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CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT FOR SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION

By
Jean V. Dorlus

Mr. Jean V. Dorlus, Th. M, is the former Dean of Students at STEP (Seminaire de Theologie Evangelique de Port-au-Prince.) He is presently pursuing doctoral studies at Western Conservative Theological Seminary. He delivered this paper at the CETA Consultation 2001, held March 18-23, 2001 in Puerto Rico.

Except maybe for the faculty, the most potent factor in any educational system is the curriculum. It is indeed in this arena where most of the political, ideological battles are waged, where victors go down in history as trailblazers, and where losers are seldom remembered. The standard question has been, and always will be, what courses should be included in the curriculum? Corollaries to this question are what should be the content of these courses? How should they be taught? How would we measure competencies? All fields, schools, nations, and even entire geopolitical regions know of the battle to answer these questions. Ironically, even when members of an institution agree on the vision, the mission of the institution, or a particular programme, it is not a sure guarantee that a consensus will emerge as to the shape of the curriculum.

Curriculum change or revision always brings friction and hopefully "good" friction. Leroy Ford warns: "Complete redesign of a curriculum can cause revolution. Somebody may get hurt – especially when empires fall" (Ford 1991, 41). Although the hurt may be inevitable, a skilled administrator may still minimize the pain of stakeholders. Theological education, by its very nature, is not immune to this sort of heart-wrenching battle. It is becoming common practice in the last two decades for theological institutions to examine their curricula in light of their mission, their programme goals and objectives, and the social and spiritual milieu. David Kelsey (1992, 13-14) asks: "If institutional reality could be remade to heart's desire, what would the ideal theological school look like?" In the beginning of this millennium, it is fair for our region to reflect on the kind of theological education that will produce change agents and ultimately

transform society. In this paper, I will endeavor to answer three questions: What is the social condition of our world and especially our region? What is the nature of biblical social transformation? Finally, what is an appropriate framework for curriculum development for social transformation?

First, let us examine our social context.

What is the Social Context?

Wisdom dictates the need to take a hard look at our society before we even try to transform it. For all practical purposes, most Christians would agree that our society is sick to the core, in spite of progress in major areas. Any attempt at describing the malaise, in spite of extraordinary progress in the domain of medicine, social studies, technology, communication, or church development, would finally culminate in a litany of misery. This has nothing to do with being a pessimist, but it is about giving a fair account of the present and current reality for the majority of our societies. In the midst of the misery, however, segments of the church are thriving and are capturing a vision for worldwide ministry. A proof of this is CONECAR 2000 held in Puerto-Rico where evangelical leaders of the region gathered to sensitize the church of the region to move from being "a mission field to a mission force." It will be interesting in the years ahead to see how God uses this region with very modest resources in his harvest. Besides this bright side, there are areas of great concern over which one can lament.

Indeed, one bemoans the fact that after countless interventions from Christians and non-Christians alike, the world still exhibits all of the marks of a suffering chamber. On a global scale, countries of the West and of the North have been historically affluent, whereas countries of the East and of the South have large populations vegetating in abject poverty. The gap is still widening. Clearly, poverty created either by war, famine, natural disaster, personal choice, unfair trade agreement, vestiges of colonialism, callousness of some, or unbiblical worldviews is one of the world's most acute challenges. It is superfluous to mention that the monstrous lies of Satan undergird all of the above causes.

Spiritual bondage unfortunately cannot be captured in photographs, and often words are really inadequate to describe it. Too many of the people in

our region practice some sorts of ancestral religion: Voodoo, Santeria, etc. These beliefs hold the imagination and the lives of Caribbean people captive. The consequences are felt in private life as well as in public life. It is not at all uncommon to find animists going hungry, but at the same time finding enough resources to hold lavish ceremonies for the spirits.

