

La Educación Teológica en Guatemala - Synopsis of Article

By Scott Meador

Guatemala is a place of great contrast and challenge. This is also true in education. Adult illiteracy hangs around 32% of the thirteen million inhabitants despite the existence of 12 universities and a multitude of public and private high schools and vocational schools in the capital city.

The major challenges that make up the environment of theological education in Guatemala include poverty, the effects of globalization, and linguistic, ethnic and cultural diversity. For example, in addition to the official Spanish language there are twenty three officially recognized Amerindian languages in Guatemala. This diversity continually challenges theological education, which the author says has to be continually adapted and applied to the needs and realities of the context. Rev. Alvarado argues that theological education in Guatemala is experiencing a renewed focus on the inter relationship between scientific thought and faith. He says if theology is the science of faith, then faith must think so that reason may believe.

Theological education is also shifting in its structure from resident to semi resident or extension programs, and in pedagogy, from a unidirectional approach to the instructor as facilitator or guide. Theological education in the Guatemalan context clearly understands the need to combine theoretical knowledge with experience based learning. One of the author's major concerns is that theological education, as a tool for pastoral training, respond to the actual needs and realities of current and future congregations. While Seminaries and Bible Institutes have historically carried the weight in

pastoral training, currently two Guatemalan evangelical universities with theological faculties are responding to the call for a greater sense of professionalism in the Guatemalan pastorate.

The author of this article, Rev. Hugo Alvarado, is a graduate of Nazarene Theological Seminary of Guatemala, and holds a Masters degree in theological studies from the Pan American University, a Guatemalan evangelical university. He pastors the San José Las Rosas church in Guatemala City, and is a part time faculty member at NTS of Guatemala.

Synopsis of "La Educación Teológica en Guatemala"
Scott Meador
TBD