

8. THE CALLING OF GOVERNMENT AND CITIZEN Where do we stand in South Africa at this stage?*

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'Every person must submit to the supreme authorities. There is no authority but by act of God, and the existing authorities are instituted by Him' (Romans 13:1).

'Peter replied for himself and for the apostles: We must obey God rather than men' (Acts 5:29; cf. also 1 Peter 2:13-14).

1. The Issue

These two Saipatural passages more or less summarize the dilemma in which Christians have often found themselves in the course of history, and in which we as believers also at present find ourselves in South Africa.

- How can we bring together the two things, and adhere to Christ's command to pay Caesar what is due Caesar as well as God (Matthew 22:21), or Peter's terse command to have reverence for God and honour to the sovereign (1 Peter 2:17b)?
- Exactly when do we reach the boundary where the Christian does not only have the right but even the duty to say that he should be more obedient to God than the government, that is, when he will be forced to be disobedient to the government?
- What form should this disobedience take? Should it remain passive resistance? Or should it start as passive resistance but later, if nothing is achieved, turn into violent resistance?
- Once again the question: How should we determine that the point has been reached where nothing remains but to fight government violence with like violence?
- Once we are certain that we have in fact reached this point, where should we draw the line in the use of violence - only hard (military) targets, or soft targets too, women, children, other civilians?

And if we use violent means in order to be more obedient to God than to government, are we really still obedient to God, who, in Christ, teaches us to love our enemies and not to redress violence with violence (cf. i.a. Romans 12:19-21).

Fortunately not all whites any longer approve of the policies of the present government. But

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it is for the black brothers and sisters that the problems are becoming ever more acute. A concrete example: An ANC terrorist hides in your house (with your permission or against your will). The police pounce and ask whether you are harbouring such a person. If you speak the truth, the life of the ANC man and probably those of your family are in danger, because you will be seen as a traitor by his friends. In this regard you transgress the command of God not to endanger the lives of your fellow man or yourself. Should you lie, you transgress another command, but you probably save lives. (Possibly one should here choose the lesser of the two evils and allow the greater commandment, that of love, to triumph.)

I have to concede in all honesty that the topic that you have allocated to me is probably the hardest that I have ever had to deal with. I am glad that we are today reflecting on this topic together, both black and white, because then it will not be so easy to fall into glib and facile one-sidedness.

My talk will attempt to come to terms with the following issues:

- What does the Bible say about rebellion and violence?
- What does Christian tradition say about these?
- What does it mean to speak of government authority, power and violence?
- What is the calling of the subject/citizen?
- Where do we stand in South Africa at present?

2. What does the bible say about resistance and violence?

The Bible is full of violence. On the first pages already we read of fratricide (Genesis 4:8) and Lamech sings his song of violence (Genesis 4:23, 24). The world was so corrupted and filled with violence (Genesis 6:11) that God had to send the flood to wash it away. The prophets (such as Jeremiah, Amos, Micah and Malachi) are full of evidence of structural (politico-economic) violence.

The first pages of the New Testament too are drenched in blood. Think of the horrendous infanticide of Herod (Matthew 2:16). Israel was occupied by a foreign power, the Roman Empire, which was known for the cruelties it perpetrated. In vain the Jewish Zealot terrorist bands tried to throw off the foreign yoke.

It is only in the last chapter of the Bible (Revelation 22:15) that we read that murderers will be excluded from the new earth.

Recapitulated, then, we find the following types of violence in the Bible: In the Old Testament violence from the outside (foreign nations) and violence from inside (Jews oppressing Jews), and in the New Testament oppression from the side of the Jewish Council and synagogue, the Roman Empire, and the pagan nations.

It is important for us to know what the reactions of believers had been in Biblical times. We find basically two reactions: a passive one and an active one.

