



Mission as local economic development in the City of Tshwane: Towards fostering a grass roots, 'glocal' alternative vision, with specific reference to Luke 16:19–31

Author:Lukwikilu C. Mangayi¹**Affiliation:**¹Department of Christian Spirituality, Church History and Missiology, University of South Africa, South Africa**Note:**

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Correspondence to:

Lukwikulu Mangayi

Email:

mangal@unisa.ac.za

Postal address:

PO Box 392, University of South Africa, Pretoria 0003, South Africa

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This article analyses and reflects missiologically on the City of Tshwane's economy, in terms of its priorities and strategies. It points out that it is to the detriment of local communities that Tshwane's economy has become a replica of the national economy which is essentially growth-focused and structured to service the global market. It also discusses possibilities for the urban church to be involved in addressing this situation as it wrestles with the question: What role can the church play towards fostering a grass roots, 'glocal' alternative vision to the current local economic system? Responding to this question, this article argues that the church, drawing from theological/missiological resources and hermeneutic insights on biblical texts, such as Luke 16:19–31, and on the concept of God's economy, can steer such an alternative vision for the economy of the City of Tshwane. It ends by demonstrating how the church can engage the issues of local economic development in a practical way, which will lead to an alternative reality where shared prosperity and inclusion are attained.

Introduction

The church 'does not hide; neither does it integrate falsely in society' (Villafane 1995:2). It cannot be indifferent to the physical, political, economic or spiritual issues affecting humanity. Local economic development is one of those important issues that the church must consider, especially in the City of Tshwane (CoT) where extreme gaps of poverty and inequality are a reality.

The local economic system in the CoT is constricted. Most institutions, including the church in the city, have been unable to influence the development of a sustainable and viable alternative to the current economic system which has caused much poverty and inequality in the communities of Tshwane. Townships in the CoT such as Mabopane, Winterveld, Hammanskraal and Ga-Rankuwa are almost excluded from meaningful socio-economic investments of the city. Swart (2008) rightly argues that:

... while the legacy of apartheid remains a primary cause for explaining and understanding these problems, larger forces of economic globalisation may today be equally regarded as a factor that is deepening the extreme rifts of poverty and inequality that are facing South African society. (p. 112)

Twenty years after the end of apartheid, a large segment of South Africa's population is becoming poorer, especially those who live in the townships and informal settlement areas of major South African cities such as Tshwane. This article agrees with Swart's argument and further claims that one of the reasons for this situation is the priorities and strategies adopted by the government to meet the requirements of the capitalistic, neoliberal, global economic system. Admittedly, this is not unique to South Africa; the whole world seems to be 'entangled' by this system, as it pursues growth and prosperity as ultimate goals. Schluter (2010:6) is right when he suggests a vision beyond neoliberal capitalism to move towards a 'relational economy'.¹ He says, '[s]ociety seems to have lost control over the economic forces which have generated prosperity' (Schluter 2010:1).

1.Schluter (2010) 'proposes a way forward through five strategies: embed relational values, strengthen household balance sheets, empower extended families, engage capital providers and entrust welfare to local communities. These changes are mutually reinforcing, because they all reform economic life so as to strengthen personal bonds in the local and wider communities. They point towards the Christian vision of a "relational economy".'

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This loss of control manifested itself with the economic recession in 2009 and continues to worsen the rift of poverty and inequality. Schluter (2010) further adds:

What is striking about the current crisis is the absence of credible alternatives. Some look to more regulation, but each new regulation is like stopping the leak in a pipe, only for another to appear because the whole pipe is rusty. Regulation cannot deal with the fundamental flaws of Capitalism ..., nor their pervasive social consequences. An alternative vision is needed. (p. 1)

Although Schluter's observation is with reference to Europe, our experience in South Africa is the same in that there is an absence of credible alternatives and that since 1994 our government has written different policies to maximise growth, in order to ensure prosperity and deal with poverty and inequality. Unfortunately, these policies have not brought shared prosperity and equality for all citizens.

In agreement with Schluter, this article seeks to sketch a vision whereby the church plays a role in fostering an alternative 'glocal'² vision based on the missiological and hermeneutic insights of Luke 16:19–31³ in relation to the so-called 'God's economy' principles (Oikos study group 2006:25–30). This article starts first with a brief descriptive analysis of the current economic system. Second, it discusses the church as an agent for an alternative vision. Third, it presents the principles of God's economy and insights from the parable of Lazarus and the rich man (Lk 16:19–34). Finally, it sketches an alternative economic vision.

