

Missionalia

Southern African Journal for Missiology

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Contents

Editorial	III
Articles	
The Prosperity Gospel <i>CJP (Nelus) Niemandt</i>	203
Towards understanding mission to Muslims in Kenya <i>Rebecca Jepkemei Lagat</i>	221
Is our well poisoned? <i>Felix Ehimare Enegho</i>	237
The Ethics of Identity and World Christianity <i>David Tonghou Ngong</i>	251
Reverse Mission and the Establishment of Redeemed Christian Church (RCCG) in Canada <i>Dele Jemirade</i>	265
Reading the Parable of the Rich Barn-Builder <i>Omaka Kalu Ngele (Ph.D), Kingsley Ikechukwu Uwaegbute</i> <i>(corresponding author) and Damian Onyemaechi Odo</i>	287
Instructions to contributors	303
Subscriptions	304

Editorial

Twenty-first century world has increasingly become a contesting and an ever-changing space. It is a world embedded in post-modernism, absolute truth is no longer the norm. The political economy philosophy intertwined with materialism, rooted in neoliberalism and globalisation, has little regard for local communities, economies and realities. Globalisation philosophy in particular has infiltrated the religious sector. We see the emergence of brands of religions whose ethos and moral are unfamiliar. The emergence of prosperity gospel is another issue that the church has to contend with in this century. These issues have, for better or for worse, consequences for the theology of mission. Regardless, one thing remains certain. That is; this ever-changing space with its numerous pop-ups gives us opportunities to co-work with the Triune God in his mission endeavour – *missio Dei*. Mission should therefore remain at the cutting edge of the Christian movement in order to engage and reflect on these issues in ways that usher in transformative praxes. Praxes that point to and work for the coming of the Kingdom of God here on earth as it is in heaven. In this regard, contributors to this edition, coming from various backgrounds, add very important insights for ongoing Missiological reflections.

Nelus Niemandt aptly investigated prosperity gospel from a missiological and African perspective, but in close relation to the discourses on decoloniality and decolonialisation, and asked if the prosperity gospel is a new form of colonialization. Among other things, in his contribution Niemandt concluded that the prosperity gospel is a spiritualisation of materiality and celebration of classic symbols of surplus/excess and consumerism. Thus, there is need to engage on an ongoing Missiological reflection on 'too much interest in material/ earthly possessions' as Ngele, Uwaegbute and Odo have highlighted in their contribution. In relation to contemporary Nigerian Christianity their study shows that the 'quest for material possessions has taken centre stage; there is excessive desire for material possession by Nigerian Christians and this has become a bane of true spirituality in contemporary Nigerian Christianity'. As a result, point out Felix Enegho in his contribution to this edition, even strategic Christian ministry such as higher education institutions has come to care less about the overall wellbeing of the students but are more concerned about the economic benefits. Admittedly, as pointed out by Niemandt, the prosperity gospel represents one of the most interesting challenges to missiologists. Thus, Niemandt's contribution incites further reflection on the topic. Prosperity gospel is indeed one of the phenomenon, which has changed the Christian space locally and the world over. It is thus pertinent to interrogate ethics of identity and world Christianity as David Ngong has done in his contribution to this edition.

Further, Christian witness has to carry on regardless of the challenges emanating from this ever-changing global space. This witness is more than just winning souls through conversion to Christian faith. In the process of witnessing there is need to understand what mission to other than Christians entail. In relation to witnessing to Muslims in Kenya, Rebecca Lagat's contribution is pertinent as she argues that "love and understanding for the true meaning and purpose of God's *missio Dei* and love for fellow men should form the basis of a clear mode of operation". Grasping the purpose of *missio Dei* and how we join in God's mission to the world provide missiologists in particular and change agents in general the mission motif for ongoing witness. Reverse mission as a case in point must be celebrated in many ways yet it ought to subscribe to ways of being and working that are consistent with *missio Dei*. In this regard, Dele Jemirade's contribution shares valuable insights by investigating the establishment of a Nigerian brand of church known as Redeemed Christian Church in Canada.

As the world keeps on evolving, missiology has to stay abreast so that mission endeavours are imagined and carried out with creativity in this ever-changing world.

Prof Reggie W Nel & Dr Lukwikilu (Credo) Mangayi