Christ Himself speaks the well-known words (Matthew 26:51) that everyone who depend on the sword would perish by the sword, and in John 18 :11 He says to Peter: 'Sheathe your sword. This is the cup the Father has given me; shall I not drink it?' As opposed to *destructive* violence He opts for *constructive* suffering, because the only victory *over* suffering is the victory *through* suffering. (His cup of suffering at the same time becomes a cup of victory.)

Paul (Romans 2:19) and Peter (1 Peter 4:12-19), in conjunction with Christ, advocate a passive reaction in the case of suffering and oppression. (The word *passive* is possibly a misnomer, because suffering in this way is one of the most difficult *activities*.) A Christian has to know what it means to *suffer* injustice, but he may not *commit* any injustice.

Two examples should suffice to illustrate this 'active' reaction. The first is found in 2 Kings 6 :8-23, in which it is told how the Aramaic army wanted to capture Elisha and kill him. In the end they are captured by Elisha. But when the king of Israel wishes to kill them, Elisha says: 'as for these men, give them food and water, let them eat and drink, and then let them go back to their master'. Violence in this instance is not answered with violence, or passively endured, but transmuted through love - there is a celebratory banquet (cf. also Romans 12:20).

We find the same in Acts 4:18-31. Herod, Pontius Pilate and the heathens conspired against the first Christians. The Jewish Council even forbade them to disseminate the gospel. Peter and John, however, tell them that they have to decide for themselves what is right: to obey them or God. And the disciples do not take recourse to violence, but all the believers unite in prayer to God (verse 24-30). The response of the Church to violence is prayer. And God's response to their prayer is that He fills them with the power of his Spirit, so that they can freely continue to preach the Word of God (verse 31). This is in keeping with the well-known words by Zechariah: 'Neither by force of arms nor by brute strength, but by my Spirit, says the Lord of Hosts' (4:6).

You can study the rest of the Bible yourselves. Cases in which believers refused to obey the authorities whose instructions they considered against the will of God abound, as you will find in Exodus 1:15-17, Daniel 3:16-18 and 6:11, Acts 5:29, but you won't find anywhere in Scripture that

this was accompanied by violent resistance.

I have in the recent past read a number of books in which people try with Biblical texts to prove that Christ had been a terrorist or a freedom fighter.

These people, however, have to make of the Bible a ventriloquist's dummy to succeed. Some even claim that because Christ did not say anything *against* the Jewish Zealots that He approved of their violence. This is weak logic (the well-known *argumentum e silentium*). In this way one could equally say that Christ approved polygamy because He did not say anything explicitly against it!

3. What does the Christian tradition say about resistance and violence?

I would like to mention very briefly four different viewpoints from the history of Christianity.

- in the first place we find the *radical passivists* (in the early Christian church and in later trends such as the Anabaptists in the sixteenth century and the Jehovah's witnesses today) who reject any resistance. The Anabaptists (today's Mennonites) even teach that Christians should not occupy government office, be a judge, take an oath or resist if one should be attacked by robbers or looters. This, however, is clearly not a Biblical viewpoint.
- A next approach would be the *partial passivists*. They do not reject all resistance, but only violent resistance. (Examples of this were Gandhi in India and Martin Luther King in the USA.) This group, to my mind, comes nearest to what we are taught in Scripture.
- The *partial militarists* while approving of violence and war as means to effect resistance, set the following conditions: (1) it should be the last resort (after all peaceful means have been exhausted); (2) it should be justified, that is, take place as self-defence (only a defensive war, not an offensive one, is a just war); (3) the counter-violence should be limited as far as possible so that tyranny is not simply replaced by anarchy; (4) the government should oppose the freedom to obey God, and (5) the rebellion/resistance against the government may not be run by the mob, but should be led in efficient and orderly manner by responsible leaders (once again to prevent, as far as possible, anarchy).

One could call this the dominant trend within Christianity. (From Augustine, Thomas Aquinas, the sixteenth-century reformers up to today.) It is clear, however, that this viewpoint can no longer be fully justified by the Bible.

