

THE TASK AND PLACE OF MISSIOLOGY AT THE PUBLIC UNIVERSITY

ABSTRACT

Although Missiology has been an accepted discipline for over 100 years since Warneck's important contribution, the teaching of this theological discipline, especially at public universities, is currently under great strain. The question is whether it is at all appropriate to teach Missiology using public funds and propagating only the Christian religion. This paper suggests the following: (a) Missiology is the essence of the church and should be taught as the ministry of reconciliation; (b) Missiology is a discipline that received universal recognition; (c) It remains important to teach theological students the essence of missions as an essential part of theology; (d) Missiology is such an integral part of theological teaching that theology in its entirety is under the same strain if Missiology is rejected. Therefore, it is not the discipline that should receive attention and possibly be adapted, but the way in which it is taught.

1. INTRODUCTION

Although Missiology has been an accepted discipline at universities for over 100 years since Warneck's important contribution, the teaching of this theological discipline, notably at public universities, is currently under great strain. The question is currently whether it is appropriate at all to teach Missiology using public funds while it propagates only the Christian religion. Is the essence of the public university not to be unbiased and scientifically neutral? Missiology is a discipline in its own right, however. It had and still has tremendous standing in the scientific world of theology. Nevertheless, it currently experiences a total onslaught on its proclamation and foundations. Missiology withstood many onslaughts in the past and will do so again. However, it seems necessary to re-establish its roots and truth. Therefore, in this article, Missiology will once more be scrutinised to explain its own position and place in theology.

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2. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Issues at stake are the following:

- a. What is the definition of mission and Missiology?
- b. Is Missiology an acceptable discipline?
- c. What is the relation of Missiology to other theological disciplines?
- d. How should Missiology be taught at a public university?
- e. Is it possible to propagate the Christian Gospel without giving offence?
- f. Is only Missiology or all theological disciplines under the pressure of a pending review at the public university?

3. THE DEFINITION OF MISSION

The definition of *mission* is important. There are largely two main directions of definitions of mission. On the one hand, mission is defined as God's mission in the world to bring his kingdom by saving people from sin. Padilla (1985:1) writes,

The Gospel of Jesus Christ is a personal message – it reveals a God who calls each of his own by name. But it is also a cosmic message – it reveals a God whose purpose includes the whole world. It is not addressed to an individual *per se* but to the individual as a member of the old humanity in Adam, marked by sin and death, whom God calls to be integrated into the new humanity in Christ, marked by righteousness and eternal life.

The other definition states that God brings about a new dispensation in this world by humans realising their own inherent possibilities. The *missio Dei* concept, however, is largely accepted in mainline Protestant churches. The definition of Charles van Engen in this regard is of great importance. Van Engen emphasises the essence of mission as crossing borders.

Mission is the people of God intentionally crossing barriers from church to nonchurch ... to proclaim by word and deed the coming of the kingdom of God in Jesus Christ; this task is achieved ... and gathering them into the church through repentance and faith in Jesus Christ... (Van Engen 1996:27).

Gensichen (1988:217) refers to the fact that the goal of mission is the renewal and restoration of human beings to what God intended at creation. He is of

the opinion that it should be an integrated witness in word and deed, faith and love, demonstrating God's holistic salvation for humankind.

Bosch (1991:519) explains the essence of mission more fully

Rather, mission is *missio Dei*, which seeks to subsume into itself the *missiones ecclesiae*, the missionary programs of the church. It is not the church which "undertakes" mission; it is the *missio Dei* which constitutes the church ... The *missio Dei* purifies the church. It sets it under the cross – the only place where it is ever safe (italics Bosch).

Wright (2006:22-23) emphasises the participation in God's work:

Fundamentally, our mission (if it is biblically informed and validated) means our committed participation as God's people, at God's invitation and command, in God's own mission within the history of God's world for the redemption of God's creation... Our mission flows from and participates in the mission of God (italics Wright).

