African refugees have been held in the past. In spite of this, the total number of refugees and the displaced continues to grow relentlessly. It is therefore opportune to examine the problems of the refugees and the displaced in a biblical context in order to make practical recommendations that would help in alleviating their problems.

REFUGEES AND THE DISPLACED

In 1951, the office of the UNHCR was established to protect and aid refugees throughout the world (Sobel 1979, Maloney 1995). According to Melander (1979), the UNHCR has defined refugees as persons who have crossed an international border because of a well-founded fear of being persecuted. Such reasons include race, religion, nationality and membership in a political group. This legal definition of a refugee excludes those people who have been displaced for similar reasons but who have not crossed a border. In spite of this, the needs of the internally displaced people and those of the refugees are often the same. Maloney (1995) argues that if the number of the internally displaced people is added to that of refugees in the official sense, about 10 per cent of the total population of Sub-Saharan Africa is displaced.

The United Nations' (UN) definition of a refugee is too narrow to encompass the general African refugee situation. The Organisation of African Unity (O.A.U) (1969) defined a refugee as every person who, owing to external aggression, occupation, foreign domination or events seriously disturbing public order in either part or the whole of his country of origin or nationality, is compelled to leave his habitual residence in order to seek refuge in another place outside his country of origin or nationality (Melander 1978:93). The O.A.U definition is so broad that virtually everyone who has been displaced qualifies as a refugee. Added to this are self-exiled individuals who for the same reasons are forced to run away from their homes. Generally, these people share the fact that external circumstances force them to abandon their homes and flee to another place either within or outside their homeland. But as Kanyandago (1992) argues, one should exclude from this group those people who are obliged to flee their countries or homes for having committed crimes against individuals

or their countries.

REASONS FOR FLIGHT

It is not the concern of this paper to discuss all the factors behind the flight of the refugees and the internally displaced people. Only a few of the salient factors are highlighted.

Many reasons for flight are given by different scholars. There is a category of people who argue that refugees are the result of bad luck, or that the supernatural powers are unhappy and no longer give security for the people, or that individuals move away from their homeland due to rumour-mongers Maloney (1995) believes that such people create fears and anxieties even when there is no reason to get excited. Reliably, the refugee problem is caused by a types of persecution and discrimination based on tribal, or racial differences, c ideological differences or even religious differences.

Most writers like Stein (1981) take the "tribal" factor as the main cause of the refugee problem in Africa. This view is based upon the assumption that the root cause of Africa's refugee problem is the arbitrariness of colonial boundaries. The borders created by colonialists are almost never coincidental with the areas inhabited by traditional ethnic groups or common linguistic patterns. In short, the various ethnic groups that were herded together within the boundaries of the colonial state were former enemies. Hence there was no way they could live peacefully together. Arguing along the same lines, Keller (1975) contends that a major cause of the problem of refugees in developing countries (Africa) is ethnicity. The refugees are victimised just because they happen to have a different ethnic identity than those exercising state power. This argument can be accepted when Rwanda is taken as a case in point. The inter-tribal rivalry between the majority Hutu people and the minority Tutsi has generated thousands of refugees fleeing to the neighbouring countries.

Wars, especially civil conflicts, which have almost become a fetish in some countries like Mozambique, Ethiopia, Sudan, Rwanda, Burundi and Somalia, result in mass flights. In Mozambique, for example, it has been estimated that more than a million people have been displaced by the war (Maloney 1995:11). Ordinarily, these civil conflicts begin due to favouritism, discrimination, bad governance and political excesses.

Many Africans are forced into exile because the land on which they live has become uninhabitable or is no longer able to support them. It is no coincidence that those countries of Africa which have been hit by soil erosion,

drought and other environmental hazards are also the major theatres of armed conflicts, recurrent famine and consequent refugee movements. UNHCR (1993) cites some of the countries in this category as the Sahel, Horn of Africa, Senegal, Mauritania, Ethiopia and Mozambique.

The root cause behind mass flight in Africa is the violation of human rights. Aseka (1996) and Kinoti (1994) have clearly shown how the African governments themselves are responsible for these violations. According to Hughton (1988:17), the UN declaration of human rights proclaims the right to:

- life
- freedom from subjection to torture, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, or slavery, servitude or forced labour.
- liberty and security of the person,
- fair trial,
- freedom from retroactive criminal laws or punishments,
- respect for private and family life, home and correspondence,
- freedom of thought, conscience and religion,
- freedom of expression, peaceful expression and association,
- an effective remedy against officials who violate these rights,
- the enjoyment of these rights without discrimination on any ground such as sex, race, colour, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, association with a national minority, property, birth or other status.

