

Address by Professor Andrew Walls of Edinburgh on Christian Scholarship in a Global Church – Nairobi, August 2007

Brothers and sisters, I must thank you for your kind welcome, for the far too generous introduction which you have given. And express my sense of the honour which it is to be invited to be a part of this consultation, let alone the fearsome responsibility of being its only plenary speaker. I'm conscious that there are some people here who have heard me and some more than once heard me on related subjects, and when you're asked to talk about the same thing several times, you run out of different ways to say the same thing. And consequently you may be conscious sometimes of what we call in Scotland, ??, "cold cabbage cooked over". You may also think it is principally the rant of an old man in a hurry and you may be right because some of the things I am going to say I really don't enjoy saying, and I'm conscious of the fact that humility and charity are scholarly as well as Christian virtues, and that some of the things I say may appear lacking in both. Especially as really the vice-chancellor has said the things I really want to say already in a few crisp sentences and with the utmost humility and charity. Nonetheless it's too late; you have set the cat at large.

The procedure I propose is to look at the present context in which we all live and work under four headings, because each of these aspects can have a profound effect on the way our world develops. The first I propose we look briefly and broadly at the geo-political situation. For all human history indicates that scholarship is often determined by pressure from geo-political developments, beyond ordinary, certainly beyond scholarly control. Second, we'll turn to the religio-democratic situation that has already been referred to, the current and developing balance in the world between religions. Then to the academic situation generally, what is happening in the world of learning as a whole. And finally to the theological situation, our own special department, with special reference to the theological academy. In relation to each of these situations I will propose a number of theses, theses in the old medieval sense, as Luther uses for his ninety-five, that is, propositions for debate, and from these theses, a number of deductions for our special concern with theological scholarship in Africa.

But I hope we can take it for granted that the object of our activity is the promotion of Christian scholarship in Africa, and let's be clear at the outset that the promotion of scholarship is an entirely different matter from the production of PhDs. There are more than enough PhDs in the world already, in Africa, in Europe, in America, who never contributed one jot or tittle to scholarship and never will. It's absolutely pointless to train people to go through doctoral hoops unless they are called by God to be scholars, prepared for the rigours of scholarly life with a passion because nothing less will do for the scholarly quest. I beseech you, brethren, in the ?? of Christ, do not seek to set up factories, however efficient, for producing doctorates. The needs are too urgent, the issues at stake too serious, the time available too short for that. Scholarship is a Christian vocation in the context of God's mission to the world. In comparison, the search for doctorates is frivolity.

And so to our first study of context: the geo-political situation. We are all people who grew up in the 20th century, a century that marked an important transition in world

affairs. The older among us, those of us born in the first half of the century, grew up in a world shaped by what I've called elsewhere, the great European migration. From round about 1500 and for about 450 years after that, Europeans left Europe in great numbers to settle in or direct the affairs of other parts of the world. They created new countries, some as vast as the United States and Greater Russia. They established great empires. They invented new states, like Iraq. They moved millions of people from Africa and Asia to other continents. They dictated to a large extent world trade. This is world that I, born in the 1920s, grew up in, the world that began to implode in that same century, and by the middle of the 20th century, the migration effectively ended. The empires were dismantled, and at the beginning of the 21st century, we are watching the dissolution of the world order that the great European migration set up. We are in the twilight, it is not yet nightfall, of the Western powers. Thousands of tiny indicators show the inexorable rise of the powers of Asia: the steady development of their economic muscle, their rising power in terms of world trade. Of what is more a mark of nationality, of what more a focus of national pride than the Swiss Army knife? Did you realize that the Swiss Army is currently inviting tenders for the supply of its famous knife and a political storm is brewing because the Swiss Army knife is now manufactured in China at a price no Swiss firm can anywhere be in touch, and world trade organization rules demand that tendering must be open to foreign competitors. What amusement the Chinese must have got a couple of years ago when the European Union had to beg China to stagger its delivery of textiles, for the memory has remained in China of how in the 19th century the European powers had imposed trade liberalization on China by force of arms. The time is at hand when globalization no longer reveals the power of the West but the mighty resources of Asia. Think of the picture of the great beasts in Daniel 7. We're seeing one great beast and he's had several horns on his head, some of them with mouths that were speaking great things, still roaring, still lashing his tail, but gradually being moved off the stage, and then ?? the other beasts to come, beasts of a different stripe, before the thrones are set up, and the books are opened, and the Son of Man comes with the clouds of heaven.