From a Roman-Catholic perspective, Bevans and Schroeder (2006:72) explain how the church has to respond to God's call to mission:

The church only becomes the church as it responds to God's call to mission, and to be in mission means to change continually as the Gospel encounters new and diverse contexts. Such change, however, is not arbitrary, rather, there have always existed certain *constants* that, while they might differ in content, are always present as a kind of framework by which the church identifies itself and around which the Gospel message takes shape. To our outer-space scholars, the community in Jerusalem might *look* very different from the church of the Council of Nicea, the church of the Irish monks in the seventh century or the church of today. But because it always responded to God's call to mission, and because that response has always been structured by the centrality of Jesus, lived out as church, preached as life's ultimate meaning, and grounded in the understanding of human nature and the nature of history, that community, and its mission, has always been the same.

Bevans (2007:11) explains this further:

The Creator Spirit *calls* the church to be a missionary church, but the gentle yet powerful work of the Spirit does not leave it at that. From the beginning, the Spirit has been present *within* the church, enabling it to be both *sign* and *instrument* of the reign of God that Jesus preached, served and embodied. The church created by the Spirit never exists for itself; it exists entirely for the coming reign of God. And yet, by the power of the Spirit, the church is *already*, in some imperfect way, a

foretaste of the fullness for which it has been created. It is that partial yet authentic reality that the church is called to witness forth to the world; and it is the hope of complete fullness that the Spirit empowers the church to proclaim and work for in the world. In other words, the Spirit *equips* the church to be a missionary church.

4. MISSIOLOGY AS THEOLOGICAL DISCIPLINE

4.1 Missiology: Rise and demise

Robinson (2009:104) explains that it was not until late in the 19th century that Missiology gained the status of a full-blown sixth discipline in the theological curriculum. He states that the direct result was an explosion in the number of chairs in Missiology all over the world. However, he has to admit that, regrettably, this heyday for Missiology did not last for a full century. He observed a saddening decline in the number of Missiology chairs at universities in the latter part of the 20th century. According to him, the reason for this is that, although many factors may account for this development, a significant one was the rise and impact of secularism. He refers to an increasing uneasiness (feelings of guilt) with a discipline openly connected to the proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ to people of other faiths or religious orientation.

The question is whether it is not the essence of the public university to be unbiased and scientifically neutral. This means the question is whether it is possible to teach a subject like Missiology with a definite preference for one religion at a public university, which should be unbiased and scientifically neutral according to some. It should be noted immediately, however, that scientific neutrality does not exist, but it is a positivistic solution to a much more complex problem. However, is it possible to teach Missiology, which has a clear-cut bias, at a public university?

The second question is: Is Missiology an acceptable discipline? Should it not be seen as a subject that has had its turn? In the new dispensation of a new public university, especially in South Africa, it should not be taught and accepted any longer. To the contrary, Heyns and Jonker (1974:302), both from South Africa, clearly see the importance of Missiology in their *Encyclopaedia of Theology*. It is regarded as a discipline dealing with the mission of the church as an instrument of the Holy Spirit incorporated in the *missio Dei*. Robinson and Smit (1996:406) refer to the challenges of Theology as a discipline in an entirely new situation in South Africa. Context, responsibility and integrity are issues that should be addressed from the theological perspective. Missiology should be evaluated from the background of science and as a discipline. However, is Missiology not a subject that has had its time during

the great awakenings of mission in the 19th century but no longer in the 20th and 21st centuries when an entirely new situation has come about? Is it not possible to teach Missiology even within the church's own community? The question is also whether Missiology is a subject with different sub-disciplines or whether it is a subject with only one discipline. Should we accept it as only a certain discipline and not as a subject with different aspects to it, for instance Systematic Theology or Ecclesiology?