The economy of the City of Tswane: Priorities and strategies in historical perspective

According to the South African Cities Network (2010), the CoT has an economy of R233 billion. The CoT plays an important role in the economy of Gauteng, featuring a strong manufacturing sector, particularly the automotive industry⁴ and metal production. According to Statistics South Africa (2012), the population is 2 921 488 people, with 71.9% of this population being of working age (15–64). The overall unemployment rate is 24.2%, the youth unemployment rate stands at 32.6% and the dependency rate is 39% of the population (Statistics South Africa 2012). Furthermore, the 2012 South Africa survey (Dimant 2012) shows that:

2.'Glocal' is used in this article to mean the co-existence of both global and local interests in the pursuing of economic activities emanating from both spheres of society. These interests are taken into account all the time. According to Steven Raimi, 'the term, which combines the words globalization and localization, first appeared in the late 1980s in articles by Japanese economists in the *Harvard Business Review*. According to the sociologist Roland Robertson, who is credited with popularizing the term, glocalization describes the tempering effects of local conditions on global pressures. At a 1997 conference on "Globalization and Indigenous Culture", Robertson said that glocalization "means the simultaneity – the co-presence – of both universalizing and particularizing tendencies"' (Raimi 2013:n.p.).

3.Luke 16:19–31 is a parable that Jesus spoke against the Pharisees, this time against their love of money and exclusion of the poor. It is clear in this parable that the rich man stands for the Pharisees and all who have the same spirit as they have. Lazarus was completely different. The rich man did not really care for Lazarus in need. In the life hereafter, the roles were changed. The parable does not say that people go to hell because they are rich, or that poor people go to heaven because they are poor. But it does show what the results are when you put all your trust in earthly things and do not use them to help those in need.

4.The CoT is home to the assembling plants of Nissan and BMW automobiles. These plants are situated at Rosslyn in the north-west region of the city.

The City of Tshwane has experienced on average 3.6% economic growth from 1996 to 2011. The formal employment growth has been on average 3.5% from 2002 to 2011. The proportion of people living in poverty⁵ has gone up from 18.5% in 1996 to 19.3% in 2011. (pp. 122–123)

The picture is bleak if you break down these statistics into separate townships on the periphery of the city. With reference to townships in Tshwane, Dimitrov (2010:727–730) confirms that unemployment, high cost of transport, lack of public facilities, inadequate public transport services, crime and fear of crime, are daily realities and further exacerbate socio-economic and physical exclusion. Looking at those figures, it suffices to point out that there are too many people of working age who are without jobs. This high unemployment rate is rampant especially among the youth. The dependency rate is unacceptably high, signifying that the working class is carrying a huge burden in order for communities of the city to survive. There are many people who are excluded from the benefits of the economic growth that the city has experienced. The discussion which follows will shed light on what has happened to the economy of Tshwane since 1994.

In 1994 the African National Congress (ANC) as the ruling party adopted the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP Section 1.3.8). The RDP document guided South Africa in addressing both poverty alleviation and reconstruction of the economy in a balanced manner. The purpose, according to Lodge (1996:1), was 'to guard against an emphasis on growth alone, as this would worsen inequality and maintain mass poverty which in turn would stifle further growth'. For dealing with inequality and mass poverty, the RDP's poverty alleviation thrust aimed at meeting basic needs such as housing for the indigents and the extension of electricity and piped water to poor South Africans. The reconstruction thrust of the RDP focused on policy change which, writes Lodge (1996):

[R]esulted in the strengthening of the public sector through nationalisation on the one hand, and on the other hand, labour policies to stress the need for training, a 'living wage', and affirmative action. (p. 2)

According to Aregbeshola (2010:2), 'the RDP was an expanding public spending on social and infrastructural facilities' to resolve trade imbalances and related economic problems that characterised the apartheid regime.

However, Jeffery (2010) argues that:

... there were many constraints on the successes of the RDP, such as incompetent public service managers, racially-tinged pessimism, a massive budget deficit and an enormous deficit in education, training, and experience of black South Africans. (p. 242)

In addition, Aregbeshola (2012:1253) includes other constraints which were influenced largely by globalisation forces such as (1) the government's inability to generate the necessary resources to finance the programme, (2)

5.Global Insight Southern Africa (n.d.) defines people living in poverty as those living in households with an income less than the poverty income level. Poverty income varies according to the household size – the larger the household, the larger the income required to keep its members out of poverty. Poverty income levels ranged from R1376 per month for one individual to R4930 for a household of eight members or more in 2011.



government's failure to establish an industrial policy and lack of compatibility between the political ideology of the ANC-led alliance, and (3) the adopted economic orthodoxy (mainly trade liberalisation and privatisation). Jeffery (2010:243) further adds: 'A sudden collapse in the value of the Rand led to the RDP's failure to stimulate growth and signalled the necessity for a change in policy direction.'

From the aforementioned, we see that the RDP as a policy was committed to 'balanced economic growth' which was unfortunately short-lived due to the factors cited above by Jeffery and Aregbeshola. From personal experience as a reflexive activist, I further submit that the scale of the programme was very ambitious and too large for the Government of National Unity (GNU), led by Mandela. The GNU had at the time of the launch of the RDP other competing priorities to contend with, such as unification of different races, reform of the legislation frameworks, and the like. With all these other pressing issues to consider, I contend that the scale of the programme could have been spread regionally – one region at a time. Secondly, the pace of implementation should have been carefully considered in terms of the availability of competent service managers and support structures on the ground. Unfortunately, when the expected outcomes could not be realised, the government re-focused the RDP (too soon) by introducing a growth-focused programme which steadily became ingrained in the make-up of all structures of government.