- Even further from Biblical guidelines stand the *radical militarists* who approve of unlimited violence (even nuclear war). I think that we should include in this group

people in South Africa who regard state violence explicitly as legal, even using theological argument to justify their views.

Which one of the four viewpoints (from passive lack of resistance to absolute militarism) should we choose in the present situation?

Before we respond to this question, we should go on a tangent first to gain clarity about certain concepts and to reflect specifically on the task of the state.

4. What do authority, power and violence mean in the case of governments?

Under authority it is meant that God gave to certain people (the government, in the case of the state) the say over other people (the subjects or citizens, in the case of the state). All authority therefore derives from God (cf. Matthew 28:18 and 1 Corinthians 15:27) who never transfers his final authority to people but simply commits it to people as office-bearers.

In each societal context there are therefore two components: those invested with authority and those guided by authority. In an industry there are employers and employees, in a family parents and children, and in a sporting club the committee and the members.

The purpose of authority is twofold. In the first place it should co-ordinate, guide and help the members of the societal circle so that they can fulfil their specific task and calling (as determined by God). As a result of the sinfulness of man authority, in the second place, should also struggle against evil and corruption and, with a view to the vocational fulfilment of the members of the societal relation, also maintain the necessary order.

In Romans 13 we read that the government should punish the bad and reward the good (fulfilment of vocation). Furthermore Paul also says that it should be so that the subjects should *not fear* their government (if the government governs correctly, there should be no reason for fear - you need fear only if you have done wrong). Subjects do, however, have to have *respect* for their government.

We have to remember very well, however, that office-bearers (even if elected by people) have been set up in their office by God. Authority is therefore not for the sake of the office-bearer, but for the sake of service.

Servant is not the same as 'representative' or, stronger, 'substitute'. Government may not presume for itself the place of God. It is only servant, instrument. The authority that it has has only been derived from God. Authority and power which is not carried by this service motif (cf. Christ's

many statements on leaders) ultimately become self-devouring monsters. A state proud of its omnipotence is already on the threshold of helplessness and destruction.

The government, above all, is the servant of God, there to serve Him - and not for its own sake and its own interests. A servant also owes his master an accounting.

Office-bearers are therefore not higher or more important than those who have to obey them. They are also not elevated above the rules and laws of their societal relation. They are subject to the laws just like any other people - even if they made these laws themselves.

Office-bearers also have to know God's norm for the societal relation in which they have to provide guidance. In the case of marriage it is reciprocal trust between man and wife (sexuality which does not also inculcate marital fidelity will not keep two people together for very long). For industry it is the stewardship over scarce resources (profit alone should not be the norm). For the state the norm is the maintenance of justice (the government receives authority for that purpose, and not for the purpose of furthering its own interests and for oppressing its subjects).

It is in fact nothing other than God's great love commandment which should gain new shape in each relation in which people live together: as fidelity in marriage, as justice in the state, etc. The quality of life which is enjoyed in each societal relation is directly linked to the extent to which office-bearers and subjects respond to the calling of the specific relation (as determined by its specific norm). If the realisation of vocation has become blurred as a result of an imperfect understanding of the norms, the quality of life also deteriorates within that specific relational sphere. Marriage loses its joy, industry exploits people, the government declares war against its own citizens, the subjects begin to rebel...

It should be clear by now what a tremendous responsibility any bearer of authority has. In the light of the general abuse of authority we realise how tragically man has begun to fail on this point.

It speaks for itself that authority within any relation is maintained in a unique manner. The state is the only societal circle to which God has granted the right to enforce authority with the sword (police, courts of justice, the death sentence). If parents, or a church council, should want to enforce their authority in the same way as the government, they do not have a proper understanding of their calling.

It is also important to remember that the office-bearers of each societal relation can only exert limited authority - within the sphere in which they have been appointed. No man or societal relation has absolute power over another. Only God has power over all and everybody.

