

Heart, voice & hands in the mission of the CGKN in KwaNdebele - a case study

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Introduction

Atteridgeville, Pretoria

I'd like to begin by telling you a story about the start of today's theme.

It was during the heyday of apartheid in South Africa in 1956. The black people lived in a village called Atteridgeville, located in the western outskirts of Pretoria.

The Free Reformed Church of SA (FRC), founded by Dutch immigrants, asked my father, who was at that time a builder who ran his own construction firm, to become a missionary co-worker in Atteridgeville, because there was no missionary there. He agreed to do so and gave Sunday school classes and did house calls to meet the parents.

He soon learned two needs:

- a) church services which were cancelled by the white churches after the introduction of apartheid and
- b) social needs: lack of money, the passbooks (ID) and health problems.

As the FRC did not want to start church services for the blacks, he started with catechism for the adults and also tried to meet the social needs by visiting the imprisoned men, the women in the black hospitals, bailed out offenders and so forth.

Later on, he started church services on his own, as he felt the need thereto. When he wasn't allowed to serve the sacraments, the services ended, as the people were longing for this.

Most of the times my father took us, his four boys, with him. We sat with the black kids in the classroom when he was teaching Bible class. The blacks were very poor.

I still remember the kids, waiting for us to arrive on a Sunday morning, running out to meet us. My father gave them sweets after the lessons and they ran after us when we left. He did this for 17 years – every Sunday, driving about 100 km to and from Atteridgeville every

Sunday. We were the only whites there. The “formalistic church order attitude” of the church was only one of his disappointments in the church as an institute.

My father preaching, teaching, as well as trying to meet their social needs, made a huge impression on me. I was a small boy, but learned from him that word and deed are combined and integrally interconnected. I saw in the reaction of the blacks that this is so true.

Asking my father recently what these experiences and efforts meant to him, he told me, looking back 40 years, it was enriching and meaningful. Today he is one of the few Pretorian residents who knows the complex roads and buildings of Atteridgeville and its history. He takes blacks on sightseeing- and cultural tours to Atteridgeville, telling them their own history. He learned how these people think and act. He learned how to genuinely communicate with them – within their cultural context. I saw it then and still see it every time he meets a black person: there is true contact and interaction, although the cultures are still very different.

As to the Reformed churches’ involvement, unfortunately the sects took over in Atteridgeville.

I asked myself: how would it have been today when the Reformed churches didn’t withdraw from this township? What if they didn’t stumble over their western like rational Bible- church dogma- and -church order thinking, mixed with apartheid? What would have happened if he got the support from the church to develop his integral thinking?

Therefore my fathers’ opinion on this is: stop copying and enforcing our white culture and white opinion on religion, onto the black man (apologies for using this term). The word syncretism was often used inappropriately without the needed contextual knowledge. Black and white need to draft a new culture that works like superglue among the nations and cultures. Don’t try to force the Reformation, the confessions, the European liturgy and western dogma’s to be part of this superglue. Rediscover the Bible in our search for this superglue.

I believe that this points us in the direction of a necessary profound Bible based, but workable and applicable integral mission approach.

This belief was already fuelled by my experience in our own church as a young lad.

Need for actuality

Being a young lad, listening to our pastor preaching, he once preached on the importance and need for personal repentance. I listened attentively, waiting for the grand finale, when the pastor would tell us *how to repent*. Then it happened, after explaining the “what and the why”, he said “amen”. Frustrated and disappointed I went home. I couldn’t understand why God would stuff me with knowledge without leading, coaching and helping me to make it part of my life. Unfortunately this is true for lots of sermons I’ve heard.

These two stories explain the hunger and conviction I’ve always felt for combining proclamation with the actuality and one’s deeds. After this sermon experience and later on, being called as a pastor, I knew that word and deed are inseparable twins. The more I read and learn about it, the more I realise the crucial importance of this, as well as the fact that we still need to learn and work.

