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sanctified, is ever in a position where He does not need that ministry to submit himself in obedience to it. As Calvin puts it,

> "We see that the most learned need to be taught, the most upright and the most righteous have need to be admonished. If God has already put us on the good road and bestowed upon us the gifts of the Holy Spirit, we must not think that preaching is now unnecessary for us, for we must be led right up to the end, since our perfection is not in this world".[15]

T. H. L. Parker quotes from one of Calvin's sermons on Deuteronomy to illustrate the kind of authority preaching has and the duty of obedience that it lays on those who hear it: p. 307

> "It is especially said 'The people has been rebellious against the mouth of God'. And how is that? It is not narrated that God appeared visibly, or that a voice was heard from heaven. No, it was Moses who had spoken it, it was a man who said that the people resisted the mouth of God. So we see how God wishes His Word to be received in such humility when He sends men to declare what He commands them, as if He were in the midst of us. The doctrine, then, which is put forward in the name of God, ought to be as authoritative as if all the Angels of Heaven descended to us, as if God Himself had revealed His majesty before our eyes. In this way He wished to test the obedience of our faith."[16]

A greater appreciation of this important truth would surely serve to deliver the people of God from the cardinal error of confusing the proclamation of the Word of God with an exercise in public speaking to be assessed, judged, criticized and even patronized, instead of accepted humbly and joyfully in a spirit of obedience and submission as a word from on high. The Apostle Paul says it all in his memorable words to the Thessalonians:

> "For this cause thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the Word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the Word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe."[17]

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From the Third World: A New Approach to Theological Education

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[15] Commentary on 1 Peter 1:25.

[16] Corpus Reformatorum, xxv, p.638.

[17] 1 Thess. 2:13.

With the term 'Christian higher education' we usually refer to university level programs that require at least secondary education as a requirement for entrance. In regard to the quality factor in Christian education this is very often equated with a high academic level, extensive library holdings, and a concentration of professors and students dedicated to full-time study or teaching. Such requirements forcibly limit us to a very small portion of the potential leaders of the church. This is especially true in the Third World, where the number of people who qualify for this kind of higher education necessarily represent an elite, and the financing required further reduces the number of candidates who can be served. Either consciously or unconsciously, however, the goal toward which theological education has evolved over many decades in the developing world has been precisely this type of model. We see this in our own institution in Central America, the Latin American Biblical Seminary, as our academic level has evolved upward over the last decades. This movement is paralleled by many other institutions in our area and the rest of the Third World. We must ask ourselves whether the criteria that have moved us in this direction are primarily imported standards that we have accepted uncritically. Not only those of us who originally came from the so-called developed world may have been uncritical on this score, but also our Latin American, African, or Asian colleagues who would not have an 'inferior' type of training imposed on them but wished also to gain access to Christian higher education, with a view to reproducing it through local institutions.

LATIN AMERICAN REALITIES

Antedating the recent theological flowering in Latin America there was another kind of flowering from the same root, a root that we can define as a re-thinking and re-elaboration of our Christian heritage from within the framework of Latin American realities. By Christian heritage we refer either to theology proper or, in the case we will take up now, theological education and its flowering in the extension movement. P. 309

In Latin America we have become aware that our church situation is radically different from the church situation in North America or Europe; churches here will never represent in the midst of this society what the established Protestant church does in Europe and North America. That model is simply not applicable in our situation. Briefly put, the Protestant church in Latin America is a church of the poor. That ten per cent or so of the population that comprises the Protestant church is found primarily among the rural or urban working classes, which occupy a much lower section of the socio-economic spectrum than relatively well-off blue-collar workers in the North. This church grows, propagates itself, instructs itself, and celebrates its faith with the help of ad hoc ministers, people who in other areas of the world might be called lay leaders.