4.2 Positions taken in Missiology

4.2.1 Gustav Warneck

Gustav Warneck opened the door to scientific research on Missiology and laid the foundation for Missiology as a discipline. Gensichen explains that Warneck in his monthly journal *Allgemeine Missions-Zeitschrift* in 1874 elevated the discussion of missiological themes to higher levels. He was also the first ever to produce a comprehensive, multi-volume compendium of the science of missions between 1892 and 1903, and he was the first to promote effective cooperation in missions by means of conferences on local, regional and national levels (Gensichen, 1991:443).

Hans Kasdorf (1980:281-282) states that Warneck's magnum opus in the clearest terms spells out the Protestant philosophy and theology of mission. He explains that Warneck treated mission comprehensively and systematically in theory and practice. Although he had built on the ideas of earlier pathfinders like Karl Graul (1814-1864), Friedrich Ehrenfeuchter (1814-1878), Hermann Th. Wangemann (1818-1894) and Karl H.C. Plath (1829-1901), Warneck did much pioneer work himself. Kasdorf writes,

The very thought of mission, he insisted, is so great, awesome and majestic, it must be attributed to God, the creator of the universe and the provider of universal salvation.

Kasdorf (1980:282) also explains that Warneck's concept of the "comity agreement" was progressive for his time and that he saw the task of mission consisting of the Christianisation of entire peoples, not of individual conversions. Kasdorf states that Warneck identifies his "Christianisation" concept with the biblical *mathetêuein* and insists that the heart of the Lord's mandate consists of making disciples.

4.2.2 J.H. Bavinck

J.H. Bavinck is the next prominent theologian to be referred to. He explicitly explained how important it is to see the different aspects of Missiology in a

scientific way. He lay the foundation for Missiology to be taught scientifically. Van den Berg (1983:174) explains that a summary of Bavinck's legacy is found in his great work *An Introduction to the Science of Missions*:

In it, we meet with the various elements characteristic of his approach, his psychological interest traceable in many places (though not as explicitly present as in earlier publications), his biblical orientation (here very prominent), and the respectful way he dealt with other religions. From the vantage point of almost three decades since the publication of that book, we are aware of a certain one-sidedness as a result of an almost exclusive attention to the confrontation between Christianity and the non-Christian religions.

4.2.3 J. Verkuyl

Verkuyl (1978:5) views Missiology as a comprehensive subject and suggests the following:

Missiology is the study of the salvation activities of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit throughout the world geared toward bringing the kingdom of God into existence. Seen in this perspective, Missiology is the study of the worldwide church's divine mandate to be ready to serve this God who is aiming his saving acts towards this world. In dependence on the Holy Spirit and by word and deed the church is to communicate the total Gospel and the total divine law to all mankind. Missiology's task in every age is to investigate scientifically and critically the presuppositions, motives, structures, methods, patterns of cooperation, and leadership which the churches bring to their mandate. In addition, Missiology must examine every other type of human activity which combats the various evils to see if it fits the criterion goal of God's kingdom which has both already come and is yet coming.

4.2.4 D.J. Bosch

Bosch (1991:363-367) explains the essence of Missiology. He states that never before in history have scholars been so interested in their disciplines as such, especially in the metaquestions concerning these disciplines. Therefore, Missiology also has to attend to serious new questions and has to find its place in a new world where the very existence of the church is being questioned. The place of Missiology, amidst other scientific disciplines and the theologies of the great world religions, is also questioned. Bosch opts for Missiology to deal with a new upcoming paradigm of ecumenism to be in creative tension to essentially answer the questions of a new world from a deep Christological basis. In this new uncertain world, his "reflections will

remain tentative, suggesting rather than defining the contours of a new model” (Bosch 1991:367).

Criticism was levelled at him, however. Yates (2009:73) refers to Frans Verstraelen who wrote a penetrating critique in the composite work *Mission in Bold Humility*, explaining that Bosch’s theology stands in the classical tradition of ideas “from above” and so contrasts sharply with liberation theologians’ concentration on praxis and concrete contextualisation. Yates (2009:73) concludes,

While Bosch himself conceded this point and was unapologetic about it, he recognised that *praxis* had its place with *theoria*, and in the interests of a human and theological holism he added a third aspect, *poiesis*, the need for a satisfying theological and missiological approach to provide beauty and worship.