According to Jeffery (2010:245) and Aregbeshola (2012:1254), Trevor Manuel⁶ introduced the Growth, Employment and Redistribution (GEAR) Programme in 1996 as a strategy for rebuilding and reshaping the economy in keeping with the goals set in the RDP. Aregbeshola (2012:1254) adds that the government assumed that GEAR would create the 'needed enabling environment to facilitate Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) inflow' for economic growth and poverty alleviation. The pursuit of FDI, coupled with policies that favour faster economic growth, were chief elements of GEAR, and growth-focused policies have shaped the South African economy at all levels of government ever since. These policies are supposed to sustain expansion through new transformation legislation in support of free enterprise aimed at the liberation of the poor. However, the unemployment crisis worsened in 2005 because, as Wray states, '[j]obs were shed by the hundreds of thousands rather than created' (Wray, cited by Aregbeshola 2012:1255).

As a result, we experienced factories closing down in the peripheral industrial areas of the CoT (such as Babelegi in Hammanskraal and GaRankuwa) which further aggravated the unemployment situation. Part of the reason for this economic crisis, explains Hirsch (2005:105–106), 'lay in the Asian, Russian and Brazilian crises in 1997 and 1998 which eroded confidence in developing markets'. As expected, not only did this high unemployment set off a spiral of labour unrest in the country, but it also caused thousands to become homeless. Rightly put by De Beer (2008:3): '[T]he liberation of

1994 has by-passed many mute victims who make the streets their home.'

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the South Africa survey 2008/2009 relate that, despite these protests from organised labour, high unemployment has remained uncurbed, although the rate of economic growth was accelerated from 2.7% in 2001 to 4.9% in 2004 (Kane-Berman 2008:92; OECD 2007:487–488). Later, Aregbeshola (2010:2) points out that:

[T]he government acknowledged that this was an unbalanced growth, because the economy failed to create significant employment for the poor, which led to incidents of violent protest and aggravated crime and unemployment. (p. 2)

Yet, to correct this imbalance, the Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative South Africa (ASGISA) was announced in August 2005 with 'the intention of helping the State to attain its core objectives of halving poverty and unemployment by 2014' (Jeffery 2010:255). These objectives have remained elusive ever since, and communities – especially those on the margins of cities – have been plunged further into poverty.

From the above, it is clear that economic growth remained a dominant feature of the South African economy from 1994 to 2010. Although the country as a whole realised steady but unbalanced growth, we have also experienced massive unemployment, especially in peripheral areas of metropolitan municipalities such as Tshwane.

On the one hand, claims were made in *The growth report* by the Commission on Growth and Development (2008:19) that sustained growth is important for reasons such as (1) an increased capacity to provide a path out of poverty (2) the promotion of human development (3) the creation of options for individuals and societies (4) encouraging political pluralism and (5) providing a stable base for the consolidation of democracy. On the other hand, claims were made that economic growth is the key ingredient in effecting political and social liberalisation in the Third World (Friedman 2005). Yet we have not seen these claims materialise in meaningful ways for the communities on the outskirts of Tshwane, as the statistics tabled earlier confirm. Grass roots communities are paying the price as a result of these growth-focused policies adopted by South Africa. Perhaps this is also one of the reasons why the newly-launched 'National Development Plan' is being rejected by some sectors of the organised labour market.

According to the OECD (2007) and Wessel (2007:1), South Africa experienced growth at an annual rate of about 5% between 1994 and 2007. This growth was fuelled mainly by booming consumption and vigorous investment by domestic demand-driven sectors such as construction, manufacturing and services, while export-oriented sectors, such as agriculture and mining, lagged behind (OECD 2007:487–488). Also, Rodrik (2007:3) states that the real Capita Gross Domestic Product (GDP)⁷ has been growing at an average

6. Trevor Manuel was the Minister of Finance at the time and was pivotal in ensuring the alignment of South Africa to the imperatives of the global market and for reform of the economy.

7. Investopedia (n.d.) defines Capita GDP as a 'measure of the total output of a country that takes the gross domestic product (GDP) and divides it by the number of [the] people in the country. The per capita GDP is especially useful when comparing one country to another because it shows the relative performance of countries.'



annual rate of only 1.2%, while the real wage rise was yet to catch up with the 1980 peak, as at 2006. Aregbeshola (2012:1255) attests that 'this is an indication that attempts to redress poverty have not been successful.' This sad history of growth-focused policies has had a serious and negative impact on the struggling areas of Tshwane.