Proven in Aalsmeer, the Netherlands

Following a call to the CGK in Aalsmeer, in the Netherlands I was asked to lead the traditionalistic, dozed, internal focussed but active church to a renewed vision and purpose.

The young people were frustrated with the sagged in church. But the muttering and complaints about the changes in the church changed to an enormous unity and an enthusiastic unified congregation when we took up a large outreach programme to KwaNdebele, RSA. Although this was a youth project, the whole congregation was involved in the two-year process and project. It was a fantastic time in the congregation. It was only when a Dutch colleague complained to me that his congregation was complaining and muttering, that I realised that they were bored. I told him: give them something to do. Give them Gods vision and a purpose. People working together, with heart filled passion and enthusiasm, do not only have no time to sag in or complain, but they are vitalised. They experience the binding power and energy from the Holy Ghost of the risen Jesus Christ. He uses His church as His instrument in a broken world to reconcile people with God through a new life in His service. The church got busy serving others with the Gospel in Word and deed and didn't have time to be narcissistic. When people experience that God saves and uses them with their hearts, voices and hands – both inside and outside the own inner circle of the congregation - God is fulfilling his purpose through us and we are shining as his bride and the church becomes a useful instrument in his plan with the world.

So, when following the call three years ago to Woerden, the Netherands, we went to work with this same principle. This congregation is a fusion of two congregations in Woerden, the Free Reformed Churches and the Christian Reformed Churches. They were confronted with different theological accents, as well as different church cultures, history and traditions. Although the unity in Christ is a given here, this had to become a practical reality in like-mindedness. Instead of only holding lectures and meetings, we started a similar outreach project to KwaNdebele. Following the new stated mission for our church as spreading the gospel by growth in hospitality, servitude and flourishing youth – all as part of a missionary vision, the whole congregation worked shoulder to shoulder to make this project in KwaNdebele possible.

We agreed with KwaNdebele that the aim was mutuality: we would help and serve them with what they needed and what we could give, and vice versa. They needed us and we needed them. We agreed on this. We also gave our outreach group cultural trainings. Our aim and focus were integral and different than most outreach groups from the Netherlands, who generally came to just build a school or a church building and have some contacts with the locals. What is the use of this, as the unemployment in KwaNdebele is around 45%? Why not then just deposit the money to enable jobless people to build it themselves? Books are written on this subject.

My point is this: we tried focusing on this project integrally: with our hearts, our hands and our voices. And although, we did and yet still have to learn a lot and we only have started yet, the KwaNdebele people reacted afterwards that they never had a group like this. They were amazed with our integral and contextual approach. We brought each other dignity and self-esteem. By our approach we started breaking down the wall of apartheid, we were told. The locals were positively confused with the fact that the white people came to them, serving them, and helping them reminding who they as Ndebele's really are (before God).

Abraham, the builder whom we helped, stood there with his dirty builders' hat in his hand. An unschooled old man, and having buried 3 of his own children, reciting Psalm 127:1 in his farewell speech: *"If the Lord does not build the house, the work of the builders is useless; if the Lord does not protect the city, it does no good for the sentries to stand guard."* I got goose bumps when he made urgent appeals from the bottom of his heart on living integrally with God and building one's life.

Somehow I got the feeling that they are more holistic thinkers than we Dutchies are.

Reviewing this, I believe that this is the heart of missio Dei: Combining the proclamation of the Triune God with serving and helping the needy, hearing them and understanding them and ourselves.

The proof of the pudding is in the eating of the words of Jesus: “whatever you did to one of the least of these, you did it for me”.

So what am I getting at?

I deliberately took a long introduction with different simple examples, but all interwoven with the same message and purpose. With this in mind, I’d like to take you further on this journey through

1. Biblical principles of heart, hand and voices
2. A short history of KwaNdebele
3. Interim conclusions on the strengths and weaknesses of the CGK’s missionary work in KwaNdebele

Biblical principles of heart, hand and voices

There has been lots of thinking on a Biblical basis for the integration of Word and deed (heart, voice and hands) in the proclamation of the gospel. Some examples are: the Lausanne Movement, the Micah Declaration and the Gospel Coalition. In fact so much that I’m having a bit of a drowning feeling... but still a lot has to be said and done. Talking is easy. But when you can implement it, when it is made practical, only then the knowledge becomes useful.

