

They did it for Christ's sake: An appraisal of the missionary movement in Africa

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Abstract

The missionary movement in Africa had a profound influence on many aspects of the life of the people of the continent. Previously, the endeavours of the missionaries were largely regarded as positive. Their sacrifices in bringing the Gospel to remote villages and countries were regarded as heroic. Presently, the mood has swung to a much more critical evaluation. In some instances, they are even described as the villains of Africa, responsible for many of the problems the continent faces. A new appraisal is necessary, taking into account their selfless sacrifices for the sake of Christ. A responsible evaluation will bear in mind that many were inspired by a love for Christ, even though many mistakes were made in the process of proclaiming Christ's Lordship.

Opsomming

Hulle het om Christusonthalwe opgetree: 'n Waardering van die sendingbeweging in Afrika

Die sendingbeweging in Afrika het 'n besondere invloed op die lewe van die mense van die kontinent gehad. Die sendelinge se optrede is vroeër oorwegend positief beoordeel. Hulle opoffering om die evangelie na verafgeleë nedersettings en lande te bring is as heldedade beskou. Die huidige beoordeling is egter veel meer krities. In sommige gevalle word sendelinge selfs uitgekryt as die skurke van Afrika, verantwoordelik vir baie van die probleme wat die kontinent

teister. Dit is egter noodsaaklik om hulle optrede opnuut te waardeer en die onselfsugtige opofferings wat hulle ter wille van Christus gemaak het in ag te neem. Wanneneer hulle optrede op 'n verantwoordelike wyse beoordeel word, is dit duidelik dat baie van hulle deur die liefde van Christus gedring is, ten spyte van heelwat foute wat gemaak is in die proses waarin hulle Christus se heerskappy verkondig het.

1. Introduction

A huge public meeting in London. Tickets sold out. Exeter Hall brimming. No, it is not Charles Kean, the idol of actors, as usual playing Hamlet before a packed audience in the nearby theatre. It is June 1840. The first anniversary meeting of the Society for the Extinction of Slave Trade and for the Civilization of Africa. Prince Albert would also attend. It was thoroughly Christian and the beginning of the unparalleled growth and development of the missionary venture into Africa. Cheer after cheer for speakers. A young man is present in Exeter Hall (see Moorhouse, 1973:25ff). Moorhouse (1973:27) writes: "And among those fervent, patriotic, well-meaning, committed and slightly hysterical Christians, was a man who was destined much more than everyone else in Exeter Hall, in London, in the whole world, to exemplify the spirit which was now being proclaimed and released as a benison upon degraded Africa." A twenty seven year old medical student from Caring Cross Hospital who hailed from Scotland; David Livingstone. Fowell Buxton made the longest speech referring to the state of Africa in crisis. An end to slavery, Christianity and, let us not forget, trade, were needed. Unprecedented the call to heed Africa.

From a total different person. At a total different age. He calls it my song of Praise.

1.

When darkness all around me falls
and drives away all light,

I still will sing my song of praise

Though covered by the night

Chorus (1, 2)

I sing with all God's children

From every class and race,

I sing with God's creation

His praise in every place.

2.

I am possessed by Jesus Christ,
He is to me the Door.
I live the life He lives in me
now and for evermore.

3.

He is my brilliant morning-star,
His glory shall shine on.
He stays with those who trust in Him
Until their day is done.

Chorus

I sing with all God's angels
who do his will in love,
I enter with his holy church
The feast prepared above.

A song by Prof. W.J. van der Merwe, epitomising the spirit of many missionaries.

(Du Preez, Pauw & Robinson, 1986:11)

Edinburgh 1910 remains a pivotal conference with regard to the missionary movement. The fruits of the missionary movement were considered, as well as what a worldwide church would look like and how it would exercise its missionary obligation. The missionary movement was regarded as magnificent and the role it played as wonderful (Ross, 2005:585).

But what about Africa?