The word 'power' in the light of the foregoing means the responsible exercise of authority. No societal relation is possible without the proper exercise of power. There is nothing wrong with that as such. In the case of the state the police force is necessary to maintain the laws, the defence force is necessary for peace and security and even the power of the sword which may take life if necessary.

One could describe the word 'violence', in the light of the above, as *abused power*. Violence is the illegal, unnecessary, excessive and even harmful abuse of power. A police force and a defence force can easily be confronted with this temptation.

This does not mean, however, that violence in all instances is an abuse of power. When a policeman, for example, has to capture a murderer by violent means, we could call this constructive violence - as against destructive violence when he should assault or shoot an innocent person. When one country is attacked by another, the government has the duty to defend its territory and its citizens against the aggressor by means of violence (war).

As a result of the corruption of sin one of our problems is that our office-bearers do not know any longer how to distinguish the boundaries of authority, and they do not know any longer what their calling is within the societal relation in which they have been appointed. Or do they know but neglect it, and simply fail to comply with it? Men see marriage simply as a means for their own sexual gratification. The management of a factory exploits its workers and pollutes nature with its effluents.

In such cases the marriage partners (possibly through the church) and industry (possibly through the state) should be reminded anew of their intrinsic calling.

This is also true for a state which neglects to fulfil its God-given calling, which is exercising impartial justice for all. Should a government, for example, consistently and out of self-preservation and own advantage only act on behalf of a certain group of its subjects and deny privileges to others, it does not fulfil its God-given calling of general justice. Such a government can then be regarded as having become revolutionary in the most profound sense of the word: it inverts God's order and rebels against Him.

Such a government should be called back to its real task by its citizens because no human authority is sacrosanct. The glorification of authority (power for the sake of power, order for the sake of order, instead of for the sake of justice) is wrong (we should respect our governments, but show reverence only to God). And citizens who oppose such an unjust government may not be called revolutionary by the government, because they are the anti-revolutionaries. They are

against the revolution against God of which the government has become guilty, and their intention is to force the government to return to the right and proper execution of its God-given office.

The important question now is of course the form that this civil protest may assume. In the light of what has already been said, I am personally of the opinion that if nothing is achieved by means of legal channels (appeals to the government) something has to be done along the lines of civil disobedience. (It is a very difficult issue to decide *who* has to judge *when* the time has come to take such a step.)

Civil disobedience means ignoring the laws of the land, to be disobedient to them. The following could serve as a definition: 'Civil disobedience is a demonstrative action which deliberately breaks the law in order to try and bring about change in the measures taken by a government in a coercive, yet non-violent manner.'

It is important to note that this is *demonstrative action*, in other words it should not take place in secret as in the case of tax evasion. The action further has a *coercive character*, it instigates actions which the government finds irritating, such as sit-in strikes, hunger strikes, boycotts against shopkeepers, disruptions of traffic, and not only peaceful protest marches of which government does not take a blind bit of notice. In the third place civil disobedience envisages *non-violent* action. I say explicitly envisages, because in practice intended non-violent actions often culminate in violence. Precisely because this is an act of disobedience, the dividing line between non-violence and violence is often very vague. Whoever disrupts traffic should not be surprised if it causes emotions to boil over, so that in the end cars are set on fire and shops are damaged. Those who commit civil disobedience are naturally not simply devils, but at the same time they are not exactly angels either.

We can confirm this from the history of three of the greatest proponents of non-violent civil disobedience, viz. Mahatma Gandhi (in India, against British colonialism), Martin Luther King (in the USA) and Kenneth David Kaunda (in the Rhodesian independence struggle following UDI).

Added to this we have to say that civil disobedience is only possible under governments where an awareness of freedom and democracy has been retained. Under a dictatorship, a totalitarian government, it is impossible to disobey the laws of the land and remain alive.

