

## **Ancestors and Healing in African Spirituality: Challenges to the Churches in Africa**

*A study document to be discussed and complemented by the Lutheran churches in Africa*

### **Introduction**

- (1) Representatives of African Religion and Lutheran churches from many countries in Africa entered into dialogue at the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) study seminar on “Ancestors and Healing in African Spirituality: Challenges to the Lutheran Churches in Africa,” from 27 to 30 September 2004, in Johannesburg, South Africa.

After two days of dialogue on study papers, the participants worked in groups to produce this study document. Training institutions and congregations are requested to discuss this document and to send their reactions and inputs to the coordinator of the African follow-up working group: Dr Sylvester Beyanga Kahakwa, Tumaini University-Makumira, P.O. Box 55 USA River, Arusha, Tanzania, e-mail: [skahakwa@yahoo.com](mailto:skahakwa@yahoo.com)

- (2) Based on the responses, the working group will revise the study document, which will be presented at an international consultation which will be held in October 2005. This consultation will receive all the regional study documents and produce a concluding study document on “Spiritualism: A Global Challenge to the Church.”
- (3) You are therefore invited to participate in this ongoing study program, which has the following objectives:
  - a) To increase the awareness within the Lutheran churches in Africa of the need to understand the concepts of ancestors and healing in the African Religion in their respective contexts.
  - b) To discover and probe the implications of African spirituality for interfaith dialogue and for the Lutheran identity in Africa.

### **African spirituality**

- (4) While there are many definitions of spirituality, the study group chose to work with the following definitions and descriptions:
  - a) Spirituality is our connectedness to God, to our human roots, to the rest of nature, to one another and to ourselves. It is the experience of the Holy Spirit moving us and our communities to be life-giving and life-affirming. Throughout the so-called Third World, spirituality is celebrated in songs, rituals and symbols that show the energizing Spirit animating the community to move together in response to God.
  - b) Spirituality is a cry for life and for the power to resist death and the agents of death. It provides the strength to go on, for it is the assurance that God is in the struggle. It

fulfills the quest for self-discovery, self-affirmation, and self-inclusion, so the whole human community can live fully as human beings created by God.<sup>1</sup>

- (5) This study deals with ancestors and healing in African spirituality both from the traditional religious perspective, consisting of the belief in ancestors and nature spirits, and the African Lutheran perspective.

### **Basic beliefs in ancestors from the perspective of African Religion**

- (6) In our understanding, ancestors are “departed” parents, members of a family or a clan who maintain a relationship and care of the living. They have special capabilities because they no longer experience the limitations of human beings. Therefore, they are able to mediate between the Creator and the living. The spiritual status they have reached is diversely interpreted. Some African people believe that the ancestors are still parents and neither divinities nor God. Thus they are not worshipped but only venerated. Other Africans believe that ancestors have reached divine status; therefore they could be worshipped. Others deify only the most meritorious ones and consult the rest. Still others see the priests as higher than all the ancestors, therefore they only consult them.
- (7) The ways of referring to ancestors in African languages point to some fundamental beliefs and principles:
  - a) Death means a transfer of life from a physical to a spiritual condition. So the dead are not dead, they are within and around the homestead as parents who are still maintaining their parental role. Hence, they are believed to be involved in family affairs.
  - b) The communion between the living and the ancestors never ends. It goes on forever.
  - c) Ancestors are clothed with supernatural power from the Creator. Therefore, they are capable of protecting the members of their family, clan and community wherever these members are.
  - d) Ancestors have needs just like their surviving descendants. It is the responsibility of the living to meet the ancestors’ needs. Failure to do so can result in retribution, which could be in a form of sickness or misfortune.

### **The presence and manifestation of ancestors in the family, clan and community**

- (8) Ancestors continue to interact with the living through dreams, appearances, visions, sounds, incarnations through animals such as: birds, butterflies, bees, snakes, lions, etc. Sometimes messages are received from them through diviners, mediums, medicine-persons or priests.

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<sup>1</sup> Various EATWOT members, “Spiritualities,” in Virginia Fabella M.M. and R.S. Sugirtharajah (eds), *Dictionary of Third World Theologies* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 2000).