Today, many people in Africa are held in bondage which denies all or most of the UN declaration. In fact, countries involved in civil wars and conflicts can hardly guarantee even the basic human rights of food, clothing and shelter. This causes undue suffering and pain.

PROBLEMS FACING THE REFUGEES IN AFRICA

Most of the refugees and the displaced in Africa are found in poor countries which can hardly assure the well being of their own citizens. In those countries, the refugees live in conditions of extreme insecurity, abject poverty, isolationism and misery.

Presently, refugees are vulnerable Many have left their homeland without their personal effects. Often, families have been torn apart without any surety that they will be re-united. As foreigners, refugees are often subjected to police brutality. Therefore, refugees deserve special attention despite the fact that they are not the only poor of the day.

In many instances, refugees are herded into camps where life is pathetic. Maloney (1995:21-22) highlights the misery faced by the refugees in the camps. He shows that death rate in the camps is high due to poor health condition.

In Dagahaley, Ifo and Hagadera camps in Kenya refugees suffer from attacks and rapes by gangs of bandits. *Daily Nation* (November 29, 1997:8) reports that 78 rapes had been reported between January and November 1997. These rapes occurred when women left the camps to fetch firewood.

With regard to those who are internally displaced, life is no better. In 1991, the Sudan government began to send the southerners back to their homes in lorries. They were only taken part of the way and left to cover the rest on foot. This callous disregard by the government for the welfare for his people was pitiable. But as if that was not enough, the government demolished shanties around Khartoum occupied by displaced people and forced the people to desert areas outside Khartoum where there was virtually nothing.

Due to sudden and involuntary uprooting, some of the refugees flee with no other possessions than the clothes they have at the time of flight, while others exchange their cash possessions at a very low exchange rate. In view of this, the only option left for refugees to earn their daily bread is by availing themselves of wage labour. Sadly, the available literature shows that the refugees are mercilessly exploited by the rich section of the local population. But just as a drowning person grasps anything within reach, refugees accept wages far below the value of their labour.

Lack of educational opportunities is a problem that faces the refugees, particularly the children. In the Eastleigh Estate of Nairobi, which has been baptised, "little Mogadishu," the many Somali refugees attest to this fact. In the estate, school going children are seen roaming around without any hope of ever going to school. This affects them negatively because their chances of climbing the academic ladder is locked out.

BIBLICAL ASPECTS OF THE REFUGEE PROBLEM

The Bible indisputably emphasises love and concern for the poor and the stranger. In the Old Testament, for example, one can manifestly see how Abraham's family left Haran and became refugees in Canaan (Gen. 12:1-9). Abraham's descendants had to depend on the hospitality of aliens for their survival. Later in life, God guided Abraham's generation in setting up laws which guided their lives and which included protection and care for the poor and the stranger. A few examples of the laws are shown hereunder:

"Do not ill-treat or oppress a foreigner; remember that you were foreigners in Egypt" (Exod. 22:21).
"Do not go back through your vineyard to gather the grapes that have fallen; leave them for the poor people and foreigners" (Lev. 19:10).

"Do not ill-treat foreigners who are living in your land. Treat them as you would a fellow Israelite, and love them as you love yourselves" (Lev. 19:33-34).

"Do not deprive foreigners and orphans of their rights; and do not take a widow's garment as security for a loan" (Deut. 24:17).

"For all time to come, the same rules are binding on you and on the foreigners who live among you. You and they are alike in the Lord's sight" (Deut. 15:15).

The Old Testament prophets were equally concerned about the plight of the poor and the stranger. The following verses illustrate this:

"No one in the city honours his parents. You cheat foreigners and take advantage of widows and orphans" (Ezek. 22:7).

"Stop taking advantage of aliens, orphans, and widows" (Jer. 7:6).

It is evident from the Old Testament verses quoted above that God is interested in defending the rights of the poor and the stranger. God is emphatic that the two groups of people should be clothed and fed. They are portrayed as God's people who deserve attention and care.