In many places of the world, there are people who live on less than $2.00 a day. Besides the economical maelstrom, widespread political and ethnic violence claims at times more lives faster than one can build graves for individual burials. This violence bears many faces. It can be seen in the "savage inequality"[1] of the educational system that dooms some for a life of marginal existence. It can be seen in ethnic cleansing. It is seen in forcing many, especially poor young women, to a life of prostitution. Economic exploitation, which is also a type of violence, is rampant, and, in spite of the efforts of many, is still on the rise in many places. The political system and process, for that matter, is marred by corruption and bears no resemblance to the desire and genuine hope of the people. The disenfranchised have no voice and can hardly fight against the systemic issues of social injustice. Diseases are still on the rise. AIDS, for instance, is claiming lives almost unhindered in many parts of the world, especially in Africa.[1] A description of the Latin American world mirrors closely the situation in many Caribbean countries:

> The Latin American world is left with a sad legacy of unaltered structures of land ownership, stagnation of rural communities, invasion of aboriginal territories, deterioration of the quality of life in the big cities, unemployment, hunger, violence, child and old age abandonment, illiteracy, housing shortage, deterioration of public services,... slow judicial processes, overcrowded prisons, generalized corruption, and inflation. (Powell, 8-12)

On the side of ideas, we live in a world known to be postmodern, chaotic (Hexter 1971), in crisis (Sorokin 1947), in anxiety (Auden 1947), and in uncertainty (Galbraith 1977). It carries with it a new wave of challenges. Postmodern thinking advocates that both modern thinking of

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[1] This term is used by Jonathan Kozol to characterize the educational system that basically keeps poor kids from having an education that will get them to climb the social ladder.
[1] AIDS statistics.

life based on rationalism, individualism and even scientific positivism and premodern thinking of life based on limited reflection, conservation of social systems, metaphysical understanding of the universe have failed. Instead, the world should turn toward a value a free society, tolerance, relativism, and a wholistic outlook on life. We also live in a pluralistic society that carries with it some challenges as well as opportunities. Even a casual look at creation would indicate that God is a pluralist God.[2]

In summary, our society is devoid of the essentials that would characterize it as a domain on which God reigns. Interestingly, the problems that cripple humanity are not new. They existed in the first century as well, only at times in different forms. Without risk of oversimplification, one can say that the ideal society is one in which people are living in God's kingdom the way God meant for them to live, that is, in submission and complete obedience to God's moral law. We now turn our attention to the nature of social transformation.

Nature of Social Transformation

The idea of social transformation using a biblical understanding needs to be fleshed out in its characteristics. Not all Christians agree on what it is. Some Christians have decided not to engage the world in any shape or fashion. They have just *withdrawn,* preferring to save a few souls one at a time and to wait for the end to come. Others have taken a rather combative approach. They have *condemned* the world at every turn, and, on occasion, do not hesitate to commit extreme acts to protect innocent victims, so they say. Still other Christians engage the world in a compassionate way, but unfortunately, after the fact and not enough in a proactive manner to prevent misery. They *bring relief* but do not provide a firm foundation for a long and lasting development. Others do not get too scrupulous about anything. They just *conform* to the ambient realities. One might be very hard-pressed to differentiate between their worldview, lifesyle, and that of non-Christians. Biblical social transformation aims at transforming both the oppressed and the oppressors, for Christ speaks to both. What then is

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[2] However, in reference to key theological tenets like exclusive faith in Christ for salvation, there is hardly a hint for pluralism in the Scripture using normal hermeneutic.

the nature of biblical social transformation? We may see four components in biblical social transformation.

First, it is God who initiates social transformation. In the secular world, one approaches problems by developing hypotheses, collecting and analysing data, and finally proposing solutions. It is believed that the right theory applied the right way must produce the desired result. Such should never be the case in God's kingdom. Although there is a place for serious research to undergird practice in Christian service, the Christian worker relies primarily on the leading of the Spirit to receive a vision and to implement it. In other words, we do not call the shots, God does. It means that we wait to find out where God is working in order to follow him there and to work as he commands. It is at this very juncture where a life of prayer and dependence upon God's guidance reveals itself all the more important in Christian service. There should be no mystery. God speaks to his saints to act in order to bring about social transformation in the same way he directs them about other things. In all this, usually more than one person is aware of what is God's next kingdom *move*. After all, is it not his kingdom we are trying to advance? How then would he be absent in any of the phases of the process? The Implication is then clear: social transformation is not the work of clever Christians with fertile mind, sparing no expense. It is God's work. If it were the work of man for man's glory, it would not differ from the social gospel of a few generations ago. This fact alone should spare the discerning Christian the disillusionment of pursuing chimerical ideas in attempting to establish the kingdom through human ingenuity. (For one thing, *total* and *complete* transformation of people and communities will happen only when Christ returns.) Are we ready to listen to God to transform whole communities with him in this journey? Are we up for the journey? Are we willing to go where he thinks the field is ripe for us to harvest?