Others also criticise Bosch’s concept of paradigm shifts, and Kreider (2005:67) is critical towards the sixfold paradigm and rather suggests a threefold paradigm, explaining that the threefold distinction of pre-Christendom, Christendom and post-Christendom paradigms can be more useful. He suggests a return to pre-Christendom, because pre-Christendom patterns can provide a means of critiquing Christendom practices and assumptions. Livingston (1999:30) also refers to Bosch’s concept of the church as alternative community.

The church is set apart from the world and called to be a church without privileges, a servant community that must embody the radical lifestyle of Christ’s new community. Yet the Christian community’s called-out existence is for the sake of the world.

4.2.5 C. van Engen

Van Engen (1996) also refers to the task of theology that always has to take into account the church as being the sent one. Without Missiology, theological disciplines would be incomplete. Theological disciplines would not be able to explain all the different aspects of mission and theology if they were not linked with one another. This is not only part of years that have gone by, but also part of the essence of the church in a postmodern world. Even in a postmodern world, the task of the church is to proclaim positively, without any doubt, that it has a calling in the world, and this calling in the world is seen in the essence of Missiology. It remains important to teach theology students the essence of missions as an essential part of theology without which the theological course would be incomplete.

4.2.6 Other suggestions

These ideas are also developed further. In *Conversation on Mission Studies* (2008:103), the relation between Mission Studies and Religious Studies is discussed:

Whereas Religious Studies can be located both within and without theological faculties, Mission Studies is a genuine part of Theology. The subject, which is taught at nearly all Protestant Theological Faculties, can be found under various categories, for example: Mission and Religious Studies; History of Religion and Mission Studies; Mission Theology; Religion, Mission and Ecumenical Studies. The reason for this lies in the complex historical development of the subject. In both contemporary public and theological discourse, the term 'mission' often leads to confusion and stereotyping, which is why the traditional subject title 'Mission Studies' is frequently the cause of misunderstandings.

World mission conferences are also of importance in this regard: Edinburgh 1910, Jerusalem 1928, Tambaram 1938, Whitby 1947, Willingen 1952, Achimota 1958, New Delhi 1961, Mexico City 1963, Bangkok 1972/73, Melbourne 1980, San Antonio 1989, Salvador da Bahia 1996 and Athens 2005 brought deep insight into Missiology but also showed how the different aspects were developed from an optimistic view of the evangelisation of the whole world to mission and social justice and humility (World Council of Churches s.a.).

5. PRESENT-DAY CRITICISM AGAINST MISSIOLOGY

Postmodernism questions the right to have a definite own, exclusive position. Missiology is under attack. The truth of the Christian religion as the truth of Christ and accepting his Lordship over all is being questioned. Many regard the large failure of Christendom (like the First and Second World Wars and colonialism) as the failure of Christianity. Mission is regarded as the exposition of Christendom, and the atrocities of conquistadors and uncritical colonialist missionaries are often put on the same level. The postmodern position critically engages the right of anyone to establish his or her own religion as supreme.

The next issue is the right of any particular faith to expect the State, which has taxpayers from different faiths, to subsidise a particular subject dealing with the expansion and propagation of that faith. Therefore, should public universities not be a-religious? Should pure science not be developed?

The third question is more particular from within the theological community. It is stated that Missiology is only a primary subject without many disciplines such as Ecclesiology.

6. THE DISCIPLINE OF MISSIOLOGY: POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

6.1 Interdisciplinary, interreligious subject

The suggestion is made that Missiology should be an interdisciplinary, interreligious subject dealing with the expansion of religions from all the different perspectives. All religions should then be accepted and taught as a subject in which all religions can see in essence how they can propagate their different religions in the world. It is then seen as a neutral subject by which all religions can benefit from the methods that can be used to propagate a certain religion. This makes it a neutral discipline in which all religions can be accepted.