Like the Old Testament, the New Testament is full of many examples that show love and concern for the poor and the stranger. In Matthew 2:13-23, for example, the infant Christ and his family are portrayed as refugees fleeing into Egypt. Thus, Jesus can be identified very closely with refugees. It is no wonder that there was so much concern with the poor and the oppressed, the stranger and the outcast in his entire life. Jesus' message of freedom, as recorded in Luke 4:18-19, is perhaps the single greatest contribution to human rights in history.

"The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour."

Refugees, doubtless, are among those poor and needy whom Jesus wants us to regard as our brothers and sisters. James 1:27 defines the essence of practical Christianity to include care for the poor of the day. "What God the Father considers to be pure and genuine religion is this: to take care of orphans and widows in their suffering and to keep oneself from being corrupted by the world." And although Jesus came seeking every individual, his ministry had a significant impact on the poor (Matt. 11:5). This is very clear in the parable of the Good Samaritan (Lk. 10:25-27) which defines our neighbour as anyone who crosses our path and is in need, regardless of colour, creed or country of origin. Paul sums it up in Galatians 6:10, "So then, as often as we have the chance, we should do good to everyone, and especially to those who belong to our family in the faith".

From the foregoing, one can affirmatively say that the phenomenon of refugees in Africa is a wound against Africa in particular and against humanity in general (Kanyandago 1992:177). But since Christ identified himself with the poor and the needy, we can assert that God is present in a special way with those who suffer, particularly the refugees and the displaced. Evidently, God speaks to us in and through the refugees and the displaced as they cry to us for assistance and help in the changing conditions which caused them to flee their homeland.

A CHRISTIAN RESPONSE
TO THE REFUGEES AND THE DISPLACED IN AFRICA

The UNHCR is perhaps the most influential inter-governmental organisation dealing with refugees in Africa. However, Kanyandago (1992:177) argues that the contribution of outsiders must never overshadow the fact that solutions to problems have to come from the people concerned. Besides the international organisations churches are concerned with the problems of African refugees. These include the All African Conference of Churches (AACC) and the variety of Roman Catholic organisations.[1] According to Ericksson et.al. (1981) the other church organisations originating from overseas but operating through local ecclesiastical institutions are the Lutheran World Federation, Lutheran World Service, Church World Service, Catholic Relief Service and the World Council of Churches (W.C.C.). The other major religious faiths in Africa have no programmes of great importance if any at all in this regard.

In a number of ways, the contributions of the organisations named

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[1] There are also many evangelical relief organisations including *World Vision, Compassion, Food for the Hungry.*

above are indispensable since they provide the refugees with the basic needs of food, shelter, clothing and medical care. Despite this, the refugees also require the compassion of Christians to assist them recover from the hardships and agony they have faced. Thus, Christians should not only recognise that refugees are human beings created in the image of God but should respect them and give them hope for the future.

The sure way of eradicating the refugee problem in Africa is by dealing with the root cause to the refugee problem. Maloney (1995:33) says that the church calls us to analyse critically the causes of their forced displacement and to reflect prayerfully on what they, as contemporary expression of God's "word", say to us in and through their suffering. In this regard, if war is one of the causes, Christians can be in the forefront in educating the masses on the need for non-violent conflict resolutions. This would be a sure way of bringing peace in the continent. Closely related to this, Christians, especially the church leaders, would do a lot of good if they would consientize their governments and the people on the need for promoting human rights. Refugees have a right to food, shelter, education, freedom from religion. and all other rights which the rest of us enjoy. Nevertheless, Christians have been complacent to human rights violations, yet God wants them to work on changing unjust situations that cause untold suffering from being uprooted. This implies that Christians must add to their praying for peace by becoming involved practically in working for peace.

The problem of refugees and the displaced call for Christians to give a hand towards both short and long-term solutions. The assistance referred to could be in the form of reading materials, food or clothes which can be forwarded through one's local church to refugees and the displaced people. Christians can also invite some of the displaced into their communities and share their testimonies with them. This would not only be a sign of friendship and solidarity with the refugees but would make the latter feel respected and loved. It is therefore evident that Christ, who identified himself with the refugees, speaks to Christians and invites them to reach out to them in their need for physical assistance and human relationships. Thus, Christians can be healers in these moments of greatest need for troubled groups. Such actions would show that Christians understand that refugees and the displaced are not victims of bad luck but are victims of forces which have historical and cultural roots and which are beyond their control.