Regardless, up until 2009, the government was determined to continue pursuing growth in the foreseeable future through upgrading of the infrastructure, diversifying exports and skills development through the Joint Initiative for Priority Skills Acquisition (JIPSA). Because it is believed by economists and policy makers that growth cannot be stopped, it has to be a continual aim of any economy. Thus, the government proceeded with growth-focused policies in the 'New Growth Path (NGP): The Framework' which was published on 23 November 2010 by Minister Ebrahim Patel's Economic Development Ministry. UNISA Bureau of Market Research (2011) explains that the NGP:

[I]dentifies four main indicators of success: namely, jobs, growth, equity and environmental concerns. At the heart of the NGP is the aim of creating five million jobs over the next 10 years and key to this is the rate of economic growth and employment intensity of that growth. (p. 1)

Of course, it is illogical to stop balanced growth, but growth that is unbalanced needs to be corrected by putting forward some alternatives. This unbalanced growth has worsened inequality and economically excluded millions especially in the cities. Africa Focus is right when it stated: 'South African cities are the most unequal in the world' (Africa Focus 2010:105). Africa Focus further elaborates:

In South African ... cities, inequalities are most pronounced and extraordinarily high, despite the dismantling of apartheid in the early 1990s. In fact, urban inequalities ... are even higher than those of Latin American cities. The average Gini coefficient⁸ for South African cities is 0.73 ... (p. 105)

In summary, many scholars and thinkers agree that it is the post-apartheid South African government's adoption of a neoliberal macro-economic policy, encapsulated in GEAR and subsequent growth-focused policies to steer the country's integration into the global market economy, that is today identified by many critical commentators as being at the heart of the country's social problems (Kotze 2004; Oikos study group 2006:17). This does not imply that life was pleasant during apartheid years, but is simply to point out that the gains from transformation are hampered by persistent poverty, inequality and unemployment which commentators link to GEAR and subsequent growth-focused policies. Furthermore, according to Kotze (2004), the government's adoption of the rules of the global economy – by prioritising economic growth, an export orientation, privatisation, trade and currency deregulation and, most

importantly, by advocating a curtailment in social spending – has proved itself to be 'fundamentally an anti-poor policy'. Worse still, I reckon, is the fact that these rules of the global economy are operative even in the local economy such as Tshwane's, through its Local Economic Development (LED) programme (see Rogerson 2000:398). This simply means that local economies replicate what is happening at the national level.

'LED is a salient public policy issue in South Africa' (Rogerson 2011:149). Of course, LED policy and practice has gone through a large amount of restructuring, adaptation and adjustment since 1996. To substantiate this point, according to Nel and Rogerson (2005:37–40), under the 2000 Local Government Municipal Systems Act, several key LED functions and responsibilities were legislated, and Integrated Development Planning was made a compulsory activity for local governments. Furthermore, under the directives of this Local Municipal Systems Act, 'South African local authorities became "the wardens of economic growth in their jurisdictions"' (Toerien 2005:1).

Thus, LED was promoted and has emerged as a central aspect of policy and planning for both urban and rural reconstruction (see Rogerson 2006; Xuza 2007). In addition, according to Rogerson (2000:398), the new emphasis accorded to LED promotion was inseparable from a need to accommodate forces of globalisation in order to ensure South Africa's re-entry into the global economy, assuming this would make the country attractive to international investors and enhance the role of the private sector. This happened simultaneously with the development of neoliberal, growth-focused policies such as GEAR and ASGISA, as was discussed earlier. In South Africa's leading cities, the mainstream LED practice has been dominated by market-led approaches that have been increasingly geared towards achieving competitiveness and sustainable high economic growth rates (Nel & Rogerson 2005:41). In short, these cities' economies are replicas of the national economy, all of them geared to maximise economic growth in a way that accommodates the forces of globalisation, and at times to the detriment of their local economies, as I observe happening in Tshwane.

Although the CoT claims that its economy is 'configured' to suit the global village's imperatives while it attempts to meet local needs, yet on the ground masses are experiencing poverty, unemployment and inequality, because, as Msizi Myeza (2012:11) states, 'the manufacturing activity is weak'. This is why, according to Rogerson (2006:61), the restructuring plans of South Africa's major centres highlight the issue of 'positioning the city in the global economy' and of sectoral targeting to build the economy through targeted support and competitive advantage in the international economy (CoT Integrated Development Plan [IDP] 2011:3). This alignment to the global economy imperatives has, sadly, marginalised the local economy's would-be priorities, for example, finding lasting solutions for the city's 128 949 registered informal households and 18% of the population which earn less than R1600 per month (IDP 2011:16–19). Hence, the need for a 'glocal' economic alternative with the church as an agent for this alternative vision, as this article suggests.

(Footnote 7 continues ...)

A rise per capita GDP signals growth in the economy and tends to translate as an increase in productivity'.

8. According to IHS Global Insight Southern Africa (cited by Africa Focus 2010:105), Gini coefficient is used to measure equality and inequality between countries or between groups of people. It assigns a measure to distribution of total personal income between zero, which is perfect equality (everyone has the same income) and one, which is perfect inequality (one person has all the income).

