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Entering into the Now Discussion of African Theology of the Late 1960s and 1970s Through Gudina Tumsa’s Approach

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Introduction

One may claim that African theology is not as complicated as that of the West. This probably is true for those who portray theology in Africa as only a theological adaptation of Western theology.¹ African theology would be meaningless if there is no indigenous theology, as such. However, though one may claim that there is certain reality behind this portrayal, it would be in ignorance of the historical fact that Christianity was introduced to Africa centuries before it was introduced to the West.² Where there was Christianity in Africa for centuries before the arrival of Western missionaries, it is impossible to suppose that Africa was a Christian continent without theology.

Christianity was introduced to Africa in the early time of the Apostles.³ One also cannot ignore the fact that early theologians of Egypt and North Africa, like Athanasius, Augustine of Hippo, Tertullian, Cyprian and others were pillars of the wider Christian churches in the early centuries. Without hesitation, anyone who is aware of their legacy and familiar with their writings can boldly describe their contribution to the development of theology in the early church.

When describing the present situation of African theology, Mercy Oduyoye postulates that African theology is being “endangered.” By the term “endangered,” she does not mean that it is about to vanish, but that it is on the verge of being “established, respectable, co-opted” through means of “indigenized forms that may show an awareness of social questions” and a “struggle with making a Christian dogma meaningful.”⁴ To the contrary, Kato states that Christianity in Africa is “being threatened by syncretism, universalism and Christo-paganism.”⁵

The dilemma continues as to how present African theology is described, “endangered” or has lost its Christian identity? And, beyond that, what kind of form theology in Africa should take is also related to the dilemma described above. In attempting to reach a certain solution, many scholars ignore the fact that Africa indeed

¹ Lehtonen and Thomas, *In Christ a New Community*, 5.

² Pobe, *Toward an African Theology*, 15; Baur, *2000 Years of African Christianity*, 17; Oduyoye, *Hearing and Knowing*, 25.

³ Acts 8:22f: according to the tradition of Ethiopian Orthodox Church, the eunuch baptized by Philip was Ethiopian. Though the term Ethiopia may not refer to the present day Ethiopia, it is possible that this man was from Africa. Parratt, *Reinventing Christianity*, 3.

⁴ Oduyoye, *Hearing and Knowing*, 9.

⁵ Kato, *Biblical Christianity*, 11.

had its own theology before the Western missionaries introduced their own forms of Christianity and worship practices. Young attempts to search for African theologies in the 19th and 20th century ignoring the rich African Christianity over the centuries,⁶ Molyneux narrows his research down to the colonial period. He proposes that theology started with the so-called “Christianization of Africa” by missionaries during the colonial period.⁷

The fact that many teachers and students in Africa ignore the debate on African theology signals a lack of proper understanding of African Christianity, which could have possibly resulted from being consumed by the dominant trend of Western theology. This paper will attempt to bring into the discussion fellow African theologians of the 1960s and 1970s, together with pertinent insights drawn from the perceptive African theologian, Rev. Gudina Tumsa.⁸ The reason to focus on the two decades, 1960s and 1970s is the fact that African theology is said to have been revitalized and developed within these decades.⁹ This paper will deal with the legacy of Rev. Gudina’s theology, in the context of this significant period in African church history.

1. Gudina Tumsa: A pace setter in African Theology of the 1960s

After the Second World War, when many African countries gained independence from Western colonial power, African Christianity also faced a question of self-identity. Desmond Tutu stated, “African theology is the result of reaction against cultural and ecclesiastical colonialism.”¹⁰ African theology, therefore, took a path of “reactionary theology”, which was the result of attempts made to gain selfhood in Christian thought by remodelling the theology of missionaries in the colonial period.¹¹

Therefore, attempts made before 1960 remind us of many efforts by African theologians to reconstruct African theology by relating biblical theology to the African context. In most cases, the efforts seem to be reactionary towards Western theology or thinking. Some thought that Western theology had nothing to do with an

⁶ Young, *Black and African Theologies*, 1ff.

⁷ Molyneux, *African Christian Theology*, 23ff.

⁸ Rev. Gudina Tumsa was the General Secretary of Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus 1966-1979. He took two years pastoral training in Nedjo 1957-1958 and was ordained as the first pastor at Naqamte Mekane Yesus congregation in 1959. He studied at Luther Seminary in USA from 1963-1966 and was granted a Bachelor of Divinity degree. He has influenced his church and the churches through out the world in his profound thinking demonstrated through his writings and speeches.