From this our first thesis then, we may deduce at least two things. First it will be perilous to build structures that depend on the long continuance of Western power and Western resources. We do not know how long those will last. By all means let us exploit them while they are there, but do not depend on them, they are not part of a ?? . Second, it may encourage us to strengthen our links with Christian brothers in Asia, in Australasia, in Latin America. So often our discussions on theological education are bilateral. They're about how the West relates to Africa, or particular African situations, how the West relates to China, or India, or the Philippines, or to those situations. Our present context calls us to develop multi-lateral relations, and theological discussion stands to gain immensely from the promotion of South-South dialogue, between Africans, Asians, Latin Americans, Pacific people. And the discussions that we need to facilitate perhaps need to bear that in mind. It's a wasteful and limiting factor in our theological development, I think, that the questions that arise from the worldviews of Africa, and those of the tribal peoples of India and Burma and Thailand, of the Pacific Islands, of the Native peoples of the Americas, these areas that have so much in common in terms of worldview, that these are pursued in different contexts and without reference to each other, while each of them is in regular contact with theologies that are shaped by totally different worldviews that come from the modern West.

But there is a second thesis under this section. Those of us here who were born since the middle of the 20th century have been growing up with a different reality though the strength of it is still to be recognized. They've grown up in a world which is steadily being influenced by what I'll now call the great reverse migration. In the middle of the 20th century, in the period when the maritime empires were being dismantled, when the movement of peoples of European descent to the rest of the world slowed to a trickle, a new movement began. People began to move and their numbers steadily grew, from Asia, from Africa, from Latin America, to Western countries, and they set permanent roots down there. It's a process that seems likely to continue. More and more the face of Africa and Asia will be seen in Europe and North America. This fact transforms world relations, gives a different meaning to them, for Asia and Africa are now part, a permanent part, of Europe and America, where once their inhabitants had to go abroad to meet Africa or Asia. It alters the whole dynamics of interfaith dialogue and of mission, for Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, are no longer people who live somewhere else but people who live in the old Christendom. It also alters the dynamics of the Christian church, for there is a huge Christian diaspora now. The latest figures from the World Christian Encyclopedia Database, if I interpret them right, show a decline in the Christians in the United States. But a notably greater decline, if you exclude the immigrants from Latin America, it is Latin American hispanic immigration which mandates the Christian population of the United States. The Great Reverse Migration has to be thought into any serious consideration of world mission and I think also into our special concern here, theological education and theological scholarship. We must not forget that there is part of Africa in America and another part of it in Europe. I'm delighted that the diaspora is represented among us here. I see my dear friends, ?? and ??, fine African scholars who are now working in Western countries.

This leads me to another thesis, that the resources of African diaspora may be vital to African scholarship. The many able African Christians who now reside in America and Europe need not be lost to Africa, they could have a vital function in our future development, especially in such topics as we are considering here. They are brokers, the people who can negotiate between African and European Christians, between African and European theologies. They need continual contact with Africa and Africa needs renewed contact with them. They should be built into our thinking for the future, not least because, as I hope to show, one of the tasks before us will be opening ways for African biblical and theological thinking to penetrate the tight knit world of the Western theological academy.

So to our second contextual exploration: the religio-political situation. The great European migration took place in the period when Europeans and people of European descent, such as Americans, were the world's representative Christians, when most of the older forms of Christianity had disappeared or been decisively weakened. But the religious effects of the great European migration were mixed. On the one hand, it was the great European migration that produced Hinduism as we know it today. The great European migration produced the conditions which made possible the rapid peaceful spread of Islam while ensuring that Muslims would feel aggrieved and offended at the same time. It did see a vast increase in the number of Christians in Asia and Africa. It also saw a sharp decline of Christianity in the West, and especially in Europe. Two processes occurred simultaneously: the largest accession to Christian faith in Christian

history and the fastest recession from the faith in its history. That recession was centred in Europe, the home of the representative Christians. The accession centred in the rest of the world. I don't have to remind this audience that the majority of the world's Christians are Africans, Asians, Latin Americans, nor that the proportion continues to grow. At present, and who knows how long these trends can continue, but at present, each year is seeing fewer Christians in the West and more in the rest of the world. And the proportion would be still higher were it not that the great reverse migration is taking Asian, African and Latin American Christians into the West. In other words, Christianity is in process of becoming what it was originally: a non-Western religion.