Africa is a continent that has struggled with many problems in the past. Droughts, famine, illnesses, ethnicity, tribal wars, and ignorance existed, but the most destructive was the slave trade. These problems posed massive challenges. The encounter with other civilizations, namely the West, the East and the Arab world, were imminent. Colonialism was both destructive and beneficial. However, it carried serious problems. There are still countless challenges to handle. The missionary movement in Africa had a profound influence on the continent, which is still very relevant.

2. Methodology and research question

This article presents a general view of the implications of the missionary movement in Africa by appraising the missionaries'

influence in Africa. A general literature study was conducted. The background of the missionary endeavour in an Africa beset with serious challenges is presented.

Should we not regard missionaries as loving and concerned people, rather than as villains?

There are some important evaluations of the missionary movement. Neill (1975) writes a comprehensive appraisal of mission, sometimes uncritical, as in his reference to King Leopold 11 of Belgium as “enterprising” (1975:379). Moorhouse (1973) gives an intriguing overview of the missionary movement but is criticised for his stance on their legacy. Walls (2009) evaluates the missionary movement largely positive, but also emphasises the weaknesses of the movement. In their respective comprehensive theologies Bosch (1991), as well as Bevans and Schroeder (2006), remain largely positive about the profound influence of the missionary movement in the light of the Enlightenment. Stanley (1992) offers an in depth analysis of the relation of protestant missions and imperialism and warns against a superficial evaluation where missions are too easily regarded as an imperialistic endeavour. Saayman (1991) regards colonialism and missions as clearly linked. Sundkler (1960) emphasises that the Christian voice was heard in Africa and should still be heard. Mugambi (1992a, 1992b, 1997a & 1997b) does not shy away from the serious destructive nature of many missionary endeavours, but is also prepared to acknowledge positives. Sanneh (1992) offers a well-balanced appraisal. Some black theologians are radically negative about the movement and are of the opinion that the missionary movement was as destructive as colonialism in its worst form (Goba, 1988). Magesa (1997:11) offers a critical view of the missionaries who, according to him, failed to see the authentic aspects of the African traditional religions and its importance for mankind in general. To evaluate the movement, attention should first be paid to the criticism of the missionaries; secondly, an overview should be provided of their influence from the perspective of their commitment, and lastly, reference should be made to the three missionaries who had committed themselves to the love of Christ.

3. The challenge to the missionaries' contribution

Currently the legacy of the missionaries is often judged negatively. Their influence is criticised on many levels.

Culture

On the level of culture, the missionaries were criticised because they were propagating the westernisation of Africa. Sanneh (1992:105ff) explains that some are of the opinion that Livingstone, with his three C's, instigated the Western colonialist idea, namely that it would be beneficial to explore and even exploit Africa. Civilisation meant the Western civilisation. The Africans had to be taught the fullness of the gospel moulded to the Western civilisation, although Ludwig Krapf had a more positive regard for Africa and believed that the African culture must stay intact. On a cultural level he also presented the gospel as beneficial (Moorhouse, 1973:53). The German missiologists emphasised the indigenisation of groups of people in Christianity. Their perspective was that the gospel had to be conveyed to the community, emphasising the communities' own cultural background. However, the emphasis was still on a Western take on society in order for the whole group to become civilised. (See reference to Gutmann by Jäschke, 1995:173-180.)

Mugambi writes (1997a:7) "This social influence has worked both towards alienation of Africans from their past, and their acculturation into the invading cultures. Christianity is at the same time a cultural catalyst and a cultural preservative. It has disrupted African social and political systems, and at the same time it has provided limited opportunities for preservation of some aspects of African culture."

During the new imperialistic stage of history even missionaries thought that non-Western people were inferior, incapable and untrustworthy (Bevans & Schroeder, 2006:216).

Gilkes (1985:59-61) refers to African colonisation as violent and culturally disruptive. Missionaries spread biblical Christianity in this context.

Kerr (2007:301) explains that paternalism existed in the relation between Western churches and churches in the missions' field at the Edinburgh 1910 Mission Conference: "The image of parent and child was frequently evoked. Western missions saw themselves as responsible for nurturing and mentoring the new churches in preparation for a time when they could undertake the burden of mission themselves."