Let's note a few pertinent facts about this state of affairs. First, these leaders perform the functions of ministry. They mobilize, organize, and accompany the members of the church in their different activities. More significantly, they are the ones responsible for interpreting what Christian faith means, for preaching it and for instructing the body of Christ. Growing out of the economic condition of the churches is a second fact: these leaders, in order to obtain adequate education and training for their task, cannot be separated from their total life situation. For the most part the churches do not have the resources to send them to a seminary. Even where a church is located in the same city as a seminary, there are not the resources necessary for a number of people to study full-time nor to support them afterwards as full-time ministers on a professional level.

A third fact: seminaries have never been able to provide enough ministers for the growing number of congregations. Perhaps we should also add that theologically the traditional pattern of pastoral training might not be the most appropriate for the Latin

American situation. The Protestant church in Latin America, as the Body of Christ, incarnates His presence among the poor. It is not the mission of theological education to demand a social evolution of its leaders into the middle or upper strata of society by following the residential school model, but rather to equip them to serve this church of the poor by providing in-service training for church leaders actively engaged on the congregational level.

THE ORIGIN OF THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION BY EXTENSION IN GUATEMALA

Gifted theological educators were present in one of the principal denominations of Guatemala in the 1960s. As they analyzed the P. 310 church situation, they realized that their small theological institution, with rather high academic requirements and located in the capital city, was simply irrelevant as far as the leadership needs of the church were concerned. It had not produced in its many years of existence more than a handful of ministers capable of inserting themselves into the local churches, of living with the people and ministering there in a meaningful way. They had effectively been educated out of their original context. Yet the church maintained its life and grew with an absence of trained ministers. An analysis of the dynamics of church life and growth indicated that natural leaders, gifted by the Holy Spirit, would arise in each congregation and carry out, sometimes rather inadequately, the functions of ministry necessary for the ongoing life of the church. A new model of theological education was called for if these people were to be served, and through them their churches. The policy of cutting ministerial candidates off from their base and transferring them to a residential seminary had already been tried and found wanting. These theological educators concluded that they must reverse the process. Theological education was to be taken to those who had proved their capability and calling. They should have the opportunity to study Scripture, theology, church history and pastoral subjects within their communities and in relation to their ministry. The seminary must extend itself to them rather than bring them in to the seminary. Theological education by extension was born.

In the classic extension model first developed in Guatemala, a central institution fans out into local centres, churches, in the person of its professors. Classes are held one day a week, related to materials provided for individual study between class meetings. The students continue their regular employment and regular church activities, thus bringing to their study the vitality of total immersion in their ministerial situation. The logic of this approach was almost immediately evident to church leaders and theological educators, especially those on the middle level academically throughout Latin America. As the Guatemala experiment began to be publicized, imitators sprang up everywhere. Theological education by extension has now been recreated hundreds of times not only in Latin America but throughout the Third World and, in recent years, also in the developed countries.

LIBERATION OR DOMESTICATION?

Theological education by extension (TEE) is not a panacea nor much less is it automatically an adequate response to the demands of the church of the poor. TEE has often been conceived of simply as traditional P. 311 pastoral training of whatever level, carried out in a new framework, a new methodological situation—traditional theological education *in* a situation of poverty. By contrast, theological education by extension can

also be conceived of as an enabling education *for* a context of poverty. There is a world of difference between the two concepts.

In the first there is a new delivery system, a methodological adaptation but not an educational alternative. There are instances where TEE programs reproduce, more efficently perhaps, a curriculum of indoctrination or domestication. TEE is a more economical way to indoctrinate. In contrast, real theological education must take into account the total context of the learners—their own poverty and their own ability to create, to change, to develop, to be God's instruments for the building of a church in the midst of desperate conditions. Unfortunately, in the rush to create TEE programs, teaching materials have been produced with inadequate pedagogical and theological criteria, not for dialogue and growth or the assuming of responsibility for learning and for creative ministry, but just the opposite—for producing parrots, through a simplistic presentation of theological and Biblical issues that are anything but simple. In the face of this distortion many educators have justifiably questioned the whole TEE movement, asking whether such reductionism is inherent in the methodology itself.

