
EDITORIAL

The desire to share with the Christian Community of the Caribbean and the wider world some of the thinking which is taking place at our two theological schools has been felt for some time. This journal is the beginning of the fulfillment of this desire.

In presenting it to the public, two sentiments weigh heavily on our hearts and minds. On the one hand, we are excited by the fact that, at last, a long held dream begins to be fulfilled. On the other hand, we recognize that our effort is modest. However, we feel it incumbent upon us to make this contribution at this time.

Nearly a millennium ago, Anselm of Canterbury enunciated an epistemological principle which many since have found helpful in the task of theologizing. In his *Proslogion* Anselm states: "I do not seek to understand in order to believe but I believe in order to understand." Centuries later, Karl Barth, interpreted Anselm's dictum to mean *Fides Quarens Intellectum*—Faith seeking understanding. Here is a stance which definitely ascribes priority to faith.

The correctness of the Anselmian approach has been challenged by many thinkers. They argue that it mistakenly declares the irrelevance of understanding for the advent of faith. Doesn't faith necessitate the grasp of a minimum of evangelical data? Regardless how one answers this question it seems that there should be no objection to the contention that given the fact of faith, the theological task consists in nothing else but an apprehension of reality and existence from the perspective of faith understood both as an existential stance and as the datum of divine self-disclosure.

The pursuit of understanding from within the horizon of faith is the immediate objective that we seek to achieve in the pages of this journal. This is reflected in the name which has been chosen for it: *BINAH* (pronounced *Bee-nah*)

which is the Hebrew term for understanding.

But the understanding that we seek is not an end in itself. The hope is that the understanding of faith will result in the obedience of faith. And to facilitate this, the understanding must perforce be contextual. That is why underlying what is expressed in these pages is a hermeneutical approach which allows meaningful dialogue between the text and context. The logo on the front cover, consisting of the map of the Caribbean region and the open scroll is meant to convey this idea.

We want the dialogue to be open, serious and meaningful, but we believe that when all is said and done, the last word belongs to the text. In keeping with this conviction, the symbol of the scroll will mark the end of each article published in *BINAH*.

This is our inaugural issue. We feel that it should convey to our readers a sense of our theological assumptions and commitments. Hence in the first article, Dieumeme Noelliste sets forth the case for the essentiality of sound doctrine, spelling out its significance for the Gospel, the church, the fitness of the minister, and the wellbeing of the people of God.

The resurrection of Christ continues to be a bone of contention even among Christians. In our second article, Rev. Clinton Chisholm offers a coherent exposition of 1 Corinthians 15:1-20 in which he shows "that the resurrection of Jesus Christ is a fundamental and logical deduction."

Another theological question on which sincere and committed Christians do not see eye to eye concerns the continuation and the abolition of the spiritual gifts known as sign-gifts. Delano Palmer takes on this thorny issue in our third article. Following his exegetical analysis of 1 Corinthians 13:8-13 and a critical interaction with some of the views offered as solutions, Palmer cautions against too dogmatic a stance on this matter.

That the Christian faith needs to be reflected upon and articulated within the context of the Caribbean has been recognized by many. But how is this task to be carried out, and what are the issues might such a homegrown theology address? Marie Reynolds offers some suggestions in the fourth article.

The fifth and sixth articles address an issue of great currency: religious pluralism. Tim Erdel assesses the ideology of religious pluralism and suggests that we respond to it "with a posture of critical dialogue."

The final piece is a review article in which Joy Richards examines the work of a proponent of religious pluralism. Richards' handling of the work reflects the sort of critical dialogical stance that Erdel recommends.

Dieumeme Noelliste