

Tolerance of Ideas and Appreciation of Diversity in a Systematic Theology Class

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Abstract

This article examines the reality of multiculturalism that the theology class, in particular the systematic theology class, is faced with. Systematic theology is highlighted as biblical, systematic, contemporary and practical. It is defined as the systematic presentation of what we believe (*dogma*) and why we believe it (*apologetics*). In the broader sense, systematic theology is the human behaviour in response to dogma (*ethics*) and a wider understanding of how theology has developed as a scientific discipline (*encyclopaedics*); and how faith is expressed (*symbolics*). Confession is consonant with *praxis*. Verbal expression of *belief* is what is embedded in both the heart and the head. Dogma is the factual expression of conviction from within. Multicultural education is a reality for even teaching theology. The multicultural society is inevitably faced with proliferation of ideologies and the racial differentiations. These come along with demographic differences such as age, sex, culture, ethnicity and language; and the personality differences such as extroverts and introverts, different values, attitudes, opinions, lifestyles etc. Diversity is a cultural reality since in theology there are Calvinists and Armenians, Catholics, Protestants and Orthodox, Classical Pentecostals and Neo-Charismatics, Conservative and Progressive evangelicals etc. Systematic Theology is a discipline of debates, discussions, and therefore open to creativity. To enhance tolerance and appreciation of ideas, two pedagogical approaches are proposed as effective methods of teaching systematic theology. These are collaboration and dialogue.

Key Words: diversity, tolerance, theology, collaboration, dialogue

Introduction

The classical theology class in the public university is diverse in many ways. The lecturer and students should value diversity and model the attitude towards this diversity. It comes to our teaching and learning space in different faces such as that of race, tribe, ethnicity, gender, age, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, education, religion, denominational traditions, and of course dogmatic persuasions. The class component is made up of people with diverse perspectives, work experiences, life styles, cultures, stereotypes and egos. All these people converge into one classroom to learn, discuss, debate, and explore some dogmatic constructs that stood the test of the aeons – the systematic theology class.

Tolerance of ideas and diversity

South African demographics had changed, and are continuing to do so, not only in human settlement patterns but also in the institutions of learning. The 1994 pendulum swing of repealing the legislated laws of segregation has enacted some huge change in the way South Africans interact in the field of employment, education, religion, civil service etc. This is captured by Seroto (Taole 2015:59) that:

Since the dawn of the democratic era in South Africa, education has been shaped in such a way that it addresses the implementation of policy in the area of diversity and multiculturalism. There is a clear shift in educational policy and practice from an emphasis on racial domination and cultural assimilation to more contemporary efforts to promote understanding of and respect for diversity.

The compartmentalised ideologies of apartheid are legally and constitutionally repealed. South Africa is becoming increasingly diverse. Johnson & Johnson (1997:445-446) refer to two sources of diversity. These are demographic differences (age, sex, culture, ethnicity and language); and the personality differences (extroverts and introverts, different values, attitudes, opinions, lifestyles etc.). “Our culture is increasingly proliferating heterogeneous discourses; choose your metaphor, there is no centre, no common ground, and no basic core” (Webb 1995: 229). The South African university community is presently experiencing a dynamic landscape regarding diversity and proliferate ideologies. These ideologies may sound as dissension or departure from the conservative cultural highways of values, morality, ethics etc. This complex composition is inevitable and demands appropriate pedagogical and didactic management. This calls for the teaching staff to “be sensitive to the diversity of population groups, language groups, socio-economic groups and cultural groups with whom they are dealing” (Le Roux 1993:110).

One of the salient features of the postmodern era is a rejection of metanarratives (Philosophies of life that are universally accepted as truths). The fundamental belief here is that all lifestyles are equally valid. For instance, homosexuality is as valid as heterosexuality. All religions are equally valid, hence the only real sin is criticising someone else’s religious views or moral choices. Every religion brings people to God. Opinions matter as much as evidence. Reality is in the mind of the beholder; therefore truth is whatever you believe. People who believe in absolute truth are dangerous. On the other hand, there is still a larger part of humanity that embraces orthodox tenets of faith and culture.

Tolerance, the appealing word of postmodernity, comes into play when thoughts are at the crossroads. Tolerance is when one is allowed freedom and choice of some behavioural pattern that may not synchronize with the norms. We hear and read a lot about racial tolerance and a little about ideological tolerance. The two are intertwined but in teaching and learning, the ideological tolerance seems to take precedence as debates, discussions, and dialogue on controversial issues come to fore. The bottom line is that our culture is facing conflict.