And Africa has a special significance in this picture. Since it's in Africa during the 20th century that the largest accession of the Christian faith of all has taken place. In the 20th century the shape of the church altered more radically than in any earlier century, except the first. The cultural and demographic composition of the Christian church has been transformed. The Anglican communion because of its peculiar structure has perhaps been the first to demonstrate how the demographic shift affects power relations in the church. Not so long ago Europeans were the representative Christians. Now the representative Christians are Africans. It's by African Christianity, whether for good or for ill, that Christianity in the 21st century will be judged. It's inevitable then that the religio-cultural transformation brought about in the 20th century will place Africa more and more in position of leadership in world Christianity, the more so since the great reverse migration will ensure that the United States and Europe become more consciously multi-religious as well as more secular. And the identification of the West with Christianity will become more and more problematic.

But any leadership needs to be an informed leadership. It is incongruous to have Western intellectual and theological leadership of a largely non-Western church. That Africa will bring gifts the world church has widely recognized, the zeal of Christ, that unembarrassed Christian witness, the energy and delight manifest in African Christian worship, that fervency in prayer that some of us envy. All these we can see can bless the world church. But intellectual and theological leadership must increasingly come from Africa, Asia, and Latin America. So theological adequacy, rubbing along, is never going to be enough. There has to be excellence, world quality, quality that is capable of giving world leadership. Africa, with Asia and Latin America, will increasingly have to be the powerhouses of Christian thinking. Translate this into academic terms and it means that Africa must become a centre of creative thinking in the biblical and theological disciplines. And this may be one of the few, perhaps the only one of the disciplines, in which this will be true. Economic and other factors will always give Europe, North America, and East Asia the edge in scientific and technological disciplines and in many branches of the social sciences and humanities. But for the sake of the church worldwide, Africa, the home of so many Christians, must pull its full theological weight. I was speaking the other day to a professor of mathematics who is concerned with building international relations with research links across the world. He's always in Japan, he's surprisingly often in Vietnam, and finding mathematicians all over the world. What about Africa? He had been looking so hard but could find no one in Africa with which to build the sort of research foundations that he needed. There's a little bit going on in South Africa, but for the continent as a whole, no possibility of leadership of the world in

mathematics in the coming century. In theology, in biblical studies, for the sake of the world, it really has to be different.

So let's turn to the academic situation. I speak here as someone whose life has been spent in the academy, who loves the learned world, regards it as a privilege to have served in it, and humbly believes that God called him to it. My first academic appointment was 56 years ago. I've held academic posts in Europe, in Africa, in the United States. I've lectured at academic institutions in Asia and in Australasia. I've worked in theological and humanities and in social science faculties, in institutions whose main object was the training of the Christian ministry and in public universities, in undergraduate and in research institutions. And I now find myself in despair for the Western academy that is my home. Academies, we have to remember, rise and fall. The Greek academy, which still makes an important mark in human history, at its height, ?? philosophy, love of wisdom, not ?? academic, but as a moral and religious discipline. Its object was ultimate wisdom, the vision of ultimate reality, the vision in fact of God. The philosopher therefore must divest himself of all the things that other people sought, like wealth and power, and go through a course of moral purgation until he reached *metabolae*, change. But the Greek academy declined. The young Justin Martin, seeking *metabolae* among the schools in the second century found philosophy had become a job, a career, a living. A century earlier, Luke had noted the lack of high seriousness among the philosophers of Athens. By the third century AD the academy was in real trouble, recycling the old ideas, though there was a general hostility to Christianity as the enemy of Greekness. But an intellectual revolution had already begun. Justin and his successors, such as Origen, actually saved the Greek academy, gave it new life, new subject matter, brought it back to life and death issues, by converting philosophy into theology. Justin, after his conversion, continued as a philosophical teacher. He had found *metabolae*, had met the vision of ultimate reality, found ultimate wisdom, Christianity was the true philosophy. ?? works of the implications of this, of the penetration of the whole encyclopedia of Greek thought by the Bible. Christianity, which had once been the enemy of Greekness, eventually brought about the salvation of Greekness. It was possible after all to be thoroughly Greek and thoroughly Christian.