A second component is that social transformation is Christ-centred. Acts of compassion for social transformation are not isolated among themselves and purposeless. As legitimate as it is to alleviate and even attempt to eliminate human suffering, acts of compassion and justice always point toward Christ who is the chief justice. One cannot perform these acts and ignore in whose name and for whose glory they are being performed. Actions are one side of the coin while proclamation is the other. It is true that, while proclaiming Christ and performing acts of

compassion and justice, not every beneficiary will turn from the evil one to the saving faith of Christ. Also not everyone may benefit from our actions. Christ has warned: "You will always have the poor with you." However, this should in no way deter us from preaching and attacking the systemic issues of social injustice. For one thing, not all those who were healed by Jesus became his followers; and if the healing of the ten lepers[3] is any indication, maybe only ten percent of those who benefited from Christ compassion followed him. It could even be less.

A third component of social transformation is that it has to deal with core values. The most devoted Christian worker sets himself up for failure if he does not care to understand the worldview of his audience. It is easy to overlook the importance of communication in Christian service. Years of mistakes ought to teach us that not only can effective communication be developed, but it can also be tailored to engage even the very core beliefs of individuals as well as entire communities. This will not be possible, however, if one ignores the worldview of the listener. Routinely, sermons that are theologically sound and crafted by well meaning workers, fall on deaf ears. Or better, for a while the listener seems to have changed at the behavioral level, but his core beliefs are left untouched. When his faith is challenged in real life situations, his real belief resurfaces and he acts accordingly since it is the worldview that guides action. Donald Smith, in *Creating Understanding* (1991), not only describes major reasons for failure to communicate effectively, but also presents at length twenty-three principles or propositions, as he calls them, to enhance Christian communication in the same culture as well as in cross-cultural settings. Social transformation will not happen in a context where understanding has not been created, nor will individual transformation for that matter. In fact, even the very beneficiaries may resist changes. The human mind wants to understand, at least to a degree, before it commits. Faith that leads to obedience is therefore based on understanding even if the latter is imperfect.

Finally, if social transformation is not mediated by the local church, there is no point talking about curriculum development for social transformation for our theological school. The only witness Christ has left

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[3] Luke records this as one key event during Jesus' trips to Jerusalem (Luke17:11-19). Another indication of how few people may respond to the Gospel is the parable of the four soils in Matt. 13:3-9

on this earth is the church, indeed the local church. As we prepare ministers to serve those churches, the question then is, what type of competencies and commitment they must show in order to transform individuals as well as society? Those who respond positively to our proclamation and acts of compassion and justice should be added to the church to become disciples. They should be nurtured so that, as they are salt and light, they will reproduce themselves.

Our framework for developing a curriculum for theological education in our region is based on the above understanding.

Framework for Developing a Curriculum for Transformation

A state of dissatisfaction with the quality of the preparation of students for ministry prompted reflective practitioners to entertain and even develop new models for theological education. David Kelsey observed that:

> For historical reasons Christian theological education in North America is inescapably committed to two contrasting and inescapable types or models of what education at its best ought to be... neither of them can be said to be somehow theological mandated by the very nature of Christianity. (Kelsey 1993, 5)

Samuel Escobar would agree when he made and incisive point about missiological education in our region that can well be applied to theological education in general:

> We cannot limit ourselves to the curriculum and methods of the predominant missiological schools in North America and Europe, especially when it is evident that they are going through a crisis of adjustment to new conditions in the world. (Escobar 1996, 105)

Our schools in the Caribbean must endeavour to create a new setting that can address new conditions. The setting that will produce change agents surely will not happen by chance. One does have to work to create it through courageous action and constant reflection. What then is an appropriate framework for developing curriculum in education that will culminate in social transformation?

Our concern is primarily with four-year Bible colleges offering baccalaureate in theology. However, most of what we are saying can apply to different levels of theological education with some adaptation. An effort to answer this fundamental question will move along two lines: the process and the components of framework for curriculum development.

The process of curriculum development in theological education advocated in this paper is simplified in six steps. Full development can be found elsewhere since the literature on the subject is quite rich.[4]

It is advisable to assemble a team made of faculty, administrators, students, and alumni (if possible) to revise the curriculum before engaging in any activities regarding these steps.

