



Transcriptions

Theological Education by Extension

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Annotation: *Daystar University, Nairobi, Kenya, 1978.* While at Michigan State University, Ted Ward gave a series of lectures at Daystar University in Nairobi. In this lecture he gives a brief definition of theological education by extension (TEE) and then presents the “good news” and “bad news” related to TEE.



Why are we bringing Theological Education by Extension into this series of lectures anyway? This is not primarily a workshop or seminar on the matter of theological education or the training of pastors. It is, I believe, a valid case study of development within the church to look at what Theological Education by Extension is all about. How it has come about. What has happened within it. What it promises and what it is. What it has not delivered on.

As I see it, Theological Education by Extension, or TE—as I may refer to it later for verbal shorthand—TEE which is quite often the way you find it written about. And as I say TEE in my lecture, you will know what I’m referring to. As I see it, TEE can be critiqued as an example of development. We can talk about the ways in which it is a good example of development, and the ways in which it is a bad example of development. For example, I would give TEE fairly high marks on about four dimensions which I believe always should be considered in evaluating development activities:

Number one: does it move toward or away from elitism? That's a fair question to ask of any development activity: does it move toward or away from elitism? I believe that I would give TEE a fairly high mark in reference to this particular criterion. You see, when you move away from elitism, you are really getting serious about redistribution of resources. And you remember on the very first day we started to talk about development in terms of its involving a redistribution of resources necessarily.

Secondly, is the project, more or less, close to the people? And here again I think I would give TEE reasonably high marks, at least, within the educational domain. We find relatively few educational ventures that truly are close to the people. Most educational ventures, especially within the formal sector, tend to pull people away from themselves, to disconnect people from their environment, and treat them apart from the environment in which they will work. At least, in some programs of theological education by extension, you should give TEE a relatively high mark on this criterion because it does move closer to the people.

Third criterion, one that I usually use in reference at least to educational aspects of development, is whether or not the experience is functional and job-related; or, by contrast, esoteric, and academic, and job-unrelated. Here, again, I believe TEE should receive high marks. Theological Education by Extension has a characteristic ordinarily of being quite functional and, for the most part, rather job-related—some programs, more than others. More of that later.

The fourth criterion is the question of where do the resources come from for a particular development activity. Are local resources called upon? Of course, the issue is not are local resources the only ones used, but are local resources identified and called upon. And in reference to theological education by extension, more than any other educational program within missions that I know anything about, I would give TEE a high mark because of the tendency to use local resources. Now, there is, to some extent, a problem with those local resources because if you look closely quite often what seems to be local resources are actually expatriate foreign resources, and therein lies one of the rubs.

It may be backward to do this, to present what amounts to a kind of a summary list of suggestions about TEE at the beginning before you've even examined the phenomenon, but I decided to organize the lecture this way so that it would have a kind of constructive bias and we would not simply be reciting history as we examine the characteristic, positive and negative, of the movement. And I decided to bring to the very front end of the lecture some suggestions about how TEE might be further expanded in a truly developmental sort of way. For one, I think, as TEE goes forward—and it seems destined to be going forward—there should be more and more effort given to finding ways that the church broadly defined in the region can influence curriculum. Still, an awful lot of TEE has the characteristic of being transplanted curriculum. And it seems to me, that if we're serious about theological education by extension as a development activity for the church, we should definitely find ways that the church can influence curriculum. That's suggestion number one.

Suggestion number two, if theological education by extension is to be more developmental than it is at this point, we need to further cut the oppressive ties to formal education. Underline the word oppressive. This is not to say that we should cut the ties to formal education. See the subtlety of it? In fact, I believe it is a sad choice to argue theological education by extension as extension over campus, or extension over residency. I think that's a meaningless sort of debate. For different purposes, we need both. However, when the residential approaches to education and the formal

traditions of education are oppressive of extension, they should be cut. And in some countries and in some situations that means that theological education by extension probably should go its own way. But in other situations I think it would be far better for there to be a kind of symbiotic relationship of mutual support between formal and nonformal education, in general, and certainly between theological education by extension and the residential theological education data.

Do you have specific things in mind as far as that oppressive nature is concerned? Yes, I will be getting to those in the main body of the lecture and if not adequately bring the question up again, but I do intend to deal with that. In fact, my sub-point right here was a remark that I probably should have more graciously given you as a response. I just noticed it here. I said that the criterion of oppression is whether or not the formal institution is also moving developmentally toward a service orientation and away from its elitism. That would probably have been a more responsible answer even though I wasn't quick enough to pick it up. *Could you repeat that?* Yes, I would be glad to.

The definition or the criterion of oppression to which I refer is whether or not the formal institution—meaning the residential school—is also moving toward a service orientation and away from elitism. And if you have not come to grips with the fact that formal education tends to be elitist and to produce elitist-thinking people, you have somehow not been very careful in observing what is going on in the whole world including your own country. In fact, most of us here are, one way or another, elitists within our own societies. We are survivors.

Generally speaking that is what school does: it identifies the survivors; the academic survivors within a society. And as survivors, we must understand that we are on lifeboats that others are not on. Therefore, to fail to understand that it is somewhat elitist to be a survivor of a basically discriminatory system designed to sort people out, not simply in terms of intelligence, but more in terms of their willingness to be oppressed by certain kinds of relationships. Seriously. There is a masochistic trend and a tendency within the survivor. He tends to be critical of himself and critical of others because he has lived in an environment in which to survive is to be a bit masochistic. And then we wonder why sometimes the academic community constitutes rather poor leadership for humanity.