Looking for a sound scriptural basis on integral missions, one learns that there is still a lot of **dualistic thinking** on missions: separating human nature and grace. I think this is because there is still a lot of dualistic thinking on faith in the sending churches. I won’t get into the history of this development, but only want to point out that dualism is the foe of integral missions.

However there is a growing acceptance that the material-, social- and spiritual needs of people are interwoven and need an integral approach.

There are at least **15 crucial Bible words** showing the integral relation between heart, voice and hands.

This triplet is already found way back in Deuteronomy 6 where the law was visibly carried on the heart, bound on the forehead and on the hands and kept in the heart, talked about and when being on your way. Also we find these three in about 500 years of church history and it is used in several hymns.

The following criteria for understanding the integration of word and deed in these words are important, because it covers the whole range of the Bible, helping us to a **solid Bible based thinking and framework** on integral missions and keeping us from formalistic thinking and a limited cultural influenced world vision:

They are: 1) God, 2) creation, 3) Jesus Christ, 3) the Holy Spirit, 4) the church and the eschatology (new heaven and earth).

The questions are:

1. Who is God and what does He do?
2. Why did He create the earth?
3. Why did Jesus become human, died and resurrected?
4. Why was the Holy Spirit sent to earth?
5. What is Gods purpose with his church in the world?

6. How does all this relate to the future – the eschatology?

Everything starts and ends with God.

The 15 Bible words, all interrelated. I put them under the umbrella, called: *missio Dei* – or, the mission of God - which is crucial for Biblical thinking as has been explained during the past few days. I'll only point out some important relevant conclusions on integrating heart, voice and hands in reformed missions. I wrote 120 pages on this and thus had to kill a lot of my darlings.

How Word and deeds are integrated in different Bible words

- **Missio Dei:** is God's mission for the World. It defines the identity, place and task of the church of Christ in Gods mission. The church is Gods instrument to reach to the world with his Word and deeds and leading them to live integral with their hearts, voice and hands to his glory.

This means that everything, like conversion, church growth, the kingdom of God, economics, politics, the community etc. are the church's business, but in such a way that it brings people to Christ where new life consequently grows.

The church isn't a purpose as such, not a waiting room for heaven, not a small heaven before heaven, not an institute as such, doesn't exists for itself, is no soul-winning- or angel factory, but rather a means to an end.

Especially western reformed churches need to be aware of the fact that preaching of personal salvation that doesn't lead believers to question the horrible injustices of society is no Christ centred preaching. Western reformed churches have to critically rethink their role, place and calling in the world and dare to revitalise, reorganise and restructure themselves in order to keep on being used as God's instrument in his plan.

This consequently asks for necessary contextual thinking and proclaiming God with Word and deed, while understanding and interpreting the local culture.

Let's look to the 15 words under the umbrella on integration.

- **Word:** Looking at John 1: 1-4 Word and deed are integrated in God Himself who is the Word and through whom all things were made. Word and life seem to be used here as synonyms founded in the words of Gen. 1: "God spoke and there was". God's words are always deeds.
- **Blessings:** God's blessings are a spiritual and practical guarantee and a foretaste of the great new future and moves man to be an integral blessing to others through Word and deeds – both spiritual and practical.
- **Godliness:** Missions need to teach, lead, train and encourage people by Word and deed to godliness transforming all behaviour and relations, giving eternal hope.
- **Co-worker:** the church is God's chosen and blessed instrumental co-worker proclaiming his Word and confirming it with deeds to shape the society as an integral part of the kingdom of heaven. Therefore as an example, the co-worker with the money isn't the boss as South Africans blacks tend to think about rich western missionaries.
- **Fear of the Lord:** childlike fear of the Lord is the base of all spirituality as well as morality and integrity. It leads believers to only have one wish, living according to God's will. Fear of the Lord brings forth the freedom to both serve and follow God integrally. It brings comfort and hope.