The first step in the process may well be to ask what is theological about theological education? David Kelsey started with that very question in his own quest to define the task. At first glance it appears as if one is trying to reinvent the wheel, but such should not be our attitude since a degree of certainty is essential to proceed. If, indeed, there is nothing theological about our task, its undertaking then becomes an option. Hopefully, a team of luminaries thinking through this section will conclude that there is a theological basis for education.

The second step is to evaluate the mission of the school in light of newly existing conditions. Again, it is an important and arduous task. In fact, it is a task so important that the overall educational programme of a school is judged in relation to its mission statement. An abundance of excellent works exists in the domain of developing vision and mission for the ministry.[5] It appears that, at least in some corners in our region, our

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[4] The literature on the processes and theories of the curriculum development and instructional design is vast and rich. From a secular perspective one can mention the work of Leslie J. Briggs, Kent L. Gustafson, and Murray H. Tillman, eds., *Instructional Design: Principles and Application.* 2nd ed. New Jersey: Educational Technology Publications, 1991.; Robert Diamond. *Designing and Improving courses in the Curricula in Higher Education.* San Francisco: Josey-Bass, 1989.; Robert M. Gagne, Leslie J. Briggs, and Walter W. Wager. *Principles of Instructional Design.* New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 4th ed. 1991.; Leroy Ford. *A Curriculum Design Manual for Theological Education: a Learning Outcomes Focus.* Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1991.

[5] Three good works can be mentioned, George Barna, *The power of vision: How You Can Capture and Apply God's vision for Your Ministry.* Ventura, Ca: Regal

mission is moving from preparing students to effect change in individual lives to effect change in the entire society.

The third step concerns the development of educational goals and objectives for our students. It has often been said that without clear goals and objectives we will never know whether we are successful or not. We suggest that the team develop clear instructional objectives in three main areas: cognitive, affective and psychomotor, as difficult as the last two may be to assess.[6] These objectives should be set in terms of learning outcomes. The latter will guide development and revision of courses.

The fourth step has to do with a general description of each course. As objectives are assembled and categorized under headings that later may develop into course titles, one should endeavor at this point to describe the courses. Opportunities for revision remain since the process is never closed but in constant change. The dynamic nature can indeed be quite upsetting for some participants.

In a separate step, the sequence of courses must be established. Is it logical, for instance, to study the Prophets before we study the historical books? Is it sound educational process to put Hermeneutics last in the curriculum? Questions like these are important especially when they are raised in light of students' prior knowledge before undertaking theological study.

The last step has to do with implementation and evaluation of the curriculum. It may be safer to conduct a pilot test with a limited number of

Books, 1992. Aubrey Malphurs, *Developing a dynamic Mission for Your ministry*. Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 1998. and in the secular world Burt Nanus, *Visionary Leadership: creating a Compelling Sense for Your Organization*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1992.

[6] Taxonomies on objectives do abound. Benjamin Bloom et al., *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives: Cognitive Domain*. New York: David McKay, 1956; Karthwohl et al., *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives: Affective Domain*. New York: David McKay, 1964. Robert M. Gagne et al., op.cit. 44. They see five categories of learning outcomes: intellectual skill, cognitive strategy, verbal information, motor skill and attitude. Klaus Issler and Ronald Habermas, *How we learn: A Christian Teacher's Guide to Educational Psychology*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1997. They teach four levels of outcomes: Cognitive, behavioral, affective and dispositional. The last is new in the discussion and it means the values and tendencies to act.

students before implementing the whole programme to the entire student body. Throughout this process, continual evaluations are made using a prearranged system to determine whether a specific course of the entire programme is accomplishing its objectives. As ongoing evaluations are made along the way, the school's officials will be in a better position to judge at the end the value of the course in the educational cycle.

Once the process of curriculum development has been identified, a framework (the different areas that need to be addressed) for action must be stated.

The present framework touches four areas: content, instruction, assessment and context. Each area has its own set of parameters. Admittedly, there will be some overlaps between these parameters and other areas given the complexity of the educational enterprise.

The first area of framework is content. It involves as many as four parameters: integration of theological branches, knowledge, competencies and commitment.

The various theological branches should not be thrown together in the curriculum without a clear direction of how they interact with each other. One should see how each branch informs another and the student must be conscious of that fact. Integration could be done using a missiological paradigm that has mission at the centre of the programme, not just as a course in the programme.

