

# EVANGELICAL REVIEW OF THEOLOGY

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## Evangelical Review of Theology

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contemporary living.*

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# Editorial

The *Evangelical Review of Theology* is a new attempt to bridge the gap between the professional theologian and the thoughtful Christian communicator—pastor, theological student, educator or lay leader—reviewing a wide spectrum of evangelical thought and opinion.

In this second issue we have sought to keep a balance between contributions from all regions of the world, and we have drawn on a wide range of publications, including a translation of a significant article in German. We are anxious to print translation of articles written in other languages, particularly those not normally accessible to English readers—such as Norwegian, Portuguese, Swahili, Arabic, Indonesian and Chinese. To help our readers keep abreast of recent books, we are including abstracts of 30 book reviews. Besides reprints of articles and book briefs, original material is always welcome, such as the excellent missiological article on the 1916 Panama Congress in this issue.

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We ask for your patience with our initial printing difficulties in New Delhi. For this second issue we have changed our printer and expect more prompt delivery in the future. Thank you for your support.

Bruce J. Nicholls  
General Editor [p. 2](#)

## Contemporary Issues in Africa and the Future of Evangelicals

by TOKUNBOH ADEYEMO

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### INTRODUCTION

ON February 3, 1960, Harold Macmillan, former Prime Minister of Great Britain gave his 'wind of change' message at Cape Town, South Africa, after completing his African tour.

He said: 'The wind of change is blowing through this continent and whether we like it or not, this growth of national consciousness is a Political fact.'<sup>1</sup> Change! This is the crucial word in understanding the dynamics of African history. Ferkiss, a prolific English journalist, in his book *Africa's Search for Identity*, published in 1966, describes Africa in these words:

Africa is a land where people are on the march, imbued with new faiths, especially nationalism, and armed with confidence in their destiny. It is a continent rushing from darkness into vigorous, often violent, awakening.<sup>2</sup>

Within the past two centuries, Africa has gone through three significant epochs. Like the period of the dark ages in European history, Africa went through her dark period when little or nothing was known about her in the West. The northern part of the continent was separated from the south by the veritable iron curtain of the Sahara desert. Her coasts were impenetrable and her forests, often called jungles, were impassable. Explorers at that time described Africa as 'the white man's grave'. Then came the period of colonisation, when, after the abolition of the inhumane slave trade p. 3 the tropical lands were sought for, partly out of curiosity and partly as sources of valuable raw materials. Once the conquest had taken place, the political and economic control was in foreign hands. 'The goals of African society were set by others, and Africa existed for the benefit of Europe. Naturally, this was a period of cultural dislocation.'<sup>3</sup> Christianity, that had failed on two occasions (4th and 5th centuries) to penetrate into the life of the indigenous peoples, finally had its way by the beginning of the 19th century. It came in different 'brands', a fact that jeopardised the unity of the Christian message. The traditional foundations of African peoples have been shaken by all the changes and everyone is asking the question, 'Who am I?' This search for identity sets the tone for a proper understanding of contemporary events in Africa. We shall examine four major expressions of this crisis.

## **CONTEMPORARY ISSUES**

### **The Socio-Political Revolution**

The growth of national consciousness has resulted in the rise of 45 independent countries in Africa, instead of only Liberia and Ethiopia, as in 1957. The transition time has been so short that the transfer from colonial dependence to national independence has been rough and uncertain. In all parts of sub-Sahara Africa, the handing over of political power was brought about by the pressures of an irresistible tide of nationalism. Consciously or unconsciously, Africans began defining themselves as such in contrast to those who oppressed or despised them. Since unity is strength, it became necessary for the leaders to seek political unity at all costs. In many of his public addresses and in his leading publication, *Africa Must Unite*, Kwame Nkrumah expressed the ambition to bring all African nations under what he described as 'United Nations of Africa'.<sup>4</sup> Though his dream was not totally realised, his advocacy of unity reached its climax at the creation of the

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<sup>1</sup> Cited by Ferkiss, V.C. in *Africa's Search for Identity* (New York: George Braziller, 1966), p. 241.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 12.

<sup>3</sup> M'Timkulu, Donald, *Beyond Independence: The Face of the New Africa* (New York: Friendship Press, 1971), p. 6.

<sup>4</sup> Nkumah, Kwame, *Africa Must Unite* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger Publishers, 1963), pp. 12ff.