The urban church as an agent for an alternative 'glocal' economy

Recently, Pope Francis articulated in *Evangelii Gaudium* the position the church should adopt with regard to the current economic system. He exhorts, specifically the Roman Catholic Church, to say, '[n]o to an economy of exclusion, no to the new idolatry of money, no to a financial system which rules rather than serves and no to the inequality which spawns violence' (Pope Francis 2013:45–60). Pope Francis's exhortation encapsulates the main argument of this article in that it calls on the church, on the one hand, to take an active role, and on the other, to foster some alternatives. For over a decade Ulrich Duchrow has been suggesting alternatives to the current system of capitalism. Duchrow (2009:1) says: 'Capitalism will implode. Our current system is doomed.' There is therefore a need to think of alternatives. Also, the World Social Forum (2002), which consists of groups and movements of civil society that are opposed to neoliberalism and to domination of the world by capital and any form of imperialism, are calling for an alternative system. The Forum proposes:

[A]lternatives to solve the problems of exclusion and social inequality that the process of capitalist globalization with its racist, sexist and environmentally destructive dimensions is creating internationally and within countries. (World Social Forum 2002:n.p.)

Similarly, as Pleyers (2009:4) argues, if one considers 'the unprecedented combination of crises in the global economy, environment, and governance, the "alter-globalisation" movement's argument for a just and equal world – "another world" – seems more relevant than ever.' Expanding on this argument, Duchrow (2009), in concurrence with Schuller, says:

The time for quantitative growth in a limited earth and, therefore, for capitalism, is running out. This system needs growth because by definition capital is property which goes beyond satisfying the needs of the owners to be invested for the accumulation of more property, measured in monetary terms. It will implode as did socialism because it destroys the sources of its own wealth. This will not be changed by governments, kidnapped by capital power, in hectic activism trying to repair the system by socializing the losses of the capital owners who had privatized the profits. This political response to the crisis only serves to postpone the urgently needed general conversion from a destructive paradigm to a life-giving civilization while the crises with their dramatic ecological and social effects are accelerating. (p. 1)

It is in essence a call for 'critical engagement' with established socio-economic and political structures. It is, according to Duchrow (2009:1), a peaceful revolution based on the fact that people have the power of self-liberation from an oppressive and destructive system. Therefore, things should not be allowed to continue the way they are. The church, I contend, could be the agent for this peaceful revolution which makes economic self-liberation attainable in communities of Tshwane. Further, Duchrow (2014) argues that insights for change (i.e. alternatives to the current

system) could be drawn from Liberation Theologies, the Torah and the Prophets, Confucianism, Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Jesus and the kingdom of God Theology and Mohamed. For Duchrow (2014:4), there is an ethical code in these religious and philosophical thought systems, which is against the 'institutionalisation of profit' which is at the heart of capitalism. This profit is 'insatiable' – it is 'greedy money' which has been driving the global capitalistic market. Models that foster alternatives that afford communities a better life are to take centre stage in society.

Beufus (2006:103) writes: '[M]odels are needed that combine economic development with a clear focus on holistic Christian outreach' which promotes collective well-being. Scholars such as Corbett and Fikkert (2009), Steward⁹ (1994), Bosch¹⁰ (1991), Kritzinger, Meiring and Saayman (1994:36), to name but a few, are among those who promote a holistic approach to mission. This approach firstly recognises that human beings live in a web of relationships, namely, economic, social, religious and political systems they have created throughout history. Secondly, it helps the church and Christians to overcome the dichotomised worldview (i.e. secular/material/physical versus spiritual/Christian) which is prevalent in many quarters of the church. This dichotomised worldview has hampered the church's initiatives towards alternative holistic transformation of communities.

The church in the CoT should not sit around idly when there is, according to Beukman (2011), 31% unemployment in Babelegi (which used to be a thriving industrial centre in Hammanskraal) and the surrounding areas north-east of the city. This article argues that the church has to find and facilitate ways of discerning a way forward which could lead to a positive outcome. However, I should point out that this is not a new undertaking in terms of the teaching and the history of the church. According to Beufus (2006:102), the history of the church is full of examples of the importance of productive economic activities, such as the apostle Paul, as a leather artisan (see 1 Th 2:9; 2 Th 3:7–9 and 1 Cor 9:6, 18) and religious orders such as the Franciscans and Jesuits who utilised productive economic activity to finance their programmes. William Carey, the famous missionary pioneer and founder/promoter of health and education mission programmes, was a shoemaker (see Beufus 2006:102). However, I have observed that there is still one major weakness in the historical involvement of the church in matters of productive economic activities. The church tends, in most cases, to be self-centred and its strategies are mainly geared towards self-survival. This inward-looking attitude has paralysed the church's witness to the world and as I observe is present in ecclesial communities of Tshwane. As a result, the church in Tshwane is generally inadequate in addressing the causes of unjust economic policies, perhaps

9. In his book entitled *Biblical holism: Where God, people and deeds connect*, published in 1994 by World Vision Australia, John Steward teaches how one can draw from the Bible to engage in holistic and integrative ministry praxis aimed at community transformation.