CONCLUSION

The subject of refugees and the displaced is high on the list of international concerns to day, not only because of its humanitarian significance but also because of its impact on peace, security and stability. The concern is commendable because the world cannot reach a new world order without effectively addressing the problem of human displacement.

In Africa, refugees are forced to flee their homeland because of armed conflicts, violence, severe disruptions of public order or widespread abuses of human rights. The refugee problem is, therefore, of our own making and not an accidental phenomenon. The life led by refugees and the displaced is stressful, humiliating, and insecure. They have no source of income and so they rely on other people for their basic needs. Christians should, therefore, transcend praying and identify themselves with the refugees and the displaced people the way Christ identified himself with the poor and the needy. By so doing Christians will be applying the gospel to the world situation.

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BOOK REVIEWS

Tropical Africa and the Old Testament: A Selected and Annotated Bibliography.

Holter, Knut.

Oslo: University of Oslo, 1996. No Price. ISBN 82 991913 7 8.

Two guidelines determine the selection of material included in this useful volume. First, it contains only those works which focus on "tropical" Africa, a region Holter designates as sub-Saharan but north of the Republic of South Africa. Holter states that works from other regions and traditions (such as Black Liberation Theology and Dutch Reformed scholarship in South Africa) have been well-covered in other sources and therefore do not warrant mention in this volume. Second, the focus of this bibliography is not scholarship by Africans, but works that relate the two entities of the title, namely Africa and the Old Testament. Therefore, one will find entries with titles such as "African experience of time and its compatibility with the Old Testament view of time as suggested in the geneaology of Genesis 5", "Isaiah 14: Its bearing on African life and thought", and "Sickness, sin, and the curse: The Old Testament and the African church". Since the emphasis in selection lies with the subject matter, African and non-African authors are cited from sources originating from both within and without the continent.

The book contains a brief preface, a six page introduction, 232 annotated bibliographical entries, and three indices (Old Testament references, geography and languages, and key words). Twelve randomly selected items from the indices were checked and all proved accurate. A quick scan of the index of geography and languages reveals that the contents are dominated by "Nigeria" as a region and "Yoruba" as a language. This likely reflects the editor's relationship, cited in the preface, with scholars from the Nigerian Association for Biblical Studies. In addition to the necessary bibliographical information, each entry contains brief, helpful annotations arranged by one or more of the following categories: key words, Old Testament reference, geography/language, and a one to two sentence abstract.

This is a welcome reference tool for any theological library in Africa. Holter correctly notes the dearth of bibliograhical sources on African interpretation of the Old Testament. A scholar is typically left on his or her own to locate sources such as those referred to in this volume from widely disparate sources. Yet, as valuable as this small volume is, its focus on Nigeria and West Africa to the neglect of other parts of sub-Saharan Africa leaves it incomplete. More work remains to be done.

These two observations, the need for tools such as this and the incomplete nature of this particular one, prompt two suggestions. First, one hopes that other bibliographies of this nature will soon appear. For example, a volume on Tropical Africa and the New Testament would be most welcome. The series in which Holter's book is published makes available bibliographies from research conducted exclusively by members of the faculty of the University of Oslo. But are there scholars willing to undertake the task of compiling similar annotated bibliographies (or of developing further a bibliography originally put together for doctoral work)? And are there publishers willing to produce such bibliographies? Biblical scholarship in Africa will take a giant step forward when we can answer "Yes" to both questions.

Second, since Holter includes his address (School of Mission and Theology, Misjonsvegen 34, N-4024 Stavanger, Norway), one must hope for a second edition of this book that might be able to take advantage of additions sent in by scholars familiar with the subject matter. For example, scholars conversant with Christianity in its multiple forms in East Africa surely know of additional work not included in this bibliography that fall within its parameters. A more comprehensive second edition would certainly multiply this volume's already extensive usefulness. [*Tropical Africa and the Old Testament* can be ordered from: The Faculty of Theology, University of Oslo, PO Box 1023, Blindern N-0315 Oslo 3, Norway.]