⁹ Gehman, *Doing African Christian Theology*, 36.

¹⁰ Gehman, *Doing African Christian Theology*, 36.

¹¹ Gehman, *Doing African Christian Theology*, 36, Bower, “African Theology. Its History, Dynamics, Scope and Future,” 114.

African worldview. However, as O'Donovan states, an overbalanced African contextual theology could tend towards syncretism.¹²

Though the name "African theology" was in process, it was not until the 1960s that it came into existence. Despite the fact that the term "African theology" was there in the heart of African Christian thinking, it fully flowered in the 1960s.¹³ A consultation, which was held on "Biblical Revelation and African Beliefs" in 1966 under the umbrella of All African Conference of Churches, which followed the assembly of 1963, had these characteristics. The Assembly affirmed, "The church in Africa could only attain selfhood and be adequate for [its] mission, when [it] possessed a first hand knowledge of the Lord of the church and was able to express that knowledge in clear account."¹⁴

The aim of the consultation was to look for the best way of presenting, interpreting, and implanting the Christian faith in Africa so as to permit Africans to hear God in Jesus Christ who addresses them directly in their very own situation and in their particular circumstances.¹⁵

Based on this aim, African Christian theologians were called to work out a theology that would be relevant for African Christians, making the Christian message relevant to all Africans. The outcome was a compendium of eight volumes, entitled *Biblical Revelation and African Beliefs*, which focused on "reformulating Christian doctrines in African idioms and thought forms."¹⁶

Gudina Tumsa was one of these African theologians who attempted to formulate a theology, which was relevant and compatible for African. However, what makes him somewhat different and distinct from his contemporary African theologians was that his theologizing efforts were not motivated by any reactionary attempt towards the so-called "white theology." He was endeavoring to formulate a theology that is basically biblical, and relevant to Christians throughout the world. This is reflected in his attempt to define and clarify the identity of the church theologically, with his ground-breaking address to the 16th EECMY meeting of August 1968, on the topic "The Church as an Institution." This was following by his theological reflection on "Stewardship of the Gospel," delivered to the stewardship

¹² O'Donovan, *Biblical Christianity in African Perspective*, 5.

¹³ According to Molyneux, the year 1963 marks "the official beginning of African theology". See Molyneux, *African Christian Theology*, 55. Bower also states that the year 1960 marks the beginning of the so called African Theology. See Bower, "African Theology. Its History, Dynamics, Scope and Future", 109, on the other hand, Byang Kato and John Mbiti states that Africa in 1960 found itself in "a situation of trying to exist without a theology". See Kato, *Biblical Christianity*, 11 and Mbiti, *Africanische Stimmen aus Asien, Afrika und Lateinamerika*. München, 1968.

¹⁴ Oduyoye, *Hearing and Knowing*, 4.

¹⁵ Molyneux, *African Christian Theology*, 60.

¹⁶ Muzorewa, *The Origins and Development of African Theology*, 88.

workshop organized for EECMY representatives, which included today's Eritrea, in May 1968.¹⁷

What is observed in the 1960s is the aspiration of African theologians to define Christianity in their own terms. In one way or another, this trend created dissimilar approaches among different African theologians. However, they all seemed to be in one accord when it came to the necessity of initiating and developing theology in Africa. Africa needed a theology that suits African soil.

Gudina Tumsa understood that his being an African was a God-given responsibility, and he was God's agent. In his own words, he states, "God has placed us where we are to do His will as Ethiopian Christians and fulfil his purpose ... a Christian lives in a society where he carries out his mandate given to him by the Lord."¹⁸ For Gudina, serving one's society is not based on one's own choice, but on God's. God has made him African not because God did not know what else he could have made him, but with a purpose to accomplish His goals through him as an African.

2. Gudina Tumsa in the debate about African Theology in the 1970s

It was at the Dar es Salaam conference of 1977 that the significance of theological reflection among the third world theologians was raised as a major concern. Twenty-two theologians from Africa, Asia and Latin America participated in this conference. In their conclusion, they stated that different theological reflection is needed on the mission of the church among third world countries, which are said to be economically disadvantaged. Moreover, this theology, according to these theologians, should be distinct from that of the economically advantaged, of the first and second world countries.¹⁹

The debate on the form and extent that African Theology should take received its impetus in Africa from the debate on the relationship between inculturation and liberation in African theology. The two East African scholars to initiate the debate during the first half of the 1970s were John Mbiti²⁰ and James Cone.²¹ The discussion was initiated by papers presented at Union Theological Seminary during the academic

¹⁷ Gudina Tumsa, *Witness and Discipleship*, 149-156 and 157-165.

