

Response

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I agree with Rev Thomas that globalisation can swallow us and make us timid and drown our voices until, too tired of not being heard, we fall silent. In this respect, we need to ask ourselves; if we are partners in this global village, do our partners consider the issue of individual differences within a “village”? How does a village treat a toddler, a child, a teenager, a young adult in a village setting? We need to ask ourselves other questions as well: In this “global village” at what stage of development are we? How long do we perceive ourselves to stay in that stage of development? What kind of nutritional diets do we need to consume so that proper development will take place that enables us to be of equal stature with other global village players? We need to know that the diet of a toddler is different from that of a five year old and that of a young adult. Let us analyse carefully and thoroughly our developmental needs. This will enable us to equate ourselves with other bulls in the global village so that when we bellow, our voices will not be drowned.

Rev Thomas is right in saying that we are like a bull strong, courageous, and filled with the same power of the God who saves all mankind. Yet we are falling silent. If the reason, as he puts it, is because we are not being heard, we need to ask ourselves the question why we are not being heard. When children talk to us through crying, we hear the language even more clearly than some of the words they say when they are mature enough to talk. How have we communicated our messages that we are not being heard? If we must continue to bellow, we must choose the tune that identifies our bellow so that we may be heard.

I agree with Rev Thomas that globalisation has impacted the way we do theology and education in the Church and he is citing at least three ways. The first one is easier communication via electronic mail. While this is true, one question that comes to my mind is, what percent of our population is impacted by this technology? How do those who have access to this technology share the knowledge gained with those who have not? Is this technology widening the gaps within the African village between the haves and the have-nots? How do we prepare our population to go out and share

with those who do not have this opportunity? Secondly, Rev Thomas is addressing the issue of having the possibility of a uniform level of instruction that could be maintained on a global scale. While that is true, I caution that there is a possibility of individuals ignoring diversity of cultures, levels of living, and many other factors that, if ignored, could result in cultural trauma and lack of initiatives and development. We need to identify diversity and embrace those diversities among us. Thirdly, Rev Thomas indicates that it is now easier to share information that could contribute to soundness of holiness theology and the effectiveness of education done by the Church of the Nazarene as a global role player. While I agree with him, I have my concerns that those who have access to this information, those who are imparting it, as well as those adopting it from one global village corner to another, must consider the different geographical and environmental conditions that the information must be subjected to so that it can be interpreted and interpolated to suit the local situations.

Rev Thomas addressed the issue of the Church resources base being in the USA. While that is the case and while it is human to share the resources others have, we need to also ask the question what our responsibility is in receiving these gifts. Is it our responsibility to receive the gifts so as to give us strength to produce ours that will make it possible to also share them in 10 years to come, or must we be expecting to be given those resources in 20 years to come? What is the target date that we must set for ourselves to be givers of services to the needy? We need to create our own strategy that will ensure that this receiving of gifts does not last forever.

On the issue that education does not bite, I need to say that in order for our people to embrace a true transformation that will give them humility, there is need to have our African and may I say Nazarene Church leaders to live by example. I am reminded here of one incident that happened in Congo many years ago where a church minister (a missionary) shared the bread during the holy communion and the congregation could not understand why they shared bread only during the holy communion but could not share it after church at this missionary's home. Does it mean that sharing is confined only **inside** the Church and not extended **outside** the Church? What about the other facets of our lives? Do we tend to categorize jobs and people we associate with and jobs and roles we perform in our Churches and communities?

I am not sure if I understand Rev Thomas as saying that the Church hierarchy is created by material possession. If that is the case, then it is very unfortunate. What we need to teach our people is to experience self worth. You may have much. Yet the more you get the more dissatisfied you may become. We thank God for those brothers and sisters in the Church in the USA who share, not because they have enough, but because God has created in them the heart of caring and willingness to share with others the little or much they have. Likewise, let us stop talking about how little we have, but talk about how much we have to share with others like the widow in the Bible who shared her little flour with prophet Elijah. Yes indeed! It is time for us Africans to start sharing the little we have and God will bless us. What will drown us will come from within us more than from without. If within us we are confident that our contribution matters, then it does not matter how little we contribute towards helping others. We need to ask ourselves what measure we use to compare our worth. I believe that if we value our possessions as God given, then even with our mud huts, we will create a different image of ourselves. By so doing we will stop belittling what we are and adopt a positive image of ourselves.

I agree with Rev Thomas that we need to bellow loudly but at the same time, we need to ask ourselves: “how shall we bellow?” When we bellow, what voice do we transmit? Are we confident of our voices or are we already starting with the assumptions that our voices will be considered primitive or inferior? If that is where we are starting from, then I say, let us pause and gather courage and confidence, then bellow.

When we look at other nations such as China and Japan today, we see that they are bellowing their own way. Although for a long time their technologies were considered inferior, they knew that they had to bellow their own tunes. That is why we are witnessing today their technologies having dominated the global market. We need to ask ourselves why are the Chinese and Japanese not viewed as primitive when they approach their economies in unique ways that meet their needs. We need to convince ourselves that we are self-worthy and that our methods of doing things and our lifestyles are not primitive. To me, a primitive way of life is that which does not embrace rational behaviour and it is not limited to “Africanism”.