The assumption that there was nothing valuable in African culture and religious heritage had serious consequences for the develop-

ment of a truly African Christianity and Mugambi (1992b:5) explains how the struggle continues to evaluate the African background because of the negative appraisal of the missionaries.

Religion

The message of the missionaries was Christianity. People had to be converted to Christianity. The African religions were regarded as unacceptable. People had to change from the African traditional religions to Christianity. Matthew 28 was regarded as the most essential text concerning the missionary endeavour. Mission meant being born again and that meant becoming Christian. The strong belief that Christ is the Lord remained all-important.

Magesa (1997:11) is critical towards the missionaries, because they did not have a high regard for the traditional religions. According to him, they failed to recognise the intrinsic value of African religions and they emphasised the discontinuity with Christianity, instead of realising its continuity in humanity.

Politics

The missionaries were regarded as being contradictory to the African society. The political systems of traditional Africa were regarded as completely unsuitable. Missionaries expected these systems to change totally. A new dispensation had to be produced. In many instances, there was an uncritical acceptance of colonialism. Colonialism was regarded as the way to a new Africa of Western politics. The political chieftdom of Africa dealt with the problems of Africa in an African way. Was the Western way at all better? According to the critics of missionaries, this was not the case. The political system introduced by the missionaries led to serious problems. Africa could have solved its problems much better on its own.

Moorhouse (1973:93) describes the way in which the missionary, Rev. C.A. Gollmer, accepted the bombardment of Lagos from the HMS Antelope as God's interposition for the good of Africa. He asked the Admiralty to attack the intractable Ijebu in 1856 and they obeyed.

Saayman (1991:96-100) explains that many challenges still exist to rectify the problems brought about by colonialism. Missionaries and

colonial powers often had a very close relation and issues such as ownership of land, indirect rule, privileges from injustices and other ills still need to be addressed.

Imperialism

The opinion was that the imperial powers used the missionaries to subdue the Africans and that the missionaries were pawns in the hands of the powerful. Missionaries accepted the leadership of the imperialistic powers, because it protected them and gave them the opportunity to live their lives to the full. Van der Walt (2003:24-25) explains that missionaries did regard the premises of the colonial powers to be correct, namely a high emphasis on individualism, the understanding of Western civilisation as the best, the understanding of paganism as degenerated and the acceptance of Western secularism in the division between faith and science.

Early missionaries, such as Livingstone, believed that benevolent colonialism was acceptable and would lead to a better society (Bevans & Schroeder, 2006:214).

Many colonial governmental spokespersons praised missionaries as allies in the colonised world (Bosch, 1991:303).

Porter (2005:40-63) gives an overview of the relation between missionaries and empire. He explains that it was not always as clear as sometimes envisaged, but that in many instances the missionaries were aware of the predicament of being too close to empire. On the other hand, the benefits of empire was easily accepted and highly regarded.

In a comprehensive overview Pakenham (1991:xxiii) explains how Africa perceived the Scramble of Africa as Conquest. Imperialism meant that the gun had the upper hand. Atrocities were commonplace. Missionaries were regarded as being in full cooperation with the colonial imperialistic powers.

Mugambi (1997a:9) explains that the colonial state expected the missionary enterprise to turn the colonised Africans into docile, obedient subjects while in return they would give grants to these agencies for educational work and social services such as health, agriculture and vocational training.

Stanley (1992:184) mentions that the Gospel has an imperial and absolutist message of the Kingdom of God and salvation in Christ alone, but that the missionaries did sometimes align that message to political imperialism.

Personhood

The missionaries' view of the personhood of Africans is criticised. It was considered that they viewed the African's personhood as entrenched in African culture and not free to the Enlightenment. Africa needed to cross from the past to the future. This meant that the person had to change. Understanding who we are, why we are here and where we are going had to change. This took place in a radical way. Africa's own personhood was changed.