10. David Bosch's contribution to mission, particularly a holistic approach to mission, stands in his life work captured in his book, *Transforming mission*, published in 1991, in which he advocates for community transformation as the goal of mission.

because of its inability to understand the systems and the powers which shape society. Tanner (2005) captures this inability in the following statement:

[The church's] attention to economic issues often seems a mere second tier of theological concern, an optional addition or supplement to those strictly God-oriented questions that form theology's central domain. Direct attention to economic questions also emerges only piecemeal in Christian history ... without any clear pronouncements and warnings. It is therefore hard to make out in this scattered attention to economic questions any fundamental proposal for a whole economic way of life. (p. 3)

Although writing from a North American perspective, Tanner's concerns resonate with the central argument of this article, as stated in the introduction, that the church in mission with God has to have a big enough vision which includes the whole economic way of life. This vision should articulate unambiguously the role of the church towards LED. It is therefore important that an ongoing analysis of the socio-economic and development policies be carried out, as this will highlight their effects on the lives of ordinary people. This is crucial for the church in doing mission. Liberation theologians were first in embracing contextual social analysis in their praxis, although some critics say that 'the Bible sometimes lost both its priority and its authority' (Berghoef & De Koster 1984:84). Admittedly, Berghoef and De Koster's argument represents the position of some conservative evangelical groups who discourage the use of a contextual holistic and integrated approach to mission. I argue that the Bible and its priority need not necessarily be neglected if one embraces a contextual, holistic and integrated approach. Further, I contend that failing to connect the Bible and the City of Tshwane in our case is negligence which has paralysed the church to the point of failure to do mission and ministry for collective well-being. This neglect leads to 'missiological short-cuts' (Kritzinger 2002:150)¹¹ that should be avoided.

Furthermore, one cannot ignore the contribution of contextual theologies in society. Contextual approaches to mission rooted in social analyses have, for example, put Christian theological concerns (such as the corrupting influence of wealth, concern for the economically depressed and solidarity with the poor) as worthy items on the mission agenda. Their analyses led to deep understanding of the issues related to poverty and misery of communities. The insights of Boff and Boff (1986:56–57) led, for example, to the distinction between socio-economic poor, those who are deprived of basic necessities, and evangelical poor, those who have adopted a position of solidarity with the poor and work for the well-being of society. These insights are important in working holistically with issues of poverty and inequality.

Drawing from the above, I suggest that the church becomes (as it should be) evangelical poor in that it adopts a position

11. Kritzinger (2002) built on the pastoral praxis cycle of Holland and Henriot. He developed the cycle into seven dimensions, namely, contextual understanding, ecclesial scrutiny, interpreting the tradition, discernment for action, reflexivity, agency identification and spirituality. He argues that if one or more of these dimensions are ignored or neglected, one gets missiological short-cuts with negative consequences, namely (1) 'political activist' short-cut (2) 'ivory tower' short-cut (3) 'missionary activist' short-cut and (4) 'conversionist' short-cut. We need to avoid these reductionist short-cuts if we are to develop a meaningful praxis of mission.

of solidarity with the poor and works for the well-being of society, not only doing charity as has been the case, but strategically working for self-liberation of the poor. The parable of Lazarus and the rich man highlighted later in this article speaks of the increasing comfort and security of the rich and wealthy, on the one hand, and the discomfort, insecurity and vulnerability of the poor, on the other hand. Thus, God's economy principles must be adopted for the purpose of dealing with poverty and inequality. This article argues that the latter is an important issue for Christian mission. I concur with Horell (2005:478) that in the church praxis 'the centre for doing mission remains Biblical truth'. Thus, the use of the parable of Lazarus and the rich man, in relation to God's economy principles, provides us with insights for meaningful ways to address the issue of poverty and inequality that we are experiencing in the CoT.

Towards fostering a 'glocal' alternative economic vision for the City of Tshwane

In order to address the issues of poverty, socio-economic inequalities and unemployment that communities of Tshwane currently experience, this article proposes a sketch for an alternative 'glocal' vision of the economy. This sketch draws insights from the story of Lazarus and the rich man (Lk 16:19–34) in relation to God's economy.

God's economy: A conceptual framework for economic activity

This theological concept 'God's economy', known as *oikos*, is suggested as the framework for an alternative vision for Tshwane's economy and strategy. Drawing from the document, 'The Oikos Journey: A theological reflection on the economic crisis in South Africa', written by the 'Oikos study group' of the Diakonia Council of Churches (2006:23), the concept focuses on a Greek word in the New Testament, *oikos*, which literally means 'house', 'household' or 'home'. The word 'economy' comes from two Greek words: *oikos-nomos* meaning the rules of the household. To speak of God's economy is therefore to speak of 'the rules that God has established for our household, the world in which people live, work, struggle, flourish and die' (Oikos study group 2006:24).

The scriptural base outlined by 'The Oikos Journey' (2006:25–30) for 'God's economy' includes texts such as:

- Psalm 24:1 (pointing to the fact that the earth is full of grace and love).
- Genesis 2:15 and Genesis 3:17 (Labour is both a blessing and a curse).
- Exodus 20:8–10a and Leviticus 25:8–17 (Sabbath is the fundamental rule of God's economy).
- Isaiah 58 and Amos 5 (Shared prosperity is the goal of God's economy).
- Exodus 20:3 and Matthew 6:24 (We cannot serve both God and Mammon).



- Matthew 19:16–22 (God's economy is a matter of discipleship).
- Deuteronomy 5:33; also 25:13–16 and 30:16–18 (We are called to live long in the land).

