

Higher, Deeper, Wider, Together

The first two articles in this issue are about forgiveness in Matthew. They arrived on my desktop within a few weeks of each other, and practically begged to be published together. In *The Paradox of the New Testament Concept of Unmerited Divine Grace and Conditional Forgiveness in Matthew's Gospel* Cephas Tushima delves deeply into Matthew to discover the tension between the concepts of grace and merit. He then casts his theological net wider to gather evidence of tension between other concepts in Scripture. In so doing he links exegesis to Biblical theology and concludes that it is necessary for us to live with the tensions. *The Jewish Background to Interpersonal Forgiveness in Matthew* by Isaac Mbabazi is also an exegetical work, relating Matthew's depiction of forgiveness to its Jewish background in Sirach. This essay, heavy on Greek analysis, remains focused on the passages and their Jewish background. In Africa, Christians are expected to forgive their enemies, just as in every other era and area of the world because God has forgiven us. Both these exegetical articles contribute to Biblical scholarship in the wider world so that together their readers may become mature in Christ.

Onesimus Ngundu's article, *Mission Churches and African Customary Marriage*, is subtitled, "A History of Church Marriages and a Case for an African Christian Customary Marriage Ceremony". This is an example of African theology as contextualisation. Ngundu not only examines his own culture regarding marriage customs, but also that of the cultures of the West. He puts the conflict between church weddings and customary marriage traditions in historical and theological perspective. The article concludes with an actual ceremony that points the way forward in solving this difficult conflict. In this article, Ngundu is both scholarly and practical.

Pastoral education institutions in Africa generally design their training of church leaders with the assumption that each graduate will pastor one church. We all realize, however, that most graduates will be multi-church pastors because Africa's swiftly growing church simply hasn't enough leaders, especially trained pastors. Philip Morrison's article, *Implications of Paul's Model for Leadership Training in Light of Church Growth in Africa*, provides a biblically radical way forward. Many Bible colleges and seminaries in Africa are deeply concerned about institutional survival due to the financial pressure of keeping such expensive facilities functioning. Taking Biblical patterns, methods and goals of leadership training seriously means our institutions will need to change, but in changing they will also survive, thrive, and serve the church. This article is among the most important ever printed in AJET.

In two Afterwords, Ernst Wendland and Jim Harries carry forward AJET's recent discussion on Mother Tongue Theological Education (MTTE). Wendland's wealth of experience shows in his well-researched article. Harries uses a story to reply to Gehman's initial Afterword in our last issue. But what do multi-lingual African lecturers make of all this missionary palaver about MTTE? AJET invites more responses, especially by African readers.