THE MINISTRY OF DR BEYERS NAUDÉ: TOWARDS DEVELOPING A COMPREHENSIVE MISSION (COMMUNICATION) STRATEGY TOWARDS THE VICTIMS OF OPPRESSION

By

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SUMMARY

This thesis proposes that the ministry of Dr Beyers Naudé to the victims of oppression during the apartheid rule in South Africa had a missionary dimension. It argues that the credibility of the Christian faith was challenged by the victims of oppression, as a result of the way in which it was used as a supportive tool for oppression. Through his ministry, Beyers Naudé succeeded in communicating the Christian faith in a special way to the victims of oppression. This led to a change of mind for the victims of oppression with regard to their negative attitude to the Christian faith.

This study further resulted in the development of a comprehensive mission (communication) strategy to the victims of oppression. The argument is that there is another form of post-1994 victims of oppression in South Africa made out of those who feel left out by government poverty alleviation, economic development and service delivery programmes. The inability of government to strike a balance between the rich and the poor as well as corruption will always yield the ‘disadvantaged’ section of society who may feel ‘oppressed’, neglected and left out in favour of the few who have ‘connections’ at higher levels of government. These victims’ response will be characterized by anger which results into protest actions similar to those seen during the time of the ministry of Beyers Naudé. The question posed in this study is ‘how to minister to angry people who feel left out by government?’ In order to respond to this challenge and to equip ministers of religion and other interested people, a comprehensive mission (communication) strategy to victims of oppression was therefore developed based on the example of Beyers Naudé.

The main question posed in this study around the reason for the success of Beyers Naudé’s ministry is “what ‘muthi’ did he use to win the hearts, love and support of the victims of oppression?” In order to answer this question, there is a three step approach that has been followed. Firstly I looked at factors that made him or influenced his making i.e. his life from his birth to his ‘conversion’, South African political landscape divided into two periods (1940-1963 and 1963-1994) as well as Faith Based Organisations’ response to apartheid. Secondly, I looked at his actual
ministry to the victims of oppression from 1963 to 1994. I divided his ministry between the categories of centripetal and centrifugal patterns of mission. Thirdly a comprehensive mission (communication) strategy to the victims of oppression was developed, based on his contribution to a positive Christian witness.

In the concluding chapter, I made some proposals for a way-forward in terms of areas for further study which were triggered by this research. The best statement for concluding this study, indicating the commitment of Beyers Naudé for God’s mission and how this was misunderstood by his church (the DRC) was taken from Mokgoebo (2009) who states:

Beyers Naudé was a prophet of his time. As the saying goes, ‘the prophet is never respected at his own home’. His witness will remain long after we have gone, as a White man who was grasped by the powerful message of the Kingdom of God, of justice and reconciliation.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The principle of UBUNTU has been greatly applicable in my preparation of this study. For those who may not be familiar with it, Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu (in Ryan 2005: v) comes to their rescue when he explains that it means “I am because you are.” It further means that a human being is not an individual or island but part of others, thus: “A person is a person through other persons” (ibid). This has been applicable in this study. The success of this study was made possible by the contributions and cooperation with others. I was like a mechanic and they were like spanner boys and girls who gave me the necessary tools and advice while I was building up this project. I wish therefore, to thank all my spanner boys and girls.

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car which is the ministry of Beyers Naudé to the victims of oppression and the mission strategy that came out of it.

I thank my wife, Nkele and two boys, Jabu and Bongani for their support and understanding when I had to sacrifice some family outings and other 'nice' things for the sake of this study. My sister Leah although she is not ‘educated’ in understanding academic matters has always been ‘pushy’, pressurizing me to finish up this study whenever I paid her a visit. I therefore dedicate this thesis to them as representative of all the mothers and children of Africa and the world. They are among the major spanner boys and girls without whom this car would not have been fixed.

ADVENT 2010
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AAC</td>
<td>All Africa Conference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AB</td>
<td>Afrikaner-Broederbond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AFM</td>
<td>Apostolic Faith Mission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AICs</td>
<td>African Initiated Churches</td>
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<tr>
<td>ATR</td>
<td>African Traditional Religions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BC</td>
<td>Black Consciousness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CI</td>
<td>Christian Institute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSV</td>
<td>Christelike Studentevereniging</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COPE</td>
<td>Congress of the People</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DRC</td>
<td>Dutch Reformed Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DRCA</td>
<td>Dutch Reformed Church in Africa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DRMC</td>
<td>Dutch Reformed Mission Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FEDSEM</td>
<td>Federal Theological Seminary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KJV</td>
<td>Kerk Jeugvereniging</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGKA</td>
<td>Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk in Afrika</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGSK</td>
<td>Nederduitse Gereformeerde Sendingkerk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NHKSA</td>
<td>Nederduitse Hervormde Kerk in Suider Afrika</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NP</td>
<td>Nationalist Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SA</td>
<td>South Africa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SACC</td>
<td>South African Council of Churches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPROCAS</td>
<td>Study Project about Christianity in an Apartheid Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UDF</td>
<td>United Democratic Front</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNISA</td>
<td>University of South Africa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>URCSA</td>
<td>Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WCC</td>
<td>World Council of Churches</td>
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DR BEYERS NAUDÉ AND WIFE, ILSE
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vii. Liberation movements

b. Support related teachings

i. Support to victims' initiatives

ii. Support to ecumenical initiatives

iii. Support by ministry of presence

iv. Support by counseling

c. Character related teachings

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ii. Deep faith

iii. Maintaining a neutral stance

iv. Humility

v. Identification with the weak, the have-nots

vi. Accessibility

vii. Courage and perseverance

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