It is not a conflict of guns, but of ideas, one in which the fight is for institutions, not territory, hearts, not hills. It is a clash of paradigms, value systems, and visions of the future – a war for the soul of our nation” (Parsley 2007:187).

In reading the works of the educationists such as Palmer (2007) and Brookfield (1995); one realises that educators should have the capacity to identify the presence of hidden or invisible elements within the teaching and learning exchange that become the places where hard and challenging questions are asked and internal transformation takes place. Theology operates in a multicultural context that is infested with varied ideologies that call for tolerance. Rhodes (1998:58) asserts that “the church in a multicultural world faces not only the demographic fact of ethnic and cultural pluralism, but also the increasing presence of religious pluralism.” Students with conservative or radical views normally build a wall of hostility between themselves in the class. The ideas clash, and the gap widens. One hears of Calvinism and Hyper-Calvinism at loggerheads; or even Classical Pentecostalism and Neo-Charismatic ideas at the cross-roads. The clash is ideological. When Afrikaans and

English becomes an issue as a medium of instruction; or Black versus White; then the clash is racial. Tolerance should come into play.

The scenario painted above is especially experienced in historically language-based institutions of higher learning. The phenomenon is especially observed in the historically Afrikaans universities, which were regarded as Afrikaner cultural enclaves. It is unfortunate that “many pre-service teachers are ill-equipped regarding knowledge of diversity education” (Seroto in Taole 2015:55). Ignoring or rejecting cultural diversity in a theology class increases conflict and stereotypes tolerance of ideas and diversity that teaching and learning is concerned about. The understanding of diversity education contributes towards interactive learning; and enhances academic achievement.

There is a voluminous discussion in education circles about multicultural education. This multicultural education surfaced in educational study fields from the mid-seventies to the eighties. Scholars of the time defined it diversely. For instance, Baptiste & Baptiste (1979:15) defines it as the “transference of the recognition of a pluralistic society into a system of education.” On the other hand one comes across the likes of Banks (1983:4) where multicultural education is defined as a ‘process through which individuals become aware of themselves and their place in the world at large.’ Suzuki (1984:305) refers to it as “a multiple education programme that provides multiple learning environments matching the needs of the student.” Jordan et al (2008:92) see it as a “responsive pedagogy for cultural diversity, which can be implemented by means of procedural clarity, culturally sensitive meaning-making and culturally diverse teaching.” The bottom line remains that South Africa is a ‘melting pot’ where cultures converge, interact and interface. The multicultural classroom has become the norm. The classroom has become a ‘salad dish’ in which all ingredients (cultures) co-exist and make salad unified, palatable and edible. This should be used for enhancement and enrichment of teaching and learning, not as a point of collision. Diversity should be used creatively to assist students towards tolerance of ideas and practices that may have sounded offensive or abhorrent in the past. Students must be prepared to enter into dialogues with people different from themselves in order to gain a wider understanding of people of different cultures. The teaching task should be the implementation of ‘zero tolerance’ for anything that is disrespectful, hurtful, or intolerant of diversity. Teaching and learning theology fundamentally agrees that “the only theology adequate to the modern period is one that is critically and constructively engaged in the experiences of the modern person” (Küng 1988:164).

Systematic Theology

Conservatively speaking, systematic theology is “statements of the most fundamental beliefs that the Christian has, beliefs about the nature of God, about his action, about us who are his creatures, and about what he has done to bring us into relationship with himself” (Erickson 1999:15). It is the explanation of our faith. It is the systematic presentation of what we believe (*dogma*) and why we believe it (*apologetics*). In the broader sense, systematic theology is the human behaviour in response to dogma (*ethics*) and a wider understanding of how theology has developed as a scientific discipline (*encyclopaedics*); and how faith is expressed (*symbolics*). Confession is consonant with *praxis*. Verbal expression of *belief* is what is embedded in both the heart and the head. Dogma is the factual expression of conviction from within.