Kritzinger (1995:5) explains,

In the midst of all these misunderstandings, I suggest that Missiology should no longer focus exclusively on Christian mission, but widen its focus to include the mission of various religions.

He proposes that Missiology must be broadened to include all different religions.

The main point for me, however, is not so much what the enterprise is called, but the fact that we should study religious communities missiologically, that is, as *world-changing movements* (1995:7).

He continues,

Mission takes place through *mutual* witness, as we move from stall to stall in the religious and ideological flea market of South Africa, and Africa as a whole. I have suggested in this paper that the task of Missiology can be conceived as equipping members of religious communities to be at home in that flea market, mixing with people, tasting and smelling what is new and strange, buying what is useful and attractive, while confidently offering their own message in the stall next door (1995:23).

6.2 Neutral discipline emphasising church and development

Missiology could also be a neutral discipline emphasising church and development. The suggestion that Missiology should be a neutral discipline emphasising the developmental aspect of the work of the church is sometimes advanced. The idea is then that Missiology becomes a neutral

discipline by dealing with the issue of development. All emphasis is laid on different models of community development. The ways of development of churches are then regarded as just another development endeavour. Empirical study to evaluate and compare developmental outreaches of churches, NGOs and other charities is then pursued.

6.3 Discipline of comparative religions

Another solution to save Missiology is to regard Missiology as a discipline of comparative religions. Missiology is then studied as the way in which one religion is regarded and evaluated amongst others. In this way, a neutral approach is possible and no offence is given to any other religion, or so it is seen.

6.4 Historical subject

Another possibility is to emphasise only the historical aspect of Missiology. Missiology is then regarded as only a historical subject, and the historical aspect, which is undisputed, is then studied in a neutral way.

6.5 Exegetical emphasis

Missiological text could also be studied, dealing with a neutral and critical interpretation of missiological and Biblical texts. Biblical texts concerning Missiology are studied with the view of exegetic evaluation but not with the view of any preference given to the Christian faith. Only the textual witnesses of the Old and New Testaments are studied.

6.6 Intercultural studies

In *Conversation on Mission Studies* (2008:104), the term intercultural studies is suggested:

For this reason it is suggested that the explanatory term 'Intercultural Theology' be added to the traditional term 'Mission Studies' without replacing the name Mission Studies. The association between Mission Studies or Intercultural Theology and Religious Studies as is customary in theological faculties, has proven to be fruitful and therefore should certainly be continued.

Tiénou and Hiebert (2006:225) continues on this line of thought and refers to the communication of the Gospel:

The task of the mission theologian is to translate and communicate the Gospel in the language and culture of real people in the particularities

of their lives so that it may transform them, their societies, and their cultures into what God intends for them to be. Missional Theology seeks to build the bridge between Biblical revelation and human contexts. It seeks to remove the gap between orthodoxy and orthopraxy and between truth, love and holiness.

6.7 Mission as frontier crossing and identity formation

Simon (2009:99 et seq.) describes the implications of mission in the process of frontier crossing and identity formation to a full understanding of mission as an integrating contextual Missiology.

Simon (2009:99) refers to the research of Prill and Ponce and first explains that, in their work, all the sub-fields of Missiology provide the contents and methods for studying frontier and “grass-roots” missional identity formation in local and global contexts. Second, he refers to the implications of Ponce’s study to develop a grounded theory on the suffering Christ and costly discipleship. Third, he explains that the studies of Prill and Ponce show that the classical and contextual themes remain relevant for a contextual Missiology, which attempts to understand why and how Christian communities introduce and sustain mission praxes for and from the frontier margins today. Simon (2009:100) finally explains that Missiology then becomes a contextual Missiology that instigates serious thought in all disciplines of Theology and explores mission themes from the contexts of frontier crossing and in identity formation.