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The Word of God in Ethiopian Tongues: Rhetorical Features in the Preaching of the Ethiopian Evangelical Church

Eskil Forslund

1993. Mekane Yesus. Uppsala: The Swedish Institute of Missionary Research. Pp. 274. ISBN 91-85424-35-8.

There is good and bad preaching just as there is good and bad story-telling. I am not thinking here about the moral goodness of the story, or the truth-content of the sermon, but of their qualities as good human communication. What makes good story-telling? What makes good preaching? What is it that fixes the attention of our hearers and holds it from start to finish? What makes us interesting (or boring)? For preachers, what makes us compelling, persuasive and challenging?

Undoubtedly part of the answer lies in the speaker's skill. Some of us have a natural gift for expressing ourselves well, choosing our words, putting our sentences together, so that what we say tastes good. For most of us, this gift (even when it truly is a natural gift) is developed by our own efforts; we have spent time and effort learning to communicate well. For Christian preachers the ideal answer also includes a degree of spiritual gift. We are aware that the Holy Spirit uses prophets and preachers to reveal Christ, and that he takes up our words and makes them powerful for spiritual ends. Mature Christian preachers are not content with speaking well; they desire deeply that the Holy Spirit's power will be found in their words.

But the answer also includes the specific details of how we use our language, what gives our talk 'punch' and 'bite' and 'flavour' – what Forslund calls the rhetorical features of our speech behaviour. His aim is to 'define and describe some rhetorical features in the preaching in the EECMY' [Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus] showing how 'preachers use the language, style and structure of their sermons as rhetorical strategies with the aim of making the message of the sermons relevant as providing answers to various situations.' (p. 3). The book is in four major parts which introduce successively the broader features of the national background relevant to the discussion of the rhetorical use of language; the characteristics of the sample texts and the methodology applied; the 'rhetorical situation' or specific context in which each sermon was used; and the features of style and structure which can be identified as deliberate attempts by the preacher to engage his audience. Each Part consists of a number of chapters.

In Part One the author touches lightly on influential aspects of the national Ethiopian setting including the influence of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church (EOC); ethnographic characteristics of rhetorical genres and devices; distinctive features of the history and theology of EECMY, including its training programme for the preaching-teaching ministry of the church (pp. 25-82). Some extracts of formal public speeches are quoted, and a brief attempt is made to identify features of these which are potentially important for the study. The sections on the influence of Islam and the ethno linguistic map of Ethiopia are peripheral to the study.

In Part Two the characteristics of the corpus (196 sermons and 72 preachers, gathered over a period of years) are discussed and used for the analysis. The preachers' training and the widespread locations of the preaching is looked at briefly. Five representative sermons are included in an English translation, with Amharic theological terms in parentheses. These usefully allow the reader access to the development of the subject matter, its organisation and so on. As a methodological approach Forslund adopts G.A. Kennedy's application of the classical model of rhetoric to New Testament writings, and provides some justification for doing so (pp. 85-121). In particular, Forslund takes over the three categories of discourse and three persuasion strategies from Kennedy.[1] There is always some tension in applying a model from one literary tradition in a different cultural context. No matter how long its pedigree, the model always runs the danger of emphasising cultural interests and ignoring cultural blind spots. However, Forslund uses the model to provide broad categories with which to tackle the corpus, and doesn't come to much harm.

Part Three reviews the 'rhetorical situation', proposing a wide variety of 'exigencies to which the preachers respond', including the Christian Calendar, social issues (and response to the Marxist-Leninist Revolution, 1974-1992). Sermon responses to the religious milieu (EOC, Islam and traditional religion) are found to be few, as are sermons responding to the charismatic renewal movement that has affected the world-wide church in recent decades (pp. 123-

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[1] See George A. Kennedy, *New Testament Interpretation Through Rhetorical Criticism*. University of North Carolina Press: Chapel Hill, 1984. The three classical species of rhetoric Kennedy (and Forslund) adopt are epideictic (to adopt/affirm some commitment in the present), deliberative (persuasion towards a future action), and judicial (to adopt a judgement concerning the past), and the three persuasions strategies, or 'proof-types' are ethos (personal credibility of the speaker), the pathos (emotional inclinations of the audience), and logos (the logic of the argument)

178), and the socialist revolution which introduced a context of massive change.