¹⁸ Gudina Tumsa. "The Role of the Church in a Given Society" in *Witness and Discipleship*, 2.

¹⁹ Norman, *Classical Texts in Mission and World Christianity*, 178.

²⁰ John Mbiti has developed a reputation among African scholars through his several publications: *African Religion and Philosophy* (1969), *Concept of God in Africa* (1970) and *New Testament Background in an African Background* (1971).

²¹ Mbiti, "An African Views American Black Theology," in *Black Theology: A Documentary History, 1966-1979*, ed. Gayraud S. Wilmore and James H. Cone, 477-82; and "The South African Theology of Liberation: Appreciation and Evaluation," in *A Vision for Man: Essays on Faith, Theology and Society*, ed. Samuel Amirthan, and Cone, "A Black American Perspective on the Future of African Theology," in *Black Theology: A Documentary History, 1966 - 1979*, ed. Gayraud S. Wilmore and James H. Cone, 492-502.

year of 1972-1973. Subsequent to that, Byang Kato, of Nigeria addressed the Christian Education Strategy Conference that was held in Nairobi in January 1973. His message was quite distinct from that of Mbiti and Cone. His basic challenge to the participants was that attempts should be made to train enough quality African theologians within already existing structures of evangelical Christianity.²²

Mbiti and other African theologians of similar theological positions, such as Harry Sawyerr,²³ Edward Fashole-Luke,²⁴ and Gabriel Setiloane,²⁵ were attempting to specify the distinctiveness of the African context by separating African theology from the so-called “imported theologies”, which implicitly referred to Western theology. Mbiti and those who shared similar ideas with him argued that African Traditional Religion (ATR) should be recognized as one of the world religions. He argued that ATR should be taken as a “*preparatio evangelica*” (preparation for the gospel).²⁶ However, these African theologians argued that both the Black American and the Black South African theologies are distinct from general “African” theology. Mbiti’s argument was that “Black theology cannot and will not become African theology.”²⁷ He saw no relationship between African and Black theologies. In his words:

The concerns of Black Theology differ considerably from those of African Theology. The latter grows out of our joy in the experience of the Christian faith, whereas Black Theology emerges from the pains of oppression. African Theology is not so restricted in its concerns, nor does it have an ideology to propagate. Black Theology hardly knows the situation of Christian living in Africa, and therefore, its direct relevance for Africa is either non-existent or only accidental.²⁸

James Cone, to the contrary, argued that Black and African theologies are not all that different as suggested by Mbiti, and therefore thought that Mbiti had misrepresented Black theology.²⁹ According to Cone, regardless of his/her context, no matter where he/she lives, “the Black World is one.”³⁰ This oneness of Africans and Black Americans is based on his/her common historical concern for the poor. What makes them one, as he describes, is the “poor perspective”, in that it creates mutual sharing in God’s creation. Again, to quote Cone:

²² Kapteina, “The Formation of African Evangelical Theology,” 61.

²³ Sawyerr, “What is African Theology?” 4.

²⁴ Fashole-Luke, “The Quest for African Christian Theologies,” 32.

²⁵ Setiloane, “Theological Trends in Africa,” 8.

²⁶ Kapteina, *The Foundation of African Evangelical Theology*, 64.

²⁷ Mbiti, “An African Views American Black Theology,” 481.

²⁸ Mbiti, “An African Views American Black Theology,” 481.

²⁹ Cone, “A Black American Perspective on the Future of African Theology,” 494.

³⁰ Cone, “A Black American Perspective on the Future of African Theology,” 495.

