

NED GERE
TEOLOGIESE
TYDSKRIF

DEEL 51 NOMMERS 3 & 4 SEPTEMBER & DESEMBER 2010

Redaksie: Proff P Coertzen (redakteur), HL Bosman, JH Cilliers, R Venter en DP Veldsman.
Adres van redaksie: NGTT, Die Kweekskool, Dorpstraat 171, Stellenbosch 7600 (Posadres: NGTT, Fakulteit Teologie, P/sak X1, Matieland 7602; e-posadres: ngtt@sun.ac.za.)
<http://academic.sun.ac.za/theology/NGTT.htm>

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Van die redaksie

Ontvang hiermee die tweede uitgawe van die Nederduitse Gereformeerde Teologiese Tydskrif vir 2010. Baie dankie aan die skrywers vir hulle bydraes en mag u as leser groot baat vind by die teologiese navorsing en nadenke wat in al die artikels neerslag gevind het.

Op 7 Julie 2010 is prof Flip Theron na 'n lang en harde stryd teen kanker oorlede. Ons bid sy eggenote Marianne, hulle kinders, kleinkinders en ander familielede die vertroosting van die Here God toe. Prof Theron was 'n baie getroue medewerker van die NGTT. By die Fakulteit in Pretoria is prof Will Vosloo, emeritus hoogleraar ook in die afgelope jaar oorlede, terwyl dr David Keta in Bloemfontein na 'n lang siekbed in Junie oorlede is. Ons meegvoel en gebed om vertroosting gaan ook uit na die dierbares van hierdie kollegas. Ons het ook met leedwese kennis geneem dat dr Callie Hugo op Saterdag 24 Oktober 2010 gedurende die nag in sy slaap oorlede is. Die laaste artikel van dr Hugo verskyn in hierdie uitgawe. Hy het homself bewys as 'n baie bekwame medewerker van die NGTT. Dr Hugo se vader het self ook vanaf 1949-1988 in die bediening gestaan. Ons innige meegevoel gaan uit na al sy dierbares, mag die Here hulle vertrous deur sy Gees.

By al drie die fakulteite is daar ook gedurende 2009-2010 nuwe aanstellings gemaak. Ons verwelkom graag die volgende kollegas by die onderskeie fakulteite en in hulle onderskeie vakgebiede. Stellenbosch: Dr Mary-Anne Plaatjies van Huffel (Ekklesiologie), Prof Julie Claassens (Ou Testament met spesiale opdrag: Bevordering van Menswaardigheid) en Me Chantelle Weber (Jeugwerk). Pretoria: Dr Sias Meyer (Ou Testament), Prof Cas Wepener (Praktiese Teologie), Prof ST Kgatla (Godsdienst- en Sendingwetenskap) en Dr V Velleem (Dogmatiek en Christelike Etiek). Bloemfontein: Dr Gordon Dames en ds Joseph Pali (Praktiese Teologie).

Dit is ook met hartseer dat ons die volgende kollegas groet wat gedurende die afgelope jaar afgetree het. Stellenbosch: Proff Daniël Louw en Jurgens Hendriks. Pretoria: Proff Jurie le Roux en Etienne de Villiers. Bloemfontein: Proff Faan Riekert en Johan Janse van Rensburg. Ons hartlike dankie ook aan hierdie kollegas vir hulle medewerking met die NGTT. Ons het ook kennis geneem dat prof Dolf Britz voltyds aangestel is in die Direktoraat vir Institusionele Navorsing en Akademiese Beplanning aan die Universiteit van die Vrystaat. Hy is voortaan slegs gedeeltelik verbonde aan die Fakulteit Teologie.

Dr Gerrit Brand is in die afgelope weke aangewys as die nuwe redakteur van die NGTT. Ons wens hom graag baie geluk met die benoeming en bid hom sterkte en wysheid toe vir hierdie taak.

Daarmee groet ondergetekende as redakteur. Dit was 'n voorreg om hierdie werk te kon doen. Baie dankie aan almal wat saamgewerk het.

Ek bid graag vir al die lesers en medewerkers 'n baie geseënde Kerksfees toe en mag die nuwe jaar ewe-eens in die teken van die Here se genade en seën staan.

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Desember 2010

Religion and the common good in a pluralistic society: Reformed theological perspectives

ABSTRACT

This article is about religion and the common good in a pluralistic society. It is argued with the pluralistic society of South Africa in mind. The theme is further argued against the background of reformed theology and asks about the contribution that reformed theology can make towards the common good in a pluralistic society.

Hierdie artikel is oor die rol van godsdiens in 'n pluralistiese samelewing. Die redenasies vind plaas teen die agtergrond van die Suid-Afrikaanse samelewing. Die beredenering vind ook plaas teen die agtergrond van Gereformeerde teologie en die vraag word gevra watter bydrae Gereformeerde teologie kan maak tot die algemene welsyn in 'n pluralistiese samelewing.

1. THE SOUTH AFRICAN SCENE

South Africa is indeed a country of many pluralities – there is a plurality of peoples, a plurality of languages, and a plurality of religions as can be seen from the following figures.

1.1 Plurality of peoples

Total population: 47,9 million

Black: 38 million (80%)

White: 4,35 million (9,1%)

Brown: 4,2 million (8,9%)

Indian: 1,2 million (2,5%)

1.2 Plurality of languages

1.2.1 Eleven official languages

1.2.2 Languages spoken in households:

IsiZulu: 23,8%

IsiXhosa: 17,6%

Afrikaans: 13,3%

Sepedi: 9,4%

Setswana: 8,2%

English: 8,2%

Sesotho: 7,9%

Xitsonga: 4,4%

Siswati: 2,7%

Tshivenda: 2,3%

IsiNdebele: 1,6%

Other: 0,5%

1.2.3 English

Language of

- Trade and Commerce
- Science (?)
- Anchor language of the government?
- Mother tongue speakers: 8,2%

1.3 Plurality of Religions

1.3.1 Christianity is the majority religion in South Africa – Christians: 79,8% (2001 census)

1.3.2 Jewish: 0,2%

1.2.3 Islam: 1,1%

1.2.4 Hinduism: 1,3%

1.2.5 Buddhism: 0,1%

1.2.6 African indigenous: 12% of Africa's total population (70 million members)

1.2.7 No religion: 1,2%

1.4 The position of Christianity

Within Christianity there is no majority denomination

1.4.1 Mainstream Churches: 39%

Reformed: 7,2%

Anglican: 3,8%

Methodist: 7,4%

Lutheran: 2,5%

Presbyterian: 1,9%

Congregational: 1,4%

Roman Catholic: 8,9%

1.4.2 Pentecostal churches: 7,3%

1.4.3 Other Churches: 12%

1.4.4 African Independent Churches: 40,8%

2. CLASH OR DIALOGUE AND CO-OPERATION?

The term “the clash of civilizations” was first used 1990 by Bernard Lewis in an article titled *The Roots of Muslim Rage* (*The Atlantic Monthly*, September, 1990). In 1992 Samuel P. Huntington in a lecture at the American Enterprise Institute formulated his theory of a *clash of civilizations* that he then developed further in an article *The Clash of Civilizations?* (*Foreign Affairs* Vol 72, No 3, (Summer, 1993), pp 22-49). In his lecture and article Huntington responded to Francis Fukuyama's book *The End of History and the Last Man* (1992). In his article Huntington writes, “It is my hypothesis that the fundamental source of conflict in this new world (the world after the Cold War) will not be primarily ideological or primarily economic. The great divisions among humankind and the dominating source of conflict will be cultural. Nation states will remain the most powerful actors in world affairs, but the principle conflicts of global politics will occur between nations and groups of different civilizations. The clash of civilizations will dominate global politics. The fault lines between civilizations will be the battle lines of the future” (Huntington, 1993:22). About civilization Huntington writes, “A civilization is a cultural entity. Villages, regions, ethnic groups, nationalities, religious groups, all have distinct cultures at different levels of cultural heterogeneity.” A civilization is thus the highest cultural grouping of people and the broadest level of cultural identity people have short of that which distinguishes

humans from other species. It is defined both by common objective elements, such as language, history, religion, customs, institutions, and by the subjective self-identification of people. (Huntington, 1993:24).

Given these characteristics of civilizations and cultures South Africa can clearly be in line for a clash between civilizations. There is for instance the Zulu festival of Ukubuthwa as an typical Zulu cultural festival (le Roux, 2009:13); recently when president Zuma married his third wife and there were outrages against it, he claimed that polygamy was part of the Zulu culture and that he saw nothing wrong with it, he claimed that he had a right to be a polygamist; nowadays when one goes into Absa banks there are pamphlets available for Muslim customers indicating special bank services in accordance with Sha'aria laws (ABSA, Islamic Banking, Banking the Sha'ari'a way, sa). Many more examples can be cited from the different cultures in South Africa. Diverse elements of religious and customary pluralism are indeed present in the South African society. The question is how must Christianity and in fact all religions in South Africa react to this diversity. In response to the theory of the clash of civilizations the former Iranian president Mohammad Khatami introduced the idea of *Dialogue Among Civilizations*. The term *Dialogue among Civilizations* became more known after the United Nations adopted a resolution to name the year 2001 as the year of *Dialogue among Civilizations*. This article is an attempt to contribute to this dialogue and the eventual co-operation between religions in South Africa and at the same time make a contribution from the perspective of Reformed theology.

3. REFORMED PERSPECTIVES ON PLURALITY

3.1 The Kingdom of God

From a Reformed perspective the Kingdom of God forms the primary context for the whole of creation, individual and society, religion and state. The Dutch theologian, Herman Ridderbos (1978:1), calls the Kingdom of God the most theocentric concept that Scripture offers for our understanding of the creation, humanity, the world and current and future times. God's Kingdom and the Lord Jesus Christ's royal sovereignty comprise the whole of creation. Where Christ's kingship is recognized, something of the Kingdom becomes visible; individuals are liberated, and the entire patterns of their lives are transformed (Ridderbos, 1960:303). Every part of creation forms part of God's Kingdom and, although a specific individual, society or state often does not acknowledge God's sovereignty, it nevertheless, according to a reformed perspective, is and remains a part of the kingdom of God.

3.2 Plurality

Plurality is a fact of life in our modern world as can be seen *inter alia* from the statistical facts about South Africa. This also applies to many, in fact most, societies across the globe.

The Canadian political scientist J L Hiemstra distinguishes a plurality of institutions and associations, a plurality of directions and a plurality of cultural contexts in society (Hiemstra, 2005:21-25). In every society there are pluralities of institutions associations, which are complementary, overlapping and mutually interdependent. This means *inter alia* that no institution or association is autonomous – a law unto itself – they all exist, or should exist to enable humanity to achieve its true unifying purpose – which for Christians will mean to love God and neighbour. About the plurality of directions Hiemstra writes, ““The full reality of institutional plurality in society can be unfolded in many religious and ideological directions” (Hiemstra, 2005:46). The pluralism of directions that unfolds in a many religious and ideological directions (Hiemstra, 2005,46) is also something very real in many societies. It entails both a confessional and a social element. Confessional pluralism is aimed at entertaining and accommodating a

diversity of religious expressions and organizations in a community. The social aspect of religious pluralism is aimed at entertaining and accommodating a diversity of social institutions such as churches, synagogues, mosques and other religious associations, families, schools, welfare institutions, academic and civil associations – they all play a very important role in the keeping and expansion of religion. All these religious institutions also play a very important role against the interference of the state in religious affairs; the establishment of religious rights, as well as supplying vital sources for theology, morality, charity, and discipline in society (Witte, 2000:44-45).

The fact that Christians cannot accept many of the ideological and religious directions of institutions and associations in society does not mean that they should not be respected and tolerated. Disagreement does not make them less real or diminishes the calling of both religions and the state to deal with the plurality of directions in society – each of course in its own way. “The state must respect and tolerate the convictions and conscience of its neighbours in a plurality of institutions within society while vigilantly executing its limited task of public justice” (Hiemstra, 2005:47). The religions including the church must also respect the convictions of its neighbours in a society with a plurality of other directional individuals, institutions and associations. This does not mean that the church and Christians must approve of all the different directions in society, but it does mean that the church and Christians cannot deny their existence or belittle them. The church must also never forget that it undeniably has the task of proclaiming, through word and deed, the Gospel of the Kingdom of God – calling all people, institutions and associations of whatever direction they may be, to obedience to the Triune God.

Hiemstra also identifies a third kind of diversity namely that which he calls contextual plurality. This refers to the fact that diverse cultures around the world and throughout different historical eras have developed the cultural and social potential of creation in different ways. Hiemstra concedes that some of these developments may be due to the sinful nature of mankind, but more often these unique geographical and historical contextual developments are simply different legitimate responses to God’s creation (Hiemstra, 2005:23-24).

3.3 Freedom of Religion in a pluralistic society

K. Blei defines freedom of religion in terms of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948). From this he points out that religious freedom has both an individual and a social side. Religious freedom also means more than just having a religion and upholding inner convictions and feelings. Freedom of religion includes the right that everybody can express their religion and faith in worship, teaching, practice, and maintenance. This view of religious freedom means that individuals and religious groups want to live their religion, act according to it, and be witnesses to the truth of their faith, also in public. According to Blei, freedom of religion also relates to the fact that the religious convictions of people usually contain views on how they think society should be organized. He also points out the important fact that freedom of religion implies that the authorities must accept the responsibility and duty to respect and guarantee the right to freedom of religion. This responsibility is not accomplished if the authorities just steer away from an active involvement in religious matters. “It is not just a matter of keeping ‘hands off’ from religious communities in their territory and leaving them alone. On the contrary, active engagement by the state is required in order to make religious freedom a reality to all religious people. The state should create the possibilities and facilities so that freedom can really be enjoyed and implemented. Otherwise, the principle of religious freedom is in danger of being doomed to remain just a nice principle without significance in practice.” (K. Blei, *Freedom of Religion: Principle and Practice*, <http://www.antenna.nl/ikvoud//docs/div/presentation-blei.html>; see also L.C. van Drimmelen, sa:199) At the same time, it can also be said that just as the

state has an active responsibility to guarantee and promote freedom of religion, churches and religious communities have a similar responsibility – they must see to it that their order and structures are adequate for the practice of freedom of religion.

In his attempt to define freedom of religion, Witte claims that “The Essential Rights and Liberties of Religion are (i) freedom of conscience, (ii) the free exercise of religion, (iii) religious pluralism, (iv) religious equality, (v) the separation of church and state, and (vi) the disestablishment of religion by the state (John Witte, 2000:37). These six essential rights and liberties of religion are indeed very handy distinctions to understand what freedom of religion exactly is. As a matter of fact for a country like South Africa with its plurality of religions within the boundaries of one state they are much needed distinctions on the one hand for the state to know what the essential rights and liberties of religions are vis-à-vis the state but also to empower religions to contribute to the common good of the country.

3.4 The state and a pluralist society

Religion apart from its involvement with individuals in society, is also involved with many other social entities for example, marital unions, families, corporations, social institutions, etc. etc. - that which can be called the plurality of associations. However it can be said the state is the most encompassing entity in its own right (Van der Vyver, 2004:35ff), which a religion/church can encounter, in its earthly existence. The state encompasses and co-ordinates, *inter-alia* by its legislation and policies, all individuals, corporations, and institutions, which include religions, within its sphere of authority.

Christians believe that the state is divinely instituted; in other words, it is an instrument of the sovereignty of the Lord Jesus Christ, or to say it in still other words, the state is the great human representative of Christ's sovereignty over the whole of creation – even if a state itself does not always recognize itself as such. This is also why, with reference to Romans 13:6, many Christians confess that state authorities are God's servants who are executing their God-given command. This conviction brings to the fore a remarkable parallel between church and state in that the centre of the church's existence is simultaneously also the final centre and authority of and over the state – Jesus Christ the Lord!

Apart from being divinely instituted the state is also a historical institution, a human, cultural response to God's call to do justice in the public relations that exist in our lives. Through the course of history the state has taken on many different forms such as kingdoms, principalities, empires, commonwealths, tribal arrangements etc. Sometimes these arrangements were more just and at other times less just. Sometimes they were even straightforwardly unjust, but were always ways of structuring the political life in their times and contexts. In the same way contemporary states are our societies' better or worse answers to God's call to concretely structure political life. This implies that states may be reformed so that they can deal in a more just manner with society (Hiemstra, 2005:39-40).

The state, as embodying a political community, can be characterized by its specific concern, to ensure that people and institutions, directions and contexts are publicly integrated in just ways. The state that has this as its main task is always territorially bound and should function by way of legal rule with the intent to bring about public justice (Hiemstra, 2005:40-46). In other words, such a state will then be obliged to recognize, integrate and protect the plurality of individuals, associations, directions and contexts which fall under its authority. For the church this will mean - as for all other institutions and associations – that the state must allow them the space and the freedom they need to fully respond to their God-given calling. However, should the actions of institutions and associations fail to achieve their essential tasks, or distort the lives of others or harm their members, the state must act to ensure that just public relations exists between all

and that the common good shared by all societal actors is achieved.

One very important document that deals with the relationship between the state and religions is the constitution of a country. About a constitution Rautenbach and Malherbe (2004:22-23) writes as follows:

“A constitution is a law that contains the most important rules of law in connection with the constitutional system of a country. These include the rules of law dealing with the state, the government bodies of the country, their powers and how they must exercise those powers. In other words, a constitution defines government authority, confers it on particular government institutions, and regulates and limits its exercise. (The exercise of government authority includes the creation of legal rules on virtually every aspect of society.) A constitution guarantees and regulates the rights and freedoms of the individual and determines the relationships that exist between inhabitants of a state and their government bodies. A constitution thus provides a norm against which everybody’s actions can be measured and which ensures public stability and security. A constitution is thus a key component of the legal system of a state. In addition, a constitution is regarded in democratic societies as an expression of the will of the people and a reflection of prevailing values, requiring the support of the citizens.”

A constitution can also be described as the *lex fundamentalis* of a country, the basis of its whole legal order. As such it is also regarded as a special law with a higher status than other laws – in fact, all other laws of a country are subject to the constitution and are invalid if they contradict the constitution. A constitution is also accorded supremacy in that it is an entrenched document, i.e. it cannot be amended at will by the government and the government itself is subject to it. To change the constitution certain definite procedures must be followed. Furthermore the courts of the country are assigned the function of enforcing the observance of the provisions of the constitution. In the case of South Africa, Section 2 of the constitution itself stipulates that it is the supreme law of the land, that any law or conduct inconsistent with it is invalid and obligations imposed by it must be fulfilled. Apart from this the South African Constitution is also entrenched and the courts are formally vested with the power to test the constitutional validity of any action by government and declare it invalid if it is in conflict with the constitution:

“All executive authority is also subject to the Constitution. The supremacy of the Constitution therefore obliges government bodies to act consistently with the Constitution, lest their actions be declared invalid by the courts.” (Rautenbach & Malherbe, 2004:25).

Article 36 of the Constitution of South Africa, the so-called “Limitation of rights” clause, enables both the state and any institution of civil society to limit certain rights included in the Bill of Rights on condition that this takes place in accordance with the stipulations of the constitution and prescribes certain procedures according to which rights can be limited in both the state and civil society.

The constitution itself can limit rights internally by means of the constitutional article that entrenches it. It qualifies it (for example article 17-rights may only be exercised peacefully and unarmed) or makes it subject to a further limiting stipulation (for example in the light of article 126[2], the right to freedom of expression guaranteed in article 16 does not allow for the use of so-called “hate-speech”). The constitution also allows for the external limitation of rights by generally applicable legal rules besides specific stipulations contained in the constitution when it:

- (i) Is reasonable and justifiable in an open democratic society based on human dignity, equality and freedom, and
- (ii) satisfies certain proportionality requirements (article 36[1]).

Institutions of the civil society (such as for example, religious institutions) can thus, by means of the formulation of internal constitutional laws, statutes, church orders, stipulations and regulations, make use of the limitation possibilities that the constitution offers, to interpret or reinterpret each of the stipulations of the Bill of Rights within the context of their own internal constitutions. In the case of churches, this will entail an interpretation or reinterpretation in accordance with the faith identity the church as it is found, *inter alia*, in the confession(s) of faith and church order of a church. Such a reinterpretation, especially where it pertains to a church's limitation of the rights contained in the Bill of Rights in the light of article 36, must always be very well motivated in the light of the church's faith identity and its resultant church order. Such limitation must furthermore be in compliance with the requirements of article 36 (cf. Du Plessis, 1999:204-206).

3.5 The Church and Christians in a pluralistic society

Within the Kingdom of God there are those who are gathered into a unity through the proclamation and acceptance of the gospel. They are gathered into a confessional, cultic, orderly and confessing community – the church (cf. Ridderbos, 1972:296-308). One could say that the church is a community of people who are, and must be, organized in respect of their confession, their worship, their teaching, discipline, pastorate, diaconate, mission, social calling, etc., etc. In all these respects the church is an image of God's Kingdom that simultaneously points to the Kingdom, and it also becomes a place where the Kingdom is revealed and displayed in this world (Heyns, 1977:23-26; Van Ruler, 1978:64).

For the church it is very important that Jesus Christ is its' only Lord and Head. He is the primary subject in his relation to the church, the latter then being the secondary subject. The church must always be about a Christological-ecclesiological relationship (Barth, s.a:678-679). The church is the body of Christ and, as His "fullness."(Ephesians 1:23; Berkhof, 1962,154) This means that it is the area where there should be perfect obedience to Him, the Lord and head (Du Plessis, 1962:76).

Christ rules His church by means of the Word, the Holy Spirit and the ministries/offices that He has given it. This is also a unique characteristic of the church. The proclamation of the Word in a variety of forms, such as preaching, training, charitable deeds, prophetic witness, caring and comforting can also be viewed as the church's unique task, as well as that of the members and the offices in the church. In the Word, the church hears the Lord's voice through the Holy Spirit's Curiological work (Versteeg, 1971:211-213). The church hears the Lord's voice for the time in which it lives, and through the calling and work of the offices and the members of His body, Christ cares for His body. The offices must equip, feed, discipline, stimulate and co-ordinate the members of the body for their task within the church, but also within God's greater Kingdom. The offices must also join and lead the body to be able to function as the body of Christ in the world (Roberts, 1963:140). All of this will mean *inter alia* that the church must continuously assist its members to walk with God in righteousness – also with regard to the political challenges that they face. The church must help its members to distinguish between the plurality of religious and ideological directions that confront them every day and what they have to do to remain loyal to Christ. It is also the task of the church to help its members to understand the societal context in which they live, be it that they are a majority or a minority religion; what the consequences are when a state that does not allow any religion in the public sphere or when a state guarantees freedom of religion to all religions within its borders and what the impact of that is on churches. It is also the task of the church as an institution but also through its individual members, which it has to equip for this task, to witness to the Kingdom of God and the sovereign rule of Jesus Christ before the political powers of the day. This can be done through prayer, dialogue or the prophetic

witness of the church, as well as through the examples of righteous living by the members of the church (Hiemstra, 2005:11-12).

The faith identity of a specific church denomination usually finds its expression in the confession(s) of faith and the resulting church order of that church. A confession(s) of faith is a very fundamental document for any church. It is a systemized expression of what the specific faith community understands as the main truths of the Bible. As such the confession(s) of faith is always subject to the teaching of the Bible. Until it is changed the confession of faith determines the faith identity of a church. The church order or constitution of a church contains the rules that govern a church's life and actions at a given point in time. The primary sources for a church order are the Bible and the confession(s) of faith of the church. Secondary sources are the history of the church and the tradition in which it stands. Although the historical-traditional or contemporary context of a church can never be a normative source for its the faith identity or the church order, it is something, which a church must always take into account. In the end a church must always weigh up its faith identity against the Word of God and the needs of the time. It is usually in this area where church, state and society must have clarity on their different identities and functions. The church order of a church usually states what the confession(s) of faith is to which the church adheres; what the offices are allowed for in the church, what their authority each office holds, how the office bearers are elected; and how the church assemblies are called and what authority they have. The church order also lays down the rules for the training of its office bearers; the requirements for eligibility for offices; the conditions of employment for ministers and other employees of the church. Furthermore the church order contains the definitions of the functions of the church; the rules of discipline and conflict resolution in the church as well as the rules that govern the church's relationships with respect to the state and society and their institutions, as well as relationships with other churches and religions. Very important is the fact that a church order contains the rules that have to be adhered to during the assemblies of the church; this means that the church order will also contain rules regarding the entrenchment of the confession of faith of the church. The church order has authority within the church and the courts of the country also recognize this authority and, although the authority of a church order can be amended, it can only be done according to prescribed means. It can be said that a church order is a contemporary expression of the identity of a church within the context in which it is called to function. As such it is a very important document in the relationship between church and state (see Coertzen, 2004:150; 187-209).

All of the above does not necessarily mean that the state, in its relation to the church, views the church as the church sees itself (Barth, s.a:686). It often happens that the state does not take the existence of the church seriously; or it propagates an absolute separation between the state and the church and the church is relegated to the so-called inner or private sphere of life. It can also happen that the state sees the church as a mere subject of itself that has to abide by its rules, denying the church its unique existence as part of the Kingdom of God. For the church the danger always exists that it can begin to view itself in the same way as the state often does, namely as a mere voluntary association of people, albeit then a voluntary association with a special relationship to the Person whom they call Christ. It can happen that while the state sees the church as a mere voluntary association of people that performs certain actions in the Name of Christ, the church can also begin to see itself as such and loose view of its very special religious identity and calling. The church may never accept or be reconciled to such view of itself. The law of the state – the *ius circa sacra* - may never, without responsible theological reflection by the church, become the law in the church – the *ius in sacra*. Given the freedom of religion in a democratic society, the church is obliged to do everything possible to convince the state to view and judge it as it expresses itself in its obedience to the Word of God and as this is expressed in

its confession of faith and in its church order. This also places the church under the obligation to express itself in its church order in a way that is consistent with its confession(s) of faith and faith convictions. In other words, the church must use the space that constitutional freedom of religion allows it to define itself in a way consistent with its faith identity as a faith community and not wait for or allow the courts of the country or the laws of the country to define it.

3.6 On the relationship between the state and religion

In the history of the relationship between church and state two big trends can be distinguished, a distinction which proves to be very valuable. On the one hand the so-called *Constantinian model*, and on the other hand the so-called *Theocratic model* which was advocated in stronger or weaker terms by the medieval church (Hiemstra, 2005:29). Constantinian and Theocratic models of the relationship between church and state are not unique to Christianity. Both these models can also be found in other religions and the way in which they see their relationship with the state and the rest of society.

Both the Constantinian and Theocratic models are positive about the role that religion should play in society – according to many Christian thinkers that support of these models, society should serve the Triune God and Christianity should provide direction to society. The models differ on who should be the guide or the leader of the role that religion plays in society. According to the Constantinian model political authorities are dominant and above church authorities. This means that they often assist, influence and sometimes fully control and use the church/religion. It also means that the state has a role to play in the advancement and protection of the “true religion” even to the extent that it may use its coercive power. Right in our own day we detect signs of Constantinianism in the relationship between religion and state when we hear that a political party wants to guide the debate on morality in the South African society, using religions in the process. According to the Theocratic model church and religious authorities determine the role of religion in society – the church (or religion) should dominate political authorities as well as the rest of society (Hiemstra, 2005:28-29).

In the history of South Africa the Constantinian model has played a significant role right from 1652 up until 1994. After 1994 South Africa became a Constitutional state in which the Constitution of the country with guaranteed freedom of religion became the guiding rule for the relationship between religions and the state. The condition for this relationship is that the state must really take up its role to guarantee, promote and protect freedom of religion while religions must take up the challenge to use freedom of religion to fulfil their religious role and to serve the common good of the country.

3.7 The nature of a Christian contribution to the dialogue and co-operation.

Because Christians are called to seek justice (Amos 5:15,24) one can argue that they are also called to political involvement, as well as involvement in society. The belief that God’s redemption is at work in this present world is one of the reasons why Christians ought to engage in political activity. According to reformed theology Christians must bring Christ’s renewing influence to bear on public life, furthering the cause of God’s Kingdom in this world in obedience to Scripture. In a country like South Africa this will of necessity entail both dialogue and co-operation with other religions and cultures. As a matter of fact the makeup of the pluralistic South African society offers a unique opportunity for dialogue and co-operation between the religions in our country for the sake of the good of all the citizens of the land and as a witness to the common grace of God. As to the nature of Christian involvement the following characteristics can be mentioned

3.7.1 Modesty

Christians must always be cautious to claim that they speak for the Lord. Smidt quotes Skillen “We must constantly act with an attitude of true humility. We should undertake every civic duty, every political action – we can add every dialogue and co-operation - with the avowed understanding that they are not God’s will but only our response to God’s will. The attitude of humility will lead us to be modest and self critical in our claims and stated intentions.” (Smidt, 2007:147). A True understanding of freedom of religion ought to keep Christians from an uncompromising claim that they alone have the answers to the problems of the land and nobody else can make any meaningful contribution. At the same time Christians must witness to the fact that they have a very important contribution to make.

3.7.2 Tolerance

Tolerance is a second important characteristic of a Christian contribution to dialogue and co-operation. Tolerance does not mean indifference or relativism. Genuine toleration calls for peaceful co-existence despite the fact that there are areas where real disagreement exists. Forbearance/ tolerance means permitting the other with whom we disagree to exist and, when appropriate to persuade and engage others by word. In the present age, prior to the full establishment of the kingdom of God that will be fully inaugurated with the second coming of Christ, we must exercise genuine tolerance – an action that defends both truth and co-existence.

3.7.3 Dialogue and co-operation

In a pluralistic country like South Africa people that share the same kind of values due to their religious convictions need to engage in dialogue and co-operation in the matters that concern all of us; they also need to co-operate with each other in order to articulate and find that which is the best for the country and all its citizens -, the elderly as well as the children, blue collars as well as white collars, single persons as well as married couples and families, government as well as subjects (Smidt,2007:147-149).

3.8 Charter of religious rights and freedoms as part of the dialogue and cooperation

3.8.1 Clear distinction must be made between the freedom of religion that every human being possess as a quality of life and freedom of religion of religion as something guaranteed by the constitution of a country. Although there are examples in history of efforts by governments to give citizens a certain amount of freedom to practice their religion, like the Edict of Milan (315?), the Magna Charta (1214), the Edict of Turda (1568) and the Edict of Nantes (1598) it was really only after the Second World War that international charters of rights were accepted to protect freedom of religion. In this regard there is art 18 of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (10 December 1948); art 18 of the *International Convention of Civil and Political Rights* (16 December 1966) (Malherbe, 2007,Motivation art 6; Lerner, 1996:86,91); art 9 of the *European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms* (Rome 1950/1953) (Malherbe, 2007,Motivering, art 6; Gunn, 1996:305). Furthermore there is also the *African Charter for Human and Peoples’ Rights* and the *Declaration on the Elimination of all Forms of Intolerance and Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief* (1981) and the *Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic Religious and Linguistic Minorities* (1992) (Malherbe, 2007, Motivering art 6).

3.8.2 For Christians the deepest foundation for freedom is that God created man in His image with the capability to choose for and serve God. Man lost this freedom when he chose to follow the way of evil instead of the way of God. In Jesus Christ the freedom of those who believe in

Him was restored. This is a freedom that is not dependent on any constitutional guarantee. This is one reason why Christianity could endure through many centuries and many regimes without having a constitutionally guaranteed right to freedom of religion. Where there is a constitutional guarantee for freedom of religion it enhances the freedom that Christians have in Christ and offers Christians the opportunity to publicly proclaim their faith identity in Christ without any fear of prosecution or discrimination.

3.8.3 Freedom of religion as a constitutional right is difficult to put into a mere definition. It is much more a concept that needs to be circumscribed. It is also a concept that can continue to develop in future. The South African Constitution describes freedom of religion in rather vague terms merely as "... the right to freedom of conscience, religion, thought, belief and opinion"(Constitution art 15 (1)). It further states that "... religious observances may be conducted at state or state aided institutions" given that it complies with certain conditions (Const art 15 (2)) Article 15 (3) provides for "... marriages conducted under any tradition, or a system of religious, personal or family law." Primarily it is and remains the task of the religions and religious people of South Africa to identify their religious rights in a way consistent with their own religious identity and within the ambit that the Constitution and the laws of the country allow. If the religions and religious people of South Africa do not accept this task it will be taken over by government, the courts of the country and society and it will be fulfilled in a way, which will not necessarily further freedom of religion – a way that can again work Constantinianism in hand. In fulfilling their task churches and religions must make very sure of their deepest roots and identity and also make sure of the rights and obligations that spring from those roots and identity. They must also take note of the Charter of Human Rights contained in the second chapter of the Constitution as well as of the acts of Parliament, which further describe the content, and application of the rights concerned. "The following examples of such acts may be mentioned:

- Section 9 (the right to equality): the Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act, Act 4 of 2000
- Section 23 (labour rights): the Labour Relations Act, Act 66 of 1995
- Section 32 (the right to access to information): the Promotion of Access to Information Act, Act 2 of 2000
- Section 33 (the right to administrative justice): the Promotion of Administrative Justice Act, Act 3 of 2000

Directly or indirectly, numerous other acts give effect to the rights in the Constitution as well, as in the case of health, housing, education, the environment, the rights of children, the right to vote, and the rights of accused persons and prisoners" (Malherbe, 2007, Motivation art 4). Religions need to position themselves with regard to the rights in the Constitution and acts that describe the content and application of those rights in a responsible manner in order to determine whether they can subscribe to them as a religion or to avail themselves of the grounds on which they may want to limit those rights in their organization.

3.8.4 Charter of Religious Rights for South Africa is currently being developed and will be put as a proposal to a public conference to be held on 21 October 2010 In the proposed Charter the following religious rights and freedoms are identified – the rights and freedoms are merely mentioned without going into all the subdivisions. The references are to the articles in the proposed *Charter of Religious Rights for South Africa*.

- The right to believe or not to believe (art 1 – 2.3)
- The obligations of the state with regard to religious rights (art 3 – 3.2, art 9.3)

- The right to observe and exercise one's religion (art 4 – 4.4)
- The right to education consistent with ones religious convictions (art 7 and 8).
- The right to maintain particular matrimonial, family and personal legal traditions (art 5)
- The right to institutional freedom (art 9)
- The rights and obligations of religion with regard to the laws of the land (art 9.4, 10).
- The right of religion to freedom of expression (art 6 – 6.3).
- The right of religion to freedom of association (art 1 – 2.2)
- The right of religion to freedom of propagation (art 6.2).
- The right to religious dignity (art 6.3).
- The right of religion to solicit, receive, manage and spend voluntary financial and other forms of support and contributions.
- The right of religion to conduct upliftment and charity work in the community and to establish maintain and contribute to charity and welfare associations, and solicit, manage, distribute and spend funds for this purpose.

All of the above in fact describes what the freedom of religion entails and to which churches and religions in South Africa can lay claim as religious rights and freedoms.

4. CONCLUSION

South Africa is indeed a country of many pluralities – cultural and religious. This in itself contains the possibility of a clash of cultures. This article argued that we must not try and deny these pluralities or force them to become one. To the contrary the pluralities must be accepted and granted their lawful space under the Constitution to live and work – as long as it is within the laws of the land.

A second argument of this paper was that the plurality of religions in SA need not clash but can serve the common good of the land through their dialogue and co-operation in drafting a Charter of Religious Rights and Freedoms for South Africa as well as through the endorsement of such a Charter and then taking it to Parliament for enactment – something which the Constitution allows for (Constitution article 234). Already in 1990 Judge Albie Sachs wrote *“Ideally in South Africa, all religious organisations and persons concerned with the study of religion would get together and draft a charter of religious rights and responsibilities ... it would be up to the participants themselves to define what they consider to be their fundamental rights.”* (Albie Sachs, 1990:46+47). A Charter of Religious Rights and Freedoms for South Africa as a document that recognizes the fact of religious pluralism in SA is a starting point, which will help both religions and their adherents to understand what their rights and freedoms are. At the same time it will help the state to know what the rights of religions are in SA and what it's own limits are. Through the dialogue and co-operation of religions in this regard the common good of the country and its citizens will be served.

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KEY WORDS

Religion
Common Good
Pluralistic Societies
Reformed
Theological perspectives

TREFWOORDE

Godsdiens
Algemene welsyn
Pluralistiese samelewing
Gereformeerd
Teologiese perspektiewe

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Spiritual formation of adolescents – a semiotic analysis¹

ABSTRACT

How do adolescents describe their own spiritual journey? Can people involved in the spiritual formation of adolescents glean helpful information from adolescents' descriptions? Fifteen semi-structured interviews were conducted with five grade 10 learners from Bloemfontein, South Africa. Through semiotic analysis, the following syntagms were found: family, spiritual leader, knowledge, community, school, speech act and friends. These syntagms fitted into three paradigms: process, role players and content. A semiotic square was constructed for the term "process". Habermas's theory of communicative action can be applied to these findings. The study suggests important communicative principles to be utilized in the spiritual formation of adolescents. Limitations and suggestions for further research are also pointed out.

INTRODUCTION

How do adolescents describe their own spiritual journey? Can people involved in the spiritual formation of adolescents glean helpful information from adolescents' descriptions? Smith did a comprehensive research project on American adolescents' faith and found the following (2005:262): "Very many religious congregations and communities of faith in the United States are failing rather badly in religiously engaging and educating their youth." There is also concern in the South African community regarding the effectiveness of religious education in helping children and youth actualise their faith in their daily lives (Venter & Van der Merwe, 2005:114). How can adolescents be best accompanied on their spiritual journey? A brief literature overview will sketch the background for this study on the spiritual formation of adolescents.

1. LITERATURE OVERVIEW

1.1 Spiritual formation

Spirituality is a multifaceted construct that, amongst others, refers to beliefs and attitudes, self-transcendence, emotional phenomena and a search for the sacred side of life (Van Rooyen & Beukes 2009:27; Wong, Rew & Slaikeu 2006:163). "Spiritual formation is a rather general term referring to all attempts, means, instruction and disciplines intended towards deepening of faith and furtherance of spiritual growth" (May 1992:6) For the purposes of this research project, the research was limited to Christian spirituality as the research group was from a population with a Christian spirituality. Strategies for Christian spiritual formation include religious practices, formal and informal study and the practice of spiritual disciplines (Upper room ministries 2010, Wikipedia 2010).

Religious practice forms part of spiritual formation and is associated negatively with drug and alcohol abuse, crime, depression and early sexual activity (Ebaugh, 2005). The positive outcomes of religious practice for the youth are also witnessed by a growing body of research and include overall well-being, altruism, service, resilience, coping and positive forming of identity (Kaster

¹ This article is based on a paper delivered at the 8th International Conference of New Directions in the Humanities, Los Angeles, 29 June to 2 July 2010.

2006:7).

1.2 Characteristics of adolescents

According to Erikson's developmental stages, identity formation vs. role confusion is one of the major developmental tasks adolescents have to master (Patient teaching 1990). A role model and peer pressure can have a great influence on them. They have to integrate different roles into a self-image.

Intellectual developments enable adolescents to reason hypothetically and think about moral issues in broader terms. Piaget calls this the level of formal operations (Olds & Papalia 1986:324). "The more adolescents talk about their personal theories and listen to those of other people, the sooner they arrive at a mature level of thinking" (Looft 1971 in Olds & Papalia 1986:328).

Cognitive development aids in moral development, as abstract thinking is necessary to move from Kohlberg's conventional to the post-conventional stage of moral thinking. Where adolescents are given the opportunity to talk about moral issues and are exposed to a person at a higher level of moral thinking, their level of moral thinking can be raised (Olds & Papalia 1986:329).

From the age of 12 years, Fowler's stage of synthetic-conventional faith is reached (Ellias 1983:127-128). Custom and consensus of groups and individuals are relied upon. At this stage, the person understands that everyone is personally responsible for accepting faith, but the authority still lies outside the person. There is a reliance on a community nurturing the values and beliefs. At this stage, faith needs to provide a helpful synthesis between the different roles an individual plays.

According to research, religious and spiritual issues are important to adolescents. Furthermore, adolescents with higher levels of spirituality and religiosity show greater competence in life skills than their less religious and less spiritual peers (Cotton et al. 2006:472).

Against the above-mentioned background, a study was conducted on the spiritual formation of adolescents. More specifically, the religious practices of these adolescents and how they influence their spiritual formation were studied.

2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

2.1 Research design

This research project was designed as a qualitative study. The aim is to look for patterns and contextual findings (Maykut & Morehouse 1994:21). A purposive choice was made regarding the sample of Christian congregations to be included in this study (cf. Glicken 2003:185). Three congregations with three different faith formation programmes were contacted. Grade 10 learners were to be included in the study as they are in the semi-final year of the congregation's faith formation programme and can reflect on their spiritual formation due to the intellectual development at this age.

2.2 Participants

Information-rich resources were used to identify five adolescents from three different Dutch Reformed Church (DRC) congregations in Bloemfontein, South Africa, for interviews concerning their spiritual formation. Religious education teachers from three different congregations were asked to each identify two adolescents from their religious education classes who had different spiritual experiences. These included adolescents from single parent homes, homes where both father and mother were present, as well as from different schools. Fifteen semi-structured interviews were conducted with five grade 10 learners. Interviews were recorded digitally and transcribed verbatim afterwards. The participants included three boys and two girls attending

four different secondary schools. Their average age was 15.5 years. Since the participants were under age, their parents gave written permission for their participation in the project. (Pseudonyms were used when referring to the participants.)

Themes investigated included spiritual formation and its influencing factors. During the first interview, five general questions regarding spiritual formation were asked, including the influence of the church, religious education and parents. In the second interview, four questions were asked regarding religious education, dealing with the content, religious education teacher and children in their religious education classes. During the third interview, questions regarding their own personal experience of faith were asked.

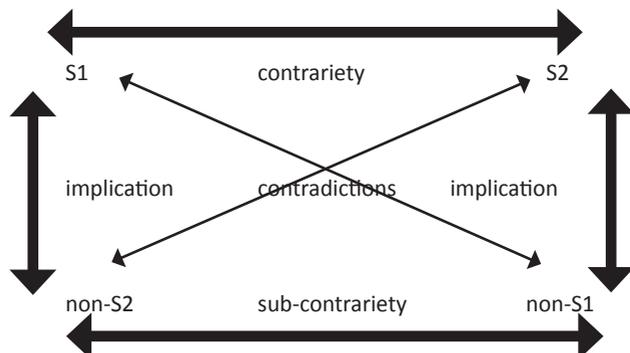
2.3 Analysis technique

Semiotic analysis functioned as the primary analysis technique. However, incorporating the grounded theory approach, which provided the concepts to be analyzed (Cf. Charmaz 2006:7 et seq.; Glaser & Strauss 1967: 28 et seq.). The grounded theory approach aims to generate theories that explain an aspect of the world. The theory must be deduced from reality (Osmer 2008:52). A theory explaining adolescents' experience of faith formation might be developed from this information. Information is coded in three ways:

- Open coding (Strauss & Corbin 1990:61) – Investigate, compare, conceptualize and categorize data.
- Axial coding (Strauss & Corbin 1990:96) – Make connections between categories (themes or syntagms).
- Selective coding (Strauss & Corbin 1990: 116) – Select the main category (theme or syntagm), and connect it with other categories (themes or syntagms).

The following concepts of the semiotic code, listed in the order they appear in this article (cf. Manning 1987:33), were utilized in this research: semioses (growth and change in the meaning of signs, p. 63); syntagm (a syntactic string of words forming part of a bigger syntactic unit); paradigm (associative context in which syntagms are grouped, p. 58) and the semiotic square. The realizing of differences on a deeper level gives meaning in a discourse (Speelman 1995:19). Amongst others, these differences can be expressed in a semiotic square. Greimas, an important exponent of semiotic analysis, utilized the semiotic square in following Aristotle's "square of opposites" (cf. Greimas 1970:136-140). The semiotic square is a conceptual network as well as a visual representation of the network that can aid in oppositional analysis (Hébert 2005:27). The semiotic square contains four terms where one term is put in contrast to another, thus gaining meaning. A semiotic square is demonstrated in Figure 1. In this study, the semiotic square will be used on a semantic level, examining the interviews for semantic possibilities (Hébert 2005:33).

Fig 1: A semiotic square (Speelman 1995:20)



3. RESULTS

In this section, the results of the research will be sketched in the light of the grounded theory approach, which first considers the reality of a situation and only afterwards considers possible interpretations (cf. Charmaz 2006:7). In section 4, the results will be discussed in more detail and compared with other studies.

3.1 Open coding

In studying the different interviews, the following syntagms came to the fore: family, religious education teacher/leader, knowledge, church/congregation, koinonia, school, speech act and friends. (The term “speech act” was chosen in the light of Habermas’s theory.) All three interviews with each adolescent were coded according to these syntagms. Individual responses were given to enable the researcher to trace patterns in adolescents and in their congregations more easily.

Interview 1

Three of the five adolescents referred to specific incidents that brought about a turning point in their spiritual journeys. After such an event, religious education, church and other activities had more meaning. With four of them, the parents played important roles in their spiritual lives in the example they set and in practicing religious activities together. In congregation A, the adolescent felt that religious education should be more like a prayer group. In congregation B, the positive relationship with the religious education teacher had a great influence. In congregation C, the knowledge element was emphasized. The adolescents partially agreed about the influence of religious education on their faith. Their responses are given in Table 1.

Table 1: What is the influence of religious education on your faith?

Congregation A	Congregation B		Congregation C	
Albert	Belinda	Betty	Christopher	Collin
Same influence as church. Can voice your opinion. Talk together. Learn. Your attitude determines whether you learn something.	Gives steadfastness in a changing world. Informal. The content stays more with you than in a sermon. Can share your problems.	Teacher gives practical demonstrations. Learn a lot.	Learn more. Gives content to your faith.	It helps you more than church. You can ask questions. Meet as a small group.

Interview 2

In this interview, three aspects of religious education were investigated: the handbook, religious education teacher and koinonia experienced in religious education. No adolescent ascribed

advanced spiritual formation to religious education. From their answers, it is evident that the fellowship of believers (koinonia) plays an important role in spiritual growth. Koinonia was also found in religious education and was mentioned in this context in interview 1. Another theme that is beginning to crystallize is actively doing something and helping others to do something for the Lord. More than one of the adolescents mentioned that one grows spiritually when one helps others to grow spiritually. What they can recall about the content of religious education pertains to lifestyle issues. One of the adolescents mentioned that religious education was a preparation for adulthood.

Interview 3

The five adolescents had five different answers to the question: “Who or what do you think has had the greatest influence on your spiritual journey until now?” However, the uniting factor was a significant other: a leader, friends, etc. Friends apparently play an important role, both on a negative and a positive side. Two of the adolescents described their relationship with the Lord in terms of friendship. Betty made a statement that might warrant further investigation: “When you talk about something, it strengthens your faith. It makes you more mature.” The issue of “believe and confess” – to give verbal expression to your faith – may play a significant role in spiritual formation. Albert remarked, “Teenagers have a great impact on the world – if one can make use of that, you can have a great influence on society.” Little new information was gleaned from interview 3. However, themes from earlier interviews were repeated, for example to talk about one's faith.

A few of the adolescents gave feedback on how they had experienced the interviews. It implored them to rethink religion and religious education. They were encouraged to do what they had been talking about – reading the Bible regularly, witnessing and attending church services.

In each interview, the question was asked, “What helps you to grow spiritually, to become spiritually more mature?” Table 2 gives an exposition of each adolescent's response.

Table 2: What makes an adolescent grow spiritually?

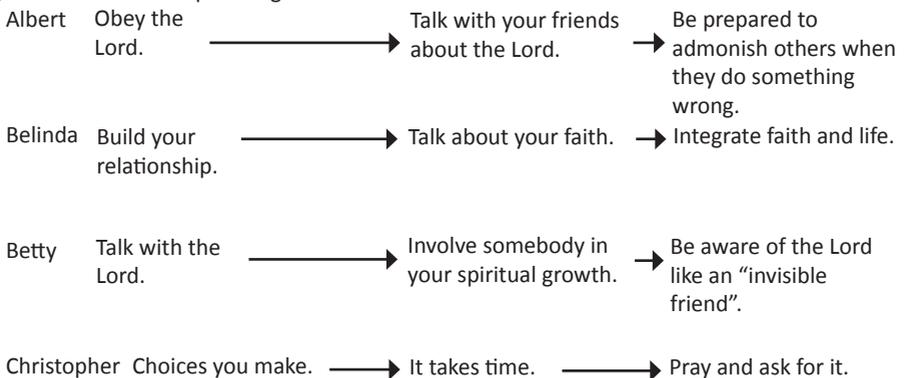
Congregation A		Congregation B		Congregation C	
Albert		Belinda	Betty	Christopher	Collin
Interview 1	Work for the Lord. Obey the Lord. Mean something for somebody else.	Build your relationship with the Lord. Talk to other people about religion. Friends can help you grow spiritually.	Talk to the Lord. Read the Bible. Read spiritual books.	Relationship with the Lord. Choices you make. It takes time.	You must continue believing.

Interview 2	Give your heart to the Lord. Live fully for the Lord. Talk with your friends about the Lord.	Talk about faith. Be “committed” to reading the Bible, praying and going to church. You want to do it.	Involve somebody else in your spiritual growth. Try to help other people grow spiritually.	It takes time. You must grow.	Stay on the right road. Make the right choices. Help other grow spiritually.
Interview 3	When an adolescent experiences that the Lord is real. Live out the Word (Bible). Talk about the Lord. Be prepared to exhort somehow when others do wrong things.	Talk about your faith. Integrate faith with whole life.	Talk to the Lord. Be aware of His presence like an “invisible friend”.	You must pray and ask for it.	Help others grow spiritually.

The adolescents’ references to “talking about your faith” and “helping one another” concur with other studies that also found that strategies that were most effective in religious education were those that involved the adolescents in the learning process and let them act as “teachers” (Theisen n.d : 5).

With each of the adolescents, semioses of the concept “spiritual growth” was evident. It is illustrated in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Semioses of spiritual growth



Collin Continue believing. → Make the right choices. → Help others grow spiritually.

As is evident from Figure 2, intensification in the adolescent’s thinking on spiritual growth has taken place during the course of three interviews. Apparently, spiritual growth results in faith becoming more integrated in your whole life (and thus influences your lifestyle) so that you may even admonish others and urge them to grow spiritually. This semiosis in the concept “spiritual growth” illustrates how a concept develops the more one talks about it.

3.2 Axial coding

Subsequently, three clusters were identified to combine the different syntagms (axial coding). Syntagms within the clusters were arranged in order of importance given by the respondents. Although this is not a quantitative study that counts the number of responses, the number of times something is referred to in a qualitative study can indicate the importance of a theme to a participant. Cluster 1 contains the themes *knowledge* and *religious education teacher/leader*. It represents the cluster with the highest number of responses (religious education teacher/leader). The themes *religious education teacher* and *knowledge* were combined in one cluster, as the religious education teacher/leader primarily imparts knowledge (compare Table 3).

Table 3: Cluster 1

Cluster 1	Albert	Belinda	Betty	Christopher	Collin
Religious education teacher/leader	Does not always know the religious education teacher personally.	Makes the classes fun, can talk about personal issues.	Helps with adjustment at new school. Makes it interesting. Helps to remember and enjoy. Some teachers at school make an impression.	It is important who presents the class. When pastor presents classes, it is different.	The person who presents the class is important.
Knowledge	Wants to learn more than is taught in religious education.	Got practical knowledge on lifestyle issues.	Involve people who know more than you do in your spiritual growth.	Bible knowledge, guidelines for faith and life. Gets more knowledge when presented by pastor.	Receives most knowledge at school.

In cluster 1, Belinda and Betty’s responses were a little more than those of Christopher and Collin were. Albert had the fewest responses here. It is notable that in this cluster and the next two clusters, the adolescents from the same congregations had the same kinds of responses and the same number of responses in each cluster. It could indicate that the common factor (religious education model) may have a bigger influence on their faith formation than their different

contexts (e.g. school and family).

Cluster 2 contains the themes *friends*, *koinonia* and *speech act*, since *koinonia* is experienced with friends and that is where they talk about their experiences (compare Table 4).

Table 4: Cluster 2

Cluster 2	Albert	Belinda	Betty	Christopher	Collin
Friends	If you do not have friends in the religious education class, you must make friends. One friend had the greatest influence on his spiritual life.	Friends have a greater influence than parents have. Sees her relationship with the Lord like a friendship.	Your friends must grow spiritually with you. In religious education class, one makes friends and learns to trust one another. Friends play an important role. Sees relationship with the Lord as a friendship.	Has an influence on your faith.	Get to know one another.
Koinonia	Religious education must be like a prayer group.		The religious education class have a nice time together. Learn to trust one another.	Experiences <i>koinonia</i> in big group and in class. Has a social relationship with class. In big youth group, trust one another.	Glad to see one another because during the week they are in different schools.
Speech act	Communicate with one another in class. When you talk about spiritual things, you grow.		Talking with friends about spiritual life makes you grow spiritually. When you talk about something, it strengthens your faith.		

In cluster 2, Albert said the most and Christopher and Collin the least. The table once again highlights the important role that friends play. Sometimes, a circle of friends outside the religious education class is mentioned. At other times, reference is made to friends in the religious education class. The social structure of friends plays an important role in the adolescents' experience and practicing of their faith.