As a result of the fact that no man or no government is perfect, it is, thus very important that each government (for the sake of its subjects - but also for its own sake!) should leave open as many channels of peaceful protest as possible. Such channels provide an escape valve. A government which

resolutely closes down the channels is looking for violent resistance against its rule, as this becomes the only recourse the citizens have.

I would like to recapitulate what I have said so far with regard to the government:

1. God appoints people as office-bearers, government in the case of the state, who have to serve the citizens according to his will and (apart from the citizens) also owe Him an accounting.
2. The service of the government consists of its guiding the citizens in such a way that their calling as citizens can be fulfilled, and that that which is wrong and which stands in the way of fulfilment can be opposed.
3. The norm for the fulfilment of calling in the case of the state is justice towards all the citizens.
4. The government may not unnecessarily intrude in the spheres of other societal relations and so presume a totalitarian authority.
5. A government also may not oppress basic rights of citizens such as public expression of opinion. It can be to the good of the government itself if ways are always left open for the citizens to express their dissatisfaction with government in a peaceful manner.
6. For the exercise of authority the government has received a special power from God - the might of the sword. If forced to exercise its power in a violent manner, it should, however, always be a matter of constructive or positive and not destructive or negative power. Stated differently: it should promote and not destroy public justice.
7. Should a government neglect its calling, or even forget it altogether, it should be reminded of its calling by other societal relations (such as, for example, the church) or by its subjects.
For the Christian this protest (or even rebellion) against the abuse of the office of government will be done in a peaceful manner. All legal ways of protest should be tried first. Should this not succeed nothing remains but non-violent civil disobedience.
8. The big question now remains as to what might happen if the government should remain blind and deaf to entreaties; if it keeps making empty promises which again and again culminate in nothing; if it is paralysed by a cowardly fear of restrictive influences in its own ranks; if continually it keeps ascribing the cause of the unrest to communist agitation and not be willing to accept that the cause of the problem lies not in Moscow but in Pretoria; if civil disobedience is frowned upon because it endangers law and order.

Such a government should not be surprised if law and order finally evades it altogether because it has been deaf to pleas and entreaties for justice.

5. What Is the calling of the subject or the citizen?

It is not only the government that has duties towards its subjects, but the subjects clearly also have

duties towards the government. Let us talk about this briefly before touching on the main point. I would like to direct attention to the *Christian* subject's responsibility.

I am not going to refer yet again to such well-known things as that the subject should bend the knee to the government (not uncritically), that he should respect (even though they are unjust) the government and pay, in direct obedience to God's command, the taxes of the government.

1. The Christian citizen may never be involved with violence in the same way that he is involved in peace: God is a God of peace (2 Corinthians 13:11), Christ is the Lord of Peace (Isaiah 9:5) and his gospel is a gospel of peace (Ephesians 2:17). Peace, however, does not simply mean the maintaining of the existing status quo but the upholding of God's peace.

2. The believer has to be an example of love and conciliation: 'Call down blessings on your persecutors, blessings, not curses' (Romans 12:14). Even though it might be very difficult, we may never tire of doing good (2 Thessalonians 3:13).

3. We have to help all people, but special care has to be lavished on the poor, the dispossessed, and the suffering (1 Corinthians 8-9) - also to structures which in many cases are the causes of the suffering and poverty.

I have read through the Bible, I have prayed along with its pages, and I have thought on it long and hard, and I have no doubt that the believers first responsibility is to be on the side of the poor, the little, the widows, the orphans, the oppressed, the exploited, the rejected of society - and to help them.

4. The believing citizen may never stop praying: 'First of all then I urge that petitions, prayers, intercessions and thanksgiving be offered for all men; for sovereigns, and all in high office, that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in full observance of religion and high standards of morality' (1 Timothy 2:1-2). Have we tried to think how difficult it must be to sit in high office in South Africa at present? Do we still realise the strength of prayer in effecting change? (James 5:16).