On the other hand, if we conceive of TEE as theological education *for* a context of poverty, that is, a new methodology that goes beyond effective delivery of a content, then we realize that we must approach the task from the bottom—from the church of the poor and its natural leaders, its only leaders. We must approach the task then from the church itself, rather than from the point of view of an institution that seeks to deliver a prepackaged program. We must view the objectives and the content of theological education, as well as its methodology, from the standpoint of the lay ministers' situation as an integral part of their churches and communities. These ad hoc pastors are *the* agents of the church, its development, change, and growth. Content and methodology together must produce a combination of study, action, and reflection that will incorporate pastoral and community activities as part of the learning process.

We can picture the situation of the extension student as a triangle. At one angle stands the student himself as a person, usually a fairly mature person who has come to a position of responsibility and leadership through the selection processes of the life of the church. Another point of the triangle represents the church, the believing p. 312 community in which this person functions. The third point of the triangle stands for the neighbourhood, town, or city in which the church is located and which it must serve in an integral way. The student must develop a critical consciousness regarding himself as a person, a minister, and a community agent. His critical consciousness will also focus on the church, its life and its mission, its message. It is particularly important that the minister-student also learn to think critically about the community and its problems, and work out the relation of the church's message and mission to society and its needs.

For this type of education to take place, the ministerial student must be enabled to bring experience into vital interaction with course materials provided by the theological program. He needs tools for analysis—analysis of Scripture, of his theological heritage, and also of his environment, the socio-economic and cultural setting of his congregation in the local community and the national scene. He needs tools for dialog and involvement in these areas. In relation to traditional subject areas, for example, a course on the Gospels will require the student of a contextualized theological education by extension to study the trial of Jesus in the light of the power structures of Jewish society in the first century. He will then reflect on the passion story together with his congregation in relation to power structures in his own context, working through the concept of institutionalized injustice and Christian responses to repression.

An integrated course of study of this type aims to enable the student to acquire the tools that will open up Scripture and the circumstances in which its events were played

out, and at the same time to acquire the tools to analyze the present situation in which the life of the church and Christian witness are lived out.

Innovatively contextualized theological education can be developed on every academic level; the particular scholastic level chosen by a specific program will be determined by the target group of ad hoc pastors. Even on the university level (and there are many leaders functioning as pastors who have managed to reach this level), quality in Christian higher education will be determined not so much by the traditional canons mentioned at the beginning of this article, but by the relevance of program content and methodology, and the demand for excellence in independent study and community involvement that it places on the student. This means both a new way of doing theology and a new way of doing theological education. p. 313

POSTSCRIPT: WHERE TO GO FOR MORE INFORMATION ON ALTERNATIVE FORMS OF THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

The most pertinent and Comprehensive volume on the subject is *The Extension Movement in Theological Education*, by F. Ross Kinsler, revised edition, 1981, published by the William Carey Library, South Pasadena, California. It bears the subtitle 'A Call to Renewal of the Ministry,' an indication that the book deals not only with method or educational theory, but is intimately related to the study of what ministry in the church means today in the Third World—and in the developed world as well.

A constant up-date on innovative theological education world-wide is provided by *Ministerial Formation*, a bulletin published by the Program on Theological Education, World Council of Churches, Geneva, Switzerland. The purpose of this quarterly newsletter is to encourage sharing and co-operation among people working for the renewal of the church's program of ministerial formation.

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Book Reviews

EXEGESIS AND INTERPRETATION

D. M. Lloyd-Jones, *Darkness and Light: An Exposition of Ephesians 4:17 to 5:17*
Reviewed by Paul D. Gardner

FAITH AND CHURCH

John Wenham, *Easter Enigma*
Reviewed by Francis Foulkes
James Atkinson, *Martin Luther: Prophet to the Church Catholic*
Reviewed by Francis Foulkes