Cluster 3 contains the syntagms *school*, *church/congregation* and *family* – representing the social spheres that form part of the adolescent’s world of life. This cluster represents items that scored the lowest number of responses (compare Table 5). Table 5: Cluster 3

Cluster 3	Albert	Belinda	Betty	Christopher	Collin
School					Learned the most in school. Has the biggest influence on his faith.
Church/congregation	He receives a message at the church service.	The church strengthens your faith.		The church inspires.	The church is people who stand together for the truth.
Family	Example of parents and practicing religion together is important.	Friends have a greater influence than parents have.	Practice religion together. Their example is important.		

3.3 Selective coding

Combining these clusters in a joint table makes selective coding possible. Shared themes between clusters can be compared now (see Table 6).

Table 6: Selective coding of clusters

CLUSTERS	CLUSTER 1 (Religious education teacher/ leader and knowledge)	CLUSTER 2 (Friends, koinonia and speech act)	CLUSTER 3 (School, church/ congregation, family)
CLUSTER 1 (Religious education teacher/ leader and knowledge)	Method/style (P) Bible knowledge (C) Lifestyle knowledge (C)	Shares knowledge with friends (C)	Gets knowledge at school and church (C)

CLUSTER 2 (Friends, koinonia and speech act)	Religious education teacher helps to build relationships (R) Religious education teacher creates atmosphere (P)	Social relationships (R) Spiritual growth (P) Part of a group (R)	Feels part of a group (R)
CLUSTER 3 (School, church/ congregation, family)	Church is context of relationship with religious education teacher (R)	“Belong to” (P)	“Belong to” (P) Parents bind adolescent with church (R)

P = process R = role players C = content

Through semiotic analysis, three “paradigms” (associative context of grouped syntagms, cf. Manning 1987:58) that are necessary for spiritual formation can be deduced, namely process, role players and content (cf. Figure 3).

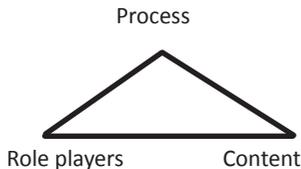


Fig 3a: Critical elements in spiritual formation (according to present findings)

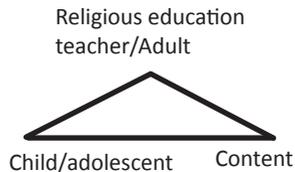


Fig 3b: Critical elements in spiritual formation (according to literature)

Often the critical elements in spiritual formation are seen as the religious education teacher, child/adolescent and the content (cf. Avenant et al. 2003:6 et seq.). According to the findings of the present study, however, the critical elements are process, role players and content.

The adolescents experienced being part of the process of religious education via the religious education teacher’s presentation and the relationship that developed. To the extent that religious education is experienced as a process and not just as an item on the congregations’ programme, it contributed to the spiritual formation of the adolescent. The adolescents that experienced spiritual growth also mentioned “belonging to”, e.g. “The church is people who stand together for the truth.” As was seen in Table 3 on spiritual growth, the adolescents regarded spiritual growth as a process.

Faith formation is also a process in which religious education does not play the only role. The school, friends and the congregation also play a part. The question could be asked what unique role religious education can play in faith formation.

In Religious education, role players include parents, the religious education teacher and friends. Content also seems to be important in religious education. Knowledge obtained in religious education (content) regularly came to the fore as an important aspect of religious education.

Not all findings were analyzed in the smallest detail, but only those that contributed to a better understanding of the meaning of concepts (cf. Speelman 1995:98). Since “process” crystallized

as an important aspect in this study, a semiotic square was constructed for the process in faith formation (see Figure 4).

Fig 4: Semiotic square for “process” in faith formation

Process	Homeostasis
Acquiring knowledge	Not grow together spiritually as friends
Practical teaching method	Not enough knowledge gained
Talk	
Grow together spiritually as friends	
Do religious activities together	
Non-homeostasis	Non-process
Friends	Atmosphere
Gives inspiration	No personal knowledge of teacher
Get less knowledge from some teachers	Teacher influences
Social relationships	Pleasant times
Learn to trust	

The semiotic square can be utilized to develop the “process” of faith formation. The contribution of the semiotic square to the understanding of faith formation will be discussed further in the next section.

4. DISCUSSION

Theories from different fields referred to below were confirmed in this study.

4.1 Psychology and education theories

Friends play an important role in the developmental stage of the adolescents in this research (cf. Olds & Papalia 1986:345). It can explain why the adolescents frequently talk about the role of friends. A circle of friends presents the opportunity to share their ideas, to talk to adolescents experiencing the same problems, to experience closeness and trust (Olds & Papalia 1986:347). It becomes evident in the interviews where reference is made to *koinonia* experienced in religious education and the necessity to grow spiritually with your friends.

The need to identify with religious education as something that is theirs and where their needs and questions are addressed relates to the need to belong. It also relates to the seeking of identity. The important role that a religious education teacher can play as a mentor and role model is also clear from other research on the topic (cf. Rhodes 2001; Zimmerman, Bingenheimer & Notaro 2002).

Effective learning entails that a person acquires knowledge on a practical level, is able to practice what he or she has learnt and that he/she internalizes it. This issue is also mentioned in the discussion of the semioses of the term “spiritual growth”. According to Edgar Dale’s pyramid of learning, a person will learn much more if he or she does something personally rather than just acquire knowledge on a topic (Cone, n.d.).

4.2 Communicative theories

Communication as part of spiritual formation came to the fore in this study. Furthermore, communication played an important role in the research technique used, namely in the interviews.

Communication plays an important role in the “process” of faith formation, as expounded in the semiotic square (compare the previous section). Communication makes the exchange of meaning between adolescent and adult possible. Habermas refers to three worlds involved in communication (1984: 275 ff.): an inner world (of the speaker), a social world (in the contact made with the listener) and an outer world (represented in what is being said). Where these three “worlds” meet, a dynamic process occurs.

The current research emphasizes that a process must take place between these three “worlds”. Mere knowledge of the adult, adolescent and content is not enough to facilitate spiritual formation. The semiotic square shows that gaining knowledge is part of a process. People, including the adolescent, friends and adults involved, are also part of the process. Speech acts (conversation) are an important part of the process. The process of faith formation becomes a homeostasis if the adolescent does not get to know the involved adult personally. Furthermore, the process can be hampered if the adolescent feels that his/her friends are not growing spiritually, too, as illustrated in Figure 4.

In ideal contact between people, communicative acts take place (Habermas 1982). In this interaction, participants acknowledge one another unconditionally, are committed to mutual consensus and communicate in freedom and on the same level (cf. Pieterse 1993:94).

A relationship of authority exists between the religious education teacher and the adolescent, as is evident from the communication about the religious education teacher. Since it is a teaching situation, communication cannot take place fully on the same level and in freedom. However, it seems that where a religious education teacher showed respect and interest in the adolescent (regarded the adolescent as on the same level), communication was more effective.

Speech acts can be fully successful only if they satisfy the demands of the three basic validity claims: sincerity, rightness and truth (Habermas 1984: 1, 275 et seq.). For example, this implies that, where an adolescent experience the sincerity of an adult involved in his/her spiritual formation, the discourse between them is more successful. Where the adolescent’s parents live according to what they teach as the truth, the discourse between them and the adolescent is more successful.

Religious education is a good example of indirect dialogical communication where the listener and the speaker come together as “specialists” (Dingemans 1991:141). It forms part of the communication theory of symbolic interactionism, where the speaker and listeners want to communicate about a specific issue (Pieterse 1993:154).

Language plays an important role in transferring and understanding knowledge in religious education. If adolescents cannot put the content of what they have learnt in religious education in their own words, it is a question whether the language/symbols/signs used were meaningful. “The importance of communication as a dynamic process of interaction and reciprocity” (Pieterse 1993:154) was evident in the case of the adolescents who experienced more in their spiritual life because of the dynamic communication with the religious education teacher (for example in congregation B).

The dialogical communication theory accentuates the inter-humanness of communication and spiral character of communication – “continuous and ever-evolving constitution and exchange of meaning between participants” (Jansen & Steinberg 1991:13). In the light of the results of this research, the question may be asked about the “exchange of meaning between participants” that should take place in the discourse. In the congregation where the adolescents could communicate their questions in class (congregation C), something of this “exchange of meaning” can be found. This explains why it was a positive experience for the adolescents.

The adolescents regard themselves as part of the role players in their spiritual formation, together with others like friends, parents, pastors and religious education teachers. This illustrates

the paradigm shift from modernism to post-modernism where the relationship of subject/object between a teacher and the person he or she is teaching does not exist anymore (cf. Janse van Rensburg 2000:36). The adolescent is an active agent engaging with adults, friends and parents, gaining knowledge and experience that contribute to his/her own spiritual formation.

CONCLUSION

In describing their spiritual journey, adolescents mention a few important aspects (some of which are to be expected as found in other theories): the important role of a mentor figure like the religious education teacher, as well as the role of parents and friends. However, the description of their journey also draws attention to a few other aspects (that might be less expected):

- The knowledge aspect of religious education is important to the adolescents.
- Faith formation must be undertaken as a process.
- The important role of communication theories in faith formation must not be ignored.

In adolescents' journey of spiritual formation, discourse plays a cardinal role. In this communication process content as well as the process of the dialogue are important. Knowledge is an aspect of the process in a dialogue (Gadamer 1979:143).

People involved in the spiritual formation of adolescents can consider the following:

- Do not give more attention to the content than the process of communication in spiritual formation.
- In addition to the content and lesson, the dialogue process should be planned in more detail.
- Focus on communication as a spiral process in which participants increasingly learn from one another.
- The adolescent and the adult are both partners in the communication process.

Even though only a small number of adolescents were involved in the interviews, this research project in the qualitative research tradition could still contribute to make contextual findings and discover possible patterns (Maykut & Morehouse 1994:21). A quantitative study involving larger numbers of adolescents will shed more light on adolescents' spiritual experience in varying contexts and on what can contribute to more effective formation of their faith.

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TREFWOORDE

Geestelike vorming
Adolesent
Kommunikasie
Habermas

KEY WORDS

Spiritual formation
Adolescent

Communication
Habermas

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The challenge of postmodernism to rationality in Practical Theology

ABSTRACT

As with previous eras, the postmodern age presents great opportunity and grave peril for the church and to Practical Theology as an academic discipline. The article gives a meta-theoretical description and evaluation of the development of the theological rationality of Practical Theological paradigms. To enable the researcher to explore the challenge of postmodern paradigms, the article describes the rationality of the Newtonian epistemology, followed by a discussion of the ecosystemic and the communication actions approaches. Postmodernistic approaches are evaluated in view of the developments. The rationality of correlative approaches is described as a viable approach to the challenges of the postmodern culture. Two examples of South African researchers are discussed to illustrate the role of rationality in Practical Theology. It is proposed that a rationality of correlation poses a hermeneutical key to a practical theological paradigm.

1. INTRODUCTION: THE CHALLENGE OF POSTMODERNISM/POSTMODERNITY

The article focuses on the challenge of postmodernism, a concept, which can be, interpreted as futuristic – or at least evolving – to practical theology. In his article on “Theology in a postmodern culture: ten challenges” GJ Rossouw (1993) a philosopher discussed some dimensions of the cultural shift from modernism to post modernism and the challenges and opportunities it offers to theologians. He specifically refers to four dimensions of postmodern culture, which invites theologians to a conversation. He mentions a broader rationality, a broader anthropology, expertise and experience and global village. In his discussion he mentions at least four challenges of Postmodernism for theology. And these are critical self-reflection, involvement in moral discourses, a spirituality of wholeness and narrative theology. He specifically focused on the rejection by modernity of discourses on values, ultimate ends and meaning of life. He said: “The dilemma that surfaced is the rejection by a modernist rationality of the importance of values, ultimate ends and meaning of life. It has become evident that a revision of modernist rationality is inevitable, a broader rationality that will include the so called non-rational and non –mechanical dimensions of life is needed.” (Rossouw, 1993:897). This poses opportunities.

In line with Rossouw’s argument Stanley Grentz, professor of theology and ethics at Regent College in Vancouver, British Columbia calls for a rebirth of theological reflection, a shift from a solely propositional paradigm (S Grentz in R A Mohler, 1995:78):

Evangelical theologians ought to move away from conceiving their task as merely to discover divinely disclosed truth understood as the single, unified doctrinal system (objective) lodged within the pages of the Bible and waiting to be categorized and systematized. Evangelical theologians should not focus intently upon doctrine and issues of propositional truth but upon spiritual vision of the community. Theology must conduct a conversation with the other disciplines and this must cohere with human (subjective)

experience. It is clear that evangelical theology does present a variety of views on salvation based on different views on the subject – object polarity.

This view is shared by Carl Raschke who writes, “During the past several decades, while postmodernism has altered the face of academic culture, particularly in the arts and humanities, it has only recently begun to pound at the door of evangelical thought and faith” (Raschke, 2004:11). Dreyer (1994:5) interprets the challenge as an “exciting risk”. This view is shared by Mohler: “The challenge may be viewed as an opportunity to transcend the corrosive elements of the older modern ideologies and the restatement of Christian truths in terms faithful to the biblical revelation and the Christian tradition and yet addressed to a new consciousness” (R A Mohler in Dockery, 1995: 84).

The challenge is however interpreted not only as an opportunity but also as a threat. Johan Janse van Rensburg (2000: 55), a South African theologian with a confessional approach to Practical Theology, speaks of postmodernism as an “onslaught” or an “attack on the basic principles of the Christian faith”. He explains: “the objective truth of God’s being is no longer the point of departure for theology. People’s experience of God, the narratives about God, the subject and the community constitute the postmodern theology. Static, systematic concepts of God are traded for dynamic concepts, creating a hermeneutic and communicative crisis”. He quotes Gergen (1992) who says, “Once post modernistic views are savoured they can scarcely be abandoned. Once tasted the appetite becomes insatiable sweet poison.”

2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Two questions guide this article -

What are the challenges and opportunities posed to Practical Theology in South Africa?

How has Practical Theology in South Africa reacted to the challenge and opportunities posed by post Modernism?

How has the church reacted to the challenge?

The last question will be addressed in a second article on the Challenge of postmodernity for church ministry.

2.1 Key terms

To address the posed research questions the conceptualisation of key terms is addressed.

Since the publication of J-P Lyotard’s text: *The postmodern condition* in 1984, many disciplines have been challenged by a new paradigm. The concept, postmodern, was not entered in the *Dictionary of pastoral care and counselling* published in 1990 but has since been included – an indication of the relevance of the concept for the field of pastoral care. Since the publication of J-P Lyotard’s text: *The postmodern condition* in 1984, many disciplines have been challenged by the new paradigm. Working in the discipline of pastoral counselling, J Patton wrote an article “Pastoral postmodernism” in 1994 and in 1995, a conference of pastoral organisations in Germany focused on the theme “Pastoral care and counselling in postmodern times” (Lyll 2001:60)

Pamela Couture wrote an article entitled “The effect of the postmodern on pastoral/practical theology and care and counselling”. She distinguished between *postmodernity* (social context/culture) and *postmodernism* (cultural philosophy) in an attempt to clarify confusion between the concepts. She defines postmodernity as a cultural state: “It defines changes in global culture associated with the decline of meta-narratives, respect for human differences, the fragmentation of communal life, loss of confidence in scientific reason, the rise of technology and virtual reality, the re-emergence of an integrated global economy and the development of a post-colonial identity” (Couture 2003:85). This conceptualisation is in line with Rossouw, (1993:895) a South

African philosopher, who discussed the challenge, which the postmodern culture poses for theology. One excellent example of the conceptualisation of this concept in the South African context is the work by N Niemandt, a missiologist. He published a book addressing the “dreams” or opportunities of postmodernism for communities of faith. He describes postmodernism as a big storm, which is a threat to faith communities, especially those communities that function in line with a modernistic paradigm. He describes the concepts of the emerging church as an answer to the threat. Writing as a reformed pastor, he says, “The speed, diversity and complexity of social and cultural changes in western industrialized settings have particularly taxed reformed theology with its particular openness to contemporary cultural developments” (Niemandt 2007:47).

In a positive optimistic mode he says, “God himself is stirring the pot. If we can pay attention we will eventually discover that not only will we lose God in this emerging postmodern world, we will find him again” (Niemandt 2007:49).

Couture (2003) defines the other concept, *postmodernism*, as a school of thought (a philosophy), which analyses and defines the metatheoretical philosophical reflection about postmodernity.

P M Rosenau (1992:15-16) in her work, *Postmodernism and the social sciences*, distinguishes between affirmative and sceptical postmodernism. Of *affirmative postmodernism* she says, “It is a more hopeful, optimistic view. They do not shy away from affirming an ethic and making normative choices”. Of *sceptical postmodernism* she speaks of “fragmentation, disintegration, malaise, meaninglessness, a vagueness or even absence of moral parameters and societal chaos. There is no truth, all that is left is play, the play of words and meaning.”

Evangelical Theology is defined in this research as the contemporary representation of the evangelical movement. A König (1998: 96) refers to Packer who describes evangelical theology as “the doctrine of God’s free and sovereign grace to sinners that is again and again expressed in opposition to what is false as Paul spoke against the Judaizers, Augustine against Pelagius, Luther against Erasmus, Calvin against the Scholastics”. He lists four key features: “The Bible is God’s instruction, God is in a Trinitarian shape, human nature is seen in a radical view of sin and grace and the deepest truth about the church is that it is invisible and an object of faith.”

Practical Theology is defined as an interpretative discipline, which involves four key tasks: “the descriptive-empirical task, the interpretive task, the normative task and the pragmatic task. These four tasks interpenetrate” (R.R. Osmer, 2008:10). The normative and descriptive tasks are central to Practical Theology as a discipline is.

2.2 Research approach

2.2.1 Problem statement

Practical theology as a discipline has established itself as part of the *universitas scientiarum* (Pieterse, 1993:40). This stance challenged Practical Theology to formulate answers about the approach to science and methodology. This challenge includes the formulation and clarity on rationality. Rossouw (1993:895) says for Theology to understand modernity and the challenge of postmodernism a focus on the rationality is a good starting point. He formulates rationality as the standard that a society requires for making intelligible and meaningful statement about reality. Osmer (2008, 114), a scholar from Princeton, says a model of rationality, which includes argumentation, perspectivalism and fallibility, opens up forms of analysis and evaluation of theories. To engage in the discussion of the challenge of culture (e.g. Postmodernism) for a discipline like Practical Theology clarity on the rationality of the theories of Practical Theology need to be determined. In this article two problems will be addressed-

2.2.1.1 Primary research problem

What is the challenge (interpreted as both a threat and an opportunity) of postmodernism to practical theology? This problem entails the analysis and evaluation of the theories or meta-theory of practical theology. It also entails the focus on the inherent cross – disciplinary nature of practical theology. How can the constructive theological perspective of practical theology dialogue with other disciplines?

2.2.1.2 Secondary research problem

What are the outcomes of the response of practical theology to the challenge?

2.3 Methodology

To enable the researcher to address the problem as stated, a methodology of conceptual analysis of the meaning of words or concepts through clarification and elaboration of different dimensions of meaning is chosen. Conceptual clarity is aspired to by a normative evaluation of meta-theoretical approaches (Mouton 2001:175).

3. AN OVERVIEW OF THE INTERPRETATION OF RATIONALITY IN PRACTICAL THEOLOGICAL

3.1 A theological interpretation of rationality

The chosen point of departure to formulate an understanding of the challenge of postmodernism to practical theology is an interpretation of Newtonian rationality.

3.1.1 The rationality of ecosystems

The elected point of departure in this article is to consider critically the shift in rationality from a Newtonian (modernist) epistemology to ecosystemic epistemologies. The difference in basic concepts relating to social sciences is illustrated in a figure developed by D P Fourie (1998:8) writing from a psychological perspective.

Level	Approach	
	Newtonian	Ecosystemic
Epistemology	Objectivity: the “real” nature of things	Constructivism Relativity
Paradigm	Reductionism Causality	Holism Fit
Theory	Mechanistic	Cybernetic
Research	Proving Validating	Making sense Describing
Methodology	Objective	Consensual
Results	Proof	Guidelines
Application	Mechanical	Creative
Hypnosis	Individual Intrapsychic	Contextual

Fourie (1998:8) explains the modernistic rationality known as the Newtonian epistemology as follows:

The philosophical basis of modernism with reference to philosophers such as Aristotle,

Descartes and Newton rests on three assumptions:

a. Reductionism or atomism

To understand a phenomenon or object it needs to be reduced to its most basic elements, which are easier to understand.

b. Linear causality

Elements or most basic elements are regarded as being connected to one another through cause and effect.

c. Neutral objectivity

One can only know what an object or phenomenon is really like if one does not influence it.

The cultural era of modernity is often equated with the late seventeenth to eighteenth century Age of Enlightenment (Goodliff, 1998, 28). The heroes of the Enlightenment were Rene Descartes, John Locke and Immanuel Kant. Against the backdrop of the Thirty Years War (1618-1648) a complex series of struggles originating in religious conflicts between Protestants and Catholics which embraced wider political factors. In reaction to the failure of religion, thinkers looked for a new foundation of knowledge and progress in the power of human rationality. A concept was epitomised by Descartes' statement –"I think therefore I am". Upon this foundation of reason a utopia of prosperous and fulfilling society was build. The future was scientific, technological and economic. Immanuel Kant distinguished between theoretical rationality and practical rationality. Whereas the theoretical refers to the Newtonian notion of the *res cogitans* (thinking substance) practical rationality refers to the moral and metaphysical aspects of man.

Fourie (1998:13) mentions how more and more fields of scientific enquiry have encountered problems of increasing complexity, which lead to the exposure of the inadequacies of a Newtonian rationality.

Criticism of the Newtonian epistemology of science came from the natural sciences, biology, anthropology, psychology and family therapy.

General systems theory and second-order cybernetics posed a new philosophical basis for rationality. Not only was the shift from a Newtonian paradigm to an ecosystemic paradigm relevant for social sciences but it also impacted on Practical Theology.

J Muller (1991) used the concept of eco-hermeneutical which is a combination of two terms ecosystemic and hermeneutical where the first refers to the widest network of systems and the second emphasises the element of understanding. The hermeneutical circle implies that in all interpretation there is a reciprocal relationship between the parts and the whole.

JT De Jong van Arkel (1991: 61) describes the implications of systems theory as a metatheory for Practical Theology. He says: "Naas die kommunikatiewe handelingsteorie word die sisteemteorie ook op meta-teoretiese vlak aanvaar en bied sodoende 'n brug met ander wetenskappe" (De Jong Van Arkel 1991:61).

He proposes an ecosystemic theory as a metatheory for Practical Theology as a corrective to the General Systems Theory (GST). He mentions that the GST could still accommodate the mechanistic and reductionistic rationality of the Newtonian epistemology of objectivity with the split of the subject and object – a notion identified in Newtonianism.

3.1.2 The broader rationality of actions theory

Another development in the rationality of Practical Theology was the development of actions theory as metatheory. In the 1990s HJC Pieterse claimed that Practical Theology was formulating its scientific rationality. Pieterse (1991: 1) discussed the implications of the role of the communicative actions theory as a bridge from practical theology to other sciences. The development of communication actions theory in Practical Theology was a development from a

narrowed rationality to a broader rationality.

When Pieterse discusses the scientific basis for Practical Theology (Pieterse 1992 in “Wetenskapsteoretiese grondslag van die Praktiese Teologie”), he describes the development of a broader hermeneutical based rationality. This was a development from the objective approach of the natural sciences to a hermeneutical approach. This rationality incorporates both irrational aspects like intentions as well as normative and subjective aspects. The social reality is epistemologically approached from the perspective of meaning – even subjective meaning – not from the perspective of objectivity in which reality is stripped of intentions, acts and social factors and meaning. Pieterse (1991) specifically refers to J Habermas who criticised critical rationalism for its narrowed rationality. Habermas used the concept of “erkenntnisleitende Interesse” by which he meant that there is a predetermined interactive relationship between the object and subject, between theory and practice. In his book, *Theorie des Kommunikativen Handelns* (1982), Habermas worked with the concept of communicative actions. The rationality of his approach is based on three domains of reality: the objective reality of facts, the subjective reality of intentions, needs and emotions, and the social reality of norms and values. In this approach, validity is reached by means of intersubjective consensus. It was specifically Rolf Zerfass (1974) in his article, “Praktische Theologie als Handlungswissenschaft”, who based his approach to Practical Theology on the theory of Habermas. Pieterse (1993) explains that this actions theory was refined into a communications action theory applicable to Practical Theology.

In his discussion of an ecosystemic paradigm, De Jong van Arkel proposes a shift from a paradigm of actions (which is the case with the communications action paradigm) to a system of semantic meanings (intersubjective linguistic realities). This was a shift towards constructivist rationality.

3.1.3 *The rationality of postmodern paradigms*

In Practical Theology the limited rationality of Newtonian epistemology was challenged not only by the ecosystemic approach and the actions theory but also by a postmodernistic paradigm based on social constructivism. Rossouw (1993) described the development from a medieval society where rationality was based on the distinction between the transcendent and the immanent. The emphasis was on the transcendent. Every dimension of society was subordinate to the divine plan – as the church presented it. The modern culture, which replaced medieval culture, rejected the basic rationality of the distinction between transcendent and immanent and replaced it with the more superior distinction between object and subject. The subject was defined as the independent rational thinking subject. This rationality however delegitimizes a discourse on values and ultimate ends and on meaning. Faced with this a dilemma a revision of the modernist rationality was evident.

A broader rationality J C Muller (2008:4-5) as a shift from foundationalism (universal perspective) to post-focussing only on the structure of the self, ego or subject foundationalism (transversal) distinguished from non-foundationalist or multiversal perspective.

He refers to J W van Huyssteen’s (2006) exposition of multiversality to substantiate his notion of interdisciplinary dialogue. He quotes Van Huyssteen (Muller 2008:7): “A postfoundationalist approach helps us realize ... that we are not the intellectual prisoners of our contexts or traditions, but that we are epistemologically empowered to cross contextual, cultural and disciplinary borders to explore critically the theories, meanings and beliefs through which we and others construct our worlds.”

He formulates the shift from individual subjectivity: “The shift of emphasis from individual to social, from subjective to discourse, which constitutes a new epistemology in the social sciences, is also part and parcel of the postfoundationalist movement.” Van Huyssteen formulates the shift

as follows: "Talk about the human subject is now revised by resituating the human subject in the space of communicative praxis. Thus the notion of transversal rationality opens up the possibility to focus on patterns of discourse and action rather than focusing only on the structure of the self, ego or subject."

The point that was raised in the discussion of systems theory was that the systems paradigm still accommodated the subject, interpreted as the individual (see De Jong van Arkel) but this view need to be revised.

A new formulation of the rationality of the subject was formulated by Rosenau (1992). She argues for the return of a focus on the individual "subject" in her discussion of the different views of postmodernists. She formulates two different postmodernistic views on the subject. Sceptical subjectivity opposes the modernist notion of the subject/individual for three reasons: because it is an invention of modernity, because it assumes a humanist philosophy and because the subject automatically requires an object (Rosenau 1992:46).

She provides an argument that the research by postmodernists based on subjectlessness varies from discipline to discipline. She suggests that there are indications that the death penalty for the subject as a personally disciplined and responsible personality was too extreme a punishment. If there has been a period of temporary death of the subject then that interval is coming to an end and support for a radically more lenient attitude is on the rise (Rosenau 1992: 57). It is clear that at least in sociology and anthropology there is a tendency for the "subject" to return, fully developed (Rosenau 1992:51).

When she discusses the views of the affirmative postmodernists, she calls it a proposal for the return of the subject but in new and novel forms, which avoids those aspects of the modernist subject that were found to be most objectionable. Her views need to be utilised to interpret the intersubjectivity of the post and antifoundationalist views of rationality in Practical Theology.

Osmer in his book *Practical Theology: An introduction* points out that the concept of transversality appeared simultaneously in a number of fields. He says (2008: 170):

"In these disciplines and others, transversality means 'lying across, extending over, intersecting, meeting and converging without achieving coincidence'. In comparison to the other models of dialogue between disciplines, this model presupposes a more fluid and dynamic understanding of the relationship between disciplines. A meta-theoretical view of modernism focused on the rational notion of objective certainty and the splitting of the object and subject. A Post modernistic epistemology focuses on the correlation of subject and object in the self and on interdisciplinary consensus in the search for scientific certainty."

The question to be discussed is what is the significance of the notion of correlation between the subject and the object and of interdisciplinary consensus for Practical Theology.

3.1.4 *The rationality of correlational approaches*

Osmer (2008), in his discussion of the normative task of Practical Theology, gives an overview of models of cross-disciplinary dialogue between practical theology and other disciplines. He comments, "In contemporary theology three models have emerged to picture the dialogue between theology and other fields; correlational, transformational and transversal" (Osmer 2008:164). He differentiates between the transversal, transformational and correlational models.

He explains the rationality of correlational models: "When used as a model of dialogue, the quantitative dimension of scientific correlation drops away (negative analogy). What is emphasized is the way a genuine dialogue is a conversation in which the parties enter into a

mutually influential relationship (positive analogy).” This correlation can be viewed as a matter of tension from different viewpoints. De Koker (1998: 454), a South African theologian, believes that “the constants at play in the total hermeneutical process are those of transcendence and immanence, subject and object. A critical perspective brings to light that there appears to be a constant tension between opposite poles. Not only is there a constant switch between the subjective and the objective poles in the quest for understanding of the Bible but also in different spiritualities.”

The rationality of the concept of correlation finds a theological basis in the construct of analogy which is discussed in systematic theology on the anthropological notion of man as created in the image of God. (Heitink, 1977, 113). Heitink says it addresses the difficult hermeneutical challenge posed by the question about the similarity or difference between Biblical and empirical articulations about man. The relevance of the construct of analogy for pastoral theology was addressed in his monumental work *Pastoraat als Hulpverlening: Inleiding in de pastorale theologie en psychologie* and in his newer work, *Pastorale Zorg: Theologie, differentiatie, praktijk* (1998). He formulated the concept of bipolarity as a hermeneutical key to formulate the complementarity of different concepts including the subject-object rationality. He says, “God blijft God en de mens wordt mens. Leer en leven, fides quae en fides qua creditor, object en subject, heilsgescheidenis en levensgescheidenis, openbaring en menselijke ervaring, communicatie ‘van’ en ‘tussen’ zijn zo op elkaar betrokken dat steeds alleen via het ene moment het andere tot zijn recht kan komen.” He made it clear that he wants to formulate the complementarity (evenwicht) between the godly and the human factors. He based his views on the systematic views of H Berkhof (1973), which are based on a complementarity of the godly and human – “het ene wordt pas zichzelf door het andere”, “the one only becomes true to himself by means of the other.” Berkhof based his view on a trend that becomes more and more relevant in theories, which focus on life as a process and on life’s development by leaps and bounds. In his comments on the concept of bipolarity in Pastoral Theology, D J Louw (1984: 22-23) refers to different approaches, including Berkhof’s approach, which formulates the God-man relationship. He refers to P Tillich (*analogia entis* – this concept described the spirit of man analogous to God’s spirit), K Barth (*analogia fidei* – this concept describes the spirit of God analogous to the spirit of man), H Berkhof (complementarity), Van Ruler (reciprocity) and Berkouwer (correlation of faith). Louw believes Heitink is in line with F Wintzer who speaks of bipolarity between different aspects of pastoral work: “Bezeugen und Beraten”, “geloofshulp en lewenshulp”. Louw however maintains that the bipolarity seen as complementarity has the implication that God is explained by man and vice versa. He formulates, with a focus on eschatology, a teleological approach in which the bipolarity between God and man is not seen as a complementarity to not neglect the difference. Teleology is based on an eschatology of “belofte-in-ervulling” and not on communication. Eschatology interprets complementarity as a God-given gift.

The bipolarity imposed by the radical Cartesian subject-object split for theology and spirituality becomes clear from a presentation by PF Theron (1990) of the systematic theological problem formulated as “What is the relationship between the objective involvement of God to save man and the subjective realm of faith and conversion by man.”

He formulates the problem as a dualistic polarity originating from Greek philosophy and accentuated by Descartes. This view leads to three possible formulations:

Polarity

a. *Human beings have a personal autonomy in relation to God.* Humans are responsible for their own destiny and are themselves capable of saving themselves by faith and conversion. God is

only responsible for 50 percent of human beings' destiny.

b. *The total opposite of a.* Humans are saved by means of an objective – *extra nos* intervention by God. Humans can only rationally take notice of God's objective work.

A-polarity

c. *God-and-humans-in-relation.* This view states that humankind and God are not concurrently related but they are covenantal related. Human beings owe their existence to God: without God there is no existence.

This a-polarity (see Leviticus 20:7-8, Philippians 2: 12-13) is an indication that humankind and God are seen as qualitatively different entities contrary to a bipolar perspective where God and humankind are seen as qualitatively on the same level (niveau).

He (Theron 1990:8-9) formulates it as follows:

“Die fout met die polêre denke bestaan daarin dat God en mens op dieselfde vlak (niveau) gedink word. Die verskil tussen God en mens is dan slegs kwantitatief in plaas van kwalitatief. Volgens die Skrif is God en mens nie konkurrent nie maar bondgenote. Die mens beskik nie oor 'n eie bestaan wat dan ook nog in 'n relasie tot God bestaan nie maar die mens bestaan kragtens sy verhouding met God.”

This view is a confirmation of the explanation by WD Jonker (1981) of the Reformed stance on righteousness and sanctification. He refers to GC Berkouwer who describes the God-Man relationship as a covenant. Jonker (1981: 200) says: “Dit is duidelik dat die wyse waarop Berkouwer die begrip korrelasie hanteer en hom verset teen elke vorm van polêre denke, van sy teologie 'n voorbeeld van verbondsmatige denke maak” He formulates three options to explain different views:

- *The polarity between God and humankind.* God is merciful but He is bounded by man's responsibility.
- *God works alone and humankind is passively involved.*
- *There is a correlation between God and humankind* (Jonker1981: 192).

The implications of this principle for a practical theological rationality suggest a corrective to a correlation based on bipolarity.

4. THE ROLE OF RATIONALITY IN DIFFERENT APPROACHES TO PRACTICAL THEOLOGY

The research into the implications of rationality for the discipline of Practical theology presents two examples.

4.1 A diaconological approach

J Janse van Rensburg (2000: 92) discussed the implications of postmodern thought for Practical Theology in his book, *Paradigm shift: An introduction to postmodern thought and its implications for theology.*

He proposes an inter-subjective hermeneutic approach without minimising the importance of the particular contexts or without compromising ethical principles. In his approach he rejects what he calls the ethical “relativism of postmodernity”. He is of the opinion that postmodern epistemologies and Christian ethical norms are incompatible. His approach is based on a subject-object split. On page 97 of his book he refers to postmodernism as an onslaught, an “attack on the most basic principles of the Christian faith”. In this view the “objective truth of God's being is no longer the point of departure for theology in Postmodernism. People's experiences of

God, the subjective and the community constitute the postmodern theology. Static, systematic concepts of God are traded for dynamic, concepts, creating a hermeneutic and communicative crisis." He refers to P Ricoeur's constructivist hermeneutics and concludes that it opens the door to a postmodern frame of mind. For Janse van Rensburg, Ricoeur presents a return to a subjective sensitivity and a loss of objectivity. Even though Van Rensburg warns that Ricoeur's approach does not suggest subjectivism, he says, "It does imply that the final choice rests with the 'I' to construct his or her reality from the task".

In reaction to the subjective sensitivity of Ricoeur, Janse van Rensburg proposes a subjective-subjective approach. In the work of the pastor this means that "it is the ideal of the Christian to come as close as possible to the perfect example of Christ, this goal should be pursued, even though the pastor may realise the person may not accept such scriptural directives". Although he proposes an inter-subjective approach he advocates a diaconological (biblical) model, which defines a directive strategy.

It is clear that he promotes Practical Theology as diaconology based on an epistemology, which acknowledges the objective truth of the Bible. In his view postmodern hermeneutics must be viewed as "sweet poison". He quotes K J Gergen (1992) who says, "Once post modernistic views are savoured they can scarcely be abandoned. Once tasted the appetite becomes insatiable."

4.2 A postfoundationalist approach

Another approach to Practical Theology is based on the notion of transversal rationality (J Muller 2008: 4). Muller quotes C O Schrag (1992) who says, "From radical hermeneutics we learn that there is no truth at the bottom of being, no final, bedrock, correct interpretation that supplies the 'letzte begründung'. On the other hand, the hurried and facile claim of relativism that every interpretation is as good as every other is equally misguided."

He then typifies his approach as "always concrete, local and contextual but at the same time reaches beyond local contexts to transdisciplinary concerns". He also quotes JW van Huyssteen (2006) who says, "Talk about the human subject is now revisited by resituating the human subject in the space of communicative praxis." Practical theology from the transversal approach focuses on social contexts and on embeddedness rather than on abstract beliefs. The locus of rationality is embodied persons. The implications are that the normative interpretative emphasis in Practical Theology described by RR Osmer (2008), is replaced by interconnectedness and communicative practices. The postfoundationalist approach can be identified as being in line with affirmative postmodernism (PM Rosenau), which focuses on an optimistic view and on the making of normative choices.

5. CONCLUSION

The challenge of postmodernism to rationality in Practical Theology leads to a focus on and a reconsideration of the rationality of Practical Theological approaches. It seems that the development from a limited rationality of the Newtonian philosophy to a broadened rationality of the communications actions approach has been accommodated in a wider approach in postmodernistic rationality. Rossouw (1993) described two opposing reactions of theology to modern rationality. The first was total rejection, which led to the total irrelevance of theology for the modern world. Another reaction was the "if-you-can't-beat-them-join-them-approach". This resulted in a rationalistic and logical theological exercise, which was timeless and irrelevant for the culture. It is suggested that the correlative approach be reformulated in the conceptualisation of rationality in Practical theology to address the challenges of a postmodern culture. Osmer (2008:163) says – 'it is not too much to say that practical theology as an academic field are

inherently cross-disciplinary in nature. This means that Practical Theology brings theology into dialogue with other theological disciplines and the arts and science. A rationality that enables the discipline to participate in a dialogue can be developed from a correlational approach.

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***Annus Virtualis*: Enkele uitdagings wat die virtuele era van Web 2.0 aan relevante kerklike bedieninge stel**

ABSTRACT

Annus Virtualis: Some challenges that the virtual era of Web 2.0 face in terms of relevant church ministry

Annus Virtualis, the digital explosion presents nothing less than a global paradigm shift away from the mass print culture. This is illustrated by a short discussion of the meteoric growth of digital platforms such as Facebook, before focusing on the new "Net Generation." These "Net Geners" are transforming the digital world from a place where you search for information to an interactive social space where you share information and collaborate on projects of mutual interest, such as solving the globe's most pressing problems. After dealing with a few dangers the new virtual era poses for authentic social connectedness, the need for churches to wake up to the digital word and come to terms with authentic digital ministry is finally addressed.

1. DIE ERA VAN VIRTUALITEIT IS HIER

Annus virtualis, die era van virtualiteit is hier. Meer as een en 'n half miljard mense wêreldwyd is reeds aanlyn bedrywig. Van die sowat 6,7 miljard mense op aarde is daar reeds oor die 1,8 miljard internetverbuikers aan die einde van 2009, oftewel 26,6% van die totale wêreldbevolking. Dit verteenwoordig 'n groeikurwe van 399% tussen 2000 en 2009.² Meer as twee triljoen dollar se besigheid word jaarliks op die internet gedoen, terwyl 33 % van alle boeke aanlyn verkoop word. Op 28 Mei 2010, met Google se bekendmaking van die grootste webruimtes in terme van internetverkeer, was *Facebook* bo aan die lys, met 540 miljoen unieke besoekers en 570 miljard bladbesoeke gedurende April 2010, terwyl *Yahoo* tweede was met 490 miljoen unieke besoekers. *Wikipedia* het 'n skaflike 310 miljoen besoekers gedurende dieselfde maand gehad. In Suid Afrika is *News 24*, wat internetverkeer betref, loshande die grootste webruimte met kort duskant 2,8 miljoen unieke besoekers gedurende Mei 2010.³

Die grootste suksesverhaal op die internet is ongetwyfeld *Facebook*, die breinkind van Mark Zuckerberg. As die jongste miljardêr in die geskiedenis is dit Zuckerberg se doel om *Facebook* as die planeet se basiese kommunikasie-platform daar te stel; oftewel as die gunsteling spasie waar mense hulle virtuele lewens deurbring. Wat aanvanklik begin het as 'n eksperiment by Harvard Universiteit, waar Zuckerberg medestudente se foto's en kontak besonderhede aanlyn geplaas

1 Navorsingsgenoot, Departement Nuwe Testament, Universiteit van die Vrystaat, Bloemfontein

2 Internet World Stats: <http://www.internetworldstats.com/stats.htm>. In Junie 1993 was daar slegs 130 webtuistes, maar teen die middel van 2007 sowat 135 miljoen geregistreerde webblad name en 61 miljoen aktiewe webblaie (Matthew Gray, aangehaal in Leadbeater, 2009:31).

3 Aldus Mybroadband.co.za: "The latest Nielsen Online website statistics showed that there was in fact no significant slowdown or growth in local website traffic... In June local OPA registered websites attracted 20,481,203 unique visitors..." <http://mybroadband.co.za/news/internet/13493-South-Africas-top-local-websites.html>.

het, het binne enkele jare gegroei tot 'n formidabele virtuele ikoon met 'n beraamde waarde van \$15 miljard aan die einde van 2008. Facebook se groei gedurende die eerste kwartaal van 2009 was by die 5 miljoen mense per week, terwyl 140 miljoen nuwe lede reeds tussen Februarie 2007-Maart 2009 hier aangesluit het (Rice 2009:Kindle).

Nog 'n uiters gewilde digitale kommunikasiemedium is *Twitter* wat in April 2010 reeds 105,779,710 geregistreerde gebruikers gehad het. Via selfone en rekenaars kan mense 140 karakters per keer met hulle "followers" deel (of "tweet" soos wat dit bekendstaan). Teen 'n tempo van meer as 300,000 nuwe gebruikers wat daaglik hier aansluit en 180 miljoen unieke maandelikse besoekers wat sowat 55 miljoen tweets per dag versend, is *Twitter* met sy 175 werknemers ook 'n beduidende rolspeler in die virtuele wêreld.⁴

Die internet het die informasie-ontploffing binne ons dag na nuwe hoogtes geneem, soos wat Joubert (2009:17-18) skryf:

"In 2006 is daar volgens *Time Magazine* 3 miljoen maal meer inligting in een enkele jaar op die www.wêreld van die internet versprei as wat daar in die ganse voorafgaande menseheugenis in boeke vasgevang is. Tans groei nuwe kennis teen sowat 2 miljard nuwe gigagrepe per jaar. Gedurende die afgelope 30 jaar is daar meer inligting in die wêreld geproduseer as in die voorafgaande 5,000 jaar. Reeds in 2005 het die internet se volume kennis elke 90 dae verdubbel, aldus Jane Alexander (*The overload solution*, 2005). Op sy beurt skryf Michael Le Gault (*Think*, 2006) daar is sowat 700 miljard dokumente in sirkulasie op die web terwyl daar elke dag kort duskant 7,5 miljoen nuwe webblaaie verskyn. Net op *YouTube* alleen is daar gedurende April 2009 meer inligting versprei en afgelaai as op die totale internet in die jaar 2000."

Ter wille van volledigheid moet ons onthou dat verwysings na die sogenaamde globale groei van die internet nie heeltemal in die kol is nie. Daar is 'n groot kloof tussen Eerste- en Twee Derdes wêreld wat internetbenutting betref. Tereg merk die godsdiensosioloog Dawson en Cowen (2004:5) op: "Any informed discussion of the Internet and its relationship to culture and society must give serious consideration to the division between the Internet haves and have-nots..." Wat Suid Afrika se internetgebruikers betref, het dit toegeneem vanaf 5,5% in die jaar 2000, dit wil sê, vanaf 2,4 miljoen gebruikers binne 'n bevolking van 43, 690 miljoen inwoners na 10,8% in 2009, of 5,3 miljoen gebruikers binne 'n beraamde bevolking van 49 miljoen mense.⁵

2. NIE FIKTIEWE WÊRELDE NIE, MAAR EERDER DIGITALE SOSIALE-KONSTRUKTE

Eindelose voorbeelde sou uitgelig kon word rakende die fenomenale groei van die internet. Hopelik is die punt egter gemaak: Nuwe elektroniese en digitale tegnologie is tans 'n onlosmaaklike deel van miljoene mense se daaglikse realiteit, ook binne die wêreld van kerk, soos wat huidige teologiese gesprekke, publikasies, seminare, en virtuele bedienings bevestig. Maar wat is virtualiteit presies?⁶ Is dit 'n blote tegnologiese aanhangsel tot die realiteit, of dalk 'n nie-reële, kunsmatige wêreld wat vir vele as ontsnappingsroete uit die werklikheid dien? Kom ons klop aan

4 Alex Wilhelm skryf: "...tweets in 2009 grew some 1,400%. Traffic to Twitter.com grew around 1,100%, and total sent Tweets went up 1,400%." <http://thenextweb.com/socialmedia/2010/02/22/twitter-statistics-full-picture/>

5 <http://www.internetworldstats.com/af/za.htm>. Vergelyk egter die inligting hieroor van die BBC by: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/technology/8552410.stm>.

6 Ter wille van terminologiese verheldering: "elektronies" hou verband met alle materiaal en data in wat elektries aangedrewe media gestoor en versend word, insluitend digitale informasie. "Digitaal" hou weer verband met inligting wat weer geberg, geprosesseer en versend word via digitale (binêre) apparatuur en rekenaar netwerke. Digitale materiaal bestaan virtueel indien dit in die kuberruim geberg en benut word.

by *Wikipedia*, een van die grootste virtuele bronne van informasie, vir 'n omskrywing:

"A virtual world is a genre of [online community](#) that often takes the form of a [computer-based simulated environment](#), through which users can interact with one another and use and create objects. Virtual worlds are intended for its [users](#) to inhabit and interact, and the term today has become largely synonymous with interactive 3D virtual environments..."⁷

Doug Estes, 'n Nuwe-Testamentikus in eie reg, reflekteer in 'n onlangse boek getiteld *SimChurch* (2009:Kindle) as volg oor die aard van virtuele wêrelde: "A virtual world is a created space where people can interact as if in the real world, but through some type of technological medium." Hy verduidelik die verskil tussen fiksionele en virtuele wêrelde as volg: "A fictional world is not the same as a virtual world because a fictional world is a mode of possibility and a virtual world is a mode of reality."

Binne digitaal gekonstrueerde realiteite, of soos wat Edward Castronova (2006) dit noem: sintetiese wêrelde, vind verskillende vorms van sosiale interaksie plaas. Enigiets vanaf webblaaie, blogs, MySpace, YouTube, SecondLife, Mixit tot by Twitter konnekteer mense op derduisende maniere en met uiteenlopende doelwitte. Inderdaad mag diegene wat verkies om nie aktiewe deelnemers aan sodanige virtuele interaksies te wees nie, dit as kunsmatige ontvlugtings vanuit die realiteit verstaan, maar dit verander nogtans nie aan die feit dat eietydse tegnologie ruim toegangspoorte bied tot sosio-virtuele wêrelde waarbinne mense interaktief betrokke is nie. Net soos wat mense binne die konkrete wêreld hul eie "ideale wêreld" konstrueer en ook leefbaar maak deur middel van prosesse van "objektifikasie" en "internalisering," soos wat Peter Berger en Thomas Luckmann dit reeds in die 1960's beskryf het in hulle invloedryke werk: *The Social Construction of Reality*, skep mense ook bepaalde virtuele realiteite waar sinvolle interaksie tussen deelnemers in die kuberruim plaasvind, en wat hul daaglikse lewe in die sogenaamde "regte wêreld" grondliggend beïnvloed.

Daar bestaan 'n onlosmaaklike verband tussen antropologie en tegnologie. Bedoelende, regte mense van vlees en bloed is verantwoordelik vir tegnologiese ontwikkelings en daaropvolgende inhoudelike vormgewing van hierdie einste tegnologie. Dit is egter nie 'n neutrale, eenrigting proses nie. Tegnologie is menslike skeppings, maar dan ook skeppings wat veranderinge te weeg bring aan ons selfverstaan en dié van ons omgewings. Daarom skryf Spyker (2008:Kindle):

"Technology is not our tools; it is how we create and use tools. In a nutshell, technology is part of what defines us; it is part of what makes us humans. More than that, the technologies we adopt affect the type of humans we become. The tools we choose to use and how we use them affect how we think, how we make decisions, how we relate to one another, how we construct knowledge, even how we think about God."

Spyker trap egter in 'n "spyker" van sy eie as hy eietydse tegnologiese verskuiwings slegs maar as 'n informasie-revolusie tipeer. Kennis het inderdaad makliker bereikbaar, onmiddellik beskikbaar en ook goedkoper geword, te danke veral aan Google, Yahoo en Wikipedia. Tog is die nuwe digitale ruimtes meer as net bestaande of nuwe vorme van kennis wat in vinnige, meer verbruikersvriendelike verpakings beskikbaar geraak het, of informasie wat slegs in nuwe elektroniese baadjies verpak word (*Kindle* en *iPad*).⁸ Die virtuele realiteit is 'n multivlakkige, digitaal gefasiliteerde werklikheid waar die vraag na betekenis implisiet sowel as eksplisiet aan die orde

7 http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Virtual_world. 9 Julie 2010.

8 Die informasiekultuur hou ook verband met die era van die drukpers wat rondom die middel van die 15de eeu afskop met Gutenberg se drukpers. Van toe af was lineêr gedrewe massakommunikasie aan die orde van die dag. Ordelyke, boekverpakte informasie was van toe af binne die bereik van gewone mense wat steeds in orale omgewings geleef het.

van die dag is. Mense is met ander woorde met hulle wil, harte, emosies, asook met bepaalde spiritualiteite hier aanwesig. Die digitale werklikheid dien derhalwe as uitdrukkingsvorms van miljoene mense se bestaande en/of hergedefinieerde identiteite. Dit is hulle voorkeur kuierplek, werkplek en kerkplek.

3. NUWE PARADIGMAS, NUWE WERKLIKHEDE!

Paradigmaverskuiwings en nuwe wêreldbeelde is nie vreemde begrippe binne huidige teologiese diskoerse nie. Dit is juis akademies korrek om op hoogte te wees met hermeneutiese verskuiwings in groepe se werklikheidsverstaan deur die eeue en hoe dit onder andere ons interpretasie van die Bybel beïnvloed (vgl Lategan 2009:13ff). Op 'n hoër vlak van abstraksie is dit nodig om ook kennis te dra van algemene veranderings binne die geskiedenis van die mensdom vanaf 'n orale kultuur, na 'n post-15de eeuse drukperskultuur, tot by die 19de eeuse informasiekultuur en ons huidige digitale kultuur (Miller 2004:19ff). Eweneens is dit waardevol om ingelyf te wees in debatte rondom die verskuiwings vanaf 'n Kopernikaanse wêreldbeeld tot en met ons eietydse heliosentriese, digitale leefwêreld, wat veral in Westerse denke uitdrukking gevind het in die Franse filosoof Rene Descartes se beroemde woorde: "cogito ergo sum" ("ek dink, daarom is ek"). Descartes se liggaam-gees onderskeid het Westerse denkprosesse grondig beïnvloed om die liggaamlike as die eintlike vorm van interaksie met die sinuïglike wêreld te verstaan, terwyl die siel as 'n abstrakte, minder reële vorm van bestaan beskou is. Die gevolg was 'n nuwe tipe rasionele denke, ook binne die teologie, wat onder andere veronderstel dat slegs dit wat ons by wyse van wetenskaplike eksperimente en historiese analogieë kan bewys kenbaar en eventueel ook eg is.

Rasionele denkparadigmas het deur die loop van die 20ste eeu toenemende teenstand gekry vanuit die geleedere van denkers soos Lyotard en Derrida wat hulleself intellektueel verset het teen sodanige logosentriese- en ander verstaansmodelle. Uiteindelik het dit gelei tot 'n hermeneutiese paradigmaverskuiwing wat algemene uitdrukking gevind het in die enigmatiese term: post-modernisme.⁹ Terwyl hierdie sambreelterm vir vele kerklikes 'n negatiewe term is en vir ander 'n reddingsterm, blyk dit dat die huidige digitale rewolusie vir vele weliswaar 'n ontsnappingsroete bied weg vanuit die hoogs gekontroleerde en spesialis-gedrewe werklikheid van die modernisme.

Die epogmakende nuwe era van digitaliteit verteenwoordig 'n verskuiwing in miljoene se verstaan van hulself, ander, God, spasie en tyd. Dit word onder andere vergestalt in nuwe kenteorieë of epistemologieë, asook in nuwe aetiologieë (verklarings vir die oorsprong van objekte); futurologieë (sienings van die toekoms); metodologieë (nuwe vorms van doelwitbereiking), taal ('n nuwe "jargon" om nuwe tegnologie en andersoortige vorms van interaksie onder woorde te bring) en waardes wat op fundamentele vlak gestalte gee aan nuwe vorms van eksistensie. Anders gestel, die koms van hierdie nuwe media het nie slegs verbeterde hoëspoed tegnologie tot gevolg gehad nie; dit het terselfdertyd dramatiese verstellings meegebring aan ons eie verstaan van, en verskillende interaksies binne bestaande en nuut gekonstrueerde (digitale) werklikhede. Tereg skryf Watson (2008:Kindle): "Greater connectivity, brought about by technology, deregulation, globalization, low-cost travel and migration, is changing how people live, how people work and

9 Wikipedia (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Postmodernism>): "Postmodernism is a tendency in contemporary culture characterized by the rejection of [objective truth](#) and [global cultural narrative](#). It emphasizes the role of language, power relations, and motivations; in particular it attacks the use of sharp classifications such as male versus female, straight versus gay, white versus black, and imperial versus colonial. Postmodernism has influenced many cultural fields, including [literary criticism](#), [sociology](#), [linguistics](#), [architecture](#), [visual arts](#), and [music](#)."

how people think.”