Western universities are the child of another movement, of the way in which Christianity saved and preserved learning and scholarship and the learned life in the chaotic period that followed the collapse of the Western Roman Empire. The great university for the Greek or Roman world, like the ?? of Alexandria, could not be reproduced in the land of my forefathers. But Christians adapted the structure of the monastery and produced a new type of learned institution, a community of scholars and teachers committed to all forms of learning, but under the conviction that is summed up in the mottos of the universities to which I belong: *Dominus illuminat ?? mea*. "The Lord is my lamp" is the motto of the University of Oxford. ?? "The beginning of wisdom is the fear of God" is the motto of the University of Aberdeen. They produced new ?? of learning, new ways of looking at history in particular, hence the introduction of dating history from the incarnation of the divine Word, that we have now translated into that curious phrase, the "common era". As the universities secularized, the ideal took a secular form, the disinterested search for truth. And universities became important as centres for ideas that could challenge and undermine powerful political interests. But as I look at the universities today, I find them in thrall to Mammon. The greatest kudos now

attaches to the project that brings in the largest grant money. Enormous power is held by the small number of foundations and academics quickly learn to interpret their nods and winks and seek projects which would please them. The corporate world has taken over the management of universities and is steadily corrupting them.

Enormous power is held by the small number of foundations and academics quickly learn to interpret their nods and winks and seek projects which would please them. The corporate world has taken over the management of universities and is steadily corrupting them. As with the Greek academy, scholarship has ceased to be a vocation and become a career. And its structures are such as to undermine the ideas of the community of scholarship and to institute, and indeed to institutionalize competition among them. Professors live by competing with other professors. An American publisher said to me that in his experience the search projects were generally about the advancement of professorial careers. I regret to say, he was a theological publisher, thinking of theological projects.

What do we deduce from this thesis? That the Western academy is in peril of its soul and that it again may be time for Christians to save the academy. And it may be that salvation can come from the non-Western world. That in Africa, the old scholarly ideals and the old scholarly disciplines can be reignited, of scholarship as a vocation. To follow a calling means putting up a sign, laying other things aside as distractions, not being able to do them, laying aside every weight as the Apostle puts it. And the scholarly vocation may be best fostered by breaking with some of the Western models, by building new structures that encourage the community of scholars, not their competition. And in theological scholarship, the one where, remember, Africa has to accept, this must mean scholarly communities that maintain a vital worship and are in active relation to Christian missions.

Which brings us to the fourth aspect of our context, the theological situation. And here again, an aged Western academic is forced to admit with sorrow that the Western theological academy is not yet equipped to give theological leadership to the world of the 21st century. For one thing, it is profoundly ignorant about the church of the 21st century and the processes by which it is come into being. It's been largely isolated from those processes by its concerns with its own traditions and the problems of the West. Its syllabuses and curricula are tied to a selection of topics that come out of the experience of the West. What passes in the West for church history gives usually a very skewed view of global Christianity. When the Western academy studies what it calls the Early Church, it usually means the Church in the Roman Empire, so it gives the early history of African and Asian Christianity no proper weight. As for the modern history of Africa, or for that matter Asia, that's completely it. That vast amount of research that has been completed over the past forty years still remains in unpublished dissertations or forgotten journal articles, not yet synthesized or followed up. I've been in despair to see tired old subtopics emerge time and again as PhD projects dressed up in fancy language with fashionable theory, but the same old topics nonetheless, when there's so much exciting new work to be done by people prepared to break new ground, learn new languages, develop new skills.

The children of darkness are in their day and generation often wiser than the children of light. And I have to admit to finding my colleagues in the secular academy sometimes more open, less culture-blind, less culture-bound, less ??, than the theological academy in these matters. In the University of Edinburgh, I work in two centres, the Centre for the Study of Christianity in the Non-Western World which is located in the School of Divinity, and the Centre of African Studies which is in the School of Social and Political Studies. My colleagues in African studies, though secular people themselves for the most part, understand what I am doing. Social scientists, trained in participant observation find when they go to Africa, they have to pray even if they've never done it in their life before. I met one young lady anthropologist who, under the pressure of a fortnight's fasting, began to see visions. My political science colleague, an expert on Benin, will readily say the only forms of civil society that work are the churches. There, my colleagues are quite prepared for the proposition, so different from when I started decades ago, but quite prepared now for the proposition that if you want to study Africa these days you have to know something about Christianity. I don't find my colleagues in the School of Divinity so ready for the converse, that if you want to study Christianity these days you have to know something about Africa.