- **Peace:** when God as the Lord of peace is proclaimed and ministered integrally it leads people to well being, prosperity, rest, security and safety in light of the eternal heavenly fullness and wealth in Christ.
- **Righteousness:** opens the possibility for man to experience Godly peace, when God takes action to restore him in the right relation with Him. This is man's incentive to treat his neighbour just. The church serves as a righteous community.
- **Justice:** God uses the church to serve as a healing community, establishing organisations to heal communities and by becoming an agent for righteous communities.
- **Fellowship:** This is well-known to us, but let's just say this: Reformed mission needs to be watchful against some emerged traditions where true God inspired fellowship silt away in formal relationships or juridical control motivated by so called love. Western missionaries have to be careful not to sow their seeds of Western institutionalised churchlife or an individualistic Western experience of faith into other cultures.
- **Ministry (diakonia):** is God's instrument of love in action by being in the first place Triune God focused proclamation integrated with merciful serviceable deeds.
- **Love (agape):** is founded in Gods character and **comprehensive** love as an overpowering mark of Christian discipleship and qualifies the ministering fellowship through words and deeds of Godly love. Love is expressed in God's Word, and proven in deeds of mercy.
- **Poverty:** effective integral missions starts with the missionary (and the sending church) understanding and confessing his all-inclusive bankruptcy before God and his neighbour by confessing God's perfection and eternal wealth. This understanding is essential, but also a prerequisite for integral missions. Jesus incarnated into poverty in order to bring man to God's eternal wealth. Mission help the poor to discover their own God-given dignity aiding him to be self-sufficient and in his turn helping others, restoring eternal hope.

Missional ministry to the poor could include:

- o 1) relieving spiritual-, physical-, social-, relational-, psychological- or material needs;
- o 2) developing self-sufficiency
- o 3) reformation of social circumstances and –structures.

Western missionaries don't define poverty in terms of money, but understand that it is firstly a **relational concept**.

- **Image of God (imago Dei):** Man as God's representative gives him his value and Christ-given dignity to be ecological responsible, economical active, productive, working, commercially involved according to his cultural mandate. The relational aspect of man as Gods image needs to be accentuated as this puts it into perspective: God's relation to man and vice versa, mans' relation to one another, as well as the relation to creation as a whole.
- **Disciple making:** is lifelong coaching and assistance in growing obedience towards the resurrected Lord. Therefore especially Western missions need to be on guard against short-term projects and financial orientated missions in vulnerable areas. Policy plans may be of vital importance to consciously make disciples: "I'll make you fishers of men" (Matt 4:19).
- **Witnessing:** One of the purposes of disciple making is to teach believers to be integral witnesses of Gods Word and deeds, by praying together and sharing the Word as well as food, properties and money to help and relief each other's needs.

These 15 words are a small illustration to show that the whole Bible is integral. The consequences are enormous and open fascinating perspectives.

A short history of KwaNdebele

The former white government of South Africa designated it as one of the 10 black homelands for the Ndebele people. It is situated at one hours drive northeast of Johannesburg with an estimated 500,000 people, speaking various local languages, such as Ndebele and Northern Sotho.

The CGK started their mission in 1980 co-working with local evangelists. In 2003, the first three local pastors were instated.

The mission was met by spiritual-, socio-economical- and political problems related to the development as a new Homeland.

Think of little employment, weak health, little economical possibilities and a huge population growth with little infrastructure.

Most of the residents are migrant labourers, commuting to and from Pretoria and Johannesburg. This led to family problems, and consequently drinking- and sexual problems and -immorality; low quality education which resulted in unmotivated pupils, the undermining of morals and authority. Add to the list: illiteracy, even among the church leaders, witchdoctor- and ancestral worship deeply rooted– even among Christians and church leaders, unemployment, HIV-Aids, crime and violence.

