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NET Newsletter - No. 14 – April 2010

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Introduction

More than a million pastors and evangelists in the Southern Hemisphere are not able to enroll in theological education. These people work during the day, and at night it is too far or not safe enough for them to attend an educational institution. In many cases, there is no well-founded school in the area at all, or people simply cannot afford it.

Therefore, NET wants to facilitate theological institutions and missionary organisations by offering digital theological online education, often combined with local meetings. This will enable Christians at home and abroad to have the education so badly needed for their work in their congregations, next to their commitments to church, work, and family! Right from the start, NET has cooperated with (international) missionary organisations and local Bible schools. The main objective of our foundation is to make reliable theological education accessible worldwide through Internet technology. For that purpose, NET offers three services: access to a user-friendly electronic learning environment, didactic supervision, and digital theological materials.

From the (new) president

"First of all, a hearty thank-you to my predecessor Maarten Burggraaf. He was president from the time NET was founded in 2006 and executed his office in an excellent way. Therefore, we are happy that he wanted to stay on as secretary to the board. Personally, I find it an honour and a joy to be NET president and in this way put my knowledge and experience in missionary work in the service of NET. I am amazed to see how much interest there already is in NET activities. One of the most beautiful things, in my opinion, is that the Internet, which also raises questions and quite rightly so, can now be a means through which God's Kingdom may grow. What unprecedented opportunities to equip Christians worldwide, but especially in the South, and to train them to become pastors, evangelists, youth workers, etc. Christians who could not receive this training otherwise. Thus, the commission to 'teach all nations' is taking shape in unexpected ways. May we count on your prayers and donations?"



Gert Nieuwenhuis

Cooperation with Center for Biblical Studies

While there are many Bible-based exegetic materials available in English, this is not the case for the Spanish-speaking world. Relatively speaking, there are few reliable theological materials available in this world language.



For that reason a cooperation agreement was signed with the Center for Biblical Studies at the end of March. The purpose behind this cooperation is to enable theological institutions in Latin America to make use of the Spanish-language version of the online Study Bible. This will become available shortly. A Dutch product is however not really suitable for use in another culture, and that is why cooperation with theological institutions in Latin America is so important. In addition, NET partners in Latin America will be enabled to supplement the Study Bible online with recent and contextualized exegesis. Cooperation between NET and the Center for Biblical Studies can provide communication possibilities and exegetical schooling in a digital way. In time, it may be considered to make the exegesis available in print.

From our partners

NET works together with partner organizations in the Netherlands, North America, and Latin America. In the next months, new agreements will be signed with partners from Namibia (NETS/GZB), Mexico, and the Netherlands, to mention but a few. We are also engaged in talks with diaconal missionary organizations that could implement NET technology in order to improve the capacity of their partners in developing countries.

In collaboration with Overseas Council (OCI), a conference will be held in Quito, Ecuador, on 12 and 13 April, Lord willing. The goal of this conference is to exchange experience and knowledge, which already happens at various theological institutions in Latin America, and to introduce new implementation roadmaps at new organizations. Fifteen theological institutions will participate, including representatives from the *Academy for Theology* at Ede Christian University.

Spanish Evangelical Missions made an extensive digital collection of theological materials available to NET so that they may be shared with its Spanish-speaking partners in Latin America. They will be presented at the conference in April.

For more information on all our partners, please visit our website www.netfoundation.nl

Technology

To enable distance learning effectively you will need proper technology. Criteria for the selection of the learning management systems of NET foundation have been: user friendly, worldwide available (in the cloud or SaaS), no local maintenance, available in the main languages and including key functionality regarding the configuration of flexible learning processes, communication and tutoring. So far our chosen technology, it's Learning, has been offering a complete set of features, lately including individual learning plan, web 2.0 integrations, portfolio, study guide, absence module, tests with wide varieties of question types, audio and video recording, web conference, etc.

Coming months (starting in April) new versions of it's Learning will become available including functions related to: site specific and flexible definable portals (dashboard), sharing of contents with other users/sites, new tutoring module, use of whiteboard in conferences and last but not least conditional or sequential learning (e.g. a new learning process only becomes available once the previous one has been successfully finished). We will keep you informed!

Contact

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