### ***The role of ancestors***

- (9) Ancestors perform many roles, for example:
- a) Unifying families and people, caring for each other, empowering, blessing, rewarding, inspiring.
  - b) Protecting families and clans from diseases, evil, enemies, even in war.
  - c) Mediating between people and the Divinity.
  - d) Enforcing discipline—in case of the breaking social values.
  - e) Facilitating holistic healing.

### **Nature spirits and African Religion**

#### ***Nature spirits and the living***

- (10) Some African communities believe in the existence of nature spirits as shown in the following stories.<sup>2</sup>
- (11) In our ethnic group, when a boy turns twelve, he has to make a bow and go hunting. One day, when I was twelve, I went to the top of the mountain to get a bow for myself. There I found a tree where I could make a bow. I carried with me a cutlass. I tried to cut the tree, but failed. I put the knife down and tried to break a branch off the tree. I then turned around to reach out for the knife. It had disappeared. I looked again at the place where I had put it. The knife jumped and hit me on my forehead. I ran away and left everything there.
- (12) Normally there is no whirlwind during the rainy season; but it happened when I was coming back from a nearby village at night. I heard a whirlwind coming towards me. I thought it would pass by me. To my surprise, it followed me until I entered my room; then I heard it going back. The next day I told the story to my evangelist. He said it was a nature spirit (Yahawala). It happened again one day. I was returning home when, there where I had met the whirlwind the other day, I saw a pig coming towards me. To my surprise the pig did not make the noise they usually do. When I gave way to the pig, it ran into me. So I ran away. This happened at night; again I was told that it was a nature spirit in the form of a pig.
- (13) The above stories illustrate that in the African worldview, nature spirits seek to form relationships with the living in order to possess them or to make them their agents or executioners. When the solicited person resists the offer, s/he might undergo severe attacks. This could be physical or mental hardship. In order to find relief, the person must appease the offended spirit by offering sacrifice.
- (14) If the person accepts the offer, s/he becomes the agent of the spirit with supernatural powers. This category of people is very much feared in Africa

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<sup>2</sup> Stories from Rev. John S. Kenan from Nigeria about Yahawala (Spirit).

### *Nature spirits and the ancestors*

- (15) Some African communities believe that nature spirits and ancestors are related to each other. They say that some ancestors get their power from nature spirits because some nature spirits are categorized as divinities—therefore they are placed higher in hierarchy than ancestors. Sometimes there is fighting going on between evil nature spirits and ancestors when the former attack the living. The ancestors as protectors of the family oppose them.

### **Ancestors and spirits from the perspective of African Christianity**

#### *Ancestors*

- (16) The belief in the existence of ancestors and nature spirits is held by many adherents of African Religion. Many African Christians also share in this belief. But is the belief in ancestors and the spirits acceptable from the Christian point of view? In the past, most scholars, missionaries and theologians believed that all ancestors and spirits are agents of Satan, and therefore should be eradicated as quickly as possible. Yet belief in ancestors and spirits is found also in other monotheistic religions such as Judaism, Islam and Christianity (Kahakwa 2003:52-53).
- (17) Many Africans believe that the African belief in ancestors and spirits made it easy for Africans to grasp the Christian understanding and worshipping of God and that this was among the factors contributing to a positive response to Christian conversion. In some cases, utterances through mediums encouraged Africans to convert to Christianity. A similar incident is also reported in the New Testament where the utterances of spirits were among the divine signs of identifying Jesus of Nazareth as the Messiah and the Son of God (Kahakwa 2003:53). Luke reports, “When he saw Jesus he cried out and fell down before him and said with a loud voice, what have you to do with me, Jesus, some of the most High God! I beseech you, do not torment me“ (Lk 8:18).
- (18) African Churches have different views about the place and role of ancestors. Some churches accept the status and role, others are undecided, and then there are those who reject them.
- (19) Some African theologians accept the status of ancestors, which include God and Jesus, but God and Jesus are above the “common” ancestors. Adherents of African Religion do not accept that ancestors are below Jesus.
- (20) Some members in the churches have contact with their ancestors and so they accept the ancestors as the living-dead, or more actively as *Abazaire abahumwire* (Parents who are resting) (Kahakwa 2003:55),<sup>3</sup> that they commune with. However, resting means neither being inactive or unconcerned, rather a special state of one’s completion or graduation of earthly life, a mandate for ongoing involvement in and care of one’s descendants. This concept could be viewed in the light of biblical portrayal, whereby resting does not mean sitting idle. Instead, it is viewing and conforming the work that has been done (Gen 2:1-3). While some Christians have doubts as to whether this is a

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<sup>3</sup> *Abazaire abahumwire* (Parents who are resting), is phrase in Haya. The Haya people live in the North-Western Tanzania.

reality or a mere psychic problem, others do not accept these experiences because they look at them as satanic manipulations.