From this scriptural base, it is notable that God's view of economic activity differs from our common understanding, in that everything is connected, which will ultimately lead to everybody and everything flourishing, and not perishing as we are currently experiencing in some aspects in the CoT. Furthermore, if we read the local economy of Tshwane through the lens of this scriptural base, it is apparent that the economy of Tshwane is failing in many regards, as reflected in the statistics tabled earlier: it fails to care for all its population, fails to provide sustainable and meaningful work for the people, fails to lead all communities to prosperity, and fails to serve the communities.

Therefore, I contend that the application of this framework will without doubt address inequalities, unemployment and poverty and will ultimately lead to economic justice in the CoT. Let me, however, admit that a framework such as this will be easily dismissed by mainline economists on the grounds that it makes no economic sense. After all, for the capitalist economist, maximum growth and profitability are what matters most and the whole economic enterprise is reduced to one goal, namely, wealth accumulation. This attitude is, for me, what makes communities and institutions worship 'growth-focused' economic strategies and programmes even if, as I argued earlier, these strategies and programmes are hurting the poor, as we have witnessed in the CoT. The principles of God's economy, on the contrary, have a broader and holistic vision of the economy. If applied, they form a framework which could be useful in addressing economic inequalities, poverty and unemployment and usher in an alternative reality. Insights from Duchrow, the World Social Forum and Pope Francis, discussed earlier, are helpful to deal with problems of exclusion and social inequality that the process of capitalist globalisation is creating within the CoT.

For the city to become a 'more just and equal city' – 'another city', Duchrow's (2009:1) insights for a 'peaceful revolution' are to be considered. Drawing from Duchrow, I envisage the elements of such a revolution to include: (1) a 'conscientisation' to know that this capitalist globalisation is destroying the sources of its own wealth, that is, land and labour (2) independence from the government social programmes, kidnapped by capital power, for redistribution of wealth and shared prosperity for all and (3) a conversion from the capitalist destructive paradigm to a life-giving paradigm. In short, say no to this system of exclusion.

In essence, Duchrow's insights concur with God's economy principles in that they both aim at the establishment of a life-giving economy. This is possible if we draw from the toolboxes of religious ethical codes. In this article, Luke 16:19–31 is used.

Insights from the parable of Lazarus and the rich man

The parable of Lazarus and the rich man is a 'vivid portrayal of the sad reality of wealth and poverty in the world', as well as in the CoT (Mangayi 2011:1). It is fundamentally a problem of exclusion, that is, economic exclusion. Lazarus is not welcome at the table of the rich man. This reality inevitably begs questions such as: What could be done with regard to the 'Lazaruses' of our CoT? What could be done for the rich men of this world to notice these 'Lazaruses'? With the CoT in mind, this paper is indirectly attempting to wrestle with these questions as it discusses the alternative vision that it proposes. Generally, this parable stimulates actions for standing with the poor and for theological reflections on economic reality. These reflections should, I contend, help us to move away from the brokenness of creation embodied in the parable of Lazarus and the rich man to signs of plenty and wholeness. They should also in a practical way help us move from starvation to food, from anguish to comfort, from greed to gift. Furthermore, these reflections should also lead to actions which guarantee jobs for the working-age population of the city, so that no one is unemployed and dependent on social grants or charity. With particular reference to the homeless community (Lazarus type) of the CoT, De Beer (2008:14) rightly suggests that we 'look for radical expressions, signs of an alternative economics, where land can be developed in innovative and prophetic ways to bring together the different worlds of our city'.

Further, O'Day (1992:118) says, 'this text invites us into God's world of compassion from the side of human pain and human resistance.' God's compassion should inspire God's agents of transformation (the church) to work alongside Christ who is 'making everything new' (Rv 21:5), in such a way that we promote life-giving opportunities to those on the margins like Lazarus. The kind of life-giving alternatives will have to oppose such ideas as trickle-down theories which continue to domesticate communities to accept the capitalist globalisation system. Pope Francis (2013) explains:

Trickle-down theories which assume that economic growth, encouraged by a free market, will inevitably succeed in bringing about greater justice and inclusiveness in the world. This opinion, which has never been confirmed by the facts, expresses a crude and naïve trust in the goodness of those wielding economic power and in the sacralized workings of the prevailing economic system. (p. 46)

Pope Francis hints to the Church to engage in co-working with God to seek alternatives for an economic system such as Tshwane's, which continues to breed inequality and poverty and believes that wealth will be trickled down to those on the margins. It is particularly a motivation to seek for an alternative 'glocal' vision of the economy, so that things should not be allowed to continue the way they are. Fundamental to this alternative, Lazarus and peers must have access to and create their own tables. Therefore, the rich man must be challenged to change his behaviour and must know that crumbs will not do and they cannot fully meet the needs of Lazarus. In the words of O'Day (1992:117): 'He must

know that God longs for God's creation to be whole and that his selfish actions stood in the way of that wholeness.'