Organisation of African Unity in Addis Ababa in 1963. The OAU charter enunciates four cardinal principles of modern African p. 4 nationalism: national sovereignty, continental liberation, pan-African unity, and world non-alignment. Though instability, bloodshed, coups and counter-coups, and general unrest have marked our political arena in the last decade, the fact remains that the spirit of unity is the spirit of Africa.<sup>5</sup> This spirit is not limited to politics; it forms the bedrock for the ecumenical movement in Africa.

The nationalists' platform for independent Africa promised not only the creation of democratic states but also a better life. It promised an improved material aspect of life where everybody would share in a new prosperity. Such a propaganda appealed to the down-trodden common man who gave it hearty endorsement. Nkrumah's slogan: 'Seek ye first the political kingdom and all else will be added unto it'<sup>6</sup> became popular. This humanistic hypothesis was to result in three major realities: (1) unprecedented urbanisation with about 25% of Africa's 360 million persons living in cities; (2) a manipulative authoritarian government,<sup>7</sup> and (3) a secularistic society characterised by five features: a shift from permanence to change, from the universal to the particular, from unity to plurality, from the absolute to the relative, and from passivity to activity. Constant student demonstrations and military coups are indicative of dissatisfaction and loss of confidence on our political leaders. Southern Africa is becoming a buffer-state in the power struggle between the West and the East.<sup>8</sup> Millions of fellow Africans are on the run today as refugees.<sup>9</sup> A political Utopia is nothing but an illusion. Where will the African discover themselves? p. 5

### The Cultural Revolution

John Mbiti has rightly defined culture as 'a pattern of human life generated by man's response to his environment. This pattern is not static; it is always in a process of renewal, change, decay, interaction and modification.'<sup>10</sup> During the colonial period the African way of life underwent some incisive changes. The doctrine of racial superiority evidenced in politics, economics, education, science and technology, and religion and culture, was to be repudiated with the turn of the 60s. Throughout the independent African nations there is an awakening of interest in the traditional culture of one's forebears. Blackness ceased to be a symbol of inferiority and became a symbol of identity and pride. All means are sought to propagate the new ideology: music, painting, carving, arts and crafts, university degrees in African studies with a cultural emphasis, seminars and, of course, publications.

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<sup>5</sup> In Sept.-Oct. 1975 issue of *Africa Report* 20:5, President Idi Amin, present Head of OAU says: 'I want to unite them (the, Blacks) completely, not only in America and in Africa, but all over the world. In the United States, Latin America and the Caribbean, there are over 83 million blacks and there are 23 million in other parts of the world. I have spoken at a high level within the OAU, explaining that we must unite with these people.'

<sup>6</sup> Alex Quaison-Sackey, *Africa Unbound*, 1963, p. 10.

<sup>7</sup> 'The Changing Face of Africa,' *To the International Point*, Vol. 1, No. 19-20, Dec. 21, 1974, p. 33. The article indicates that 19 African countries are militarily ruled: 17 have one-party government.

<sup>8</sup> See 'The Soviets in Africa', *Newsweek*, April 4, 1977, p. 43.

<sup>9</sup> The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees reported in August 1976 that more than a million Africans are still living in exile in the 19 nations that have given them shelter (see 'Africa's Record on Human Rights: Millions of People on the Run', *U.S. News And World Report*, Nov. 8, 1976, pp. 39-40).

<sup>10</sup> John Mbiti, 'African Indigenous Culture in Relation to Evangelism and Church Development', in *The Gospel and Frontier Peoples*, ed. R. Pierce Beaver (Pasadena, California: William Carey Library, 1973), p. 79.

*Festac '77*, which recently drew about 17,000 participants to Lagos, is an abiding testimony. The rise of Black Power in America at the same time as national consciousness in Africa cannot be mere coincidence.

Two unfortunate dangers face evangelical Christianity in Africa. In the first place, many Africans identify Christianity with imperialism. Western culture was assumed to be Christian culture. With this type of confusion, the deterioration of Western culture and the loss of political power, one is not surprised at the concentrated efforts of the nationals to uproot any form of foreignness. One national journalist is quoted as saying: 'Cultural revival is out to liquidate the work of the missionaries and their deception which made our people throw away their precious heritage.'<sup>11</sup> The second danger can be described as 'ecclesiological conformity'. The debate in many of our churches today centers round what type of music, arts, painting, architectural designs and officiating garments should be used. 'Should Jesus be given a black face in pictures?' is a popular question. Some of our theologians even claim that p. 6 'Jesus Christ has come to fulfill and not to destroy African religion'<sup>12</sup>. Evangelical Christians are duty bound not only to correct the errors rampant in our day but also to give a defense of their faith ([1 Peter 3:15-16](#)). As the late Dr. Kato said: 'The attitude of Christians towards cultural renaissance need not be negative. Culture as a way of life must be maintained. But where a conflict results (between Bible and culture), the cultural element must give way.'<sup>13</sup> A fellow student at Dallas Theological Seminary, Tony Evans, says it more succinctly: 'Black must be Biblical before it can be beautiful. Where blackness and Bible bump heads, blackness must go.'<sup>14</sup>