Systematic theology is biblical. In other words, it regards the Bible as primarily God’s Word that constitutes the content of theology. The *imago Dei* that humanity carries (Genesis

1:27), humanity needs to learn how to think God's thoughts after Him. Human thoughts should be derivative of God's word and not merely human subjective autonomous opinions. Exploring the Bible dictates and agreeing with its general principles regarding history, law, psychology, education, religion, politics, economics, family and science, then there is a biblical worldview that serves as lens that interprets all the data we inhale. This inevitably invites debates regarding the Bible's authority, including in particular the doctrines of revelation, inerrancy, inspiration etc.

Theology is also systematic. It attempts to draw together into one coherent whole what the entirety of Scripture says on a given topic e.g. human sinfulness. In the words of Husbands and Treier (2005:208): "Theology formulates doctrinal propositions from Scripture and tradition." Divine utterances on human issues become the centre of discussions, and diverse opinions are inevitable. What really makes systematic theology class a place of divergent opinions is that theology is conducted in the context of human cultures. It is inter-disciplinary, and therefore invites the input and the contribution of philosophy, psychology, anthropology and other disciplines.

Theology, especially systematic theology is contemporary. "The aim of the theological enterprise is to restate timeless biblical truths in a form that is understandable to the people who are living today" (Erickson 1999:16). Dogma always addresses the contemporary issues. Mickelsen (1977:346) points out the importance of "logical categories *that* reflect the contemporaneous character of systematic theology, i.e. the biblical materials can be organised so as to answer current questions asked about the nature of God, the nature of man, etc." For this reason, systematic theology is applied into the calling situations where students' backgrounds can influence the doctrinal stance on the pertinent issues. Doctrine or theology in general, must come out of intellectual or philosophical cocoons by asserting itself in the contemporary world. McGrath (1997:79) drives this point home:

Doctrine is to be viewed, not merely as a description of Christianity, but as an existential imperative, a challenge to become a Christian. Doctrines are descriptions which propose to be actualised in human existence, there is a demand for the interiorization of doctrine.

Most postmodern Christians don't have a biblical worldview except a cursory knowledge of selected Bible texts they recite for physical and emotional health. This limited fragmented knowledge of Scripture has resulted in believers acquiescing to secular humanistic views in all practical matters dealing with the stewardship of the earth. Consequently Christians relegate to dealing only with matters of religion and spirituality. Despite having an abundance of Christians serving in secular societies and high records of people attending Sunday church services, the postmodern culture continues to reflect a humanistic worldviews.

Above all, systematic theology is full of robust debate, because as a subject, **systematic theology is practical.** Systematic theology is applicable in the daily lives of its students. The theology students are bombarded daily by ethical issues that need some scriptural norms to govern moral aspects of human existence. These issues relate to sexual orientation, abortion, euthanasia, nuclear weapons, war, civil disobedience etc. These are practical issues that need theological perspectives; and they invite diverse perspectives and perceptions to be hypothesised, constructed and formulated towards certain conclusions. Therefore the theological discussions cannot be without disagreements. Theology students

must always bear in mind that “disagreement cannot be eliminated from religion, just as it cannot be eliminated from morality, philosophy and politics” (Ward 1999:10).

Obtaining a biblical worldview, systematic theologians need to speak the language of the cultural context in which they operate. All life disciplines have their own subculture with their own nomenclature (vocabulary describing nuances in their work). In the same way as the disciplines of political science, economics, sociology, education, and management sciences all have terminologies; theologians have to master theirs in order to minister prophetically to these sciences and communicate with their mental abstracts. Theology can be made a public discourse in some most passionate ways. Theological jargon, as good as it is for discursive discussions; cannot change lives. The primary goal of teaching theology is not just acquiring knowledge of God and the universe, but to change life. This is what puts a theology teacher on a higher pedestal, because passion is integral part of the rationale behind this teaching. Passion and teaching are inseparable. Mary Elizabeth Mullino Moore (1991:1) opens her book by reminding a reader that her book is an invitation to passion. She declares: “The passion is for theology and education to stand in relationship, to speak to one another, and to be re-formed by one another.” Those involved in teaching theology need to embrace this passion by becoming linguistically relevant to the context in which they teach. Francis Schaeffer (in Parsley 2007:175) points out that “Biblical orthodoxy without compassion is surely the ugliest thing in the world.” As far back as the nineteen-seventies, one of the leading American Christian educationists, Lawrence O Richards (1980:312) stated that “Educational settings which are designed to process Scripture primarily as concepts (or information) to be believed are not only inadequate, but they also are almost certain to distort the ‘reality’ character of the Word.”