With reference to our South African context, Tinyiko Maluleke concurs with O'Day and goes a step further by sketching what Christian mission has to do, namely, 'rescuing Lazarus before he dies' (Maluleke 2014:2). He adds that the task includes (1) replacing hope for crumbs with hope for bread; (2) making Lazarus visible and seeing Lazarus; (3) recognising the emergence and emergency of Lazaruses; (4) making the link between the poverty of Lazarus and the wealth of men of 'linen'; (5) appreciating the initiative and creativity of Lazarus; and (6) saving Lazarus before, not after he dies.

In addition to what Maluleke proposes, Mangayi (2011) adds a process to engage the rich (the 'haves') and Lazarus (the 'have-nots') of our context in a twofold approach, consisting of an inside-out process and dealing with the root problem. First, the inside-out process begins inside human hearts and minds, transformed through faith in the Trinitarian God, and embrace his law and principles that govern the economy. He says, 'God's law and rules must be written on the individual's heart, then on the hearts of economic institutions of society' (Mangayi 2011:3; cf. Cope 2006; Miller 2000:22–23). This should hopefully lead the church to interrogate the strategies and principles (as I have done in the previous sections) that govern the local economy by ascertaining their compatibility with the ideals of the Trinitarian God and his principles. A priority issue in this interrogation is the question of whether growth-focused economic policies are suitable for Tshwane in the light of God's economy. Are these policies creating tables of inclusion or exclusion? This would be followed by establishing whether people are 'flourishing or perishing' under this economy. Obviously, the statistics tabled earlier and our analyses conclude that people are in some aspects perishing instead of flourishing in the city.

Secondly, it is about dealing with the core of the problem which is our mind – our ideas, beliefs and assumptions. Miller (2000:19) rightly states, '[t]he mind drives our emotions, feelings and values, which in turn shape our decisions and choices, and these determine the kind of lives we will lead.' Hence, I submit that the philosophy, ideas and assumptions that govern the current economy of the city have failed in a number of ways and it is therefore not a healthy economy. I contend, as I did earlier, that a healthy economy does not exclude many of the working-age population from jobs nor does it have a high proportion of the population on dependency programmes. An alternative vision is needed – 'Lazarus has the right to be seated and feast at the table.'

A sketch for an alternative vision

The chief insight in formulating an alternative towards addressing inequality and poverty, requires the city to move away from the brokenness of creation to signs of plenty and wholeness. In a practical way, it is a move from starvation to food, from anguish to comfort, from greed to gift whereby Lazarus is not excluded at the table.

The strategy for this alternative vision is twofold, consisting of an inside-out process of transformation of individuals and institutions, and a change of 'mind'. Within the framework of God's principles for the economy and drawing from Maluleka's insights (2014), the following activities will be included for the success of this alternative vision:

1. Replacing hope for crumbs with hope for bread (through strategic interventions, analysis, reflection and plan of action).
2. Making Lazarus visible and seeing Lazarus (create platforms and engage in dialogue; these dialogues will involve the rich and the poor in a way which maximises a frank conversation).
3. Recognising the emergence and emergency of Lazaruses (situational analysis from Lazarus' perspective: reasons for his presence in the city must be taken seriously)
4. Making the link between the poverty of Lazarus and the wealth of men of 'linen' (advocacy, genuine participatory approaches and joint partnerships).
5. Appreciating the initiative and creativity of Lazarus (assets-based development approaches and appreciative inquiry: let Lazarus' ingenuity be used as the stepping stone).
6. And Lazarus must be saved before, not after, he dies (relief, empowerment and shareholding).

What is new in this alternative? This is certainly a fair question that could be asked, given the fact that there are already many programmes attempting to do some of these things. Yes, I admit that some of these processes and activities are currently being implemented even by churches involved in economic development work. But I argue that as long as they are carried out in the framework of a growth-focused strategy of the neoliberal economy, the outcomes on the ground will be the same, namely, the poverty and inequality that we are currently experiencing. I also do admit that even the church's own economic activities do often perpetuate the cycle of economic exclusion. But by using the proposed processes and activities within the framework of God's economy rules, shared prosperity and harmony will be achieved – Lazarus will have access to and feast at the table.

Conclusion

This article has argued that the church has to critically engage the issues of the economy affecting communities, especially where extreme rifts of poverty and inequality are a reality, such as in the CoT. It has shown that 20 years after the end of apartheid, far too many people still live in poverty because of the adoption, by all spheres of government, including the CoT, of neoliberal and capitalist growth-focused economic policies, such as GEAR and others. These policies continue to reproduce major rifts of poverty and inequality. Therefore, an alternative economic vision is suggested.

Placing the church at the centre of action, the alternative vision suggested in this article is partly informed by scholars such as Duchrow and further draws insights from two theological/missiological resources, namely, God's economy principles and the parable of Lazarus and the rich man. In contrast to



the philosophy of the neoliberal and capitalist system, these theological resources offer a broader and holistic vision of the economy which the author believes could lead towards shared prosperity and inclusion for all, that is, wholeness.

Admittedly, this alternative vision is an untested sketch, far from providing a solid prescription on a theology for an alternative and sustainable economy for the CoT. Another study – possibly a community engaged research project – could definitely prove to be useful.

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