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Conversions and Transformations: Missiological Approaches to Religious Change

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**Remixing liberation and prosperity:  
Thinking about transformation in dialogue with young people in Johannesburg**

The paper focuses on constructive similarities and critical differences in liberation theological and prosperity gospel (broadly understood) understanding of transformation. How do the two ways to define transformation support one another? What are the fundamental and mutually exclusive differences? The aim of this discussion is to constitute a challenge for liberationist praxis to consider prosperity gospel as a resourceful dialogue partner in discussing transformation in the lives of real people – instead of a merely harmful interpretation of faith. While the paper draws on chosen scholars' writing on these two traditions, the theoretical questions are inspired by the author's empirical research with a group of young lower-class Zimbabwean migrants in Johannesburg and her listening to their creative remixing of the two discourses. This creativity is most apparent in accounts of a liberationist social justice emphasis in a given mainline church and preaching on prosperity and success in some Charismatic churches carrying the same message: You can make it in life despite the current circumstances and despite your social location. Yet the critical voices among the young people towards churches and Christians in general also contribute to discerning connections between liberation and prosperity.