Weliswaar is die wêreldverskuiwende impak van digitale tegnologie nie ewe sterk op almal nie. Dit is meer “voelbaar” binne die sogenaamde “Net Generasie” (sien afdeling 4) en minder op ouer generasies. Binne ons sosiale netwerk era van Web 2.0 is digitale werklikheide vir hierdie “Net Geners” gelyk aan die realiteit per se, terwyl die digitale media vir ander persone en groepe ten minste meer effektiewe hulpmiddels ter ontsluiting van informasie bed. Nogtans is die digitale werklikheid waarbinne ons onself bevind onvermybaar. ’n Onlangse berig in Harvard Business Review deur Jeanne Meister en Karie Willyerd praat alreeds van ’n nuwe tipe “virtual leadership” waar internasionale besighede virtuele vergaderings, aanlyn forums en groepbesprekings met kollegas regoor die aarde hou met behulp van tegnologie soos WebEx en TelePresence.¹⁰ Selfoontegnologie is in hierdie verband ook ’n fenomenale globale verbindingsmedium. Selfs in ’n ontwikkelende land soos Suid Afrika beskik 80% mense reeds oor selfone, soos wat ’n onlangse Markinor ondersoek uitgewys het (Joubert 2009:34)

Een van die heursitiese sleutels ter verstaan van die digitale era is ’n doelbewuste soeke na “connectivity,” oftewel konnektiwiteit. Konnektiwiteit verwys nie net na die spoed, bandwydte of verbindingsvermoëns wat nuwe digitale tegnologieë bied nie, maar ook na die deelnemers aan hierdie nuwe werklikheid se uiteenlopende behoeftes aan onderlinge skakeling. Daarom dat hulle taal deurdrenk is met terme soos interaktiwiteit, skakeling (“links”), netwerke (“social networks”), vriendskap, volgeling (“followers”), ensomeer. Kortom, dit gaan oor eiesoortige sinvolle “peer-to-peer communication.” Ongetwyfeld hou die virtuele wêreld groot belofte in ten opsigte van nuwe vorms van konnektiwiteit. Soos wat Thomas Kuhn, die mees invloedryke nadenker oor wetenskaplike paradigmasverskuiwings, ons geleer het, is dit juis die beloftes wat nuwe teorieë, en in ons geval: digitale media, bied, wat telkens ’n “eksodus” na ’n nuwe universum tot gevolg het, nie noodwendig die reële veranderinge en verbeterings of, in ons geval, die verhoogde kwaliteit van verhoudings, wat dit eventueel bied nie.

Die groot soektog vir vele binne ons post-moderne, digitaal bemiddelde wêreld, is om uit hulle kokonne van alleenheid, onbelangrikheid en “disconnectedness” te ontsnap. Die behoefte om iewers te behoort, is een van die basiese menslike behoeftes, soos wat die bekende sielkundige, Martin Seligman, Edward Diener, en ander navorsers binne die skool van “positiewe sielkunde” bevind het. In hierdie verband skryf Janet Surrey (aangehaal in Jessie Rice, 2009:Kindle) dat konnektiwiteit “the core of psychological wellbeing” is, sowel as “the essential quality of growth-fostering and healing relationships. In moments of deep connection in relationship, we break out of isolation and contraction into a more whole and spacious state of mind and heart.”

Facebook is waarskynlik die belangrikste virtuele ruimte binne die www.doolhof wat vir miljoene die belofte bied van ’n nuwe tuiste waar individue op hul eie terme kan behoort en eiesoortige konneksies met hulle “vriende” kan vorm. Reeds teen die middel van 2009 is 850 miljoen foto’s per maand op Facebook opgelaa. Die gemiddelde Facebook lid deel sy of haar lewe tans met ten minste 120 ander “Facebook friends.” Jessie Rice (2009) verduidelik hierdie idealistiese onderbou van Facebook in terme van die beeld van ’n tuiste of ’n “home” (vergelyk ook Friesen, 2009):

“Home is where we keep all the stuff that matters most to us” (*Facebook* dien as uitstalplek van mense se fotos en dit bied onder andere ook spasies waar hulle politieke en religieuse waardes verwoord kan word)

“Home is wherever we find family” (*Facebook* fasiliteer vinnige “homelike moments with family and friends from around the world, despite any geographical barriers.”)

10 http://blogs.hbr.org/cs/2010/06/leading_virtual_teams_to_real.html?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+harvardbusiness%2Fcs+%28Conversation+Starter+on+HBR.org%29 (30 Junie 2010).

“Home is where we feel safe because we can control the environment” (Individue se behoefte aan aktiewe, instrumentele beheer word op *Facebook* aangespreek).
“Home is where we can ‘just be ourselves.’” (*Facebook* is die ideale virtuele ruimte vir individue om ’n ideale beeld te skep van hulself en dit ook te projekteer na hul vriende sonder direkte eksterne inmenging.)

4. NIE LANGER NET INFORMASIE-JAGTERS NIE: DIE NUWE “NET GENERASIE”

Die digitale era is nie ’n uniforme, gelyktydige proses wat orals op dieselfde wyses en teen dieselfde spoed plaasvind nie. Dit is veral die jonger generasie wat digitaal gesosialiseer is, soos wat Don Tapscott (2009:xi-xii) onder andere bevind. In ’n uitgebreide ondersoek, getiteld “The Net Generation: A Strategic Investigation”, waar hy en sy span tussen 2006-2008 onderhoude met 10,000 mense gevoer het, praat Tapscott juis van “*Net Geners*” as die geslag wat volledig met die internet opgegroeï het. “In 2008 the eldest of the generation turned 31. The youngest turned 11. Around the world the generation is flooding into the workplace, marketplace, and every niche of society. They are bringing their demographic muscle, media smarts, purchasing power, new models of collaborating and parenting, entrepreneurship, and political power into the world (2009:9).” Hy kon hier ook bygevoeg het, hul eie spiritualiteit!

Kritiek op hierdie sogenaamde “*Net Generasie*” bly egter nie uit nie, soos wat Tapscott tereg aandui. Hulle word soms uitgewys as minder intelligent as vorige generasies van soortgelyke ouderdom. Hulle word “screenagers” genoem wat verslaaf is aan digitale media en wat hulle interpersoonlike vaardighede verloor het. Ook word beskuldigings van diefstal, skaamteloosheid, gewelddadigheid, selfbehaaglikheid en luiheid in die rigting van hierdie jonger generasie geslinger. Tog bevind Tapscott dat die meeste van hierdie aannames vals is. Hy skryf: “As the first global generation ever, the Net Geners are smarter, quicker, and more tolerant of diversity than their predecessors. They care strongly about justice and the problems faced by their society and are typically engaged in some kind of civic activity at school, at work, or in their communities (2009:6). Hy vind vervolgens ’n aantal karaktereienskappe wat tipiese “*Net Geners*” beskryf en wat hul onderskei van hul “*Baby Boomer*” ouers, naamlik: “They prize freedom and freedom of choice. They want to customize things, make them their own. They’re natural collaborators, who enjoy a conversation, not a lecture. They’ll scrutinize you and your organization. They insist on integrity. They want to have fun, even at work and at school. Speed is normal. Innovation is part of life.” (2009:6-7).

Tapscott meen dat die kritiek op die nuwe digitale generasie eerder te make het met ander mense se onbekendheid met nuwe tegnologie, eerder as dat dit gebaseer is op feitlike navorsing. Die nuwe “*Net Generasie*” gebruik tegnologie immers heeltemal anders as hul voorgangers. Vir hulle is dit nie slegs nuttige kommunikasie-middels nie, maar konneksie-platforms. “*Net Geners* are transforming the Internet from a place where you find information to a place where you share information, collaborate on projects of mutual interest, and create new ways to solve some of our most pressing problems” (Tapscott 2009:40). Hulle doen dit deur die skep en deel van nuwe interaktiewe inhoud op blogs en ander hulpmiddels wat Web 2.0 se sosiale netwerk platforms aan hulle bied.¹¹ Dit is nie langer die dagblaaie, TV nuus of boeke wat hierdie generasie se hoofinformante is nie. Nog minder is dit gesagsinstellings soos tradisionele kerke, of outoritêre godsdienstige leiers. “Old time religion” het in hulle omgewing ook plek gemaak vir “online religion” met virtuele kerke, interaktiewe Christelike gespreksforums en erediens as hul geestelike kuierplekke.

11 Web 2.0 verwys vir baie na die nuwe internet tegnologie wat mense in staat stel om hul eie inligting op die internet te publiseer en interaktief te deel. Dit gaan dus oor sogenaamde “user-generated content.”

Die digitale era word tans gekenmerk deur 'n groeiende generasie gaping, wat bepaalde implikasies vir kerklike bediening in die toekoms inhou in terme van die uiteenlopende bedieningsbehoefte van verskillende generasies. Verskillende sienings van die rol, funksies en aanwending van nuwe tegnologieë is volgens George Barna een van die vernaamste redes hiervoor. Navorsing deur die Barna groep in 2009 bevind dat 22% van mense in die ouderdomgroep 18-24 die nuutste tegnologie as 'n hoë prioriteit in hul lewens beskou, terwyl slegs 9% van volwassenes bo die ouderdom van 25 dit as 'n prioriteit sien.¹² Nog 'n rede vir die generasie gaping is waarskynlik omdat die breinontwikkeling van hierdie "*Net Generasie*" verskillend plaasvind van dié van hul voorgangers.¹³ Leonard Sweet noem tereg dat daar inderwaarheid net drie tipe mense op aarde is: "foreigners, natives and immigrants." Daardie volwassenes wat weier om te emigreer na hierdie nuwe digitale beskawing, "...constructed with sand (silicon), glass (fiber), air (wireless) and DNA (genes)" (Sweet 1999:147), sal bes moontlik gestrand agterbly op 'n krimpende eiland van digitale ongeletterdheid.¹⁴

Binnensnel veranderende wêreld, waar digitaliteit 'n omvattende nuwe werklikheidsverstaan veronderstel wat alle vorms van realiteit grondig raak, moet ons bedag wees op bepaalde vangstrikke wat dit inhou. Tereg merk Neil Postman (1993:5) op dat daar baie eenogiges is binne nuwe werklikhede "...who see only what new technologies can do and are incapable of imagining what they will undo." Eietydse media en die gevolglike leefstyle en wêreldbeelde wat dit fasiliteer is definitief nie neutraal nie. Media, na luid van Marshall McLuhan se bekende uitspraak, is immers die boodskap self; "the medium is the message." Sodra enige medium verander, raak dit die boodskap ook op een of ander manier. Ons skep ons media en ons word gevorm deur ons media. In die woorde van Shane Hipps (2009:45): "The tools we use to think actually shape the way we think. The same applies to our faith as well."

5. DIE IMPAK VAN VISUALITEIT

'n Verdere uitdaging vir die nuwe digitale era, bo en behalwe die feit dat veral die sogenaamde "*Net Generasie*" te veel persoonlike informasie op sosiale netwerke deel wat hul toekomstige privaatheid kan ondermyn, is die oormatige klem op visualiteit. Visuele beelde en geskrewe woorde se emotiewe impak is uiteenlopend van aard en word ook in verskillende dele van die brein geprosesseer.

"Images initially make us feel rather than think. They can pin the logical side of your brain to the back of your skull, which is why image-based advertising is so effective. Images don't invite you to argue; they give you an experience. In contrast, the printed word makes us think and question... Our brains process printed words and images in different ways. The printed word is processed primarily in the left hemisphere of the brain, which specializes in logic, sequence and categories. Images are processed primarily in the right hemisphere, which specializes in intuition and holistic perception, rather than linear analysis." (Hipps 2009:76-77).

12 <http://www.barna.org/barna-update/article/14-media/212-new-research-explores-how-technology-drives-generation-gap?q=media+technology>

13 Alhoewel sodanige navorsing nog in 'n vroeë stadium is, lyk dit asof hierdie generasie hoër ontwikkelde ruimtelike en visuele vaardighede as vorige generasies het (Tapscott 2009:97-120).

14 Goeie nuus egter is dat nuwe navorsing ook aantoon dat die volwasse brein steeds verder kan ontwikkel. Susan Begley (2007:8) sê in hierdie verband: "The brain can indeed be rewired... It can activate long-dormant wires and run new cables like an electrician bringing an old house up to code.... The adult brain, in short, retains much of the plasticity of the developing brain, including the power to repair damaged regions, to grow new neurons, to rezone regions that performed one task and have them assume a new task, to change the circuitry that weaves neurons into networks that allow us to remember, feel, suffer, think, imagine and dream."

Hipps bevind selfs: Electronic media not only nurture the right-brain' it can suspend activity in the left brain" (p. 145). Dink net watter implikasies hou hierdie feit in vir die lees, hoor en korrekte verstaan van die Bybel! Kortom, kerklike bedienings sal kreatiewe maniere moet vind om die Bybel relevant en verantwoordelik aan die woord te laat kom binne digitale werklikhede.

6. DIE AFWESIGHEID VAN SPESIALISTE EN KENNERS

Die digitale realiteit fasiliteer dikwels kunsmatige beelde van die realiteit en sistap daardie fakulteite in ons brein wat noodsaaklik is om 'n groter potensiaal tot kritiese denke aan te wakker. Derhalwe kan digitale ruimtes soms manipulerend en eensydig raak. In dieselfde asem kan die nuwe "we-think" mentaliteit van die virtuele wêreld, ten spyte van bepaalde voordele wat dit inhou (Aldus Leadbeater, 2009:32ff),¹⁵ 'n tipe werklikheid skep waar alle opinies, standpunte, idees en waarnemings op presiese dieselfde vlak staan (vgl Joubert 2009:22-24:). Of jy nou 'n jong "Net Gener" is wat willekeurig jou (anonieme) opinie gee, en of jy 'n deurwinterde direkteur van 'n mediese firma is, alle menings oor, sê nou maar een of ander nuwe mediese produk, loop die gevaar om op presies dieselfde vlak geëvalueer en benut te word deur "we-thinkers." Naïewe opinievorming van en deur die massas kan 'n ongesonde kollektiewe digitale kultuur tot gevolg hê wat veral die "Net Generasie" sleg kan benadeel in terme van hul sosiale en emosionele ontwikkeling. Daardie "everyone is a media outlet" sindroom (vgl Shirky 2008:55ff), kan selfs aanleiding gee tot verskillende vorme van digitale banaliteit ten einde die virtuele ruim se nimmereindigende statistiese gewildheidsleer verder uit te klim. Derhalwe is daar 'n dringende behoefte aan 'n herwaardering van spesialiste en meningsvormende kenners binne kuberruimtes wie se opinies eenvoudig meer gewig moet dra as diegene wat na willekeur ongeïnformeerde, naïewe standpunte digitaal loslaat.

7. NAGEBOOTSTE KONNEKTWITEIT EN ONMIDDELLIKE BEHOEFTEGEDREWENHEID

'n Ander knik in die pad van die digitale era is die opkoms van 'n nuwe geslag individualistiese stamlede, oftewel "tribal individualsits." Uiteraard kom hulle veral uit die geledere van die sogenaamde "Net Gener" (sien afdeling 4). Sowel Shane Hipps as Jessy Rice wys tereg op die kunsmatigheid van vele vorms van konneksie binne die www. wêreld. Dit vervang dikwels noodsaaklike gesig tot gesig relasies ten gunste van gemanipuleerde "vriendskapsverhoudings", maar sonder diep konnektiwiteit wat egte onderlinge verbondenheid tot gevolg het. Kortom, dit skep hoogs selfsugtige wêreldes waar: "The near become far, and the far are brought near" (Hipps 2009:107). Lee Siegel (2008:6) gaan selfs so ver om die kuberruim: "the first social environment to serve the needs of the isolated, elevated, asocial individual" te noem.¹⁶ Hierbinne kan emosies, ervarings en gesprekke vanaf 'n veilige afstand bestuur en beheer (gemanipuleer?) word. Dit kan individue spoedig afstomp vir egte omgee en onselfsugtige diensbaarheid teenoor hul medemens wat juis met persoonlike ontberings en opofferings gepaard gaan. Trouens, die groot versoeking van die virtuele wêreld is 'n sogenaamde "convenience factor" waar individue

15 Leadbeater (2009:32) skryf: "we will not make sense of the mass of information generated by the web on our own; our only hope is to employ our shared intelligence. The more people contribute, the more we need to collaborate. The more people use the web to say 'I think... this, that and the other, the more we will need 'We-think...' to create some order, to sort the wheat from the chaff." Groter deursigtigheid is 'n groot voordeel van hierdie subtiele verskuiwing "from 'me' to 'we'" (Watson 2008, Kindle).

16 Siegel (2008:8) skryf dat sy kritiek op die konvensies van die internet gewoonlik met groot teenstand en beledigings op blogs begroet word." Criticize the Internet and you are accused of criticizing democracy. The triumphal, self-congratulating rhetoric surrounding the Internet has made it impervious to criticism."

die meesters van hul eie klein wêreld en die bestuurders van hul voorkeur-maniere van konnektiwiteit word. Sodanige gemanipuleerde wêreld boots dan slegs verhoudings na, maar dan sonder die seer, swaar en pyn van dag-tot-dag saamleef met ander.

Uiteraard is die behoefte aan onmiddellike satisfaksie binne die kuberruim veral te sien in die nimmereindigende gewildheid van pornografiese webtuistes. Dit blyk aan die begin van 2010 dat sowat 12% van alle webtuistes pornografies van aard is. Sowat 35% van alle materiaal wat jaarliks vanaf die internet afgelaai word is pornografie. Hierdie industrie genereer jaarliks sowat \$4,9 miljard.¹⁷ Een van die nuwe tendense sedert 2005 op hierdie gebied is die verskyning van sogenaamde “sosiale pornografie” waar besoekers pornografiese inhoud self genereer en gratis op webruimtes versprei. Sodanige webtuistes bereik tans by die 17 miljoen unieke besoekers daagliks.¹⁸

8. 'N SPIEËL EN SKADU TEGELYK: GELOOF IN 'N DIGITALE ERA

a. Die digitale werklikheid is ook diep geestelik

Die internet blink uit in die skepping van 'n “weird, wonderful and what's next” werklikheid. Tog moet ons nie die fout maak, veral wat godsdiens betref, om te dink digitale werklikhede en dag-tot-dag werklikhede is onafhanklik van mekaar nie. Al weet niemand presies hoe hierdie simbiotiese relasie vorentoe gaan uitspeel nie, is Dawson en Cowen in die kol as hulle sê: “Cyberspace is not quite as unusual a place as sometimes predicted. Life in cyberspace is in continuity with so-called ‘real life,’ and this holds true for religion as well. People are doing online pretty much what they do offline, but they are doing it differently (2004:2). In vele opsigte figureer die digitale wêreld beide as 'n spieël en 'n skaduwee vir religieuse aktiwiteite tegelyk. “That is, there is very little in the real world that is not electronically reproduced online, and very little online that has no offline foundation or referent.”

Godsdiens het 'n groot staanplek op die internet, soos wat die impak van plaaslike webwerwe soos ekerk (www.ekerk.co.za) in Suid Afrika onder andere bevestig. Naas webblaaië met 'n pornografiese inhoud, is religieuse webblaaië tans van die mees besoekte ruimtes. Geen wonder nie dat teologiese navorser, Brenda Brasher (2004), praat van 'n nuwe reformasie wat religieuse kuberdisies in die gesig staar as gevolg van, wat sy noem: “die tsunami van spiritualiteit” wat die kuberruimte getref het en wat alles in die pad oorspoel. Vandag kan individuë ter enige tyd en enige plek op aarde toegang tot “the sacred” hê. Boonop word groter religieuse verdraagsaamheid en diversiteit hier gefasiliteer as in die regte wêreld. Tog bly die tergende vraag, ook vir Brasher, of koinonia ten diepste gefasiliteer word in die kuberruim?

b. “Religion online” versus “online religion”: Staan die internet teenoor geloofsbeoefing in plaaslike kerke?

Is daar 'n verskil tussen “religion online” en “online religion?” Volgens Dawson & Cowen (2004:6) is “online religion” gelyk aan “the provision of information about and/or services related to various religious groups and traditions.” Dit sluit in webblaaië en inligtingsbrosjures van gemeentes en geloofsorganisasies. “Religion online” op sy beurt “invites Internet visitors to participate in religious practices.” Dit mag enigiets omvat vanaf aanlyn gebede, Bybelstudies,

17 Aldus MBA online: <http://www.blogtactic.com/2010/06/internet-pornography-statistics-2010.html>

18 <http://woorkup.com/2010/06/24/the-state-of-social-porn/> In Suid Afrika bevind 'n onlangse ondersoek onder hoërskoolleerlinge, waarvolgens 9 uit 10 kinders toegang tot selfone het en 7 uit 10 toegang het tot die internet, dat 92% van respondente seks op TV geleer het en dat 2 uit 5 al selfoonboodskappe met seksuele inhoud ontvang het- Rapport, Sondag 6 Junie 2010.

kerkdienste tot berading. Uiteraard pas vele vorms van godsdien op die web iewers tussen hierdie twee kategorieë in. Dit bied sowel informasie as partisipasie; oftewel, dit bied informasie ten opsigte van reële godsdienstige aktiwiteite én die belofte van deelname aan 'n volledige en omvattende "plaaslike gemeente" op die internet.

Navorsing rakende die rol van godsdien op die internet stel allerlei interessante nuwe vrae aan die orde, soos of normale religieuse aktiwiteite ondersteun, belemmer of aangewakker word deur die internet; andersyds of individue se godsdienstigheid hulle internetgebruik raak, en of godsdienstige affiliasie enige beduidende impak op individue se gebruik van die internet het. In 'n kort studie in hierdie verband verwys Christopher Paine (2009) na 'n meningspeiling waar respondente se aanlyn aktiwiteite ter ondersteuning van hul godsdienstige gebruike getoets is. Hieruit blyk dit onder andere dat persone die internet graag benut om geestelike musiek af te laai, asook om geestelike leiding te gee en te ontvang via epos (2009:10). Volgens Paine wil dit egter voorkom asof "people who are actively engaged in religious activities simply may be using the Internet for seeking religious information rather than buying religious items or planning religious activities" (2009:11).

Op hulle beurt bevind die bekende kerknavorsers, George Barna en David Kinnaman in 'n kort studie in 2008 oor die internetgebruik van gelowiges dat "people within the Christian community are just as immersed in (and dependent upon) digital technologies and social networks as are those outside of it." Trouens, "matters of faith played very little role in differentiating people's technological habits." Ewe interessant is die toename wat Barna-hulle bespeur in ouer persone wat digitale preke luister, algemeen bekend as "podcasts". Sowat 45 miljoen Amerikaners maak naamlik gebruik van digitale media een maal per week om 'n preek af te laai. Tog is die tegnologiese gaping tussen verskillende ouderdomsgroepe, ook in die kerk, steeds beduidend groot.¹⁹

c. Digitale bedienings is nie aanhangsels tot die "eintlike" kerklike bedienings nie

Die benutting van tegnologie vind toenemend ingang in kerklike bedienings. Die dae dat die kerk nog "stuck on the print autopilot" is (aldus Len Sweet in sy voorwoord in Stephenson 2006), is aan die verbygaan. Al hoe meer kerke aanvaar die gebruik van elektroniese mediaborde, rekenaars en video's deesdae tans as vanselfsprekend. Publikasies oor die effektiewe benutting van nuwe tegnologie in kerke wemel ook op boekrakke. Barna bevind juis in 'n studie oor die groeiende gebruik van tegnologie in kerke (2005):

"... that church budgets for technology resources are increasing. 'As church staff and congregational leaders become more comfortable with, and dependent upon new technologies for communication, they are expecting their church to stay relevant in its capacity to convey messages in ways that are common in our culture. Some seminaries are offering courses and even degrees in the use of media for ministry, and increasing numbers of churches are creating staff positions for technology specialists.'"²⁰

19 "The technology gaps by generation were impressive. The researchers categorized "mainstream" technology as those used by 50% or more of the population, while "emerging" technology represented penetration of 20% to less than half. Among Elders (ages 62+), two out of the 15 areas were deemed mainstream (email and search), while another two domains were emerging (IM and online purchases). Boomers (ages 43 to 61) had two mainstream categories and four emerging areas. Busters (ages 24 to 42) had four mainstream and four emerging technologies. The nation's youngest adults, Mosaics who are 23 and under, were easily the furthest along in their adoption of these technologies. Mosaics had eight mainstream categories and another three deemed to be emerging. In other words, out of the 15 areas of technology assessed in the research, Elders widely embraced or were becoming comfortable with four, Boomers with six, Busters with eight, and Mosaics with 11." <http://www.barna.org/barna-update/article/14-media/36-barna-technology-study-social-networking-online-entertainment-and-church-podcasts?q=media+technology>.

20 <http://www.barna.org/barna-update/article/5-barna-update/172-technology-use-is-growing-rapidly-in->

Digitale bediening is vir die meeste organisasies en kerke steeds egter net 'n "add-on," nie 'n sentrale bediening as sodanig nie. Webblaaie dien hoogstens as digitale afkondigings, of as 'n algemene informasieblad, maar nie as uitdrukking van 'n goed deurdragte, duidelik gefokusde digitale media bediening nie. Stephenson (2006:Kindle) verwoord die moontlike rede hiervoor as volg: "Most people in church leadership positions know very little about internet ministry." Min kerke is derhalwe bereid om mense te betaal om deelyds of voltyds sodanige digitale bedienings te bedryf. Daar is steeds kerklke boufondse en orrelfondse in plek, maar min kerke beskik oor behoorlike digitale begrotings.

- Volgens Stephenson kan digitale bedienings:
- "Improve church communication quickly, easily and inexpensively
- Empower lay volunteers for active participation
- Minister lay people at any time and in any place
- Allow your sermons, devotions, and Bible studies to continue to minister for years to come
- Expand your ministry to reach people around the world."

Vir gemeentes om tans nie 'n virtuele bediening in plek te hê nie, is amper net so goed as om geen telefone by die kerk te hê, of geen gelyste telefoonnummers in telefoongidsde nie. Om te meen "digitale gevisualiseerdheid" (die drukpers era sou hier gepraat het van "geletterdheid") val buite 'n gemeente se skopus, is sinoniem aan ongeletterdheid in die drukpers-kultuur!

d. Begryp die filosofie rondom bediening in die digitale era

Nuwe publikasies fokus op aspekte soos die filosofie, praktyk en die voor-en nadele van die benutting van media in Christelike bedienings. Tereg wys Len Wilson (2008:Kindle) in hierdie verband daarop dat media binne die digitale kultuur primêr narratief van aard is. "This narrative purpose is in direct contrast to mass print culture... Its strength in storytelling is due to powerful engagement of the senses on multiple levels through visual and aural imagery." As gevolg van die nuwe interaktiewe aard van Web 2.0 media is die kerk in die gunstige posisie om die evangelie op nuwe, verbeeldingryke maniere te kommunikeer; iets wat voorheen net nie moontlik was nie. Hierbinne word daardie tipiese vraag van die "Baby Boomer Generasie": "staan die benutting van media dalk in die pad van die boodskap?" vervang met 'n veel beter vraag: "which forms of communication do we believe are worthy of communicating the gospel?" Eersgenoemde vraag spruit voort vanuit die wêreld van die drukpers-kultuur, terwyl laasgenoemde gewortel is binne die "image driven" narratiewe kultuur van die digitale era.

Binne die digitale era is media nie 'n luukse nie. Dit is eerder volgens Wilson "an emerging, fundamentally new system of communication, equal to oral and written word... Media then, should not be treated as operational support, but as ministry that uses video, audio, graphics, text, the Internet, and other emerging technology applications to communicate the gospel. The more digital, narrative, participatory, and immersive, the better."

Len Wilson (2008:Kindle, hoofstuk 2) lig vier belangrike maniere uit hoe om digitale media binne die kerk te verstaan, te wete

- (i) "Media as the arts." Deur middel van die artistieke skoonheid van verskillende kunsvorms is God se woord vir eeue lank verkondig. Trouens, pous Gregorius het reeds aan die begin van die sewende eeu die kunste as die primêre media beskou om oningeligtes aangaande die Christendom te onderrig. Wilson haal Frederich Buechner aan wat sê die sterkte prediking in ons generasie is afkomstig "from the poets, playwrights and novelists," en gaan dan voort. "He almost got it right, with amends for his print-age

bias. The most powerful preaching today is actually coming from the filmmakers, the stand-up comedians and the producers- the storytellers of the digital age. As die kultuur van ons dag kuns gebruik, al gebeur dit ook binne die sogenaamde “pop art” kultuur, dan moet die kerk juis ook hier aanwesig wees.

- (ii) “Media as information.” Die mikpunt hier vir die kerk is nie soseer om informasie te versprei nie, maar eerder om media as ’n transformasie-middel te benut om mense na Christus se beeld te hervorm. Dit gaan dus nie oor blote kognitiewe inligting nie. “Effective or excellent media for this age engages not only the mind but also the heart and soul”
- (iii) “Media as mission or evangelisation.” Relevante bedienings moet die taal van die kultuur van die dag te praat ten einde mense deel van Christus se geloofs familie te maak. Tog moet die kerk ligloop vir ’n soort dualisme, in die sin dat eietydse media slegs as evangelisasiemiddel die kulturele taal van die wêreld praat terwyl normale kerklike praktyke onveranderd op ou maniere voortgaan. ’n Geïntegreerde interne en eksterne digitale kommunikasie-matriks is dringend nodig.
- (iv) “Media as cultural language.” Effektiewe media aanwending “must mediate the presence of the church in the world, for the sake of transforming the culture.” Die kerk beskik oor die mees radikale, lewensveranderende stories om te vertel vanuit die Bybel. Derhalwe is insig in ons wêreld dringend nodig ten einde die Woord van God effektief te vertaal en te verwoord/verbeeld in die kulturele jargon van die digitale era.

SLOT

Die aanbreek van die digitale era beteken nie, soos wat sommige kuber-profete voorspel het, dat die werklikheid soos wat ons dit tans ken, finaal tot ’n einde gekom het nie. Vele bestaande interaksies, instellings en gebruike in ons wêreld sal steeds onveranderd voortgaan, soos wat John Naisbitt (2006) tereg opmerk. Verandering gebeur nooit reglynig en gelyktydig nie; dit vind voortdurend plaas binne ’n kultureel-antropologiese kontinuum. Tog is Estes (2009) net gedeeltelik in die kol as hy sê: “The real world is here to stay, though the internet remains a large part of our collective society.” Digitaliteit is nie net ’n aanhangsel of ’n effektiewe nuwe tegnologiese hulpmiddel tot die bestaande realiteit nie; dit is terselfdertyd ook ’n radikale ingreep in, en aanpassing van (ons verstaan van) die werklikheid. Niemand kan aan die globale implikasies en die gepaardgaande grondvlak-impak van die digitale era ontsnap nie. Om elke hoek en draai het dit ’n radikale effek op mense, vanaf inligting verspreiding tot by vermaak en spiritualiteitsvorming.

Ons is geroep om ons kultuur te help transformeer as eietydse navolgers van Christus. Dalk moet ons hier gaan kers opsteek by Maarten Luther wat die nuwe media van sy dag, naamlik die drukpers, effektief aangewend het om die Reformasie deur te voer. God se koninkryk moet met styl aanbreek binne ons uitdagende digitale era. Tereg sê Wilson (2008): “Our job as messengers of the gospel, is to speak in whatever language the culture is speaking.” Die digitale era bied ruim nuwe geleenthede aan die kerk tot nuwe vorms van samewerking oor bestaande grense heen; die deel van nuwe informasie en tegnologie ten einde die evangelie vinniger en meer relevant uit te dra, en die bedryf van nuwe kollektiewe aksies. Kom ons leef dan ook digitaal!

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TREFWOORDE

Digitale era
Digitale kerk
Virtuele era
Virtele bediening

KEYWORD

Digital ear
Digital church
Virtual era
Virtual ministry

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Searching for a question and an answer

ABSTRACT

This article focusses on Eckart Otto's theory of the Pentateuch, his contribution to Pro Pent (the "Project for the study of the Pentateuch") and his influence on our understanding of the first five books of the Hebrew Bible. There was something in his thinking that appealed to many South African scholars; an appeal that softened down the harsh criticism and blunted the sharp edges of Pentateuch study of the past two centuries. And this was accomplished by turning the focus to the theological and ethical issues, which were the driving forces behind the formation of the Pentateuch. Put differently: to show the Pentateuch as an answer to a question and Pentateuch criticism as a constant search for the questions to which the Pentateuch is answer.

He arrived on a Tuesday. The exact date I cannot remember anymore. It was, however, a fine day in the year 2000 when Eckart Otto visited the Faculty of Theology at the University of Pretoria. For the next decade he would return each year for lectures to theologians, sociologists and philosophers. Each visit was packed with meetings with students and others. He was always accompanied by colleagues and friends wanting to talk, discuss issues or just enjoy a cup of coffee with him. Each visit was demanding and strenuous but he kept up an unbelievable pace.

He has been honorary professor of the Faculty since 2000, became honorary member of the Old Testament Society of South Africa and received an honorary doctorate from the University of Pretoria in 2007. Owing to Otto contracts were negotiated between the faculties of theology of Pretoria and Munich and later also between the two universities. It was, however, for the meetings of Pro Psalms and Pro Pent that he came each year. Especially Pro Pent which the two of us "founded" in a noisy student café during his first stay. Pro Pent became a joint project between Pretoria and Munich and Otto's lasting influence must be sought here (Le Roux 2005:1-21). He changed our worlds in more than one way: he introduced a new way of understanding the Old Testament and showed us a different but very challenging way of understanding the Pentateuch. Due to our theological past Pentateuch criticism became a thorny issue and terms like "source criticism", "Pentateuch criticism", "sources", et cetera are still regarded with suspicion (Le Roux 1993:26-33).

Below we endeavour to determine the significance of Otto's contribution for the South African context by interpreting his views in terms of a hermeneutics of question and answer and in such a way that the Pentateuch can be understood as answer to a question. To serve as background against which to appreciate his unique approach, earlier efforts from this country to understand the Pentateuch in a more historical critical way, as well as the commotion it incited, will be referred to.

PENTATEUCH ANGER

Otto stepped into our world which was not particularly inclined to Pentateuch criticism or theories explaining its origins and growth. One reason for this was that since 1971 South African

biblical scholars started to focus more on the final text and structural analysis and to underplay historical information. The extra-linguistic world was bracketed and the single sign or word or expression was viewed as sufficient for understanding a linguistic utterance. All that was needed was the correct method and the correct execution of the different exegetical steps (Le Roux 2007:1-18). This synchronic way of working was often viewed as a substitute for historical criticism, the diachronic reading of the Pentateuch and Pentateuchal theories.

Another reason for the lack of a local Pentateuch tradition was the lot that befell some Pentateuch scholars in South Africa. They often found themselves at loggerheads with the church and the faith community and often were not tolerated. *John William Colenso* serves as an outstanding example. He was an English bishop who arrived in South Africa on 20 May 1855 and took up residence at Bishopstowe, just outside Pietermaritzburg where he stayed for the rest of his life and where he devoted himself to missionary work and Pentateuch study (Chadwick 1971:7-23).

Colenso was a mathematician and as a young man he found his way through life by teaching arithmetic, at times from five-thirty in the morning to the early evening. At Cambridge he contributed to his upkeep by teaching and writing text-books on mathematics which allowed him to attend university and pursue his dreams in the world of learning. Colenso, however, was not financially independent in these years but when his publishers in 1853 bought the copyright of his books it enabled him to settle his debts and take care of the bishopric of Natal in South Africa. It was with this mathematical mindset that Colenso began his study of the Pentateuch (Cox 1888:40-47; Hinchliff 1964:60-64; Guy 1983:3-56).

Colenso therefore read the Pentateuch as an arithmetician indicating the 'remarkable inconsistencies and contradictory statements' in the text (Colenso 1863:163). He, for instance, investigated the tabernacle's court to determine whether it could accommodate the total number of the congregation. This inquiry was prompted by the continual reference to the assembly of Israelites who had to gather at the door of the tabernacle (cf Lev 8:1-4). According to Colenso's calculation this was impossible. There was not even adequate space for a small section of the assembly. Although it was extremely difficult to determine the size or the nature of this assembly Colenso nevertheless restricted himself to the numbers mentioned in Numbers 2:32: the Israelite warriors amounted to 603 550. They must have formed part of the assembly but definitely did not enter the tabernacle. The width of the tabernacle was 10 cubits or 18 feet and its length 30 cubits or 54 feet. If two cubits were allowed for each person, only nine could have attended the meeting. If all the warriors were filed in ranks of nine they would have formed a line of more than 100 000 feet - 'in fact, *twenty miles*' (Colenso 1862:33).

By means of his mathematical approach to the text he indicated sufficiently 'the utter impossibility of receiving any longer this story (of the Pentateuch) as literary and historically true' (Colenso 1863:169). And when the first part of his book on the Pentateuch was published in October 1862 in London it caused a sensation and Colenso was ridiculed. In 'a rising wave of hysteria' (Hinchliff 1968:68) Colenso's views were fiercely rejected and unfairly attacked whilst many wanted him to be deposed from his office as the Bishop of Natal. Today all the uproar seems unnecessary but in the nineteenth century it was a reality. And it was all caused by a lonely missionary at the southern tip of Africa who read the Pentateuch critically and thereby contributed to a way of reading that prevailed ever since (cf Wellhausen 2001:346).

Colenso was not the only victim of Pentateuch anger. *Johannes du Plessis* caused a stir in the Afrikaans community in the late nineteen twenties and thirties of the previous century. He propagated a very mild form of historical criticism and distinguished between the Elohist, the author of the first creation story, the Jehovist, the author of the second creation narrative, the Deuteronomist, who was responsible for Deuteronomy and the Junior Elohist, who became

united with the Jehovist. Du Plessis' source criticism was not complicated because he wanted to convince the church of the importance of historical criticism. He was of opinion that the church could no longer ignore these insights and challenges. Du Plessis never developed his Pentateuch theory further but nevertheless agitated the Afrikaans community and the church. In the end he was dismissed from his post as professor in theology at the theological seminary of Stellenbosch. Du Plessis appealed to the higher court which returned a verdict in his favour. Thus an early attempt to read and understand the Pentateuch from a critical historical perspective was nipped in the bud (Du Plessis 1926a:100-106; 1926b:80-87; 1927:23-26; Deist 1986b:36-65).

Nearly a century after the death of Colenso *Ferdinand Deist* picked up the threads again. After Colenso he was the first South African who approached the Pentateuch in a true historical critical manner. The academic year that he spent in Marburg with Otto Kaiser enabled him to appropriate and understand especially the German critical or scholarly mind. He was not only acquainted with the method but also with the philosophy and theory of science underlying the critical study of the Pentateuch. It enabled him to understand the Pentateuch critics and to penetrate their theories intellectually. No other South African Old Testament scholar has immersed him/herself so completely in the works of critical Pentateuch scholars as Deist. This resulted in a book on the history of Pentateuch research which was first published in Afrikaans and subsequently in English. It was the first book on Pentateuch scholarship to have appeared in South Africa and it confronted the academic community with a long forgotten tradition. It once again caused repercussions in the community and Deist also had to suffer the burning anger of many who adhered to the Mosaic origin of the Pentateuch. However, with Deist's untimely death on 12 July 1997 at the age of fifty two, his Pentateuch research was brought to an abrupt close (cf Deist 1976a:1-12; 1976b:1-36; 1977:325-357; 1981:23-39; 1983:26-48; 1984:98-132; 1986a:159-172; 1986b:36-65; 1988:1-47).

It is against this background of Pentateuch anger that Otto's contribution must be understood. There was something in his thinking that appealed to many South African scholars; an appeal that softened down the harsh criticism and blunted the sharp edges of Pentateuch study of the past two centuries. *And this was accomplished by turning the focus to the theological and ethical issues, which were the driving forces behind the formation of the Pentateuch. Put differently: to show the Pentateuch as an answer to a question and Pentateuch criticism as a constant search for the questions to which the Pentateuch is answer.*

AN ANSWER TO A QUESTION

Hermeneutics has to do with a question and an answer: "Die Frage nach der Frage, auf die die Hermeneutik die Antwort ist" (Marquard 1991:117; Körtner 2006:1-5). Reflecting on a hermeneutics for the Pentateuch the words "understand", "question" and "answer" are constitutive (Marquard 1991:117-138). They can serve as building blocks for appreciating Otto's understanding of the Pentateuch's context and growth.

The answer, however, is always incomplete: "Was ausgesagt ist, ist nicht alles" (Gadamer 1973:504). To rephrase: the Pentateuch as an answer to a question (or many questions) is never complete and present in its fullness. Augustine's distinction between *verbum cordis* or "inner word" and *verbum exterior* or "outer word" explains this incomplete nature of an answer. The inner word is the "word" before it is uttered in sound (Drobner 1994:352-354). It is more authentic, is the real true word and it never loses its quality as the ineffable inner word. Not every word we utter is therefore the true word and the word that sounds outwardly is only a sign of "the word that gives light inwardly". Thus, the words in the Pentateuch are not the full expression of the authors' inner word; the authors' inner words were not fully emptied in

the “final text”; something remained “behind”, so to speak (Augustinus, *De trinitate*, 11,20; cf Grondin 1994:24-39; 2001:50-59; Figal 2002:102-125).

And this “unexpressed information” can only be “retrieved” in the dialectic of question and answer. We must always ask “which answers to which questions fit the facts”. This “is in fact the hermeneutical ‘Urphänomenon’” (Gadamer 1966:224). The Pentateuch’s meaning is therefore linked to this dialogical process of question and answer. The exegete must therefore become engaged in the endless process of asking (historical) questions: What was the original question? What were the circumstances? To what is this or that section of the Pentateuch an answer? To whom was it directed? How did the editors interpret and formulate the answer? Et cetera (Zenger 2008:60-135, 156-187).

The Pentateuch is an answer to the questions that lived in the hearts of people. At specific junctures in Israel’s history certain questions were posed and the various redactions of the Pentateuch are attempts to provide answers to these questions. Traces of the original questions and answers can still be detected and the scholar must endeavour to determine the original questions with which the authors grappled. And the way in which Otto described the origin and growth of the Pentateuch helps one to understand something of Israel’s world and the existential problems they were confronted with.

THE PENTATEUCH AS AN ANSWER TO A QUESTION

There is something in Otto’s approach which averted (at least in scholarly circles) the Pentateuch anger as described above. Something which contributed in a remarkable way to a kind of South African Pentateuch tradition which would take the critical study of the past two centuries seriously but also become “practical”. Practical in the sense that the critical study can be used in discussions about human rights and theological issues (such as the greatest gift of Yahweh to Israel). And Otto accomplished exactly this by treating the Pentateuch as an answer to a question; by understanding the Pentateuch in terms of a very creative dialogue between questions posed and answers given. Existential questions prompted by the struggles of life, many human failures and the bleak expectations of a new future. Life-related answers to people in specific contexts in Israel’s history. And as said above, it is a never-ending dialogue because no answer is complete or a full expression of the author’s views (Lawrence 2002:167-200). To illustrate some examples from Otto’s work are given below.

The Judean Deuteronomy’s answer to resistance

In the seventh century Judean intellectuals grappled with the problem of insubordination and defiance (Otto 1999a:15-109; 1999e:1-84; 2001b:1-120; 2002c:43-83). It was the time of the neo-Assyrian power and the loyalty oath of the Assyrian King Esarhaddon (VTE) of 672 BCE. Due to the massive military power of the neo-Assyrian empire the Northern kingdom was destroyed in 722 BCE and in 701 Jerusalem narrowly escaped Sanherib’s siege. By 699 BCE Manasseh subdued himself to the Assyrians and Judah became an Assyrian vassal state. This implied that Manasseh had to accept the vassal treaty of Esarhaddon, which expected absolute loyalty. Even the smallest member of the family was involved in this act of loyalty and any form of disobedience was brutally punished. As a vassal of this world power Manasseh also had to accept the Assyrian thinking that only they had a positive influence on the world and that only through them could all nations unite and live in peace, harmony and social justice. And of course he had to worship Assur. This god was enforced upon all defeated nations and all had to revere Assur (cf Albertz 1992:291–304).

Many people in the seventh century experienced everyday life as harsh and difficult to cope

with but the “judäischen Intellektuellen” devised a brilliant “intellectual rebellion”. They took over the Assyrian totalitarian ideas and terminology and rewrote it in such a way as to honour Yahweh alone. An anti- Esahaddon strategy was developed by borrowing Assyrian ideas and terminology but redefining and rewriting it in such a manner that Yahweh’s uniqueness was emphasized and Israel’s absolute loyalty was stressed (Otto 1997a:321-339; 1998a:1876-1877; 1998b:1-84; 1999a:1-90; 2000g:43-83; 2007a:19-28; 2007b:173-178; 2007c:29-53). A consequence of this resistance and devotion to Yahweh alone was the rejection of Assyrian anthropology and the clear boundaries for state intervention, political demands and allegiance to the king that were set. According to Assyrian political theology the king was the “representative” of Aššur but in the eighth psalm everything is democratised. Although frail and weak, human beings are nevertheless God’s representatives “und ... insgesamt mit der Königsfunktion beauftragt” (Otto 2000a:29-32; cf 1994:1-120; 1999d:1603-1606; 1999f:1609; 2000d:822-823; 2000e:845-848). This answer of the “judäischen Intellektuellen” to the question of resistance thus had a tremendous influence on the history of Israel and of human rights in general.

The answer about the future of the exiles

During the bleak days of the exile people struggled with the very painful question whether there was a future (Otto 1998b:1-84; 1999c:693-696; 2000a:43-83; 2007b:140). Did the exile imply the end of God’s history with his people? In their spiritual odyssey the dates 722 (the fall of Israel) and 586 (the fall of Judah) haunted them because they were historical markers accentuating defeat, suffering and loss. Would the Babylonian exiles experience the same fate as Israel? Would Judah’s identity also be completely destroyed as in the case of the people of Samaria? Would Judah also fade from the pages of history as did Israel? The Zadokite intellectuals had to provide answers to these pressing questions of the first generation of exiles (Otto 2000a:237-243; 2002a:29-32; 2002b:282-290; Schmid 1999:273-301). Standing in the intellectual tradition of the priests responsible for the neo-Assyrian resistance these Zadokites created something new, fresh and original. Their answer to these questions is called DtrD and refers to the first Deuteronomistic redaction of Deuteronomy. It consists of a Moses discourse (Dt 5; 9-10*) and a Deuteronomic legislation (in Dt12-26*), both linked to Horeb, the mount of God. This redaction also inserted the story of the golden calf, Moses’ intercession and the reissuing of the Ten Commandments (Dt 9:9-21; 10: 1-5). This sequence of events (calf worship, intercession, reissuing the commandments) underscores the fact that despite the people’s transgression of the main commandment the covenant of Horeb remains intact (Otto 1997b:197-209; 1999b:625-628; 2000f:1570-1571).

In this apparently hopeless situation the golden calf event enabled the exiles to understand the nature of the pre-exilic worship of other gods better. By means of this desert story the exiles got a clearer picture of themselves as well as the unfaithfulness of previous generations. Through reliving the early history the exiles also comprehended that despite their desperate context a new beginning was possible; that there was a new life after the unfaithfulness of the pre-exilic times; that the laws of Deuteronomy were still valid; that each generation was still standing at Horeb; that they can still hear Moses’ voice encouraging them to follow Deuteronomy. In this way the Zadokites (or the first Deuteronomistic editors of Deuteronomy) reworked the suffering of the exiles by giving the breach of the covenant a very prominent position. In this way they comforted the exiles with hope for a new future (Otto 2004:14-35; cf 1995:163-191; 2000b:702-704; 2000c:741-743).

By means of this “hermeneutische Kunstgriff” the first Deuteronomistic redactors of Deuteronomy endeavored to answer the question about the future. It was only through reliving the time of Moses that they re-discovered their own position as the people of God; it was only

through remembering the horrible pre-exilic days and the re-enactment of the Sinai event (Decalogue, covenant making, golden calf) in their minds that they found themselves again and regained hope for the future (Otto 2000a:237-243; 2002a:29-32).

The answer about God's greatest gift

After 538 BC tension mounted as different people started to demand land and small farm holdings. These claims were supported by the Hexateuch redaction (HexRed) who regarded land as the greatest of Yahweh's gifts (Otto 2002a:38-49; 2000a:248-273). According to the authors of the Hexateuch the possession of the land was Yahweh's main goal. In Genesis 15:18 and Joshua 24:13 traces of this kind of thinking can still be found: "On the same day Yahweh made a covenant with Abraham saying: To your descendants I will give this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river Euphrates" (Gen 15:18). See also: "I have given you a land for which you did not labour, and cities you did not build, and you dwell in them; you eat from vineyards and oilyards you did not plant" (Josh 24:13). For the priestly authors of the post-exilic Hexateuch the aim of creation and world history (Gen 1-11) was Israel's possession of the Promised Land and their rest in this land.

In the Pentateuch redaction (PentRed) the voice of the diaspora is heard. It also deals with the landless but in a strikingly different way. When Moses died in Deuteronomy 34 the Torah took his place: "Mit dem Tod des Mose wird aus die Sicht der Pentateuchredaktion der Pentateuch geboren. Mose hat den Jordan nicht überschritten, wohl aber die von ihm verschriftete Tora. Mit ihr wird an seiner Stelle die Geschichte des Volk Israel weitergehen" (Otto 2000a:232-233). The Torah must therefore be cherished day and night and in its words Israel must rejoice. For the Pentateuch redaction the Torah was the greatest of Yahweh's gifts and this answer had a decisive influence on Israel's future

UNDERSTANDING AS THE RELIVING OF QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

This dialogic nature of Pentateuch study implies a certain kind of understanding or intellectual grasp. A type of understanding that will do justice to the notion that the Pentateuch is an answer to questions which were posed in real life contexts. In short one can say it implies an understanding of an expression ("Ausdruck"), which is the manifestation of a life experience ("Erlebnis"), which is embedded in true-life experiences and which we attempt to re-enact ("nacherleben") (Grondin 2002:36-51) or to re-live by means of spiritual empathy (Gunkel 1903:398-455)

It can also be explained in terms of history's "outside" and "inside". "Outside" knowledge is indispensable but something more is needed (Collingwood 1994:213-215). That is the "inside" story, the thinking behind an event. The "outside" story is something "which the historian looks, not at, but through, to discern the thought within them" (Collingwood 1994:214). And how does one "enter" the inside of an event? One way of saying it is to use the word "re-enactment": Knowledge of the past is gained when the past is re-enacted in the mind of the historian. All history is therefore "the re-enactment of past thought in the historian's own mind" (Collingwood 1994:215). To narrate the story of the Pentateuch we must first of all feel our way into the life-experiences of Israel, relive their past experiences, re-enact that past in our minds and re-tell that story (like Israel) in our own words.

In Otto's work the "outer" and "inner" parts are integrated harmoniously. The outer part is constituted by building blocks like the seventh century BCE; the neo-Assyrian royal ideology; the loyalty oath of the Assyrian King Esarhaddon (VTE) of 672 BCE; the Assyrian totalitarian regime; the disintegration of family life; the collapse of ethical values; the Judean kings Hezekiah, Manasseh and Josiah; the resistance of Judean intellectuals; the fall of Jerusalem; the exile; the

struggle of the first and second generation of exiles; the break between the Aaronides and the Zadokites; the imperial ideology of the Persian rule in Jehud; the intense inner–Judean debates, et cetera. These events and people, these so-called “facts of Israel’s history” are indispensable but they are merely the external framework and the outer structure. One still has to crawl into the inside of an event and understand things from within.

By following the traces in the text Otto then endeavored to bring back the voices of living people from Israel’s past. In other words, by focusing on the inner history he could understand something of the thinking of people like the Assyrians, the Judean intellectuals and the exiles. Although this penetration of people’s inner thoughts is a historical endeavor it always implies thorough text study: “We have seen that the literary history of the Pentateuch preserved intensive debates about “Israel’s” identity, its relation to Yahweh, dialogues, how to understand revelation and what Yahweh’s gifts to His people were, how to live on in hopeless situations and how to define the rights of the individual and the state. A diachronic analysis gives all these voices back to the texts and without it they would have been lost. The reader may decide if this would be a loss or an advantage. I am convinced that we should not let all these voices die. But – and this also should be mentioned – to keep them alive means hard exegetical work” (Otto 2007b:52-53).

To summarize: Biblical scholarship since 1971 focused on language and it is believed that language utterances are self–regulatory (they are not organized according to fixed external principles), self–sufficient (they do not need external information), self–contained (the meaning lies within the utterance) and self–reliant (its meaning is determined by itself). Meaning is thus independent from something outside and free from a dictating mind or an outside world but is determined by the position of the signs within the utterance. A sign is like a code which does not have a meaning of its own but derives its significance from its place within the whole system of codes. And meaning originates through the differences between the signs (Le Roux 2007:1-18). This approach has accomplished and these “studies will forever remain the conscience of our South African Old Testament science ... To a certain extent future generations will always have to measure their work in the light of these studies” (Le Roux 1993:26-33).