The third developmental suggestion that I would give about the expansion in the continued development of TEE is quite frank and quite bold: I think we should specifically reduce external and expatriate control, period. One of the sad facets of TEE is that in order to be able to prove to a doubting Third World that TEE had any value the grip of the mission became firmer in order to prove its point in many situations. Now it's about time for some of that kind of firmness for proof to back off just a little bit and to let the evaluations take place where they ought to take place within the thinking of the local people.

I've been very close to the question of theological education by extension in reference to Africa because at the time that there was no such thing in Africa and there were very few people within Africa even talking and reading about it—and I refer to '68, '69, and '70. One of our graduate students who had been known to me only obliquely because I don't know anything like all the students at our university who are in missions and mission background. We have well over 200 of them and I just don't know them all. They're all over the university in different departments. But we have a large number of people and we had a very remarkable missionary man that I had heard about and not met whose name was Gerald Bates. Some of you may have heard of him, may know him. He's free Methodist. He's been in francophone Africa for most of his missionary career. He's quite

elderly. He's almost as old as I am. He was taking his doctorate in another department and he came to meet me and somehow our conversation got around to theological education by extension because I was looking forward to my first trip to Africa on behalf of Theological Education by Extension. I was to do a series of four workshops in 1970, which, by the way, included one here at Lemoore. And I said to him, "Tell me what you think about the prospects for Theological Education by Extension for Africa? There are several mission groups that are asking us to do these seminars and I'm not sure what the African perspective is with reference to Theological Education by Extension." He says, "Well, frankly, I have not thought much about it and I don't think many of the missionary educators in Africa have thought about it, and I doubt very seriously if many of the church leaders in Africa have thought about it. It seems to be quite a Latin American phenomenon and probably not very relevant to Africa."

Whereupon I said to him, "You're just the man I want to talk to. As a matter of fact, would you please do me a favor?" "What is that?" "Would you please write me a paper indicating why Theological Education by Extension is not for Africa? Because if I'm going over to do a series of seminars, I would like to have some kind of learned opinion to the contrary if, in fact, this is the case." He says, "I'd be glad to do it." So I handed him about four or five resource materials that I had out of the Latin American experience so he could fill in some of his background about what it was all about, and he walked away. I almost had forgotten about it but it was perhaps just a little over a month later and I was getting very close to my trip to Africa. He came back in and said, "Do you remember what you asked me to do?" And I said, "Yes. As a matter of fact I remember and I'm rather surprised that you remember." And he says, "No." He says, "I took that very seriously because I am concerned." And, by the way folks, would you believe that in our pre-registration for this seminar, that man's name was on the list? And it's been to my grief all week that he didn't make it. But he was listed to be here among us and I was really counting on that—Gerald Bates from Zaire. Gerald sat back down in my office and he said, "Here's my paper." And he kind of unceremoniously threw it across my desk, as Americans are prone to do, and I kind of turned my head sideways to see what it said and it said, "Why Theological Education by Extension is for Africa." And I said, "Now that a funny title for a paper that I asked you to write." He said, "You know, I'm a convert." And I said, "Well, I'm especially glad that I didn't help in that conversion process because I might feel that it was just my persuasive ability." And I said, "The things that I gave you to read I know were somewhat promotional, but I also know that it's possible to read past that promotion and to come to grips with the thing. Tell me truthfully, what do you think?" He said, "I put it all in the paper, read the paper." And so I read the paper.

So excited was I about that paper because he had really an African perspective on education and development and he's a very brilliant and learned man with a great deal of insight and warmth and compassion and identification with Africans, and I've come to love him since. That was really my first in context with the man but subsequently he came back and did his doctoral thesis on yet another furlough. And at that time he asked me to join his doctoral committee and I was able to help with that thesis. At any rate, that paper so impressed me that I immediately made four copies of it and put them in the air mail outgoing for the four different workshop centers, where I was expected to be within a few weeks, and asked the workshop leaders in each of those places to reproduce it and send it out in advance of the workshop so that the people there might be able to receive it. And, Sue, I suspect that Ed received, Ed's here. Hi, Ed. Good. I suspect you remember receiving that copy of Gerald Bates' little paper that he wrote for me; not as an academic exercise, but as a as an analysis on the part of a professional person.

And that paper, I believe, was really the first serious attempt that I know about, to ask African questions about Theological Education by Extension. And even after that first series of workshops in '70 and in the follow-up of '71, there was still a great deal of skepticism within Africa whether the Theological Education by Extension could be successful in Africa. Because, you see, Theological Education by Extension, to some extent, is a break with the traditional past and it does ask for people to value something different: It asks people to evaluate and value the practical and functional aspects of learning more than they value those academic trappings that are associated with education. Now, I know that many of the more successful programs in Africa have found ways to put this all back together so you can have your cake and eat it, too, so you can be a non-elitist and an elitist all at the same time. And I suspect that's human nature and not necessarily to be laughed at, but sometimes it does appear to be just a little humorous.

More systematically, let me treat Theological Education by Extension critically. As I see it, it is an exciting, emotional, promising, and yet frustrating kind of a of an innovation. And the only way to talk about it is in terms of what, in the American jargon, is referred to as "good news and bad news." I have some good news, but I have some bad news. First of all, let me ask this question, just so that I'm not talking past you: How many of you know fairly well what we're talking about in Theological Education by Extension? I don't really need to spend much time explaining what it's all about. Is this not altogether uniform? Okay. Theological Education by Extension is an attempt to decentralize the educational institution through its extension programs. In other words, to take education into the village, into the countryside, where the functional pastors are.