But the main disability of the Western academy in relation to ?? theology is the fact that Western theology is simply not big enough for Africa. The reason for this lies in the cultural and intellectual history of the West. The complex series of intellectual movements that we collectively designated the Enlightenment presented the greatest challenge to the Christianity of the West and ?? of Islam. By its exultation of reason and of the autonomous individual self, it battered the supports that had upheld Western Christianity for centuries, revelation and the corporate consciousness of Christendom. The flooding of scientific activity and discovery assisted in refocusing the view of the universe so that it concentrated on the empirical world that we could see and feel. The Enlightenment turned much of traditional thought upside down and that traditional thought had been penetrated by Christian teaching over the centuries. It might have strangled Western Christianity, in fact it nearly succeeded. But Christianity recovered. An evangelical revival made a special contribution, I think, to producing a new synthesis by demonstrating that Christianity, formerly expressed corporately within the concept of Christendom, could be reconciled with the individual consciousness and the new primacy of the autonomous self. So there emerged two Enlightenment views, a Christian Enlightenment and a non-Christian Enlightenment. Fundamental to the Enlightenment view was a demarcated frontier between the empirical world, what we can see and touch, where repeatability works, and the other world, the world of spirit. Natural must be distinguished from supernatural. The non-Christian wing of the Enlightenment could argue that there was nothing on the other side of the frontier of the empirical, or if there is, that we can know nothing about it. The greater part of the Western secular academy still works on that assumption, though it does not always make the assumption clear.

The Christian Enlightenment, of course, could not leave the matter there. It accepted the frontier between the worlds, but insisted that there were identifiable crossing places: incarnation, resurrection, revelation, prayer, perhaps miracles. But these were recognized crossing points for a frontier generally closed. Theological activity was sometimes a matter of deciding where the bona fide crossing points are. Theology is, in fact, policing the frontier. Even the reading of the Bible became subject to frontier

policing. So much of the Old Testament doesn't fit into an Enlightenment worldview that Enlightenment Christianity developed ways of reading the Old Testament at a distance. And even features of the New Testament church—prophecy, healing, other works of power—became designated as “frontier crossings formerly in use but no longer available”.

It was in a framework like this that the Gospel came to Africa and was accepted and appropriated by Africans. Missionary education regularly expounded an Enlightenment worldview. The scientific worldview and Christian conviction intermingled seemed equally opposed to the magical. But in African visions of the world, the frontier between the empirical and the spiritual worlds was being crossed and recrossed every day, in both directions. Africans responded to the Gospel in multitudes but they could not easily lose the vision of the open frontier. As a result they inherited, and Church practice was based upon it, a theology that didn't fit the experience of daily life. The problem was not that Western theology is wrong, but that it's pared down theology, cut and shaved to fit a small-scale universe. Most Africans, even when they were participating in Enlightenment activities, science and technology found a ?? in Africa, lived in a larger universe with the frontier still open. The distinction between natural and supernatural wasn't easy to preserve. And some of the most devastating aspects of life, witchcraft for instance, or sorcery, were beyond the reach of mission theology, beyond the reach of Western theology. In an Enlightenment universe, witchcraft doesn't exist. It's an imaginary crime. I have seen no textbook of passable theology that tells you what to do if someone says to you, “I am a witch. I kill people. I've killed three children. How do I stop?” Enlightenment Christian swept witch and witch doctor, together with every form of magic and divination and most forms of traditional healing, into a single pile of refuse called superstition. And the resultant gap between worldview and theology, between what people see the world to be and the resources that the church supplies for coping with it in a Christian way, has been incalculably damaging.

