

THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION AND EVANGELIZATION REPORT

Theological training programs intended to equip pastoral and evangelistic ministry in many cases are outmoded and antiquated. Any advance in this crucial area must begin with a reconsideration of the basic objectives of theological education. Irrespective of the level sought, attention must be given to the integrated development of the student's total person in his *being, knowing* and *doing*, to the end that the man of God be equipped:

1. To lead others to commitment to Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord.
2. To sustain in commitment those who have believed.
3. To mobilize the church to effective evangelistic activity.

Theological educators should pay greater regard to the spiritual gifts of the seminary candidate, his teachability in the intellectual sphere (e.g., Paul's concept of being "taught by the Spirit"), and emotional and spiritual maturity capable of embodying the fruit of the Spirit (love, peace, patience, etc.).

The training of leaders for evangelization must be pursued under the Spirit in an atmosphere of excellence both in the academic and practical spheres. Quality must not be sacrificed for quantity. In practice, the pressures of academic concerns frequently undermine the spiritual development of the student. The division of a student's curriculum into alternating or concurrent periods of formal instruction and field service should contribute towards the development of both mind and spirit. Lack of objective criteria for the evaluation of ministerial and evangelistic skills is a conspicuous deficiency demanding careful research. Whatever the pattern of theological education, the art of evangelization is frequently best communicated through the example of a seasoned evangelist or pastor. Principals and professors of theological training institutions should themselves be theologians with a passion for evangelism, since the art is "caught" as well as "taught." Perhaps the cell concept, wherein the mature student guides a core of inexperienced students, could be employed with profit both in formal instruction and in field service.

Theological education for evangelization in the traditional residential pattern must come to grips with the following obstacles. The typical residential program tends: 1. to decontextualize the student by isolating him from his cultural milieu; 2. to generate an unhealthy dependence of the third world student upon the sponsoring institution; 3. to lead to stagnation through lack of input from the external world. It is recognized, however, that the obstacles of the residential institution are by no means insurmountable. Indeed, the residential pattern offers the distinct advantage of providing an ideal laboratory in which the New Testament ideal of community can be experienced. Further study should be given to the ways and means of deepening the sense of community in theological education between the student, the professor, and the church in the world. It is urged that the student-professor relationship be extended in field service and internship experience. The TEF publication "Learning in Context" has some helpful comments on new patterns of theological education.

The strategy of theological education for evangelization ought to pay due regard to new patterns of non-residential education such as theological education by extension. Extension education is a potentially effective tool for advancing evangelism because of the greater flexibility of its curriculum and its ready application to the people at the local level. Perhaps the time is coming when Third World leaders trained in TEE techniques can be enlisted to promote extension education in the service of evangelism in given areas in the Western world.

The biblical principle of the priesthood of all believers (1 Pet. 2:1-10) where each member of the church is endowed with gifts of the Spirit, underscores the fact that laymen in the local church likewise must be trained and equipped for evangelism. Attitudes of paternalism and professionalism on the part of some clergy, which hinder involvement in local evangelism, must be squarely faced and forsaken. Valuable training programs which equip lay people for a ministry of evangelization are being developed through specialized training centers and functional institutes in many parts of the world. Such lay training programs for evangelization supplement the theological schools and also the teaching ministry of the local church, and ought to be done in cooperation with the local fellowship.

The task of educating a force for evangelism on a global scale necessitates careful consideration of the issue of the "contextualization" of the Gospel. In the face of confusion arising from fluidity of usage, particularly in some ecumenical circles, the following definition of contextualization is proposed: "Contextualization means the translation of the unchanging content of the Gospel of the kingdom into verbal form meaningful to peoples in their separate cultures and within their particular existential situations." In this regard it is reaffirmed that this Gospel of the kingdom as defined in Holy Scripture is *totally relevant* to man in the totality of his need. This follows because the Gospel was designed and provided by the same God who made the human heart and who knows the depths of man's alienation from Him and from his fellows. All who do the work of the evangelist are under solemn obligation to *guard* this relevant, revealed Gospel. The task in evangelism is to communicate the Gospel to all men in terms meaningful to their cultural identity and existential condition. The *problem* in contextualization as popularly understood is that one can all too easily drift into an unwarranted and God-displeasing syncretism. By this is meant the sort of accommodation to the cultural values of a people that results in a mixture of biblical truth and ethnic religion. Syncretism invariably and inevitably dilutes and distorts the fact that Jesus Christ alone is Lord and Savior. Furthermore, when one attempts to translate biblical truth into the language and culture of a people, one is under solemn obligation to produce what will be no more and no less than the normative Word of God. The more one reflects on the task of contextualization; the more conscious one becomes of the larger task, of seeking to structure theological thought within each separate culture in such a way that the total corpus of biblical truth is more faithfully communicated to every man in his own culture.