Secondly, Theological Education by Extension is an attempt to move theological education or the training for pastorates, primarily, into the arena of functioning pastors rather than in the arena of preparatory pastors. In other words, the typical theological school deals with what sorts of people? In service or pre-service? Pre-service. It is a preparatory education. It prepares people to be pastors.

Now, as a matter of fact, on the world scene more than nine pastors out of ten are not educated at all, at all in any kind of a way that you might call formal or informal or anything else structured. They are basically simply disciplined people that have been disciplined by an individual quite often in a very simple sort of a way. They may or may not be readers; they may or may not be continuing to get any input. On the world scene, then, better than nine out of the ten of the pastors of the world are not educated anyway. And it is felt within Theological Education by Extension that that particular category, nine out of the ten, constitute the primary target audience: people who are pastors but without any training. So, Theological Education by Extension generally relates itself to people who are in pastoral responsibilities not preparing for pastoral responsibilities. And therein lies one of the, of course, the big differences.

Theological Education by Extension, as it was begun first in Guatemala, has tended to be a function of some kind of printed material that is simple enough to be self-instructional, or allow people to study for themselves individually, and then followed up by some kind of collective group experience called "a seminar" or some other kind of periodic getting together with a traveling instructor. That is the general model of Theological Education by Extension. *India must have been an exception because I would think that half or three-quarters of the students would be lay people within the church involved but not the pastors.* I think that's true and there are several different varieties of programs in India and what you're speaking of is one sector of those programs. And it is quite true that much of theological education by extension has also had the effect of broadening education to the laity or to

the general community of believers. And some people regard that as a very sad turn of events; others regard it as very desirable. I'm going to speak to it critically as I come along in the lecture, but you are dead right. In some programs, the target audience is not exclusively the pastor, though it quite often starts with the notion of the untrained pastor, and then broadens out to the general congregation. Now, is that enough background to give you some idea of what we're talking about with Theological Education by Extension.

Let's start with the bad news, just to clear the air. First of all, I have demonstrated to you in my introductory material, and in my advance summary, that I think there's great hope for the development and that I don't take a dim view, or a hopeless view, of it at all. However, I have a very frustrated feeling about it. In fact, one of the articles that I have written on the subject critically in the last few years is called, "Types of TEE," and I've made a play on words where T-E-E in some languages is, of course, t-e-a in English and I refer to the different types of tea in this article. I referred to such things as green tea, you know, that's an immature notion about what it's all about. I'd refer to gunpowder tea as how you get an innovation to happen with blowing everything up, and oolahlah tea which, of course, the Orientals refer to as Oolong Tea.

And oolahlah tea is where I really want to start in my bad news because some of what has gone wrong in theological education can be traced to an oolahlah notion of over-promotion. As I see it, there are three bad news problems, and I will divide them into over-promotion, misconceptions, and shallow changes. First of all, over-promotion. Even theological educators, in their enthusiasm, saw Theological Education by Extension as a sociologically pragmatic and technologically gimmick-oriented thing that would be a great idea because it'll help us get the job done better. Now I think that it is dangerous any time the church buys into a sociological pragmatism. In other words, doing something simply for "getting ahead" sorts of reasons. I think we always ought to be disciplined in anything that happens within the church to biblical premises not simply to opportunisms. And although the project that began this whole thing in the early '60s in Guatemala is not properly understood, simply as a pragmatic sociological alteration, there is that characteristic in it. And there is that characteristic in the way it was described. And there was very promptly after that, a tendency to emphasize the technological gimmickry associated with this movement and to identify it with North America. Though it began in Guatemala, and some of us have relished pointing out that this is [one time] that a trend that affects the world began somewhere else except in the ordinary developed West. Some of us talk about that with great relish but, on the other side of it, we're well aware that the over-promotion centered the thought not only in North America but in that major hotbed of the source of parachurch notions in the United States—Southern California. You must understand that it has never been a non-American debate. It's always been an American debate. And, of course, that tendency to over-promote is so associated with the North American mentality: once God shows us something new we've got to immediately tell the whole world that God has shown us something new. And that has its good points and it has its bad points, but in the general domain of things, it has created tensions. It created tensions even in South American republics that had a great deal of difficulty coming to grips with anything but the negative imagery in this innovation even though it was clearly a Central and Latin American institutional transformation. By the time it got to Ecuador, it looked less like Guatemala than it looked like California.

Second over-promotion function is what was the identification with technology that was so characteristic of the first ten years of the promotion of Theological Education by Extension. Whenever anyone talked about it, they talked about such gadgets as Programmed Instruction. And

someone says critically of me right now, “Well, Ward, didn’t you write one of the key books in Programmed Instruction technology for the use in TEE? And didn’t they sell despite the fact that you told them to print only 500? Didn’t they sell 3,800 of the things before you finally pulled it off the market?” Yes, I admit it and I’m not even sorry because I think that it has its place. But the over-emphasis of the technological distressed me from the start and I haven’t changed my mind about that. Too many people promoted it in terms of its educational technology and its gadgets and its planning flow chart. That kind of flow chart mentality did an awful lot of turning off of people because it was not only promoted heavily but promoted with an emphasis on its technology. And there were other people at the same time such as Sam Rowan and others saying, “Hey, that isn’t the important thing. The important thing is what it has in it of a theological refinement of our educational approaches. The issues are not educational or technological; they are theological.” Sam Rowan and others were saying. And during that period of time they were regarded as a bit out of it.