The relation between indigenization and liberation does not have to be antagonistic. In fact, we need both emphases. Without the indigenization of theology, liberation theology's claim to be derived from and accountable to oppressed peoples is a farce. Indigenization opens the door for the people's creative participation in the interpretation of the Gospel for their life situation. But indigenization without liberation limits a given theological expression to the particularity of its cultural context. . . . If theology is to be truly indigenized, its indigenization must include a social analysis that takes seriously the human struggles against race, sex, and class oppression.³¹

A prominent figure in South African churches, Desmond Tutu entered this theological debate in 1979 with his watershed publication entitled *Black Theology/African Theology: soul mates or antagonists*.³² We can understand from his title that Tutu agrees with Cone, and attempts to show the dynamics in the interrelation of Black and African theologies. According to Tutu, both indigenization and liberation theologies "are aimed at liberating Africans from all forces that hinder them from living fully as human beings."³³

Kato on the other hand entered the debate from a different perspective with his influential paper entitled, "Theological Trends in Africa Today", presented to a Conference held in Nairobi in 1973. In this paper he argued that the problem with African churches is "theological anaemia", which allowed for theological "syncretism, universalism and christo-paganism."³⁴

A more recent theologian to enter into this dialogue is Emmanuel Martey.³⁵ Martey argues that the bases for both the enculturation and liberation strands of theology in Africa are/were attempts to give varying responses to situations within Africa. Enculturation theology was the result of struggles for independence from colonizers in sub-Saharan Africa. Its roots are firmly observed in African culture and traditions. Liberation theology also has immersed in South Africa out of Black Africans struggling against the oppressive system of apartheid. Martey, therefore, describes inculturation and liberation as "hermeneutic procedures that seek both *understanding* of the African cultural-political reality and *interpretation* of this reality in the light of the gospel of Jesus Christ, so as to bring about *transformation* of the oppressive *status quo*."³⁶ In this way, he aspires to show that liberation and inculturation are not paradoxical, but complement each other. In his postlude, Martey indicates that the factual hope for African theology lies in an attempt made to create interaction between indigenisation and liberation theologies.

Gudina Tumsa's Personal Conviction on Formulating "*Confessio Africana*"

³¹ Cone, "A Black American Perspective on the Future of African Theology," 500.

³² Tutu, "Black Theology/African Theology," 483-491.

³³ Tutu, "Black Theology/African Theology," 486.

³⁴ Kato, "Theological Trends in Africa Today," 5.

³⁵ Martey, African Theology, 55.

³⁶ Martey, African Theology, 55.

Even though Gudina Tumsa completed theological education in the West and graduated in 1966 with a BD from Luther Seminary in America, 1966, his education in America, according to Christian Krause, did not make him a “westerner.” By the term “westerner,” it is obvious that Krause meant Gudina did not attempt either to think or practice Christianity as a Westerner. Gudina, according to Krause’s observation, criticised a western understanding of mission and the church. This emanated from his “deep involvement in the problems and needs of his country Ethiopia.”³⁷

It should be highlighted that, just as Mbiti, Gudina’s personal zeal was to gain independence in terms of theological thought and church practices from that of the West.³⁸ This independence could only be actualized by formulating one’s own thinking pattern in terms of theology and church practices.³⁹ Gudina’s motive to formulate a “*Confessio Africana*”, which Estifanos Tesema identifies as “*Confessio Ethiopicana*,”⁴⁰ is his attempt to define endogenous theology that was in his mind for his own people. In Gudina’s own words:

Indigenous theology the Ethiopian context may be defined as a translation of the Biblical sources, the various Confessions, and traditions transmitted to us throughout the history of the Christian church, to the patterns of the thoughts of our people, that they may feel at home with the Gospel of love as revealed in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.⁴¹

As noted above, what we can understand from Gudina Tumsa’s statement is that he defines “indigenization” as the process of making the message of the gospel understandable for the local people by using relevant terms. This implies that it is a “term describing the translatability of the universal Christian faith into the forms and the symbols of a particular culture of the world.”⁴²

Gudina Tumsa was a responsible leader, not only attempting to meet the challenges of the church at that time, but was also drawn into the social, economical and political needs of the society. In other words, his concern was that the church should meet these various challenges with the Christian message. In Gudina's opinion, African Christianity must meet its own challenges. It should develop its own theology, which is "relevant to African social, political and ideological reality."⁴³ For

³⁷ Krause, “Gudina Tumsa: Not Just for Himself,” 5. It is undeniable that many believed his critical approach was due to the fact that he was influenced by Western theological thinking, though this group has never tried to justify their conviction in written form.

³⁸ Krause, “Gudina Tumsa: Not Just for Himself,” 5.