Economics

Livingstone's third C, commerce, was one of the most important issues for the colonial powers. The view was that commerce should also be used in such a way as to uplift the Africans. It was, however, not acceptable for the capitalist exploiters and they again used the missionaries to that avail. Many missionaries regarded trade as a means to develop Africa. The belief was that trade would enhance the lives of the Africans. However, this led to much exploitation.

This goes hand in hand with the belief in progress and success. Bosch (1991:339) explains that this belief emerged from all missions from the 17th to the 20th centuries in the light of the Enlightenment, and is therefore a shift from grace to works.

Liberation

Sharp criticism came from liberation theologians and black theologians. They thought that the missionary movement lacked the essential implication of political and economical liberation. To them the message of the missionaries was void of the realities with which they dealt. Salvation as attaining eternal life without taking the realities of the present day into consideration, were actually enslaving the people. Missionaries are therefore regarded as part of the problems of Africa, leading to its enslavement. Post-colonial criticism also thinks that missionaries caused many of Africa's problems. According to post-colonial criticism the liberation of Africa

is therefore achieved not as a result of the endeavours of missionaries, but rather instead of their endeavours. Gichaara (2005:79) writes: "Liberation theologies from Africa are, so to speak, recoverers of the Moses heritage and memory. What they recover in this context is not merely Moses the law giver, but the liberator of the oppressed people. African liberation theology or theologies, as the case may be, calls to mind Moses the founder of a religious tradition that is at once political and radical. At the same time, this Messianic tradition is also traceable and stretches through the whole Bible to the Messiahship of Jesus himself, however much of it may have changed, stretched and even developed."

From the perspective of black liberation theology, anger at the construct of God created by white churches that minimised the perspective of the black religious experience emerging from the context of suffering, is also emphasised radically by those challenging the missionary movement (Kacela, 2005:212).

4. The failure of Africa

Some regard the present problems of Africa as the result of the failure of the missionary movement to bring about a new dispensation of hope in Africa. The opinion is that traditional Africa had better systems in place to deal with their problems. However, cognisance should be taken of the problems and crises in Africa. The missionaries encountered serious challenges and problems. Poverty and famine, illnesses, ethnic wars and upheaval were prevalent. The slave trade was still sweepingly present and slavery from both the West and the Arab world was radically destroying Africa's inhabitants. The missionaries had to act. Livingstone was especially struck by the slave trade. However, there were other problems to solve. The problem of education. Need for assistance. Fear. They encountered very serious challenges.

5. Evaluation of the contribution of missionaries

However, to evaluate the legacy of the missionaries in Africa, justice must be done as to their influence. Bosch (1991:344) writes: "The Western missionary enterprise of the late eighteenth to the twentieth century remained, in spite of valid criticism which may be aimed at it, a most remarkable exercise." Mugambi (1997a:10) writes "Some missionaries were racial bigots and colonial bullies,

but, others were excellent pastors, counselors and teachers. Some were businessmen, and others were diplomats. Thus both the negative and the positive influences must be acknowledged in a balanced assessment of the missionary impact in tropical Africa.”

Salvation and church

The first legacy of missionaries in Africa is the church. Their endeavours resulted in establishing the church. The presence of the church, although it may be broken, poor, struggling and powerless, is still a great confession to the selfless contributions of the missionaries. On any given Sunday, many are on their way to church. The church exploded in Africa. Today, Africa is the new dawn of Christianity. The church is the carrier of the hopes of Africa. Mugambi (1992a:41ff.) explains how the influence of missionaries not only led to mainline churches being established in Africa, but they influenced the way in which African aspects of worldview was interpreted in the church, which influenced Africa's own kind of Christianity. The future of the church in Africa will develop from the sources of the missionary influence (Chipenda, 1997:3ff.). Fiedler, (2010:334) strongly states that Edinburgh 2012 recognised that the church is no longer the church of the global North, but the church of the global South, because of the missionary movement. With all the challenges of Africa, Sundkler (1960:316-317) is of the opinion that the missionaries, by inspiring the churches in Africa, made known the implications of God's will, and says that it still needs to be presented.