Today although there have been improvements on infrastructure and the standard of living, most of the problems the CGK met in the early stage of her missions, still exist.

This leads us to the question which conclusions do we reach about the CGK's missions

Interim conclusions on the strengths and weaknesses of the CGKN missionary work in KwaNdebele

To be honest, my experience is that mission is much more alive in the CGK than it used to be in the South African reformed churches where it was underestimated and also during my theological training undervalued. After arriving in the Netherlands I soon learned that the CGK were mission-orientated. And this is also true of other Dutch reformed denominations. The CGK have had several international mission projects running. The missions' deputies worked hard to boost the mission awareness in the local churches. Local churches were involved in missions by receiving update information and collecting money for the missions, 'mission days' were organized. Thanks to the CGK my pilot light for the missions thankfully flared up.

The CGK have been conscious of their God sent calling to lead unconverted people and nations to faith in the Triune God by reconciling them in Christ and to do this by Word and deed. Lots of time, love, energy and money has been invested into missions.

The missions in KwaNdebele started simple and sincere. The intentions were true and upright, as far as a human being dares to say. But the CGK had no specific plan, strategy or policy for their missions in KwaNdebele. It took shape along the way. At first the purpose was to train and shape local unschooled church leaders with a view to church planting and church growth.

Today, when we look back some 35 years, the CGK has in fact ended their mission-work in KwaNdebele, although there is some difference of opinion on this. It's healthy and enriching to evaluate and to find out how things can be improved and whether churches internationally could learn form this.

But, the CGK didn't evaluate their mission to KwaNdebele.

Although it's always easy to look back and criticize, this is not the initial intention. Evaluation and drawing some conclusions however can help. Let's rethink and revitalise our approach on missions, using the developments and renewed international theological insights as well as that from other sciences.

Many Bible texts support this line of thinking, like: Proverbs 13:18: *Poverty and shame shall be to him that refuseth correction; But he that regardeth reproof shall be honored.*

Maybe the most important conclusion on the CGK's mission to KwaNdebele is that there was a broad vision namely that of Matthew 28:18-20: *"All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age"*. No specific vision, mission and policy on the mission to KwaNdebele were formulated, neither on integrated mission and cultural contextualization.

Each missionary formulated his own vision on mission. One missionary's vision was: *"touched by the Gospel of Jesus Christ, to see the needs of the people and set something up together with them to get out of the poverty spiral, aimed at community development"*. Once a missionary departed to KwaNdebele and he asked the deputyship what his vision and task had to be, he was told: *go and find out.*

These personalized visions indeed had their values, but also lead to differences on this amongst missionaries. Each had his own idea of what was important and what had to be done. It also led to conflicts.

Conflicts are a known problem to missions.

One important conclusion is that lack of a suitable vision, mission and policy on integral mission-work as well as taking the local culture and context into mind, could lead to differences and/or conflicts which on their turn could lead to disastrous results for all involved. This gets to the heart and bottom of true Triune God-inspired and integral mission with heart, voice and hands.

Another conclusion is that when more than one missionary is sent to the same area, make sure that they share the same vision, that they fit together and complement each other. Churches like the CGK with diverse opinionated pastors have to give special attention to this and not just send out any volunteer pastor as a missionary.

As time passed by and the involvement in KwaNdebele developed, the CGK formulated increasingly clear objectives, but didn't always implement it consequently. This leaves us at the end with a quite confusing image of what the purpose of the mission to KwaNdebele exactly was and consisted of as if it were a medley of missionary activities depending on the personal vision of the missionary at that moment.

One can also say that, because the CGK didn't approach the mission to KwaNdebele in a planned and strategical way, one could speak of a spontaneous strategy, as Mintzberg and Douma calls it in business science. In this approach plans are deliberately not made beforehand. When then a clear pattern of strategic decisions is recognized during the process, one can call this a spontaneous strategy. When this isn't the case it could lead to a continuous power struggle, which unfortunately looks to be the case for KwaNdebele.

