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

**Conformity vis-a-vis transformational conversion in mission: towards a  
transcendental mission agenda**

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Abstract

The author discusses the topic conversion as opposed to conformity to a religion and transcendental mission approach as an alternative solution. He analyses the role played and the contributions made by missionary and the liberation theologies in South Africa. The white traditional theology sought to produce black conformists to the system; liberation theologies resisted the conformity mentality and fought for equality in society. Both movements failed to embrace transcendental methodology that would go beyond the secular boundaries and brought about transformational and empowering spirituality. The paper proposes a new way of doing mission in a racist conflict ridden environment. It suggests new spirituality for life and affirmation that would work against self-hate among the previously oppressed and self-guilty among previously oppressing. It seeks ways of healing broken relationships through authentic empowerment and transformation. A transformational approach with internal recognition of socially interwoven relatedness and the complexity of oppression and exclusion can bring new meaning of conversion that promote coexistence in a society with a long history of conflict and bitterness and open up exclusive and oppressive structures for a new spirituality of inclusivity based on Gospel in South Africa.

BIO BACKGROUND

Prof S T Kgatla is a Emeritus Professor of Science of Religion and Missiology at the University of Pretoria. He is a former Moderator of the Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa. Currently he is serving a local Polokwane congregation as a minister of the word and sacraments and part-time lecturer at the University of Pretoria.