5. The believer may also never neglect his prophetic calling as citizen. He has this calling not only in his capacity as subject or citizen in relation to government, but also to other subjects; not only towards white citizens, but also toward black, poor and rich, weak and strong, believers and non-believers. The Old Testament prophets can be an example to us in this. They made audible their stringent criticism not only to other nations, but also did not spare their own nation and rulers. A government is simply a reflection of the nation, and a nation 'deserves' the government that it has.

In South Africa too we should not hesitate to address the government in the name of God, to reveal abuses and excesses of power committed by the SAP, the SADF *and* the dangers of the counter-violence of the ANC and the AWB (or the White Wolves). The big question is whether we indeed have a politics of justice or a politics of injustice. Politics which degrades human dignity runs counter to God's Word.

This Word has to be applied to our situation with *greater courage, more openly* and especially *more concretely* from our pulpits and church meetings.

We should never under-estimate the strength of God's Word. It can lance open sin, so that healing becomes possible. It has greater healing power than the theology of revolution or white theology, and has more dynamic force than an R4 or an AK47.

6. I am of the opinion that we should also gain clarity in South Africa about the relationship between the church (or let us say Christianity, which is more than the church) and the state (or politics).

We may certainly not *mix* the two or *identify* them. Then it is all too easy to get to the point where support for Christendom means support for the political establishment - and vice versa Or - if you don't support the political status quo - it becomes a matter of betraying the Christian faith.

We are however, also not allowed to *separate* them or to *oppose* them, so that no influence can emanate from the church towards the state and so that anything that has to do with politics is automatically regarded as bad.

We may not mix, identify or separate these two entities, but should clearly *distinguish* between them. Church and state are independent entities but they are not isolated from each other and may exhort each other to reform.

7. All possible (permissible) means should be used to change the present situation to a just and peaceful society. Here I would like to direct myself to the oppressors and towards the privileged - therefore also to myself. An *oppressor* is somebody who actively uses existing structures to commit injustices to his own advantage and to the detriment of others. A *privileged person* is not necessarily somebody who had a hand in the creation of an unjust structure, and he does not use the structure consciously to his own advantage. But, it is still the duty of *both the privileged and the exploiter* to end the injustice. Injustice should not only be ended when the exploited as a last resort turns to violence.

8. In the final instance it is the duty of (especially Christians) to keep on talking - as we are doing

here today. If Christians cannot reach out to each other there is little hope left for South Africa.

6. Where do we stand in South Africa at this stage?

We have landed in a society full of violence. There is the oppressive, structural violence on the side of the government. The 'revolutionaries' respond to this with self-defensive, liberating violence.

We are doing exactly what God forbade us to do: we are paying violence with violence. For Christians this is indeed a tragic hour, because we know that Christ spoke a true word when He said that all those who live by the sword would die by the sword (Matthew 26:25).

We all share in the guilt. And yet as believers we feel that we cannot choose between the two extremes of governmental violence and counter-violence. We cannot declare government violence sinful and yet sanctify revolutionary bombs - just as little as we can justify state violence and call every form of liberation theology Marxist. Because both are forms of violence and the one is no *better*, in Scriptural terms, than the other. (I do have the feeling, though, that state violence is far *more dangerous* than counter-violence because of the means that it has at its disposal.)

Christians are people of the Way (cf. Acts 9:2; 19:9, 23; 22:4 & 24:14) - the Third Way. We should therefore let ourselves be heard on both sides -even though this is very difficult, because both sides might regard us as traitors to the cause. We have to say to both the government and those who oppose it that violence is wrong, and that it is never the solution.

To the South African government we also have to say that a government that does not recognise its limits and uses unwarranted violence will be forced, as is happening now, to become ever more violent. No end is so elevated that it justifies any means - even violence. The road back is difficult, but not impossible. Please re-open the avenues of peaceful protest. Listen to all the citizens. Suspend the banning of the ANC and talk to them, then the reason for their going over to violence after being essentially a peaceful movement will be removed.