Education

The missionaries have educated Africa in a modern educational sense. The schools in Africa are the direct results of the contributions of the missionaries. Although the education was Western, education in the modern world is largely impossible if it negates the Western scientific methods and aspects. Education was on the forefront of the missionary movement. Even though Gerdener (1964:17) agreed with the policy of separate development, he mentioned in 1964 that the new leaders in Africa have to be recognised and he mentioned with appreciation that many were educated at mission schools. The massive influence in the propagation of the vernacular by missionaries should always be

acknowledged. In many instances this led to a new kind of nationalism (Sanneh, 1992:106)

Health

Missionaries' legacy is nowhere better explained than that they absolutely offered themselves for the sake of the sick. Hospitals all over Africa bear witness to the influence of the missionaries. The missionaries entered Africa with the Bible and a medical case. Neill (1975:255) mentions the wonderful influence of missionary doctors from the very start.

Personhood

Neill (1975:380) points out that the missionaries regarded the Africans as children of the Heavenly Father and that they could be regenerated to a place of spiritual equality with Europeans. Walls (1995:146) refers to the fact that Livingstone, for instance, respected Africans and African personality. This was unusual for the time and his confidence in African capabilities never wavered. Sanneh (1992:233) writes: "A similar emphasis occurs in Protestant missions. Even those missionaries who held a rather narrow view of the Bible as *sola scriptura* were no less significant in facilitating cross-cultural participation in the Christian movement. They did this by promoting vernacular languages as autonomous instruments, rather than judging them by the standards of Western commentaries and the intellectual and cultural values enshrined in those commentaries."

Democracy and social justice

Not all missionaries were lackeys of the imperial forces. Many thought that democracy was possible in Africa. Some were at loggerheads with the civil governments of their time, because they saw a future for the African people. Benedetto's (1996:10) well documented narrative of the influence of the American Presbyterians in the Congo mission states how William Morrison, against the instruction of his missionary organisation and the government in the Congo, which was in fact ruled by King Leopold 11, took a stand against slavery, labour, murders and other atrocities in the Congo. Morrison and Sheppard, another minister who spoke out bravely, were brought to court in Leopoldville on 20 September 1909

(1996:16). Morrison hoped that a show trial would be possible to reveal the atrocities, but this did not happen. It did however lead to reforms against slavery, and taxes were halved (1996:26). Many more instances of missionaries speaking out for the Africans can be mentioned. Although it is clear that missionaries had a view of the salvation of eternal life, and would certainly be critical of liberation theology, it would not be fair to regard them as insensitive towards the political and economic plight of people.

6. They did it for Christ's sake

Why?

I am very aware of the danger of generalisation and oversimplification but many missionaries in Africa had a deep sense of Paul's missionary motivations, which Bosch (1991:133-139) describes aptly as a sense of *concern*, *gratitude*, and *responsibility*.

Many Catholic and Protestant references to the difficult life of the missionaries are available and can be mentioned, but they endured for Christ's sake.

They had a sense of *concern*. Like Paul, they were appalled by the fear, idolatry, magic and superstition of many. The need to reach out required the gospel. This was also evident in much of the Dutch Reformed church's outreach to Africa, for example to Malawi (Cronjé, 1981:7ff.), Zimbabwe (1981:84ff.) and Zambia (1981:144ff.).

Walls (2009:100) explains the profound influence of the evangelical movement on the African continent. The high regard given to Scripture and the recognition of immediacy in personal experience have been regular features of African Christianity brought about by evangelical preaching.

They had a sense of *responsibility*. They were responsible for the needs of the Africans and had to bring the gospel to them. They would be responsible if any of them were lost.

They had a sense of *gratitude*. Most missionaries experienced the life-giving regeneration of the rebirth. They experienced Christ and were full of gratitude for what he had done.