Thus, the search for truly contextual Missiology is the main emphasis in this approach.

Although, in his response, Robinson (2009:104) refers to Simon’s proposal as a plea to safeguard Missiology from being phased out altogether, he is of the opinion that Missiology still has a definite and specific role to play, and that the classical approach to Missiology must be regarded as still relevant.

6.8 Missiology as ecumenical enterprise

Missiology is also regarded as an ecumenical enterprise in which the context plays an important role. Garcia (2009:95) explains,

The reason for this hope is that any Missiology, from whatever regional context, would have to seriously take into account three things: biblical revelation; history of mission, including theology and practice; and the concrete socio-political and cultural contexts. It is an ecumenical endeavour encompassing history, cultures, and the whole biblical revelation. Here, I suggest two basic methodological principles: (1) that Missiology is a critical reflection on mission strategy and (2) that

Missiology is a critical reflection on context for the sake of mission. Both of these reflections are based on and developed in the light of biblical revelation.

Garcia (2009:97) also refers to main issues:

The study of mission in all its aspects, including the evangelistic aspect, is Missiology. Missiology as a theological discipline should not be an area reserved only for ordained missionaries and theologians. Professionals who see their work as part of the redeeming action of God should be invited to missiological discussions. Mission would be well served with their presence and insights from their work and ministry.

7. AN EVANGELICAL REFORMED APPRAISAL OF THE DISCIPLINE

Missiology is a discipline that has been receiving attention from a universal audience due to the positive contribution of prominent scholars such as David Bosch and Charles van Engen. Missiology is an essential and intricate part of theological study. An evangelical, reformed appraisal of the discipline emphasises that it is essential to teach Missiology as part of theological studies because it is absolutely part of the task of the church to proclaim this in the world. Therefore, Missiology cannot be separated from the theological discipline and the implications of this discipline. Missiology and the aspect of the life of the church should always be connected with each other. It remains important to teach theological students the essence of missions as an essential part of Theology, without which the theological course would be incomplete. However, it should be taught in humbleness and brokenness.

The suggestions of this paper are the following: Missiology is the essence of the church and should be taught as the ministry of reconciliation. It is not possible to teach Theology without Missiology. Missiology is an intrinsic part of Theology. Schirmmacher (1999:15) writes,

Whoever wants to practice missions pragmatically and therefore to renounce theology and teaching, because they might hinder practice, is doing missions in his own commission and does not care what God said about mission. Whoever teaches dogmatics which do not focus on world missions and do not lead to practical steps to reach the unreached, teaches in his own commission and does not care why God gave us His Word and teaching. Biblical and practical world missions will always begin with sound and thorough teaching. Sound and thorough teaching will on the other side always lead to biblical and practical world missions” (italics and bold script Schirmmacher).

Theology without Missiology is the church without its calling in the world. The church has a definite calling in the world. The church is being called to spread the Gospel in the world, and Theology as such cannot exist without the implication of Missiology. The church without mission is not a true church. The church without mission does not live according to the calling of Jesus Christ; therefore, it is not possible to have a theological faculty or a theological discipline without the discipline of Missiology. Missiology is the essence of the theological scientific thought. Bosch, in his magnum opus *Transforming Mission*, clearly establishes the full importance of Missiology.

Missiology is such an intricate part of theological teaching that theology in its entirety is under the same strain if Missiology is rejected. No theology exists without missiology.