³⁹ Though Krause is not clear by what he meant “church practice”, we can see the connotation that it can mean every church practice, like leadership, worship and all others.

⁴⁰ Estifanos Tesema. “Gudina Tumsa’s: From Christology to Anthropology.”

⁴¹ Gudina Tumsa, “Witness and Discipleship,” 69.

⁴² Conn, “Indigenization,” 481.

⁴³ Eide, “Integral Human Development: Rev. Gudina's Theology,” 37.

him, God's mission has to be carried out by the church in an indigenous way. As Eide stated, though Gudina "was never given the opportunity to fully develop a *Confessio Africana*,"⁴⁴ it is possible to see his noble attempt in so doing.

3.1 Distinctiveness of EECMY from other African Churches in terms of Theologizing in the 1960s and the 1970s

A 1977 publication by the Lutheran World Federation was distributed in order to prepare participants for the Sixth Assembly which was about to be held in Tanzania. This publication stated that fifty years after the missionaries came and "introduced" Christianity to Africa, many African churches continued to follow the Western Christian traditions and practice without further attempts to develop their own. In that same book, it is clearly stated that a distinction is made in this aspect when it comes to describing the practice of the EECMY of Ethiopia. According to the LWF report, the EECMY had begun to challenge the LWF to see the other side of "development relationship." This was postulated from the African point of view and asserted that serving the "whole person" is very vital.⁴⁵ In this report, the stand of EECMY was clear in that it is impossible to dichotomize between serving the physical and spiritual needs. This assertion of the church was clearly identified by the LWF leaders as originating from EECMY leaders' distinct biblical understanding of what constitutes service rendered by a church. This indeed originated from a distinct understanding of its leaders. The question needing to be posed was, "How could the church come up with such a Biblical understanding, which is identifiable within the context of African people?"

"Praxis-theory-praxis"

When one carefully studies the life and ministry of Gudina Tumsa, one is astonished by the fact that his ministry always blended the theological with his practical experience. This to me, is a salient factor when one compares Gudina with other African theologians. He lived and preached his convictions, in which he could be set as a distinct African theologian of his time. Basically, his theology focused on interpreting biblical texts based on one's practical context. This, according to him, should encompass the whole life of man, his spiritual as well as his physical well-being.

Instead of adopting Western religious ideology, Gudina strongly propounded that the church should develop its own. He took to task Western theology on the basis that it lacked authenticity when it came to relating these theologies with the life experience of Africans. He stated, "Western theology has lost the this-worldly dimension of human existence."⁴⁶ For him, the well-known theology of Luther's doctrine of "the two kingdoms" had no place in Africa. The reason for him to say this was the fact that separation of "secular from religion, mind from the body, and faith

⁴⁴ Eide, "Integral Human Development: Rev. Gudina's Theology," 37.

⁴⁵ Lehtonen, In Christ a New Community. p. ?

⁴⁶ Gudina Tumsa, Witness and Discipleship, 69.

from development" is unreasonable for Africans.⁴⁷ He believed and underlined the fact that separation of religion from the daily life of the people is impossible in Africa.⁴⁸

Karl Muller, in agreement with Gudina's conviction states, "The Christian message is open for the world and history in their universal breadth and diversity; it cannot thus be confined to the norms and values of one particular context."⁴⁹ For the diverse needs of the community in which he was serving, Gudina sought a biblical answer from inside the continent, but not from scholarly works of Westerners. According to him, theology that was developed and shaped in a way that it could communicate and give meaning to the African way of life, was a theology needed at his time. For him, "theology is a relative statement on the central message of the Christian gospel, in an attempt to translate that message to the people."⁵⁰

This is clearly shown in his 1975 memorandum to H/E Emanuel Abraham, the then President of the EECMY:

Theology must grow out of the daily experience from our dealings with ordinary affairs of life as we experience them in our situation, in our cultural setting, in our economic life, in our political life experience and in our social practice.⁵¹

This brings to mind a saying of an individual from Rwanda, a son of a preacher, speaking at a meeting which took place in 1994 between Tutsi and Hutu of Rwanda and Burundi. He said that before he was attending church five times a week. At that 1994 meeting, he described to the people gathered that he "only heard one sermon; a sermon that only addressed the life of the hereafter." As he continued, he said:

So much death, so much hatred and distrust between tribes, so much poverty, suffering, corruption, and injustice, and nothing ever really changed. Eventually, I realized something. I had ever heard a sermon that addressed these realities.⁵²

A similar situation is being observed in many parts of Africa. A sermon, which is irrelevant and incomplete to African day-to-day life experience and a theology that does not address the total aspects of African life is being preached. This is my plea to African theologians to consider today. Gudina has left us an example as

⁴⁷ Eide, 'Integral Human Development: Rev. Gudina's Theology,' 37.

