

Issues in Global Theological Education : The ‘North – South Divide’

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Chris Wright

International Director : Langham Partnership International

A. Some biblical and theological dimensions

The ‘divide’ is not new; as early as the New Testament church itself. Note some aspects of early Christian response to disparity and diversity.

1. The commitment to equity among believers
2. The poly-centric nature of the church and multi-directional nature of mission
3. Theology and ethics across the divides

B. Historical and contemporary observations

1. Positive changes in last 40 years
2. Majority World Christianity getting ‘noticed’ in the west
3. Divide no longer merely ‘North South’, but within South itself
4. ‘Seeking a new equilibrium’ (Doug Birdsall)

C. Some strategic reflections

1. Build on strength, while strengthening the weak
2. Recognize that the 'divide' is more than merely economic
3. Educate the West / North – for its own long-term good
4. Accept mutual prophetic critique – offering judgment *and* hope
5. Define and discern excellence in theological education, with generic constants and cultural variables
6. Celebrate our diversity and capitalize on it in theological education
7. Utilize globalization; without either idolizing, or demonizing, it.

D. Some practical suggestions

1. At student level
2. At faculty level
3. At institutional level
4. Dissemination of theological discourse and its fruits