Knowledge refers to what our students know, that is, their theoretical and intuitive insights. A body of knowledge is well established in theology. We have to exercise special care in our effort to be relevant not to fall prey to the temptation of rejecting a whole body of knowledge. The risk of becoming too provincial and turning our back on the rest of the world is always present. The knowledge of our graduates should be on par with any other graduate in the rest of the world in the same programme of study. Evidently as knowledge continues to increase, our schools may not be in the position to cover everything (nor any other school for that matter), but they can first of all provide the skills to access information, and secondly, instill a commitment for lifelong learning in all students.

Competencies have to do with their abilities to acquire and apply knowledge. For our goal of transforming society, our schools should educate toward four broad competencies: exegeting the Word of God, exegeting culture and society, addressing biblically and theologically the

issues of the time, and finally bringing transformation through proclamation and acts of compassion and justice. What tools then do our students need to do this?

Firstly, students should learn theology as well as how to do theology in order to be partners with God in transforming society. One should not dismiss too quickly the wisdom in mastering a great body of theological knowledge whether it be systematic, historical or biblical. It is high time for the students of our region to begin to think theologically and address the issues they are facing using a biblical theological grid. Learning to do theology is essential if our churches are going to come to grips with the realities surrounding them. Because our context is different than that of North America, the theological questions that must be asked, as well as the answers, will be different. The agenda will be significantly different as students equally address issues related to creed and those that are related to oppression and systematic injustice in our communities. It is through the process of doing theology that new categories may emerge even if they do not necessarily satisfy the level of new truths. At any rate, the focus may not even lie in developing orthodoxy, as noble and crucial as this may be, but in developing orthopraxis. Teaching students to do theology can be accomplished in a number of ways. One of them is to create in the classroom, situations where students have to think creatively. It is easier said than done. For one thing, the teachers themselves not only must master the content of their subjects, but also must be creative thinkers. Another way is the systematic exposition to students of the real problems of their communities, and asking them to act and reflect on ways to bring transformation. This type of activity entails that education will not be centred around a building but on communities. Some key questions in learning will be: What does our immediate society look like? What does God say about what we see? What principles can we discover in scripture on which to base our actions? How do we use these principles to address the particular problems? What can be done now? Reflection and action or perhaps action and reflection must always be part of the training. Robert Banks (1999, 160) underlines: "It is important that they 'act out' not just 'learn from' the educational process."

Secondly, students should be educated toward developing a holistic ministry in their communities in order to transform society. To accomplish this, our schools must provide opportunities to go beyond preparation for

church ministry, which include the usual competencies like communicating the Word, counseling, and visiting, to leading the church to even wider competencies such as, sustainable community development and exegesis of culture and socio-political milieu. It is at this juncture that students are educated to move away from a culture of poverty and fate based on deficiencies and the lies of the enemies, to a culture of possibilities and faith based on potentialities and on God's good intentions for his creation. At the same time, they would be wise enough to avoid any triumphalistic attitude, and to cultivate dependence on God and respect for every person they want to serve, lead and transform. Our students should be able to develop church without walls. The development of holistic ministries will require the use of God's Word, the mind, and the hands. Christianity will gain its full strength by moving away from a Sunday religion to an everyday faith that is lived in all its vigour and fervour, excluding any idea of compartmentalization and privatization. The result is no less than a public faith significantly affecting our socio-political context.

Thirdly, students should be educated in worldview change if they are going to be agents of transformation. Charles Kraft sees worldview as the "basic conceptual work by which members of a society order their impulses, impressions, interpretations and activities" (Kraft 1980, 51). Great educators, philosophers, and theologians of the past and present know for a fact that ideas or worldviews or models through which we see the world do not remain without tangible and visible consequences. Augustine, Thomas Aquinas, Max Webber, Abraham Kuyper, Emil Brunner, Louis Luzbetak, and James Sire, to cite just a few, would agree that as far as transformation of society is concerned one must work at changing worldviews for they influence a culture or society for good or evil. Our students must be able to categorize or place worldviews on a continuum. They must be able to critique them biblically and know how to approach them for change from the inside as well as from the outside. No transformation of society is possible without an understanding of how that society functions. In this regard, the works of Sherwood Lingenfelter are helpful, especially his book *Transforming culture* where he analyses in great detail four prototypes of social games, shows how key issues fit within them, and provides numerous illustrations to enhance learning. Our curriculum will take extra precautions so that our students will not just

transfer one culture on top of another, but actually transform the ones they are living in to something that moves ever closer to biblical Christianity. This deals primarily with the transformation of the mind.[7] We have already pointed out the importance of having change at the very core in order to have lasting transformation. Therefore, our curriculum should contain courses that deal with worldview change.