Theologians are the gatekeepers of culture, therefore expected to successfully immerse in theological discipline in order to apply it and articulate those concepts in secular terms that unchurched people can connect with. Contemporary and progressive theologians who do this skilfully in the class can expect to be elevated to the highest places of prominence in their respective fields. Relevance in communities calls for theologians to continually study their changing demographics and provide practical services that people need. Religion and culture are the forces in some form of symbiotic relationship. “Culture is where religion happens, religion is located within human culture. Religion has emerged within the cultural phase of evolution” (Philip Heffner in Gregersen 2000:91). This leaves theologians with a need to adequately represent themselves when making announcements by losing some of the unnecessary religious jargon that the average audience cannot understand or connect with. They are expected to be culturally correct in order to be theologically relevant. The Catholic theologian, Avery Dulles (1987:219) captures this correctly that “when religion is so divorced from daily life, it begins to appear peripheral and even unreal.”

Systematic Theology class

No area in Christendom stands more in need of revitalization than that of doctrinal teaching or systematic theology. For theology class, diversity is not only about cultures, but denominations and ecclesiastical confessions. This is particularly observed in the public universities where the theology and religion faculties exist. The classroom is made up of the Calvinists and Armenians, Catholics and Protestants (sometimes with the Orthodox believers), Classical Pentecostals and Neo-Charismatics, Conservative and Progressive evangelicals etc. The ideas presented by these religious backgrounds lead into hot debates, not regarding methods or approaches, but contents. These debates make the systematic

theology class a lively platform of discussions that may lead to either some synergy or dissension. However, proper teaching of theology must always results in synergy where stakeholders pull together though in disagreement. This is successful teaching that is viewed by the former Director of Christian Education at Dallas Theological Seminary, Howard Hendricks; that “successful teaching not only opens the mind but also stirs the emotions, fires the imagination, galvanizes the will” (1991:71).

Theology is taught to change lives and to shape the cultures of the world. Wehrli (1992:78) blazes the way that “the purpose of teaching is to let the gospel speak to life by defining and developing the relationships that are shaped by the new age.” Teaching and learning theology is clear: “The goal of learning is not information but life transformation” (Ezelle 1995:34). Teaching systematic theology calls for an intergenerational approach. Systematic theology teachers are to *catechize* the emerging theologians who are trained to apply the Bible to everyday life. This will lead to nurturing the greatest leaders the world will ever see just like the ancient church did when they had the greatest artists, scientists, writers, politicians, and educators that transformed the then known world. Up until the mid-1800’s, the church not only cared for the down and out, but also nurtured the “up and in” cultural elites who became the mind moulders that influenced culture.

Instead of starting world-class universities or seminaries, the church shuns higher education and encourages emerging leaders merely to attend their little Bible institutes! As long as there is some paranoia for higher education, teaching and learning theology will never ascend to the head of diverse cultures. It is time for theology students to become the “cultural elites” of society in order to lead communities with wisdom and justice. The systematic theology class can produce these cultural elites by embracing the two methods of learning:

Collaborative Learning

The systematic class is supposed to be vibrant as minds are applied in the most creative way. Collaborative learning should be the ideal teaching method to be applied. This method shifts the focus from the teacher to student group works or discussions. “Each student in the group is accountable, individually, based on what the group is working on together” (Frey 2011:5). Students are given some tasks that allow them to consolidate their understanding and accountability. Of important note is that “collaborative learning is a time in which students talk with one another using academic language” (Frey 2011:5). Collaborative learning in a theology class also enhances cross-cultural understanding. As students open up and talk to each other, the windows of learning about others open for wider insight. Collaborative learning opens the door for effective teaching. In the class of diversity where tolerance of descending ideas must prevail, knowledge about learning stakeholders especially students should be prioritized. This is inevitable since:

Effective teaching demands that we know about aspects of their social locations, such as their backgrounds, communities of origin and belonging, personal life experiences, and learning styles. With knowledge of our students, we are at least able to teach in ways that best respond to their learning styles and to their current levels of awareness, assumptions, expectations, and information. We will also be able to judge whether we are using appropriate and realistic learning goals as well as anticipating questions or areas of confusion. Moreover, we are at least able to anticipate student reactions to our specific social group as instructors (Fernandez 2014:9).

