

**TRANSFORMATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF  
HUMAN SOCIETY: A HOMILETICAL  
PASTORAL PERSPECTIVE**

BY

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*“The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it.”Genesis 2: 15 (NIV).*

*“If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land”.*

**II Chronicles 7:14 (NIV).**



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## DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that the work contained in this Dissertation:

### **TRANSFORMATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF HUMAN SOCIETY: A HOMILECTICAL PASTORAL PERSPECTIVE**

is my own original work and that all sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references. Furthermore, I have not previously submitted it in its entirety or in part to any University for a degree.

Signed.....Date.....

**ROBERT MUNTHALI**

Signed.....Date.....

**PROF. M.J. MASANGO (PROMOTER)**

## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this dissertation to my parents Mr. Joseph (Joe) White Bidiga Munthali (deceased) and Mrs. Enala Nyirenda Munthali, my beloved wife Mrs. Balekeni Nyirenda Munthali, my precious sons Tiwonge Abel Munthali and Robert Gomezga Munthali and my daughters Lucy Munthali and Maralisa Musukwa.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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Also to the interviewees for their responses for agreeing that, I use their names for educational purposes. My thanks to the following people for their advice and help: My beloved Wife Mrs Balekeni Munthali, Miss Tshililo Nembilwi, Mrs. Beauty Matumba, Dr. Jason Kelvin Phiri, Dr. F. F. Nemadzivhanani, Professor Thidziambi Tshivhase-Phendla, Dr. T. S. Nedohe, Mrs. A. L. Nyirenda-Chunga, Mr. Steve Chunga, Uncle M. Nyirenda, Delphyn Nyirenda, Advocate M. Nethangaheni Mukwevho, Mr. T.W. Mamathuba, Miss L. E. Mzana, The Right Reverend M. K. Boshomane, The very Reverend A.A. Rannditsheni (Dean), Tiwonge (son) and Miss Maralisa Musukwa (daughter) for reconstructing the dissertation which was destroyed by a virus. Other family members who supported me in my errands between Limpopo and the University of Pretoria, Granny Mashila Ketsina Munthali, Aunty Nkhesani Joyce Munthali, Aunty Philippine Munthali Marwala and Miss Lebogang Florence Munthali. Thanks to the Gooldville Congregation for allowing me to study and work among them.

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## ABSTRACT

This dissertation investigates the Preacher and his/her homiletic contribution to transformation, development and healing of human society. Descartes (1596-1650) is the father of modern thinking. A fragmented approach to life, which he accentuated reason above all other aspects of human endeavour, thus derived the dichotomy that emphasizes the material and despises the spiritual as metaphysical. It appears that from this thinking, the preacher has been bombarded with misperceptions and misconceptions when confronted with the transformation, development and therapeutic issues of this modern; if not post modern era.

The modern Church is not free of blame for enforcing this approach that sidelines the Preacher from his full balanced mandate that is God given, namely: *work it* and *care for it*. Meaning *transform the earth for the better* and *heal it* as a divine decree with a bearing of preparing people for the *hereafter*. The Preacher is crucial and pivotal to society's transformation, development and the healing of the human condition, which is bedevilled by many natural and unnatural maladies that constantly challenge life as God ordained it.

A holistic approach of the Preacher and his/her homilies is critical and is an important contribution to the unlocking, unfolding, releasing and unleashing of the hidden potential which can heal human society. This dissertation proposes the need for change /shift of mindset in order to embrace progress and healing of humans; as this is a very human phenomenon with transcendent help. This need is observed in the homilies that are preached in the rural villages; which lack balance in the holistic approach.

The homilies of Billy Graham, Martyn Lloyd-Jones and ancient John Chrysostom are depicted to demonstrate how preaching has contributed to bring regeneration, progress and healing to human society. The case studies of three churches in Venda namely Tshigubu (Drum) Church (African Independent), Lutheran Church (Churches of Reformation) and Calvary Christian Church (charismatic church) are investigated with regard to changes they have brought within the Venda society.

When the history of western/ modern civilization is traced from Sumerian and Graeco-Roman times, the Preacher features prominently; and even in rural Venda with its kings and chiefs; the Preacher remains critical to the phenomenon under study.

## SUMMARY

This research has attempted to show the critical role of the Preacher in impacting effectively on human society by bringing transformation, development and healing. In the context of Venda, with its kingdoms and its chieftaincies, the Preacher remains a critical player in rural transformation, development and healing through his/her homilies. These are evident core activities that are liberating, unleashing the potential which has been inhibited by inherent structures of oppression and under-development. These mindset inhibitions manifest in the lack of adequate infrastructure; good roads, clean and safe water, etc. In the Vhembe district there is a need to transform the mindset with regard to helping citizens to aspire to a better life, without sidelining the Preacher, who is critical to the phenomenon.

Billy Graham (1956:95) reminds us that, “Art and education may refine the taste; but they cannot purify the heart, forgive sin, and regenerate the individual. It is not simply education in civilization that the world is wanting today, but civilization with enlightened conscience.” Regeneration is key to the gospel when bringing change, progress and healing. Graham’s emphasis on transformation of the human heart, and this is unravelled in this dissertation.

The contribution of the three preachers, Billy Graham (since 1918), Martyn Lloyd-Jones (1899-1981) and John Chrysostom (347-407 AD), to the phenomenon from an evangelical reformed perspective, is then related to three Churches namely; the Tshigubu Church in Vhufuli (representing an African independent Church), the Lutheran Church at Ha-Luvhimbi at Georgholtz Mission and Calvary Christian Church, which are all located in Venda, Vhembe district. The 10 respondents from each of the Churches mentioned above, represent a cross-section of the strata layers which consist of leadership, ordinary members and some youth groups.

The thinkers and philosopher thought to replace the Priest in order to bring a new morality where man becomes the centre; and where religion is not needed as man will come of age; depending on technology to solve his problems. Re-looking at development from a holistic perspective includes natural, social, political, economic, and psychological aspects.



The need to revisit the Preacher and his homilies with regard to the phenomenon is of paramount importance. Also, the development of civilization had developed before the Greeks as Sabine reminds us: “archeological research has... increased our knowledge of the ancient world... Humans in a broad sense seem to have been born in Africa... spreading to Europe and India, and across the plateau of Iran into central Asia. Agriculture became civilization..., growing on the flood plains of great rivers ...Tigris-Euphrates” (Sabine, 1973:9).

The contribution of the Hellenic legacy to modern western civilization cannot be overlooked. The Venda background is linked to global and western civilization in order to help connect the rural Preacher to the centrality of his/her contribution. *Kerygmatic* is derived from the Greek word *Kerygma* which means Preaching or Proclamation (Deist, 1984:136).

*What role has the Preacher and his/her preaching played in bringing progressive transformation and development of human society to healing?*

The therapeutic element is from the pastoral care, as God has decreed: *for the earth, to work it and care for it.*

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