Finally, students should be educated in spiritual warfare. The enemy is not necessarily more active in our region than he is in other places, but his actions for the most part are more overt. Because of the open practice of ancestral religions, the enemy has free reign to operate and to inflict pain in the name of folklore. Any formidable opposition must come from mature believers who understand the dynamic of spiritual warfare, and who are actually walking in obedience with God. Unfortunately, some of our faculty members born in Christian families, or who studied in the West where an ideology of the "excluded middle" is prevalent, may have to learn how to teach students to withstand grand scale attacks of the enemy. Our agents of transformation are doing battle against political, social, and ideological structures as well as spiritual realities. In fact, a great deal in the battle of the transformation of society will be waged in this realm first: that is on knees in fervent prayer.

The commitment of graduates is to advance the kingdom of God on earth. As they learn to operate through a kingdom paradigm, they would commit to personal devotion characterized by a deep prayer life and regular study of the Word, discipleship, and development of the community. It is that type of commitment that will help them regain a new appreciation for ministry the way Jesus did it, that is, heal the sick, empower the disenfranchised, save the lost, and call everyone to repentance.

The second area of the framework is instruction. Our framework may not be complete if we do not establish the parameters of instruction: learning styles, learner-centred instruction, and balance between classroom and community-based instruction.

First, our curriculum and the delivery of instruction must take into account the learning styles of our students. It is at this point that the faculty who will deliver instruction must be trained to use different learning

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[7] Paul is undoubtedly talking about transformation of the mind in Rom. 12:1-2.

activities to match different learning styles of students. In fact, in the Gospel narrative the Lord used a variety of learning activities to make disciples. Some of our students prefer concrete learning situations, others desire abstract ones, some are dependent learners, and others are independent learners.

A second parameter concerns the centre of our instruction. Instead of having either the teacher or the subject matter at the centre, we gain a great deal in theological education by having the student at the centre of instruction. This is achieved when teaching and learning activities are focused on the students' needs and styles of learning. It is not an impossible process at all if faculty understand how to individualize assignments and build learning contracts with students. Also, the interests of students should count in the learning process. Faculty can also help in preparing students to learn. Once the right conditions are created we can expect, under the guidance and power of the Spirit, that learning will occur.

A third parameter in the area of instruction concerns its sphere. Our educational enterprise must provide opportunities for person-to-person learning experience in order for our students to transform society. Perhaps, this is the point where our theological education system is most deficient. We tend to centre theological education around a building, which is a sad commentary. A strong case must be made, therefore, to see learning happening in structured as well as non-structured contexts, such as field studies, mentoring, networking, service learning and shadowing. Effort should be made to have faculty members that are practitioners (significantly involved in ministry) to mentor students outside the walls of our schools. These activities should be duly counted as part of the education cycle. It is undeniable that in Biblical times one-on-one learning was practiced extensively, at times almost exclusively. The prophets, Jesus, and the apostle Paul all had a time where they would meet in small groups with disciples. In the case of Paul, it seems he spent a lot of time one-on-one with Timothy preparing him for the ministry. It is more or less a study/service context. Our schools must decide to take a hard look at the internship programmes to enhance their quality and centrality in the whole theological education cycle. An entire year devoted to field ministry under a proven practitioner is not a far-fetched idea. It is amazing how many different opportunities can be presented on the field for learning under a

capable mentor. It is on the field that the student becomes a participant observer. Indeed instruction, more often then not, will take place as new situations emerge and as events unfold. The' wise mentor will not always provide answers but will raise questions and seek answers together with his protégé. In this regard, the mentor himself must be someone who is addressing biblically the spiritual and social issues of his community, in other words, committed to social transformation. The model of ministry our students see is crucial in their understanding of the nature and process of ministry in our region for the twenty-first century. Most likely they will replicate what they learn from the mentor. Mentoring is so important that in recent years it has been advocated as a "grassroots approach to Theological Education". In business and secular education there is a return to the value of mentoring as a key competent in any learning effort. Bob Biehl sees lots of benefits in mentoring, among them guidance and assurance of going in the right direction (Biehl 1997). In recent years the literature on mentoring has swollen.[8]

The third area of the framework is assessment. Two parameters can be distinguished: purpose and forms.