Collaborative learning assists students to improve on the skills of sharing, participation, communication and listening (Muijs & Reynolds 2002:32). This is also confirmed in PytlikZillig, Bodvarsson & Bruning by Samal (2005:66-67) that an advantage of collaborative learning “is the development of communication and problem-solving skills.” It enables the students to dig deeper into the learning contents and to formulate relevant questions that answer the intended learning outcomes. Students are consequently able to communicate the learning content to each other. Samal in PytlikZillig, et al (2005: 67) continues to point out the five necessary elements that make comparative learning superior to direct instruction:

- *Positive interdependence* whereby group members encourage and assist each other to do well. Students feel that they should succeed or fail together.
- *Face-to-face promotive interaction* is when individuals encourage and facilitate each other's efforts to achieve, complete tasks, and produce in order to reach the group's goals.
- *Individual and personal accountability* is when each group member provides her fair share of work and feedback.
- *Interpersonal and small group* skills both relate to the group members' ability to positively interact and support one another.

When these happen, inclusivity surfaces powerfully because in reality inclusivity is a goal of theology. Kärkkäinen (2013:17) captures this correctly that “inclusivity is not blind to the limitations we all bring to the task. Rather, it builds trust and room for each and every one to face one's limitations.” Collaboration includes everyone therefore maximizes resources of time and energy to the best utilization. The research on student - centred learning approaches had proved that learner achievement is higher through collaborative learning than through direct instruction. The fact remains:

Cooperative methods are particularly recommended for problem-solving or when creativity or divergent thinking is called for. Learners will firstly develop an elementary set of thinking skills, and as they gain confidence in working in groups they may progress to higher or complex levels of thinking (Jacobs, Vakalisa & Gawe 2015:202).

The thinking and cooperation skills prepare students for market or ministry fields they are anticipating. This is confirmed by Arch Chee Keen Wong Ambrose University that “Collaborating with others in solving problems or mastering difficult material contributes to this sense of involvement and prepares students for the messy, unscripted problems they will encounter daily during and after their studies” (2015:68).

Dialogue

Theology class is where the dialogue should take place. Ognibene & Penaskovic (2014:105) point out that

The word ‘dialogue,’ comes from the Greek, dia-Jogos, that is, ‘between meanings.’ The dialogic situation makes possible a teaching/learning process between meanings, that is, between persons bearing unique significance in which each person teaches, and learns from each other.

The contemporary systematic theologians speak and write a lot about comparative theology whereby dialogue is engaged with other religious traditions and confessions in order to seek understanding and learning of the fundamentals that can build towards mutual understanding of each other. However, this dialogue does not or is not expected to water down the Christian convictions; as Kärkkäinen (2013:26) points to the fact that “comparative theology is robustly Christian theology; it is committed to its traditions and contemporary expressions.” Students of theology learn how to dialogue with others in order to reach academic excellence and conclusions. Since controversy makes part and parcel of theological debates, students of theology are required to acquire collaborative and conflict management skills. These can be achieved and caught through the skills of dialogue. Dialogue is necessary for the enlargement and deepening of our theological understanding of God and the universe at large. After all, this is the subject of theology. Dialogue brings cultures closer to such an extent that humans discover themselves as unique beings in the multicultural settings. Rhodes (1998:61) is correct that “cross-cultural encounters can liberate Christians from their own ethnocentrism.” Diversity empowers people towards unity in regardless of multicultural context in which humanity exists. The fact is also brought forth by Ryken (2001:149) that “Diversity, not sameness, is the means by which God brings us to unity.”

The dialogue activities focus on teaching and reinforcing knowledge, skills, and awareness of diversity issues in higher education related to race, gender, sexual orientation, and religious literacy. Challenging topics are essential not only to academia but to democratic citizenship in an increasingly diverse society. The purpose of dialogue is to understand and learn from one another. Dialogue happens during collaborative learning where participants look for common understanding of controversial issues regarding theology and its application in life. Its goal is to find a common ground. It enables participants to listen in order to understand, so as to find common agreement. This concurs with Moltmann’s assertion that “Dialogue is a sign of hope for these people (ordinary people) if it is carried on in the interests of their life and liberation” (1989:162). Theology, like all scientific studies, calls for full participation in arriving to conclusions.