But is Missiology an acceptable scientific subject? Science deals with all aspects of life. However, science is differentiated from emotions and pre-scientific evaluations by the aspects of logical methodology, tested evaluation and a theoretical system of knowledge in which the order of the universe plays an important role although not all accept it (see Strauss 1990:3). Theology should also seek to evaluate and differentiate in such a way that its conclusions can be tested in its own perspective. In this regard, Missiology is also a discipline in its own right. It has a clear, set field of research and it has a clear theoretical framework and methodology (Jongeneel 1991:13-17). It influences and is influenced by other subjects in especially the human sciences like Sociology and Anthropology (Jongeneel 1991:295-308). Missiology also has a profound influence on acquiring knowledge. It has clear implications for the context and situation of people (Robinson & Smit 1996:408). Many professions benefited and benefit from the knowledge of this scientific discipline (Verstraelen 1988:413-416; Jongeneel 1991:155-180). Verstraelen (1988:430 et seq.) sees a new future for Missiology in which the ecumenical aspect of the discipline will receive much more attention. The fullness of the discipline, its reach and implications are profound. Jongeneel (1991:31 et seq.) explains in full how Missiology touches the different theological disciplines, such as Systematic Theology (1991:57-110), Ethics (1991:111-137), Cybernetics (1991:155-199), Catechetics (1991:200-226) and Homiletics (1991:255-299).

First, Missiology deals with the command of Jesus Christ. The church cannot exist without acknowledging that Jesus Christ gave the great commandment: Go into the world, make the people my disciples and baptise them. This aspect of Missiology is so essentially part of the church that it is impossible to have the church without the commandment of Jesus Christ. This commandment of Jesus Christ is the foundation of Missiology and should be acknowledged as such, and it should be proclaimed as such. Missiology cannot be seen without this aspect of its total importance. Even more so, if it is accepted that Jesus

Christ is the Saviour of the world, it should be accepted by the church and should be proclaimed by the church. It is even more essential to proclaim that Missiology should be taught at a public university.

Pocock, Van Rheenen and MacConnell (2005:69) write,

God's heart for the masses, seen in the tears of Jesus weeping over Jerusalem, desires that each and every one is touched with the same gracious love experienced by those who know Christ as Saviour. The church spread throughout the world as communities of redeemed people form the structure of Christ's plan (Eph. 2:19-22).

However, the question remains: How should this be done? If it is done in a derogatory way by looking condescendingly upon other religions and criticising other religions because they are not acceptable, then Missiology might become a questionable subject. If it is proclaimed in a way in which Jesus Christ and the following of the commandment of Jesus Christ is proclaimed in total brokenness and acceptance of the task of the church in the world as the task of those who commit themselves to Jesus and who are humble in the propagating of the Gospel, it is highly acceptable. The church should always be humble in the proclamation that Jesus is the Lord. On the other hand, it should also be bold. David Bosch clearly explains this. The church in bold humility, is bold in Jesus Christ but also humble. However, it does not mean that it does not have a message to bring to the world. It is a clear message that has to be proclaimed and has to be brought to people. It has to be brought in the name of Jesus Christ, the Saviour of the world. It also has to be done in humility, however: not being conceited and not being proud; not being triumphalistic. It should be in brokenness and humbleness, but as such, it cannot be separated from the task of the church and the calling to proclaim the word of God in this world. Therefore, the following should be taken into consideration: In the light of Bosch's dictum that mission is the church at the cutting edge, Robinson (2009:105) refers to the four classical questions in missions as still very relevant, namely What?, Who?, Where?, and How? Robinson (2009:105-106) concludes,

These four questions shed a penetrating light on past, present and future theological thinking on the goal and content of mission, the Church as bearer of the message, the widely differing and always changing contexts, and the never-ending search for and development of effective methods of communicating the Gospel of Christ by word and deed.

The important contribution of missions can also not be underestimated. Webster (1982:765) explains the influence of mission:

Christian missions have made an unprecedented impact on history and society. In addition to establishing vigorous churches and Christian communities, missionaries in the past played an important role in the abolition of slavery, cannibalism, infanticide and widow-burning. From the beginning, Christian missionaries introduced biblical perspectives on human values, family life and the role of women. They pioneered medical and health services in many lands as their ministries of compassion to orphans, lepers, the sick, the dying and the disadvantaged demonstrated Christian love in action.