Third, in reference to the over-promotion with the identification with particular institutions and particular regions. For example, it was unfortunate that Guatemala was played up so consistently and steadily. Although it was proper to respect Guatemala, the fact is that it was almost a coincidence that it should emerge out of Guatemala and much of the world does not regard Guatemala as a terribly leading example of anything. And in some sense, though, we should respect the work of the Presbyterians in Guatemala. It was unfortunate to put so much emphasis on the paternal institution there that created it because, in fact, that first institutional Theological Education by Extension was really quite deeply faulted and there are much better examples today than that first one. And people that went there to pay obeisance to it quite often wondered what it was that they were looking at because it didn’t seem to be all that exciting.

Furthermore, anytime that you identify a particular innovation with a particular location and say, “Look what they’re doing in, and then you fill in the blank,” it is instinctive for every other person on the face of the earth to say, “Yeah, I know, but our situation is different.” There’s something in human nature that makes everyone want to demonstrate that kind of individualism that says exactly as Gerald Bates did, “Yeah, but it’s not for Africa.” And instead of asking the question is it of the church, we were asking questions like where did they do it.

The fourth element in the over-promotion was the conflict dimension which was entered very early and largely stimulated by The Wheaton Conference in 1968, commonly known as “The Wheaton Conference on Theological Education by Extension,” which was the very first worldwide pow-wow on this subject and it was the one that led to the blue-and-white book that is *Theological Education by Extension* by Ralph Winter. By the way, I was going to bring that in and hold it up right now as an object lesson and I forgot to pick it up. It’s in the Resource Center, so we can do that and show it to you tomorrow if any of you want to look at it—the blue-and-white book which, I think came out in 1970 which contained all the papers from that Conference in ‘68. You will find in that book a more than undercurrent of argument between formal and nonformal education. Although no one at that period referred to it as a nonformal education trend, except the on-looking secular educators who were very well aware of what it was going on. In fact, I think sometimes, though, my secular colleagues, in their observation of this whole phenomenon, were much more alert to the dynamics that were involved than were many of the missionary promoters.

The conflict between the formal and nonformal institutions or, in other words, between the residence institutions and the extension programs was virtually demanded by the approach being used in print at that period. It was caused by the tendency to assume, as Ralph Winter did, that the

real issue was whether or not the extension program could measure up to the quality of the residential program, which I have regarded and have been over a dozen times with Ralph, and he knows very well that we disagree on this point. I regard that as a patently silly sort of an argument. The issue is not being as good as but being better than. Because if anything the residential institution plays from a very limited environment. It plays from a restricted environment. It necessarily plays from the same kind of restriction that you have any time when you pull people way from reality. So, residential theological education is not necessarily the world's best example of anything, but it still has its valid place. But the kind of posture taken by the early promoters was that if we can be as good as it in extension then we won't need it anymore. Well, don't you see that raises all of the defenses of the people who are maintaining the established forms? So I guarantee that there would be, in this over-promotion, a deep schism and ultimately a terrible conflict which should never have occurred. As I see it, the issue is for us to respect properly both formal and nonformal approaches to education. To understand some of the capabilities of each, and the restrictions of each. There are limitations in each; there are qualitative advantages in each. My biases tend to be with the nonformal sector when I'm dealing with certain kinds of competencies. When I'm dealing with other kinds of competencies, my biases tend to be with the formal institution. This week you've probably not heard me on that subject of "What is the formal education institution worth anyway?" But the fact is that I have a position in such an institution and regard it as the appropriate place to do some of the things that I do. But I am in an institution that values its own nonformal education programs and in our university, since about 1884, we have had nonformal education as part of our university. We are one of the oldest in North America with an extensive nonformal education operation and it still is extensive. And we have a blend, within that university, between the formal and the nonformal. And I'm not just referring to classes that happen to sit out on the front lawn grass on a nice warm day. I'm talking about experiences that occur in and among, non-academic people in ghetto situations in our city of Detroit, for example. I refer to some of our staff members who work in the kitchens in the homes of poverty families in three of our most impoverished cities in the State—faculty members of our university who are employed to work educationally in neighborhood poverty situations and who work there with trainees from our institution. This is the kind of nonformal education that I believe in, but I also believe in academic education for certain kinds of purposes. However, increasingly I am convinced that what the church needs most is a service orientation in its educational program that would cause it to think much more in terms of nonformal than in terms of formal.

Okay, so much for over-promotion. Let's talk about misconceptions. The misconception that I think is probably the key to much of the frustration and argument over theological education is the tendency to think of the biggest issue being the logistics of education rather than the biggest issue being the curriculum of the development of leadership for the church. The biggest issue in *Theological Education by Extension* is not whether or not you built your institution on the wrong side of the mountain. Now, indeed, that turned out to be the key problem after the Presbyterians had a substantially defunct investment in this particular school in Guatemala, which had done its job among this relatively small amount of people that needed that job done for them, and it realized that the real need now had become the need on the other side of the mountain. But you couldn't move the institution, so you moved the faculty and you found ways to extend the faculty of that institution into the functional need on the other side of the mountain. But that's logistics. Important, yes, and I think God used that to trigger a bigger issue into focus. It's as if God, in focusing the present moment in theological education, used the circumstances of the wrong placement and the wrong form of a number of a number of institutions to open our eyes to other ways of handling educational needs.

The second misconception is that TEE is equivalent to Programmed Instruction or the formula $TEE = PI$, and that without PI you don't even have Theological Education by Extension. Absolutely absurd. Programmed Instruction is but one form—it happens to be a very good form if it's done well and done right—it is but one form of making self-instructional experience available to people so that they can study effectively on their own. Now the truth of the matter is that PI fits much better in the North American frame of reference because it is highly individualistic. It's the North Americans that get anxious about people being held back because they're studying with others who are not learning as fast. It generally is not people in Latin America, Asia, or Africa. In my experience, that particular question rarely seems to come up, except among Americans and to some extent Europeans. The Programmed Instruction caters to individualized learning and why we should use that in situations that people ordinarily learn in a collective, is beyond me. I said that in 1968 and that particular part of my remark somehow failed to get edited into the blue-and-white book. And I have never ceased to mention that at the right moments. There were a number of warnings that I gave in 1968 that were edited out of the blue-and-white book. What you will find under my name in two places in the blue-and-white book is the good news side of a similar good news and bad news sermon. And if anybody edits this tape that way, I've got your number this time.