### **The Ecclesiological Struggle**

The winds of change and the search for identity have not left the Church in Africa unaffected. 'Despite murder, expulsion and repression of black and white churchmen, Christianity among black Africans is flourishing with dynamic new life.'<sup>15</sup> Churches of every denomination are jammed with young and old. Church authorities estimate that there are more than 100 million Christians among the 360 million black Africans. Ironically, the Church was not prepared for such unprecedented growth. Consequent on growth is a myriad of problems such as universalism, ecumenism, humanism, pluralism, and syncretism.<sup>16</sup> The growing tendency is towards what John Stott labels as 'a fruit cocktail of religions'.<sup>17</sup> Unfortunately, many disciples are caught in our evangelistic nets but remain untaught in our doctrinal institutions. How many average churchmen know that Christ alone saves? How many are convinced that the Cross that saves is able to keep day by day without help from the p. 7 native medicine man? How many understand the

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<sup>11</sup> Cited by Nathaniel Olutimayin in 'The Greatest Threat to the Church in Africa', *Africa Now*, July–August 1975, p. 7.

<sup>12</sup> John Mbiti, 'Christianity and African Culture', a paper presented at PACLA, Dec. 9–19, 1976, cited by Richard B. Kabazzi in *Perception*, 15:8, April 1977, p. 7.

<sup>13</sup> Byang Kato, 'Theological Issues in Africa', in *Bibliotheca Sacra*, Vol. 133 No. 530, April–June 1976, p. 146.

<sup>14</sup> Tony Evans, in a pamphlet entitled *Biblical Theology and the Black Experience* (Black Evangelistic Enterprise Inc., Dallas, Texas, 1977), p. 25.

<sup>15</sup> John Worrall, a reporter on African affairs in 'Why Christianity is Thriving in a Turbulent Black Africa', *U.S. News And World Report*, May 2, 1977, p. 63.

<sup>16</sup> For brief, precise definitions of these terms, read Eric Mallefer's article: 'Syncretism—Its Causes and Cure', *Perception*, No. 7, January 1977.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 2.

implications of what some of our theologians are saying today about Biblical errancy, authentic saving revelation outside the Bible, and Christ's fulfillment of African expectations?

We evangelicals have spent a great deal of time and resources trying to condemn ecumenical activities in Africa to little or no effect. Instead of reacting against a movement, it is time for us to take initiatives. Nothing is wrong in unity based on Biblical principles. But we shall never sacrifice divine commands at the altar of carnal fellowship. Compassion is an intrinsic part of the Gospel, but we shall never allow political, economic and social liberation to replace the spiritual regeneration and reconciliation of man to God. Rather than moratorium, which is a manifestation of a proud carnal mind and false security, Biblical Christianity should maintain 'partnership' which is the legacy of the Apostolic church ([Romans 15:24](#); [Philippians 1:5](#); [2:25](#); [4:15](#)). The Church is of Christ wherever it may be located. This Christological uniqueness must be maintained, though forms and expressions of worship may take on local colors.

### **The Theological Debate**

The theological deficiency of churches in Africa has led to the rise of many sects, heresies, cults and numerous other false movements all over the continent. Several attempts have been made both by individuals and groups to combat the situation. The contributions of such scholars as Mbiti, Idowu, Sawyer, Danquah, Kato and many others cannot be overlooked. As a beginning of joint efforts, in 1969, the All-Africa Council of Churches published a book entitled, *Biblical Revelation and African Belief*. It was written against an African background with the main aim of showing the authenticity of the traditional beliefs based solely on the validity of general revelation. While one admires the scholarship of the work, one seriously disagrees with its universalistic presuppositions and objectives. Concentrated efforts are being made in our universities and other places of higher learning to produce theology for our churches. Ironically, like many of their writings, the theologies so far advocated or proposed cannot be called 'Christian' by any **p. 8** stretch of the imagination. Some of the unacceptable proposals include:

