

Incarnational Reality
as an Approach to Missional Theological Education and Training

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this thesis, using a Living Theory methodology, was to confirm if my own approach of Incarnational Reality to missional theological education and training results in transformative learning for my students. This approach has come out of my own experience which I define as *'God in loving union with us, the embodiment of spiritual reality enfleshed through our lives, empowered by the Holy Spirit in our participation and engagement with God in the world'*. I present this as a Pentecostal pastor and missionary, with a belief that God can be encountered in the immediate world, and human beings can encounter God. My experience, background and training influenced my approach of Incarnational Reality, and the compilation of my holistic, integrated curriculum within the dichotomies and varying perspectives presented by different denominations, Christian communities and cultures. During my missionary service of over 35 years, I have been involved in training mission workers among the poor and marginalised wherever I have been located. I have endeavoured to impart Incarnational Reality through the Holy Given International School of Missions which I direct in various nations.

The literature review provides insight into trends and developments in missional theological education and training since the first age of Christian history. It draws broadly on wide-ranging literature in missional theological education and identifies the strengths and weaknesses of the church's approach to missional theological education and training. Key themes and principles which informed the development of my own Incarnational Reality approach to missional theological education and training have been identified and discussed.

I have drawn insights from a range of methodologies and theories, and have woven together hermeneutics, phenomenology, ethnography, narrative disciplines and transformative learning perspectives in a Living Theory methodology, which has allowed me to draw from my own mission experience in confirming my Incarnational Reality approach to missional theological education and training.

The value and contribution of Incarnational Reality as an approach to missional theological education and training has been confirmed as students described transformative learning experiences and understanding of concepts taught through the Holy Given curriculum, community living, worship (including communal, participative, spontaneous and indigenous worship), and outreach. The results of this research highlighted that the pedagogical role and ministry of the Holy Spirit is the epistemological key in facilitating transformative learning (John 20:21-2). This does not happen in isolation, but in relationship – human with the divine, and humans with one another. This study also identified areas for improvement and development of my own practice and that of my teaching staff. This research is a rich picture of my own mission context and practice and has allowed me to make assertions and knowledge claims regarding the transfer of my practice, values and beliefs to generations of future mission workers.