


# Stephan Joubert festschrift: From timely exegesis to contemporary ecclesiology – Relevant hermeneutics and provocative embodiment of faith in a Corona-defined world

**Author:**Willem H. Oliver<sup>1</sup> **Affiliation:**

<sup>1</sup>Department of Christian Spirituality, Church History and Missiology, School of Humanities, University of South Africa, Pretoria, South Africa

**Corresponding author:**

Willem Oliver,  
wh.oliver@outlook.com

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With this *Special Collection* of *HTS Theological Studies*, we want to honour Stephan J. Joubert, a South African scholar of high calibre. Most of his personal details are included in the first article of this *Special Collection*, in which Prof Joubert answers questions asked by Prof Jan van der Watt, a big friend of his, about himself and his work. A variety of other scholars from South Africa as well as abroad have contributed to this *Collection* in order to pay tribute to Prof Joubert for all the contributions that he has already made to theology in academic circles, Bible translations, theology for society and on the electronic platform *ekerk*. His contribution with *ekerk*, which he founded 17 years ago, especially makes him a key figure in the application of electronic media for the Christian religion in our country. As a big part of the Christian church in South Africa is still stuck in the paper era, and is still focused on personal contact – face-to-face – the implementation and execution of *annus virtualis*, specifically during the COVID-19 pandemic era, is a frightening idea for many preachers, but not for him. Interestingly, those who have already taken the step of delivering virtual sermons, for instance, will never look back again because of the high success rate thereof.

Apart from everything being stated in the above-mentioned article, Prof Joubert is also a prolific international guest speaker, having delivered guest lectures at the Christian University of St. Petersburg (July 1995; July 1998), in Würzburg, Germany (January to December 1997), Wuppertal, Germany (December 2001 to January 2002) and at the Department of Early Christian Studies at the Radboud University in the Netherlands (April 2014, April 2016). He also serves as a board member of the Spirit Venture Ministries (USA) of Prof Leonard Sweet and is a trustee of the Mergon Foundation, Stellenbosch (South Africa).

Despite being an outstanding academic and a leading figure in electronic media for the Christian religion in South Africa, Prof Stephan Joubert is a very humble, down to earth person, always willing to give advice and help someone in need – a very good example of a servant leader. These characteristics are what God expects from people who are serving him full-time in his ministry. We are really expecting many more books, articles and *ekerk* activities from Prof Joubert in future. Thank you for being such a good example for every one of us!

**Note:** Special Collection: From timely exegesis to contemporary ecclesiology: Relevant hermeneutics and provocative embodiment of faith in a Corona-defined world – Festschrift for Stephan Joubert, sub-edited by Willem Oliver (University of South Africa).