#### *African Theology*

This can be defined as 'a systematic interpretation of the indigenous life and religious experience of Africans as deposited in their oral traditions, myths, legends and the world around them'. It is a theology that emerges from African traditional religion with materials locally collected and collated. The product of such a task includes Idowu's book *Olodumare: God in Yoruba Belief*, Danquah's book, *The Akan Doctrine of God*, and Mbiti's works, *African Religions and Philosophies*, and *Concepts of God in Africa*. These men do not pretend to be writing Christian theology for an African audience and we should not credit such a title to them. One cannot imagine any Christian African turning to the above works for spiritual comfort, exhortation and illumination or for the defense of his faith. The reasons are obvious: apart from being subjective interpretations of fallible evidences, their purpose, as Idowu himself indicates, is to show the spiritual vacuum of the African people.<sup>18</sup> What the Vedas and Upanishads are to Hinduism, so will the works of these men be to African traditional religion. Generations to come may not have to go to oral traditions to find African religion; its monuments are in the making. African theology is not Christian theology. Unfortunately, its proponents are not only using Christian

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<sup>18</sup> E.B. Idowu, *Olodumare: God in Yoruba Belief*. Mbiti shares the same conviction in his *African Religions and Philosophies*.



terminology, they claim to be Christians. This is why Kato states: 'African theology seems to be heading for syncretism and universalism.' He goes on to say: 'In the African evangelicals' effort to express Christianity in the context of the African, the Bible must remain the absolute source.'<sup>19</sup>

### *Black Theology*

Tom Skinner, considered to be a moderate, defined Black Theology in these words: 'If theology is the study of God, when we talk about Black Theology we are talking about the study of God through p. 9 the black experience.'<sup>20</sup> Originating simultaneously with the Black Power movement of the 60s in North America, Black Theology, as a system, alleges that white theology has exploited the black man, and now turns the tables by calling for black economy, black power, black churches and black ideologies. It does not see any religious differences, since its philosophy is to attain political prominence. As a result it does not hesitate to align itself with the Black Muslim movement. James Cone, the leading mouthpiece and more radical advocate, said in a personal interview that the primary source of Black Theology is the experience of the American Black.<sup>21</sup> In its ecclesiastical pretense and with the seeming offer of identity, Black Theology is gaining some ground in Africa, particularly in the deep south. In my assessment, Black Theology seems to be a Marxist philosophy wrapped in the garb of theology.<sup>22</sup> In places of apparent quietness and political stability, Black Theology has no message. Actually, Black Theology is as foreign to Africa as alleged Western theology.

### *Theology of Contextualisation*

In cross-cultural communication, the theology of contextualisation is being pushed today. The term is difficult to define because it describes itself as 'dynamic-equivalence theology' comparable to the methodology employed by the Wycliffe Bible Translators. Though the system has much to commend it its end-product is less desirable. Undertaking the discipline, the craftsman does not look at his own situation from the standpoint of a text, but rather he looks at the text from the standpoint of his life-situation and existence. In essence the message can become relativistic, existential and situational. Human experiences can become normative rather than the inerrant and infallible Word of God. Localised theology could take on any form as the Theology of Liberation in Latin America, and could result in unprecedented consequences as evidenced in Germany in the 40s.

Contrary to above-mentioned brands, the writer proposes *Biblical p. 10 Theology in an African setting*. Biblical Theology can be defined as 'a discipline that scientifically expounds God's revelatory acts in their historical progressive contexts as deposited in the Bible and systematically organises its results'. It presupposes the infallibility and authenticity of the Word of God which is its primary source. It is not merely an exegesis of the text though this is indispensable to it, neither is it systematic theology which employs all and every available source of revelation. A student of Biblical Theology deals with the text before him in its historical and grammatical setting. Rather than

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<sup>19</sup> Byang H. Kato, *Theological Pitfalls in Africa* (Nairobi: Evangel Publishing House, 1975).

<sup>20</sup> Tom Skinner, *If Christ is the Answer What are the Questions?* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1975), p. 109.

<sup>21</sup> During question time after his guest lecture on 'Worship in the Black Church' at Perkins Graduate School of Theology, Dallas, Texas, April 1977.