He mentions that missionaries in India established more than 600 hospitals and that schools and colleges and other institutions of learning were founded. The contribution of mission to disciplines like Linguistics, Ethnography and Comparative Religion is also significant. Translation of parts of the Bible into more than 1,700 languages is to be commended. Webster (1982:765) also mentions the positive role of mission in helping communities to become self-sufficient by propagating activities like agriculture.

Mission, however, should be practised as the ministry of reconciliation. The ministry of reconciliation demands that we should proclaim the word of God in the world around us in humbleness and brokenness. This humble and broken church proclaims that it has a task in the world in which it exists. Verster (2008:64) regards mission as the ministry of reconciliation in which Christ became the One in our place, our substitute to reconcile us totally with God in his glorious salvation, being made sin in our place. Christ as our substitute is our salvation. Mission deals with the ministry of reconciliation proclaiming these truths:

If we accept that Jesus Christ is our reconciliation, He is proclaimed as the One who brings reconciliation, who places people in a totally new relationship with God despite a previous relationship that was totally distorted (Verster 2008:64).

As such, Missiology is an intricate part of theological teaching. Theology in its entirety is under the same strain if Missiology is rejected. Therefore, it is not a question of whether the discipline of Missiology should be eliminated. The question to be asked is: How can Missiology as part of Theology be taught at a public university? Christian theology as such is part of the scientific world. The scientific world cannot be evaluated justly without accepting the importance of the church in this world. In this scientific world, theology should be acknowledged. Therefore, the public university should take cognisance of the fact that evaluating disciplines such as Theology should be given the same appreciation and full acceptance as is the case with other scientific subjects. Missiology as an inseparable part of theological studies should also be accepted and taught at a public university.

Bridges-Johns (1997:142) explains,

Ministerial formation from the starting point of 'God with us' views education in the larger contexts of formation which integrates beliefs (orthodoxy), affections (orthopathy) and actions (orthopraxis). This view of theological enquiry is in line with the ancient Christian meaning of *theologia* which united spirituality and a theological task. Consequently, the humanising power of education is given its proper place under the canopy of Pentecost where there would be ordered learning as well as critical enquiry utilising the best scholarly tools. However, it would require not only the discursive reasoning but the engagement of the whole person within the context of community which is formed by the Holy Spirit (*italics Bridges-Johns*).

First, it should be proclaimed as part of the task of the church. It is impossible to have the church and not to have missions. Therefore, Missiology should always be accepted as a part of Theology, as a scientific subject that has the right to be taught because Missiology is part of the church.

Schirmmacher (2007: 432) puts it aptly:

What is called for, as we think about integrating a sense of mission throughout our curriculum, is not so much offering (or requiring) more courses or more assignments that overtly fall under the exotic category of "mission history." Rather, our curricular goal should be to cultivate a missional hermeneutic of history. By this I mean a frame of historical reference which embraces the ongoing encounter of the Christian faith with unbelief and with rival religions, along with the integration of new believers from such backgrounds into the church, as central to the whole sweep of church history, not as an interesting or exotic side-bar to that history.

Second, the way in which it should be proclaimed should always be in humble acceptance of the task of the church in this world. It should be done with great humbleness but also in the name of the Lord.

Robinson comes to the following conclusion:

When Missiology succeeds to involve every discipline in Theology to be part of a dynamic search for a genuine service identity *at the cutting edge* then it has fulfilled its role as *Mother of Theology* (2009:106).

8. CONCLUSION

Theology at the public university should be comprehensive. It should include the vast world of scientific theological study. Missiology is an intrinsic part of this

world and should be accepted in this regard. However, it should not be taught in any derogatory or offensive way, but humbly in bold humility. The scope of Missiology is comprehensive; therefore, it includes many aspects of theology that cannot be studied sufficiently without the discipline of Missiology.

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