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# BOOK REVIEW

## CONTESTED ISSUES IN TRAINING MINISTERS IN SOUTH AFRICA

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Naidoo, M. (ed.), *Contested issues in training ministers in South Africa*, (Stellenbosch: Sun Media, 2015).

This volume comprises eleven chapters, divided into three main sections, namely Structural realities of theological education; Ministerial formation challenges, and New developments. This is a sequel to another excellent edition entitled *Between the real and ideal: Ministerial formation in South Africa* (2012). The contributing authors are outstanding scholars and ministers in the field of Theology.

The chapters grouped under Structural realities of theological education address the realities and status of theological education in South Africa, especially in terms of quality, accreditation, and diversity. The first chapter poses a rhetorical question relating to re-integration, especially with the historical fragmentation of theological education in South Africa. Theological education at the University of the Western Cape is used as an example of how theological education is slowly retreating into obscurity. The inevitability of an interdisciplinary approach to theological education is highlighted and the six conflicting models prove this point.

The second chapter contains some invaluable information regarding the accreditation processes. A brief historical overview of theological education, especially through denominational institutions, together with the challenges, is helpful by pointing out how faculties of theology benefited, on the one hand, while having to allow secularisation into the Theology curriculum, on the other. The current red

tape ushered in by the Higher Education Act 101 of 1997 is given and the rubrics involved in accreditation processes highlighted. The frustration brought by these processes earmarks the current scenario in relation to credibility and quality assurance at the expense of private and independent institutional capacities. The chapter closes by considering some models for appropriateness to the Southern African context. Initiatives such as Association of Theological Schools (ATS), Theological Education for the Anglican Communion (TEAC), and The Accreditation Council for Theological Education in Africa (ACTEA) are discussed.

The last three chapters of this first section shift from the realities of re-integration and accreditation to internal issues such as curriculum decolonisation, as well as sexism and diversities in theological education. As for the decolonisation of theological education, African Renaissance is used as a premise in theological education to demonstrate how indigenous African epistemologies can be tapped as a foundational resource for theological education in Africa. African philosophy and identity, communalism and *ubuntu* can all be used to characterise the theological view of a person who is interwoven in social, economic, political, cultural, and educational realities. Women are an inevitable component in theological education in order to balance the power in the fields of masculinities and societal prejudices. As diversities is an issue in theological education in Southern Africa, its management should, therefore, become a pivotal component in ministerial formation.

Section Two of the book consists of three chapters that focus on moral challenges in ministerial formation. This section starts with the elaborative definition of ministerial formation. Attention is paid to spiritual formation, highlighting conceptual, institutional, and operational issues, together with communal realities, as important aspects of spiritual formation. From spiritual formation, there is the challenge of moral formation with application of “reason” to enhance principles that shape the moral formation. The last chapter in this section is crucial, as it demonstrates the expected or unique relationship between the church and the seminary. The symbiotic relationship of the two enhances healthy ministerial formation that can produce balanced and effective ministers of the Gospel.

Section Three of the book is concerned with the current developments in theological education. A special reference in three chapters encapsulates entrepreneurship, technology, and blended learning (diversification in training). The first chapter unpacks factors that may contribute to the formation of entrepreneurial pastoralism, with a special reference to the Pentecostal-Charismatic tradition. The implications of entrepreneurial pastoralism are highlighted. The value of this chapter is the explanation

of pastoral entrepreneur who leads and manages the church by incorporating business leadership managerial expertise with traditional pastoral principles. Theology of entrepreneurial pastoralism has become common, as observed in mega-churches of North America. In this regard, challenges for theological education include populism, neoliberalism, non-contextualisation, and, of course, the curriculum content.

The second development in theological education is educational technologies. Training ministers by means of technology focuses on pedagogical issues and the theological nature of the training offered. Tech advantages and disadvantages, as well as responses and ambiguous effects of technology in theological education for training ministers. These are referred to from the middle to the end of the chapter. The concluding chapter of the book addresses diversification. Thematic emphases should be relevant to diverse contexts. The chapter systematically unpacks existing formal ministry training opportunities in the informal church environment. The authorities do not formally accredit the qualifications obtained. Similar challenges are offered under the umbrella of established institutions. However, diversification of training models is still a solution or contribution towards ministerial formation.

Church ministers, theologians, theological students, teachers, and church members are indebted to Prof. Naidoo and her contributors for making this rich resource available. I commend the editor and publisher alike for this book and eagerly anticipate the results as leaders read and take to heart the relevance and importance of ministerial formation. The editor and her contributors have done a distinct service in compiling, editing, and publishing these golden nuggets for the Kingdom.

A valuable addition to any theological library! Sturdily and handsomely edited! Highly recommended!