<sup>22</sup> For an excellent critique of Black Theology, see Kato's article in *Perception* No. 6, October 1976.

superimposing his ideas, he humbly derives the theological categories from the text. He undergirds himself with such questions as: what is the lexical meaning of the word? what is the intent of the writer in using the particular word or phrase or concept? how did the immediate audience understand it? and what are its implications for contemporary situations? Such an approach to Scripture will both honor God and edify the saints. It will result in rightly dividing the word of truth in terms of expository preaching desperately needed in our churches today, and will provide the base on which to construct a systematic theology and an *apologia* for churches in Africa. It will be an illusion for the evangelicals of Africa to expect this type of theology from our universities: they are not set up for such a discipline. Our seminaries can do this only if their present standards are raised.

## THE FUTURE OF EVANGELICALS IN AFRICA

The question of the future is a very touchy one. One could be as extremely pessimistic as Tai Solarin who in 1961 wrote in the *Lagos Daily Times*, the newspaper with the widest circulation in West Africa, that Christianity has no future in Nigeria.<sup>23</sup> History has proved him wrong. On the other hand, one could be as overly excited about the zeal and enthusiasm of African Christians as Billy Graham, who pleads for African missionaries to America at **P. 11** the close of PACLA.<sup>24</sup> One thing is sure: the Church of Christ has come to exist in Africa regardless of Satanic opposition. Our Lord has said: 'I will build my church, and the gates of hades shall not prevail against it' ([Matthew 16:18b](#)). From this and similar statements about the Church in the New Testament, churches in Africa can derive their directives.

### The Threats to the Church in Africa

That the 'gates of hades'<sup>25</sup> will confront the evangelical churches in Africa goes without question. The distinguishing mark of the true Church throughout the ages has been Satanic opposition. Besides promoting the persecution of the saints, a fact which African Christians should be prepared for, Satan delights himself in sowing falsehood wherever the truth of the Gospel message is sown. This sober reality constitutes the threat to the Church in Africa. The following issues demand our attention: syncretism, sectarianism, secularism, humanism, ecumenism, universalism and pluralism.<sup>2</sup>

In the light of all these perils it is comforting to know that he who has promised is faithful and he will do it: 'I will build my church and the gates of hades shall not prevail against it.' Like the Reformers of the 16th century, evangelical Christians in Africa and the world in general must reaffirm their 'total, unconditional and exclusive commitment'<sup>28</sup> to

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<sup>23</sup> Tai Solarin is an influential Nigerian educator and writer. Classifying the Protestant Churches begun by foreign missionaries as 'imposed Christian churches', he contended that by 1984 their numerical strength would be half of what it was in 1954. See: 'Future of Christianity in West Africa', *Nigeria Daily Times*, Sept. 16, 1961.

<sup>24</sup> Roger C. Palms quoted Billy Graham in 'Africa: a mighty challenge', *Decision*, April 1977, pp. 8-9. Such a possibility is not denied. It is only hard to see its probability now in light of the internal struggles and perils of the churches in Africa and diplomatic uneasiness abroad.

<sup>25</sup> There are various interpretations of the phrase 'gates of hades'. In this paper it is used to denote the Satanic opposition that militates against God and all his programs.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 12.

<sup>28</sup> Eric Maillefer, *Perception*, No. 7, p. 7.



the authority of the Word of God. The theological battle in Africa will be won or lost in the areas of the truths concerning the inspiration, infallibility, inerrancy, and absolute p. 12 authority of the Scriptures.<sup>29</sup> It is imperative therefore for African evangelicals to establish (i) proper priority; (ii) proper perspective; and (iii) proper programs. I submit the following:

### **The Priority of the Church**

The priority of the Church is threefold: (a) in relation to God; (b) in relation to the Body; (c) in relation to the world. According to the Westminster Shorter Catechism, the purpose and duty of the Church is to glorify God and enjoy him forever. This noble function was exemplified by the life of our Lord, who in [John 17:4](#) declares: 'I have glorified thee on the earth; I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.' Like her Head, the Church has the primary and fundamental duty of glorifying God. This she does by praising him ([Psalm 50:23](#)); by doing his will ([Galatians 1:24](#)); by acknowledging who he is ([Romans 1:21](#)); by bearing fruit ([John 15:8](#)); by suffering with him ([Romans 8:17, 30](#)); by loving one another ([John 13:35](#)); by her good works ([Matthew 5:16](#); [I Peter 2:12](#)); and by her purity ([I Corinthians 6:19-20](#)).