- (21) In any case, African Christians do not believe that the ancestors are gods. It is a deliberate and intentional distortion of a people's culture to say Africans worship ancestors, deities, or individuals. Africans do not wish to equate ancestors with Christian saints; the comparison is dangerous and misleading. It smacks of mimicry. African Religion must be explained and practiced in its cultural context.
- (22) Some African theologians have identified God as an ancestor. This is neither a replacement of each other, nor an end of African Christian's recourse to their ancestors (Schreiter 1991:124). Rather, each side continues to maintain its place and role in African cultural religious context but in a new way.
- (23) According to Danquah, the Akan doctrine of God maintains that in Africa God is perceived as the Great Ancestor, the Father Ancestor, who is the source of all, including all human ancestors. Thus, he is the proto-ancestor or super ancestor *par excellence* (Saywer 1970:93).
- (24) Through the relationship with the Father-Ancestor, Jesus Christ became our ancestor. Since he was the first-born among many brethren, he becomes the Father's only son and the elder brother among many brethren (Schreiter 1991:6). For Nyamiti, Christ as an ancestor has become our archetypal model of behavior, and therefore is superior to all African ancestors and all spiritual beings and other cosmic powers.
  - a) The exiting gap following ancestral identification of the Christian concept of God, is how to identify the Holy Spirit in an African idiom, similar to that applied to identify the Father and the Son—Jesus Christ. Despite the well portrayed African theological models and their theological significance, most of them if not all are lacking a clear integrated Trinitarian notion. This demonstrates a gap in the Christian understanding of God, who is portrayed as binary and not threefold typical of some Africans' conception of God (Kahakwa 2003:101-109).
  - b) To fill this gap some African theologians have applied an African pneumatological model to identify the Holy Spirit in an African idiom. Its theological justification has a basis in the Haya (in the North-Western Tanzania) and Nkole/Kiga (in West of Uganda) belief of creation, whereby the Deity, *Ruhanga* created the first human being from clay. Thereafter his son, *Kazoba* breathed the breath (of which the latter was perceived and identified as *Ntangaire* (a she for Haya) (or *Rugaba* (for Nkole/Kiga) (Twesigye 1996:103-104), who is the vital force or spirit of *Ruhanga*) into the created man, and thus made him alive (Kahakwa 2003:147-148). It indicated three aspects of the One Deity, *Ruhanga*, which led to an invocation of him in a threefold form, by addressing each of his aspects in unison: *Ruhanga* (the Father), *Kazoba* (the Son) and *Ntangaire* the Spirit of *Ruhanga*. Since the aspect of the Father and the Son was perceived as a he, the aspect of the Spirit of the Deity was perceived as a she, along ancestral models. The perception of a she aspect among the he aspects of the Deity gave birth on an integrated threefold model of the Deity. It led to identify the Christian experience of the Spirit of God, that is, the Holy Spirit as a *Sister Ancestor*.

- c) On this basis, and in the light of the *Father Ancestor* and *Brother Ancestor* models, Kahakwa and other African theologians have identified the Holy Spirit as *Sister Ancestor*. Their argument is based on the thesis that the implications of the ancestral christology is incomplete, unless it is understood from the viewpoint of its relationship with the Spirit of God. The conviction is that the Spirit plays a central role which has been described as sanctifying grace, necessary for a full and authentic ancestral relationship (Schreiter 1991:12). Accordingly, an ancestral interpretation of christology, should involve the Spirit of the Deity in an African context (Bediako 2000:22), who was first imparted upon the ancestors. This is basic if we are to understand Christ's ancestorship and his salvific work (Mugambi & Magesa 1990:137).
- d) The suitability of *Sister Ancestor* as a pneumatological model has a basis in the assertion that she represents well the notion of the ancestorship, either God the Father or God the Son, according to the Haya-African threefold model of God and the doctrine of the Trinity.
- e) Moreover, *Sister Ancestor* model fits well to illuminate the oneness of the Deity, *Ruhanga*, (who has been christianized partially by applying only one of his aspects—God the Father), in terms of link and relation with each of his aspects. "