The third of the misconceptions is that PI can be translated. I was literally embarrassed by the number of missionary executives in North America that persisted in the argument, that if all Programmed Instruction, no matter where it originated, could be translated into English and then transported to other parts of the world, the missionaries would be able to re-translate it into their local languages. There was substantial amount of money committed to such a large scheme to take all Programmed Instruction originating everywhere in the world, convert it to English, and make it available worldwide. I will have to confess to being one of the people who pulled the plug out of that big bathtub. Totally futile. There's no way that good instructional materials of any sort can be effectively translated, least of all, Programmed Instruction because it is too particularly tuned to thought patterns of the local people. But your executives, and some of you in this room, have chief executives that I have debated with in various sorts of meetings much to my embarrassment on this subject.

Third fourth misconception is that Theological Education by Extension will allow us to find a place for less competent teachers. There are relatively few people who will admit to this, but I know it to be a fact that missionaries have been recruited to go into Theological Education by Extension with the argument given, in some cases in writing, that they will not need to have as much preparation because they will be going into an extension teaching situation where much of the teaching takes care of itself and all you need to do is kind of organize the thing and look in on it every now and then. Absolutely absurd. But it is no coincidence that the low watermark in post-World War II missionary support overseas from North America was just before the Theological Education by Extension movement caught hold. And, as a consequence of the Theological Education by Extension movement, the amount of North American missionaries overseas has gone up and many a high percentage of those new ones are in Theological Education by Extension. It has been used, then, as a mission's strategy to find a redeployment of displaced missionaries and a provocation to hire more missionaries.

Some of us early in the movement were regarding it as one of the most promising opportunities to transfer educational leadership into the hands of nationalists because it was much more appropriate in its style to national leadership because of its informality of teaching and of its itinerancy. It is no wonder, then, that I am more than a little bit disappointed with that particular

part of Theological Education by Extension because I am deeply committed to the indigenization, or if you please, better words, to the getting out of the way and let God do his work among his people with assistance and cooperation as requested by national persons from a missionary community standing ready to see itself, at any moment, worked out of a job. That being my philosophy, I was very disappointed that that trend was in Theological Education by Extension.

The fifth of the misconceptions was in the failure to see the readiness for extension in a true historical perspective. Now this was an academic point and one that is obviously subject to a good bit of interpretation and debate, but let me tell you where I stand on it. As a person who, all during the '60s, was becoming increasingly aware of the discontent in much of the world over the traditions of formal education; a person paying close attention, for example, to Ivan Illich, long before he wrote his book, *Deschooling Society*, and becoming very aware—especially among the Marxists and among some of the Catholic innovators in Latin America—that there was really a new move or a new wave of thought coming onto the scene in education. I was wondering if it would affect the church in any kind of constructive way that the church could identify with the pride of liberation. And I think it did in Theological Education by Extension, but there has been a misconception that assumed that Theological Education by Extension is simply a particular case in the church instead of understanding it to be the church's share in a much larger worldwide phenomenon of evil in formal education itself.

Now, what difference would it make? I'll tell you what. It would have allowed us to understand, at a timely moment, the potential for sloganizing, constructive sloganizing, by capturing the imaginations of people for a more free access to education. A more widely available opportunity for growth and development; for a pulling away from the elitism that even affected the church. But, no, we didn't see it in that perspective and consequently we saw it as a simple little side-water of action when God comes rushing along at the last minute to make sure that his people don't completely fall off of the trail. How sad. A moment of leadership lost exactly ten years ago next month, the '68 conference.

Shallow changes, the next category of concern continuing in the bad news this litany of disappointment. One of the most important shallow changes was the simple transplantation of academic concepts from the school to the countryside, literally untouched by human hands. You take all the trappings of the school, except the classroom, and dump it out on the rural countryside. Now that's a little exaggerated but not much, especially when you take a hard look at the sorts of criteria that were held up early and still are being held up, in some centers, in terms of what constitutes quality. I submit that the quality that is being talked about there is Greek quality not Christian quality. It is the quality of the academic marketplace and, hence, is basically secular in its thinking. I believe that many otherwise responsible theologically learned people are promoting a transplanting of a very non-Christian form of education and are imposing it on Theological Education by Extension lest anybody come along and criticize Theological Education by Extension as being somehow inferior. How sad.

