

MISSION IN A "NARCISSISED" CONTEXT: THE DYNAMICS OF "POST-TRUTH ERA TO MISSION"

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Abstract:

The difficulties confronting mission in our modern world is what Keane (2017) calls "pathologizing lying" characterized by the spirit of fake news, distortion of reality and purposeless dishonesty (Peters 2018). These new challenges make the church appear vulnerable, wounded and irrelevant. The narcissistic, compulsive and habitual untruthfulness that distort empirical facts orchestrated by those who intend to achieve certain political objectives, manipulating public opinion through fabrication of false narratives has the effect of suffocating true order. This new activity appeals to broad base of all communities because of the globalized media and the false promises that it makes.

The term "post-truth era" gained its prominence in 2016 when Oxford English Dictionaries cited it as the Word of the Year (Keane 2017). The concept, according scholars is a public burial of "objective facts" by an avalanche of political and religious distortion of reality. In today's world deceiving others has become a norm, a game, and, ultimately eroded the foundation of trust that underlines any healthy community and communication. The resultant effect of the phenomenon is that high-profile people such as journalists, politicians, priests and pastors that should earn the trust of the ordinary people are under suspicion.

The church as a messenger of the good tidings is in a volatile age, where reality is designed to fit the competing ideologies. Mission without integrity, self-denying honesty threatens the very foundations of its tenets. Mission succeeds where intimacy, transforming agency and trust are built and truthfulness is its very axiom. The normalization of false perceptions and addict pursuance of global consumerism that does not fight the structural falsehood and social sin is incompatible with the spirit of mission.