Bosch writes (1991:286) "In the missionary awakening love became a powerful incentive – love as gratitude for God's love in Christ and as devotion to him ..." He (1991:286) also emphasises the fact that

the glory of God was lifted up in mission. Missionaries showed the discipleship of Christ in their lives. Western missionaries had a positive influence on culture (Bosch, 1991:297). See also Bevans and Schroeder (2006:221), who are of the opinion that they had a pervading spirit of “manifest destiny and religious fervor instilled within them, a desire to promote their culture and religion, a sense of responsibility for other peoples, a willingness to sacrifice and to trust, and a hope fueled by enthusiastic optimism.”

7. Missionaries in service of Christ

It will serve us well to turn to four missionaries of very different backgrounds and establish how they dealt with the challenges of Africa. Let us now turn to missionaries who showed their commitment and love of Jesus Christ.

Georg Schmidt

Georg Schmidt had a typical Moravian conversion experience and it had a profound influence on his life. He eventually suffered imprisonment and even disgust from his fellow Hernhutters, because they believed that he had betrayed the cause in his letter to be released. He undertook a new missionary journey to redeem himself (Bredenkamp & Hattingh, 1981:19). In February 1763, Count von Zinzendorf mentioned a Macedonic call from Amsterdam.

On 23 April 1738, Schmidt writes to Zinzendorf:

[My will is entrenched in his, and as long as there is a drop of blood in my veins, it must be just Him and to win souls for His kingdom, because He is worth it.] (Bredenkamp & Hattingh, 1981:63) [My translation from the German]

On 15 November 1739, he writes in his diary:

[Dear Brothers and Sisters! From this you can see how I lived among these people. You can also see my mistakes and shortcomings, because I admit and confess from my deepest heart that I am a poor, despicable human. Before Jesus Christ I can assure you that it was my only view to save souls and I want to lay them before the feet of the saviour.] (Bredenkamp & Hattingh, 1981:95).

The essence of his message is clear – 7 July 1741

[If you just believe that, you are a cursed human being and want to be helped by the Savior. Because he died out of love on the cross for all you heathen as well as for the so-called Christians and he paid by his blood.] (Bredenkamp & Hattingh, 1981:239).

Schmidt had a deep sense of responsibility and concern. Love drove him to bring the gospel to Africa. He also had deep gratitude for what Christ did for him.

William Morrison

William Morrison was mentioned earlier. What drove Morrison?

On 16 October 1902, Morrison wrote to Emri Cambieré, a member of the government's Native Protection Commission:

"I hope, My Dear Sir, that you will excuse my having written at such length on this subject, but I wish to establish very clearly my position. I am convinced that my position is also that of other Congo missionaries, at least among the Protestants, whom I know better than those of other missions. I believe that, whether Catholic or Protestant, we are here for the well-being of the native people, and that all that hinders this end we must condemn. I know the deep interest that you put into the cause of supporting the natives and I am absolutely convinced that you will use your influence to obtain from government a radical change in the matter in which they act towards the natives, whether or not they belong to a mission" (Benedetto, 1996:146).

His loyalty to the state, however, remained paramount (Benedetto, 1996:170).

He also writes to Samuel Clemens on 28 October 1904: "You can thus well say that we Protestants are being gradually crowded out. Every possible interference is put in the way of our work. But we are united in our purpose to subordinate the distinctly religious side of our work to the humanitarian: we must get the poor suffering, oppressed people liberated". (Benedetto, 1996:219).

Morrison is a clear example of a missionary in Africa who went to great lengths for the sake of the people he served, even endangering his own life. His sense of responsibility is clear.

Eugene Casalis

The positive encounter of Casalis with the inhabitants in Lesotho (then Basutoland) is of great importance. The central message of the gospel was brought to the people with enthusiasm and love. Casalis (1889:182) writes how they regarded the central message of the Gospel to be beneficial to the people of Basutoland: "We were the messengers of a God of Peace, whose protection and love were assured us, and who was willing to protect and bless the Basutos also. If Moshesh and his people consented to place themselves with us under the care and direction of this God, we had the most perfect assurance that He would undertake to make incursions of their enemies cease, and to create in the country a new order of belief and of manners which would secure tranquillity, order and abundance. In order to prove to our new friends the firmness of our convictions on this subject, and the purity of our intentions, we offered to establish ourselves definitely in their midsts, and to share their lot, whatever it might be."