A strategy of theological education for evangelization must come to grips with the dearth of classical reference works, textbooks and monographs on the biblical foundation of the faith and on issues of con-

temporary theological concern in the Third World. Little creative theological writing by spokesmen of the younger churches has been produced. The following recommendations are put forward to stimulate the production of relevant theological literature in the Third World: 1. theological institutions should offer writing sabbaticals to promising professors; 2. a collective approach needs to be made to theological funding agencies for assistance in this area of theological literature; 3. extensive bibliographies need to be developed.

Centers for theological research can be a vital stimulus to effective communication of the Gospel. Clearly, the structure and content of such research facilities will differ from continent to continent and culture to culture. Thus it is recommended that each major geographical region develop its own theological research center which reflects the uniqueness of its own cultural situation. The proposed research centers ought to pursue study in the following areas: 1. theological research translating basic biblical concepts such as "God," "man," "salvation," etc., into cultural contexts; 2. an analysis of contemporary competing ideologies which tend to discredit the authenticity and relevance of the Gospel, e.g., Neo-Marxism, religious syncretism, etc.; 3. area studies from a cultural, historical and socio-political perspective, so as to better understand the structures and problems of countries resistant or closed to the Gospel; 4. methods of evangelism and the production of suitable evangelistic materials. In relation to the above goals, it is recommended that coordination at the international level implement a system of exchange of ideas and personnel between the various theological research centers. On a level of international coordination, an evangelistic research committee could take responsibility for the development of evangelistic research tools in a resource pool of available materials, and for the establishment of an evangelistic research lending library to serve as the central deposit for evangelistic and missionary publications and archives.

Optimum effectiveness in the task of training communicators of the Gospel demands new patterns of cooperation in theological education. Such regional and international relationships would facilitate the sharing of new educational methods, curriculum planning, etc., and advise concerning the availability of new publications in the various theological disciplines. To implement these objectives, it is recommended that in addition to cooperation in existing theological associations, evangelical associations of theological schools, theological societies and professional theological journals of modest proportions be created on the regional level, where desirable. The calling of conferences to study specific problems in the area of theological education would be of further help. Finally, the older churches could demonstrate their concern for world evangelization by assisting their brethren in the younger churches to establish theological training institutions in strategic centers of the world. The goal to which the entire church must press with urgency is the equipping of gifted national educators to bear the responsibility of training their own peoples for the effective evangelization of the world.

CHRISTIAN HIGHER EDUCATION AND WORLD EVANGELIZATION:

A Strategy for the Future

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If only we had listened to God! In his earliest conversations with the man he created, God talked about the oneness of the earth and the stewardship of its resources. The ideas of a "Global Village" and "Spaceship Earth" are nothing new. But, as a symptom of our sin, we split the world into pieces of self-interest and blazed a trail toward extinction with our polluting wastes.

Mercifully, God is speaking again. Our fantasies of selfish growth and unlimited resources have been exposed by ecological prophets wearing the mantle of Malthus. God must laugh as he hears us talking today about the oneness of the world and the management of resources as if we had just invented the first survival kit for the human race.

World evangelization also depends upon a global view and stewardship of resources, but like the earth it has been victimized by selfish interests and wasted resources. Our sin is not always conscious. Selfishness frequently comes in the form of competitive ministries, and waste is justified by doctrinal differences. Behind the veil of these attitudes is the same thinking that has taken us to the brink of extinction in the secular world — self-interest in viewpoint and self-indulgence in resources. We can no longer afford these luxuries. If we are as serious about world evangelization as the human race is about survival, we, too, will let God speak again.

The relationship between Christian higher education and evangelism illustrates our shortcoming. Each claims the redemptive purpose and the global scope of Christ's continuing mission. Like C. P. Snow's "two cultures" of art and culture in the academic world, however, Christian higher education and evangelism tip their hats but they do not speak. Communication between the two ministries is limited. They tend to divide into narrow, competing specialties rather than complementary tasks in the Kingdom of God. Worst of all they seek to multiply by using duplicated resources of men, money, space, and time. To me, the two cultures of Christian higher education and evangelism point out the major issue in world evangelism to which this Congress should address itself. Berlin and Minneapolis gave us solid position papers and strong resolutions. Our need now is a plan of action. Therefore, my purpose is to reassemble Christ's great commission as a whole-world view in order to rediscover the principles of stewardship and reinforce the perspective of size as the strategy for the future of Christian higher education in world evangelization.