The first parameter concerns purpose. Why do we measure and evaluate learning in theological education? Assessment could be used for at least three purposes: to evaluate students' progress, to give feedback to the teachers as to the effectiveness of their teaching, and to evaluate the curriculum and the course. None of these should be neglected. All three should be regular. Evaluation as a way to refine, correct, rebuke, praise, and to promote is also a biblical practice. Jesus used it with the disciples and the Old Testament repeatedly reports crises in the life of all major characters that walked with God. Assessment has been an integral part of learning to be a disciple, and it is all the more appropriate to include in educating change agents because they will have to evaluate themselves and others. Although a large quantity of the assessment in the biblical record

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[8] One can cite the following works: Howard Hendricks et al, *As Iron Sharpens Iron: Building Character in a Mentoring Relationship.* Chicago: Moody Press, 1999; Ted Engstrom, *The Fine Art of Mentoring: Passing on to others what God has given you.* Brentwood, TN: Wolgemuth and Hyatt, 1989; Laurent A. Daloz. *Mentor: Guiding the Journey of Adult Learners.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1999.

was about character, in the end it revealed what the person really believes or knows to be true and what he or she can do.

The second parameter of assessment addresses the question: How do we measure and evaluate learning in theological education? The secular field is rich in this area.[9] As we understand its importance, it is crucial that we make an effort in theological education for our assessment to be valid, reliable, and also useful to the student, the church, the faculty, the school, and even to the community at large.[10] Often times we have too many assignments that have no bearing on the sociopolitical and spiritual milieu of the students. Serious effort should also be made to assess at higher levels of thinking skills (synthesis and evaluation). Assessing learning can take a number of forms: paper and pencils tests, performance tests, and students' portfolios. Creativity on the part of the faculty member can help generate a host of possibilities in assessing students' progress.

Finally, the last area of the framework is context. We may be able to identify two parameters: the spiritual, social, and political milieu at the regional or national level, and the immediate context of the school.

On the regional level a lot has been said in the first part of this paper. We have indeed described our society in its spiritual, social and political aspects. The curriculum development team in their immediate school context should consider issues relating to availability of human resources, facilities, financial resources, and students. The latter is a major stakeholder. One must find out about their availability, their location, and even their ability to contribute financially toward their education.

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[9] Some useful works in this area include Norman K. Gronlund et al. *Measurement and Assessment in Teaching.* 8th ed. New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1999; and James W. Popham, *Classroom Assessment: What Teachers Need to Know.* Allyn & Beacon, 1998.

[10] This can be really good practice to engage students for instance in limited social research in their communities to explore the needs and potentials for ministry or get them to reflect on ideas in their milieu about God, the world and man. For instance, Bruce McMartin, a professor at the Evangelical Theological Seminary of Port-au-Prince (STEP), has asked students to collect and catalog proverbs about God in Haitian culture, explain them and provide a critique in light of what the students have learnt in the course on Trinitarianism. As good assignments pile up we are acquiring data that can inform us about the people we are trying to transform.

In conclusion, this potential framework for curriculum development for the Caribbean region in the twenty-first century advocates content, instruction, and assessment that are biblical and aimed at changing individuals as well as entire social structures. The indicator of our success does not reside solely in how many students graduate from our school (for a school should not have any resemblance to a factory producing diplomas) as important as this is, but in what the students are doing after they graduate and how many are involved in significant ministry.

Since success in developing and implementing a curriculum for social transformation depends also on the quality of the faculty, it is therefore imperative that administration holds periodic seminars or distributes literature on teaching techniques, learning activities, preparation of objectives, assessment, understanding of culture and worldview, community development and mentoring.

Conclusion

As important as curriculum is for the delivery of instruction, all by itself it cannot bring about the quality in education we hope to see. Robert Diamond warns:

> ... no matter how well-designed our courses and curricula are, we will not be successful if our libraries are not conducive to studying, if our residence halls provide students with little personal support, if few opportunities for recreation exist, and if we as faculty are rarely available to meet with students outside of the classroom. (Diamond 1989, 3)

Many other entities should be added as we consider theological education. For instance, corporate worship, spiritual fervor, an institutional culture that is bent on missions, and opportunities for supervised service are some of the key components to obtain success in our task. Indeed, education is never complete until the learner has learnt how to learn and how to adapt and change. Will we be committed to teach our students how to learn, and to change themselves and others for the glory of God?

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