⁴⁸ Gudina Tumsa, *Witness and Discipleship*, 123. This is in conformity with Dr. Manas Buthelezi, the Tanzanian Theologian who made this claim in 1973.

⁴⁹ Muller, *Mission Theology: An Introduction*, 22. He further notes that Western culture was very often the determining factor in order to set the norm for mission.

⁵⁰ Gudina Tumsa, *Witness and Discipleship*, 57.

⁵¹ Gudina Tumsa, *Witness and Discipleship*, 57.

⁵² McLaren, *Everything Must Change*, 18.

to how we must address our respective communities as Africans. It must be a theology that is developed from one's own experience of the triune God.

Yonas Deressa remembers Gudina's ministry as follows:

One consistent feature that was loudly audible in his [Gudina's] sermons and prayers was that they address the total needs of believers and non-believers. The spiritual need ... including other concerns that beset the society in which he lived. Those included social, political, economical and other factors.⁵³

Conclusion

The debate among African theologians for the last few decades is whether to take the position of a Ghanaian theologian, Kwame Bediako, in which he described that theology in Africa should be constructed from the already existing experiences of African Christianity,⁵⁴ which encompasses what Mbiti explains as theologizing based on African traditional religions,⁵⁵ or what Byang Kato, a Nigerian theologian, demonstrates as "Biblical theology," which according to him is universally valid in "evangelical Christianity,"⁵⁶ be taken as a base for African theology.

Gudina stated that, "The EECMY is in the process of developing an indigenous theology grown out of her experience dealing with the Ethiopian situation, taking the spiritual and the physical in an inseparable manner."⁵⁷ Did that become to reality? No. Oyvind Eide stated, "His [Gudina's] murder brought to an end the possibility of creative and visionary theological reflection in the church, which was so much needed in Ethiopia at the time. It was blow to African theology, as well as the worldwide church. His theology which grew out of African soil, remains of great interest."⁵⁸

The challenge we encounter today in the EECMY, as well as in the greater Ethiopian evangelical movement, is that of addressing the community with the Good News in the most effective way. The reason for this is that we have accepted Western Christian norms, ways of communication and worship styles as absolutes, which often are at odds to our own community. These practices, which we have followed in our church for many decades, are now accepted as the only right way of worship or communicating the Good News to our society. Those who questioned the norm were branded as "heretics".

⁵³ Yonas Deresa. "Rev. Gudina Tumsa: His Early Life and Ministry," 12. Yonas Deresa describes that this saying was always heard from Gudina Tumsa in his ministries, beginning from the time he served as the General Secretary of the Church.

⁵⁴ Bediako, *Jesus in Africa*, 3ff.

⁵⁵ Kato, *Biblical Christianity in Africa*, 12.

⁵⁶ Kato, *Biblical Christianity in Africa*, 12.

⁵⁷ Gudina Tumsa. *Witness and Discipleship*, 69.

⁵⁸ See the back cover of *The life and Ministry of Gudina Tumsa*, 2nd volume.

Nevertheless, when we observe the outcome, these practices have proven to be the means for many to leave the church because they could not understand what was happening.⁵⁹ Because of this rigid stance, the communication of the Good News has been very ineffective. Therefore, it is time for our church to hear the voice of our own prophet, Gudina Tumsa, and to respond positively in communicating God's message to our generation, just as God revealed His mission effectively throughout historical events.

Gudina states, "A look at the whole life of the Saviour, in my opinion, will sufficiently express that He (the Messiah) intended to create a community of believers to continue the mission work ... which has began for salvation of mankind."⁶⁰ Therefore, we who are left on earth, to carry out this mission have to consider this truth and put it into action.

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⁵⁹ EECMY-Agenda Report on Church Council Meeting, 2006; Reports of 16 pastors from different Synods in 2006 reveal this fact. The report was made to the EECMY head office for the reason that they were asked to survey how evangelistic activity was going on.

⁶⁰ Gudina Tumsa, Witness and Discipleship, 158.

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