There is, however, another perspective, which developed the past ten years. And according to this view terms like “understanding”, “question” and “answer” became important for the study of the Pentateuch. The Pentateuch is now understood in terms of a question and an answer. And the understanding of the Pentateuch as an answer to a question requires that one should treat it as an expression of real life experiences that must be re-enacted in the mind. This implies that the outer history always serves as starting point but that the inner circle is the space so to speak where the voices of the past, the questions people grappled with and the answers that were given can be re-lived. And given the South African intellectual tradition this notion opened up new worlds.

CONCLUSION

Above we have attempted to interpret and evaluate Eckart Otto’s contribution from a South African perspective. It was stated that since 1862 (when Colenso’s first volume on the Pentateuch was published) a kind of Pentateuch anger prevailed. This has discouraged many and prevented them from appropriating the insights of critical Pentateuch research. An important consequence of this attitude is the little reflection on history and the historical understanding of texts. And therefore we will always remain grateful to Eckart Otto for visiting us and showing us another way of reading and understanding of the Pentateuch. His views are so rich that it can be expanded in many different ways. In this chapter we investigated the possibility of understanding the

Pentateuch as an answer to a question and hopefully this will inspire South African scholars to immerse themselves in Otto's work and to discover a different, fulfilling kind of historical study.

Once again: we are all grossly indebted to Eckart Otto. Not only for the new avenues he opened up but also for what he meant to all as a person. We wish him well.

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Care to the human “soul” in contemporary theological theory formation. From “kerygmatics” to “fortigenetics” in a pastoral anthropology

ABSTRACT

The core problem: whether a theological paradigm in theory formation for a pastoral anthropology, derived from, and coming from the very positivistic stance of orthodoxy, is appropriate for counselling people within processes of change, transformation, deconstruction and relativity? The question to be posed is whether the traditional kerygmatic model for a pastoral anthropology (*cura animarum*; the human soul as substance), or the psychotherapeutic model of self-analyses (the human soul as a psychic phenomenon to be observed empirically) can deal effectively with existential life issues within the new global context of post modernity? A spiritual hermeneutical approach is proposed. In this regard the notion of *habitus* and *parrhesia* can play a decisive role in a constructive and realistic pastoral care model.

OPSOMMING

Teorievorming in die pastorale teologie benodig 'n fundamentele wysiging in paradigmas grondliggend aan 'n pastorale antropologie. 'n Positivistiese model, gebaseer op 'n pessimistiese lewensbeskouing en 'n substansiële siening van die mesnlike siel, pas nie in by die vraagstuk van sin/betekenis binne die netwerkprosesse van globaliserende denke met die aksent op dekonstruksie, relatiewiteit, verandering en transformasie nie. 'n Paradigmaskuif vanaf die kerugmatiese en die kliënt-gesentreerde fenomenologiese model na 'n spiritueel-hermeneutiese model word voorgestel. In dië verband kan die konstrakte van *habitus* en *parrhesia* 'n deurslaggewende rol speel in die vestiging van 'n konstruktiewe lewenshulpmodel.

Human problems, and even spiritual pathology, are embedded in fixed paradigms and reduced patterns of thinking (rational categories, world views, life convictions, and belief systems). One can even call them the “functional a priori” of life; they function as regulative teleology. Change, and therefore healing and therapy, imply more than personal or behavioural change. The ABC for change resides in paradigm shifts as related to conceptualisation within the undergirding rational frameworks of theoretical reflection¹.

Within the tradition of *cura animarum* theory formation in the reformed tradition of pastoral care was mostly dominated by the anthropological principle of the fall, human sinfulness and

1 It is therefore the contention of Marinoff (1999:31) that if the root of your problem is philosophical, nothing on your pharmacist's shelves is going to give lasting relief. “Drugs don't do anything in the outside world – even with a mood softened by Prozac, You'll still have to deal with a sadistic boss or a cheating partner or a bureaucratic bank:” (Marinoff 1999:33-34).

the dualism between ‘soul’ (substance) and ‘body’ (worldly flesh). The implication was that pastoral theology dealt primarily with the notions of repentance, confession, admonition and forgiveness. Proclamation became the dominant schema of interpretation.

It will be argued that an eschatological understanding of our being human shifted anthropology from the pessimistic anthropology of sinfulness into the constructive anthropology of pneumatology: human beings in Christ are a new creation and empowered by *charisma* in order to be equipped and encouraged to live a total new life (the *habitus of phronesis*)

It will be argued that with reference to a qualitative approach in “soul care”, the concept of “spiritual fortigenetics” can help pastoral theology to develop a more positive approach to the reality of our being human. In this regard the theological notion of *parrhesia* can play a decisive role.

Zombie categories

Due to the important role of theories in scientific research, one should continuously assess whether a theory is still valid in terms of human needs within cultural contexts. Theory formation is contiguously engaged in the interplay between paradigmatic conceptualising and contemporary worldviews or philosophies of life.

In his book on Reconstructing Practical Theology, Reader (2008:1) warns against the danger of “zombie categories”², i.e. the continued employment of concepts that no longer do justice to the world we experience and yet which are difficult to abandon because of tradition and also because they are not yet totally redundant. Zombie categories are therefore described as the “living dead”, the tried and familiar frameworks of interpretation that have served us well for many years and continue to haunt our thoughts and analyses, even though they are embedded in a world that is passing away before our eyes.

Reader (2008:6) aptly points out that the field of practical theology was for many times dominated by the clerical and official paradigm. On the other hand practical and pastoral theology has been overtaken by ideas from the fields of psychology and sources of therapeutic knowledge. In the meantime the “hermeneutical model of pastoral engagement” (Reader 2008:6) surfaced and is putting new challenges before practical and pastoral theological reflection. The “monogamy of space” of the earlier modern age has been transformed into the “polygamy of space” (Reader 2008: 11), while the categories rural and urban made place for the categories of local (integration) and global (fragmentation).

With reference to the notion of “reflexive spirituality”³: Reader (2008:73-80) probes for a self-awareness that is engaged in the issues of a global society such as “green spirituality” and the “rise of the new economy” with its paradigmatic framework based in knowledge based information (the information technology revolution); global activities of production and consumption; and networking competition. (Reader 2008: 103-104). The point is: spirituality has become an important topic⁴ within current practical theological reflection. One can even say that the realm of spirituality currently demarcates the field of pastoral theology. In terms of the tradition of pastoral care *cura animarum* sets the boundaries of pastoral care as an academic endeavour. Within the academic field of Christian anthropology and spirituality, the focal point of research was always the realm of the “human soul”.

2 A concept used by Ulrich Beck in Reader(2008:1)

3 The value of Reader’s attempt to reconstruct practical theology, is that his ”reflective spirituality”puts anew on the agenda of practical theology the importance of philosophical schemata of interpretation that influence existing paradigms and patterns of thinking and critical reflection.

4 See in this regard the article of Herholdt 2008: 183-200 about wellness as an expression of spirituality. “Our practical theological praxis is informed by our notion of spirituality” (188).

With reference to Christian spirituality, the notion of the human quest for meaning within the awareness of the presence of God becomes vital for scientific research in pastoral theology. The challenge in an academic approach is how to work within the healthy tension between *scientia* (knowledge of the mind) and *sapientia* (wisdom of the heart). Our theological endeavour is therefore to develop proposals for conceptual designs, which are adequate to the hermeneutics of different pastoral contexts.

1. THEORY FORMATION IN PASTORAL THEOLOGY AS A BRANCH OF PRACTICAL THEOLOGY

In pastoral care and practical theology theory formation drew heavily on theories coming from the humanities. In this regard psychology and sociology played an enormous role.

N Ferreira (2009:4) accuses the church from holding on to metaphors derived from what he calls the mythological period of reflection. With reference to trans-personal psychology and the three phases of pre-rational (archaic, magical, mythological), rational and post-rational, it is his contention that we are living in a pluralistic-holistic stage, which operates according to post-rationalism. The category post-rational refers to holistic and integral reflection, i.e. the mode of networking. It puts on the table of academic research the quest for an integrative and hermeneutical approach.

In the light of the previous accusation, it is urgent for pastoral theologians, as well as practical theologians, to pose the question: *What is the under girding theory behind my practice and which idea is shaping my mind within the practice of counselling?*

The practical theological question is not merely the question of Immanuel Kant: in his *Kritik der praktischen Vernunft*: What should I do? But the praxis-question: How should I behave and respond? The basic principle for anthropology is not *cogito ergo sum*, but *respondeo ergo sum*. At stake is the qualitative question about *habitus* and the intentionality within human actions. This question of *habitus* is closely connected to the spiritual realm of meaning, the "soulfulness" of life, and the appropriateness of one's belief systems.

Psychological reductionism: the psychologization of spirituality

One reason why pastoral care should pay attention to the overarching paradigm, which dominates its theory, is the paradigmatic reduction in pastoral care. The implication in the 19th and 20th century, i.e. the reduction of healing to the realm of the self-culture, was a paradigm shift from the spiritual realm to the realm of the living human document. Sperry (2002:2) refers to this process as the "*psychologization of spirituality*". One can even refer to this process as psychological reductionism (Sperry 2002:3), i.e. the over-reliance on and uncritical adoption of psychological constructs, such as self-fulfilment and self-realisation. As to Sperry, such theories may actually promote and reinforce individualism and spiritual narcissism. Sperry rightly pointed out that narcissism; pragmatism and individualism are core features of American culture. It breeds self-preoccupation with self-fulfilment and narcissism. The problem in this psychological reductionism is that it does not provide for a communal perspective in theory formation. It would therefore be very difficult to merge such an understanding of individual solipsism with the principle of communality in *ubuntu*⁵-spirituality (I am a human being through others; for healing to take place, relationships should be healed).

It is the contention of Sperry (2002:25) that if pastoral care wants to shift from self-

5 For a discussion on the relationship between African philosophy and the ubuntu-concept, see Gathogo 2008:39 – 54. "While Ubuntu's concern of humanness is basically hospitable, African hospitality goes beyond mere concern for humanness. It is an all-embracing entity whose concerns, like African religion, address all the departments of life" (53).

reductionism to spiritual direction, it should take seriously *self-transcendence*. Sperry argues for a balance between pastoral counselling and the moral domain. The challenge is to balance moral guidance with compassion and empathy (Sperry 2002:22-23).

The **core problem** of the article is the following: If it can be accepted that, in distinction from the reductionist and exclusive psychological paradigm of personal, self-healing, psycho-analysis and behavioural change, as well as from the empirical paradigm of observational analyses (induction in terms of the appearances of phenomena how can the healing of the “soul” (*cura animarum*), be reframed in order to deal with life issues in our current cultural philosophy of postmodernity and globalisation (the context of critical deconstruction, the relativity of global networking and the contextual quest on interculturality)? What should be the philosophical and scientific mould or matrix of pastoral care and pastoral theology if the healing and caring profession of care giving wants to shift from the traditional matrix of *cura animarum* with its main emphasis on “saving the individual soul” into the more networking paradigm of *cura vitae* with its emphasis on the spiritual healing of life and the empowerment (encouraging) of the human soul?

In order to answer this question we first need to answer the question: but what is the praxis we are dealing with in pastoral theology and anthropology?

Towards a praxeology of *habitus*

Pastoral care is the expression and representation of the sensitivity and compassion of the Scripture’s understanding and portrayal of God’s encounter, intervention, interaction, and involvement in our being human. The encounter between God and human beings takes place within the existential realm and context of everyday living⁶. This encounter and intervention is called in traditional theology the covenantal encounter between God and human beings. In terms of practical theological terminology one can translate this covenantal encounter as the “praxis of God”.

“Praxis”⁷ is not merely “practice”. Practice refers to the practicalities such as skill, technique (the how question). With “praxis”⁸ is meant: the intention of actions as related to meaning and destiny (intentionality as the why question, and for what purpose question). In theological

6 See in this regard the wisdom literature and tradition in the Old Testament as well as the function of the torah in this regard. See also Schipani’s research on the way of wisdom in pastoral counseling, 2003.

7 While *praxis* usually refers to the process of putting theoretical knowledge into practice, the strategic and organizational usage of the word emphasizes the need for a constant cycle of conceptualizing the meanings of what can be learned from experience in order to reframe strategic and operational models. ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Praxis_\(process\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Praxis_(process))).

8 Thus, for Aristotle, praxis is guided by a moral disposition to act truly and rightly; a concern to further human well being and the good life. This is what the Greeks called phronesis and requires an understanding of other people..... Practical wisdom (phronesis) involves moving between the particular and the general. The mark of a prudent man [is] to be able to deliberate rightly about what is good and what is advantageous for himself; not in particular respects, e.g. what is good for health or physical strength, but what is conducive to the good life generally. (Aristotle).

We can now see the full quality of praxis. It is not simply action based on reflection. It is action which embodies certain qualities. These include a commitment to human well being and the search for truth, and respect for others. It is the action of people who are free, who are able to act for themselves. Moreover, praxis is always risky. It requires that a person 'makes a wise and prudent practical judgment about how to act in this situation'

We can say that word and action, action and reflection, theory and practice are all facets of the same idea. This action is not merely the doing of something, what Freire describes as activism and Aristotle as poiesis. Poiesis is about acting upon, doing to: it is about working with objects. Praxis, however, is creative: it is other-seeking and dialogic. K Smith 1999: <http://www.infed.org/biblio/b-praxis.htm>.

terminology, the praxis of God refers to the will of God (divine intentionality) as focused on the meaning and destiny of life. In the Old Testament this intentionality is expressed in wisdom thinking as represented by the torah.

When one can accept that in practical theology, one is in one way or another involved in the “praxis of God”, pastoral theology as an important branch within the field of a practical theological reflection, is engaged in a form of doing theology that includes the following practical verbs: understanding/interpretation; communication/verbalising; acting; hoping; imagining⁹; and seeing.

In these “practical verbs” practical theology poses the question about the reason or intention of human actions, as well as the norms and values that direct actions and influence decisions. D Browning (1991:9-10) refers to this dimension of practical theology as the question about **practical reason**¹⁰. And practical reasoning is embedded in patterns of thinking as expressions of human ideas and concepts, i.e. paradigmatic frameworks of the human mind. These frameworks are reasonable and rational representations of convictions and philosophies of life. They are shaped by cultural contexts, expressed in metaphors and portrayed by symbols.

In the context of the Christian faith, practical verbs should be viewed as the carriers and containers of *phronesis*: wisdom as the driving force within actions. They describe the qualitative dimension of the actions of religious communities. When connected to the understanding of God, the theological question about the content of the will of God immediately surfaces, i.e. the question about the intention of God’s salvific actions of redemption and grace for human life. Within the context of theological reflection (i.e. the human attempt to express and portray the presence and will of God in such a way that meaning in life and comfort is contextually disclosed and discovered) pastoral theology becomes both a hermeneutical and communicative endeavour. Pastoral theology then becomes the science of the theological, critical and hermeneutical reflection regarding the intention and meaning of human actions (*habitus*) as expressed in the practice of ministry and the art of faithful daily living. Meaning-identification (*Sinnduiding, Sinndeutung*) can then be identified as a fundamental endeavour of practical theology¹¹.

Ed Farley in *Practical Theology* (1983:27) argues that *theologia practica* is simply the *habitus*

9 Imagining can refer to the power of improvisation. A G Reddie refers to Jesus as a Jazz musician and the possibility of a jazz hermeneutics. It includes the power of improvisation. “It is the power of responding to circumstances in such a way that the ‘givenness’ of the context is radically re-altered and something startling and new emerges” (2008:57). Jesus’ engagement is one that straddles the tension between that which exists (the tradition of Judaism) and that which is becoming (the reinterpretation of tradition). For the role of improvisation in the drama of ethics, and for the fact that improvisation implies more than merely performance, see Wells 2004: 62-66.

10 In his book *Religion before Dogma*, Douglas McGaughey (2006:1) points out the importance of understanding “practical” not in the sense of pragmatics but in the Kantian sense of practical reason. In his pleas for practical theology as “relational theology”(2006: 240-242) he refers to the fact that our experience and consciousness are determined by conceptual structures. The conceptual structures contain “ideas” about experience and behaviour and operate as a regulative a priori for human behaviour. He calls them “synthetic judgements” constituting “a set of a priori transcendental ideas” that we must assume. “Spirit” is therefore of paramount importance in human behaviour. Transcendental ideas function as a kind of spiritual realm within the dynamics of a relational networking. “Among these transcendental ideas are what we mean by God, freedom, and the self” (2006: vii).

11 See in this regard the conviction of the practical theologian W Gräß (2000) that practical theology as a hermeneutical endeavour should be engaged in the act of meaning identification within the realm of life; “sinnorientierendes Lebensdeutung” (2006:42). Even the articulation of the concept “God” cannot be done without the quest for meaning (Gräß 2006:30). His argument is that a normative-deductive approach is inappropriate within a secularised society. Thus his option for what he calls a “phänomenologische und kulturhermeneutische Ausrichtung der Praktischen Theologie” (2002:41)

viewed as to its end (from the spiritual perspective of the ultimate). "Practice meant that aspect of *habitus*, or wisdom, in which the divine object sets requirements of obedience and life. Both reside in the single existential *habitus* called theology. Theory/practice is based here on what could be called a phenomenology of theology as *habitus*" (1983:27).

With reference to a pastoral anthropology, *habitus* is the translation of attitude as the exemplification of the intentionality of Christ (*phronesis* Phil. 2:5). *Habitus* is more or less the equivalent of *nēfēsh* as a qualitative principle for life. Soul therefore indicates the stance of a human being (being function) before God. It functions as an equivalent for attitude (*phronēsis*)¹².

It becomes clear that a qualitative and systemic understanding of soul in a pastoral anthropology has indeed implication for the fundamental paradigms¹³ and schema of interpretation¹⁴ in theory formation for pastoral theology. How does the notion of *habitus* impact on a new schema of interpretation is a pastoral hermeneutics?

2. TOWARDS A SPIRITUAL HERMENEUTICAL PARADIGM IN PASTORAL THEOLOGY

Within the history of pastoral care, and the traditional understanding of *cura animarum*, one can identify¹⁵ the following main paradigmatic approaches.

(a) The **kerygmatic paradigm**¹⁶ with its focus on the human predicament of sinfulness and the quest for forgiveness and redemption. The tendency in this model is to reduce most of human and life problems to our being sinners (theological reduction). Healing is then God's grace as incarnated in Christology, and communicated within the mode of proclamation.

12 The word for psyche (*psuché*) is derived from a root which means breath, or to breathe. The Hebrew word for soul, *nēfēsh* (Gen 2:7) means breath, exhalation, the principle of life (Seidl 1999:751, Brown 1978: 679 – 680). *Nēfēsh* denotes a principle of life which makes a body, whether human or beast, into a living being. When *nēfēsh* is translated as *psyché*, it signifies that which is vital in a human being in the broader sense. In combination with heart (*kardia*) and mind (*nous*), soul in the New Testament describes the seat of life or even life itself. It represents the person in the broadest sense and indicates the quality of life experiences (*habitus*). Soul therefore does not refer in the first place to a different anthropological category, but to a different mode of being (Harder in Brown 1978:684). For a further discussion, see D J Louw, 2004: 12-19.

13 With paradigms are meant: conceptual patterns of thinking as rational structures of the human mind (spirit as creative understanding and insight) of appearances (phenomena) as well as creative constructions embedded in cultural contexts.

14 For the role of schemata of interpretation in a pastoral hermeneutics, see Capps 1984:53.

15 Reduction implies a risk. It becomes a formal schema which can harm the different intentions with their very vibrant differences and nuances. My attempt is only to see whether one can identify broad categories and tendencies in order to understand better the different options in care and counseling.

16 The kerygmatic approach is dominated by the reformed view of the human being: *simul justus et peccator*. Guilt before God and the reality of sin make a person a sinner who is subject to God's punishment and wrath. A person can be freed from this sinful condition only through Christ's expiatory sacrifice and God's sovereign mercy. The reality of sinful brokenness and transient fallibility (death) underlies all human problems. Restoration is 'beyond' the competence of humans and is found only in redemption. 'Therapy' implies proclaiming forgiveness; of sins.

A. The kerygmatic model: proclaiming salvation

ANTHROPOLOGY	METHOD	THERAPY	EFFECT
(a) The bipolarity of sin and grace (b) Distress regarding our misery and sinfulness (Problem orientated)	(a) Proclamation (Scripture) (b) Admonishment Confrontation Directive Advising	Repentance and forgiveness Function of pastoral care: Reconciliation Conversion Transformation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remorse • Confession • Conversion • Redemption

Pastoral care: Liberation from guilt: conversion; proclamation of salvation and forgiveness

Christology: Redemption through grace on the grounds of Christ's expiatory salvation (soteriology).

(b) The **phenomenological paradigm** with its focus on human need fulfilment and the notion of individualistic self-realisation (the democratisation of care) is promoting the self-centred culture of assertiveness. Healing is then about need-satisfaction and the development of inner human potentials (the individual is his/her own therapist). The emphasis is away from an external locus of control to an internal locus of control. Access to the human person is through empirical analyses and the observation of human behaviour. In this regard the affective dimension is dominant with the emphasis on empathetic counselling.

The phenomenological approach is closely related to developments in American psychology due to the impact of Anton Boisen's thesis of the living human documents with its principle of the inner human potential and Rogerian psychology¹⁷.

The human potential for self-actualization thus becomes a type of remnant and primitive condition (*status integritatis*), which is not affected by sin.

B. The phenomenological (client-centred) model: disclosing inner potentials (facilitating)

¹⁷ The client-centred approach uses Rogers's non-directive, client-centred therapy to introduce the theme of self-actualizing in pastoral care. Hiltner (1958:145) confirms this focal point: 'Client-centred' was intended to show that one begins and proceeds from the best possible grasp of internals - that is, the inner frame of reference of the other person in so far as it can be grasped."

Rogers's personality theory contributed to the understanding that congruency between the self and the immediate field of experience are important for any therapeutic approach in counselling. A basic point of departure for effective counselling is the fact that congruency may be increased by means of empathy. Even greater appreciation should be given to Rogers's emphasis on the basic attitude in counselling. He stresses the crucial need for 'deed proclamation' in pastoral care, where love is expressed concretely in interpersonal relationships (Smit 1960:151).

ANTHROPOLOGY	METHOD	THERAPY	EFFECT
(a) Autonomous and independent self-image (affective) (b) Inner human potentials Growth oriented Non-directive (c) The human as self-actualising creature. Self-realisation	(a) Listening skills Empathy and communication (b) Relation building Trust (c) Phenomenological method: Experience Observation Perceiving	Acceptance Function of pastoral care: Maieutic Heuristic Nurturing	Self-insight Self-help Self-confidence Self-integration Self-actualisation Congruency

Pastoral care: A holistic approach: self-integration. (Client-centred and relational).

Christology: God's acceptance and identification with human needs via Christ's incarnation and suffering on the cross (God's pathos) with the view to salvation on the level of human relations (functional Christology).

The previous two models tend to reduce human problems either to sins or to human failure and a lack of self-confidence and self-insight. Both perspectives are indeed important and valid. They do not exclude each other and should be assessed as complementary and supplementary.

(c) In terms of new developments in theological research, I would like to opt for what I would like to call a **spiritual/hermeneutical model**.

(C) The spiritual/hermeneutical approach

ANTHROPOLOGY	METHOD	THERAPY	EFFECT
Psyche = Life/ <i>nephesj</i>	Interpretation	<i>Promissio</i> - therapy Reframing of God-images Renaming of issues	Self-transcending
Person = position/ meaning Attitude Aptitude <i>Phronesis</i> = discernment/wisdom <i>Sophrone</i> Phil 2:5 Being functions	Hermeneutical Connect life issues with God-images: God as Partner for Life and Soul Friend (covenantal thinking) Spiritual networking	Hope therapy = being functions Philosophical counselling	Shifting of positions; change in attitude.
Systems understanding	Qualitative assessment	Anticipation	Re-assessment of goals

Integrative & holistic approach	Indirective Goal setting Internalisation of norms & values = virtues = fruits of the Spirit	Re-positioning: <i>habitus</i> Healing space of grace/ unconditional love Empowerment of <i>parrhesia</i>	Spiritual maturity & growth
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Pastoral care: A systemic approach. The pastoral caregiver as a spiritual guide (soul friend), a co-interpreter of life; pastoral networking between existential realities and the Christian content regarding spirituality (human quest for meaning). With *promissio*-therapy is meant an organic use of the Bible in counselling wherein the fulfilled promises of God are connected to the reality of existential life issues.

Christology: the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ as a radical reframing of the notion of power, i.e. from force to vulnerability. The transformation and empowerment of people in order to instil and foster a courage of being (*parrhesia*) and a new attitude in life (*phronesis*). In this regard pneumatology, the charisma or fruit of the Spirit, plays a decisive role in a qualitative understanding of *respondeo ergo sum*.

3. PARRHESIA: TOWARDS SPIRITUAL FORTIGENETICS

With reference to the two paradigmatic approaches of kerygmatic change (with the predominant emphasis on a “homiletic approach” to conversion and confession) and phenomenological self-insight (with the predominant emphasis on empathetic listening and self-change, inner potential deployment), what is the difference between the previous two and a spiritual hermeneutical paradigm?

The kerygmatic model focuses predominantly on conversion: the healing of a sinful and individual soul through proclamation. The phenomenological model focuses on self-development: the healing of an autonomous and democratic personality through inner potentials.

The hermeneutical model focuses on the affirmation of beings functions: the healing of positions (attitudes) within the systemic network of existential and relational life issues. It is about the empowerment of human beings through the spiritual realm of the Christian hope in order to instil courage to be (spiritual fortigenetics).

Fortology represents a movement away from pathology to constructive enforcement and encouragement. Strümpfer, for example, points out the importance of *fortigenesis* in adult life (2006:11-36). Fortigenesis (*fortis* = strong) refers to a strengths perspective, which relates human wellness to the positive components in human behaviour. This approach concentrates on those components in human wellness that create strength, courage and a positive approach to life demands.

The background to a “science of strength” is to be found in the meaning dimension of life. Interpersonal flourishing and subjective well being are closely related to one another. Research applications in the field of positive organisational behaviour are developing as part of the paradigm of fortology. Both *psychofortology* and *positive psychology* support the development of human strengths and their role in motivation and constructive performance.

In theological terms fortology and a strengths perspective are the equivalent of what is meant by *the courage to be* in the language of existential theology (cf. Paul Tillich).

The emphasis on strength is intended to encourage a move away from the paradigm of pathogenic thinking and to link health to a sense of coherence, personality hardness, inner

potency, stamina or learned resourcefulness (Strümpher 1995: 83).

In the paradigm of a theology of affirmation "*fortigenesis*" points more in the direction of *existential* and *ontological* categories than mere inner emotional strength and positive behavioural attitudes. A theology of affirmation refers to an *ontic state of being*, which means that one is affirmed in one's very being qualities by eschatology. To be a new being in Christ means to be strengthened by the *charisma* (fruit) of the Spirit in order to live life with courage and through a vivid hope. Spiritual fortigenesis and fortology refer to that kind of spiritual strength and courage that emanates from our new being in Christ.

The equivalent in Scripture for fortigenesis is *parrhesia*, i.e. a courage that is not a human quality but a quality that comes from God and Christ (Ps 8; 1 Thess. 2:2) (A stance and ontic position in Christ due to the eschatological reality as founded by the cross and resurrection of Christ). *Parrhesia* is a pneumatic function as part of the fruit of the Spirit. Due to the indwelling presence of the spirit in our bodily existence (ensouled embodiment), inhabitation theology is about the charismatic reality of the fruits of the Spirit of God within the realm of our daily existence and life experiences. This inhabitational presence creates a "spiritual noetics" of understanding and interpreting life events (wisdom, *sapientia*).

CONCLUSION

The hermeneutical schema of interpretation with its emphasis on the Christian spiritual notion of *habitus* proposes an integrative approach in theory formation. Hermeneutics (derived from *hermeneuein*) refers to the art of explanation and interpretation (Smit, 1998:276). Hermeneutics is the attempt to understand the meaning of different texts within the vibrant fibre of intertextuality. The core text in a pastoral anthropology is the human "soul". As *habitus* soul portrays the inter-text of a networking praxis-reality of interrelational attitudes and aptitudes in life.

In a pastoral theology the interpretation of metaphors and symbols in terms of the interrelatedness of systemic networking becomes important. Its impact on God-images is that pastoral theology becomes involved in the quest for meaningful God-images that can promote meaningful (hopeful) norms and structures for a humane living.

Healing through communication often implies a deconstruction of fixed perceptions and concepts. Changing rational and noetic categories and investing them with new content and meaning is an important ingredient of the process of healing in pastoral care. In a hermeneutical approach, healing implies how one can connect life and existential issues with the spiritual realm of the content of the Christian faith. One can call this approach: spiritual existential networking. The healing is the understanding of the interconnectedness and how the spiritual categories can assist in the attempt of finding meaning in life. To be encouraged and empowered by *parrhesia*, presupposes a theology of affirmation, which derives its anthropological categories from the eschatological reality of cross and resurrection.

The paradigm shift from the kerygmic model (proclamation) and the phenomenological model (observation) to a spiritual and hermeneutical model (networking interpretation) does not imply to be exclusive. The other two are always implied. However, the focus is more into the direction of a realistic prevention approach than either a pessimistic or optimistic approach.

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KEY WORDS

Cura animarum
 Fortigenetics
Parrhesia
 praxeology of *habitus*
 praxis of God
 pastoral anthropology

TREFWOORDE

Cura animarum
 Fortigenese

Parrhesia

praksiologie van *habitus*

praxis van God

pastorale antropologie

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Op 'n mespunt. Die ontvangs van Johannes Calvyn in die denke van Willie Jonker

ABSTRACT

This paper, originally read as the fourth Willie Jonker commemoration lecture (October 2009), explores how the central tenets of Jonker's theology have been fundamentally shaped by John Calvin. It is argued that Jonker's very understanding of Reformed theology is derived from Calvin. Furthermore, on three issues, Calvin plays an important role: Jonker's insistence on the visible unity of the church, the importance of social ethics, and the church as the people of God superseding the ethnic notion of a *volkskerk*. The paper concludes with a list of contemporary theological and ethical issues that may be addressed from the Calvin-Jonker line of thinking.

“Maar 'n mens moet erken dat dit die moeite loon om eers goed na Calvyn te luister, voordat jy dink dat jy beter weet as hy” (Jonker 1973b:37).

INLEIDING

Dis vir my 'n eer en voorreg om vanjaar die vierde W.D. Jonker-gedenklesing hier in Kaapstad te hou.¹ My eie geestelike en teologiese vorming is diep deur die lewe en werk van prof. Jonker beïnvloed. Hoe meer ek lees wat hy geskryf en gepreek het, hoe meer kom ek onder die indruk van sy intellektuele diepte, sy suiwere oordele oor die sake van sy tyd, en sy voortgaande relevansie vir teologie in Suid-Afrika vandag.

Toe Willie Jonker se aktiewe teologiese werk teen 1955 'n aanvang neem met die voltooiing van sy proefskrif, was daar drie samehangende teologiese pilare waarop die dominante NG Kerk (NGK) teologie van daardie tyd gebou was:

- Die eerste pilaar was die idee van **pluriformiteit** in skepping, kerk en samelewing met ernstige implikasies vir die sigbare eenheid van die kerk.
- Die tweede pilaar was die **piëtisme** met as kenmerk 'n privatistiese spiritualiteit en onkritiese Skrifsin met 'n blinde vlek vir sosiale etiek.
- Die derde pilaar was die idee van die NGK as **volkskerk** met 'n spesiale plek in God se voorsienigheid en 'n afswakking van die kerk as belydende gemeente.

Hoewel nie eksklusief nie, is Calvyn as getuie bygeroep om hierdie raamwerk te ondersteun. Dus was die stryd om 'n (nuwe) teologiese paradigma in die NGK ook 'n hermeneutiese stryd om die interpretasie van Calvyn en die nalatenskap van die Reformasie.²

1 Gedenklesing gehou in die Ring van Kaap die Goeie Hoop in die kerkgebou van die NGK Tamboerskloof op Sondag, 25 Oktober 2009.

2 Vir 'n breëre oorsig oor die stryd om Calvyn in Suid-Afrika, lees die onlangse bydrae van Robert Vosloo genaamd “Calvin and anti-apartheid memory in the Dutch Reformed family of churches in South Africa” (Vosloo 2008) en natuurlik die klassieke bydrae van John de Gruchy waarin hy uitvoerig argumenteer vir 'n bevryde en bevrydende resepsie van Calvyn (De Gruchy 1991).

In hierdie gedenklesing wil ek probeer om Jonker se kritiek op en teenstand teen bovermelde teologiese raamwerk te herkonstureer vanuit sy eie vertolking van Calvyn. Natuurlik drink Jonker uit vele bronne – Luther, Bavinck, Berkouwer, en Barth is maar enkele voorbeelde – en sou dit ’n vertekening wees om Calvyn as die enigste beslissende invloed in sy teologie te beskryf. Maar dat Calvyn aan die wortels van Jonker se denke lê, blyk uit die feit dat hy deurgaans onbeskaamd Gereformeerde teologie bedryf. En as hy hierdie tipe teologie omskryf, staan Calvyn as sentrale figuur voorop:

In *Op weg met die teologie* beskryf hy eers die breë onderskeid tussen Rooms-Katolieke en Protestantse teologie. Hierop volg ’n nadere onderskeid tussen Lutherse en Gereformeerde teologie, en in die uitspel van die kernverskille tussen hierdie twee rigtings, staan Calvyn absoluut sentraal:

In die verhouding God-mens plaas Luther die klem op die heilige God en sondige mens, terwyl Calvyn uitgaan van God as Skepper en die mens as gevalle skepsel. Waar Luther God se eer veral soek in die regverdiging van die sondaar, handhaaf Calvyn dat God se eer met die verlossing van die ganse skepping as *theatrum gloriae* saamhang. Weens Luther se tweeryke-leer word die betekenis van die verlossing (teen Luther se bedoeling in) „aanmerklik ingeperk“ in vergelyking met die wye blikveld van Calvyn waar die kerstening van die kultuur en die heiliging van die lewe en sosiale etiek alles onder die heilsbestel van God val. Waar Luther die Bybel byna uitsluitelik as heilswoord hoor en binne die kanon soek na “*was Christum treibet*”, laat Calvyn die hele kanon meesprek oor die alle terreine van die samelewing (Heyns en Jonker 1977: 248-252).

Vir Jonker is veral hierdie laaste punt van groot belang: teologie spreek oor die hele lewe mee alleen omdat dit luister na die hele Skrif en hierdie Skrifwoord dinamies uitlê met die oog op die vraagstukke van elke tyd.³ In hierdie sin is Gereformeerde teologie ook katoliek: Dis geen seksionele teologie nie, maar staan vierkant in kontinuïteit met die Christelike teologie van alle eeue. En dit streef om aan die volle (katolieke) waarheid vas te hou soos die konsekwensies van God se openbaring oor die hele skepping uitgespel word (Heyns en Jonker 1977: 253-254).

Daar is geen twyfel dat Jonker “gereformeerd” en “Calvyn” heel direk op mekaar betrek en hierdie betrekking het dan ook sy hele teologie fundamenteel gestempel.

’n Kort voordrag soos hierdie kan egter nie die volle invloed van Calvyn op Jonker se denke uitspel nie. Daar is eenvoudig te veel eksplisiete en implisiete verwysings⁴ na Calvyn om aan die reikwydte van die hierdie verhouding reg te laat geskied. Nietemin word enkele temas aangesny waar Jonker se werk nie los van Calvyn geles behoort te word nie.

Daar is inderdaad genoeg getuïenis om Jonker se resepsie van Calvyn in hierdie Calvynjaar uit te wys as onontbeerlike element in die bou van ’n alternatiewe Gereformeerde tradisie binne die NGK.⁵ Of liever: Om die NGK terug te roep na haar eintlike wortels in die Protestantse Reformasie teenoor die kragvelde van volkskerk en evangelikalisme (Jonker 1998).

3 Kyk sy mooi samevatting en definisie van teologie in sy lesing voor die GES met die titel “What is theology?” (Jonker 1976b), en sy klem daarop dat die prediking aktuele Skrifuitleg moet wees in sy invloedryke boekie oor die prediking, *Die Woord as opdrag* (Jonker 1976).

4 ’n Mens dink onmiddellik aan die Jonker-bundels in die dogmatiekreeks wat hy saam met Jaap Durand geskryf het. In sowel die historiese as “riglyne” afdelings van hierdie boeke speel Calvyn ’n deurslaggewende rol. Kyk as voorbeeld die bespreking van Jonker (1988) se verbondsteologie later in hierdie artikel.

5 Kyk byvoorbeeld die uitstekende artikel waarin Jonker breedvoerig aan die woord kom in verband met Calvyn se sosiale denke: Dirkie Smit, “Views on Calvin’s ethics: reading Calvin in the South African context”, *Reformed World* 57 (4), 2007: 306-344; asook Smit se verwysings na Jonker en Calvyn in die derde WD Jonker- gedenklesing (Smit 2008).

2. OP DIE MESPUNT TUSSEN PLURIFORMITEIT EN DIE SIGBARE EENHEID VAN DIE KERK

In Willie Jonker se jarelange stryd om die eenheid van die kerk beroep hy hom meermale op Calvyn. Kortliks saamgevat kom Jonker se argument op die volgende neer: Die eenheid van die kerk is 'n geestelike saak is wat roep om sigbaarmaking in die gemeenskap van die heiliges. Plaaslike gemeentes is volledig kerk, maar is verplig om hulleself in 'n kerverband te voeg waarin die eenheid en katolesiteit van die kerk tot uitdrukking kom.

Agter hierdie relatief eenvoudig klinkende samevatting lê beslissende teologiese keuses wat Jonker vanaf sy proefskrif in 1955 tot minstens 1986 keer op keer teen verskillende fronte moes verdedig:

Dis ironies dat iemand wat oor die mistieke liggaam van Christus binne die nuwere Franse Katolieke teologie gepromoveer het (sien Jonker 1955), as "Rooms" beskou is omdat hy op die sigbare eenheid van die kerk sou aandring. Dis presies waarvan prof TN Hanekom oortuig was: Jonker en sy medestanders wat aandui dat die eienskappe van die kerk ook sigbaar gestalte moet vind, is skuldig aan 'n holistiese kerkbeskouing met 'n "ongelukkige geboorte uit die Romeinse staatsbeskouing" wat teenoor die Skrif en Gereformeerde kerkbeskouing staan (Jonker 1963:435).

Nee, skryf Jonker, Calvyn dui reeds aan dat "kerk" in die Skrif die ganse menigte van mense wat oor die aarde versprei is, aandui, en daarom na 'n sigbare, historiese werklikheid verwys. Die katolesiteit van die kerk het dan ook direk betrekking op ons innige verbondenheid aan eensgesindheid met al Gods kinders (Calvyn: Inst. IV, I, 3). Hierdie een, algemene kerk – bestaande uit allerlei volkere wat saamstem met die een ware belydenis, is onderverdeel in plaaslike kerke. En hierdie plaaslike kerk, as dele van die een sigbare wereldkerk (Calvyn: Inst. IV, I, 9) moet hul onderlinge verbondenheid tot openbaring bring in 'n kerkverband waarin die eenheid juis tot sigbare uitdrukking kom. Die NGB art 27-29 volg in hierdie voetspoor van Calvyn en maak duidelik dat die mistieke liggaam van Christus 'n sigbare, uitwendige organisatoriese lewe het ter wille van onderlinge sorg en vermaning (Jonker 1963:436-437).

Die Gereformeerde kerkreg⁶ het dus van die begin⁷ af konsekwent gehandhaaf dat 'n kerk wat homself byvoorbeeld tot nasionale grense wou beperk, prinsipiël onjuis handel. Sels Kuyper het 'n "nasionale kerk" 'n teenstrydigheid genoem (Jonker 1963:437). Waar die een kerk van Christus oor die grense van land en taal en volk beweeg, kom 'n verskeidenheid tot stand wat volgens Calvyn moet aanpas by die praktiese omgewing weens "eise van die menslike noodsaaklikheid" (Jonker 1983:438). Maar nooit tree hierdie verskeidenheid van kerke uit die verband van die een band van Christus nie.

Jonker wys dan daarop dat die Dordtse Kerkorde een kerkverband oor volks- en taalgrense handhaaf, met een generale sinode, en een kerkorde as sigbare uitdrukking van hierdie eenheid. Skalks merk hy op: "Ek het niemand dit nog ooit "Rooms" hoor noem nie", en hy wys daarop dat net in die voorafgaande jaar (1962) die onderskeie NG Kerke hul in een algemene sinode saamgevoeg het. Dis eg Bybels en Gereformeerd om hierdie kerkverband te sien as sigbaarmaking van die een, katoelike kerk (Jonker 1963: 438).

Aan die een kant moes Jonker sy standpunt teen die beskuldiging van Roomsheid verweer. Aan die ander kant, het die neo-Calvinisme van Abraham Kuyper gestaan soos binne die NGK

6 Jonker se eerste bydraes tot openbare kerklike debatte het op die vlak van die kerkreg en kerkverband gele. Hy het natuurlik geweet dat teologiese beslissings daar hul beliggaming vind! Kyk sy welbekende boekie oor die sendingbepalinge van die NG Kerk in Transvaal (1962) en die minder bekende ongepubliseerde studie oor die ontstaan en ontwikkeling van die Gereformeerde kerkreg (1965).

7 Jonker verwys hier o.a. na Voetius wat die noodsaaklikheid van die kerkverband teenoor die independentisme gehandhaaf het (1963:435).

nagevolg en vertolk deur veral prof FJM Potgieter,⁸ ’n kollega van Jonker by die Kweekskool.

Potgieter neem sy teologiese vertrekpunt in Kuyper se kosmologie waarvan Gods geskape pluriformiteit die hoeksteen is. Pluriformiteit van taal, kultuur en spiritualiteit is uitdrukking van die ryke geskape verskeidenheid. Sou daar dus afsonderlike etniese kerke tot stand kom wat naas mekaar bestaan sonder een kerkverband, tas dit nie die eenheid van die kerk aan nie. Sulke kerke is immers uitdrukking van die geskape verskeidenheid en nog steeds deel van die een onsigbare kerk. Eenheid is per slot van rekening ’n geestelike saak. Wie dus aandring op een kerkverband bedreig die skeppingsmatige voorsienigheid van God, en is “bes moontlik ’n prooi van die moderne nivelleringsdenke wat alle verskille tussen mense wil uitwis” (Jonker 1982:8).

Op voetspoor van Calvin, ontken Jonker nie die verskeidenheid nie. Maar anders as Kuyper wat Calvin se verwysings na God se algemene genade verhef tot die sluitsteen van sy (skeppings) teologie en sover gaan om te sê dat “die skepping die herskepping struktureer” (Jonker 1986:11), wys Jonker daarop dat Calvin vanuit die besondere genade oor die kerk dink. Vir Calvin is die nuwe mensheid in Christus (en nie ’n idealistiese pluriformiteitsleer⁹ nie) die uitgangspunt. Wanneer “die kerk sy lewenswet aan die skepping ontleen”, skryf Jonker, lei dit tot “niks anders (nie) as ’n vorm van natuurlike teologie” (Jonker 1986:10).

Calvin het homself onvermoed beywer vir die bewaring van die eenheid van die Reformatoriese kerk, met volle erkenning van die verskille na gelang van plaaslike omstandighede in die verskillende lande (Jonker 1986:6). Wat in die NGK gebeur, is egter die teenoorgestelde: Op grond van die skeppingsverskeidenheid word daar tot geskeidenheid gekonkludeer. Buiten dat dit teologies bedenklik is, speel nie-teologiese faktore hierin mee, naamlik die wil om veilig te voel by die eie groep, die vrees om op kerklike terrein oorheers te word deur nie-blanke Christene, en ’n algemene “afsonderlikheidsindroom”. Dit lei tot ’n radikale afswakking van die gemeenskap van die heiliges wat wel elke Sondag bely word, maar waarvan daar net sporadies en kunsmatig sprake is (Jonker 1986:12).

Agter alles, meen Jonker, sit ’n etniese motief wat ongelukkig uit die Duitse sendingwetenskap¹⁰ sy weg via die NGK se eie sendingbeleid gevind het: aparte kerke vir verskillende etniese groepe.¹¹ Hoe krau en opsigtelike rasse-gebonde die NGK praktyk is, blyk uit die feit dat ’n afsonderlike kerk vir Kleurlinge gestig is waar taal en kultuur nie ’n groot rol kon speel nie, maar ras wel. Ook is daar maar een kerk vir alle swart lidmate opgerig en is nie ruimte gemaak vir die verskillende etniese swart groepe nie. Daar is ook nog nooit oorweeg om Engelssprekendes in ’n ander kerkverband tuis te bring nie.¹² Hierdie etniese denke het die eenheid van die kerk soos uitgedruk in een verband ernstig op die spel geplaas.

Kortom: Calvin speel ’n beduidende rol in Jonker se verdediging van die sigbare eenheid van

8 Vir ’n uitstekende oorsig en analise van Potgieter se werk (insluitende sy band met Calvin en Kuyper), lees Hans Engdahl se proefskrif, Engdahl 2006:65-142.

9 Vir ’n meer detail kritiese analise van Kuyper, sien Jonker 1981: 91-94 en 1989:16-18.

10 Jonker verwys hier na die invloed van J du Plessis en GBA Gerdener wat die volkskerkgedagte uit die nou verband tussen bekering en etniese groep by die Lutheraanse missiologie oorgeneem het. Kyk ook sy verwysing na die invloedryke werk van Hoekendijk oor hierdie tema (Jonker 1986:11). Vir ’n meer uitgebreide bespreking van die band tussen volkskerk en missiologie met analise van oorspronklike Duitse bronne, lees Naudé 2005.

11 Jonker wys daarop dat *Ras, volk en nasie* (1974) wel op sommige punte korrek handhaaf dat daar verskeidenheid binne dieselfde kerk moet wees, maar tog op voetspoor van Kuyperiaanse terminologie in artikel 29 skryf: “Daarom kan ’n verskeidenheid van volke ook ’n verskeidenheid van inheemse kerke tot gevolg hê” (Jonker 1986:11).

12 Daarom argumenteer Jonker ook sterk teen die moontlike stigting van ’n eie kerk vir Portugeessprekende lidmate. Dis die konteks van hierdie 1986 artikel. Portugees kan wel weens taalredes ’n eie gemeente vorm, maar moet steeds binne een kerkverband bly, meen Jonker.

die kerk teenoor beide die kritiek van Roomse denke en die neo-Calvinistiese skeppingsteologie van Kuyper.

3. OP DIE MESPUNT TUSSEN PIËTISME EN SOSIALE ETIEK

Die NGK waarin Jonker in die laat 1950's as teoloog getree het, het naas sy Gereformeerde wortels ook 'n sterk invloed vanuit veral die Skotse piëtisme beleef. Die sterk punte van die piëtisme was 'n klem op beleefde geloof teenoor die rasionalisme van die kritiese teologie en 'n onvoorwaardelike aanvaarding van die Skrifgesag. Die kwesposte was dat hierdie individuele spiritualiteit mense swak toegerus het om 'n aanvoeling vir sosiaal-etiese sake te ontwikkel. En die onkritiese Skrifsin het gelei tot vorme van fundamentalisme wat die historiese sin van die Bybel nie genoegsaam kon verreken nie. Jonker het later hierna verwys as die kragveld van 'n evangelikaliese spiritualiteit (Jonker 1998).

In 1973 verskyn twee artikels van Jonker oor die sosiale etiek waarin hy hom direk op Calvin beroep: "Die aktualiteit van die sosiale etiek". (Jonker 1973a) en "Heilige Skrif en sosiale etiek by Calvin" (Jonker 1973b).

Die eerste artikel begin eers met 'n verduideliking van die verskil tussen 'n personele en 'n sosiale etiek. Jonker wys daarop dat die personele etiek op die sedelike gedrag van die individu fokus waar mense mekaar konkreet as naastes teenkom. In hierdie sin het die personele etiek natuurlik ook met die mens as fundamenteel gemeenskapswese te make, maar dan steeds gedink vanuit die standpunt van die individu.

Hierteenoor gaan dit in die sosiale etiek om die verhouding tussen mense "onder die gesigspunt van hulle omtmoeting (of samelewing) met mekaar binne die kader van bepaalde saaklike betrekkinge soos hulle mekaar binne 'n sekere gemeenskapsverband teenkom" (1973a:79). Dit gaan dus in die sosiale etiek om die vraag na wat sedelik goed en kwaad is op die gebied van die bowe-persoonlike gemeenskapsvorme waar laasgenoemde self die fokuspunt is sonder om dit steeds vanuit die individueel-etiese gesigspunt te beskou.

Welwetend dat die heersende spiritualiteit van die NG Kerk diepgaande deur die piëtisme¹³ beïnvloed is, lewer Jonker fundamentele kritiek: Die piëtisme spreek hom sterk uit oor sedelike sake, maar hierdie sake lê byna almal op die vlak van die persoonlike etiek. Die piëtisme beklemtoon die individuele ten koste van die sosiale juis omdat dit individualisties dink oor verlossing en heiligmaking.

Hierdie sterk individualistiese klem deel die piëtisme met die wysgerige tradisie uit die Verligting vanaf Descartes en Kant tot by die moderne eksistensialisme. Op 'n ambivalente manier is piëtisme dus eg modernisties.

Waar die piëtisme wel oor sosiale vraagstukke nadink, duik daar twee tekortkominge op: Eerstens. Hul biblisistiese hermeneutiek lei daartoe dat Bybelse voorskrifte onhistories op vandag van toepassing gemaak word. Daardeer word dit waarteen die piëtisme stry – die afswakking van die Skrifgesag – juis verweselik (Jonker 1973b:31). Tweedens maak hierdie soort hermeneutiek die leser blind vir sy of haar eie voorveronderstellings. As hierdie voorveronderstellings nog gevoed word met 'n *corpus Christianum* idee van kerk en staat, is kritiek op die samelewingsverbande (Jonker 1973a:82 noem dit die „institute“) self, onmoontlik. Inteendeel, die piëtisme deel in die lang geskiedenis van die Christelike denke waarin die samelewingsordeninge as ordeninge van God Self – en dus onveranderlik en bo kritiek verhewe – beskou is (Jonker 1973a:83).

Hier loop die weë van die piëtisme en die Verligting weer uiteen. Jonker sou later oor die

13 Jonker is terdeë bewus daarvan dat die "piëtisme" self 'n komplekse verskynsel is wat in verskillende gedaantes in die geskiedenis verskyn het. Kyk byvoorbeeld sy sensitiewe bespreking hiervan in *Die relevansie van die kerk* (2008), 35-37.

Tweede Verligting skryf waarin denkers soos Marx, Nietzsche en die neo-Marxiste kritiek op godsdienste as sodanig lewer en 'n skerp maatskaplik-kritiese sin sou ontwikkel. Deel van die NGK se probleem is dat hy weens sy isolasie in die jare ná 1948 (Universele Verklaring van Menseregte) presies in die teenoorgestelde rigting as die ekumeniese en internasionale denke beweeg het.

Calvyn – so reken Jonker – kan ons met die sosiale etiek help. Calvyn self het aan drie fronte gestry vir die ontwikkeling van sy sosiale denke:

Teenoor die Rooms Katolieke natuurregleer, handhaaf Calvyn die Skrif (en nie redelike insig nie) as norm vir sosiale vraagstukke. Teenoor die Lutherse tweerykeleer waar wêreldse sake op wêreldlike wyse hanteer word, handhaaf Calvyn dat Christus se heerskappy oor alle lewensterreine uitstrek. Teenoor die Wederdopers wat Ou Testamentiese wette direk na hul eie tyd oorvertaal, handhaaf Calvyn 'n historiese Skrifsin wat die substansie van die wette ondersoek en dit dan op histories verantwoordelike en kreatiewe wyse op eietydse vrae betrek (Jonker 1973b:35).

Calvyn slaag dus daarin om die blinde kolle van die piëtisme te oorkom: Met sy hermeneutiek waarin die totaliteit van die Skrif in haar historiese en “dogmatiese” sin aan die bod kom, slaag Calvyn daarin om die gesag van die Bybel beter te handhaaf, en inderdaad sinvolle etiese riglyne daar te stel vir die vraagstukke van sy tyd. Die sosiale vraagstukke kom in die verband van die institute self aan die bod sodat Calvyn fundamentele vrae oor stelsels (ekonomie, politiek, kerk) as sodanig kan stel in 'n tyd waarin dit vreemd was om sosiale institute self aan kritiek te onderwerp.

Maar Calvyn bring volgens Jonker ook 'n sterk Christologies-ekklesiologiese dimensie in die sosiale etiek. Die norm waaruit Calvyn oor politiek en 'n Christelike maatskapy dink, is die nuwe mensheid in Christus: “Dáár, in die Liggaam van Christus, word die oorspronklike skeppingsbedoelinge van God, veral ook wat die onderlinge verhoudinge tussen mense betref, in beginsel reeds sigbaar” (Jonker 1973b:36).

Hierin lê deels 'n verklaring vir die *Leitmotif* in Jonker se hele sosiale teologie: Die kerk is die ruimte waar „God se bedoelinge met die herstelde mensheid” (1973b: 36) bewys behoort te word. Daarom is sigbare eenheid en versoening tussen alle gelowiges so uiters belangrik en daarom is 'n etniese volkskerk so vreemd aan God se geestelike regering oor en tussen mense. Ja, reeds in 1973 skryf Jonker in die gees van Calvyn dat die staat en maatskappy juis veel by die kerklike diakonaat moet leer omdat egte diakonaat so “diep in die maatskaplike verhoudings ingryp” (1973b: 37). Inderdaad vind ons hier reeds 'n verwysing na wat Belhar later (1982) die geregtigheidstaak van die kerk sou noem.

