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Editorial

In 2023, the South African Theological Seminary singled out ethics as an academic focus for the institution. Our e-conference, “Theology, Ethics, and the Church: Perspectives from the Global South,” raised the question, “How does biblically-informed, Christlike, Spirit-empowered, and God-glorifying ethics inform and transform clergy, congregants, communities, countries, and even continents?” *Conspectus 36* further explores this question with its various offerings. From articles in Biblical Studies, to those in Systematic Theology, Practical Theology, and Biblical Counselling, this issue addresses a variety of ethical questions and how faithful analysis of the biblical text ought to transform communities on the African continent and beyond. May the articles inspire our readers to think deeply and act wisely wherever they are situated.

***Conspectus 36* Articles**

In the first article, “Nonconformist Transformation: An Exegetical Study of Ephesians 5:7–14,” José de Carvalho dives into Ephesians 5:11’s appeal to expose the unfruitful deeds of darkness, arguing that Paul had the deeds of unbelievers in mind. Through an exegetical and literary study of verses 7–14, de Carvalho demonstrates the missional value of non-verbal gospel communication through a nonconformist lifestyle that rejects secular norms.

Next, Jiofack Kana C. Jésus points out the threats and opportunities in African missions, illustrating the need to engage biblical authority, theology, and anthropology for an effective and faithful missional theology in and for Africa. In his article entitled, “Towards a Biblical Theology of Missions in Western Africa,” Jésus argues that African theologians are well positioned to articulate a biblical theology of missions.

In her article, “The Effects of Boko Haram on the Church in Nigeria: The Case of Michika Local Government Area, Adamawa State,” Roseline Luka Vandi discusses the devastating impact of Boko Haram on the church in the Michika Local Government Area of Adamawa State, Nigeria. Employing a critical phenomenological method, Vandi makes recommendations about the hopeful and redemptive role of the church and its leaders in the aftermath of the insurgence.

Next, June Dickie applies literature trauma theory to demonstrate how reading and performing the biblical story of Ruth and selected lament psalms could facilitate more cost-effective healing for trauma sufferers. Reflecting on the outcomes of readings and performances of these texts with selected groups, Dickie argues that this approach gives sufferers the opportunity to express their own pain and relate to characters in the Bible.

In his article, “Emotive or Ethical? A Theological Reflection on Kenya’s Comprehensive Sexuality Education,” Kevin Muriithi Ndereba critiques an emotive response to sexuality education in Kenya. Through a customized practical theological methodology, Ndereba offers a theological and ethical approach to the issue by analyzing the Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) policy in Kenyan society, evaluating its sexual ethics in light of key NT passages, and offering practical recommendations for ministerial and theological engagement in matters of sexual ethics in Kenya.

In her article, “Drawing on the Collective Wisdom of the Past to Develop a Transformative, Scripture-Infused Eco-Theology for Land Use in Africa,” Katherine Norton addresses the widespread environmental degradation in Africa by proffering a Scripture-infused eco-theology that honors indigenous wisdom and takes seriously the engagement with Scripture

within a community's local language. She concludes with eight practical recommendations, inspired by experiences of the Faith and Farming program in Nigeria and beyond.

Finally, Samson Tadelles Demo engages the topic of transhumanism in his article, "Deconstructing Transhumanism: A *Metanoia* from *Homo Deus* to *Homo Kenosus*." Demo critiques the transhumanistic ideals of *homo deus* and calls for a *metanoiac* turn, a kenotic embrace of Christ's incarnate life and service, as key to deconstruct the ethos of transhumanism.

The publication concludes with three book reviews. Daniel Nii Aboagye Aryeh reviews David deSilva's (2022) *Honor, Patronage, Kinship, and Purity: Unlocking New Testament Culture*, Max Swart reviews *Spiritual Formation for the Global Church: A Multi-Denominational, Multi-Ethnic Approach*, edited by Ryan A. Brandt and John Frederick (2021), and Megan Braithwaite reviews Catherine L. McDowell and Philip H. Towner's (2021) *The Rewards of Learning Greek and Hebrew: Discovering the Richness of the Bible in its Original Languages*.

Editorial Board

On behalf of the Editorial Board chairperson, Dr. Desmond Henry, I am honored to welcome two new members to the board: Drs. Basilius Kasera and Bitrus Sarma are joining the *Conspectus* Editorial Board from November 2023.

Dr. Basilius Kasera is a Lecturer in Philosophy, Applied Ethics, Religious and Moral Education, and Religious Studies at the University of Namibia. His research interests include moral philosophy, African philosophy, education, justice studies, religion, culture, political theology, contextual studies, and theology. He has contributed to the quality of *Conspectus* in various ways over the past years, including serving as a reviewer and publishing in the journal.

Dr. Bitrus Sarma is a Professor of New Testament Interpretation and Greek. He is the current Provost of ECWA Theological Seminary Kagoro (ETSK) in Nigeria. His publications include *Hermeneutics of Mission in*

Matthew: Israel and the Nations in the Interpretative Framework of Matthew's Gospel (Langham Monographs, 2015); *Blessed New Humanity in Christ: A Theology of Hope for African Christianity from the Book of Ephesians* (HippoBooks, 2021), and *Drums of Redemption: A New Testament Theology for Africa* (HippoBooks 2023).

We are grateful for the addition of these colleagues and pray that their contributions will benefit both the journal and church. We have also come to the end of our first three-year Editorial Board cycle. On behalf of the SATS Management Team and Editorial Team, I wish to thank each Board member for serving the journal with much wisdom and zeal. It has been a joy to co-labor with such passionate and skilled scholars and practitioners. To the new Board, to be introduced in our next volume, we look forward to the coming three years. May each work of recalibration and innovation bring glory and honor to our Lord's Name.

My gratitude to our contributors, the Editorial Board, the Review Board, the Editorial Team, and the Seminary for the successful publication of this issue. As we grapple with the ethical challenges and opportunities in Africa and beyond, may we pursue theology that is firmly Bible-based, Christ-centered, Spirit-led, and contextually informed.

In Christ,

Dr. Cornelia van Deventer

Editor