#### ***Nature spirits:***

- (25) Richard J. Gehmann stressed that the Western world is anti-supernatural and naturalistic and they are against African view and biblical view of the spirits.
- (26) Evangelicals who believe in the authority of the Scriptures, will accept African and biblical views of the spirits as not just mere superstitions and imaginations, but a reality. The Scriptures teach about fallen angels and unclean spirits and how they are opposed to God and Jesus Christ, so to accept the reality of the existence of the spirits, is acceptance of the truth of the Bible.
- (27) The ancient world believed in the spirits. This is found in the living literature of the Babylonians, Chinese, Arabs, Greeks, Jews, Persians, Indians, etc. In the Bible, God is sovereign over them all and thus God is separated from idolatry (Dt 6:4, Isa 43:10-12).
- (28) The question of ancestors in African spirituality has been dealt with in this study paper and found that it challenges the churches as to how to deal with it, because it is at the core of African Christianity.
- (29) Africans believe that they are surrounded by the spirit world. On the one hand, Africans believe that both ancestor and nature spirits, which are the intermediate between them and the Creator God, inspire them. On the other hand, Christianity is Christ-centered, and Christian inspiration is from the Holy Spirit, with Christ as the mediator between the Christians and God.
- (30) Africans who become Christians are torn apart because they fail to reconcile the differences between African beliefs, which are part of them, and Christian beliefs. This sometimes leads to syncretism. This is a challenge to the Lutheran church in Africa. As a solution, some African theologians are suggesting a christology that makes Jesus and the Holy Spirit ancestral figures.

(31) It is therefore dialogue that enables us to understand and appreciate each other.

**Questions for dialogue**

(32) When Grace's mother was about to die, she gave Grace her ring, which had Grace's father's name on it. The mother told her to wear the ring and every time she washes her hands and face, she should remember her responsibility to take care of her brothers and sisters. Since her mother's death, Grace has been wearing her mother's ring. On January 6, 2001 she was woken up by a church choir singing a song accompanied by loud trumpets. The words of the song said: "Listen you Samuel, listen." She still remembers the words and the tune of the song. Grace has written the song in her Bible. Her brother is called Samuel. Grace had been praying for her brother. He was drinking too much alcohol and had lost his job. Everyone was concerned about him. So Grace phoned him, told him what the song had said and that she thought that the song was meant for him. When Grace told her husband about the story, his interpretation was that Samuel must stop drinking alcohol. After one month, Samuel stopped drinking. Up to now he has not touched alcohol again.

- a) Who gave Grace the song?
- b) Does this story mean that Grace's mother is in the spiritual world with God?
- c) What does this story say about the role of the ancestors?
- d) What is your reaction to the story of the ring and the mandate to take care of her siblings and that Grace believes that God has changed things since the vision she had.
- e) How do you define ancestors in your tribe?
- f) What kind of relationship exists between the living descendants and the departed parents?
- g) Should Christians communicate with their ancestors?
- h) What does the Bible say about relationship with the ancestors?
- i) What is the role of the ancestors in African families/clans?
- j) What influence ancestors have in your daily life?
- k) How do you understand and define spirit?
- l) In your life, how do the spirits relate to human beings?
- m) What do you think about the story of Rev. John S. Kenan quoted in this document?
- n) Do you have a similar story in your ethnic group?