Second, there is a persistence of Western arguments in the theological curriculum. Now I'm beginning to meddle badly here but as a self-taught theologian, of sorts, and as an observer of the theological education scene, I am preoccupied with our curriculum in Western theological education which I see not to be nearly so much a curriculum focused on regeneration and redemption, so much that it is focused on the historical debates of the church which happen, incidentally, to deal with redemption and regeneration. And we tend to use the debates of the church. I refer to two sets

of debates: the reformation debates and the modernism debates. The reformation debates of the past and the modernism debates, so-called, of the early part of this century which, indeed, did split the North American and, to some extent, the European churches. German theology arguing for a kind of humanistic Christianity in the early part of this century, branded in North America “modernism,” responded to by a book called, *The Fundamentals*, and hence the establishment of a sector of Christianity known as the Fundamentalists. Now having been brought up in a fundamentalist tradition myself, I think I know this community rather well and I do not reject my friends and colleagues among them. I respect certain aspects of my own upbringing in regard to this because it does have a Bible-centered focus. Sometimes I think it has a relatively small view of the Bible, but it nevertheless is a Bible-centered focus and for this I have great respect. But I argue that it is not necessarily apropos of the conditions in India, Africa, South America, Southeast Asia, or anyplace else that I know about except where the missionaries have persisted in raising those questions as being the major issues. I suspect, for example, that spiritualism is a much bigger issue here than modernism. And if I missed that, forgive me. But I am acquainted with the fact that there are theological issues that the North American typically doesn’t see as issues that are much closer to the experience of the Christian in other parts of the world. Why should the curriculum of the North American Western arguments persist in theological education overseas? Now you notice I’m exempting my British and Canadian, to some extent, Canadian, friends from this, though I think if they want to criticize themselves on these grounds they are quite welcome to and I think they have good ground to.

Third, shallow change is the inadequate attack on elitism within education for the church. Somehow we have tried, even within theological education, to somehow desperately hold onto elitism. And one of the saddest debates that has emerged is the debate that I know of, in certain instances in West Africa, and I know of it in Indonesia, in which those leaders of the national church who were educated formally are fighting against less formal approaches to education because *they* were able to make it through that irrelevant elitist system and not let it get *them* into those fixes and they certainly don’t see why the younger people should have any, quote, “easier way of it” than they had. All of this in the name of non-elitism. I don’t understand it. It is clear that until elitism in the church is called elitism in the church and is attacked as being non-Christian, we will continue to have that kind of unfortunate undercutting of all sorts of good development.

Fourth shallow change is the one that I have already alluded to in the rather unfortunate reallocation or relocation of missionaries. I am afraid that in the minds of some missionary executives Theological Education by Extension simply bails them out of an awkward moment. When they’re really not sure what to do with displaced missionaries, Theological Education by Extension has provided a great way to expand without troubling the local church. And I think this is very sad and it does represent a very shallow understanding of what Theological Education by Extension could be all about. I believe that the higher priority should be given to nationalizing educational experiences, or if you want to put it in other terms “localizing educational experiences.”

Now, just one footnote on all this. I recognize in my arguments another serious danger at the opposite extreme and that is putting such emphasis on broad-based education through extension that national Christians are cut out of opportunities to continue on into higher forms of education particularly into graduate education and ultimately becoming the professors of the future. I think this would be similarly unfortunate. We do need formal institutions especially at the graduate level. I would encourage more extension work to be focused at the pre-college and college and seminary theological school levels and the graduate level education probably continued to focus, at least until

we see some inspiring model alternatives, in institutional forms where large libraries and large aggregations of people can be brought together to share their learning.

Now we get some good news before we have tea-time. We might almost argue that that's not going to give equal time. But the fact is that the good news can be run through in rather short order because, although it's a good news and bad news situation, I am much more familiar with the bad news. I think I'm standing in one of the few places on the face of the earth where Theological Education by Extension has really taken off and gone to a fast run. Many other places it continues to start and halt and start and halt and all sorts of disappointments enter in. I'm not familiar enough with what's going on here right now—I last critiqued this program out here about three years ago—to really have any ground on which to even raise critical questions about it and I don't intend to do so because I would definitely be meddling and probably promulgating trouble. Those who are listening to these tapes and are thinking that I am obliquely criticizing what is going on in East Africa should now understand that I am not. I'm not knowledgeable enough. In fact, I usually used East Africa as an example of where Theological Education by Extension has taken hold well and is moving rapidly.

However, footnote: I keep asking nasty questions like how many nationals are involved. But I wouldn't want to do that here in East Africa. However, I understand that it isn't all that much of a problem; that's yours to decide. Good news, in some cases.

I think Theological Education by Extension has begun a process of change in one of the most tradition-bound fields of education. I know of no other form of education, no other curricular area that is quite so behind, that is quite so tradition-bound, that is quite so limited in its educational perspective as theological education. Now I say that well aware that there are good reasons for that to be so. For example, religion in any society, from an anthropological point of view, is part of the conserving tradition of that society. Religion plays the role of keeping things the same. By the way, if Christianity can be described in those terms, Jesus Christ would be rather uncomfortable with it. But, nevertheless, religion historically has a conserving kind of place in human society. And let's face it, much of Christianity has conformed to that kind of notion of religion, therefore, it's not surprising that a conserving-type institution, called "the school," in the service of a conserving-type institution called "religion," would be inherently rather conservative. It follows. But it is an interesting observation that God has used Theological Education by Extension to somehow start a process of change that has allowed all sorts of questions to be raised that really were not raised prior. It's very interesting to look at the literature in the field of education of theologians and see how little was written before 1970 and how much has been written since 1970. I don't have any data on it. I haven't taken the trouble to count things like this because I love to quote other people but I don't like to do the counting myself. But I suspect, judging by the good biographies that I've seen, that it must be that in the last eight years we've generated more than in the in the prior eighty years in terms of actual literature on the subject of educational approaches to the training of the ministry. Fantastic.

Second, I think there is a definite piece of good news in the movement toward functional education within the church. Because, as I have looked at the field of Christian education itself, other than being largely a series of rather simply defined notions of how you deal with children, there has not been that concern for functional experience, especially for adults. Bible exposition, yes, but relationship to life, relationship to practical experience, not an awful lot. But what has happened

now, praise God, is that, through Theological Education by Extension, a new kind of value is entering in: a valuing of education that will make a difference in life.