Another important issue is that no problem analysis and/or environmental analysis has been made; to use the business science terminology of these recited authors. This becomes clear when every synod received a continuing changing list of the problems in KwaNdebele. Not that they were not valid. On the contrary, but the point is that a continuous changing list of problems leads to the conclusion that the absence of a thorough analysis, including a cultural- and contextual analysis, results in the lack of a work plan or applicable and custom made policy. Take for example the thorough analysis Paul makes in Athens in Acts 17 before ministering to them as well as Jesus' remark about the wise man calculating the cost before starting building his house and Moses intensive training in the Egyptian palace and in the desert before leading Israel out of Egypt.

The lack of analysis also lead to the fact that little attention was given to some important social issues, like apartheid. This could also be a typical CGK characteristic: being very cautious due to the differences within the CGK on experience of personal faith and the church and so holding on to each other by not stirring too much. We need to keep the prophetic calling of the church in missions in mind, because God wants to reach these peoples lives integrally and has a church for this job! Courage is needed.

A thorough analysis could lead to a profound biblical based framework, paradigm and policy which gives the missionary clear space and enough flexibility to work. Without rigid inflexible and formalistic structural thinking and enforcing the church order as some strict, inflexible law, controlling the missionary like a policeman. An analysis is measurable and leads to clear and relaxing expectations.

Giving hope consciously, with heart, voice and hands as a crucial eschatological perspective in mission, is absent in the CGK's vision on mission to KwaNdebele. Eschatological hope is already a reality within God's kingdom in Christ within the framework of "yet and not yet" and must be a vital part of the message from the mission in vulnerable areas. The message of hope comes through Gods Word and deeds of mercy.

A few years ago the CGK's mission approach was changed to a short-term project orientated mission, with the aim that local churches would become self-sufficient, as soon as possible. The CGK's mission role in this is to give personal or financial assistance and guidance within a defined time and limited budget.

Although the aim of self-sufficiency has a solid and healthy Biblical basis, the theological underpinning is weak, for two reasons: the time limit as well as the result-oriented mindset.

For example one needs to keep in mind that the westerner, the Dutch, is economical- and production oriented - time is money. While, the African is relation oriented – achievement, performance through relation. Ubuntu. Production versus relation [ubuntu].

Some questions derive from this: how does time limited and financial motivated project missions take the traumatic history and current living conditions of the local people of KwaNdebele into account? How does it relate to the time consuming integral ministry regarding poverty, raping's, HIV-Aids, unemployment, broken families, trauma's etc. etc.? When has enough theological education been given in an illiterate culture, in order for missionaries to withdraw? It may be obvious that these problems need long-term support, help and coaching. Taking into mind that the churches, as well as the church leaders, are also vulnerable, one needs to ask whether short-term mission as if it is a product, is a biblical base for integral mission? How is this contextual thinking?

Thinking within a missio Dei perspective, the argument put forward that this needs rather a pastoral or diaconal approach, isn't relevant and arguable. This is a typical western way of thinking in structures and formalism, and tends to dualism.

To support this argument, an elder in KwaMhlanga told me in July 2013 (I've heard this argument lately often): the Dutch missionaries came and handed out money, this was not good, because they didn't make us self-sufficient. It must be done differently, he said, while accentuating loving the missionaries and being grateful for what they have done. Asking him what he meant he answered: *"...when helping us you need to engage us. E.g food-parcels. Don't buy us food parcels, but train us as to how to produce our own food, that is: give us seeds, but not the end product. That creates laziness. People just sit there knowing that at the end of the month manna from Holland is coming. Seeds make a person to go to work and it makes him/her creative and creates the culture of ownership. If sponsorship of food-parcels dry-up, then what will happen to the people who were given this parcels?"*

During the time of the missionaries, the Reformed church of KwaNdebele used to have a huge number of members, but today some of the church buildings are closed down. Then now, what was it that made people attend the church during that time? Preaching has not changed it and so it can't be that. It is because the Reformed church currently does not give food-parcels. In the future, if you want to help us, let us sit down and see what is our contribution to the project? Take Vezubuhle as an example. We are building a screen wall and a Sunday school class. We submitted a proposal to Holland where we outlined our contribution to the project. The church members run the project. They make bricks and their build it themselves. It creates the culture of working and it promotes the bond between the church members."

