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**Conversions and Transformations:  
Missiological Approaches to Religious Change**

**Christianity and social transformation  
in post-apartheid South Africa**

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It is virtually a cliché now to speak of the shift in gravity of World Christianity from the North to the South. The question is begged: What is the state of Christianity in the South in general and in the continent of Africa in particular? A greater focus could be created by asking this question with particular reference to a country like South Africa. To be sure, a major challenge for Christianity in South Africa has been its conspicuous absence from the public domain since the arrival of democracy in 1994 and the ascendancy of Mandela to power as the first democratically elected president. The issue is sharpened by the fact that transformation has become a buzz word in the country without any clarity whatsoever on the true meaning of the word. It has been reduced by and large in meaning for purposes of political expediency, further aggravating matters for Christianity in South Africa.

The main thrust of the paper is to trace some of the reasons for the inner emigration of Christianity and to pose the pertinent question: has the maneuvering of Christianity into the periphery and its privatization not unnerved the religion to the extent where it cannot significantly contribute to the fundamental and thoroughgoing transformation of society? On a more positive note the paper explores signs of hope in terms of the regrouping and re-emergence of prophetic Christianity in the land. A proposal is formulated on how best Christianity could and should contribute to transformation from the perspective of those suffering the triple crisis of inequality, unemployment and poverty in the light of the gospel and the values of the reign of God.

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