Third, there's a bit of good news in the broadening of the access to education. To me, it's very important that Theological Education by Extension is catering to a broader audience; that Theological Education by Extension is catering to a larger audience even than pastors. It is providing educational help within congregations. Now there's a there's a sub-point on that. Some people have raised the question whether that may not produce chaos in the church? And, indeed, it's a valid question because, if the pastor is bypassed in any educational venture and the parishioners are educated beyond the involvement of their pastor, tension is bound to result. And a number of these short-course seminar workshops that travel the world giving laymen a good idea of how to beat their pastor out of the old game are, I think, very chaotic within the church. Pastors should always be involved in any kind of training that the parishioners are involved in. If he's not helping to provide it, he should be experiencing it with them, and I think that's a good proviso to throw on this.

Fourth piece of good news. There really are some new books coming out that have been written someplace other than Canada, United States, Great Britain, and whatever. It's exciting to see actually books being originated in Kenya, in Nigeria, in Indonesia, in other places where Christians are working together. Sometimes these books are written again by expatriates, but at least they're written outside the Western world. That's important. And better yet, some of these books are being co-written by national Christians and missionaries. And in a very few cases, and I think it's increasing and I'm excited about it, national persons are generating these sorts of materials for themselves. I think that's important: the development of new literature sources.

The last piece of good news is the fourth piece of good news is that Theological Education by Extension is breaking school's grip, which happens to be the title of the third in the series of materials that I'm publishing soon in the Theological Education by Education Readers Series, "Breaking School's Grip." [Never happened.] You've already heard us on this subject in other talks this week, but schooling as a frame of mind, as a way to look at development, as a way to look at ourselves, as a way to look at proper human relationships is a very stultifying social form. It hierarchically structures any social situation and divides people into those who know and those who don't know. And to my taste, one of the most important and exciting things that's happening around TEE is that it is breaking that kind of mentality down and helping us to understand that some of the finest kinds of learnings can occur in community through sharing.

The good news that I have rushed through so rapidly in those five points is actually very important good news. And as I see it, taken together, those five points are huge propositions. That if, in fact, God has begun a process of change within theological education—never mind my cynical observations that theological education is behind—God can bring it into tune and do so in rapid form. But I think we have to, each one, ask the question: How much are we willing to accommodate in the way of change of institutional forms in order that God's will can be worked? If, in fact, the movement toward more functional education has begun, God is capable of moving it as far as he wants it to move so that education can be less a matter of the prestige and the academic marketplace of the secular world and more a question of functional service within the church. And if the access to education is being broadened by nonformal education through TEE, what other forms of nonformal education may be about to emerge on the scene? Especially as we think in terms of some of the crucial areas such as parent development; as we think in terms of the educational development of the laity so that the responsible decision-makers within the church can have a

biblical background that is, in some measure, equivalent to what we know appropriate in the pastor. The church cannot be strong so long as all biblical truth is locked up within the pastor.

And if, indeed, new books are on the horizon through this movement, what a change it can make. Because although literacy is not necessary to salvation and in no way does God hold literacy to be of any particular merit in terms of righteousness, the fact is that God has elected to reveal himself in a written word. And as we broaden the availability of books and literature and anything that we do that dramatizes the worth of reading and the worth of sharing through written modes, I think we are potentially strengthening that part of the Spirit's work which comes through the ministry of the written word. And if, indeed, God is breaking school's grip, what a transformation it could make within the church as a unique society. It is quite possible that the contrast between the church and the secular world in the future will be far greater than the contrast between the church and the secular world that we've known to date. It is quite possible that the institutional forms within the church might take on much more of the characteristic of the community of the redeemed than simply carbon copies and reflections of the community of the secular society.

Thus, although these five points are far outnumbered by the bad news that I recited earlier, and although my own cynicism about some of the things that have happened in TEE is just too transparent for me to try to hide, and although I am afraid that in some of my own work in writing and in service for TEE I have been, like many others, far too inclined in the earlier years to see the Western technologies as being the big contribution from our side of the ocean. I now recognize a much larger work being done by God, the Holy Spirit. And it seems to me that one of the modes and processes that he is using to release the church from its limitations; not only its limitations of colonialism, but specifically its limitations of traditionalisms—largely traceable to the Greek society—is indeed TEE. I have great faith in it as a continuing movement. I have no faith in it at all as a fad. There's a big meaning and a little meaning. The little meaning is logistical change: making schools simply more accessible. The big meaning is the important one. I believe there is a crashing in on history of an alternative philosophy and an alternative tradition in education. And the church is being confronted by it, at this point, and I see it, not as a threat, but as a strong positive alternative.

We know that there are two dominant philosophies within formal education. One of these is far stronger and more prestigious than the other, but the two traditions run side-by-side, and you can find them in most countries of the world. There is, first of all, the strong dominant philosophical tradition of education for power, authority, and prestige. In most of the world, higher education enables people to gain power, authority, prestige—one, two, or all three of these—through the processes of becoming more educated. The outcome of that dominant tradition, let's face it, is successful competitors; people who can compete successfully. I firmly believe that much of what education is within the church can be traced to that dominant philosophy. I have a very close acquaintance who, asking a professor in a certain very prominent Christian college why the college seemed to have so little interest in developing a sense of Christian community among the students and the faculty, was told by one of the learned professors in this institution that it was not the place of this particular college—which goes by a particularly prominent name—it was not the purpose of this college to create Christian community; that indeed there would be plenty of time for that after college; that it was the purpose of this college, instead, to make it possible for Christian young people to compete successfully in the secular marketplace. My eyebrows are raised and some of your eyebrows might very well be raised. Is that, indeed, the purpose of education in and for the church: to make it possible for Christians to compete successfully in the secular marketplace? I submit if that

is the way we define Christian education, whether Christian higher education or theological education or whatever, that we might as well admit that the secular community can do it better, and that, therefore, there really is no place for Christian higher education.