Obviously the CGK have changed their approach correctly. Their withdrawal and closing of the money tap led some local people to take initiative and not to be dependent on the missionaries any longer. On the other hand the above mentioned comment on dependency and the lack of self-sufficiency is clear. Although it could also be an excuse not to take responsibility!

But, the CGK haven't drawn a vision on integral mission to these people who obviously are still in great need. In fact, all the stated problems mentioned in 1980 still remain today. Others have even been added to the list, like HIV-Aids.

And yet one must admit that the CGK mission has led to more self-sufficiency. Some local communities have taken charge of the Daycare centre's after white management failed! The point that remains is: to say that mission is a project or needs project thinking, without taking the contextual- and cultural related factors into regard as well as the Biblical way of long term relational education and coaching, is insufficient and superficial. And maybe also dangerous, because Africans are being uprooted by the Western capitalist influence and western missionary influence, thinking Christians are "money rich". This has done a lot of damage.

Integral mission with heart, voice and hands takes the context and culture serious and is focuses to improve both cultures to a biblical Christ based culture. Self-sufficiency is therefore only a part of the Triune God centered and -focused life. The proclamation of God is inevitable.

Another conclusion regarding CGK mission to KwaNdebele is that of oversight and supervision. This tends to be complicated. As the missionary's sending church board is far away overseas, who oversees and supervises the missionary when abroad? Who mediates between missionaries when they differ regarding the vision on integral mission? Who, when necessary, reproves and corrects the missionary when needed? One would probably say: the

local church board of course! In the case of KwaNdebele this would mean that the black brothers would need to mediate or correct them! This would be great, but isn't necessarily logical, because of the cultural differences. Dutch, for example, tend to be direct and confronting – “their hearts lies on the tongues”, while Africans are indirect and avoid confrontations and stay polite. This is culturally important, but also the production- or relational mindset. This is a difficult problem to solve.

Therefore a missionary must have a sound knowledge and understanding of the local language, culture and context – or otherwise stated: the local vision on God, on life and on the world. Getting an educational training on this could be an investment to all involved and contributes to integral mission. I know this from my own experience to the Netherlands. This in fact a form of incarnation, become one of them without necessarily adapting everything.

The last conclusion I want to mention here, is that the CGK tends to a dualistic way of thinking. This is relevant to the topic of integral mission and is always a dangerous threat to the church, mission and personal faith.

The CGK endorses the unity of Word and deed, “kerugma and diakonia”. Due to practical reasons and workability, two separated deputyships evolved: a deputyship for foreign mission and a deputyship for relief work. Put it simple: preaching and diaconal ministry.

The question is whether this could lead to a division of grace and human nature where proclamation is being reduced to the spiritual by preaching and the relief work is only focused on the practical, or diaconal work.

Integral proclamation is applicable proclamation: with heart, voice and hands. Think of Jesus preaching and caring at the same time, as an integral part of proclaiming the kingdom of heaven. He held a fish and bread in his hands, proclaims the Kingdom of heaven and at the same time integrally feeds the masses.

While the CGK confesses the unity between Word and deed there is no policy on this – not universal or custom made for KwaNdebele. Even when one agrees with the missionary who said that this is not realistic to expect from the CGK as it is tailor made on the job, keeping the spontaneous strategy in mind, one would expect the CGK to come with a plan.

The reality of the brokenness of KwaNdebele accentuated the need for unity between theology and the reality.