The people who first explored the gap were often semi-educated people. More highly educated people could hope to find the missing key as their knowledge increased, though ? had to make provision for the world as they saw it. They could see that for Christians God in Christ ought to fill the whole world relate to everything in it, but the theological framework they inherited left huge areas of the world as they saw it untouched. It had nothing to say on matters of high importance to ordinary people. But as they read the New Testament themselves they saw those stretches of material that Enlightenment theology had bracketed out. The Old Testament isn't a foreign book in Africa. It needs no special introduction there. They put two and two together and did some theological reconstruction. This evidence of creative informal theology all over Africa, carried out by people who didn't realize that they were being theologians. The songs, for instance, of the Ghanean traditional midwife Afoua Kouman, are a good example. They celebrate Christ in the form of the traditional praise song addressed to chiefs using traditional titles so that we see Christ in the shining robe of the diviner or as the Great Hunter, or as the one who carries water in a basket. She's able to slip easily over into the modern world where ordinary people like her fall foul of the police or the legal system. Jesus is her chief of police, she bursts out in one of her songs. Christ is her lawyer, and oh, how well-equipped he is!

I must hurry on. There is much more I would wish to say on this topic. But the inference is that in country after country, African Christian practice now recognizes the need for Christ to fill the world as Africans see the world, to be applied to the ?? areas of life that Western theology's got nothing to say convincingly about, to cope with the open frontier between the empirical and spiritual world. No longer is it the African instituted or spiritual churches who take the lead in this; they've been outflanked by the charismatic movement, with its firm base of support in the old denominational churches, as well as in the new churches. Pastoral and evangelistic practice is in process of transformation, but there is as yet no adequate theology to express the change. The framework of theology inherited from the West ?? of the African seminaries cannot cope. It isn't big enough for the universe that most Africans live in.

Africa knows systemic evil. It walks naked through broken-backed states where there's war, because there's a war, because there's a war. And the endless cycle of funerals of AIDS victims. Western theology is still trying to come to terms with the Holocaust. How did the plan for the extirpation of the Jewish people take place at the heart of Christian civilization? African theology has to cope with the equally frightful genocide in Rwanda and to consider how this happened in what, by any standard, was the most Christian country in Africa. We must pray and hope and expect to see an African theology catching up with ?? practice, explaining it, correcting it, balancing it, ?? it in context. And such an African theology, I expect, will be increasingly concerned with the powers that force such questions onto the theological agenda in Africa. Western theology has found it difficult to enunciate the relationship between personal sin and personal guilt and systemic evil. So we sometimes produce Gospels, alternative gospels, one for the person and one for society. Paul's vision of the principalities and powers, these powerful spiritual entities in the structure of the universe, has sometimes been interpreted as referring to malign evil spirits, sometimes to political structures, Caiaphas and Pilate figures. Either way Christ triumphs over them in his triumphal chariot of the cross that draws the resurrection with it. It's a victory over such powers as held the Christians in Colossae in bondage and over the political structures that tried to destroy the Christ of God. In the end, all the evil powers, all wreaking destruction in individual lives or ruining society and environment, have a single origin. Theological thinking that we must expect for and hope for and pray for might also help us understand the full cosmic scope of redemption, reaching to the heights of universe and the depths of human personality.

I had other thing I would have wished to say about this, of how such work could bless Western theology caught up in its bind with an inadequate theology of evil. How much the West would gain from an African reading of the Old Testament, of the different place from which African Christianity starts, from the point at which European Christianity starts simply in relation to the name of God, for the revolution in Biblical studies which one could hope to receive from Africa.

I might even leave as one last word: While we're considering the question of renewal, what about mother tongue theology? English has been steadily becoming the international language of theology. Even German, the language of so many of the most influential theologians of the modern theatre, has given way under the relentless pressure of English which is beginning to occupy the place which Latin held in the Western church for a thousand years. Ironically, this dominance of English is a fruit of the rise in importance of Christianity in the non-Western world. It's the language of ecumenical

encounter. And what do you think we did for our ?? encounter here? There are many happy results. No one would wish to abandon English as a theological language. But think again of the comparison with Latin. It was the Protestant Reformation that broke the universal sway of Latin by giving new life to the European vernaculars, like German, French, English. Originally it was a matter of the vernacular Scriptures. Unless, as with Luther's famous 1520 treatise, there was some special reason to use German. But the first edition of Calvin's Institutes of the Christian Religion was written in Latin. Calvin wrote the much larger second edition in French. It was a landmark. No one had ever written a substantial work of learning of any sort in French before. And of course, it liberated a creative stream that lasted for centuries. Calvin's Institutes is mother-tongue theology.

