

Welcome back to the Crucible readership after a pause in production. In this edition Crucible returns with a selection of articles from around the globe and a couple of resource articles as reflection upon ministry predicaments through various human science, and Biblical theological lenses. The three articles concern issues of the relationship between ecclesiology and culture; intra-church, national and worship practice.

In *Hitting the Wall*, experienced pastor and chaplain, Peter Frith distils the essence of his major research project that uses Bowen Family Systems theory as the interpretive grid to grasp the essence of the phenomenon of systemic pushback against pastoral leadership as experienced by a representative sample of Anglican clergy. Many of these experienced forms of aggression and unethical behaviour that crossed the line of outright abuse. These subjects were able to reflect upon their stress responses to the behaviour that they encountered, and the writer was able to use a phenomenological approach to distil these responses into five core themes: 'shock', 'inadequacy', 'alienation', 'relinquishment' and 'hopelessness'. Using the notion of Speed Leas conflict levels Dr Frith identified a counterintuitive finding that the level of severity of the conflict did not determine the lasting effect of conflict upon the pastor or the system whereas there was evidence that the level of emotional differentiation did. Theological reflection then leads to significant ramifications for those who would train and prepare persons for church leadership.

It is a rare privilege to publish a theological reflection from an African perspective. In an article entitled *God Will Supply All Your Needs According to His Glorious Riches*, Paul Kolawole Oladotun examines the phenomenon of extreme materialism that has become characteristic of the pastorate in Nigeria. Not only is this somewhat symptomatic of wider Nigerian culture but a source of materialism that significantly has eroded the witness of the Church and attracted unwanted attention from criminal sources. The writer reflects upon this in the light of Paul's paraenesis in 1 Corinthians 9 and from this makes three pastoral suggestions as to how such a pervasive culture may be transformed at the root.

Abraham Wu supplies an article from Regent College. The article is germane in this current context where much has been written about missional church from sociological and missiological perspectives. The approach in this article *Eating out in the Open: The Centrifugal, Missional Significance of the Eucharist*, as the title indicates reflects upon the Eucharistic practice from an ecumenically broad domain to show that the table as envisaged by Christ is inherently imbued with aspects that are more to do with sending, compassionate hospitality and even creation care than one would suspect if the eucharist is reflected upon via traditional substantial or mystical categories.

In the Test Tube section two resources are presented. The first relates to a recent publication from a deeply immersed pastoral practitioner. Rev Dr Barbara Kathleen Welch supplies *Existential Shame: A Liturgical Approach to Soul Care of the Victims of Child abuse* concerning what is required of those who lead and design liturgy who also wish to develop services of worship that address the healing needs of those who have been victims of childhood abuse. As a duty of Care she supplies us with a checklist of features that such a form of worship should have if it is to be spiritually and emotionally reparative for those for whom the experience of 'existential shame' has distorted the capacity for faith and trust.

Ben Chenoweth shares his ideas and experience as a distance learning director at a local theological college regarding the teaching of Biblical exegesis in an on-line format. His resource *Doing Biblical Education by Distance Well*, having outlined the range of exegetical methods a student can expect to be exposed to in this era. Taking his cue from Troftgruben, he develops creative ways that the student can engage synchronically in an instruction 'from the side' that also privileges the assessment of exegetical competence through situated tasks in the student's ministry setting. This article is a spur to a conversation with other educators or others who would develop exegetical skills within wider disciple-making contexts. This process has pertinence to the contemporary challenges faced by educators in the current restrictive environment.

Crucible will return with at least one other edition in the coming months as we respond to the new regimes and welcome contributions from all thoughtful evangelicals especially regarding their ideas about theology, ministry or mission or combinations of these.