Due to the lack of a profound vision and policy on integral missions, the CGK made conflicting missional decisions regarding the relation between Mukhanyo Bible school and the Mukhanyo Theological College (MTC). In the end it resulted in ending the relation with MTC. However the Mukhanyo Community Development Corporation which was an integral extension of the theological training at MTC was still being supported, because it was a diaconal ministry of the enormous practical problems of HIV-AIDS, orphans and broken families etc. MCDC was abandoned when financial problems arose due to mismanagement. This is difficult to understand but boils down to this:

The logical and unbreakable unity of theological training and diaconal merciful support, even in tough times, was let loose, leaving a dualism. We experience this in the foundation I'm chairman of where we raise money for the ministry to Kwandebele: people won't give money for training and personnel, but for hungry- and ill people and left alone orphans. Churches have to take charge and train their members to think holistic, integral and long-term and to be willing to suffer for the glory of God.

We need to conclude by saying that the CGK was obedient to the calling of proclaiming the Gospel to the ends of the earth. Much has been invested in this calling. Many people were reconciled with God through Christ and started living a better life according to his Word.

Looking back, we can be grateful, but we need to be honest and introspect. We have to conclude that a sound, solid, Triune-based vision and custom made policy, including the cultural context, on integral mission to KwaNdebele could have contributed to a greater impact in people's lives! Then it would be integrally built up and restored in Christ to live in KwaNdebele with eternal hope to the glory of God.

The western life- and world vision, as well as the western church culture were projected too easily on these people from Africa.

Three words are indispensable: integral, contextualization, inter-culturalization with in the framework of God, creation, Christ, Holy Spirit, the church and the future.

Let's summarize this by these clear and unmistakable words from

James 2:18: *I will show you my faith by my actions*

combined with Pauls' words in

Romans 10:14: *And how can they believe if they have not heard the message? And how can they hear if the message is not proclaimed?*

Condensated in this triplet: using heart, voice and hands.

Enumeration

To enumerate the above said in a shortlist would call for a repetition. Just this, all these principles are actually true for every church and every congregation. I'm very eager to learn your thoughts Thanks!

Group discussion:

We will have discussions in small groups to help each other pointing out some critically factors in integral missions with hearts, voice and hands.

1. React on the following example: a Dutch reformed youth group wants to serve a Daycare centre for vulnerable children (e.g. orphans). Which preconditions are needed in the light of the *missio Dei* integrating Word and deed? How to go about with the idea of groups reaching out to poor communities and building structures for a couple of weeks while the locals are jobless and could have done the work themselves – which happens most of the time with Dutch outreach groups. How could it be done more effectively in order that both groups take advantage of such an outreach – think of mutuality?
2. How can a church analyse the area where it intends to do missions, best to formulate a vision, mission and policy on integral missions including contextualisation?
3. Is mutuality in integral missions a requirement? Explain. Which conditions are to be met – or not? How do you help recognizing your own and their poverty - using the true Biblical definition?
4. Name three important things to make contextualization work. Think for e.g. of the “power of the rich”; different cultural ways to communicate with semantic differences (in second or third languages) etc.

5. How can reformed denominations (working with synods and deputyships) come to a Scripture based, God centred, triune balanced, missio Dei vision, mission and contextualized policy and strategy - involving the local churches and the spiritual gifts and where the missions doesn't disappear into deputyships and responsible leaders don't become little popes?
6. What is our opinion on both short- and long-term mission projects? How can the final dismantling phase of a missions project lead to a painless and harmonious transfer to independence, when the money supply ends?
7. How to go about missionaries serving in the same area with conflicting personal visions on integral missions? Who supervises and oversees these missionaries when the responsible and sending church board is overseas and the local church board is from a different culture?
8. React to the following statement: "it is not realistic and unmerciful to make a policy on missions (beforehand) in a specific area. It has to be custom-made on the job."
9. (How) can a sending church evaluate the effect of her integral missions project?
10. Mission in a church like the CGK is organised centrally by deputies with local churches involved by contributing financially. Name the pro's and con's. How could this be developed in order that all church members are actively involved contributing to integrated missions with his/het spiritual gifts?
11. What would your reaction be on the elders' remark that missionaries handed out money and that things must be done differently?