**Prof. CJS Lombaard**

Abstract

The heritage of German liberal theology in the 19h century led, in reaction, to American fundamentalist theology in the 20th century. Whereas mainstream academic theology has for the greater part left behind these two relatively stark extremes of constructing the relationship between reason and metaphysics, church theology often still reflects aspects of this earlier conservatism, and broader societal circles often still reflects aspects of this earlier theological liberalism. (Seldom the other way round.) Yet, already decades ago one of the most influential missiologists of the late 20th - early 21st century, David Bosch, had pointed out that such distinctions no longer hold any water. That insight is here developed further, particularly for our currently unfolding “post-secular”, or perhaps better-termed “religiously-realist”, age, which age will, all things being equal, increasingly characterise the rest of this century. Both these older forms of, respectively, conservatism and liberalism, reflect too little faith — with faith being a core characteristic of our species. Our human reality is filled with religion, if we simply care to notice it. This faith-drenched human experience is a fuller, more comprehensive existence, in which religiosities (spiritualities, faiths, metaphysics) concretely abound. A realist perspective on humanity acknowledges this, which acknowledgement alters understanding our matrix of existence, towards our more faith-positive and more religiously pluralist unfolding times.