Die rede – reken Jonker – waarom Calvyn se sosiale denke sy tyd so ver vooruit was, lê eenvoudig daarin dat Calvyn die Bybel ernstig geneem het. “Die Skrif is ons immers altyd voor.” En hy voeg (profeties-krities?) daarby: “Wie na die Skrif luister, sal nie eers agter die dinge aanloop, of geneig wees om die bestaande te sanksioneer... nie” (1973b:37). Hy sluit af dat 'n mens seker heelwat kritiek op Calvyn sou kon hê. “Maar 'n mens moet erken dat dit die moeite loon om eers goed na hom te luister, voordat jy dink dat jy beter weet as hy” (1973b:37).

Toe Jonker enkele jare later (kyk Jonker 1984) oor 'n konkrete sosiaal-etiese vraagstuk skryf, beroep hy hom weer eens sterk op Calvyn. In reaksie op 193 beswaardes teen die voorgestelde nuwe grondwet waarin nie-Christene ook potensieel sou dien, wys Jonker die teokratiese ideaal van oud Israel af. Hy volg liever vir Calvyn wat 'n duidelike onderskeid tussen kerk en staat maak sonder om in die twee-ryke leer terug te val. Jonker meen dat Kuyper se “soewereiniteit in eie kring” (ten spyte van kritiek daarop) hier nader aan Calvyn se intensies kom as die *corpus Christianum* idee of 'n voltoeking van NGB art. 36 as sou die staat eksklusief die Christelike geloof moes verdedig.

Hy wys – tong in die kies – daarop dat beswaardes teen 'n nuwe demokratiese grondwet hul

eerder oor die kwaliteit van hul Christenskap in so 'n bedeling as oor 'n paar andersgelowiges moet bekommer!

4. OP DIE MESPUNT TUSSEN VOLKSKERK EN BELYDENDE GEMEENTE

Baie vroeg in sy teologiese werk word Jonker gekonfronteer met 'n intense debat oor die idee van 'n volkskerk. Benewens sy akademiese werk hieroor, is *Die Kerkbode* korrespondensie uit 1955/6, 'n interessante gevallestudie van Jonker se denke. Dr AC Barnard (gemeente Sonhoogte) lewer eers twee bydraes op 23 en 30 November 1955 waarin hy onomwonde stel dat die NGK geestelik verval en 'n volkskerk geword het. Die hoofartikel van 30 November 1955 meen daar moet 'n verhouding tussen kerk en volk wees – “hoe nouer, hoe beter” – en dat geestelike verval nie slegs aan die historiese band tussen die NKG en die Afrikaanse volk toegeskryf kan word nie.

Op 18 Januarie 1956 maak Jonker self 'n bydra en – soos 'n ware heer – begin hy deur te sê dat hy met dr. Barnard in beginsel saamstem, maar toegee dat laasgenoemde dalk sy saak te te sterk gestel het (!).

Jonker maak dan 'n uiters verhelderende opmerking dat die begrip “volkskerk” nie in die eerste plek op die band tussen 'n etniese groep en spesifieke kerk wys nie. Nee, in navolging van die jong Kuyper, sien Jonker 'n volkskerk primêr as 'n massakerk wat ter wille van sy eie uitbreiding almal maar doop wat voor die vont gebring word. Dis 'n kerk “die rijp en groen in sich opneemt, die de wereld doopt en die de zichtbare kerk met de wereld vereenzelvigt” (Jonker 1956:18).

Waar dit gebeur, “onstaan vanself die gedrog van 'n Kerk wat 'n opvoedingsinrigting wil wees en meen dat dit goed is om soveel moontlik mense maar in die Kerk in te sluit ...” (Jonker 1956:18). In so 'n kerk moet die tug noodwendig verwaarloos word, of minstens afgeswak word tot 'n spesifieke groep “sondes”, terwyl die eintlike tug agterweê bly. Die dodelike gevolg van so 'n volkskerk is dat hy so bekommerd raak oor die onbekeerdheid van sy eie lidmate, “dat hy graag gryp na die hulp van allerlei interkerklike en buitekerklike bewegings om sy eie mense terug te roep, en dit word so erg dat selfs sommige van sy predikante meer van die buitekerklike beweging hou as van die minder suksesvolle Kerk!” (Jonker 1956:18).

Waar so 'n volkskerk ook nog 'n duidelike etniese karakter vertoon, is daar dubbele skade aan die egte verstaan van die kerk soos in die Skrif en Gereformeerde tradisie gehandhaaf.

Waar lê die oorsprong hiervan? Jonker verduidelik dit in sy artikel oor die verskil tussen Luther en Calvyn met betrekking tot die volkskerk (sien Jonker 1967). Jonker merk op dat die verskille nie soseer teologies is, as dat Luther weens praktiese omstandighede 'n ander weg as Calvyn en die Gereformeerdes ingeslaan het.

Albei erken teenoor Rome dat slegs Christus die hoof van die kerk is, en oor die kerk regeer deur Woord en Gees. Albei maak ook veel van die plaaslike gemeente as volledig kerk. Luther het egter om drie redes aan die kerk as volkskerk vasgehou en nie soos Calvyn na die kerk as belydende gemeente deurgebreek nie:

Die tyd was volgens Luther nog nie ryp om egte belydenisgemeentes te stig nie omdat geskikte persone daarvoor nog ontbreek. Hy was, tweedens, bang om in die Doperse rigting te beweeg waar independistiese denke klein „ware“ kerkies opgestel het teenoor die groter massa. Derdens wou hy nie die gedoopte massas prysgee nie omdat hy op hierdie punt inkonsekwent was oor sy verstaan van die regverdiging deur die geloof alleen. Hy vergeet volgens Jonker dat die enigste grond van die gemeente lê in die geloofsregverdiging wat 'n objektiewe werklikheid is ten spyte daarvan dat die gemeentelêde subjektief nie sulke ernstige christene sou wees nie! (Jonker 1967:207-208).

Die uitbreek uit die kader van volkskerke is verder in die praktyk bemoelik omdat Luther gemeen het dat vorste wat die Reformasie goedgesind was, ook as “noodbiskoppe” die kerk moes help regeer. Luther het gehoop dit sou ’n tydelike maatreël wees, maar dit het die aard van die Lutherse kerke vir etlike eeue bepaal.

Wat hierdie saak betref, het Calvyn op presies die teenoorgestelde standpunt gestaan. Sy nadruk om owerheid uit kerksake te hou, het hom sy verbanning gekos. En hy het onvermoed gestreef om deur prediking, opvoeding, orde en tug “die volkskerk te verander in belydende gemeentes” (Jonker 1967:211). Van hieruit sou ons Jonker se passie vir die kerk as belydende en belydeniskerk moet verstaan, asook sy siening dat die belydenis van Belhar ’n gawe van God aan die kerk is. Dis die bevrydende waarheid van die konfessies (Jonker 1994) as *repetitio Sacrae Scripturae* (Heyns en Jonker 1977:213) wat altyd weer die kerk bewaar van ingekeerde volkskerk.

Toe Jonker enkele jare later twee artikels oor “Selfliefde en selfhandhawing” skryf (Jonker 1974), beroep hy hom weer eens op Calvyn en Luther: In ’n konteks waar mense geglo het die liefdesgebod sluit ’n plig tot selfliefde in, wys Jonker daarop dat Calvyn self nooit sou dink dat God die vuur van die selfliefde wat al vanself sterk genoeg brand met ’n gebod tot selfbehoud sou aanblaas nie. En Luther se definisie van die sonde as ingekeerdheid in die self plaas sy denke ook ver buite die reikwydte van selfliefde. Hy wys in die tweede artikel op Calvyn wat “verruklieke dinge” oor hulp aan ander en die sosiale implikasies van die evangelie geskryf het, en sluit af met talle perikope uit die Skrif wat op selfprysgawe as die kern van dissipelskap fokus.

Dis hierdie soort denke wat Jonker daartoe aangespoor het om van sy eerste populêre geskrifte oor die kerklike tug te skryf. *En as jou broeder sondig* se eerste uitgawe verskyn reeds in 1957 en hy maak duidelik dat die misverstand van ’n volkskerk daarin lê dat so ’n kerk dink die grootste invloed in die wêreld is moontlik as hy soveel lede as moontlik het. Maar om al hierdie lede aan te trek en te behou, moet hy so min aanstoot as moontlik gee. Daardeur word uitbreiding bo suiwerheid gekies en lidmaatskap van die kerk is nie meer dieselfde saak as lidmaatskap aan Christus nie. Dit was juis Calvyn wat ter wille van die eer van God en die behoud van sondaars aangedring het dat die kerk die tug in gehoorsaamheid aan die Woord van God moet beoefen (Jonker 1978:9, 20-22).

In sy latere werk oor verkiesing en verbond, *Uit vrye guns alleen*, stel Jonker hom ook op teen die verbondsteologie waarop vele die volkskerkgedagte gebou het. Die populêre idee onder Afrikaners was dat hulle ’n uitverkore volk was wat onder God se voorsienige hand as ligdraers aan die suidpunt van Afrika geplaas is met die doel om inheemse volke tot bekering te lei. Tereg skryf De Gruchy (1991:27): “The blending of Afrikaner ‘sacred history’ and neo-Calvinism with its ‘sovereignty of spheres’ thus provided a powerful ideological base for Afrikaner nationalism and apartheid.”

Op uiters subtiele, maar effektiewe wyse, ondermyn Jonker hierdie idee in sy bespreking van Calvyn se verkiesingsleer:

Op voetspoor van Augustinus, handhaaf Calvyn die totale korrupsie van alle mense. Hy staan hierin teenoor die semi-Pelagianer wat reken dat mense inderdaad met God meewerk aan hul heil, en hy verwerp die Arminiaanse posisie dat ons heil gebaseer is op God se keuse om ons vooruitgesiene geloof as grond van ons verkiesing te neem (Jonker 1988:28, 32). Calvyn hou hierteenoor vas aan die Reformatoriese *sola gratia* en plaas volgens Jonker die leer van die verkiesing heel tereg nie in die Godsleer nie, maar in die soteriologie.

Hierdie soteriologie word dan Trinitaries ontwikkel: Ons word gered op grond van God se genade soos aan ons betoon in Jesus Christus en gerealiseer deur die werk van die Heilige Gees (Jonker 1988: 50ff).¹⁴ Verkiesing rus daarom op niks in mense nie, maar alleen in “die

14 Jonker merk krities op dat Calvyn weens skolastieke elemente in sy verkiesingsleer soms die Christologiese fokus verloor.

onveranderlike en vasstaande keuse van God” (Jonker 1988:35). Gevolglik kan geen mens – en ook nie ’n spesifieke groep mense – daarop aanspraak maak dat hulle deur God verkies is op grond van enige deug of kenmerk (ras of geografie) in hulleself nie. Jonker waarsku spesifiek teen ’n onkritiese oordrag van die God se verbond met Israel op enige historiese groep mense vandag. Só ’n argument eis verkeerdlik God se heilsverkiesing op vir ’n verbond wat buite die grense van die kerk, die nuwe Israel, om loop (Jonker 1988:215).

Ons sien dus dat Jonker onder andere ook op Calvyn rus om die volkskerk in sy drie gedaantes aan die kaak te stel: as massakerk, as etniese volkskerk, en as uitverkore Godsvolk. In die plek hiervan pleit hy vir ’n heilige kerk wat die tug ernstig neem, vir ’n deurbreking van die etniese (rassistiese) band tussen kerk en volk, en die vashou aan genade as grond van die verkiesing van mense wat almal saam in Christus die nuwe Israel vorm.

5. KONKLUSIE

Willie Jonker het dwarsdeur sy lewe geglo dat sy taak daarin lê om publieke sake kerklik aan te spreek en sosiaal-etiese kwessies teologies te analiseer. Dis duidelik dat hy swaar op Calvyn gesteun het om ’n suiwerder teologiese paradigma in die NGK te help vestig. Sonder Jonker se resepsie van Johannes Calvyn sou vele van die diepliggende insigte wat ons vandag byna as vanselfsprekend aanvaar gewoon nie hul ingang in ons teologiese raamwerk gevind het nie. Die agenda om Jonker (en Calvyn) se insigte in Suid-Afrika vandag in die praktyk om te sit, bly natuurlik oop. As ek ’n lysie sou maak van die dringendste sake, sou die volgende daarop verskyn:

- Die sigbare eenheid van die NGK familie, ’n onafgehandelde taak
- Weerstand teen Doperse en evangelikaliese teologie, liturgie en kerkvorming
- Teologie as publieke, eietydse Skrifteologie wat spesifiek op die globale ekonomie en die ekologie fokus
- ’n Kritiese blik op die institute – insluitend die demokrasie wat steeds minder is as Christokrasie
- Teologie as pastorale begeleiding tot geestelike vernuwing – ’n diep insig uit Calvyn dat ware selfkennis net gebore word uit kennis van God.

Ek sluit met die woorde van prof Jonker tydens die Wes-Kaapse sinode van 1983. Die eggo van Calvyn kan duidelik hierin gehoor word:

“Wat ons nodig het, is ’n staanplek waavandaan ons onself en ons situasie kan beoordeel, sodat ons wat goed en wat kwaad daarin is, van mekaar kan onderskei. Daardie staanplek kan geen ander staanplek wees nie, as voor die aangesig van God.”

“Voor die aangesig van God, *coram Deo*. Wat ons nodig het, is inkeer tot God, verootmoediging voor God” (Jonker 1983:372).

Mag ons jaarlikse herdenking van Willie Jonker en sy werk ons aanspoor om “na vore te onthou”, en te doen wat God van ons in die evangelie en ons tradisie vra.

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TREFWOORDE

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 Gereformeerde Teologie
 Piëtisme
 Pluriformiteit

KEY WORDS

Willie Jonker
 John Calvin
 Reformed Theology
 Pietism
 Pluriformity

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Kontoere in die ontwikkeling van 'n missionêre ekklesiologie in die Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk – 'n omvangryker vierde golf

ABSTRACT

Contours in the development of a missional ecclesiology in the Dutch Reformed Church – a more comprehensive fourth wave.

This article is a response to the description of Dutch Reformed mission since 1990 as mission “to the ends of the earth” in Willem Saayman’s book *Being Missionary – Being Human. An overview of Dutch Reformed Mission*. Saayman distinguish four eras or waves of extraordinary mission endeavour. It is argued that the 4th wave identified by Saayman as an unfolding wave with particular emphasis on mission work outside local communities and South African borders, must be understood in a more comprehensive way. There is clear indication of an emerging missional ecclesiology in the policy decisions of the Dutch Reformed Church. A study of these policy decisions leads to the conclusion that a renewed commitment to Africa and to the healing of South Africa as well as a new missional paradigm are paving the way for a focus on local communities. The mission spiral of mission “far away” has made a turn “at home”.

INLEIDING

Willem Saayman het in sy belangrike sendinggeskiedenis van die Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk (NGK), *Being Missionary – Being Human. An overview of Dutch Reformed Mission*, die oorsig oor die NG Kerk ingedeel in vier golwe. Met verwysing na die sosiale analise van Max Weber het hy vier bewegings in die geskiedenis van die NG Kerk aangedui wat elk gekenmerk is deur 'n opwelling en 'n tydperk van buitengewone sendingbedrywighede. 'n Golf is 'n omvangryke beweging wat nou verwant is aan belangrike en bepalende gebeure in die Suid-Afrikaanse en wêreldgeskiedenis. So 'n golf dui op 'n verandering in rigting wat die lewens van die meerderheid kerkklimate en predikante aanraak. Dit het ook te doen met die identifisering van nuwe sendinggeleenthede (Saayman 2007:9-13). Hierdie studie sluit aan by Saayman se vierde golf en beskryf die kontoere in die ontwikkeling van 'n missionêre ekklesiologie in die tydperk wat volgens hom in 1990 'n aanvang geneem het. Die sosiale konteks van die vierde golf is die demokratiese Suid-Afrika wat 'n aanvang geneem het met mnr. FW de Klerk se dramatiese toespraak op 2 Februarie 1990. Hofmeyr en Kruger (2009:387) het aangedui dat sulke sosio-kulturele veranderings belangrike implikasies vir die identiteit van die NG Kerk het. Die demokratiseringsproses in Suid-Afrika en globalisering dien juis as sosio-kulturele agtergrond vir die nuwe rigting wat sending in die NG Kerk sedertdien ingeslaan het.

Die gesprek word opgeneem waar Saayman dit afsluit met sy opmerking dat die vierde golf fokus op die “eindes van die aarde”. Daar word aangevoer dat hy dit voortydig beskryf het as sending na “die eindes van die aarde.” Dit is duidelik dat daar wel van 'n vierde golf gepraat kan word, maar dit moet eerder tipeer word as die herontdekking van die missionêre aard van

die plaaslike gemeente. Die beskrywing van die golf moet omvattender moet wees as bloot “na die eindes van die aarde”. Dit is eerder ingebed in ’n missionale renaissance wat gesteun word deur ’n nuwe verstaan van die aard en wese van die kerk en uitloop op ’n globale en lokale fokus. Hierdie globale en lokale fokus word soms in Engels as “glocal” beskryf en dui aan dat dit ’n globale dimensie na die “eindes van die aarde” het, maar dat die vierde golf lokaal ruimer verstaan moet word sodat dit ook die NG Kerk se gerigtheid op Suid-Afrika en plaaslike gemeenskappe insluit.

’N OMVANGRYKER VIERDE GOLF

Hoewel Saayman (2007:106,117) verwys na twee betekenisvolle besluite van die Algemene Sinode, naamlik die definisie van sending in die Sendingreglement van 1998 en die Roepingsverklaring van 2002, laat sy beskrywing nie reg geskied aan die ontwikkelings wat sedertdien op hierdie besluite gevolg het nie. Daarom word die kontoere van die NG Kerk se ontluikende missionêre ekklesiologie verder gevolg en geïnterpreteer in die lig van resente ontwikkeling in die NG Kerk rondom missionêre ekklesiologie. Die verdere ontwikkelings was so duidelik dat daar selfs stemme was wat in die wandelgange tydens die vergadering van SAWS (Suid-Afrikaanse Werkgemeenskap vir Sendingwetenskap) in 2010 gepraat het van ’n nuwe golf van sending in Suid-Afrika. Dit is nie ’n nuwe vyfde golf nie, maar eerder ’n geval dat die aard, rigting en omvang van die vierde golf nou eers duidelik word. Daarom word sinodebesluite en beleidstandpunte van die Algemene Sinode en enkele streeksinodes van die NG Kerk ondersoek en die kontoere van ’n ontluikende missionêre ekklesiologie aangebied as ’n korrektief op, maar ook uitbreiding van die vierde golf.

Dié verruiming van die vierde golf is duideliker sigbaar in die verskuiwing in die manier waarop daar oor die kerk en gemeentes gedink word. Dit raak veral die verstaan van die kerk se deelname aan God se werk in die wêreld. Begrippe soos “gestuurde gemeentes” en “missionêre ekklesiologie” word oral gehoor. In die NG Kerk is daar gemeentes wat hulleself beskryf as missionêre gemeentes. Daar is werksinkels en vennootskappe en seminare oor gemeentes en hoe hulle betrokke kan raak by hulle gemeenskappe. Meer as 170 gemeentes was teen 2010 lid van die Suid-Afrikaanse Vennootskap van Gestuurde Gemeentes (SAVGG) (Niemandt 2010) Party gemeentes het hulle name verander en staan bekend as “gemeenskapskerke”. Die saak het ook ter sprake gekom by kerkvergaderings. ’n Enkele voorbeeld: Die NG Kerk Sinode Hoëveld verander sy visie in 2005 om te lui: “Die Sinode van Suid-Transvaal (a) begelei gemeentes om God te eer, mekaar en die wêreld met Christus se liefde te dien; en (b) begelei gemeentes sodat die NG Kerk in Suid-Transvaal groei na ’n gestuurde kerk vir die samelewing”. (Sinode van Suid-Transvaal van die Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk 2005). Die Algemene Sinode het sedert die sinode in 2002 in sy “Roepingsverklaring” sterk gefokus op die NG Kerk se roeping in die wêreld – veral in Suid-Afrika én in Afrika met hul geweldige uitdagings:

“Tydens die vergadering van die Algemene Sinode 2002 het ons as afgevaardigdes al hoe meer oortuig geraak van die liefde van Christus en daarom ook van die NG Kerk se roeping en plek in Suider-Afrika. Daarom:

(a) verbind ons ons opnuut aan die Here wat ons Kerk 350 jaar gelede hier geplaas het. Ons dank Hom vir die voorreg om ook nou nog deel van sy kerk te kan wees. Ons is daarvan oortuig dat net die evangelie van Christus ons op ’n pad van heil kan plaas. Daarom wil ons as kerk die Woord van die Here tydlig en ontydig verkondig en orals getuienis aflê van die hoop wat in ons leef.

(b) verbind ons ons opnuut tot ons kontinent, in die besonder Suider-Afrika. Die tragiese verhale van die allerverskriklike vorme van geweld, die geweldige omvang van armoede en

gevolglike hongersnood, die konsekwensies van die vigs-pandemie, die gebrek aan respek vir mense, diere en die omgewing en ook ons aandeel daaraan, het ons ontstel. Die Sinode betuig sy meegevoel aan die talle slagoffers. Ons wil ook 'n verskil maak. Daarom verbind ons ons om mee te werk aan oplossings vir ons samelewing. Ons stel ons as kerk beskikbaar om op elke vlak waar ons kan help, betrokke te raak. Ons verseker die owerheid van ons voorbidding en ons verbintenis tot diens aan die gemeenskap.

(c) verbind ons ons tot groter eenheid met ander kerke. Ons wil graag herenig met ons Kerk-familie, soos ons glo God dit wil hê. Ons wil ook graag ons ekumeniese bande bevestig en uitbrei en met alle ander Christene hande vat om ons lande op te bou en pynlike omstandighede te verlig.

(d) roep ons ons gemeentes op om by die genesing van ons lande betrokke te raak. Ons dank die Here vir die toegewydheid van lidmate en die talle positiewe aksies waarvan ons orals hoor. Kom ons wys die wêreld opnuut dat ons as sout van die aarde en lig vir die wêreld God se koninkryk wil laat kom.

Ons het 'n Here. Ons is hier. Ons is Sy kerk.

Aan God al die eer." (Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk 2002 = NGK 2002:604)

Die gerigtheid op Suid-Afrikaanse gemeenskappe is deur die Algemene Sinode van 2007 herbevestig en lidmate en gemeentes is aangespoor om met nuwe moed en oortuiging aan te meld en om in die lig van God se werk in die wêreld (*missio Dei*) en die kerk se missionêre taak hul verantwoordelikheid raak te sien en na te kom. Die Roepingsverklaring van 2007 spits die verklaring van 2002 verder toe en lui onder meer:

"Christus, die Hoof van die kerk, stuur ons om ons roeping te gehoorsaam en ons daaraan toe te wy... om met openheid onvoorwaardelik diensbaar te wees in die wêreld. Ons wil graag met alle ander Christene hande vat om ons samelewings op te bou en pynlike omstandighede te verlig. Ons wil mekaar as gemeentes en leiers met liefde aanspoor, begelei en toerus om by die genesing van ons lande betrokke te raak. Ons is beskikbaar en is verbind tot diens aan gemeenskappe. Ons dank die Here vir die toewyding van lidmate en die talle positiewe aksies waarvan ons oral hoor. As gestuurde gelowiges is ons sout van die aarde en lig vir die wêreld. Ons staan in diens van die koms van God se koninkryk" (NGK Die Kerkorde 2007).

EKUMENIESE KONTEKS EN INTERNASIONALE DISKOERS

Saayman gee in sy beskrywing van elkeen van die vier golwe aandag aan die sosiale en politieke konteks en skets telkens ook die globale perspektief wat die omstandighede in Suid-Afrika en die NG Kerk beïnvloed. Die impak van die demokratiseringsproses en globalisering het sendingwerk na die eindes van die aarde moontlik gemaak (Saayman 2007:111-112), maar hy verreen die impak van globalisering op die NG Kerk en ander kerke in Suid-Afrika nie ten volle nie.

Die konteks waarteen die vierde golf afspeel behoort verruim te word deur kennis te neem van die feit dat die ontwikkelings in Suid-Afrika ingebed is in 'n globale missionale renaissance (McNeal 2009:1). Die verstaan van sending as die kerk se deelname aan God se werk in die wêreld, en die implikasies hiervan vir plaaslike gemeentes, was onder meer een van die belangrike temas van die sendingkonferensie in Edinburgh in 2010. By Edinburgh 2010 staan die saak teweens in die kern van die gesprek: God is die sturende God en die kerk word uitgenooi om deel te neem aan hierdie sending van God (Balia & Kim 2010:23-26). Die nuwe Wêreldgemeenskap van Gereformeerde Kerke het sy visie ook in missionêre taal uitgespel en sê onder meer dat die lidkerke geroep is om deel te neem aan God se transformasie van die wêreld

(World Communion of Reformed Churches 2010=WCRC 2010). Kim (2009:23-27) gee 'n oorsig van die byeenkomste van die International Missionary Council en die Wêreldraad van Kerke. Sy dui aan dat die ekumeniese verstaan van sending gegroei het tot konsensus oor die feit dat dit 'n sendinggesentreerde kerk is. Die *missio Dei* het die oorkoepelende paradigma van haas alle Christelike kerke geword en die kerk word verstaan as diensbaar aan God se sending in die wêreld (Kim 2009:30). Die diskoers in twee denominasies dien as verdere aanduiding hiervan. In die Anglikaanse kerk is dit vervat in die boek *Mission Shaped Church* (The Archbishops' Council 2004) en Nederland het die Protestantse Kerk in Nederland (PKN) 'n program *Kerk na buite* (PKN 2010). Dit verbaas dus nie dat McNeal (2009:xv) hierdie missionêre gerigtheid as 'n bepalende kenmerk van hoofstroomdenke oor kerkwees sien nie.

Daar moet melding gemaak word van die invloed van die *Gospel and Our Culture Network* (GOCN), waarbinne teoloë soos Keifert, Guder, Van Gelder en Hunsberger die werk van Bosch en Newbigin verder ontwikkel en belangrike leiding verskaf oor die missionêre aard van die kerk (Guder 2000:xi-xiv, Keifert 2007:12). Hierdie nadenke het 'n belangrike rol in die NG Kerk gespeel. So word dit by name gemeld in die verslag van Algemene Kommissie vir Diensgetuïenis aan die Algemene Sinode van 2004 en word erkenning gegee aan die feit dat Suid-Afrika deel van die netwerk is en dat daar besinning gedoen word oor "... die missionêre roeping van die kerk en veral oor plaaslike gemeentes in eie konteks." (NGK Agenda 2004:35)

Dit is duidelik dat daar 'n groeiende konsensus oor die missionêre aard van die kerk is – 'n verskuiwing van 'n kerkgesentreerde sending na 'n sendinggefokusde kerk. Dit het so belangrik geword dat Christelike kerke wat so sendinggefokus is, amper onherkenbaar anders lyk as kerke wat nie daardie fokus het nie.

'N NUWE MISSIONÊRE IDENTITEIT VIR DIE NGK

Die teologiese ontwikkelings wat uitgedruk is in besluite van die ekumeniese byeenkomste, teologiese insigte in die wyse waarop die *missio Dei* ekklesiologie bepaal en die groeiende belangstelling in missionêre identiteit, het 'n belangrike rol gespeel in die denke oor die identiteit van die NGK. Die kontoere van 'n ontluikende missionêre ekklesiologie kan juis gevolg word deur die NG Kerk se verstaan van sy identiteit aan die orde te stel.

Die NG Kerk se identiteit word deur sy Gereformeerde aard bepaal. Tydens die Sinode van 2007 het die kerk hierdie aard en karakter as volg uitgedruk:

"In die Gereformeerde teologie is daar oor die jare telkens teruggegryp na die boustene van die Reformasie en is die kernsake telkens nuut interpreteer. Een van die bondigste maniere om Gereformeerde uit te druk, is via die vier 'solas'."

Die bekende vier "solas" word dan genoem, naamlik die fokus op die Skrif alleen, die sentrale rol van Christus in die bemiddelingsproses, die fokus op genade alleen en geloof alleen.

"Oor elkeen van hierdie 'solas' is daar met reg boeke vol geskryf. Hierdie solas kom uiteindelik vir gereformeerdes tuis onder die dak van *solus deo gloria* (aan God alleen die eer)... Dit gee uitdrukking aan die leuse van die Reformasie dat ons altyd weer volgens die Skrifte moet reformeer (*semper reformanda*)" (NGK Agenda 2007:13).

Dit is opvallend dat die NG Kerk moeite doen om die oproep van die Reformasie tot voortdurende reformasie met nadruk te stel. Dit verduidelik ook hoekom die kerk soveel waarde heg aan die verstaan van sy konteks en gedurigdeur besig is om sy bedieninge nuut te oorweeg. Die kerk word voortdurend uitgedaag – hoe kom die Evangelie tuis in nuwe omstandighede? Hoe lyk die kerk se sending in die hedendaagse wêreld?

INGEBED IN DIE TRINITEIT

Wanneer daar oor die wese van die kerk en die kerk se sending gepraat word, begin die gesprek altyd by God self. Sedert die byeenkoms van die International Missionary Council in Willingen in Duitsland in 1952 is die denke oor sending, onder die invloed van Hartenstein en Barth, bepaal deur die kerk se lewe in die Triniteit (Kim 2009:27-28). Newbigin (1995:29) het sending in sy bekende *The Open Secret – An introduction to the theology of Mission*, beskryf as die verkondiging van die koninkryk van die Vader, om lewe in die liefde van die Seun met almal te deel en om getuies van die Gees te wees. Dit moet ook verstaan word teen die agtergrond van die herontdekking van die Triniteitsteologie (Venter 2009:544).

Die kontoere van die NG Kerk se ontluikende missionêre ekklesiologie word ook deur die kerk se lewe in die Triniteit bepaal. Die NG Kerk sien die kern van Gereformeerde identiteit as 'n gerigtheid op God. Die Latynse frase *coram Deo* beskryf in 'n neutedop waaroor dit vir gereformeerdes gaan. Die lewe van 'n Christen is 'n lewe voor God. 'n Lewe gerig op God (NGK Agenda 2007:13). Die Algemene Sinode het hierdie sterk verbintenis van die kerk aan die drie-enige God reeds in 2002 verwoord:

“Deur Christus is die kerk verbind aan die drie-enige God van die Bybel – Vader, Seun en Gees. Ons glo dat die kerk aan die drie-enige God alleen behoort en in verbondenheid met Hom bestaan. Die kerk is die volk van God, die liggaam van Christus en die tempel van die Gees. Alles wat ons is en doen – ons identiteit, ons missie en ons bediening – word deur hierdie verhouding bepaal. Dat alles wat die kerk is en doen gedefinieer (behoort te) word deur sy verhouding met die lewende God, is die eerste en mees basiese beginsel van kerkwees. En die God van wie ons hier praat is die drie-enige God wat ons in die Ou en Nuwe Testament leer ken as Vader, Seun en Gees” (NGK Agenda 2002).

Dit word verder gevoer in die Sinode van 2004 as daar in 'n verslag oor gestuurde gemeentes gepraat word van die “fundering” van die roeping van die gemeente in die Triniteit. Die onderlinge verhouding van die persone in die drie-eenheid en die eenheid in die Triniteit het “heerlike implikasies vir die verstaan van die kerk se roeping” (NGK Agenda 2004:35). Sending is geheel en al die werk van die drie-enige God, Skepper, Verlosser en Saligmaker, ter wille van die wêreld, waaraan die kerk bevoorreg is om deel te neem. Die Reglement vir die Sending/Getuienis verduidelik dit as volg: “Sending is die heilshandeling van die drie-enige God, Vader, Seun en Heilige Gees met die wêreld, waardeur Hy deur uit die ganse menslike geslag vir Hom 'n gemeente deur sy Woord en Gees vergader” (NGK Die Kerkorde 2007:104).

MISSIO DEI

Die wese van die kerk en die sending van die kerk is ingebed in die verstaan van die kerk se lewe in die Triniteit. Die drie-enige God op wie die bestaan van die kerk gerig is, is 'n sturende God. Dit het tot 'n wydlopende konsensus oor en verstaan van die missio Dei gelei. Sending is God se sending en behoort tot die wese van Christenskap en kerkwees (Kim 2009:26). God is 'n sturende (missionêre) God. Die kerk en die kerk se sending word vanuit die sturende aard van God self verstaan. Die lewe van God is 'n proses van gestuurdheid: die Vader stuur die Seun, die Seun stuur die Heilige Gees. God het die wêreld so lief dat Hy sy enigste Seun stuur om nuwe lewe te bring. Vader, Seun en Heilige Gees stuur die kerk in die wêreld in (Bosch 1991:390). Bosch stel dit duidelik: dit is nie net 'n geval dat God sending doen nie, Hy is sending. Dit is God wat die eerste inisiatief geneem het: Die Vader het in liefde na die mensdom uitgereik en sy Seun gestuur. Die Seun het as eerste Gestuurde na die aarde gekom om God se heilsplan in werking te stel. Met die

voltooiing van Jesus se werk, het die Vader en die Seun die Heilige Gees na die wêreld gestuur om God se heilswerk te bevestig. Die sturende God stuur sy kerk nou ook uit om deel te neem aan God se sending. Dit is deel van die kerk se wesensaard, die kerk se DNA, om as gestuurdes te leef (Hirsch 2006:18).

Die NG Kerk beskryf haar Gereformeerde identiteit in hierdie taal: “Die roeping van die kerk kan as Gestuurdes van God omskryf word. Die kerk behoort in wese altyd op die wêreld gerig te wees en op pad na die wêreld te wees” (NGK Agenda 2007:14).

Sending behoort dus nie aan die gemeente nie, dit is nie iets kosbaar wat gehoorsame mense doen nie, dit is ten diepste ’n eienskap van God self. God is ’n skeppende God wat alles gemaak het. God werk ook steeds in sy skepping deur die Heilige Gees. Die Gees herstel die stukkende verhoudings sodat God se nuwe bedeling, sy Ryk, kan kom. Hierdie nuwe bedeling is een waar die versoeningswerk van Jesus Christus dit moontlik maak dat die verhouding van elke stukkie van die lewe met God herstel kan word. Anders gestel – God se werk in sy skepping behels dat hy besig is om sy Ryk te laat aanbreek in elke enkele aspek van die skepping. Sending is dus God se beweging na die wêreld en die kerk is ’n instrument in daardie sending. Die saak word as volg verduidelik in ’n verslag aan die Algemene Sinode van 2004: “Belangrik is die herontdekking van en herbesinning oor die begrip *Missio Dei*. Die kerk se roeping is nie in die eerste plek om te stuur nie, maar om opgeneem te word in en deelhebber te wees van God se sending na die wêreld. Dit is God wat stuur. Die kerk se wesenlike roeping is dus om self gestuurde te wees” (NGK Agenda 2004:35). Die begrip dat die kerk nie ’n doel op sigself is nie, maar instrument in God se sending, is kenmerkend van die ontluikende missionêre ekklesiologie in die NGK.

GOD SE SENDING EN DIE KERK SE SENDING

Die sending van God mond uit in die sending van die kerk. Die *missio Dei* bepaal die *missio ecclesiae*. Die *missio Dei* is die diepste grond vir die *missio ecclesia* (Heyns 1978:374, Bosch 1991:370). Die kerk is sending en neem deel aan God se sending want dit kan eenvoudig nie anders nie. Dit is presies hoekom die kerk bestaan – die kerk is geskep en gebore vir dié doel (Van Gelder 2007:93). Die kerk is die vrug van God se sending en bestaan om deel te neem en diensbaar te wees aan die voortgang van daardie sending.

Die getuienistaak van die kerk is ’n omvattende taak wat op die nood van die wêreld in al sy dimensies gerig moet wees. Die liefde van die Here moet in woord en daad verkondig word, én in die lewe van die kerk gedemonstreer word. Die kerk word geroep, bymekaargemaak en gestuur om die boodskap van liefde verder te dra. Wanneer daar dan van ’n gestuurde kerk gepraat word, verduidelik dit iets van die wese van die kerk. Dit is om deel te neem aan God se sending. Keifert (2007:30) som dit op: Die kerk is ’n geloofsgemeenskap wat deur God geroep, versamel, gefokus en gestuur word na die wêreld.

Hierdie verstaan word ook raakgesien in die Roepingsverklaring van die NG Kerk (2007) wanneer die kerk sê: “Ons besef opnuut God roep die NG Kerk deur sy Woord en Gees om aan Hom te behoort. Christus, die Hoof van die kerk, stuur ons om ons roeping te gehoorsaam en ons daaraan toe te wy om met ’n leerbare gees die wil van God deur sy Woord te leer ken en uit te leef in die uitdagende en komplekse wêreld waarin ons lewe.” (NGK Die Kerkorde 2007)

Die ontluikende kontoere van die NG Kerk se missionêre ekklesiologie dui aan dat daar in die kerk instemming is dat die sending van God uitmond in die sending van die kerk (NGK Agenda 2007:84, 85). Die feit dat die kerk verstaan word as beskermer maar ook as draer van die apostoliese waarheid, is al reeds by die Sinode in 2004 beskryf as die herontdekking van die “apostoliese karakter” van die kerk. Dit is nou duidelik hoekom die kerk se sendingtaak omvattend omskryf word. Die NG Kerk se Reglement vir die Sending/Getuienis (NGK Die Kerkorde 2007:104)

gee 'n goeie opsomming van hoe dit verstaan word:

“Deur die gemeente laat God sy Woord aan die gevalle wêreld verkondig; bring Hy die gemeenskap van die heiliges uit alle nasies tot stand; laat Hy diens aan die wêreld in nood lewer; laat Hy sy opdrag om die skepping te bewaar en te bewerk sigbaar tot uitdrukking kom en word sy geregtigheid aan die samelewing en die wêreld verkondig. So laat Hy sy koninkryk kom tot by die voleinding van die wêreld.”

Dit kan ook beter verstaan word uit die gesamentlike verduideliking van die NGK, die Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk in Afrika, die Reformed Church in Africa en die Verenigende Gereformeerde Kerk in Suider-Afrika (Gesamentlike verklaring 2006):

“ Dit is 'n wesenskenmerk van die kerk as die liggaam van Christus ons Here en Verlosser, om deel te wees van God se sending in die wêreld (missio ecclesiae). Die gemeente, as plaaslike gestalte van die kerk en primêre instrument van God se sending, maar ook die kerk as geheel en elke lidmaat daarvan, is deur God gestuur.”

Daar word in die gesamentlike verduideliking daarop gewys op die belang van 'n lewe in die teenwoordigheid van God asook die opdrag om die Evangelie te bedien deur woorde en dae in 'n verhouding van liefde en eenheid. Die kerk moet streef na geregtigheid, versoening en heling en getuig van die hoop waarin ons lewe.

GESTUURDE GEMEENTES

Sending is nie iets wat die kerk doen nie, maar wat die kerk is. Die kerk word deur God in die wêreld gestuur om deel te neem aan God se sending. Wanneer die kerk dit nie doen nie, hou die kerk eintlik op bestaan (Kirk 1999:30). Sending is vir 'n Christelike geloofsgemeenskap juis om te doen wat hulle gestuur is om te doen – en dit begin reg daar waar die gemeente haarself bevind. Die kerk is 'n lewende organisme wat deur sy gestuurdheid gevorm en bepaal word. In 'n verslag aan die Algemene Sinode van 2004 word gesê dat dit nie in die eerste plek gaan om dit wat die gemeente doen nie, maar eerder om dit wat die gemeente is, naamlik “...om opgeneem te word in en deelhebber te wees van God se sending na die wêreld.” (NGK Agenda 2004, Agenda:35) Dieselfde oortuiging klink op in die kerk se nadenke oor Gereformeerde Identiteit. Die kerk word beskryf as God se geskenk aan die wêreld. Die kerk is God se gestuurdtes wat in wese op die wêreld gerig is en op pad na die wêreld moet wees (NGK Agenda 2007:14). Die Sinode van Suid-Transvaal besluit in 2005 op die volgende strategiese fokus: “Om gemeentes te begelei om 'n gestuurde kerk vir die samelewing te word deur (a) uit te reik na die gemeenskappe en deur (b) te groei na 'n bediening wat vir diversiteit voorsiening maak.” (Hofmeyr en Kruger 2009:390-391)

Die Apostolaatsteologie het die sending van die kerk sterk gefokus op die feit dat die kerk na die wêreld gestuur is. Net so min as wat daar aan die kerk gedink kan word sonder om van sending te praat, net so min kan aan die kerk gedink word sonder om van die kerk se verhouding met die wêreld te praat. Die kerk se bestaan, organisasie en ampte behoort hierdie gerigtheid op diens aan die gemeenskap te weerspieël (Kim 2009:31).

SENDING EN KONINKRYK

Nadenke oor die kerk se gestuurdheid is ten nouste verweef met nadenke oor God se Ryk. Kirk (1999:35) beskryf die verhouding tussen koninkryk, kerk en die wêreld in die deelname aan God se sending as 'n komplekse saak. Die kerk getuig oor en is 'n voorsmaak van God se koninkryk, maar is nie identies met die koninkryk nie. Die kerk kan eerder beskryf word as 'n lewende

interpretasie van die koninkryk. Uiteindelik gaan dit om die koninkryk of die heerskappy van God in die wêreld – dit is die einddoel van die kerk se roeping tot getuienis. Die kerk is God se mense wat 'n voorsmaak bied van God se genesende heerskappy. Die nuwe bedeling wat Jesus Christus bring, die versoenende heerskappy van God in Christus, gee deur die werk van die Gees geboorte aan die missionêre kerk. Die aard, bedieninge en organisasie word dus beslissend bepaal deur die werklikheid, krag en bedoeling van God se Ryk, wat beteken dat die wese van die kerk missionêr van aard is.

Die inweef van die koninkryk van God in die verstaan van die kerk se missionêre identiteit het die afgelope tien jaar al hoe duideliker in die NG Kerk geword. Hoewel die saak van die koninkryk so lank terug as in 1974 aan die orde gekom het (NGK 1974:39-53), is die koninkryk en die gestuurde aard van die kerk sedert 1990 baie nouer verbind. Die verslag oor gestuurde gemeentes stel dat die nadenke oor missionêre identiteit ook die saak van die verhouding tussen kerk en koninkryk onder die soeklig bring. In die verslag word gestel dat daar gewaak moet word teen 'n verkerkliking van die wêreld, of 'n kultuuroptimistiese ideaal dat die kerk die roeping het om self die koninkryk te bou of die wêreld te transformeer. Dit is en bly God wat self sy koninkryk bou, daarin gebruik Hy die kerk, maar ook ander instansies en individue as diensknegte en instrumente (NGK Agenda 2004:36).

Die saak van die koninkryk word ook opgeneem in die verklaring oor Gereformeerde Identiteit:

“Gereformeerdes het altyd 'n oog gehad daarvoor dat die koninkryk groter is as die kerk. God is nie 'n afdelingshoof nie. Hy regeer oor die kosmos. Selfs al is die realiteit van die gebroke wêreld deurgaans teenwoordig, is daar ook orals tekens van die voorsienigheid en sorg van God sigbaar. Gelowiges het die roeping om orals tekens van die koninkryk op te rig en vanuit die heerskappy van God te leef” (NGK Agenda 2007:16).

Die koppeling van die missionêre verstaan van die kerk en diensbaarheid in God se ryk is veral sigbaar in die NG Kerk se Roepingsverklaring van 2007: “As gestuurde gelowiges is ons sout van die aarde en lig vir die wêreld. Ons staan in diens van die koms van God se koninkryk.” (NGK 2007)

God se sending word in die wêreld en in die kerk uitgevoer. Die kerk kan nie anders om doelbewus te getuig oor die betekenis en impak van God se koninkryk nie, al is die kerk en die koninkryk nie presies dieselfde nie. Die ondersoek na ontluikende missionêre ekklesiologie van die NG Kerk dui aan dat dié saak die afgelope twintig jaar die aandag van verskeie sittings van die Algemene Sinode van die kerk geniet het.

KONTEKS

Die feit dat die kerk in wese altyd op die wêreld gerig is en op pad na die wêreld is, onderstreep hoe belangrik dit is om die konteks te verstaan. Keifert (2007:53) beskryf gestuurde gemeentes as gemeentes op 'n reis midde-in die werklikheid van die drie-enige God. Op hierdie reis is dit belangrik om ook in die “wêreld te wandel” – om vas te stel wat in die konteks aan die gebeur is. Dit herinner sterk aan Brouwer (2009:407) se beskrywing van 'n gemeente se ekologie waar hy verduidelik hoe belangrik dit is om sensitief te wees vir die feit dat gemeentes ingebed is en leef in interaksie met die gemeenskap.

Die herkenning van 'n gemeente se ekologie verg onderskeidingsvermoë – 'n liefde wat lei tot begrip en fyn aanvoeling om te onderskei waarop dit werklik aankom. Dit is dus beter om die klem eerder op luister en onderskeiding te laat val as op voorskriftelike bedieningsmodelle. Wanneer die kerk sy aard as gestuurde gemeenskap, sy geskiedenis en sy konteks verstaan, groei die kerk

se verstaan van sy roeping. Dit verg begrip vir die prosesse van verandering in die transformering na gestuurde gemeente-wees (NGK Agenda 2004:36). Hierdie onderskeidingsvermoë het met luister te doen – om te luister na die Woord en om te luister na die wêreld (konteks).

Die Seisoen van Luister, wat in Mei 2005 geloods is, moedig gemeentes en sinodes in die NG Kerk aan "...om met nuwe toewyding na God, medegelowiges en die kontekste waarin ons ons bevind, te luister." (NGK Agenda 2007:3) Dit het baie belangrike implikasies vir die verstaan van die ontluikende missionêre ekklesiologie in die NGK. Die duidelike fokus om ruimtes te skep waar lidmate na die Woord van God, mekaar en die wêreld luister sodat daar doelgerig diensbaar geleef kan word in 'n veranderende wêreld, het die vierde golf waarna Saayman verwys, beslis in 'n ander rigting laat ontplooi as "na die eindes van die aarde". In 'n sekere sin het die Seisoen van Luister die diskoers oor sending na Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria en die eindes van die aarde presies geplaas binne die dinamika van die nimmereindigende spiraal waarna Saayman (2007:123) verwys. Die kerk van Christus is gestuur om die Evangelie te bring en uit te leef in Jerusalem en die eindes van die aarde. Saayman het die hoop uitgespreek dat die NG Kerk se Roepingsverklaring van 2002 sal lei tot 'n dringende hersiening van prioriteite en die gerigtheid in die NGK. Die Seisoen van Luister is die duidelikste aanduiding van 'n omvangryker vierde golf. 'n Enkele geval verduidelik genoegsaam: In 2009 is 'n proses binne die Seisoen van Luister geloods wat bekendstaan as "Groei oor Grense". Die doel is om gemeentes te begelei om in hulle plaaslike konteks oor grense te groei. Die proses poog om lidmate te help om sonder vooroordele en onbevang na mense te luister. Dit wil hulle help om deur grense te breek en na vreemde stemme te luister en veral vas te stel wat die Bybel sê oor bewegings oor grense (NGK 2010). Teen April 2010 het die proses baie aandag in die NG Kerk gekry. Die jaarlikse Pinksterreeks is gewy aan die tema "Groei oor grense". 23 067 hulpmiddels oor die proses is in April van die webruimte afgelaai, 'n groei van 539% teenoor Feb. 2010. 18 053 elektroniese hulpmiddels oor Pinkster is afgelaai. Daar is 'n boek oor die proses gepubliseer. Die skrywers (Van Wyk, Marais, Simpson, 2009) van *Die vrou by die put* gebruik die verhaal wat in Johannes 4 opgeteken is as vertrekpunt om te sê: God het ons gemaak met die behoefte om in gemeenskap met mekaar te wees. God het ons geroep om vir ander te leef, maar dit beteken om waarlik by hulle teenwoordig te wees. Die publikasie geniet rekordverkope. Van Wyk (2010:3) dui aan dat die Seisoen van Luister 'n betekenisvolle beweging binne die NG Kerk van dominasie na diens is. Volgens Saayman (2007:124) kan die NG Kerk sy roeping in Afrika net ontdek deur gedeelde ervarings met ander Christelike geloofsgemeenskappe. Die Seisoen van Luister kan dalk daarin slaag om hierdie soort groei oor grense moontlik te maak.

GEMEENTES

Die nadenke oor God se sending, die koninkryk en die wêreld het die fokus veral op gemeentes laat val. In 'n verslag voor die Algemene Sinode van 2004 word gesê dat die klem verskuif het vanaf die institusionele kerk na die plaaslike vergestaltung van die liggaam van Christus en van die sinode na die plaaslike gemeente (NGK Agenda 2004). Die kerk bestaan primêr op plaaslike vlak. Hoewel denominasionele en sinodale strukture belangrik is, is die plaaslike gemeente die eintlike gestalte van die kerk. Die plaaslike gemeente is die belangrikste rolspeler in die getuienistaak, wat deur God as sy agent in die gemeenskap aangestel is (NGK Agenda 2007:84-85).

'n Missionêre gemeente is 'n gemeente wat gevorm is deur die gemeente se deelname aan God se sending, naamlik om verhoudings in 'n gebroke wêreld te herstel na dit wat God se plan vir sy skepping is (Barrett et al 2004:x). Dit bepaal alles wat die gemeente doen – van eredienste tot opleiding, van uitreike tot gemeentelewe – want die kerk se roeping is om te onderskei wat God in die wêreld aan die doen is en daarby aan te sluit.

Die NG Kerk is sedert die sinode van 2002 besig om sy verstaan van gemeentes, wat ook hul missionêre aard insluit, te verwoord (NGK Agenda 2007: 44 – 56). In die omvattende verslag is die volgende van belang om die kontoere van ’n ontluikende missionêre ekklesiologie in te vul:

- Die gemeente word gesien as ’n gemeenskap van gelowiges wat koinonia met mekaar beleef. Dit gaan om nuwe verhoudings wat gekenmerk word deur liefde en onvoorwaardelike lojaliteit aan mekaar as lede van een familie (NGK Agenda 2007:46).
- Gemeentes fokus op die koninkryk van God. Lidmate is Jesus se voltydse dissipels wat gekenmerk word deur “...hul lojaliteit aan Christus en sy plan om die koninkryk van God wêreldwyd te laat seëvier.”(NGK Agenda 2007:46).
- Alle lidmate is geroep om sendelinge te wees, waar hulle hul ook mag bevind (NGK Agenda 2007:46).
- Gelowiges leef in die alledaagse werklikheid. Alle gelowiges is voltydse verteenwoordigers van Christus op elke plek waar hulle hulself bevind. Kerkwees gebeur daarom binne elke lewensfeer. Sodoende word die skeiding tussen heilige ruimtes en sekulêre ruimtes opgehef (NGK Agenda 2007:47).

’N NUWE MISSIONÊRE IDENTITEIT VIR DIE NG KERK – SAMEVATTING

Die oorsig oor veral beleidsbesluite van die kerk dui aan dat daar in die tydperk wat deur Saayman as die era van die vierde golf (sedert 1990) aangedui is, belangrike kontoere van ’n ontluikende missionêre ekklesiologie getrek is. Hierdie kontoere weerspieël baie van die missionêre renaissance wat in ekumeniese geleedere en ook in ander denominasies sigbaar is. Dit sluit onder meer die volgende in:

- ’n Bewustelike missionêre identiteit wat in die NG Kerk se Gereformeerde identiteit veranker is;
- Die verstaan van die kerk as ’n lewe in die Triniteit. Die verstaan van die Triniteit as ’n verhoudingstriniteit het tot gevolg dat die saak van gemeenskap en verhoudings in nadenke oor die kerk en sending beklemtoon word;
- Die herontdekking van die begrip *Missio Dei*. Die kerk se roeping is nie om te stuur nie, maar om opgeneem te word in en deelhebber te wees aan God se sending na die wêreld;
- Die sending van God mond uit in die sending van die kerk, sodat van gestuurde gemeentes gepraat word;
- Die kerk is ’n lewende interpretasie van die koninkryk en staan in diens van die ryk;
- Waardering vir die ekologie of plaaslike konteks van gemeentes en die alledaagse werklikheid waarbinne lidmate hulself bevind, soos veral duidelik geword het in die Seisoen van Luister;
- ’n Duidelike verbondenheid om by die genesing van die lande en diens aan plaaslike gemeenskappe betrokke te wees.
- ’n Verstaan van sending as die inkarnasie van die Evangelie, ’n konkrete boodskap vir konkrete mense in hulle alledaagse lewe – in die woorde van Saayman (2007:5) “being missionary while being human.”