The African theology must reach the mother tongue. The vernaculars cannot be seen simply as for people who cannot read English or French with comfort. Its development could liberate a new stream of thinking, so powerful and refreshing that it would have to be translated into English and French for the benefit of the rest of us. That's what happened to Calvin.

Let me close then with some few thoughts, upon summary, of the ingredients of the scholarship we would now need. First, renewal of the sense of Christian vocation to scholarship. The new worldwide church has a desperate need for scholarship, scholarship taken as a Christian calling. I verily believe that there's a voice from the throne of God saying, "Whom should I send and who will go for us?" We've seen it's not a matter of more PhD's, it's not a matter of more people in academic posts. Scholarship is the faculty of discrimination, the gift of discernment, without which all our weight of learning is noise and jangle. It's not achieved easily. It needs long years of training. It needs the readiness to take infinite pains. It needs years of discipline, the labour of acquiring mastery of the sources, sources sometimes that no one else will bother with. And all this tempered by the humility of the vastness of what one does not know. It's a way of life, a calling. It often carries with it a heavy burden of teaching and writing. It rarely leads to very lucrative appointments or much in the way of glory. We need a research climate. Africa is packed with the most amazing resources for research, historical research, biblical research, ?? research. But their institutions, often demoralized by the lack of funding and resources of other kinds, are not always aware of the goldmines within their reach. They could call collect and preserve the search materials to foster a sense of inquiry, develop forums for discussion and scholarly investigation, that the West just doesn't have.

The Western university's become an ivory tower. The economic realities of Africa make that ivory tower unattainable here. There are other traditions of scholarship, and one belonging to India may have particular relevance to Christians. The ashram was, and is, a community of people living a simple life of worship and study together. Some Christian ashrams of the kind have already come into being, especially for the scholarly purpose. There are splendid examples of such institutions that I'm aware of in Africa, as well as in Asia and Latin America. But equally, a Christian ashram could arise on the side in an institution that is already there, if it maintains the devout spirit, the active cooperative fellowship, and the research climate.

Third, exacting standards. One of the frequent utterances of that pioneer of African education, J. E. K. Ackray (??), was, "Only the best is good enough for Africa." The words are remembered in his native Ghana and were remembered in the 1950s when

the University of Ghana was established with sumptuous accomodation. But exacting standards can be achieved without grand surroundings.

Fourth, collegial attitudes. The Western academy is suffering from rampant individualism built in competitiveness. The ashram model is of scholarly cooperation, sharing resources and corporate responsibility.

Pioneering spirit. The new scholarship needs origins, investigators who open up new fields and develop new ways of exploring them. It's risky. There's no such thing as safe theology. Theology is an act of adoration fraught with the risk of blasphemy.

Dual education. The effectiveness of scholarship will depend on its depth of understanding in two areas. One is the biblical and Christian material. The other is the local material, the African material. It will need people like ?? with a dual education. In his case the Greek interpenetrated the Christian so that he could be most Christian when most Greek and most Greek when most Christian. That must be our scholarship, most African when it's most Christian, most Christian when it's most African. Because both sources are penetrated.

A catholic attitude to knowledge. Specialization is inevitable in scholarship, but it can also inhibit scholarship. The big theological insitutions in the West no longer employ church historians; they employ Early Church historians or Revelation Church historians or American Church historians, if they're big enough, Civil War American Church historians. The new situation needs scholars who, while maintaining and developing their own expertise, are willing to listen and learn and absorb Christian learning from every discipline, sacred and secular. A breaking down of our departmental divisions is long overdue. They simply create turf wars. They don't advance our understanding.

And finally, as the vice-chancellor so eloquently drew our attention to, a lively sense of a global Christian fellowship to recognize that our fellowship is with Christians everywhere, West and East, North and South. The Church is Christ's body and the picture that Ephesians gives us is of all its different segments of converted social reality turned to Christ, drawn together in him, being made building blocks of the new temple, becoming organs in a functioning body of which he is the Head. And ultimately the apostle says, it is together, we all come together, to the full stature of Christ.

May God bless and guide you, not only in this consultation but in all the work of preparing people for this high calling.