Casalis' endeavours were worth the while and he experienced that Moshesh at the end of his life showed all the signs of a person who has committed his life to Jesus Christ (Casalis, 1889:232). The positive results of this missionary work are still present in the church in Lesotho. Although struggling with many challenges, the church in Lesotho from the missionary heritage of Casalis is still strong (Froise, 1989:29-31).

Ms Ella Botes

The singular work of Ms Ella Botes of Magwero, Zambia, must be mentioned. Looking after the blind among lions and other wild animals, facing uprisings and struggles, she and others, like Mss Spies and Stofberg, gave their lives for the poorest and most rejected in Zambia. It became the mother of institutions for the blind in Africa. Women, deep in Africa, out of love for Christ (Cronjé, 1981:168).

Botes had an evangelical outlook towards her work, but it is also very clear that she regarded her work as far more comprehensive than saving individual souls. She had to convince the church council that it is to the benefit of the blind to help them to work (Cronjé, 1956:73). At Magwero the blind, deaf and mute, as well as orphans, were educated to help them to become independent.

Botes (Agenda, 1963:6) reports in this regard: "There are 55 blind and 15 grown-ups in the workshop. The handiwork was very good, and the blind competed with one another in turning out the best mats and baskets and in the selling of their handiwork."

Prayer, however, remained essential in the missionary effort. She had a positive inclination to trust God in the endeavour. Rev. Van Schalkwyk reported that, at Magwero, the love for the "heathen" (sic) children was clear (Cronjé, 1956:135).

Criticism was levelled at her missionary endeavours in Zambia and even from her fellow missionaries who said that she de-ethnicised the children (Cronjé, 1956:120).

Generally, the Dutch Reformed missionaries in Zambia had a simple gospel message, calling for repentance and acceptance of Jesus (Verstraelen-Gilhuis, 1982:50), but it is also clear that many were, for the sake of Christ, deeply involved in the lives of their "congregants" (Cronjé, 1956:117 ff, Cronjé, 1984:205, Odendaal & Odendaal, 1974).

A deep sense of responsibility towards the most marginalised in the community drove Botes. The love of this missionary is clear.

8. Conclusion

Bevans and Schroeder (2006:221) writes: "Later generations would criticise them for their paternalism, superiority complex and collaboration with imperialism, but one should not overlook their dedication and sacrifice in proclaiming the gospel in the way that made sense to them as children of their time."

Walls (2009:100) explains how the message of the missionaries had its own dynamic in the critical encounter of life in Africa. The missionaries came to spread the Gospel, not evangelicalism, to Africa.

At Edinburgh 2010, many voices were heard from churches from the global South, even from places where there were no Christians in 1910, emphasising that the missionary movement did indeed have a profound influence (Dowsett, 2011 and also Cho, 2010). The missionary movement was a magnificent endeavour to bring Christ to a world in deepest need. Their methods and their views on colonialism and culture may be criticised, but it remains heroic and deeply Christian.

The way forward for missionaries in Africa

A new world is dawning in Africa. We hope for a more humane, more democratic continent with leadership leading unto a better life for all. If this is to happen, the missionaries' endeavours and legacy will have much to do with it. At Edinburgh 2010, a new perspective on future mission was established. Living through the Spirit in faith, the Gospel should be brought to Africa in a new way. Evangelicals were worried that evangelism and mission did not receive the attention it should have and that interreligious dialogue received more attention than proclaiming the gospel; however, the future of living the gospel in this world remains a legacy of the missionaries.

A new kind of missionary is needed. The emphasis must be much more on cooperation and building relationships. The love of Christ, however, must still be the essence of the community of faith.

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