Hierdie kontoere van ’n ontluikende missionêre ekklesiologie dui aan dat die vierde golf omvangryker as Saayman se tipering van “tot die eindes van die aarde” is en dat sending in die NG Kerk ’n baie sterk plaaslike fokus gekry het. Hoewel dit nie binne die bestek van hierdie studie aan die orde gestel is nie, dui die meer as 170 gemeentes wat lid van die SAVGG is, sowel as verhale van diens aan plaaslike gemeenskappe (in Kruisgewys van Augustus 2010 word vyf gevallestudies aangeteken), daarop dat die ontluikende missionêre ekklesiologie gemeentelike

praxis bepaal. Die NG Kerk bevind hom in 'n vierde golf wat die lewens van die meerderheid kerklidmate en predikante aanraak. Die omvangryke golf spoel sterk in die rigting van plaaslike gemeenskappe en die ontdekking dat nuwe grense oorskry kan word. Dit spiraal ook uit na gemeenskappe aan die “eindes van die aarde”.

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KEY WORDS

Dutch Reformed Church
Missional ecclesiology
Mission history
Missional congregations
Missio Dei

TREFWOORDE

Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk
Missionêre ekklesiologie
Sendingeskediedenis
Gestuurde gemeentes
Missio Dei

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Metatheoretical decisions for the grounded theory research of sermons on poverty and to the poor as listeners¹

ABSTRACT

The challenge of working with metatheoretical assumptions in a postmodern situation of a plurality of scientific-theoretical approaches is taken up in this article. The question whether the researcher must, in a practical-theological study, begin with theory analysis first or with praxis analysis first, is discussed. In sermon analysis with a grounded theory, abductive approach, the question is whether we have to begin with a blank mind. In order to answer this question the theory-praxis relationship is discussed. This leads to the argument of the article that wherever we begin the researcher cannot work without a theological perspective and in the case of homiletics, without a homiletical-theoretical framework.

1. INTRODUCTION

In his paper at the meeting of the Society for Practical Theology in South Africa on 21 January 2010 at the University of Pretoria, Richard R. Osmer of Princeton Theological Seminary, has drawn our attention to the importance of metatheoretical assumptions the practical theologian has to make in an approach to research and theory construction (Osmer 2010; see also Osmer 2008). Approaches to practical theology today are highly pluralistic. See for instance in South Africa Cilliers (2009); Müller (2005; 2009); De Wet (2009); Pieterse (2009). I am hesitating to speak of hardened paradigms in our contemporary situation. In one decade the secularization premise has changed into a post-secular situation (cf. Harrington 2007; Joas 2009). There are also signs that the endless plurality of postmodernity in the academic world is starting to change (cf. Van den Brink 2007). Osmer (2008:241) speaks of a “reflective equilibrium” where practical theologians can find common ground in the plurality of approaches on the four interrelated intellectual operations of practical theology, namely the descriptive task, the interpretative task, the normative task and the pragmatic task. Instead of talking of hard barriers of different paradigms, I would like to speak of a matrix of assumptions that a practical theologian has in her/his approach to research in the discipline. When we take this perspective as a vantage point the four metatheoretical issues that Osmer puts on the table for consideration when we decide on our assumptions in research are important (see Osmer 2010:8). These metatheoretical issues are:

The theory-praxis relationship, which is the kernel or *crux* of practical theological reasoning. From a certain philosophical and theological background a specific perspective is chosen on the reality of praxis and the relationship between theory and praxis through which we develop theories for praxis.

Sources of justification, which implies the traditional sources of theological truth – Scripture, tradition, reason and experience. The practical theologian has to decide on the theological sources that will form a basis of justification of interpretation of the reality that

1 This article is part of a project funded by the National Research Foundation.

will be researched. In the light of the theological tradition the current practical-theological theory for a specific pastoral action should be analysed for its concepts.

Models of cross-disciplinary work, which have to do with ways to perform the task of bringing two or more fields into conversation with one another, such as intra-theological disciplines, and for instance the relationship between theology and social sciences in inter-disciplinary discussions.

Theological rationale, which implies a theological theoretical framework, which means that we approach a research project from a specific theological perspective with assumptions that have an impact on the methodological process.

As a result of the wide variety of approaches to research in our field we have a *problem* in our discipline in this postmodern mindset, namely that practical theologians not always spell out their theological-theoretical framework that carries their assumptions when they are doing research. Therefore it becomes difficult to follow their research process because one is left in the dark about their metatheoretical assumptions. In sociology, the idea of abduction as understood by some writers, works with a blank mind without any theoretical assumptions that is of course a sign of extreme postmodern thinking (cf. Reichertz 2004; Bude 2004). F.Gerrit Immink is adamant that we as practical theologians need to put the theoretical framework we work with on the table in our research reports, that will not only help the reader, but also direct the research process and the evaluation of the findings (see for instance the theoretical framework in a research report, Immink & Verweij 2007:141-148).

In this article I will only discuss the theory-praxis relationship as it pertains to my research project of preaching on poverty and preaching to the poor as listeners. My theological perspective and homiletical-theoretical framework will be put on the table. In this research I have to make use of a grounded theory empirical approach in homiletical research. That implies that the researcher starts with a rather blank mind and does open coding leading to theoretical coding of the sermons – in this case on Matthew 25:31-46 – in order to be informed by the ideas in the sermons. The grounded theory approach intends to find concepts emerging from the data, concepts that fit the data in the sermons. From those concepts the researcher can construct a theory about preaching in a context of poverty – in my case sermons of Uniting Reformed and Dutch Reformed preachers. This grounded theory emerges from the data and can then be brought into interaction with current homiletical theories (cf. Charmaz 2006; Immink & Verweij 2007; Immink, Boonstra, Pleizier & Verweij 2009; Pieterse 2010). This way of empirical research works abductively, namely constructing theories for practice moving from an analysis of the praxis to theory. The *question* of this article is whether this approach can work with metatheoretical assumptions in the sense of Osmer's paper. In order to answer this question I will discuss the theory-praxis relationship with the question of what is a legitimate process in order to start the research of a project in the light of Osmer's metatheoretical advice: *from theory first or from praxis first?* In all my research projects so far I have always worked with an approach of theory to praxis (empirical research of the current praxis) to a theory for praxis. That means that I started with a theological perspective, a theoretical framework of the current practical-theological theory packed out in concepts, which guided the questionnaires (quantitative research) or half structured schedules (qualitative research) to come to a revised theory for practice.

2. THE THEORY-PRAXIS RELATIONSHIP IN PRACTICAL-THEOLOGICAL RESEARCH

For many centuries and also in the history of reformed theology practical theology was regarded as the application of theological theory in practice developed in the biblical sciences and

dogmatics (cf. Heyns & Pieterse 1990:85-89; De Wet 2006:64). Since the turn in the approach to practical theology in the sixties of the twentieth century when he insight dawned that the praxis should be researched in an empirical manner, the focus changed from the old idea, namely that the movement in our discipline is from theory to practice as application of theory, to the question of the relationship between theory and praxis in practical theology (cf. De Wet 2006:61; Greinacher 1974).

Greinacher (1974:104-105) gives a description of 'theory' and 'praxis' that still forms the basic idea of these two concepts in our discipline. *Theory*, in practical theological sense, is a theory that represents the coherent structure of normative pronouncements rooted in the gospel of Jesus Christ and its theological tradition, and is related to the current church praxis and the current situation of society. *Praxis*, in practical theological sense, is church praxis, namely the actions of individuals or groups in public church-oriented actions. Firet (1987:260) added to these actions the concept of communicative actions in the service of the gospel. Greinacher (1974:110) describes the relationship between theory and praxis as a bipolar tension and points out that they should be neither totally separate nor identical (cf. Heyns & Pieterse 1990:31). Heitink (1999:152) also sees the relationship between theory and praxis as a critical, bipolar tension. We must understand the concepts of theory and praxis in their philosophical tradition, beginning with the view of Aristotle's through to the current view of Habermas' conception of the relationship between theory and praxis (Heitink 1999:149-153). Heitink works with a hermeneutical-mediating approach that also has an empirical component. The insights from philosophy and our experience in practical theology over some decades have taught us that there is an indissoluble link in the relationship between theory and praxis. A bipolar approach in the relationship between theory and praxis seems to be the best way to go about in our discipline instead of the approach where theological theory is applied to practice. The bipolar relationship is a critical relationship where both theory and praxis can be critical on each other in the interaction between the two in constructing new theories for praxis in a research project on an aspect or field in practical theology. Working with this relationship between theory and praxis helps us to construct practical theological theories for praxis that are true to the biblical message and relevant to the contexts of congregations and society.

In current practical theological studies we find authors who start their research with a description of the current praxis, stating their theological and theoretical assumptions at the beginning, but there are others who sometimes do not state their theoretical assumptions. Some authors start with a theory and in some cases an analysis of the current theory for praxis, for instance preaching, and describe the theory in a conceptual framework before they embark on empirical research guided by an operationalisation of the concepts in common language for the respondents to understand. Then a critical interaction with the current theory and the experiences in praxis as a result of the findings in the empirical research can follow in order to construct a renewed theory for praxis.

2.1 Embarking on research by first describing the praxis before asking about general theological theories and of the specific field of praxis.

In the practical theological approach to social transformation Cocrane, de Gruchy and Petersen (1991) in their model of doing practical theology, view the moment of insertion in a practical theological research program as beginning in the context with a social-ecclesial analysis (Cocrane, de Gruchy & Petersen 1991:17-18). But they put their faith commitments on the table, namely the confessing of Christ (Cocrane, de Gruchy and Petersen 1991:15-16). Although they start with analysing the praxis, they provide a theological rationale for their model.

They describe the total process of a research project as follows:

- Prior commitment (faith)
- A direction: towards the 'kingdom' of God
- The moment of insertion
- Social analysis
- Ecclesial analysis
- Theological reflection
- Retrieval of the tradition
- Spiritual formation/empowerment
- Pastoral planning & praxis (Cocrane, de Gruchy & Petersen 1991:14).

Their model does not radically differ from the models that insert the process by first stating the theological assumptions and conceptualising of theories in order to get a scientific grip on the reality of the praxis of a specific field in the service of the gospel.

Ploeger (1989) has done a doctoral research project on the place of experience in the communicative action theory of Jürgen Habermas where Habermas' view of the theory-praxis relationship is prominent. He sees the theory-praxis relationship as on equal footing and in a critical relationship. Praxis can criticise theory for not being contextually relevant, and theory can criticise praxis for not being theory-laden and therefore following a blind praxis. Habermas' communicative theory on rational discussion works with the idea of a "herrschaftsfreie Diskussion" also in the theory-praxis relationship (Ploeger 1989:205). That opens the possibility for Ploeger to decide on beginning with experience (faith experiences) regarding communicative action in his practical theological design (Ploeger 1989:246-248). He maintains a certain distance from Habermas. Ploeger works with a solid theological framework. He shares the Reformed theological view that faith is something that is given by God through the work of the Holy Spirit. God is to be known only in his Word (cf. Ploeger 1989:43, 152-153).

Julian Müller (Demasure & Müller 2006) works with a narrative approach in seven movements where he firstly listen to the stories of the co-researchers, analyses them and then he also embarks in an interdisciplinary discussion with relevant social science participants. Müller has a solid theoretical base. He builds on the narrative perspectives of Ricoeur, social constructionism and the postfoundationalist approach to practical theological epistemology. Müller thinks in a narrative paradigm that functions with the dominant metaphor of postmodern times, namely a variety of mirrors in which ideas are constantly reflected to each other.

Don Browning has published a thorough, sophisticated and well informed study on the research process in practical theology (Browning 1991). He sees the organization of a fundamental practical theology as four moves, namely descriptive theology, historical theology, systematic theology and strategic practical theology. Working with the hermeneutical approach of H.G. Gadamer, Browning comes into the sphere of practical philosophy (Browning 1991:34-41). The idea is then that practical thinking moves from practice to theory to praxis, not from theory to practice – rather a practice-theory-practice structure (Browning 1991:41). This model is also observable in Rolf Zerfass' model of a movement from praxis to theory to praxis (cf. De Wet 2006:79). Browning understands the process of research in our discipline as beginning with a practical concern, therefore with descriptive theology of the praxis. We approach the praxis with a pre-understanding (Gadamer) in which our own theory-laden views or spectacles determine our observation. Browning (1991:47) gives a description of descriptive theology that will start the research process in practical theology:

Its task is more important than its name. It is to describe the contemporary theory-laden practices that give rise to the practical questions that generate all theological reflection.

To some extent, this first movement is horizon analysis; it attempts to analyze the horizon

of cultural and religious meanings that surround our religious and secular practices. To describe these practices and their surrounding meanings is itself a multidimensional hermeneutic enterprise or dialogue. It would be a great mistake to believe that descriptive theology is simply a sociological task, especially if sociology is modelled after the narrow empirical natural sciences. Descriptive theology, however, would be close to sociology if sociology were conceived hermeneutically.

In descriptive theology the praxis that we describe is also theory-laden. With the results of the descriptive theology we engage with the classic Christian resources, historical theology and systematic theology, in order to come to strategic practical theology that can guide a renewed praxis (cf. Browning 1991:47-57).

Building on Browning's model Osmer (2008) works with four tasks in practical theological research, namely a descriptive-empirical task (what is going on?); an interpretative task (why is it going on?); a normative task (what ought to be going on?); and a pragmatic task (how might we respond?). He then describes the descriptive-empirical task as the beginning phase of interpreting church praxis, and on a continuum, also a research project (Osmer 2008:37). Although he works with a theological-theoretical framework – the threefold office of Jesus Christ as priest, king and prophet (Osmer 2008:28) – the question can be asked what theoretical framework guides the descriptive-empirical work of a specific field such as preaching that involves theoretical thinking beyond priestly listening? Although we should not separate the two poles from each other (theory and praxis) we need theoretical concepts in order to get a grip on praxis. "Scientific understanding is linked to theoretical constructs and systematic reflection: we look at phenomena from our conceptualizations and theoretical constructs, and in so doing we detect what is constant or variable, regular or irregular" (Imminck 2005:2-3).

It seems as if contemporary practical-theological approaches prefer to begin a research project by analysing the current practice. Seeing the bipolar and critical relationship between theory and praxis the possibility to enter the process from analysing current practice is not far-fetched. The few designs that I discussed above work with one or other theoretical perspective or frame before they analyse the current practice. However, Browning and Osmer's approaches are not very clear about a theoretical frame for a specific field that should be empirically analysed.

2.2 Embarking on research by first describing the theological perspective, the theoretical framework and a conceptualised theory of a specific praxis for empirical research

In the extensive quantitative research project by Van der Ven, Dreyer and Pieterse (2004) each theological aspect that is tested for the views held by grade eleven high school respondents in the Pretoria-Johannesburg region, is first theoretically conceptualised and thereafter operationalised in questions in the questionnaire. That was the only way we could get relevant results. This kind of quantitative research has its limitations. "The concepts and theories utilized in this type of research are not suitable if one wants to penetrate to deeper levels of consciousness. At this point assistance is needed from qualitative methods, employed from a hermeneutical angle" (Heitink 1999:232).

In Heitink's approach to practical theology he gives a pneumatological basis to his practical-theological theory of interpretation (Heitink 1999:192-194). He chooses as theological model the one of bipolarity with the view "that divine salvation and human reality, though in tension, can be so related that the one moment cannot fully come into its own without the other. This creates room for elements like encounter and experience. Greinacher (1974) applies this model to the theory-praxis relation in practical theology" (Heitink 1999:195). Heitink's approach has a clear theological-theoretical basis. In his description of empirical research in a practical-theological

study he indicates that the theoretical framework comes before the empirical research:

The study may proceed as follows: After an introductory chapter with the definition of the problem, the statement of the goals, and the statement of the question to which an answer is sought, the first chapter will map out the theoretical framework of the study, in historical, sociological, and theological sections. The second chapter will deal with the empirical research, carried out on this basis, with a justification of the methodology, a description of what has been done, and a statement about the results. Keeping the theoretical framework in mind, the third chapter critically evaluates the results, with a view to pastoral action. A final chapter contains the conclusion of the study (Heitink 1999:238).

Heitink works with a hermeneutical approach and favours qualitative empirical research, although he keeps the methodological spectrum open, as long as the choice for qualitative or quantitative research has been justified.

In my research on the experiences with God by people who have lost their jobs or cannot find a job because of the application of affirmative action in South Africa, I have described the attributes (“hoedanighede”) of God first, then a theory of alienation when people become jobless in a situation they experience as unjust, and then did the interviews with affected people in a qualitative approach guided by our theological understanding of God (Pieterse 2009)

The research done by Erina du Plooy on the witness of hope by terminal AIDS patients with Ben J. de Klerk as supervisor, works with a basic theory build on exegesis from relevant texts in Scripture, a metatheory of relevant medical, communication and psychological disciplines, a qualitative empirical research and praxis theoretical perspectives in order to finally come to guidelines for pastoral care (Du Plooy 2009). This approach is based on God’s revelation in Scripture in relation to the praxis that is being empirically researched. In the hermeneutical interaction of normative theory and the results of the empirical research, the Word of God in Scripture is the point of departure as God’s revelation. The light of God’s will is thrown on a renewed praxis theory. These insights can bring enduring change in the praxis of the church (cf. De Wet 2006:54-55).

Grounded theory homiletical research that starts with descriptive interpretation in the sense of the analysis of sermons by means of the grounded theory approach of Barney Glaser, has also been build on a theological-theoretical framework (Immink & Verweij 2007). That framework with its assumptions is clearly described before the empirical part of building a theory from the praxis of preaching can follow (Immink & Verweij 2007:141-144).

The *conclusion* of the discussion of the theory-praxis relationship, in the light of Osmer’s idea of metatheory, should therefore be that theological assumptions and a theoretical framework for the research must first be stated, even when the research begins with an analysis of the praxis as in my grounded theory research project. This is also the *argument* of this article. Therefore I state my theological perspective and homiletical-theoretical framework for my current research project in the following paragraph.

3. THEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE AND HOMILETICAL-THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 Theological perspective

The core of the praxis we study in practical theology is faith in the living relationship and communication between God and human beings, and human beings with each other. The praxis of faith is therefore formed by the interaction between God and humans as well as between humans beings (Immink 2005;1,11-12; Pieterse 1984:7). God takes the initiative in this relationship and the presence of the speaking God and the responding human can be experienced

in the practice of this relationship. The relationship and the communication thereof finds its observable practice as faith as it is lived which also includes, for instance, the presentation of the preacher and the active listening of the congregation in the liturgy (Immink 2005:43-69; Pieterse 2009:253-254). Faith as it is lived in our everyday practice, our pastoral praxis and in the worship service is the field of study for practical theology. Practical theology studies this communication and communion acts as communicative acts in the service of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

The relationship between God and humans is being made possible by the work of the Holy Spirit (De Wet 2009; cf. Heitink 1999:193-194). Only by the work of the Holy Spirit can the reality of God and the reality of humankind be joined in connectedness. Therefore we work with a pneumatological point of departure in this theological-theoretical framework for the study of practical theology. Immink speaks of the uniqueness of the praxis of faith in the face of the existential character of the human act of faith and the *praesentia Dei*, the presence of God in this act (Immink 2005:3). All this is possible because God has created humans as spiritual beings with the ability to communicate: speak, listen and respond in relationships. God is a speaking God who communicates with us in personal relationships through his Word and Spirit. In this approach we have to work with theology, the understanding of God in his revelation in Scripture and his activity in our lives, as well as with anthropology, the understanding of humans and their actions in empirical research of the concrete praxis. The theological premise of pneumatology influences our point of departure in scientific research and is therefore unique in the spectrum of the social sciences (De Wet 2009:241).

This theological perspective has implications for the final phase of a practical-theological study – the construction of a relevant and renewed theory for praxis. The results of normative, theological-theoretical concepts based on Scripture and our theological tradition, and the results of empirical research in a practical-theological research project, must be confronted in interaction in a hermeneutical way in order to develop a renewed theory for the current praxis. When we work with a critical, bipolar tension between theological theory and praxis (described above), the normative theoretical part (theocentric) and the results of the empirical research of the current praxis (anthropological), should be confronted in a hermeneutical interaction with specific theological features. The lens through which we observe reality is a “perception by faith in combining vision of God with vision of what is seen and done in the concrete praxis” (De Wet 2005:505). This is possible if we work with a practical-theological pneumatology that operates in the space of the relationship with God made possible by the covenant in which Jesus Christ fulfils the role of Mediator. In the communicative acts in service of the gospel the ministry of reconciliation in Jesus Christ is a central activity. All these theological assumptions of our Reformed tradition that form our lens of observation and understanding play a role in the hermeneutical interaction process between theory and praxis (cf. De Wet 2005).

3.2 Homiletical-theoretical framework

In my research project of sermon analysis by means of the grounded theory approach homiletical assumptions are also important, because the theoretical perspective of the researcher influences the interpretation in the sermon analysis *even* if you do an empirical analysis in the first phase of the research project. A theological point of departure is important in homiletics (cf. Dingemans 1991:30-50). The sermon is a public address. But in this speech act the preacher’s aim is to speak about God, to address the congregation with the Word of God from Scripture (cf. Cilliers 2004:57). Preacher and listener are closely related in the interaction in a dialogical way (cf. Immink 2005:273-277; Pieterse 2001). In the preaching event are observable linguistic and social actions that can be empirically analysed, but there is also a spiritual dimension, communication and communion with God, the Word of God as an event that touches the hearts and lives of

people in a transformational way. This dimension must be studied theologically.

Preaching as a hermeneutical communicative act finds its task to preach in the Bible. Immediately after the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost Peter started preaching. Since then preachers preach in the Christian church until today in every age and every context. The apostles formulated the substance of preaching quite early on (cf. Acts 2:22-36; 3:13-26; 4:8-22). The purpose of preaching is to bring about an encounter between God and human beings. In such an encounter people can experience God that brings salvation, reconciliation, new life, spiritual growth, fresh hope and inspiration (cf. Pieterse 2004:16; Buttrick 1987:452). All this is possible through the work of the Holy Spirit and the Word of God that we can hear in Scripture (Pieterse 2004:16).

Preaching is an event that brings two contexts together – the context of the biblical text, which is the source of the sermon, and the context of this Sunday's congregation. These contexts fuse in a process of homiletical hermeneutics (cf. Dingemans 1991; Long & Tisdale eds. 2008:61-89; Buttrick 1987:263-280)). Thorough exegesis is a priority for the preacher in the preparation of a sermon (cf. Vos 1996 II; De Klerk & Van Rensburg 2005). The exegesis is directed at the context of the congregation. Topical preaching is preaching in the context of a specific congregation and the wider context of the socio-historical situation. The light of the Word of God shines in contextual preaching on the questions, discussions, pain, joy and future action of the congregation as disciples in the service of the gospel.

4. CONCLUSION

The discussion of the relationship between theory and praxis leads us to accept that it is not a problem to embark on a research project by either beginning with theory or beginning with praxis analysis, provided that the researcher works with solid theological and theoretical assumptions.

No one does theology from a position of theological neutrality. We all approach the task, whether at a crude or sophisticated level, whether poorly or well, from some perspective, from within some commitment or other, and with an agenda – however vague – in mind (Cochrane, de Gruchy & Petersen 1991:15).

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KEY WORDS

Metatheoretical assumptions
Theory-praxis relationship
Approach to research
Theological perspective
Homiletical-theoretical framework

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The Congregational Life Survey in the Dutch Reformed Church: Identifying strong and weak connections¹

ABSTRACT

For the first time in a South African church, a Church Life Survey was done. A pilot study was done in the Dutch Reformed Church (DRC) during August 2006. The aim of this empirical description is to identify the strengths and stronger connections of DRC congregations and help congregations identify their own religious role and identity. This will help congregations positioning themselves within the DRC and the wider context of other Church Life Surveys.

Die “Church Life Survey” (CLS) is vir die eerste maal in ’n Suid-Afrikaanse kerk gedoen. Dit is gedurende Augustus 2006 as ’n loodsstudie gedoen in die NG Kerk. Die doel van die empiriese, beskrywende ondersoek was om sterkpunte en sterkter konneksies in gemeentes van die NG Kerk te identifiseer. Dit behoort gemeentes te help om oor hulle rol en identiteit na te dink. Die CLS maak dit ook moontlik om dit in ’n breër konteks te plaas en met ander soortgelyke studies te vergelyk.

For any denomination or community, congregations are important. Growing and strong congregations will help communities and denominations function within society. Nel (2009b) claimed: “The congregation is a local expression of the church of Christ in this world. The church has a global and local context.” The aim of this article is to describe a quantitative, empirical research process that will help congregations find their strong and weak connections in a reliable and credible way within a global and local context.

Congregations are always analyzed, be it formally or informally. People talk about congregations and have perceptions concerning their own and other congregations (Nel 2009a). People demand better results from every institution they encounter, including their congregation and parish (Woolever and Bruce 2002:4). This is also true of congregations in the Dutch Reformed Church (DRC). Congregational leaders, therefore, need the kind of reality-based organizational analysis that business leaders in growing, healthy, excellence-orientated companies find helpful (Woolever and Bruce 2002:4). To meet the challenges they face, DRC congregations need an analysis that they can trust and use to plan their way forward.

Congregations have both a theological and an empirical identity (Nel 2009b). These two identities play an important role in the way in which a congregation is analyzed (Nel 2009a). As part of a practical theological reflection, it is important to ask: What is going on in this congregation? This descriptive-empirical task is about “[g]athering information that helps us discern patterns and dynamics in particular episodes, situations or contexts” (Osmer 2008:4). This is done by listening to different voices, in this case, by listening to the voices of the members of the congregation. Osmer (2008:35) claims that “[p]riestly listening is, first and foremost, an

1 Part of this article was delivered by the author as a paper (“The Congregational Life Survey in a South African church: strengths and weaknesses.”) at the SSSR conference on 2 November 2007 in Tampa, Florida, USA.

activity of the entire Christian community, not just its leaders.” Woolever and Bruce (2002:8) ask who speaks for the congregation. The Church Life Survey is a process that will help the leadership of a congregation to hear the voices of “ordinary” members. As a formal process, listening is done through empirical research (Osmer 2008:38). The Church Life Survey is an empirical way of listening to the congregation.

Listening is a hermeneutical and communal process of discernment. In doing this, congregations make decisions using certain resources. They may use any combination of the following (see Woolever and Bruce 2002:7, Van Gelder 2007:104-114):

- A theological understanding of the church and congregation;
- The Biblical text, for example using a church model from the Bible;
- Spirit-driven, the belief in the way the Spirit is leading the congregation;
- The way church tradition prescribes the organization of a congregation; and
- Information or data about the situation in and around the congregation; this data and information need to be valid and reliable, or else it could also lead a congregation in the wrong direction.

The Church Life Survey is a fifth resource denominations and congregations may use in looking at themselves. It needs to be noted that the other resources all play an important role in the discernment process. The rest of this article is exploring this fifth way, first of all by looking at the Church Life Surveys in general and then by applying this form of research within the DRC.

1. THE CHURCH LIFE SURVEYS

The Church Life Surveys started in 1991 in Australia with the aim to assist congregations to fulfil their mission as church. In 1991, 6 700 congregations in 18 denominations completed the survey in Australia (Kaldor 2002:96). The Australian survey was repeated in 1996 and also in 1997 in New Zealand. This time, 324 000 church goers from around 6 900 congregations in 20 denominations completed the survey (NCLS 2010). The success of the survey caused it to be used in England and the United States as well. In 2001, about 1.2 million worshippers in these four countries participated in the International Congregational Church Life Survey (Bruce et. al. 2006:3).

The survey provides useful information for individual congregations about their own situation and helps them to understand their role as a faith community. The survey provides congregations with the opportunity to reflect on their life and mission, their leadership, and their connection to the community (NCLS 2010, Nel 2009a). Most worshippers believe that their congregations are unique, but while each congregation is unique, much about congregations are universal (Woolever and Bruce 2002:3). The Church Life Survey is an attempt to provide reliable information about the more universal situation of denominations and congregations. Seeing the bigger picture will help congregations evaluate their own position.

The task teams for the survey identified the following aims and purposes for the research (see the US Congregational Life Survey, NCLS 2010):

- To develop resources that will help congregations better understand themselves, identify their strengths, and stimulate their efforts to create a positive future for themselves;
- To develop resources that help congregations assess their ministries and relate more effectively with their communities;
- To provide a national and international data base that will enable congregations to look at their ministries in relationship to denominational, national and international benchmarks; and

- To provide denominational leaders, congregational consultants, and congregational planners with information and resources to assist congregations.

Congregational health is envisioned as more than just numerical growth (Woolever and Bruce 2002:6, Sterland et.al. 2006:39-40, Nel 2009a). This means that a congregation cannot be described only in terms of the change in numbers, such as membership, attendance, income, etc. The Church Life Survey identified four dimensions or main connections of importance in a congregation (Woolever and Bruce 2002:4). These are:

- Spirituality and faith development (spiritual connections);
- Activities and relationships within the congregation (inside connections);
- Community involvement of the congregation (outside connections); and
- Worshipers' vision of the congregation's future (future connections).

Within the framework of these four connections, the following question was asked: "What are the qualities of a strong congregation?" (Woolever and Bruce 2004:9). Rather than looking at one strength or quality, ten qualities that place a congregation in the upper 20% of strength and effectiveness were found (Woolever and Bruce 2004:9-10 and 125-131):

- Growing spiritually;
- Meaningful worship;
- Participation in the congregation;
- Having a sense of belonging;
- Caring for young people;
- Focusing on the community;
- Sharing faith;
- Welcoming new worshippers;
- Empowering leadership; and
- Looking to the future.

These ten strengths or qualities are thus concepts that are empirically defined and used in describing growing congregations. They must not be seen as primarily normative indicators.

Without information about the changed nature of the community and the congregation, it may happen that "congregations move faithfully forward making decisions based on nonexistent realities" (Woolever and Bruce 2002:8). It is important to note that this is a databased approach and not a case-study approach. This article now wants to explore, from this point of view, the situation within congregations of the DRC, using the four connections and the ten strengths.

2. METHODOLOGY OF THE DRC-SURVEY

There are 1176 congregations in the DRC. A random sample of 10% was selected from all the congregations. Thus 118 congregations were selected and asked to complete the questionnaire during August 2006. As 81% (95) of the congregations returned questionnaires, 12522 questionnaires completed by worshippers (15 years or older) attending any worship service on one of two Sundays in August 2006 were returned. D. Bruce from the Presbyterian Church (USA) provided the methodology that they used for calculating the ten strengths and indexes. The calculations were done in exactly the same way, except for the youth at home (Strength 5) which was not included in the DRC questionnaire.

The results of the PC (USA) on the strengths were used as a point of reference in discussing the situation in the DRC. There are certainly differences between the contexts of the two

denominations, differences in language and ecclesiology for example, but the Presbyterian results were only used as a point of reference. This helps congregations in the DRC to benchmark them within a wider context. These limitations must be kept in mind when the results of this research are discussed.

3. A SHORT DESCRIPTION OF THE RESPONDENTS

The following is a short description of the respondents that completed the questionnaire:

Less than 20 years	5
20 to 29 years	7
30 to 39 years	13
40 to 49 years	19
50 to 59 years	19
60 to 69 years	20
70 to 79 years	13
80 years and more	4

Employed full time, part time, or self	52
Unemployed	1
Full-time homemaker	11
Retired	27
Student	5
Other	3

No formal schooling	1
Some high school	13
Completed high school	31
Less than 3 years after school	22
More than 3 years after school	33

Never married	12
In first marriage	63
Divorced	5
Widowed	10
Remarried after death of spouse	3
Remarried after divorce	6
Living in a committed relationship	1

This is my first time	1
Hardly ever or special occasions only	1
Less than once a month	2
Once a month	3
Two or three times a month	23
Usually every week	63
More than once a week	6

In summary, 37% of the respondents are older than 60 years. More than 50% are employed and have a tertiary education. More than 60% are married. This is more or less the description of an aging, middle-class denomination. They usually attend the worship services every week. This may be an indication of the loyalty and commitment of the respondents.

4. SPIRITUAL CONNECTIONS

The Christian church connects believers to one another. They share the same belief in God the Father, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit. Healthy congregations develop and encourage this connection between God and the believers (Kaldor et. al. 2002:27). The spiritual growth of believers and the congregation itself are therefore an important part of congregational life.

Strength 1: Growing Spiritually

Table 6: Questions on growing spiritually: Percentage of worshippers who ...		Average DRC	Average PC (USA)
A	Are growing in their faith through participation in activities of their congregation	38	33
B	Spend time at least in private devotional activities a few times a week	90	66
C	Feel their spiritual needs are being met in their congregation	79	82
D	Report Bible study and prayer groups as one of the three most valued aspects of their congregation	15	15
E	Report the prayer ministry of the congregation as one of the three most valued aspects of their congregation	7	13

Worshippers place a meaningful emphasis on private devotional activities (B). Personal religious activities take an important place in the religious life of the worshippers. The congregation is also helping in the growth of their faith (A). Most of the worshippers feel that their spiritual needs are being met in their congregation (C). The congregation plays an important role in the faith formation of its members, but faith cannot grow in isolation, and meaningful worship is therefore needed.

Strength 2: Meaningful Worship

Table 7: Questions on meaningful worship: Percentage of worshippers who ...		Average DRC	Average PC (USA)
A	Always or usually experience God's presence during services	94	73
B	Always or usually experience inspiration during services	84	70
C	Always or usually experience joy during services	83	73
D	Always or usually experience awe during services	71	18
E	Rarely experience boredom during services	30	63
F	Rarely experience frustration during services	26	67
G	Report the sermons, preaching, or homilies as one of the three most valued aspects of their congregation	57	40
H	Report worship services or activities of the congregation help them with everyday living to a great extent	48	43

Worshippers experience God’s presence (A), inspiration (B), joy (C), and awe (D) to a great extent in worship services. These experiences play an important role in the spiritual growth of the worshippers. They therefore report that sermons and preaching (G) are a valued aspect of their congregation.

5. INSIDE CONNECTIONS

Christians live in community with each other; they are part of the community of believers. “Our life together in a community of faith is not an optional extra but part of the core of our Christian life,” Kaldor et. al. (2002:37) claims. In a fragmented and individualistic society, people are looking for a place to belong. The question is: Does the church provide in this need? Attending a worship service is an important part of the religious life of the members, but there are more to being a congregation than only attending the worship service on a Sunday. In a congregation, its members relate to one another and form a community. How can these relationships and connections be described?

Strength 3: Participating in the Congregation

Table 8: Questions on participating in the congregation: Percentage of worshippers who ...		Average DRC	Average PC (USA)
A	Usually attend worship services every week or more than once a week	69	78
B	Are involved in one or more small groups (e.g., Sunday school, prayer or Bible study, discussion groups, fellowships)	53	62
C	Have one or more leadership role in the congregation (e.g., board member, teacher, leading worship)	42	57
D	Often participate in important decision-making in the congregation	18	31
E	Give 5% or more of their net income to the congregation regularly	47	56

The participation and involvement of all the DRC-worshippers is lower than that of the PC (USA). They attend the worship services less often (A). Just more than half are involved in small groups (B). They are also not to a great extend part of the leadership (C) and the decision-making processes in the congregation (D).

Strength 4: Having a Sense of Belonging

Table 9: Questions on having a sense of belonging: Percentage of worshippers who ...		Average DRC	Average PC (USA)
A	Report they are participating more in the activities of the congregation than compared to two years ago	25	28
B	Say most of their closest friends are part of the congregation	13	13
C	Feel they have a strong and growing sense of belonging to their congregation	40	50

The sense of belonging to the congregation is also lower than with US respondents. Fewer than half of the respondents feel a strong and growing sense of belonging to the congregation (C). If the involvement were lower, so would be the sense of belonging. “Strong congregations find

ways to encourage emotional attachment while giving people the freedom to be themselves,” is the opinion of Woolever and Bruce (2002:47). The implications are that the level of involvement and sense of belonging in the DRC congregations are not as strong as it could be.

Strength 5: Caring for Young People

Table 10: Questions on caring for young people: Percentage of worshippers who ...		Average DRC	Average PC (USA)
A	Are satisfied with what is offered for children and the youth (less than 19 years of age) in the congregation	66	55
B	Report ministry for children or the youth as one of the three most valued aspects of their congregation	13	15
C	Percentage of children and the youth (living at home) who worship in the congregation	Not asked	75

The worshippers are satisfied with the care for the young people in the congregation (A).

6. OUTSIDE CONNECTIONS

The church has a mission beyond its own borders and an obligation to the wider community it serves. Churches have the challenge to build, rebuild, or strengthen connections with the communities and people they want to serve (Kaldor et. al. 2002:51). A congregation cannot just look to the inside, but must be connected to the wider community. Is this the case with DRC congregations?

Strength 6: Focusing on the Community

Table 11: Questions on focusing on the community: Percentage of worshippers who ...		Average DRC	Average PC (USA)
A	Are involved in social service or advocacy groups through their congregation	22	29
B	Are involved in social service or advocacy groups in their community	29	38
C	Contribute to charitable community organizations	50	77
D	Report wider community care or an emphasis on social justice as one of the three most valued aspects of their congregation	27	13
E	Report openness to social diversity as one of three most valued aspects of their congregation	3	8
F	Worked with others to try to solve a community problem	16	26
G	Voted in the last (presidential) election	60	81

In the DRC, the focus on the community is lower in most of the aspects. The exception is the congregation’s emphasis on community care and social justice (D). For the rest, the worshippers report a lower community involvement. Less than a third of the worshippers are involved in social service through their congregation (A) or in the community (B). Just 60% of the respondents voted in the municipal elections of March 2006 (G).

Strength 7: Sharing Faith

Table 12: Questions on sharing faith: Percentage of worshippers who ...		Average DRC	Average PC (USA)
A	Are involved in evangelistic activities in the congregation	8	17
B	Feel at ease talking about their faith and seek opportunities to do so	12	11
C	Have invited to a worship service a friend or relative who has not attended in the past year	52	48
D	Report reaching those who do not attend church as one of the three most valued aspect of their congregation	13	11

Worshippers are prepared to invite a friend or relative to a worship service (C), but are not much involved in evangelistic activities (A). To invite somebody you know is easier than being involved in evangelistic activities. The sharing of faith is done within a known atmosphere.

Strength 8: Welcoming New Worshippers

Table 13: Questions on welcoming new worshippers: Percentage of worshippers who ...		Average DRC	Average PC (USA)
A	Who have been going to worship services or activities of this congregation for 5 years or less	31	26

A congregation grows by welcoming new worshippers. This response is slightly better, but is it “new” worshippers or just DRC members or friends from other congregations that are welcomed? The welcoming of newcomers remains important: “Newcomers are more likely than other attendees to report that the initial catalyst to attendance was an invitation from a spouse, friend or contact through a church activity” (Sterland et.al. 2006:51).

7. FUTURE CONNECTIONS

Vision and purpose give direction to a congregation. Without vision and purpose, a congregation will go nowhere or do nothing meaningful. In the view of Kaldor et. al. (2002:72), “[a] shared picture of the future they are working towards binds people together and gives them energy to make the vision a reality.” The role of the leadership in the congregation is to inspire and lead the way in fulfilling the congregation’s vision and purpose.

Strength 9: Empowering Leadership

Table 14: Questions on empowering leadership: Percentage of worshippers who ...		Average DRC	Average PC (USA)
A	Feel the congregation’s leaders encourage them to find and use their gifts and skills to a great extent	48	34
B	Feel the minister, pastor, or priest takes into account the ideas of worshippers to a great extent	41	48
C	Describe the leadership style of the pastor, minister, or priest as one that inspires people to take action	45	44
D	<u>Strongly</u> feel there is a good match between the congregation and the minister, pastor, or priest	41	45

The one response that is standing out is the feeling that the congregation's leaders are encouraging the worshipper to use their gifts and skills (A). This is also the strong point for the worshippers in the congregation. The leadership style inspires them to take action (C).

Strength 10: Looking to the Future

Table 15: Questions on looking to the future: Percentage of worshippers who ...		Average DRC	Average PC (USA)
A	Feel the congregation has a clear vision, goals, or direction for its ministry and mission, and they are strongly committed to them	26	30
B	Have a sense of excitement about their congregation's future	36	19
C	Feel the congregation is currently moving in new directions	18	28
D	Feel the congregation is always ready to try something new	73	50

Worshippers feel excited about the congregation's future (B) and have a strong feeling that the congregation is always ready to try something new (D). Worshippers have a positive attitude when looking to the future.

8. A SUMMARY OF THE STRENGTHS OF DRC CONGREGATIONS

The ten strengths can be categorized and summarized by calculating an index number for each of the strengths. The following is a summary of the ten strength indexes. To have a reference point, it was compared to that of the PC (USA). (See the stated limitations in this regard in the last paragraph of point 2).

Table 16: Summary of the ten strengths	DRC	PC (USA)
Spiritual connections		
1. Growing Spiritually	46	42
2. Meaningful Worship	62	56
Inside connections		
3. Participating in the Congregation	45	57
4. Having a Sense of Belonging	26	30
5. Caring for Young People	(39)	48
Outside connections		
6. Focusing on the Community	30	39
7. Sharing Faith Scores	21	22
8. Welcoming New Worshippers	31	26
Future connections		
9. Empowering Leadership	44	43
10. Looking to the Future	38	32

In looking at Table 16, the question is: What is standing out? Using the different indexes and drawing comparisons between the DRC and the PC (USA) can identify stronger and weaker connections.

The stronger connections:

- Spiritual connections: Both strengths (growing spiritually and meaningful worship) are in the case of the DRC stronger than those of the PC (USA). The emphasis of worshippers may be on an individualistic relationship and view towards religion. Religion is a private matter and “my” personal relationship with God is of the utmost importance.
- Looking to the Future connections: Worshippers are excited about the future. Tomorrow is better than yesterday. It possible that this vision is also part of an individualistic view about one day and not a commitment to the future here and now.

The weaker connections:

- Inside connections: These connections are not as strong as they can be. Both participating and belonging to the congregation are weaker. Congregations in the DRC have a strong geographical base and loyalty may be taken for granted because the members reside within the boundaries of the congregation.
- Outside connections: The community is not in the sights of the congregations. The congregations are not strongly involved and connected to the community. The involvement of congregations in the community needs to improve.

Research shows that focusing on the future is an important aspect of congregational life. In the words of Woolever et. al. (2006:63): “Optimism about the future is associated with greater levels of congregational involvement among worshippers and, at the same time, involvement promotes greater optimism about the congregation’s future.” This is a strength that can be used in making the weaker connections stronger.

Certain priorities can be identified to make the connections in congregations stronger. Three factors are important (Bruce et. al. 2006:121):

- Ensuring that new people are welcome and become active members;
- Empowering the leaders and using them effectively; and
- Focusing on the spiritual development of the worshippers.

These three factors are strengths of the DRC congregations. They may be used and developed further in the process of growing healthier congregations.

It must be remembered that this is only a pilot project and the beginning of, hopefully, a much bigger study. This empirical description can only be part of a more comprehensive reflection on the role of the congregation from a practical theological perspective.

A final remark: It seems that the worshippers in the DRC and its congregations are living in their own private world and are lacking involvement with each other and especially with the wider community that they are supposed to serve. DRC congregations need an approach that focuses on serving the community, i.e. being a church for the other. The Church Life Survey provides an empirical approach of listening to the membership of congregations that may help in describing and making stronger the different connections of the congregation, as a community of believers.

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TREFWOORDE

Kerk
Church Life Survey
NG Kerk
Gemeente

KEY WORDS

Church
Church Life Survey
Dutch Reformed Church
Congregation

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Reading the patriarchal narratives (Gen 12 – 50) in the context of the exile

ABSTRACT

The question addressed in this contribution is how the stories about the patriarchs told in Gen 12-50 would resonate in the time of the exile? It was Gunkel who maintained that the patriarchal narrative should rather not be seen as belonging to the genre of historiography but to that of legend. It seems that this (deliberate?) vagueness on historical detail is yet another indicator that the patriarchal narratives were not meant to be historiography in the strict sense of the word, but was compiled for another reason in exilic times. A basic presupposition in this paper following the recent trend in scholarship will be that the Torah was formed during the exile. Texts where the patriarchs resurface in exilic texts from the prophetic literature (Isaiah 41:8, 51:1-3; Jer 33:25-26; Ezek 33:24) are briefly examined before some conclusions are made regarding the promise made to Abraham (Gen 12:1-3), the motif of entering and re-entering the land, living outside the land on foreign soil, the presence of Yahweh outside of the land, covenant, the genealogies in Gen 12-50, and God who acts in hidden ways.

1. INTRODUCTION

Pentateuch criticism has a long and distinguished tradition of dedicated research with impressive results. The never-ending flow of publications probing the questions of the origin and composition of the Pentateuch is ample proof of vibrant research still going on. Within the historical-critical paradigm the exact dating of various sources that eventually made up the Pentateuch was and is important. Earlier scholarship dated the material from the Pentateuch according to the main sources detected by historical-critical investigation. So, for instance, to quote von Rad as an important exponent of historical-critical scholarship, dated the Yahwist (J) ca 950, the Elohist (E) “perhaps one or two centuries later”, with the latest source, the Priestly document (P) is dated in the postexilic period (538-540) (von Rad 1975:25). Later on Gottwald (1985:173) locates the ancestor traditions within the tribal period of Israel in Canaan before the rise of the kingdom.

Gradually a new conviction was formed, dating the Torah or Pentateuch in the exilic period. The Yahwist’s date especially should not be dated to the period of Solomon and the idea that such an author/source or redaction ever existed before the exile was seriously doubted (Ie Roux 2001:449). Albertz (2003:252) remarks in this regard “Thus the existence of an exilic Patriarchal History has been gaining scholarly support and seems increasingly likely”. Brueggemann (2003:21) maintains in this regard “It is a widespread assumption that the Torah reached roughly its final form by the time of the exile or soon thereafter (587-537 BCE)”. Lemche (2008:127) recently put it even more straightforward: “The patriarchal narrative should be dated to the exilic period”. Mostly recently Blenkinsopp (2009:212) maintains: “A critical consensus now exists that the P History was composed after the fall of Jerusalem in 586 and subsequent deportations”. It has become almost a common conviction that it is very difficult if not impossible to date the patriarchs in a reliable way. It was Gunkel who maintained that the patriarchal narrative should

rather not be seen as belonging to the genre of historiography but to that of legend. It seems to me that exactly this (deliberate?) vagueness on historical detail is yet another indicator that the patriarchal narratives were not meant to be historiography in the strict sense of the word, but was compiled for another reason in exilic times. A basic presupposition in this paper following the recent trend in scholarship will be that at least (some form of) the patriarchal history and probably a large part of the Pentateuch as a whole were formed during the exile.

It is interesting to note how the patriarchs resurface in exilic texts from the prophetic literature (Isa 41:8, 51:1-3; Jer 33:25-26; Ezek 33:24; 28:25; 37:25; Blenkinsopp 2009:231). There were reasons for this to happen. According to Albertz (2003:246) the patriarchs recall Israel's history as a family history and now in the time of the exile stateless Jews would have no difficulty in rediscovering themselves in the events the patriarchs had to go through. Kiefer (2005) in his study on the concepts, words and historical background of the exile and Diaspora in Israel/Judah made similar important remarks on the role the patriarchs played. According to him (Kiefer 2005:107) the narratives on the patriarchs were written down for a reason, the reason that there must have been some kind of identification between the patriarchs and later generations. Kiefer (2005:107) maintains that it is the terminology and themes of migration, landlessness and the promise of the land that would resonate well with the time of exile and deportation from the land. The main theological traditions of Israel became more than a historical narrative about the past. It gained theological meaning and serve as blueprint for the current or future acts of God that can be expected (Kiefer 2005:108). That the purpose of the patriarchal narratives was that of identification is not a new insight as can be seen from the commentary of Westermann (1981:8) What is new in recent research is to locate the origin of the patriarchal narratives in exilic times.

The aim of this paper is to put the theory to the test and to the text. How would the stories about the patriarchs told in Genesis 12-50 resonate in the time of the exile? Le Roux (2001:449) noted that once the narratives about the patriarchs were 'moved' to the exile, the view of Abraham also changed. In particular, four theological themes will be highlighted, the issue of the land, covenant, the genealogies in Genesis 12-50, and God who acts in hidden ways.

2. TEXTUAL EVIDENCE

As was noted earlier, is it notable how the patriarchs resurfaced in exilic times. Although texts referring to the patriarchs are not many, they are nevertheless significant in especially prophetic texts.

The first reference to the patriarchs is encountered in Isaiah 41:8 *"But you, O Israel, my servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, you descendants of Abraham, my friend ..."*. It is difficult to decide whether this reference to Abraham is at home in an exilic or Judahite scenario (Tiemeyer 2008:52-53). A cluster of terms is used to describe Israel: servant, chosen and a friend or beloved of God. It is important to note that it is Abraham who is regarded as a friend of God. It is a statement about Abraham's relationship to God rather than the other way around. It seems that being chosen by God, the response to it is to be a friend or beloved of God. According to Beuken (1979:73) the parallelism between "being chosen" and to be regarded as a "friend" of God indicates Abraham's loyalty to God as a proper response to being chosen. An appeal to the patriarchs going back to events prior to the Exodus events is an appeal to the trustworthiness and fidelity of God. He can still be trusted and what is more the relationship between God and his people is still intact. In this way the patriarchs may now serve as models of hope for the exiles (van Seters 1999:81).

The second reference is found in Isaiah 51:1-2 *"Look to the rock from which you were cut*

and to the quarry from which you were hewn; look to Abraham your father, and to Sarah, who gave you birth. When I called him he was but one, and I blessed him and made him many". The metaphor employed here is strange and not easy to interpret. The metaphor of 'rock' is usually employed to refer to God and not humans but in this case it seems better to interpret it as a metaphor of Abraham and Sarah (Tiemeyer 2008:55-56). Furthermore, 'quarry' indicating a cistern is never used as a metaphor indicating women. The purpose of the metaphors of rock for Abraham and quarry for Sara is not at once clear. Does it indicate the strength of Abraham being likened to a rock? Or does it indicate the hardness of Abraham and Sara and that God irrespective of their hardness and the impossibility of bearing children blessed them nevertheless? Does the reference to the blessing of a great number of descendants refer to the small numbers of the exiles? Irrespective of how difficult these questions are, the point is that a reference is made to the patriarchs in the time of the exile.

The third text that makes reference to the patriarchs is Jeremiah 33:25-26 *"This is what the Lord says: 'If I have not established my covenant with day and night and the fixed laws of heaven and earth, then I will reject the descendants of Jacob and David my servant and will not chose one of his sons to rule over the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. For I will restore their fortunes and have compassion on them'"*. This text is a difficult and controversial text mainly because verses 14-26 do not occur in the LXX. Furthermore, the reference to the Levites mentioned with David and in both cases in covenantal forms (Jer 33:20-21) makes one think that this text is rather post-exilic than exilic (Holladay 1989:229).

The fourth text referring to the patriarchs is Ezekiel 33:24 *"Son of man, the people living in those ruins in the land of Israel are saying, 'Abraham was only one man, yet he possessed the land. But we are many, surely the land has been given to us as our possession'"*. The oracle addressed the issue of those who were still in the land after the exile took place. A popular saying is quoted by the prophet probably used by those who were not deported. The argument they followed is that since Abraham being only one individual, owned the land, they are entitled to possess the land because of their numbers. God has shown his great power in dealing with one man (Abraham), how much more He would do so now by replanting those who survived Babylonians (Eichrodt 1970:462; Albertz 2003:247; van Seters 1999:80). Tiemeyer (2008:51) argues that the unconditional promise of land to Abraham gained importance in time of the exile bringing hope and encouragement to those who amid all the dangers of a disordered land had decided to start life afresh.

What is striking here is the lack of theological considerations (Block 1998:259-260). There is no mention of God who promised and granted Abraham the land and no mention is made of the covenant between God and Abraham. The reference to Abraham as one individual reminds one of Isa 51:2, but the argument goes in a different direction. In Isaiah 51:2 the blessing of one man is accentuated culminating in a nation of many descendants. In Ezekiel 33:24 the reference to Abraham is made to claim the land on account of numbers without any mentioning of the blessing of the Lord. Time and space does not allow elaborating on two other texts in Ezekiel that also mention the patriarchs (Ezek 28:25; 37:25).

These texts is ample proof that the patriarchs do surface in the time of the exile and that in one way or the other hope and encouragement were drawn from them and the traditions surrounding them in a time when other traditions seemed to fail (David, Zion).

3. THE ISSUE OF THE LAND

There is little doubt that the experience of the exile impacted on the life, thought and religious convictions of Judah in a major way. Not only did they lose the kingdom of David with all the

promises attached to it, the exile had a grave impact on the way Judah thought of Yahweh, their God since times immemorial. The nagging question they had to answer was whether Yahweh was defeated by Marduk, the chief god in the Babylonian pantheon of gods now that the temple – the dwelling place of Yahweh – was devastated (Brueggemann 1997:149-150; Becking 1999:4-5). The exile also impacted on the psyche of the Judeans. To be exiled is an experience of displacement and a sense of severe loss. They were homesick for Jerusalem, there was a depressing sense of helplessness, on inability to have an influence on the course of political events, there was bitterness toward those who stayed behind and they suffered from a severe sense of guilt (Albertz 2003:104-105). Then they also lost the land – the land they once entered as a living proof of a fulfilment of a promise Yahweh made to them as far back as the ancestors together with promises of abundant fruitfulness, a land flowing with milk and honey.

In Ezekiel 33:25-26 Abraham and the land are linked to the situation of the exile. Mentioning Abraham will bring back memories more than only the figure of Abraham. The narratives connected with Abraham will also be recalled. Tiemeyer's (2008:65) conclusion is that the character of Abraham is an important and a recurring theme in exilic Judahite texts. It is especially the land that is emphasized and hence the relevance of the land promise made to Abraham is apparent. Abraham was a foreigner to whom the promise of land was made to him and his descendants by God himself. The exiles, deprived of their land could now hold on to the promise of the land once made to Abraham.