## Healing

- (33) From childhood, Nokuzola had dreams and visions about old people speaking to her. She was very close to her mother who was a member of the Methodist women's guild (*Manyano*). She would share her experiences with her mother but did not take them seriously. When she started teaching at one of the high schools away from her home area, she started menstruating a lot. She went to a doctor but it did not help. She went to see a gynecologist but still she was told that she had no problem in the uterus and she was not anemic. The bleeding went on for six months. One day, an old woman who was her neighbor, called her and asked her what her problem was. She was instructed to go to her village and tell her mother about the problem. She did. She told her paternal aunt, because that is the cultural procedure. The aunt told Nokuzola's uncle who came to Nokuzola and told her that she was not sick and he was going to talk to the ancestors on her behalf. Her uncle also asked her whether since she started working as a teacher she had informed the ancestors about her job. She said that she had not but she was going to do it in December of that year during the school holidays. The day after she accepted to do the ritual, the bleeding stopped.
- (34) Then she went to University of Cape Town, historically a "white" university, to study for BA (honors) and MA degrees. After she finished, she registered for a Ph.D. At that time, she had a dream in which she was told to wear a traditional outfit for her MA graduation. While the letter of invitation to the graduation had called for formal dress, she decided to wear her traditional attire with African beads. Then she continued with her Ph.D. She had another vision of her Ph.D graduation in which she was wearing beads and carrying a stick for those who have graduated as Sangomas, She even knew where she should go for her training. In the meantime she struggled to be motivated to work on her Ph.D. Through dreams she was told that if she did not accept her call to be a healer, she would not finish her Ph.D.
- (35) Nokuzola is the only girl in her family and was very close to her father who died in 1992. After he died, her visions became very strong. Before he died, he had gone to the river and had come back with a stone. He was singing a Christian song, "Who will roll this stone for me." He instructed all his children that when he died, this stone should be put next to his head and when any of the children come and stand on it and talk to him, he will respond. The stone was put in the cattle kraal until he died. Since then she goes to the grave of her father to talk to him and she feels him with her.
- (36) In 1996, she was invited to talk on National Television about African Religion. During the presentation she felt very good, but once off the air, she was feeling sick. Three days in a row, she dreamt of her father who had died telling her that she had made it in life and it was time to fulfill her calling. She still did not do it. She was resisting. As a result, she started getting sick again until she went for training to become a healer. Then she was healed.
- (37) Some people say that the story above is common to most Africans across the continent.
- a) Do you have similar stories from your own context?
  - b) What is your personal assessment of this story?

### ***Sickness and healing from the perspective of African Religion***

- (38) When we speak of healing, we also speak of sickness because they are connected. Sickness does not only mean the pains in the body, the malfunctioning of cells in the body. The concept is usually more complex. It refers to an imbalance within the human being, the clan and also within the community, and that needs healing.
- (39) Therefore, healing is restoring harmony and wholeness in humanity and its relationships: physical, psychological, social, moral, economic, political and spiritual. When disharmony occurs, it is experienced as illness in the community. The causes are multiple: they could be related to ancestral wrath, witchcraft and natural circumstances.
- (40) In order to restore the disturbed harmony, people consult the ancestors either directly or through the healer, in order to establish the true cause and the healing rituals to be performed.

### ***Some methods of healing***

- (41) Bishop Asriel Myatafadi from Nigeria narrated a story of how he and his aunt were sent to a diviner in order to find out the cause of a problem in their family. This happened some years ago. On reaching the place of divination, the priest wrote on the ground and asked to place their hands on the writing. This was repeated over and over and it took them almost an hour.
- (42) Whenever he wrote on the ground and these two people placed their palms on the writing, the diviner tried to read through to find a meaning. At last, the cause of their problem was identified. They were asked to go home and perform a certain sacrifice and when this was done, the problem was solved.
- (43) There are two main categories of healing, which are used:
  - a) Divinations, which is used to identify other healing methods such as rituals, herbs, sacrifices etc.
  - b) Herbal healing where the healer just prescribes the herbs without divination.
- (44) Divination is an act in which people are moved by what they feel and believe to be their experience of the sacred. It is the divination dimension that brings the ordinary person of a healer into contact with the sacred and the healer becomes an object that serves as medium of the sacred power.
- (45) Rituals are healing practices performed by the living for the spiritual world to establish harmony. Rituals can be performed at individual, family and community levels. Sometimes special rituals are requested by ancestors like bringing back the spirit of someone who died far away from home. In these religious gatherings, the community acts out its various forms of worship. Through these rituals, unity and healing are achieved. Most rituals are marked by a sacred communion meal, which brings spiritual healing.
- (46) Herbs are plants with healing properties. They consist of roots, fruits, tree bark, leaves, vegetables, seeds, etc. Herbs are prescribed by all healing systems around the world. Africans have used herbs, like other societies for the healing of sickness. In Africa, the

herbs are given by a diviner or herbalist. Sometimes the knowledge of herbs is shared by people of the community.

- (47) Sacrifices are special rituals of offerings made to the ancestors to ask for favor for healing of various things, for example: the land, the body, broken relationships, protection etc.