Those who are guilty of counter-violence should also heed a warning. It is easy to commit the first deed of violence. But afterwards it becomes ever harder to stop. If the government does not capture you and hang you, your own people might kill you as a traitor because you do not wish to continue on this way. You will - if you survive - have to sustain your efforts until the government has been overthrown. And how much pain and suffering will have to ensue before this happens? Where do you draw the line? At first only hard (military) targets, now already soft targets (women, children, civilians) - even your own people!

As Christians we have to say to both sides that we *understand* why they have gone so far. I understand the fear of the Whites; I also understand the frustrations of my Black compatriots - even though I might not approve of the methods used.

7. Conclusion

No statesman after Gandhi has been such a passionate subscriber to non-violence as the president of Zambia, Dr. Kenneth Kaunda. He was an admirer of Gandhi and he is a true Christian. He also saw to it that Zambia obtained its independence practically without bloodshed. In his book *Kaunda on Violence* (1980) he describes, however, how he was torn between his passion for justice in Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) and his faith in non-violence. He was finally forced to relinquish his lifelong views and to accept to inevitability of armed struggle in Zimbabwe. I quote only one passage from this book:

‘I ended up supporting armed struggle in Zimbabwe because I could no longer believe that *anything* is preferable to the use of force. I have been much taken with some words of a Victorian writer, Douglas Jerrold: ‘We love peace as we abhor pusillanimity; but not peace at any price. There is a peace more destructive of the manhood of living man than war is destructive of his body. Chains are worse than bayonets.’ Yes, if one must make the terrible choice, I do believe that chains are worse than bayonets. We never had the luxury of choosing between the strategies of perfection and those of harsh realism. We never had any option but to weigh up one form of evil against another and ask for God’s forgiveness as we undertook to do what had to be done.’

I can understand why Kaunda - a man for whom I have a profound respect - should have made this decision.

We should not only *understand*, however. We should also *do* something. President Kaunda inscribed the following in one of the books he gave me (4/8/1987): ‘The march to one South Africa and one nation is on, and the outcome will depend on what every one of us does.’ In an inscription in another book he offers a key to a better South Africa: ‘There is an inner voice that defies all forms of description in all those who share genuine love with others.’

We have forgotten that love is the *most* and the *strongest* of all things: much stronger than the greatest fear and the most profound hatred.

On the same occasion the wise Zambian Christian statesman, when I asked how he perceived

our task as Christian academics in South Africa, answered as follows: 'You must return to South Africa. Do not become terrorists. Open the eyes of your students so that they can see.' This is perhaps the profoundest calling that we have yet had as Christians in South Africa: to open our own eyes and the eyes of others to (1) the realities in which we find ourselves, and (2) for the clear norms which God gives us in his Word.

When we left President Kaunda, he would not let us go before playing us a melody on his electric organ and singing a hymn in his vernacular (Bemba). Upon enquiry, it appeared that the content of the song had been a prayer that the Holy Spirit should fill us with strength for the task ahead.

Why should we not do the same when we leave here today? I can think of no more suitable hymn than '*Nkosi sikele' l'Afrika*. It is a song which speaks from and to the heart of Africa We sing it in spite of the fact that it is often politicized by Blacks and misunderstood by Whites.

God save Africa
Let her glory be raised
Hear our Prayers
O Lord, do bless us,
her children.

God save Africa
Let her glory be raised
Hear our prayers
O Lord, do bless us,
her children.

Come Spirit, come, come
Come Spirit, come, come
Come Spirit, most Holy one,
O Lord, do bless us,
her children.

God save our nation
Bring an end to fights and sufferings.
Save her,
Save her,

Save her, o Lord
Our nation,
Nation of Africa

So let it be
So let it be
For ever and ever,
For ever and ever,
Up to eternity.

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