3.1 The promise made to Abraham (Gen 12:1-3)

It is in this regard that the promise made to Abraham in the programmatic text of Genesis 12:1-3 becomes relevant. A threefold promise was made to Abraham: an unidentified land, he will be the ancestor of a great nation and the nations of the earth will be blessed through him (Gen 12:1-3).

Two matters are significant for the purpose of this investigation. First, the promise of land and secondly, the location of where the promise of land was made to Abraham. Significantly, the promise of the land comes first. Without a land to make a living in, a great many offspring will have no meaning. The promise of land was made when Abraham was still outside of the land. Later history of Abraham will show that Abraham occupied only a small part of the land and that small part he had to buy from the owners of the land. Although the conditional promise of the land within Deuteronomistic circles may have been in jeopardy in the time of the exile, there is another promise of land the people can now adhere to – the unconditional promise of the land made to Abraham. As Abraham lived by the promise of the land, the exiled people will also live by the promise of the land. The land may be lost to Judah in the harsh reality of the exile, but the promise made by Yahweh to Abraham will be kept. However, one must not think that the mentioning of the land in the first place renders the second part as unimportant. The exiles would have recognized themselves as the descendants of Abraham as a fruit of the promise of a great offspring.

Brueggemann (2008:270) asks the question to whom the promise of land is addressed? Brueggemann answers the question by pointing out that a promise of land is made to those without land. He then goes on to identify four possible candidates, all of them considered to be landless. He mentions nomads, slaves and peasants as likely candidates but then interesting enough also includes exiles. In this regard Brueggemann (2008:271) argues that since the final form of the Old Testament text is accomplished in the sixth century exile, "we may imagine that the land promises in the final form of the text are addressed to displaced and deported Jews who have been scattered into other lands and who yearn for a return home to the land". According to Brueggemann, even though the land promises are much older than the sixth century, they

could be re-heard in a second listening. What happened was that the land promise made once and fulfilled with Israel's initial occupation of the land when it was said that Yahweh gave them rest (Jos 21:43), became the ground for hope for the exiled people. Yahweh's promise of the land once received a new meaning in the context of the people outside of the land during the Babylonian exile.

3.2 The motif of entering and re-entering the land

There is an interesting motif of entering and re-entering the land by the ancestors. The story of Abraham is a story of constant migration: from Ur to Haran to Canaan to the Negev to Egypt and then back to the Negev to Beth-El and eventually to Hebron. In Genesis 11:28-12:9 Abraham received a calling from God to leave Ur in Chaldean to an unknown land promised to him. It is not unlikely that this calling from Ur is an allusion to the people in exile calling from Babylon (Tiemeyer 2008:54). Just as Abraham was once called from Ur the exiles are called from Babylonia back to Judah. It is also interesting to note that Abraham moved into the land without any military actions or aggressive invasion of the land (Blenkinsopp 2009:234-235) just as the Judeans re-occupied the land when they returned from exile. What is also of particular interest is the journey from Canaan to Egypt recorded in Genesis 12:10-20. It is clear that Abraham did this in contradiction to Yahweh. Yahweh however intervened in Egypt and Abraham returned to the land once again. According to Albertz (2003:259) this incident served as a critique on those Judeans who in exilic times emigrated to Egypt. Clearly the intent of Abraham's stay in Egypt is to show that Egypt is not the place to stay – the land promised to them is the place where they belong. The mention of Egypt will certainly bring back memories of Israel's stay in and subsequent deliverance from Egypt. Reading this narrative against the background of the exile, Abraham's move to Egypt may also serve as a metaphor for the stay in exile. So, just as Abraham, the founding father of the people of Judah once moved to Egypt but re-enter the land under the guidance of Yahweh, so the exiled people will also once again re-enter the land from exile.

The same motif is found with Jacob. Jacob has to flee from his brother to Paddan Aram (Gen 27:43-28:2) and within this context the promise of the land is reiterated to Jacob. After a lengthy stay in a foreign land, he re-enters the land (Gen 31:18; 33:18). Later in his life Jacob and his family once again move from the land to Egypt (Gen 46:1-7). His migration to Egypt is accompanied by a promise that he will return to the land even beyond his death (Gen 46:4). When Jacob died he was indeed buried in Canaan at the same site where Abraham, his wife Sarah as well as Isaac and Rebecca were buried.

Joseph was sold by his brothers and eventually stayed in Egypt. Shortly before he died he made his sons swear an oath not to leave his body in Egypt but to take it with them "from this place" (Gen 50:25). In this way the book of Genesis comes to a close with the prospect of returning from Egypt to the Promised Land. God will come to or visit his people in Egypt "and take you out of this land to the land he promised on oath to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob" (Gen 50:24). In Jeremiah 29:10 the same verb is used to describe God's action towards his people in exile. He will visit them and bring them back. This visit of God is according to Brueggemann (1982:379) an exile-ending intrusion something that served as the hope for the sixth century exiles in Babylon.

In the case of Abraham, Jacob and Joseph there is a motif of exit and eventual re-entering into the land can be detected. This means that the time of stay outside of the land will only be a temporary one, ultimately they will return to the land (Albertz 2003:269). It is interesting that this motive is lacking in the stories about Isaac. In fact, when Isaac considers moving due to a famine like the one his father experienced, he was advised by Yahweh not to move to Egypt but to stay in the land of Gerar together with a reiterated promise that he will be prosperous in the

land (Gen 26:1-6). In the case of Jacob and Joseph the re-entering into the land was transposed even to beyond death. To live in a foreign land is not home. The people living in exile could take courage from their forefathers who also had to live outside of the land but with the promise and even actually returning to the land. The fact that two of the ancestors died outside of the land may be a reminder that not all of the exiled people will return to the land.

3.3 Living outside the land on foreign soil

In Jeremiah 29:4-23 a letter of Jeremiah to the exiles is recorded encouraging the exiles to make the best of their stay outside of the Promised Land. Joseph (Gen 37-50) did exactly that. He is an example of an Israelite who on the one hand remained a true Israelite but on the other hand raise to one of the top positions to be occupied in Egypt. Joseph's position at the Egyptian court resembles the Judeans who make a good living in a foreign country and serve at the courts of foreign kings in the period in and after the Babylonian exile. There is life outside of the borders of the Promised Land. The Joseph narrative is ample proof of this. A people in exile can pursue its own interests and do so with success. The fate of Joseph is thus used to illustrate the opportunities and dangers that faced the Israelites in a foreign country. The life and times of Joseph is a way of showing how Yahweh's promise to Abraham concerning his blessings to other nations, became effective (Gen 12:1-3). At the same time the Joseph story also served as a warning to the dangers of living in a foreign land. He became a slave and landed up in prison because of a false accusation by a woman (Albertz 2003:263-264).

The Joseph story is also a story of divine providence. This is a theological theme that would also resonate well with exiles. Despite so many things that went wrong in the history of Joseph and his brothers, the Lord did not forsake him or his brothers. At crucial moments during his stay in a foreign country, he was reassured of the Lord's presence (Gen 39:2; 20-21, 23). The Lord's presence may also be experienced outside of the land.

Wisdom influences are also widely recognized in the Joseph narrative. The success Joseph achieves at a royal court, serving as loyal subordinate, planning ahead, rejecting sexual temptations by women, acquiring the virtues of humbleness etc are all very typical of wisdom traditions. It is in this regard that the Joseph narrative may be thought of as a Diaspora novella, "a short story orientated to life in exile" (Birch 1999:92-93).

The initial promise to Abraham that "all peoples on earth will be blessed through you" finds a special application in the story of Joseph. Joseph was indeed a blessing not only to his own people but also to the people of Egypt by Joseph's foresight to be prepared for the years of drought. The scope of the blessing reached other nations when Joseph act to the benefit of Egypt and by doing so was nothing more than a blessing to Egypt. Earlier on in Genesis 14 Abraham also acted to the benefit of foreign kings and in this way became a blessing to them.

3.4 The presence of Yahweh outside of the land

The narratives about Jacob are marked by two incidents where Jacob had a special encounter with God (Gen 28:10-22; 32:22-32). To a certain extent these encounters serve as a framing mechanism in the narratives about Jacob. In both cases at Bethel as well as Peniel, a very real encounter with God is experienced resulting in the names of the places as a testimony to the presence of the Lord. At Bethel not only the promise of the land was reiterated to Jacob, he was also assured of the presence of the Lord (Gen 28:15). At Peniel Jacob was blessed and had a name change from Jacob to Israel. What is noteworthy is that both encounters took place outside of the land promised to the patriarchs. The presence of God can thus be experienced even outside of the borders of the land. What happened once to the exiled Jacob rings still true to the exiled people in Babylonian times? What is more, these encounters took place at

locations not particular known as holy places where God can be met. God is thus not confined to be worshiped only at an official place of worship such as a temple and at the time of the exile no longer in existence. A nameless place somewhere between Beersheba and Haran became Bethel, a house, and a dwelling place like a temple, of God. The same motive is found in Genesis 46 where Jacob/Israel is assured of Yahweh's presence when he moved to Egypt. Yahweh will not abandon Israel in Egypt, to the contrary the relationship between God and Israel is not tied to the land; it could be as intense in the Diaspora as in Judah. Yahweh was with the patriarch Jacob once when he had to move to Egypt and so it will be for those living in exile outside of the borders of the land (Albertz 2003:267-268). The presence of God outside of the land is also one of the theological motives in the Joseph-novella. The story begins with the statement that God was with Joseph (Gen 39:1-6) and toward the end of the story it was stated again (Gen 45:8). Westermann (1982:286) indicated how the presence of God could be seen in Joseph's explanation of the Pharaoh's dreams. The ability to explain dreams is a gift from God and the outcome of this event was to the benefit of both Egypt and the people of God.

4. COVENANT

With the exile the conditional covenant made at Mt Sinai and further explicated in Deuteronomy apparently came to an end. Deuteronomy 28 clearly warned the people of what would happen should they trespass the conditions of the covenant. The curses predicted and foreseen in Deuteronomy came into effect. In the mind of many a Judean the Sinai covenant was nullified by the behaviour and sins of the people. The exiled people were in need of another covenant. The covenant Yahweh made with Abraham provided in precisely that need. There was thus another and unconditional covenant that Yahweh made with Abraham. In Genesis 15 (Gen 15:18; 15:6) the ritual of a covenant making is described. God from his side promised to give the land to Abraham and his descendents. Although the ritual implies a threat should one of the parties not adhere to the stipulations of the covenant, there is no explicit threat posed in the Genesis 15 account. The same promise of the land is found in Genesis 17:7 also as part of Yahweh's covenant with Abraham. The descendants of Abraham are included as the co-recipients of a promise that they will have everlasting possession of the land and thereby Yahweh will be their God (Klein 1979:137).

Genesis 17 is another text emphasizing the importance of a covenant but an important detail is added: circumcision. Considering that Genesis 17 is often regarded as so-called P material and that P is regarded as the most recent of the so-called sources of the Pentateuch, the link with exilic times is possible. Even if the source hypothesis is not accepted, Genesis 17 is dated within the time of the exile and by doing that the circumcision performed in Genesis 17 is linked with the exiles of the Babylonian exile (Wyatt 2009:407). What is of particular importance in terms of Gen 17 is that the covenant is termed as an everlasting covenant in verse 6 and that means that Israel's disobedience can in no way nullify the permanent validity of the covenant (Tiemeyer 2008:51; Blenkinsopp 2009:236-237, 241). It is often said that circumcision became important in exilic times especially as marker of Jewish identity (Collins 2004:103-104). That explains why stories about the covenant and circumcision as a visible sign of the covenant became important in exilic times. There was another covenant over and above the Sinai-covenant made by the same God the people could rely on. Circumcision is not a recent custom but one that can be traced back even to Abraham. Furthermore, the fact that the covenant with Abraham will include also the seed of Abraham (Gen 17:7) underlines the ongoing validity of the covenant with Abraham and the seed will of course also include those living in exile now (Klein 1979:136). There are also

covenantal overtones in the mentioning of Abraham in Isaiah 41:8-9. God will not - because of his covenant of grace with Abraham – abandon his people for ever (Tiemeyer 2008:53).

5. THE GENEALOGIES IN GENESIS 12-50

The importance of genealogies in exilic times is something scholars agree upon. According to Westermann (1981:48-49) the function of genealogies is to establish one's place in the society you belong to by a common history as well as a common fate and destiny. In a time of utter confusion and disorientation such as the time of the exile, it would have made sense to re-establish one's identity by looking back to the past and discover one's roots once again. It is noteworthy that genealogies occur time and again in Genesis 12-50 (Gen 25:1-4; 12-18; 36:1-30; 46:8-26). The genealogies bring to mind the Jacob-Esau strife. Considering the role Edom played in the events surrounding the exile, the strife and conflict depicted in the patriarchal narratives between Jacob and Esau may of some significance. Edom/Esau is on the one hand in conflict with Jacob/Judah while on the other hand they are also twins. The conflict described in the patriarchal narratives shows that it is an age-old conflict yet at the same time it is inexplicable that twins can be at war with one another.

6. THE GOD WHO ACTS IN HIDDEN WAYS

The time of the exile was a time of severe doubt in the capability of Yahweh. Was and is He still the Almighty one? One of the theological themes in the patriarchal narratives is that God acts in hidden ways. If the exiled people could thus not comprehend how Yahweh was still in control of world matters irrespective of the exile, the patriarchal narratives may console them. Way back in the history and also in a place outside of the borders of the Promised Land, Yahweh also acted in hidden and mysterious ways.

Closely related to this theme is the one emphasizing the importance of human endeavours. Even though Jacob is a trickster and speaking from a moral point of view, a doubtful character, he nevertheless enjoys the promises, presence and guidance of the Lord. The same theme is seen in the Joseph narrative. Humans may make innovative plans to survive in difficult times. Yahweh's guidance is often not to be seen in a spectacular way therefore the emphasis is on humans to work out plans to bring about a positive turn in events. In the end it turns out well because in all human planning Yahweh was at work in a hidden and mysterious way. This is also the conclusion Ebach (2007:40) came to. The Joseph-novella is about the hidden but active ways in which God is at work in history. But at the same time humans are at work themselves making plans in innovative ways to survive. These two trajectories is according to Ebach summarized right at the end of the book in Genesis 50:20 where it is stated that humans sometimes plan evil things but God let it happen for good.

7. CONCLUSION

The conclusion reached can only be a preliminary one. Much research is still to be done to further substantiate and refine an exilic reading of the patriarchal narratives. But at least it may be said that reading the Patriarchal narratives in an exilic milieu makes sense. It seems that many of the stories related to the patriarchs could have had meaning to an exiled Judah.

This exercise proved once again that it is important to keep a historical dimension in mind when reading Biblical texts. Ancient texts gained meaning only by reading them within a historical background. A a-historical reading may lead to a fundamentalistic reading and interpretation

with dire results to both the texts and its application.

Not every detail of the patriarchal narratives can be linked to the time of the exile. The enigmatic Genesis 22:1-19 or Abraham's meeting with the three figures in Genesis 18:1-15 or Rachel's theft of her father's household gods (Gen 31:19) especially in an exilic context where monotheism was emphasized, is unlikely to provoke any direct contact with an exilic context or every detail of the Joseph narrative will not by necessity fit an exilic background. Gottwald (1985:175) has shown how that the ancestor traditions are primarily concerned with the struggle to secure a viable community by means of the need for offspring and the repeated defence against outside pressures. Even the prominent issue of land may have a different meaning within the socio-historical horizon of the ancestors of Israel in earlier times.

To read the patriarchal traditions against an exilic background is in essence a hermeneutical exercise. Von Rad in his commentary on Genesis (Von Rad 1972:35, 39) made us aware of that. On the one hand, von Rad maintains, Israel saw the need and the promise of its own existence before God in Abraham and Jacob. On the other hand, the interpreter should abandon any attempt "for one meaning which is the only meaning that the narrator can have intended" (von Rad 1972:39). Why? Because the narrators of these stories did not hand over an explanation to the reader but rather to let the events narrated speak for themselves to the reader or hearer (von Rad 1972:39). This is something that has been done many times since the Babylonian exile – even up to present day circumstances where believers find some parallels between the stories told in Genesis 12-50 and their present day conditions.

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KEY WORDS

Patriarchal narratives
Exile
Land

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Ballingskap
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Eenheid in die NG Kerkfamilie: Waar staan die NG Kerk¹?

ABSTRACT

Unity in the family of Dutch Reformed Churches: Where does the Dutch Reformed Church stand?

The story of the process of unity in the family of Dutch Reformed Churches is vulnerable to the ebb and flow of points or situations of consensus and difference. A lack of trust and understanding often brings this process to standstill.

The two main issues to solve are the roll and status of the Confession of Belhar in the new church and the structural model which should be used. The DRC are of the opinion that the acceptance of the former can not be used as a condition for unity, although it may be included in the confessional basis of the new church: but as not compulsory for any member of the church. Against this the General Synod of URCSA of 2008 again decided to make the acceptance of Belhar as a confession a condition for the process. They were only willing to proceed with unity talks if it was facilitated by members of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches.

It seems as if there are less problems on the proposed structure as put forward by the joint conference of the family at Achterberg in 2007. The proposal is to start with a joint general synod which replaces the existing general synods. The DRC seem prepared to go this way, although the smaller members of the family seem to object. In the mean time the DRC remain committed to the process and are willing to talk to solve any difference or problem.

GESKIEDENIS VERLOOP AF EN OP

Die verhaal van eenheid of hereniging in die NG Kerkfamilie is na bykans 50 jaar² besig om 'n sage van af- én opdraandes te word. Hoogtepunte of punte wat hoop vir die saak gee, word telkens platgevee deur misverstande, wantroue en meningsverskille. Hierdie toedrag van sake kom nie net tussen die NG Kerk – die “wit” of eertydse apartheidskerk³ – en die res van die familie voor nie, maar ook tussen die Verenigende Gereformeerde Kerk in Suidelike Afrika (VGKSA), die NG

- 1 Hierdie artikel is 'n verwerking van 'n voordrag wat die skrywer op 19 Maart 2009 tydens die 150 jarige feesviering van die Fakulteit Teologie op Stellenbosch gelewer het.
- 2 Die Federale Raad van NG Kerke as 'n federale uitdrukking van strukturele eenheid is reeds in 1964 gestig. Dit gebeur óók teen die agtergrond van 'n voorstel van die Gereformeerde Ekumeniese Sinode van 1963 dat die NG Kerkfamilie één Algemene Sinode vorm, Van der Watt 1987:23. Aspekte van die lang eenheidsproses in die NG Kerkfamilie die afgelope 50 jaar word aangeraak in talle publikasies waaronder bekendes soos: Smith, N 1980:214; vv; Geldenhuys, FE o'B 1982:126vv; Adonis, 1982:244vv; Jonker, WD 1998:53vv; Coertzen, P 1991:201vv en Nel, R en Du Toit, H 2007.
- 3 'n Onlangse opname uitgevoer deur die kantoor van die Algemene Sinode van die NG Kerk, het vasgestel dat meer as 60% van die NG Kerke of gemeentes wat lidmate betref, nie meer die etiket van “net Blankes” om die nek dra nie. In die “konserwatiewe” Sinodes Vrystaat en Wes-Transvaal is dit onderskeidelik 40 en 50%(Brief JJ Gerber aan VGKSA, 2008:08:20). Daarby vorm sommige eertydse gemeentes van die jonger kerke tans saam die NG Kerkverband. So 'n voorbeeld kom voor in die Vrystaatse Sinode, vgl NGK in die VS 2009:26.

Kerk in Afrika (NGKA) en die Reformed Church in Africa (RCA)⁴.

Die mees voor die hand liggende rede vir hierdie kerke om te verenig, lê in die feit dat hulle van dieselfde kerklike familie en daarom – hoofsaaklik – van dieselfde belydenisse en kerkregering is⁵. Tog blyk verskille oor die Belydenis van Belhar en, tot ’n mindere mate, die struktuur of regering van die nuwe kerkverband, om sake te oorheers (vgl NGK 2007:23vv; VGKSA 2008:194vv).

Dit is dus nie vreemd dat die houding van die NG Kerk oor kerkhereniging in die NG Familie ook deeglik met hierdie sake rekening hou nie.

Daarom word die houding van die NG Kerk teenoor die onderwerp aan die hand van vier hoofsaake verduidelik; sy houding oor kerkeenheid; die belydeniskwessie, die voorgestelde kerkverband⁶ en enkele ander sake. Vir die NGK-houding word op die standpunte van die Algemene Sinode gekonsentreer. Hierdie vergadering praat vir die hele NG Kerk in sake wat al die gemeentes⁷ raak, hoewel die kerkrade ook oor belydeniskwessies en die verandering van die struktuur van die kerkverband met kerkhereniging, stem (vgl NGK-KO 2007 artikel 43.1, 44; NGK 2007:340).

DIE NG KERK: HOUDING OOR KERKEENHEID

Die houding van die Algemene Sinode oor kerkeenheid waaronder “sigbare” strukturele eenheid in die NG Kerkfamilie, is sterk positief. Om dit te illustreer begin die besluite van die Algemene Sinode van Hartenbos in 2004 oor eenheid in hierdie familie so:

“Die NG Kerk is hartseer en verleë omdat ons na baie jare se gesprekke oor kerkhereniging nog nie veel gevorder het nie. Terwyl daar faktore is wat die proses werklik baie moeilik maak, weet ons dat dit nie ’n verskoning is nie.

By die Sinode het ons voor die aangesig van die Here opnuut oortuig geraak van die belangrikheid van kerkeenheid en ons wil onself met nuwe toewyding daaraan wy... ons oordeel dat versuim in hierdie verband nie net sal beteken dat ons die Here gefaal het nie, maar ook ons Suider-Afrikaanse samelewing ...” (NGK 2004:427).

Hierdie sterk en duidelike taal is opgevolg met besluite waarin die belangrikste kwessies oor eenheid in die NG Kerkfamilie aangeraak is. Besluite, soos dit genoem is, “oor die herstel van een kerkverband in die NGK-familie” wat sou dien as *voorstelle* met die “*status van aanbevelings* vir gebruik in die verdere verloop van die gesprek met hierdie familie” (NGK 2004:429). Ek gee die besluit verbatim en net so onderstreep weer omdat die VGKSA – vanuit ’n afleiding wat nie met die NG Kerk self deurgepraat is nie – dit die NG Kerk sedertdien verwyt het dat hy nie tot op die letter van die wet by hierdie besluite bly nie (VGKSA 2008:195) .

Wat die Sinode van Hartenbos betref, moes hierdie besluite as voorstelle of aanbevelings

4 Vgl die verhare van die NGKA, RCA, NG Kerk en VGKSA in Nel en Du Toit 2007. Die verhaal van die RCA word deur Pillay, V pp 31-35, van die NGKA deur Keta, D, Hoffman, A en Ramolahlehi, J pp 36-54, van die NG Kerk deur Strauss PJ pp 92-105 en van die VGKSA deur Kgatla, T pp 106-115 versorg. Genoemde verskille is deurgaans sigbaar.

5 Hierdie gemeenskaplikhede is elders uitgewerk (vgl Kleynhans, HJ 2009:145vv) en word nie hier herhaal nie. Die enigste verskil in belydenis is die VGKSA se aanvaarding van die Belydenis van Belhar teenoor die ander drie wat dit nie het nie, Strauss 2007b:100. Onder gereformeerde kerke word dit wyd aanvaar dat kerke van dieselfde belydenis en hoofsaake van kerkregering “weselik” een is. Daarom is die enigste “wettige” skeiding wat daar tussen hulle mag bestaan, een van afstand of geografiese skeiding, Strauss, PJ 1991:197.

6 Die voorgestelde eenheidsstruktuur by die konferensies van die afgelope jare is een kerkverband. Dit gaan dus oor die bestaande gemeentes wat so bly en in ’n nuwe verband betrek word, Strauss, PJ 2007a:781vv.

7 Hierdie gemeentes tel in 2010 ongeveer 1247, NGK 2010:30-46.

nou in verdere gesprekke met die familie en die sinodes, kerkrade en gemeentes van die NG Kerk gebruik word. 'n Konsultasieproses is met kerkrade en gemeentes vanuit elke streeksinodale/sinodale kommissie/sinodale diensraad/sinodale moderamen in die vooruitsig gestel. Die resultaat hiervan moes teen die einde van Januarie 2006 by die destydse Algemene Sinodale Kommissie wees. Die gespreksmatige aard van die proses in die NG Kerk self én met die NG Kerkfamilie – soos gesien deur die Algemene Sinode van die NG Kerk – is beklemtoon deur uitdrukkings in die besluite soos: dat “ons” bereid moet wees “om mekaar iewers in die middel te ontmoet”; dat daar ruimte gemaak moet word vir mense met huiweringe en vrae”; “dat ons kerkskeuring ten alle koste moet vermy”; dat “ons” daartoe verbind is om ons “gemeentes te raadpleeg en te toets sodat ons saam hierdie pad kan loop” en die woorde “gesamentlike gesprek én besinning op alle vlakke” (NGK 2004:427-429).

Hierdie besluite is in die NG Kerk self én in die NG Kerkfamilie gekommunikeer en, op moontlik een uitsondering na, as voorstelle en nie finale besluite nie, aanvaar. Hierdie uitsondering was die Algemene Sinode van die VGKSA van 2008.

Die Algemene Sinode van die NG Kerk het hom by Hartenbos 2004 daartoe verbind om vanuit sy voorstelle gesprek te voer, maar ook na die ander gesprekgenote (die familie en sy eie gemeentes) te luister. Op geen manier is die besluite van Hartenbos 2004, of Achterberg II 2007 (die konsultasie van die hele NG Kerkfamilie in Suider-Afrika) of die Algemene Sinode van Boksburg 2007, beskou as die finale antwoord nie. Die NG Kerk het sy gemeentes immers weer in die laaste helfte van 2007 gekonsulteer. 'n Konsultasie wat lidmate en kerkrade sou uitnoui om kommentaar op die voorstelle van Achterberg II te lewer. 'n Konsultasieproses wat as konsultasieproses ook nuwe voorstelle vanuit die gemeentes kon oplewer. Voorstelle wat die Algemene Sinode – om sy woord gestand te doen – moes oorweeg. Die kommentaar vanuit die gemeentes van die NG Kerk is in Junie 2008 deur 'n uitgebreide Moderamen oorweeg, in standpunte of stellings verwoord en persoonlik deur die Moderatuur aan die Moderatuur van die VGKSA oorgedra (vgl Submission by DRC 2009:3; NGK 2007:206). Die resultaat was die Algemene Sinode van die VGKSA van 2008 se moratorium op verdere gesprekke, tensy die Wêreldbond van Gereformeerde Kerke die gesprek bemiddel, en die eis dat die aanvaarding van die Belydenis van Belhar 'n voorwaarde vir eenheid is (VGSA 2008:194vv).

DIE BELYDENISGRONDSLAG VAN DIE VOORGESTELDE KERKVERBAND

Vir die Algemene Sinode van die NG Kerk van Hartenbos in 2004 was dit 'n uitgemaakte saak dat die vier kerke van die NG-Familie die Drie Formuliere van Eenheid as hulle belydenisskrifte aanvaar. Die twis het rondom die aanvaarding van die Belydenis van Belhar – na inhoud en as belydenis – gelê.

Teen Belhar was en is daar weerstand: in die gemeentes van die NG Kerk en beide die NGKA en RCA. Daarteenoor is daar oorheersende stemme in die VGKSA dat Belhar hulle huidige kerklike identiteit verwoord.

In dié situasie het Hartenbos 2004 voorgestel dat Belhar “as een van die belydenisskrifte in die herstelde kerkverband opgeneem word.” Dit sou egter nie beteken dat enige iemand in die nuwe verband dit “as vanselfsprekend as belydenisskrif hoef te onderskryf nie”(NGK 2004:428). Hartenbos wou beide die voor- en teenstanders van Belhar in die eenheidsproses akkommodeer. Vir hom (Hartenbos) was die eenheid reeds verwoord in die ses ander belydenisskrifte van die NG-familie: die Apostolicum, die Belydenisse van Nicea en Athanasius, die Confessio Belgica, Heidelbergse Kategismus en Dordtse Leerreëls (Adonis 1982:213).

Hartenbos het besef dat die afdwing van Belhar vet in die vuur vir die verbranding van die ideaal van 'n verenigde NG Kerkfamilie sou wees.

In die geleedere van die NG Kerk leef daar die oortuiging dat Belhar op geen stadium deur enige konferensie van al die lede van die NG Kerkfamilie, nadat Esselenpark 2006 met 'n nuwe inisiatief gekom en verklaar het dat die aanvaarding van Belhar nie vir die VGKSA 'n voorwaarde vir kerkeenheid is nie (Durand en Meiring 2007:56)⁸, as voorwaarde vir kerkhereniging gestel is nie. Beloftes dat daar na Belhar as belydenis gekyk en dit weer oorweeg word, het niks hieraan verander nie. Die Algemene Sinode van die VGKSA se besluit in 2008 dat die aanvaarding van Belhar as belydenis 'n voorwaarde vir kerkeenheid is, beteken vir baie in die NG Kerk 'n terugkeer na die weë voor Esselenpark 2006 (vgl Submission by DRC 2009:4vv).

Daarom was die interpretasie van die konsultasieproses onder die NG Gemeentes in 2007 deur die uitgebreide Moderamen van die NG Kerk nie 'n "verskuiwing van die doelpale" soos die Algemene Sinode van die VGKSA beweer nie (VGKSA 2008:195). Die interpretasie was dat die konsultasie, wat 'n kwalitatiewe en nie 'n kwantitatiewe ondersoek of stemming was nie, aangedui het dat daar groot weerstand teen Belhar in NG Gemeentes bestaan⁹. 'n Weerstand wat die aanvaarding van Belhar in die NG Kerk vir die huidige onmoontlik maak. Daarby het Hartenbos 2004 en Esselenpark 2006 uitdruklik hiervoor ruimte gelaat.

Artikel 44 van die Kerkorde van die NG Kerk maak 'n nuwe belydenis in die NG Kerk afhanklik van die goedkeuring van 'n tweederde meerderheid van tweeders van die kerkrade, al die tien sinodes en die Algemene Sinode (NGK-KO 2007:19). Omdat 'n belydenis gereformeerd beskou die "akkoord" van kerklike gemeenskap is, is dit fundamenteel vir die kerk as 'n geloofsinstelling. Juis omdat dit in die kerk om 'n eenheid in geloofsoortuigings gaan, kan en moet 'n belydenis nie afgedwing word nie. Ook nie deur 'n kerkvergadering nie.

Hartenbos het met sy voorstel oor Belhar reeds na "die middel" beweeg as een van sy eie aanbevelings om die eenheidsproses te laat slaag. Dit het 'n struktuur bedink wat die realiteit van sterk voor- en teenstanders van Belhar te midde van ander gemeenskaplike belydenisse, akkommodeer. Met hierdie besluit en die besluit van die Algemene Sinode van 1998 wat die "wesentlike" inhoud van Belhar as Bybels aanvaar (NGK 1998:516), verbind die NG Kerk hom reeds¹⁰ aan 'n Skriftuurlike eenheid, geregtigheid en versoening: die essensie van Belhar. Om die aanvaarding van Belhar egter 'n voorwaarde of die "acid test" of lakmoestoets hiervoor te maak (Submission by the DRC 2009:4vv), bring mee dat die gebruik van Belhar self sy eie oogmerk verongeluk. Nie die sake waarvoor Belhar staan nie, maar die dokument self word nou die toets. Anders gestel, nie die Bybelse norme en inhoud van die sake wat in Belhar geopper word, word die toets nie, maar Belhar as 'n gestalte of toepassing daarvan.

Ek oordeel dat die rigting waarin Hartenbos 2004 se voorgestelde oplossing lê steeds die rigting vir 'n oplossing van die dilemma rondom Belhar in hierdie kerkeenheidsproses kan wees. Werklike geloofseenheid in die sake wat in Belhar genoem word, is moontlik sonder om die Belhardokument op die spits te dryf. En, na die beste van my wete, is dit ook die roete wat uit die gesindheid van die Belharbelydenis self spreek (vgl by Botha en Naudé 2010:16).

8 Durand en Meiring stel dit dat die afvaardiging van die VGKSA by Esselenpark en Achterberg van mening was dat die aanvaarding van die Belydenis van Belhar nie 'n struikelblok in die pad van kerkeenheid moet wees nie, 2007:57, 61. Hulle het dus verklaar dat dit nie 'n voorwaarde vir eenheid is nie. Skrywers noem dit 'n grondige verskuiwing in die houding van die VGKSA, 2007:61.

9 In die konsultasieproses is Belhar as uitsluitende en verdelende faktor die tema wat die tweede meeste na vore gekom het of verwoord is, naamlik 77 keer. Dit figureer byna net so sterk soos gesamentlike projekte en spontane samewerking en gedeelde verantwoordelikheid tussen gemeentes (80 keer). Op Hartenbos se eenheidsvoorstelle was daar byna ewe veel instemmende stukke kommentaar as die negatiewe kommentaar oor kerkeenheid (50 teenoor 51 keer). Pieterse en Steyn sa:3.

10 Hartenbos 2004 sê met verwysing na die Algemene Sinode van 1998, by herhaling: "Ons is steeds oortuig dat die wesentlike van Belhar baie wyd aanvaar word", NGK 2004:

DIE STRUKTUUR VAN 'N HERSTELDE KERKVERBAND

’n “Nuwe” begrip wat uit die NG Kerk se Algemene Sinode van 2004 se besluite oor eenheid in die NG Kerkfamilie na vore kom, is die begrip om “saam te groei na groter eenheid”. Dit beteken dat die struktuur van die voorgestelde kerkverband nie vir alle tye in konkreet vas gegiet is nie. Soos wat eenheid in huweliks-, gesins-, span- en politieke partyverband kan groei, so ook in die kerk. Hierdie groeiende eenheid druk hom uit in wisselende of veranderende kerkverbande.

Hartenbos stel voor dat die herstelde verband in die NG Kerkfamilie die presbiteriaal-sinodale vorm van kerkverband gebruik. Dat die bestaande gemeentes in ’n verenigde kerkverband “net so behoue sal bly” en saam die gemeentes van die nuwe verband sal vorm.

Die blote feit dat Hartenbos telkens van ’n “herstelde kerkverband” praat, dui al daarop dat dit om die kerklike struktuur gaan waarin gemeentes verenig en nie om die gemeentes self nie. Dieselfde benadering is deur die VGKSA in 1994 by sy ontstaan uit die destydse NG Sendingkerk (NGSK) en NGKA gevolg. NGSK- en NGKA-gemeentes kon so bly (vgl by Kleynhans 2009:114vv).

Volgens Hartenbos moet “al die gemeentes as selfstandige gemeentes ingevoeg word in ringe, sinodes en een algemene sinode.” Dit impliseer ’n proses waarin ruimte gelaat word vir “onderhandeling, nuwe moontlikhede en ’n groei na mekaar” (NGK 2004:428). Anders gestel, die eenheidsstruktuur op ’n bepaalde stadium in kerkverband is ’n uitdrukking van die mate van geloofs- en kerklike eenheid – of eenheid in belydenis en kerkinrigting – wat daar tans tussen die gemeentes bestaan. Die struktuur van die verband word gedra deur die sake waarin daar geloofseenheid is. As hierdie eenheid dit kan dra, word die betrokke kerkverband ’n sinodale of nouer verband. So nie word dit ’n federale of lossere verband (Strauss 2007:782).

In die geskiedenis van die NG Kerk is daar in 1905 begin met ’n Federale Raad van NG Kerke waarin die Sinodes van Kaapland, die Vrystaat, Natal en Transvaal verenig het. Die besluite van hierdie Raad was adviserend en nie bindend op lidkerke nie. Tog is tipiese kerklike eenheid in die proses verseker deur ’n eenheid in belydenis en geloofs- en etiese oortuigings. Dit het meegebring dat die samestellende sinodes selde ’n besluit van die Federale Raad van NG Kerke geopponeer het. Die huidige algemene sinodale verband van die NG Kerk het eers in 1962 en uit hierdie Federale Raad gegroei of ontstaan (Van der Watt 1987:20). Groeipyne het veroorsaak dat ’n algemene sinodale verband eers na 57 jaar gevorm is. Interessant genoeg het die Algemene Sinode van 1962 nie die bestaande “provinsiale” sinodes vervang nie, maar aangevul. Dit was dus nie ’n vervangende nie, maar ’n bykomstige sinode.

So beskou was beide die Federale Raad van NG Kerke en die Algemene Sinode van 1962 verbandstrukture wat ’n passende en volhoubare vorm van eenheid tussen die betrokke NGK-gemeentes op daardie stadium uitgedruk het.

Vanuit ’n gereformeerde-kerkregtelike oogpunt is die houding van die Algemene Sinode van die VGKSA van 2008 dat ’n federale raad en ’n bykomende algemene sinode apartheidsfigure is, eenvoudig onhoudbaar. Om – soos sommige in die eenheidsdebat – hierdie houding op die Belydenis van Belhar te grond, is om ’n gereformeerde belydenis wat oor kernsake van die geloof moet handel, vir ’n tydelike of randsaak te gebruik en die belydenisaard daarvan in gedrang te bring. As Belhar in die konteks van die 1980’s in Suid-Afrika¹¹ hom onder die tema “kerkeenheid” sou rig teen die destydse Federale Raad van NG Kerke, maak dit van ’n randsaak ’n kernsaak.

Hierdie houding van Hartenbos 2004 is versoenbaar met die voorstel van Achterberg II dat die verbandstruktuur in die NG Kerkfamilie begin by ’n gemeenskaplike algemene sinode (NGK 2007:23). ’n Sinode wat die bestaande sinodes vervang, maar wat ook bykomstig kan wees – so is daar vanuit die NG Kerk geoordeel – om die NGKA en die RCA wat albei prys stel op hulle eie

kerklike identiteit, te akkommodeer. Vir die handhawing van so 'n kerklike identiteit benodig hulle – dit is begryplik – ook 'n eie gemeenskaplike sinode.

Ooreenkomstig Hartenbos se voorstelle kan die NG Kerkfamilie groei om naas hierdie sinodale eenwording mettertyd rings- en gemeentelike eenwording te kry. Achterberg I se verklaring bevat die begrippe “eenheid” en 'n wettige “verskeidenheid” (diversiteit) wat ook in die struktuur van die herstelde verband verreken moet word (vgl Verklaring Nov 2006).

Daarmee voer die NG Kerk aan dat die struktuur vir eenheid in die NG Kerkfamilie nie 'n saak is wat aan die begin vir alle tye klaargemaak word nie. Ruimte vir reformasie is ook hierin nodig. Anders gestel: vir die NG Kerk is een gemeenskaplike sinode as 'n beginpunt en 'n herstelde verband in die NG Kerk familie, die wegspringplek vir 'n groei na verdere gestaltes van eenheid.

Dwang én wantroue wat geen ruimte laat vir 'n saamgroei in gemeenskaplike oortuigings en strukture nie, kan die eenheidsproses in die NG Kerkfamilie kelder. Hulle wat glo dat die waarheid eventueel seëvier, maar ook aan mekaar ruimte vir ander insette as hulle eie gee, sal nie krampagtig en geforseerd alles van die begin af na hulle eie sin wil hê nie.

ANDER SAKE

Die NG Kerk is oortuig dat die kwessies van die belydenisgrondslag en struktuur van die nuwe verenigde kerkverband, die groot sake is. As 'n oplossing hierin gevind word, kan ander – “meer praktiese” – sake “saam” onderhandel word.

Hieronder plaas die Algemene Sinode van 2004 'n nuwe kerkorde, die naam van die nuwe kerkverband, teologiese opleiding, die organisasie van kerklike werk, finansies, eiendomme, taak ensomeer (NGK 2004:428). Die Algemene Sinode van 2007 besluit ook om sinodes aan te moedig om met die Diensgroepe vir Diens en Getuienis van die ander kerke in die familie te verenig en besluit om dit self op die algemene sinodale vlak te doen. Dieselfde Sinode neem dankbaar kennis dat die familie van NG Kerke betrokke is by 'n gesprek oor teologiese opleiding (NGK 2007:207).

Volgens Hartenbos 2004 moet hierdie sake “met wysheid, oorleg en sensitiewe hanteer word”. Meningsverskil oor hierdie kwessies behoort egter nie in die weg van kerkeenheid te staan nie (NGK 2004:428).

Verder verklaar Hartenbos dat kerkeenheid “indringende gesprekke en begeleiding op alle vlakke” vereis: veral met gemeentes en lidmate. Kerkskeuring “na enige kant” moet “ten alle koste” vermy word. In die proses moet alle gemeentes, predikante en lidmate saam hierdie pad aanpak. 'n Proses waarin daar vorentoe beweeg word met ruimte vir mense met huiwering en vrae. Strukturele eenheid op algemene sinodale vlak gaan 'n langsame proses wees (NGK 2004:428). Boksburg 2007 voeg hieraan toe dat hy die NGK-gemeentes in 'n konsultasieproses in die tweede helfte van 2007 wil betrek waarin hulle kommentaar en insette op die voorstelle van Achterberg II lewer. Hierdie insette en voorstelle moet dan deur die Moderamen verwerk word en saam met die besluite van Hartenbos 2004 met die ander drie kerke van die NKG-familie onderhandel word. Daarna kan finale voorstelle in 2008 aan die gemeentes voorgelê word (NGK 2007:206).

Ten hierdie tyd is dit ou nuus dat die Algemene Sinode van die VGKSA op grond van 'n voorlegging van sy Algemene Sinodale Kommissie hierdie proses effektief beëindig het. Dit het gebeur toe die VGKSA Hartenbos 2004 en die reaksie van die NGK-gemeentes in 2007 op die eenheidsvoorstelle as innerlik weersprekende én finale besluite wat vir die VGKSA nie aanvaarbaar is nie, geïnterpreteer het. Op grond daarvan het hy op sy bekende moratorium besluit (VGKSA 2008:194vv).

Die VGKSA het die gesprek beëindig voordat dit sy finale, beslissende fase kon ingaan.

SLOT

Intussen bly die NG Kerk se Algemene Sinode verbind tot gesprek met die drie ander lede van die NGK-familie en sy eie gemeentes. Maar dan geen eensydige gesprek waarin hy die buitelyne of grense by voorbaat eensydig bepaal nie. Die aard van die saampraat is immers gesprek en nie 'n blote inligting- of informasiesessie "van bo af" nie...

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TREFWOORDE

Belydenisgrondslag
Belydenis van Belhar
Struktuur van kerkverband
Meningsverskille
Groei na eenheid

KEY WORDS

Confessional basis
Confession of Belhar
Structure of denomination
Differences of opinion
A growth to unity

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Mission, medicine, and power: A Foucauldean perspective

ABSTRACT

For mainline church and theology, the awareness of underlying power structures is of relevance when developing and evaluating theological constructions of health, illness, and healing. This article aims at raising this awareness by way of interdisciplinary research. A Foucauldean frame of reference is applied to the missionary medicine paradigm in order to reveal structures of power as social and religious control hidden in missionary medicine's health constructions and therapeutic practices. The Foucauldean interpretation of the relationship of mission, medicine, and power might very well function as a steppingstone in the development and evaluation of theological articulations of health, illness, and healing in the African context.

1. INTRODUCTION

In the African context, mainstream church and theology are facing the challenge of articulating their conceptualizations of health, illness, and healing clearly. Against the backdrop of the HIV/AIDS pandemic, many believers are struggling to make sense of illness and suffering within the parameters of their own experience, beliefs, ideas, and traditions. The theological discourse is slowly but increasingly responding to these interpretation processes of believers, and a growing number of contextual approaches to health and healing are constructed.

This article is a contribution to the theological discourse on healing in the African context. It is part of a wider (PhD) research on health paradigms in the Southern African context in relation to a Reformed pneumatological perspective on health, illness, and healing. There are basically four main health discourses to be discerned in the Southern African context (the ngoma discourse, the missionary medicine discourse, the HIV/AIDS discourse, and the faith based healing discourse), and each health paradigm has its own impact on how people in Africa develop their understandings of health, illness, and healing. These subjective health constructions have been explored extensively within various social science disciplines (esp. cultural and medical anthropology), and the presumption in this article is that any theological reflection on healing needs to be part of and nurtured by interdisciplinary academic research if it wants to be meaningful, in the sense that it responds to the health seeking behaviour of believers, in the African context.

The focus in this article is the missionary medicine paradigm. The health concepts and practices of medical missionaries in Southern Africa resulted from and were determined by the developments of Western biomedicine. Yet missionary medicine can be regarded as a discourse on its own, based on its extra dimension of Christian belief and ideology in relation to health, illness, and healing. The purpose here is to explore the notion of power within the missionary medicine discourse. Is it possible to say that the notion of power is a crucial constituent of missionary medicine? And if so, what was its function within the missionary medicine paradigm?

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What does this mean for theological reflections on health, illness, and healing within the African context?

The first part of this article is a brief characterization of missionary medicine. Based on how illness was perceived and treated by medical missionaries, missionary medicine can be characterized as a powerful blend of Protestant theological doctrines and European illness etiologies. The description of this *mixtum compositum* provides the foundation for the second part of this article: the exploration of the notion of power within the missionary medicine discourse. A Foucauldian frame of reference is applied in order to get a clearer view on this notion of power (as social and religious control) and on how it functioned within the discourse. The reason for using a Foucauldian lens is that it traces power exactly there where power dissolves in its concrete application. In other words, a Foucauldian-based analysis of the missionary medicine paradigm lays bare those dimensions of health concepts and treatment practices that otherwise remain absent in missiological and church historical treatises of medical missions, or — even more important — in systematic and practical theological debates on church and healing in the African context.

2. CHRISTIAN MEDICINES

Missionary medicine, or Christian medicine (Hardiman 2006:25), refers to European biomedicine that is imbued with Christian notions as a result of the impact of the modern missionary movement in the nineteenth century. One example of the influence of this nineteenth century combination of Christian faith and scientific bio-medicine is the language of biomedicine: “Although there have been persistent attempts to revise and mathemise the language of medicine, the modern discipline still reveals rich traces of its religious inheritance. Neurology is still permeated by Christian notions of order and hierarchy whilst modern pathological concepts of viruses and germs remain rooted in the magical language of agency.” (Hayward 2004:58)

2.1 European illness etiologies

One of the elements that make up the distinct nature of Christian medicine is the way illness was perceived by those who reached out in order to bring healing among African peoples. In the missionary discourse, illness etiology was a *mixtum compositum* of Christian beliefs and developing scientific insights. The rigid Enlightenment dichotomy between faith and science had not fully materialized in this field, because basically all medical missionaries (at least up to the second world war) were committed Christians dedicated to practicing their personal faith by offering medical treatment. These medical doctors and nurses stood firmly in the Protestant tradition that was gradually impacted and redefined by political, economic, socio-cultural, and scientific developments in the European context. Simultaneously, the missionary’s religious beliefs about health and healing that were configured by Protestant doctrines were supported and even justified by Western feelings of cultural superiority in the era of nationalism and imperialism.

Generally speaking, the attitude of medical missionaries towards disease and illness was precipitated by the Western attitude towards dirt and filth. During the Enlightenment, health and fitness became bourgeois shibboleths in response to the aristocratic obsession with blood and heredity (Foucault 1978; Porter 1985:186; Hardiman 2006:11). The emphasis on health was intricately linked with a disdain for the flesh and its supposed uncleanness. Particularly the female body was the epitome of uncleanness because of its ambivalent physical state that was related to and projected in childbirth and related circumstances (Shorter 1983). In the same vein there was a supposed relationship between uncleanness and sexual activity.

Later on, in Calvinistic circles the emphasis shifted more and more to cleanness as a virtue. John Wesley is often mentioned as one of the initiators of the idea that there is a relation between cleanliness and health: physical well-being could be achieved by moral excellence. However, Wesley's adage of cleanliness as a virtue "next to Godliness" was not the message that was reflected in the thinking and practices of mid-nineteenth century Christians. While John Wesley's theology conveyed the importance of hygiene, purity, and moderate living as a means to become more pious and godly, others would regard the laborious tasks of cleaning, washing, and bathing as a virtue to distinguish one self from the poor and the miserable in society. "Clergy of that time favoured cleanliness to promote not piety but Christian respectability, and eventually, health." (Hoy 1995:3).

In the context of increasing industrialization, urban settings became the scene of sanitation. The awareness grew that hygiene was crucial in the prevention of cholera and other diseases that flourished among crowded and dirty households. City administrators and public health officials began to implement sanitary regulations, and the public effect of eliminating filth as prevention measure was enormous. The importance of health prevention over cure also started to trickle down to other dimensions of life: religious thinking and practices — already embracing the link between body, environment, and cleanliness — now demonstrated a clear preference for and emphasis on order, neatness, and immaculate living. The realization that hygiene promoted a healthy life was supported by the message of the religious revivals: people "began to prepare for the Second Coming of Christ by living more in accordance with the "laws of nature" and by distrusting the pills and drugs prescribed by would-be doctors." (Hoy 1995:6) In striving to live a life that was in perfect harmony with God and that would resist and refrain from sin, one could produce health and healing. Piety and purity were perceived as "a prophylactic against sin and sloth, the mark of the elect" (Porter 1985:186).

2.2 European illness etiologies in Africa

These ideas about physical and moral health in combination with a forceful rejection of dirt were transposed to the African context. The pre-modern African life-styles that the (medical) missionaries encountered, gave rise to the idea that Africa was inherently dangerous, filthy, and full of diseases. Throughout the colonial era, (medical) missionaries reported on the primitivity of Africa and they emphasized that the continent "was inhabited by backward, pagan peoples who suffered from inherent illness and a host of indigenous, pathological evils and defects." (Good 2004:43) The missionaries understood their perspective as justified on biblical grounds: all the diseases and disabilities that are mentioned in the New Testament were abundantly present in the African context (Hardiman 2006:26). And, in the perspective of the missionaries and their supporters, the biblical justification also covered the presence of the (medical) missionaries in Africa: the ignorant inhabitants of dark Africa were in need of civilization and liberation of the evil forces that captivated many people.

The projection of Western illness etiologies on Africa created an antithesis, and this antithesis became a crucial part of missionary medicine. Medical practitioners and other missionaries started to define Christian medicine on the basis of the constructed characteristics of its African competitor. Substantiated with scientific biomedical insights and supported by biblical interpretations, 'African medicine' was portrayed as everything opposed to the medical knowledge, skills, and practices that were part of the missionary frame of mind. Africa stood for everything ranging from primitive, ignorant, pagan, mysterious to dark, cruel, evil, and witchcraft, while the Western world was depicted as modern, sensible, Christian, developed, rational, clean, illuminating, good, and exemplary. The antithesis had developed into a battle that in essence determined the course of missionary medicine.

The discourse of Christian medicine had become a battle against Africa itself, whereby the advocates of missionary medicine regarded the Africans “as the merest adjuncts to the central conflict with the continent.” (Hammond & Jablow 1992:169) With such a demeaning and depersonalized perspective of Africa, it was not difficult to accept the idea that the African condition (dark, disease, filth, evil, suffering) was “the sweat of sin in Adam” (Beidelman 1982:110). Basically the whole missionary venture was saturated with this kind of thinking about suffering and sin: there was a close relationship between disease and ungodly living, and the African context was the proof of it. On the other hand, health was the result of inner salvation, and the presence of (medical) missionaries would facilitate this kind of moral redemption (Vaughan 1991:66; Good 2004:43) The connection between physical condition and spiritual state was not new in the Protestant tradition; however, in relation to Africa the fine balance between body and soul had been distorted by the drastic and zealous approach of the missionary movement: the subjection of the body to the soul was the key to missionary success.

3. MISSIONARY MEDICAL POWER

Approximately since the 1990s remarkable studies have been published on missionary (and colonial) medicine with a particular focus on the exercise of power. The practices of medical missions during colonial times have been evaluated with a Foucauldian frame of reference: concepts like power, the body, the gaze, and medical knowledge that were developed by Michel Foucault (mainly in his *Birth of the Clinic*) have been applied to the discourse of missionary medicine. These Foucauldian based analyzes reveal that Western social and cultural attitudes influenced so-called objective biomedical science. That in itself is not novel, but the cultural construction of illness and of “the African individual” through biomedical discourse turned out to be a powerful tool of social control (Vaughan 1991:73).

After a brief clarification of three Foucauldian concepts (body, power, gaze), these concepts will be related to the theory and practices of missionary medicine.

3.1 Foucauldian concepts

3.1.1 *The body*

The assumption of the Foucauldian paradigm is the contingent state of the body: the body is not something fixed and ready to be read, examined, and treated, but is something that comes into being under influence of the relationship in which the body is. The body of an individual becomes the body of a patient, directing the focus on the disease that needs to be treated, when examined and pressed or cut by the hands of the medical practitioner. So, in Foucauldian terminology, the body is continuously configured and re-created by the power relation of which the body is part. “The individual, with his identity and characteristics, is the product of a relation of power exercised over bodies, multiplicities, desires, forces” (Foucault, in Gordon 1980:74). The difference between conventional approaches of histories of medicine and Foucauldian based approaches, is epitomized in how the body is viewed: according to the Foucauldian paradigm, it is impossible for social and medical science to view the body of the individual as starting point, as the entry of research, since the body is only the result, the invention, and the effect of the actions of the researcher or the medical practitioner. The body is created during the research process and emerges from the treatment instead of being the point of entry from where the research starts (as in conventional approaches implying that the body is a fixed, unchanging entity being the basis of actions and insights of the researcher or medical practitioner). Because of the different perception of the body (namely as the effect of the relation with the researcher or

the doctor), in the Foucauldean approach the body is interpreted as “the very locus of insertion of their knowledge” (Butchart 1998:14). Drawing the attention to the body and the relationship as its framework in which the body exists, leads to the revelation of power that is exercised over the body or the individual. The body is the magnifier or key to discovering the power at work in a personal, national or global relationship.