### ***Categories of healers***

- (48) Below are some examples of religious leaders who are also healers in African Religion.
- (49) The elders, both men and women, play a major role in healing in African Religion. Owing to their wisdom and life experience, they are able to see when harmony is disturbed and also if ancestors are displeased. The elderly are the advisors of the community. There is no general trend of gender differentiation as that depends on the roles played in that particular ritual. The paternal or maternal aunts depending on the type of that particular society (patrilineal or matrilineal) have also special roles in the ritual performances in their clans. The paternal aunt plays a crucial role in the health of the brother's children in her clan, and the first-born male plays a major role in the healing of his clan members.
- (50) A curse might be placed on someone by their parents or ancestors. Then the person confesses and discloses what the problem was. The elders will speak on behalf of the person and try to arrange reconciliation.
- (51) Some healing activities are performed by first-born males or females in a clan. These people, because of their birthright, play key roles in some family rituals.
- (52) A diviner is either male or female and uses divination to communicate with the ancestors or the Divine in order to understand causes of sickness and healing rituals or processes. Some examples of divination include: the reading of palms, dancing, falling into a trance, throwing bones or shells, prayers, reading of water, reading of a mirror, etc.
- (53) Herbalists heal by giving herbs without divination. They have the gift of knowing particular medicines revealed by the ancestors or given to them in dreams. They might also learn about medicines from elsewhere e.g., parents, diviners, friends, colleagues, etc.
- (54) African healing has areas of specialization among the diviners and herbalists such as, setters of fractured bones; children illnesses; gynecological diseases; widowhood rituals; poisonous bites, etc.

### ***Healing in the African church***

- (55) Healing in Christianity is based on the Bible as part of God's mission. In Genesis 1, God created the world as a whole. In Genesis 3, sin came and destroyed God's plan for humanity. In the story of Sarah, God intervened and cured her from barrenness. During the period of the Exodus, God healed the Israelites who were bitten by snakes. In the prophets, God worked through the prophets and priests to bring healing. For example, God used Elisha to bring healing to Naaman. In the New Testament, Jesus' ministry

included healing. The disciples and apostles too were sent to heal and to preach the kingdom of God (Lk 9, 1-6; 10, 1-12; Acts 3:1 ff).

- (56) When Christian missionaries came to Africa, they established hospitals. Most missionaries rejected African healing and also played down the gift of biblical healing systems, which were more in line with African healing systems. The hospitals concentrate on physical healing and leave out the spiritual causes of sickness as understood by African and biblical healing. Some of the reasons why African healing is rejected by Western Christians is because of its association with ancestors and spirits. Thus, some churches' approach to healing is conservative and limited and still does not accommodate alternative forms of healing. Yet, some Christians would go on their own for alternative healing without asking permission from their churches. Some do so because Western medicine is neither accessible nor affordable for the majority of the African people.
- (57) One of the reasons for the growth of African initiated churches and charismatic ministries in Africa is to respond to the challenge of the absence of spiritual healing in the mission churches. Many members from the mission churches are drawn to these churches and ministries to seek healing.
- (58) At the same time some mission churches are accommodating the challenges and have included healing ministry in their services. Charismatic/Pentecostal spirituality is also found in some mission initiated churches in Africa because it resonates with African spirituality.

### **Conclusion**

- (59) Jesus Christ is an example for all Christians. Jesus' ministry was holistic. It included physical and spiritual healing. Christianity moves across cultures. Wherever it goes it should be understood in the context of that culture. Therefore, if spiritual healing is central in Africa, it does not make sense that the church in Africa has mainly limited itself to Western healing systems at the expense of African ones.
- (60) Questions for discussion:
  - a) How do you understand healing in your own ethnic group and what does it include?
  - b) Where does healing come from?
  - c) Can God use a Christian to heal a non-Christian?
  - d) Can God use a non-Christian to heal a Christian?
  - e) Why not share your stories of healing with others?
- (61) Questions regarding possible action:
  - a) What could be done so that concepts of alternative healing are acknowledged and used in our churches?

- b) What could be done so that biblical gifts of healing are acknowledged and practiced in the church? (e.g., in special services that feature the prayer for the sick, laying of hands and anointing the sick in the name of the Lord according to Jas 5: 13-16).
  - c) Should Christians be allowed to use traditional herbs and traditionally acceptable methods as long as they can be used in the Name of the Lord? (Ex 15: 26).
- (62) We hope that this document motivates the churches commit themselves to working on this topic in the training institutions and congregations so as to be able to make an important contribution to the international meeting that will take place in 2005.