Postmodern students cannot only be taught the facts of science. They have to reflect on their own cognitive, attitudinal, affective, behavioural experiences and practical knowledge. Participative learning in action may enable students to solve scientific and pragmatic problems (Dames 2012:38).

Systematic theology must be on the cutting edge of tolerance of ideas and diversity by engaging students through collaborative activities in the classroom and engaging students through dialogue. This is what is known as ‘decolonisation of education.’ Ryan and Tilbury (2013:20) in citing Hyland et al (2008) and Welikala (2011) help us to understand the decolonisation of education:

The idea of ‘decolonising education’ is concerned with deconstructing dominant pedagogical frames which promote singular worldviews to extend the inter-cultural understanding and experiences of students, plus their ability to think and work using globally-sensitive frames and methods. It has emerged as an urgent and important pedagogic need for HE, linked to rapid globalisation and the issues of cultural diversity and inclusivity this implies. As a learning challenge geared to embedding ‘diversity’ within the idea of flexibility, it includes efforts to ‘internationalise’ the curriculum through the inclusion of global examples, reach and content, but also moves past this to extend inter-cultural literacy among staff and students through their broader experience of HE, improving their ability to think and work using different cultural perspectives

Conclusion

Systematic Theology is a living and vibrant theology that need to be taught with exuberance and excitement. It is not a dead dogma as some people think. The political landscape in South Africa has led to socio-cultural shifts that call for some theological re-dress. The Systematic Theology class offers an opportunity for discursive discussions on these shifts. It's a pity, as my colleague, Riaan Venter observes by pointing to the disappointing failure of the church and theology to respond appropriately to the complexity and diversity of cultures (2008:542). The time has arrived for the world to come to theologians for advice and intelligent response to the pressing problems in the socio-cultural contexts. Theology should produce the greatest thinkers, entrepreneurs and strategists the world had ever seen. Presently, the world is waiting for a theologian to articulate responses regarding the failing economy, global terrorism, cures for cancer and AIDS, environmental issues, disaster relief strategies and more.

The fundamental principle here is that "the varying needs of those to whom the message comes produce differences in the way the message is presented. The message is not changed but the manner of presentation adapts to the need" (Mickelsen 1977:90-91). This article suggests the two approaches of making the Systematic class a vibrant place of learning where tolerance of ideas and diversity can be embraced, enhanced and appreciated. These are collaborative learning and dialogue. These two pedagogical approaches enhance the learning capacity of the students and accelerate them towards academic achievement and excellence. Teaching theology is not just the transmission of facts; or what is called direct instruction. Theological education's purpose is to replace an empty mind with an open one. Collaboration and dialogue reach far much beyond socio-cultural barriers such as diversities that make up our national population. Thrower (1999:94) of the University of Aberdeen correctly concludes that:

To argue for, and still worse to seek to impose, as so many professionally engaged in the study of religions have done in the past, a single problematic and a single methodology for the study of religions is profoundly mistaken. Students come with a variety of interests, needs, hopes, and spiritual yearnings.

Theology class is the ample space for learning all about life including cultures, economies, environments, historical backgrounds; and the universe at large. Theology sets students on the path of truth discovery if done in a collaborative and dialogical approach. Cultural diversity and tolerance of ideas are to be explored, scrutinised, and studied in order to achieve the academic goal of teaching and learning. To ignore them is academically suicidal. It is therefore critical for theologians in the making to engage socio-politically in order to be relevant in the contemporary society. It is indeed true that:

The faith is cultural and timely, not acultural and atemporal. It is important for the church in each time and place to embody and communicate the life of Christ exactly where it is. Christianity is not about compartmentalization or withdrawal: it is radically and relentlessly life-encompassing. Christianity understood as culture is about a living tradition, a continuing argument, a still-unfolding history. It is about being engaged by a God who is not through wooing, harassing, changing and redeeming an estranged creation (Clapp 1996:188).

Küng is right that “Tolerance through ignorance is not enough” (1988:6). There is a need of change of mind and attitude. People must be respected for who they are; because “all human beings share a fundamental dignity regardless of their nationality or religion” (Doyle 2000:77). Diversities and proliferation of ideas are the current reality in teaching and learning. They must be turned around for positive contribution towards teaching and learning. Rhodes (1998:61) continues to bring to attention that “cross-cultural encounters can liberate Christians from their own ethno-centrism.”

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