Next to glorifying God, the Church has the responsibility of edifying her members. To this end, spiritual gifts, talents and ministries are being bestowed on every genuine member of the Church ([Romans 12:6-8](#); [I Corinthians 12:7-11, 28-30](#); [Ephesians 4:11-12](#); [I Peter 4:10-11](#)). It is mandatory for the pastor-teachers to teach their members how to discover their God-given abilities, and to encourage them to exercise such abilities according to the measure of grace ([Romans 12:6](#)), to the glory of God ([I Peter 4:11](#)), and for the perfecting of the saints till we all come in the unity of the faith ([Ephesians 4:12-13](#)). The concept of 'Body Figure', wherein unity in diversity predominates, rules out selfishness, schism,, and moratorium. When we humbly exercise our gifts in love we have an abiding testimony before the watching world. In unity lies strength.

To the world, the Church has the responsibility of witnessing for Christ and discipling the nations ([Acts 1:8](#); [Matthew 28:19](#)). This does not preclude works of charity which are an intrinsic part of the p. 13 good news. However, caution needs to be exercised in this area. The Church is not an organisation for social and political asylum, nor are we to use divine resources to bribe people into God's kingdom. Since the Church is in the world but not of the world, she should not be indifferent to the social, political, and economic struggles of mankind; neither should she sacrifice her ambassadorial function at the altar of social involvement. Our Lord Jesus Christ liberates the total man: the material and the non-material. Thus he says: 'If the Son, therefore, shall make you free, you shall be free indeed' ([John 8:36](#)). The Biblical sequence begins with an internal spiritual regeneration and reconciliation of man to God, manifesting itself in an external physical transformation and reconciliation of man to man in society. The task of the Church therefore is to confront (not maintain dialogue with) the world with the claims of Christ as deposited in the Bible. This mission, central to the heart of God, his Son, and the apostles, must be the mission of evangelicals to the world. The New Testament Church was a missionary Church; and so must be ours. We must go forth (i) with a thorough-going Biblicism which does justice to the claims of the Scriptures, and (ii) with a Biblicism that is both *contemporary* and *relevant*.

### **The Perspective of the Church**

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<sup>29</sup> Dr. Francis Schaeffer stressed the same fact at the consultation of SIM directors held at the Emmaus Bible Institute, St. Legier, Switzerland. See *Africa Now*, March-April 1977, p. 15.

The theological prospects and religious movements in Africa resemble the world of the 2nd and 3rd centuries of the Christian era. There was a time of doctrinal strifes which called for ecumenical effort to formulate creeds and a positive Christian apologetic. Likewise, evangelicals in Africa need a system which will express theological concepts in terms of African situations. Theology in Africa should scratch where it itches. Such problems as polygamy, family structure, spirit-world, worship and the Christian's responsibility to the government need to be tackled by evangelical African theologians, and Biblical answers presented. Also we need Christian apologists like Tertullian, who will, without compromising, uphold the uniqueness of the Biblical faith and present a defense to the intellectual world. To accomplish such an objective, sound and advanced theological training becomes imperative. The price can never be too high. **p. 14**

In closing, it needs to be said that whatever organisational programs we decide to undertake must reflect our priority, perspective, and objectives.<sup>30</sup> We must, individually and corporately, do our utmost in the power of the Holy Spirit for God's highest and the good of mankind.

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## Contextualization: Asian Theology

by BONG RIN RO

*Reprinted from What Asian Christians Are Thinking with permission.*

IN THE first part of the paper Dr. Ro asks: 'What does contextualization mean?' He quotes from the Theological Education Fund Report *Ministry in Context*:

'Contextualization is not simply a fad or catch-word but a theological necessity demanded by the incarnational nature of the Word. What does the term imply? It means all that is implied in the familiar term "indigenization" and yet seeks to press beyond. Contextualization has to do with how we assess the peculiarity of Third World contexts. Indigenization tends to be used in the sense of responding to the Gospel in terms of a traditional culture. Contextualization, while not ignoring this, takes into account the processes of secularity, technology, and struggle for human justice, which characterize the historical movement of nations in the Third World.'<sup>1</sup>

Bong Ro comments:

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<sup>30</sup> The late Dr. Kato's suggested programs are still up-to-date and very appropriate. See (a) 'Theological Trends in Africa Today', in *Perception*, April 1973, March 1974. (b) 'Africa's Christian Future', *Christianity Today*, October 25, 1975, pp. 12-16. (c) 'Theological Issues in Africa', *Bibliotheca Sacra* 133:530, April-June 1976, pp. 143-52.

<sup>1</sup> Theological Education Fund, *Ministry in Context: the Third Mandate Programme of the Theological Education Fund 1970-1977* (Biomley, England: TEF 1972), pp. 19-20.