Part Four (Chs. 10-14) is the focus of the work, and examines the rhetorical genres that the sermons conform to, and the structural and stylistic devices employed in them. He finds a preponderance of sermons are epideictic, holding up a model of the good life and exhorting Christians to emulate it, with deliberative sermons also occurring (Ch. 10). The language not unnaturally reflects the theological vocabulary which was already well established by EOC, and uses the same terms. It less often reflects concepts of Marxist-Socialism as the Revolution understood it, but does show the influence of western missionary agencies in this adoption of expressions which emphasise the personal nature of repentance, conversion and the evangelical believer's relationship with God. The language of sermons is formal, solemn and uses numerous biblical expressions (Ch. 11). Forslund notes repeated use of allegorical interpretations, relating this to a fondness for rich allusive rhetorical effect in the national and EOC context. Alongside this is the ubiquitous use of parable as a major explanatory paradigm, and much use of metaphor and other stylistic devices. (Ch. 12). Forslund looks at the 'proofs' preachers use to substantiate their case (Ch. 13). EECMY preachers rely heavily on the 'external' support provided by other biblical texts, and also use illustrations drawn from local life and thought. They also rely on their own 'ethos' (personal and official standing), and the 'pathos', or emotions, of the listeners as grounds for their appeal. Inductive arguments drawn from biblical texts or daily life and deductive, syllogistic, arguments are found, although the former is more common. Sermon structures are fairly simple (Ch. 14). A clear division into Introduction, Exposition and Conclusion is infrequent, and is drawn either from the Preacher's Manual which promotes this (western?) organisation of material, or from formal experience of theological education. The two most common structural patterns are the following. Following the reading of a biblical narrative passage, the preacher will retell it step by step, bringing in applications for the Christian as he progresses. These applications may be explored by introducing other relevant biblical examples, 'proofs' and exhortations. So, the biblical narrative itself provides a model within which the audience is encouraged to view contemporary Christian life. Secondly, an inductive pattern is found, in which a problem of contemporary life is introduced, and a variety of aspects of the biblical answer are propounded in turn. Both patterns reveal the epideictic nature of much of the corpus.

The book is a doctoral dissertation, and requires some effort to read. This will restrict its use to faculty of theological colleges, and some senior students. It has a broad scope, which is acceptable in view of the lack of previous studies of the same sort. It may be worth indicating some directions for further study. The link between homiletic style in the church and the preacher's manual used in the training programme is not developed. It would be

useful to know whether and how homiletical training affected the preachers' approach. Further studies should aim for a more selective sample of preachers, stratified on the criteria of (i) older, less educated and more culturally integrated into rural society and life, and (ii) younger, educated and more modern in outlook and temperament. Further studies should also separate clearly the use of national language and lingua francas outside of a native speaker context, and use of the local language within the native speaker community. Finally, it would be worth looking at recent literature for a model for research, or setting one up, rather than rely on a classical one.

Forslund's focus is central to hermeneutic, homiletic and contextualising studies, and this book should be read by everyone teaching in these fields in Africa. Hermeneutics or exegesis that stops short of expressing biblical content in community languages stops too short. Homiletics that is confined to an approach to sermon-making culled from one culture doesn't go far enough. Contextualisation that misses the language factor is in danger of ignoring a major means of cultural expression. In Africa today, with its ethnic, cultural and language diversity, our theological education must pursue the question of expressing Christian truth beyond the language and forms of the classroom in its search for good preaching. Good story telling and good preaching are evaluations made within a particular language and cultural context. Good American preaching is not good British preaching, and French preaching is different again. What is good in Amharic will not necessarily be what is good in Kikuyu, Ndebele, Lingala... We need a number of careful studies in Africa which explore the rhetorical features of good, contextualised preaching, both with and without the educational influence of (western) homiletic models. We could benefit from similar studies, particularly in situations where African students and scholars could report in detail on the resources of a language community and the use made of these resources by its preaching-teaching fraternity. Theological education needs to be further informed of cultural preferences in the church's oral communication. Having said that, many of the features noted in EECMY sermons seem to be widely found elsewhere in the African church. No doubt there are more structural types that sermons adopt, and some study of these would both enrich and contextualise the message in the African church.

One of the saddest stories comes from my early years in Africa, when a well-educated man of my own age confessed that he could not tell his own story - his Christian testimony to Christ - in his mother tongue. He did not have the words to express himself. He could not put it together without stumbling over his grammar.

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AFRica JouRNaL of EvaNGeLicaL THeOLOGY

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