Now I would not for a minute, even though I have not named this institution, I would not for a minute claim that that is the dominant feeling of the faculty in that institution. It is likely not, even though, to a large extent, that's the way the institution behaves. It evaluates, it sets its curriculum, it puts its values largely in terms of that theme of excellence within the secular community. I submit to you that the values of the Christian community are in enough contrast with the secular community that to simply tune whatever you do educationally to the equivalent norms for quality in the secular environment is the first step toward secularizing your education.

There is another tradition within education. It is not a tradition as this one for power, authority, and prestige, but instead simply education for service. The outcome of this system is not successful competitors so much as competent servants. And surprising as it may be to you, this tradition has been alive and well and thriving, as a matter of fact, within secular education for quite some time, thank you. And it did not originate in Guatemala on the other side of the mountain. The sad reality is, that although in much of the Western world and in a good bit of the so-called Third World, there has been another kind of educational force at work; this service-oriented form that you find, for example, in the British "red brick universities," and in the Land Grant universities of the United States, and in other comparable institutions. You have found in such institutions less concern for developing people who have great and deep knowledge of the classical literature and the fine things in music and art, though those things are not discredited, instead a tremendous interest in making people able to serve their society through agriculture, through health, through community development, through responsible civil service, and through those other aspects that we think of as the social welfare services within a society. I often wonder what would have happened had Christian higher education drawn its traditions from the red brick university-type philosophy and the Land Grant-type philosophy rather than from the, what is called commonly "the ivy league" sort of a notion, of what education is all about. I don't think we would be in the crisis we are today.

Some of you may not be aware, even though you are Americans, that some of the classical, traditional rivalries between American institutions are along this very issue. And in the United States, virtually every State has one of each type of institutions as a matter of public law. There is in each State in the United States, with only a very few exceptions, one leading university in the classical, elitist tradition and one university in the service orientation. And many of the classical rivalries that are regarded as the reasons for the football teams actually date to the traditional rivalry between academic scholarship in its excellence, on the one hand, and service orientations to the common people as a contrasting and usually regarded as lower quality education, on the other hand.

As a Christian and as an educator, I must very enthusiastically tell you that I have spent twenty—how many years now? Twenty-three, twenty-two years. Who said twenty-two? I think you're right. *You said twenty-two the other day.* I said twenty-two the other day. I'm losing count because we're entering a new school year back home and I'm not with it. Twenty-two years, I believe it is, at an institution in the Land Grant tradition where the institution is constantly reorganizing and reshaping its service role in response to the needs of people. During the 19th century, our institution was primarily focused on the problems of agriculture producing the capability of farms in our regions to be able to supply food for the vast increases in population within our country. And as you know, this has largely been a successful venture. In this century, that same sort of orientation to

service has transformed the institution into two somewhat different specializations, although they have not lost the agricultural emphasis which remains very strong. We have now an extensive involvement with the situations in the impacted metropolitan centers of the United States. And a substantial amount of our research and development work is being done now in urban centers with reference to the solving, as best we can, of urban problems and the providing of service for urban development.

The other of the aspects that our university has become widely known for, and the very reason that I can stand here in front of you today and still be a responsible person on the payroll of that university, is because our university has become the largest in the United States and, as a matter of fact, the largest in the world in terms of its commitment to international development in the Third World. At any one point, there are upwards of 200 of our faculty, averaging around 250, who are in overseas assignments in the Third World. It has literally become true that the sun never sets on the flag at Michigan State University. But the nature of the role of these services is usually somewhat different than the colonial past because the nature of these services is, number one, always on request *of* and in response to projects designed *by* the local governments of the respective nations; even sometimes when we, ourselves, feel that the government is not doing it the way we would like to have it done. Our first response is to the national planning offices of those respective countries.

Secondly, our service is organized in such a way that it is focused primarily on the needs of the poorest of the poor. By commitment, we are less concerned with nations that have a high degree of development and more concerned with nations that have a low degree of development. For example, I do not believe that Michigan State University has had but a couple of relatively small projects in conjunction with the country of Kenya. We have had some, but relatively few and relatively small. On the other hand, I can name, and you can think of, a number of other countries in Africa where our university has had a large number of projects including the development of the alternative university, the large agricultural university, for the country of Nigeria which unfortunately got caught right in the middle of the Biafran war. Our university built that university in conjunction with the government of Nigeria. Unfortunately it became the center of the Biafran uprising and ultimately it came to something of a sad end. It has now, however, been adopted within the national system of Nigeria and is being rehabilitated.

So let me just say in closing, that as far as I'm concerned, TEE is a rather interesting example of development within Christian ministries in the world. It is a very promising development; one that has had a lot of problems and many of us have been involved in over-promotion in ways that we probably shouldn't have and many of us have been guilty of emphasizing the wrong sorts of thing. But through it all, I think there is evidence that we can see the hand of God at work taking even the feeblest and the sloppiest, sometimes, of our helps and ventures and turning them to his glory. And I am very convinced that what stands to happen within theological education by extension will, in the long run, have a developing effect in and for the church, especially if you define developing, as I did this morning at chapel, as moving from the domination of sin into the freedom of godliness. And I believe that what theological education by extension may very well do is to release educational traditions from domination by that sinfulness of secular valuing and releasing it into a freedom of the spirit with a sense of cooperation and a sense of service being the major hallmarks.

Thank you very much.