3.1.2 Power

The concept of power occupies a crucial role in the theories of Foucault. ‘Power’ should not be understood according to conventional interpretations of it. ‘Power’ is not a force in a fixed form, or a product resulting from interests, or something that one person does have while others do not have it; “power is not a stricture, or a certain force with which people are endowed; it is a name given to a complex strategic relation in a given society” (Foucault, in Gordon 1980:27). Foucault makes a distinction between sovereign power and disciplinary power – two forms of power that can exist together as well as opposite each other.

Sovereign power is often visible in a relation. This visibility is even necessary for sovereign power since it is a force that is being exercised downwards, from one central point towards the subjects who are supposed to acknowledge and affirm this ruling sovereign power. The power of a king is visualized in his appearance, and *visa versa* the appearance of the king emphasizes his power; in the same way the mechanism of sovereign power can be explained. In short, sovereign power is being fed by visibility, it exercises control by way of threats and intimidation, and it is centralized in one position ruling over and controlling many subordinates.

The other form of power is disciplinary power. The mechanism of disciplinary power came into existence at a time when the mechanism of sovereign power began to fade under the influence of cultural and scientific developments. These changes in culture and science also impacted the system of ruling within society. Disciplinary power is a general idea capturing every expression or approach aiming at organizing, classifying, controlling, and analyzing every individual in a given society. Foucault exemplified Bentham's 1843 design of an ideal prison (the Panopticum) to explain the concept of disciplinary power. The Panopticum was a circular shaped building designed in such a way that all prisoners were continuously visible in their cells. The guard was able to exercise control over each individual inmate in his cell while being invisible himself. The process of individualization of each prisoner in his cell, and the situation of continuously being exposed to the surveillance of the guard are the crucial elements of the mechanism of the disciplinary power regime. “The Panopticum therefore made the operation of power continuous by inducing in the inmate a state of conscious and permanent visibility that assured the automatic functioning of power” (Foucault 1978:201). The shift to disciplinary power, which should not be understood as replacement of sovereign power since these two forms are always in co-existence, was also made possible by developments in medical science. The study of the anatomy of the human body caused the researcher to focus on the interior of the individual. The body and the individual became the focus point of many methods that were applied in exploring and grasping the human being.

The most important difference between sovereign and disciplinary power is the notion of visibility. Sovereign power is sustained by its visibility while disciplinary power does not depend on its visibility. A relation determined by disciplinary power requires not the power to be visible, but those on whom disciplinary power is exercised. They are the ones who need to be seen, who have to be visible. The very moment of entering the situation of being seen, watched, and inspected, the targets of disciplinary power change into individual objects that are being assessed according to a specific norm established by comparison with others.

3.1.3 *The gaze*

In a relation of disciplinary power, in the monitoring and manipulating of the individualized body, the body transforms into an object that at the same time is also the effect of disciplinary power, of the surveying eye. In the Foucauldean framework, this process is closely related to the disciplinary gaze. "It refers both to how things have appeared to medicine and to the techniques by which medicine has made things appear, in coming to have particular knowledge of the human body" (Butchart 1998:17). The gaze is the technique applied by the guard or the medical practitioner in observing the prisoner or the patient. This technique is by definition also the boundary of the practices of the guard or the doctor, because the act of seeing and the way of observing is determined by and limited to the zone of social-cultural values and insights.

The gaze, the technique or way of observing, of the medical practitioner is the disciplinary power by which first and foremost the doctor himself is created. Only afterwards does the gaze of the doctor invent the body that is examined. Both the medical practitioner and the body are objects and effects of the disciplinary medical gaze controlling the relation. So the gaze should not be identified as just a specific skill the medical practitioner has to acquire; the gaze is a power regime governing the way people speak, see, and act. In this sense the gaze itself is the creator and inventor of the medical practitioner, and the medical practitioner becomes the object and effect of disciplinary power himself before he exercises with his medical gaze disciplinary power on the body of his patient.

3.2 **Medical mission's power regime**

When discussing missionary medical power from a Foucauldean perspective, importance is attached to the gaze of the medical missionary that turns the relation between medical missionary and African body into a relation in which the medical missionary is exercising disciplinary power on the African body. The gaze as power regime and the individualized human body as its object and effect, constitute the two main themes in Foucauldean analyzes of missionary medicine.

3.2.1 *Regime of sanitation*

At the time of missionary practices in Africa, the human body was viewed as "an anatomical container of disease which the hospital medicine produced as its object and effect" (Butchart 1998:74). Based on the anatomical approach in medical science a shift in localizing diseases had taken place: disease was now localized, specified, and classified in relation to the interior of the human body, and the consequence was the drawing of a clear line between everything happening within the human body and whatever was existing outside the human body. As a consequence of this new gap between body interior and body exterior, hygiene became an important issue in medical science and in urban society. "Thus the focus of late nineteenth-century public health became the zone which separated anatomical space from environmental space, and its regime of hygiene developed as the monitoring of matter which crossed between these two great spaces" (Armstrong 1993:396). In this sense, sanitary science enhanced a disciplinary regime since society was now split up in individuals who were governed by physical prohibitions and regulations. Human wastes needed to be controlled and individuals needed to be informed and medically reformed. It was inescapable that medical missionaries, who were objects of the hygiene regime themselves, now generated the disciplinary regime by transporting their scientific insights to Africa. Waste as the new ordering principle in many European and American societies had an enormous impact on society and interpersonal relations in the colonies. The western frame of bodily control was now also imposed on the colonized subjects, often in name of civilization. A characteristic of this focus on the body is that it brought along social and political control of the subordinate, exactly according to the principle of disciplinary power. The waste practices

as method to improve the public health situation in a given society offered at the same time “a potent means of organizing a new, teeming, threatening environment” (Anderson 1995:643).

The focus on hygiene also became the ordering principle of the medical missionaries’ practices: their endeavours to liberate Africans from ignorance and superstition in order to civilize them were impacted by the strategy of *moral* sanitation. “Analogous to how sanitary science in Europe individualized the body by delineating the boundaries between it and the environmental space, this new colonial power constellation emerged in the formation of missionary medicine as a device of ‘moral sanitation’ directed to the boundary between the African body and a surrounding space of customs, rites and superstitions” (Butchart 1998:75). Moral sanitation implied that everything that could distract the African body and soul from becoming cleansed and purified in order to be saved had to be interrupted, put to an end, and if necessary destroyed. The African body and soul had to be aligned towards the light of the Gospel, and moral sanitation was viewed as a necessary means to achieving the healing of the body and cleansing the soul from impurity.

Moral sanitation as a disciplinary power can best be identified by examining the practices of the medical missionaries, since power is difficult to recognize as something defined, explicit or obvious, but it can be traced “at its extremities (...) those points where it becomes capillary” (Foucault, in Gordon 1980:96). According to the Foucauldean approach power should not be detected where it can be logically and easily located (with specific people in specific positions in a given society), but it should be traced exactly there where power dissolves in its concrete application on the ground, “such as the way the doctor’s hands palpate the body, or how built space conditions hygienic habits” (Butchart 1998: 32).

3.2.2 Manipulation of the body

One of the most crucial aspects of medical missionaries’ practices is the relation between illness and sin, for this link offered the possibility to combine medical practices with evangelism activities. The practices of the medical missionaries aimed at treating and curing the sick body in order to heal its sin. The focus on the individual body was induced by the biomedicine paradigm with its emphasis on distinguishing between the interior of the body and the exterior environment, and its assumption that manipulating and protecting the interior of the body will safeguard it against the evil of the exterior environment. Localizing pain in the body concretized restricting illness to and indicating illness in the body. “Imaging illness meant finding a site for pain” (Landau 1996:272). And precisely in the act of localizing pain in the individual the power of discipline reveals itself: in localizing pain in the body of the individual, the medical missionary “localized the *linkage* between pain and wrongdoing to the individual” (Landau 1996:275. Italics original). Just as the doctor was able to remove the pain from the body, so he was able to uplift the sin of the individual by treating and reconfiguring the African body.

In this sense, the application of minor surgery exhibits the power of discipline that manipulated and re-created the individual African body. One of the most successful therapeutic activities in medical missionaries’ practices was minor surgery (see Landau 1996:267; Butchart 1998:82). Striving for winning or creating individuals who would no longer be controlled by evil powers and superstitions, but be cleansed, purified, and civilized, surgical work appeared to be an effective device. “People went to Europeans to be cut” (Landau 1996:267), something which did not happen often in African traditional therapeutic practices because cutting the body on purpose meant not only damaging that specific part of the body but the body as a whole. ‘Wholeness’ carried a different meaning for Africans compared to western medical missionaries who generally approached the body as a network of separable parts. According to the western paradigm the body was a container of health or disease, so when disease was localized in the

body, it could only be removed from the body itself. Despite the different views on the body of the individual as well as of the community, Africans suffering from illnesses were attracted by the practice of surgery of the western missionaries. Surgical work was quick and obvious: “(t)he removal of huge and disabling tumours remained occasions for the dramatic display of the powers of European surgery” (Vaughan 1991:59). The impressiveness of surgical work and the fast relief of pain served the purpose of convincing local people to become Christians.

Landau (1996:275ff) suggests that this interest in minor missionary surgery also had to do with the interpretation of surgery as rite of passage. Elaborating on the practice of tooth pulling, he shows how the African patient, during the treatment by the medical missionary, undergoes an alteration of the body, which can be seen as one of the most important aspects of a rite of passage. The patient is passing to a new status, and this new status is visualized in a changed appearance, and experienced in the pain that was necessary to reach this new status. “One might even argue that missionaries intended tooth-pulling to be a rite of passage, in that they constantly wished to lead Africans across a threshold into a new, and more perfect, civil order” (Landau 1996:277).

Whether the attraction of surgery is to be explained by the notion of blood and the visibility of this bearer of life on the clothes of the doctor after an operation, contributing to the apparent power over life and death of his patient (see Butchart 1998:82), or whether it has to do with the deconstruction and reconfiguration of the body as part of a rite of passage, a moving away from the norms and beliefs that were captivating the Africans, with the accompanying transition of the soul (see Landau 1996), might be worthwhile to investigate further. Here it suffices to mention that medical mission relied on biomedicine's discursive strategy by manipulating the individual body, while creating a clear distinction between body and soul, in order to make converts.

3.2.3 Invention of the individual

A further aspect of the practices of medical missionaries was the invention of the individual as an object and effect at the same time. Invented individuals themselves, the medical missionaries aimed at promoting the potential status of the individual over against the invisibility and therefore the inaccessibility of the mass or kinship group. The gaze of the medical missionary saw the body of the African as an instrument or a device to reach the soul of the African. For that purpose the space between the body, the individual African with organs and a soul, and its environment had to be addressed. Just as a tumour had to be cut out of the body, in the same way the environment of the individual African had to be eliminated. The environment was occupied by influences of the African tradition, and these beliefs, customs, rites, and regulations of the tribe had to be overpowered by Christian faith, medicine, and practices. The therapeutic practices of the missionaries disturbed the traditional communal ties, and threw them off balance by introducing the concept of the individual. African traditional thinking about health and illness was intrinsically linked with the social network of relations. “Malleable but reliable communal ties were the best insurance of good health” (Landau 1996:266), and from the perspective of the missionaries these communal ties had to be stripped of their influence in order to save the African soul. Substituting the kinship community for the idea of the individual, and locating illness in the individual body in stead of the interpersonal zone of forces, matched very well with the “Protestant's (...) understanding that conversion was a result of inner conflict and turmoil. The evangelical assumptions of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century missionaries insisted on individual attainment, an elevation of the autonomous Self. Converts had to undergo an internal struggle, leading to a difficult and important resolution.” (Landau 1996:274) The manufacturing of the individual, the direct manipulation of the body in order to remove impurities which disclose the threats of the African tradition and community, and the

conversion of the individual which was seen as moral sanitation or internal decontamination point towards disciplinary power and its requirement to make the target over whom power is exercised visible.

3.2.4 Site of healing

Another aspect of the therapeutic activities of the missionaries is the site of healing. The site, the location, where the African body was examined and treated, appeared to be important in the process of making converts. Up to the 1920s the medical practices resembled the therapies of the African priest-healers in the sense that the healing therapy or treatment required to be seen and dramatized: it needed to be witnessed by others who were supposed to be in awe by what they had seen. This theatre or spectacle of healing often happened in the open air, in the vicinity of medical dispensaries where patients would assemble and wait for their turn to be treated. The carrying of the medicine chest, the display of instruments that were going to be used, the examining with the stethoscope, the tooth-pulling or setting of broken bones, the distributing of medicine – all these practices can be viewed as instruments of visibility aiming at manipulating and converting the African body and soul to the kingdom of God and to civilization. The spectacle's features of display witnessed by impressed onlookers resemble the mechanism of the sovereign power regime with its visibility and demonstrated dominance. "The spectacle of sovereignty addressed the onlookers in whose beliefs and deeds were reproduced the forces of darkness that had to be made to bow to 'civilization'. But running alongside, almost incidental to the drama that attracted the African's attention, coursed the whispering currents of disciplinary power: through the doctor, through the catheter and stethoscope" (Butchart 1998:81).

In the 1920s mission hospitals started to emerge, and the hospital as fixed site of treatment and healing shifted the accent in the regime of dual powers: the healing spectacle with its openness and visibility changed into a fixed site where patients were examined and treated in seclusion. The shift from outside to inside, from open to isolation, symbolized the shift in power mechanism: "the dominant power investing in the work of the medical missionary switched from that of conspicuous sovereign to silent surveyor of African suffering and superstitions" (Butchart 1998:83). In fact, the emergence of mission hospitals shifted the attention from successful achievements supported by impression by the onlookers who would spread the good news of the missionaries, to the debilitating circumstances of the Africans. Especially in the hospital, where so many sick people gathered, the diseases and their causes were magnified and over-emphasized. The gaze of the medical missionaries saw African bodies and souls being threatened by traditional beliefs and practices. These sick bodies were held hostage by witchcraft beliefs and therapeutic practices of the African doctor, and the missionaries' pursuit to liberate these bodies and to win them for the Gospel was represented in the mission hospital as healing site, and its threshold was imagined as the absolute separation between superstition and salvation (see Butchart 1998:85). The hospital's power over the heathen African body and soul exemplifies the power regimes, which constituted the missionary practices.

5. CONCLUSIONS

A brief look at illness etiologies and therapeutic practices as basic features of missionary medicine in Africa gives birth to the idea that the notion of power is a central tenet in the missionary medicine discourse. Health constructions as well as illness interpretations by medical missionaries turned out to be important catalysers in the process of reaching out to Africans. The health-illness correlation was often synonym for cleanliness-dirt, European-African, salvation-sin. Consequently, therapeutic practices were framed according to these correlations, and according

to the idea that the body had become the site for spiritual outcomes. Although the exercise of power and control over Africans is not directly obvious and visible, the notion of power certainly lingered under the surface of health ideas and healing practices of medical missions.

A further, critical exploration of the notion of power within the missionary medicine discourse was done with a Foucauldian frame of reference, because such an approach reveals more clearly the mechanisms of disciplinary power in a particular area of society. The main implication of the Foucauldian based analysis is that disciplinary power permeated the whole medical missions discourse, because it nurtured western biomedical faith-based healing constructions and it fuelled those missionary activities that aimed specifically at the conversion of Africans.

The notion of power thus functioned as a firm foundation for the healing-conversion constellation of missionary medicine. Consequently, many currently existing and prominent health concepts (generated by medical missions) in the African context are based on, or at least influenced by, the same relationship of disciplinary power, conversion, and healing.

Even though mainstream churches generally reject a direct link between conversion and healing, between sin and suffering, they do not address the ever present notion of power in this triangle, whilst disciplinary power turns out to be the fuel of the cluster, and therefore at least needs to be acknowledged in theologies of healing produced by mainstream tradition.

The Foucauldian based analysis in this article represents a challenge and an opportunity for mainstream theology in Africa regarding reflections on health, illness, and healing. The exemplification of missionary medicine with its invisible disciplinary power generates the suggestion that equivalent under-the-surface power structures might also be present within the current relationship of church, theology, HIV/AIDS, and healing. The notion of power becomes concrete in its application when one looks, for example, at the dichotomies that continue to exist in the theological discourse on HIV/AIDS: international sources are referred to as knowledgeable informants, whilst African sources rather function as local eyewitnesses; theological health constructions are foremost determined by the general scientific consensus, whilst socio-economic factors, indigenous knowledge systems, or individual experiences play a subordinate role; theological health concepts are constructed by the minority on behalf of the majority that is often portrayed as helpless victims; and the language used to articulate health concepts is infused with dominant negative words like “the needs”, “the deficits”, “destruction”, and “suffering”, which actually reinforces the idea that infected people are automatically disadvantaged and dependent on external sources. I intend to explore these issues in-depth in my broader research project in the field of theology, power, and illness. And one of the proposals will be that the Foucauldian lens can be used as a critical tool in the development and evaluation of theologies of healing in the African context.

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KEY WORDS

Missionary medicine
Healing
Power
Foucault
HIV/AIDS

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Cottesloe 50 years later: Did the Dutch Reformed Church answer to the call?

ABSTRACT

The Cottesloe consultation took place fifty years ago. The declaration after the consultation made a call to the church in South Africa to get involved in the struggle against the unjust system of Apartheid. Although the declaration was met by negative reaction from the Dutch Reformed Church, the church struggled since 1961 through various synods to answer to the call of Cottesloe. After the first answer, *Human relations and the South African scene in light of scripture*, was rejected, it was back to the drawing board. The final answer was eventually given at the Rustenburg conference in 1990 after several important impulses influenced the theological thinking in the church. Although the Dutch Reformed Church officially answered to the call in 1990 the challenge of Cottesloe still remains, fifty years later.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Cottesloe consultation took place from 7-14 December 1960. The consultation's declaration made an appeal to all churches in South Africa to get actively involved in changing society in South Africa. It was met by strong negative reaction from the major white Afrikaans Church, the Dutch Reformed Church. The call which Cottesloe made on the church, could however not be ignored. Almost 50 years later it is appropriate to revisit the events which led up to the consultation, but more significantly, to ask the question: Did the DRC answer to the call?

The aim of this article is to give a short overview of the events that led to the consultation and to the declaration itself. It will then focus primarily on the struggle which took place in the Dutch Reformed Church on her way to answer to the call of Cottesloe, before concluding that the DRC did answer to the call of Cottesloe, but only 30 years later at the Rustenburg conference in 1990.

2. THE ROAD TO COTTESLOE

2.1 1960 year of political turmoil:

The year 1960 will always be remembered as one of the stormiest years in the history of South Africa (van der Merwe 1990:10). It all started when the prime minister, HF Verwoerd announced in parliament that a referendum¹ would be held in order to decide to become a republic (Pelzer 1963:306). On the 3 of February the British Prime Minister, Harold Mc Millan held his famous "Winds of Change" speech² in Parliament in Cape Town while non white political organizations targeted 1963 as the year of freedom for South Africa. This led to widespread unrest in black populated areas (Lombard 1981:191).

The unrest and competition between the African National Congress and the Pan African

1 Only the white population could vote in the pre 1994 South Africa.

2 Mc Millan warned that the struggle for freedom which happening in almost all of Colonial Africa was on it's way to South Africa and that there would be now way to escape it.

Congress to get the majority support from the masses added fuel to the fire which reached its zenith on 21 March 1960 in the black township of Sharpeville when Pan African Congress supporters marched on the police station to protest against the pass laws (Giliomee & Mbenga 2007:335). The Police panicked and started shooting, killing 69 and injuring 180 more³. On 30 March 1960 the government called a state of emergency and detained more than 18000 people over the next few weeks. On 8 April it banned the ANC and the PAC (Giliomee&Mbenga 2007:335).

Sharpeville and the events which followed drew the eyes of the world to the injustice taking place in South African society. One person, who played a major role, was the Anglican Bishop of Johannesburg, bishop AR Reeves (Steenkamp 1987:124). His letters and reports led to an enquiry by D Kitagawa, secretary of the study group on "Intergroup Relations" of the World Council of Churches. This led to letters from WA Visser' t Hooft⁴ to CB Brink, BJ Marais and AR Reeves to gain information on the situation in South Africa (Steenkamp 1987: 124). As a result of further correspondence between the World Council of Churches and churches in South Africa,⁵ RS Bilheimer departed on a fact finding mission to South Africa on 18 April 1960 ⁶ He had to consult with the different churches. On 20 April, the thought of a church conference was already on the table and after further consultation a planning committee was named and the decision was taken that the conference would take place from 7-14 December 1960 at Cottesloe in Johannesburg (Van der Merwe 1990:19-20).

2.2 The Cottesloe Declaration: Call to the Dutch Reformed Church

Although the official history of the ecumenical movement has only one passing reference to the Cottesloe consultation, it was a gathering of great importance for the churches in South Africa (De Gruchy 2005:64). The concluding statement which was issued after the conference comprised of three sections (Cottesloe 1960:1). Part one rejected all forms of injustice and emphasized that: "in its social witness the Church must take cognisance of all attitudes, forces, policies and laws which affect the life of a people; but the church must proclaim that the final criteria of all social and political action is the principles of scripture regarding the realisation of all men of a life worthy of their God-given vocation" (Cottesloe 1960:1).

De Gruchy (2005:64) makes a correct assessment by saying that it was in Part Two that far-reaching consensus was achieved. It started by saying: "We recognise that all racial groups who permanently inhabit our country are a part of our total population, and we regard them as indigenous. Members of all these groups have an equal right to make their contribution towards the enrichment of the life of their country and to share in the ensuing responsibilities, rewards and privileges", (Cottesloe 1960:1). In the following paragraphs it addressed the wrongs that were part of the heart of the apartheid system. In paragraph 6 the declaration read: "No-one who believes in Jesus Christ may be excluded from any church on the grounds of his colour or race" and paragraph 10: "There are no Scriptural grounds for the prohibition of mixed marriages." Paragraph 11: "we call to attention once again to the disintegrating effects of migrant labour on African life." Paragraph 15:" It is our conviction that the right to own land where he is domiciled, and to participate in the government of his country, is part of the dignity of the adult man and for this reason a policy which permanently denies to non-White people the right of collaboration in

3 Although there are many different accounts of what actually happened, there are consensus about the numbers of dead and injured (Steenkamp 1987:198).

4 Dr WA Visser't Hooft was the General Secretary of the World Council of Churches (De Gruchy 2005:61).

5 Detail about the corespondation in (Van der Merwe 1990:16).

6 RS Bilheimer was a minister of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America and one of the four general secretaries of the World Council of Churches.

the government of the country of which they are citizens cannot be justified.” Part three included specific resolutions about justice in trials, freedom of worship, freedom to preach the gospel and future consultation and cooperation between churches (De Gruchy 2005:65). The declaration was a definite call to the Dutch Reformed Church, and indeed also to the other two Afrikaans churches, to take a stand against the government’s policy of apartheid. This is confirmed by the dramatic response from Prime Minister HF Verwoerd himself (De Gruchy 2005:65). Verwoerd condemned the declaration in his New Years message saying: “the churches have not yet spoken. The voice of the churches still has to be heard through the different synods where members and ministers are present.”⁷ Strong reaction followed from conservative groups in the church and in April 1961 the Transvaal synod of the Dutch Reformed Church strongly criticised the delegates to the consultation and rejected the declaration of the consultation (Van der Merwe 1990:28). The Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa followed in October 1961. This led to the withdrawal of the church from the World Council of Churches (De Gruchy 2005:67). What was meant to be a highpoint suddenly became a low point. What should have been an enormous ecumenical breakthrough became a serious breakdown in relationships between the different churches in South Africa. The call from Cottesloe on the Dutch Reformed Church, was however loud and clear! In some way the church had to give an answer to the call. The importance of the call is confirmed by the actions of the acting moderator of the time, Beyers Naude⁸. He founded the Christian Institute which led to him being deprived of his ministerial status by the Dutch Reformed Church and later to his banning by the state (De Gruchy 2005:67).

3. THE STRUGGLE TO ANSWER TO THE CALL

3.1 A first answer

The fact that Cottesloe was a call to the Dutch Reformed Church that could not be ignored was first realized by the Cape Synod of the Church. During the 1961 synod, the circuit of Cape Town requested the synod to appoint a permanent commission for the study of race Relations (Handelinge 1961:51). The appointment of this commission was the important first step in formulating an answer. In 1965 the commission tabled a report about the church and race relations in South Africa. This report became the vehicle which transported the call from the Cottesloe Consultation from synod to synod and kept the discussion about race and relations between races in the Dutch Reformed Church on the agenda (Van der Merwe 1990:35).

It formed the basis of a report tabled at the General Synod of 1966, before another revision was tabled at the Cape Synod of 1969 (Handelinge 1969:193). In 1970, the General Synod of the Dutch Reformed Church decided to appoint a permanent commission for the study of race and ecumenical issues (Handelinge 1970:785). The report from this commission which was approved by the General Synod in 1974⁹ was published in 1975 under the title: *Ras Volk en Nasie en volkereverhoudinge in die lig van die Skrif*¹⁰. It was also translated into English under the title: *“Human Relations and the South African Scene in the light of Scripture”* (Van der Merwe 1990:110). The fact that this was the first official answer to the call of Cottesloe was confirmed by a remark from FE O’ Brein Geldenhuys¹⁰. He wrote: *“With Human relations and the South African Scene in the light of Scripture under my arm, I went to Europe to present it to all the important*

7 My Own translation of the following: “In feite het die kerk nog nie gepraat nie. Die stem van die kerk moet nog gehoor word en wel op sinodes waarop lidmate sowel as predikante teenwoordig is” (Van der Merwe 1990 :23).

8 Beyers Naude was Moderator of the Dutch Reformed Church in Transvaal

9 The report is discussed in (Van der Merwe 1990: 96-104).

10 O’ Brein Geldenhuys was the first Director of Ecumenical issues in the DRC

protestant churches in England, the Netherlands, Germany and Switzerland. The request to all of them was: This is the point of view of the DRC about the South African scene. Please study it and let us discuss it" (O' Brein Geldenhuys 1982:81).

The content of the document was nothing else than a confirmation of the church's support for the policy of the National Party government, giving *separate development*¹¹ a biblical foundation.¹² *Mixed marriages* were undesirable and forbidden and common worship was only permissible in special situations. It was nevertheless still severely criticised by conservative groups in the church, as being too liberal and moving away from the true biblical point of view and the well known policy of the church.¹³

That this answer was no answer at all came hard and clear from churches outside South Africa. Although there were also voices criticizing the document from a more liberal side from within South Africa,¹⁴ it was the protestant churches in Europe that tore the document apart.

The Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland reacted by denouncing the document. One of the major points of critique was the fact that the document sanctioned the political policy of separate development and gave it a biblical foundation (Van der Merwe 1990:167). The Swiss Federation of Reformed Churches¹⁵ invited a delegation of the Dutch Reformed Church to a conference in Louvain.¹⁶ Main points of criticism against the policy adopted by the Dutch Reformed Church was the interpretation of scripture, the prophetic calling of the church, separate development, and a large dualism between theology and practice in the document (Van der Merwe 1990:190). After their visit to Switzerland the delegation went to Germany to meet with delegates of the Reformierte Bund. In a report which was published after the discussions the Bund declared: "We can therefore, only regard the NG report of 1974 as a theological confirmation of the present political system in South Africa, in which the separation of races means in practice the dominion of the one and the discrimination, denial of rights and exploitation of the other" (Handelinge 1982:157). Serious questions were also asked about the use of scripture in the document. A press release from the Reformierte Bund on 22 September 1979 summed up the dilemma of the Dutch Reformed Church: "Against the background of the terrible consequences of the Homeland policy, against the background of the news we get about torture and banning, against a background of a church divided according to race, we have asked their advocating for the disadvantages of the oppressed and their involvement in the struggle for church unity. Our dialogue partner could not give a satisfactory answer, because they had to hold on in general to the present official line of the NGK as outlined in the 1974 Synod report: 'Human relations and the South African scene in the light of scripture'" (Handelinge 1982:157).

The Protestant churches not only severely criticised the document, but by 1982 they had severed all relations with the Dutch Reformed Church (Van der Merwe 1990:205).

It is clear that the answer formulated by the Dutch Reformed Church did not make the grade. Severe criticism from conservative groups in the church and the rejection of "Human Relations" by the reformed churches in Europe made it important to go back to the drawing board. It was

11 Separate development was the term used for the policy which became known as apartheid.

12 In its reaction the Reformierte Bund in Germany declared: "We can therefore, only regard the NG report of 1974 as a theological confirmation of the present political system in South Africa, in which the separation of races means in practice the dominion of the one and the discrimination, denial of rights and exploitation of the other" (Handelinge 1982:157).

13 Van der Merwe 1990 p117 -135

14 Dr Allan Boesak criticized the decisions of the synod and warned that a major confrontation was on hand (Die Burger 22 Oktober 1974:1).

15 The Swiss federation of Reformed Churches published the document: "Theology – Advocate or Critic of Apartheid? A critical study of the Landman Rapport".

16 The conference took place from 2-6 April 1979 in Le Louvain Switzerland

however, not only critique against the document that led to a decision to review the answer of the Dutch Reformed Church. New impulses also played an important role.

3.2 Important new Impulses

3.2.1 The Reformed day witness

One of the important impulses which stimulated the Dutch Reformed Church to formulate a new answer was the Reformed day witness of 1980. Not only did it influence the way of thought in the church, it also showed the enormity of the struggle which took place in the church in search for a new answer. Signed by eight theologians¹⁷ from the Dutch Reformed Church, the Witness was published on 5 November 1980 in *Die Kerkbode*, official newspaper of the Dutch Reformed Church (*Die Kerkbode* 1980: 695). The Witness called on the church to answer to its prophetic calling in a South African which became more and more polarized making mention “of the divine calling of reconciliation on a meaningful and credible basis in a situation of increasing tension and polarization between population groups in the country”. It also called on the church to strive for: “the elimination of loveless and racist attitudes and actions which caused hurtful incidents” and to “a form of church unity in which the oneness of believers adhering to the same confession can take a visible form.” It also made mention of the fact that the DRC could make a God honouring contribution to a: “deeper consciousness of the demands of God’s Word under which both the authorities and their subjects are called to reform the present order, so that every individual can be given the scope to realise their potential as the bearer of the image of God” (Van der Merwe 1990:203).

The Witness caused a storm in the church which lasted for several months. Newspapers were flooded with letters, statements and counterstatements.

Although some researchers like Els (2008:82) likes to point out that the witness was “too little too late”, it was the start of a sincere struggle in the Dutch Reformed Church which would eventually lead to a meaningful answer to Cottesloe.¹⁸

3.2.2 The Open Letter

The next important impulse, which gave momentum to the struggle in the DRC, was the publication of the Open Letter on 9 June 1982 (*Die Kerkbode* 9 Junie 1982:1). Signed by 123 ministers and theologians from the Dutch Reformed Church family, the letter criticised Apartheid legislation and pledged them to work and pray for justice in society (Els 2008:85). The Letter stressed that: “the primary task of the church in our country is the ministry of reconciliation in Christ.” It went further by saying: “reconciliation includes a prophetic witness in relation to the entire life of society and therefore the church dare not remain silent on those matters of moral decay, family disintegration and discrimination” (Els 2008:86).

Els (2008:85) is correct when he says that: “the DRC establishment was staggered by the Open Letter.” It was met by fierce critique from official Dutch Reformed Church circles. Although nothing was said about the content of the letter, the critique was focused on the method which was followed and it was stressed that according to church policy the letter could not be received (Els 2008:85). It was further stressed that the timing and publication of the letter was a well planned move to influence the General Synod which would convene later in 1982 (Van der Merwe 1990:307).

Although there was a solid wall of opposition from the Dutch Reformed Church, an indication

17 The Witness was signed by CFA Borchardt, HJB Combrinck, BA Muller, WP Esterhuysen, JA Heyns, WD Jonker, HW Rossouw and AB du Toit

18 The reaction to the Reformed day witness and the way in which the theologians were handled in the Transvaal emphasize the ferocity of the struggle that started (Van der Merwe 1990: 235-260).

of the overwhelming sentiments in the church (Els 2008:85), the letter was a movement to a new way of thinking. The voices of the Reformed day Witness were becoming a chorus with the Open Letter and could no longer be ignored.

3.3 Church and Society: a second answer?

3.3.1 The General Synod of 1986

During the meeting of the World alliance of Reformed Churches in Ottawa in August 1982, the DRC was suspended. Apartheid was declared a heresy.¹⁹ Another blow hit the Dutch Reformed Church in September 1982²⁰ when the Nederduitse Gereformeerde Sending Kerk declared that it could do nothing else but accuse the Dutch Reformed Church of heresy and idolatry because of the legitimising of Apartheid on the basis of Scripture and announced a Status Confessionis (Skema van Werksaamhede 1982:606). A concept confession was drafted which would become the Confession of Belhar in 1986 (Els 2008:88). WD Jonker summed the situation up correctly by saying: "This brought the DRC to an unavoidable situation....I was convinced that the DRC was put in a position where it has to take a serious decision" (Jonker 1988:162). The Dutch Reformed Church had no other choice but to revise *Human Relations and the South African scene in the light of scripture*. The first answer to Cottesloe met a dead end and a new answer had to be formulated. This important decision was taken during the General Synod of the DRC in 1982 and a commission was appointed to do the important work (Handelinge 1986:1201).

At the meeting of the General Synod in 1986 a new document *The Church and Society* was laid on the table for discussion and finalising (Els 2008:90). This was a new policy document on Race relations in South Africa. In the introduction social concerns were discussed and the religious scene in South Africa was examined. This was followed by basic Scriptural principles regarding the Bible as the "yardstick" of the church and its focus on the Kingdom of God. In the following chapters the nature and calling of the church were discussed, followed by prophetic task of the church. The role of the church in group relations led to an ethical discussion on Christian behaviour before the document concluded with a practical description (Hofmeyr 1991:378). JA Heyns, the newly elected moderator of the Synod explained the important new course of the Dutch Reformed Church during a press conference. Scriptural grounds for Apartheid were rejected and the church doors of the Dutch Reformed Church were now open to people of all races. Membership was also open. The Synod also decided that mixed marriages could not be prohibited on Scriptural grounds (The Star 23 October 1986:1).

This was an important new attempt to answer the question raised at Cottesloe. The full scale storm which broke loose confirms that this was a new course but that the course was not acceptable to all the members of the church. It led to an immense struggle in the church. As the intensity of the storm grew, even the Moderature, with the exception of Heyns turned back by saying: "nothing has changed" (Meiring 1994:180). Meanwhile meetings and protest meetings were organized in congregations and towns. Even politicians got involved. AP Treurnicht, leader of the Conservative Party, said at the annual congress of the party that brown and black people could now become ministers in DRC congregations (Die Burger 25 Oktober 1986:1). This did not help to calm emotions and it soon became clear that a church split was becoming a reality. At a meeting of 2500 Dutch Reformed Church members which took place on 28 November 1986 in Pretoria, it was decided to appoint a committee to look into the possibility of founding a new church (Die Burger 29 November 1986:1). This was the first step and despite all the efforts from the Dutch Reformed Church, a new church was founded on 27 June 1987. It became known as

19 Proceedings of the 21st General Council of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, 17-27 August 1982. Ottawa. Canada

20 Skema van Werksaamhede van die Ned Geref Sendingkerk 1982

the Afrikaans Protestant Church, a church for white Afrikaners only (Van der Merwe 1990:677). 19 Ministers and more than 5000 members of the DRC left to join the new church (Van der Merwe 1990:682). The church split confirms that the struggle from the DRC was sincere and intense. Heyns (Die Kerkbode 22 Julie 1987:6) described it as: "one of the darkest days in the history of the DRC". Although the reaction on *Church and Society* created a major storm in the Dutch Reformed Church it also laid the foundation for the General Synod of 1990.

3.3.2 The General Synod of 1990

The General Synod of the DRC met in Bloemfontein from 16-25 October. Els (2008:93) is correct when he writes: "In the history of the DRC this meeting will be known for its dramatic decisions on Apartheid in South Africa. It was the culmination of a process that started in 1978 with the adoption of the document *Human relations in light of Scripture* (HRS). This was revised and in 1986 the document *Church and Society* (CS) was adopted as the official policy of the DRC. The Synod of 1986 opened the way for discussions of Church and Society and asked members to send their grievances and objections as well as 'better formulations' so that it could be revised and presented to Synod in 1990."

During the synod certain changes were made to aspects of Church and Society and it was adopted as the official decision on race relations.

The Synod declared the following:

282. The Dutch Reformed Church, however, acknowledges that for too long it has adjudged the policy of Apartheid on the above named grounds too abstractly and theoretically, and therefore too uncritically...

283. While the Dutch Reformed Church, over the years, seriously and persistently sought the will of God and his Word for our society, the church made the error of allowing forced separation and division of peoples in its own circle, to be considered a biblical narrative. The Dutch Reformed Church should have distanced itself much earlier from this view and admits and confess its neglect.

285 Any system which in practice functions in this way is unacceptable in the light of Scripture and the Christian conscience and must be rejected as sinful. Any attempt by the church to defend such a system biblically and ethically, must be seen as a serious fallacy, that is to say it is in conflict with the Bible.

286 The Dutch Reformed Church wants to state clearly that it condemns all forms of discrimination and the suppression of peoples and wholeheartedly desires that all will be free to share in the privileges of the fatherland and will receive reasonable and equal opportunities to acquire prosperity and riches.

The unjust system of Apartheid was clearly condemned by the synod and although the synod also declared that not everything can be branded as wrong and inhuman.

"One cannot deny that positive developments were also achieved during this time" (Church and Society 1990:38-40).

From this revised document it is clear that the Dutch Reformed Church answered to the call of Cottesloe in a much more acceptable way. By denouncing the political system of Apartheid and the injustice it created, the wrongs that were identified by Cottesloe were answered to. The church did however not in so many words confess apartheid as a sin. This had to wait for The Rustenburg Conference in December 1990

4. RUSTENBURG 1990: THE LONG AWAITED ANSWER?

In December 1989, State President FW de Klerk, made an appeal to the churches in South Africa

in his Christmas message to formulate a strategy “conductive to negotiation, reconciliation and change for the situation in South Africa” (Du Toit, Hofmeyr, Strauss & van der Merwe 2002:105). A steering committee was appointed under the leadership of dr Louw Alberts to organise a conference of church leaders from across the spectrum of Christian churches in South Africa to “rediscover its calling and to unite Christian witness in a changing South Africa”(Alberts & Chikane (eds) 1991:15). The conference was held from 5-9 November 1990 at the Hunters Rest Hotel outside Rustenburg (Du Toit, Hofmeyr, Strauss & Van der Merwe 2002:105). The delegation of the Dutch Reformed Church consisted of PC Potgieter, moderator of the General Synod of the church, P Rossouw, DJ Hattingh and FM Gaum. JA Heyns and WD Jonker were present as speakers.

During Jonkers’s address he made the confession that resounded throughout the world within hours. He said: “I confess before you and before the Lord, not only my own sin and guilt, and my personal responsibility for the political, social, economical and structural wrongs that have done to many of you, and the results of which you and our whole country are still suffering from, but vicariously I dare also do that in the name of DRC of which I am a member, and for the Afrikaner people as a whole. I have the liberty to do just that, because the DRC at its latest synod has declared Apartheid a sin and confessed its own guilt of negligence in not warning against it and distancing itself from it long ago”(Alberts&Chikane(eds) 1991:92).

After Jonker’s address, Archbishop Desmond Tutu reacted by saying:” Prof Jonker made a statement that certainly touched me and I think touched others of us when he made a public confession and asked to be forgiven. I believe that I certainly stand under pressure of God’s Holy Spirit to say that, as I said in my sermon that when confession is made, then those of us who have been wronged must say ‘We forgive you’, so that together we may mover to the reconstruction of our land. That confession is not cheaply made and the response is not cheaply given”(Alberts &Chikane (eds) 1991:96).

Like so many times before, this special moment was marred by what happened next. From all over South Africa messages and telegrams were received to thank Jonker, but there were also those who asked the question:”who gave him the right to confess on behalf them and the Afrikaner people.” Even the previous State President PW Botha phoned Potgieter to object to the confession.(Els 2008:97). The next morning Potgieter asked to make a statement about the issue. He said that there are delegates who doubt if the confession was really genuine with respect to the position of the DRC. He then continued by saying (Jonker 1998:207): “The delegates of the DRC want to sate unambiguously that we fully identify ourselves with the statements made by Prof Jonker on the position of the church. He has in fact precisely reiterated the decision made by our General Synod in Bloemfontein recently. We would like to see this decision of the synod as the basis of reconciliation with all people and all Churches”.

Although the Dutch Reformed Church again made their own declaration after the conference²¹ the confession of Jonker and the statement by Potgieter is to my mind the answer on the call made by Cottesloe 30 years earlier. After three decades of intense struggle within the DRC, Apartheid and all the injustice that went with it was denounced.

5. CONCLUSION

Twenty years later and 50 years after Cottesloe, it is time to revisit the question: Did the Dutch Reformed Church answer to the call of Cottesloe? Officially the answer is: Yes. History tells us that after an intense struggle in the church and even a church split in 1987, Apartheid and all

21 Jonker wrote:”we left Rustenburg under a cloud in spite of all the wonderful things that happened there” (Jonker 1998:208) .

the injustice that went with it, were denounced. The Dutch Reformed Church even confessed its own role in the establishment of Apartheid. Pieter Potgieter, however, summed up the current situation correctly when he wrote (Potgieter 2002:216): “The discussion about when and where the DRC crossed the Rubicon about apartheid will go on. Was it with the General Synod of 1986 and its policy document Church and Society? Was it at the General Synod of 1990 or was it the Rustenburg Conference in 1990? Or, is the DRC’s Rubicon still in the future, encapsulated in its struggle for church unity?”

Although the Dutch Reformed Church have answered to the call of Cottesloe, the challenge of a South African society still marred by separation, poverty, racism and all kinds of injustice still echoes the call of the Cottesloe declaration. The impasse in the church unification process within the family of Dutch Reformed churches still remains a challenge, but so does the justice called for by the Cottesloe consultation 50 years ago.

For all churches in South Africa, it is time, *ke nako*²², to listen carefully, to look carefully and to speak up, to take up the challenge to make South Africa a better place for all! By doing that, Cottesloe won’t be a relic, but will be part of the living history of the church in South Africa.

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- The Star, 23 October 1986 p1

Church Documents

- Handelinge van die Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk in Suid Afrika: 1961
- Handelinge van die Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk in Suid Afrika: 1969
- Handelinge van die Algemene Sinode van die Ned Geref Kerk: 1970

22 Ke Nako means “It is time” and was the slogan used to promote the 2010 FIFA World cup in South Africa.

Handelinge van die Algemene Sinode van die Ned Geref Kerk: 1982
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KEY WORDS

Cottesloe
Apartheid
Church and Society
Rustenburg conference
Dutch Reformed Church confession

Recent developments and challenges in understanding the Dutch Reformed family of churches' missional identity and calling

ABSTRACT

The article focuses on recent developments in and discourses on the missionary or missional calling and identity of the Dutch Reformed Church Family. The historical legacy of an ideological missionary approach and involvement, the reaction of younger sister churches, important workshops and declarations, the struggle for unification as well as the post-Apartheid context, contributed significantly to this process of understanding its calling to witness and service. It is a continuing discourse which is currently also impacted by a new understanding of "being" missional congregations.

In October 2006 the domestic family of Dutch Reformed Churches, the Dutch Reformed Church (DRC), the Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk in Afrika (NGKA), the Reformed Church in Africa (RCA) and the Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa (URCSA), formed a united structure for service and witness. It is called the United Ministry for Service and Witness. This newly formed structure adopted an important declaration on its calling to service and witness in unity². This declaration is a significant development in the continuous theological reflection on the church's missionary (missional?) identity and calling.

This article aims to briefly tell the story of how and on what theological basis the domestic family of DRC Churches came to the formation of a united ministry for service and witness. The legacy of more than two centuries of the DRC's mission policy and practical involvement in mission and diaconal service, resulting in the younger churches' struggle for independence and the family's struggle for reunification, has had a significant impact on the process. Some recent developments and specific events in the South African post-apartheid context however, also played a major role. In the successive stages of the process of reflecting on the church's missionary identity, calling and practice, the Bible has been read differently, emphasising different texts and hermeneutics. Some important declarations on the church's understanding of its calling to witness and service also guided the process. From a new angle the current discourse on "missional congregations" is also contributing significantly to the discourse on defining the church's missional calling and identity.

1. BRIEF HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE ON THE DUTCH REFORMED CHURCHES' INVOLVEMENT IN MISSION AND SERVICE

1.1 An important feature of the DRC is its immense historical involvement with mission work in Southern Africa (Cronjé 1981, Crafford 1982). The planting and the growth of several churches

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2 See document attached below

in Southern Africa can be directly linked to the historical mission involvement of the DRC: domestically there are the Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk in Afrika, the Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa and the Reformed Church in Africa, and abroad there are the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian (the Nkhoma-Synod in Malawi as well as the Harare and Zambia Synods of the CCAP), the Reformed Church in Zambia, the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe, the Dutch Reformed Church in Botswana, the Church of Christ amongst the Tiv (Nigeria), the Reformed Church in East Africa (Kenya), the Igreja Reformanda em Mozambique and the Swaziland Reformed Church (Cronjé 1982). There are also established churches in Namibia and Lesotho, but they form part of the DRC, NGKA and URCSA. For more than a century missionaries sent out by the DRC contributed sacrificially in establishing many mission schools, special institutions for the deaf and the blind, hospitals, developmental- and agricultural projects, theological training institutions and so forth.

However, while celebrating the contribution of the DRC missionaries, the enormous contribution indigenous members – the elders, evangelists, ministers and especially women – of the different churches made in building these churches, should never be forgotten. Many of these mission areas – so we increasingly discover - were “opened up” by pioneers sent out by the erstwhile NGKA and the Dutch Reformed Mission Church, as well as evangelists from the young sister churches in our neighbouring countries (Crafford 1991). Some of those pioneer missionaries even started working years before the DRC actually became involved by officially sending out missionaries to these areas.

A family of independent churches in southern and central Africa evolved, with historical and confessional ties, sharing a joint tradition and calling. At the height of the DRC’s mission involvement with these sister churches, a Federal Council of Dutch Reformed Churches was established in 1964, expressing the concept “family of churches” as a federal bond between independent churches. For several reasons, like perceived paternalistic trends and the hampering of the domestic reunification, the existence of this council has increasingly been questioned. It stopped functioning in the late seventies.

1.2 The DRC is also known for the major role it played in caring for the poor (“Armesorg”) and other forms of compassionate services throughout the 20th century (Van Aarde 2002:411-419). Many special institutions for the blind, the deaf, orphanages, old age homes, etc. were built and different forms of social services rendered. Towards the end of the century the DRC could be regarded as one of the largest providers in social services in South Africa – next to the state probably the largest social service provider! This work became institutionalised. Organisations for delivering effective diaconal services were formed and it was done in close cooperation with and supported by the government.

1.3 The development of the younger churches’ own mission and diaconal services were in a sense restricted; as objects of service and witness they mostly depended on the work done to them by the “mother church”. The spontaneous witness and diaconate done by members in local congregations of the younger churches, resulting in the rapid growth of these churches, were also not recognised as such. Some wonderful institutions for orphans, the deaf and blind, the training of social workers, etc. were established by the diaconal services of the Dutch Reformed Mission Church, for instance (Botha 1986:35-53).

1.4 Despite all the good work, this very contribution in service and witness has eventually been driven by the ideology, which became known as apartheid. At some stage it was even blatantly called “our mission policy of apartheid”, for instance in booklets and articles written by the

Mission Secretary of the DRC Free State, rev JG Strydom, and officially distributed by this synod (Strydom 1939, 1946). Many dissertations have been written on the role the mission policy, which was adopted by the Federal Mission Council in 1935, played in the DRC's theological justification of apartheid. One example was how, under the influence of the 19th century German ("Volkskirkliche") missiology, the text of Matthew 28:16-21 - the so called great commission to go to the nations - has been interpreted to mean that separate, indigenous churches must be planted for each people group (Robinson 1986:86-101). Other texts that played a major role in this "Apartheid Bible" (Loubser 1987, Kinghorn 1986) were Genesis 1:25, Deuteronomy 32:8 and Acts 17:26. These texts were read as unchangeable "orders of creations" or "laws of nature", commanding the separateness of nations and therefore also of the different "Volkskirche" (Adonis 1986:78-81). The so called "daughter churches" were established with the ideal of being guided and supported by the so called "mother church" into separate, independent and indigenous churches.

The same applies to the DRC's compassionate service during the 20th century. This work focussed mainly on the alleviation of poverty and the social uplifting of the Afrikaner people, often excluding people of other races. It became customary in the DRC to understand compassionate service to be work done amongst the "white" members of the DRC and the diaconal and social work amongst black people has been called "mission".

1.5 This approach in mission and service led to a reaction by the younger churches, especially during the latter half of the 20th century. The Sharpeville Massacre (1960) and the ensuing debates and church struggles, questioned and criticised this apartheid hermeneutic, especially in the mission policy of the DRC. The younger churches struggled for independence and pushed for political, social and cultural liberation. The mission policy of the DRC and the role missionaries played were increasingly questioned. Missionaries had to withdraw from the mission field in large numbers. The history of many different decisions by younger churches, the formulation of different documents, a "status confessionis" (1982) and even a new Confession of Belhar (1986) by the erstwhile Dutch Reformed Mission Church, are examples of this struggle against a mission policy that kept churches separate and dependent. The mission policy of the DRC had to be revisited. The baggage of the ideological understanding of mission (witness) and diaconal services had to be shed.

2. WORKSHOP ON "WHAT IS MISSION" – 1986

2.1 A Workshop on mission, convened at the University of the Western Cape in 1986, played an important role in this process of coming to a new understanding of mission (Robinson and Botha 1986). Representatives of several churches in the DRC-family (domestic and abroad) participated in this historical workshop. The aim was to come to a joint understanding of what mission entails. The discussion was frank. Amongst others, JC Adonis of the Dutch Reformed Mission Church fundamentally questioned the mission policy of the DRC and how it has been implemented in practice. In another keynote speech David Bosch gave a principled definition of mission. He emphasised mission in a kingdom perspective. By kingdom he meant God's involvement with the whole of creation, working towards comprehensive peace (shalom). In explaining this, he gave an exposition of Luke 4:18-19: "good news for the poor... the year of the Lords favour." The church's mission is flowing forth from and is partaking in the *missio Dei* – God's mission and action to realise shalom. All the mission ministries of the church are facets of this *missio Dei* and are constantly driving the church to cross boundaries of geography, religion, culture, ideology, social class, language, race, etc. Crossing boundaries, and not setting boundaries, like

in the previous understanding of mission, became the new principle. The participants of the conference eventually formulated a joint working definition of mission. The church's mission (mission ecclesiae) flows from the realization that mission is first and foremost God's mission (missio Dei) and that the churches' calling to a holistic witness (marturia) should include the following dimensions: proclaiming the Word (kerugma), acts/services of love (diakonia), the forming of a new community of love and unity (koinonia), the zeal for a just society (dikaïoma) and worship (leitourgia). It was also accepted that the integrity of mission depended on it being done in unity - the reunification of at least the domestic family of Dutch Reformed Churches was accepted as an urgent goal (Robinson and Botha 1988:62).

After the events of 1986, the DRC entered a period of debate and reflection, culminating in a comprehensive declaration on Church and Society in 1990 (Church and Society 1990). The church confessed its role in providing a biblical basis for apartheid and its active participation in the implementation and maintenance of this ideology, as sin. The DRC committed itself to a process for the reunification of the DRC Family. Its own mission policy was adapted to include the 1986 workshop's formulation. A period of withdrawal from the traditional mission fields resulted in the end of what some would call a specific "colonialist" mission era.

2.2 In the early nineties the South Africa society changed dramatically. In 1994 the new South African democracy was born. In that same year the Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk in Afrika and the Dutch Reformed Mission Church merged to form the Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa. However, several congregations of the NGKA, especially in the Free State and Northern Cape, decided to exclude themselves from the unity process and to continue the NGKA. This led to a period of prolonged tension, disputes about the existence of the NGKA and court cases about church buildings. The status of the Belhar Confession as prerequisite for the unity process became a point of dispute. The Reformed Church in Africa formulated the Laudium Declaration (1990) on its reformed, evangelical identity, being a missionary church in its own predominantly Hindu and Muslim context. Real reconciliation will not come overnight; deep schisms, distrust and wounds of the past still had to be healed. How to create space for different identities within the one church became an important question. The struggle for unity would take much longer than expected. As sister churches on a pilgrimage to unity (Nel and Du Toit 2007) the DRC Family still has to properly deal with the sadness and pain of the legacy of apartheid.

2.3 Towards the end of the 20th century it became clear that a new era has dawned. The old mission paradigm began to shift (Van der Watt 2003:224, Saayman 2003:194-212). In a recent overview on the DRC's mission history, Saayman dealt with the successive eras in the DRC's mission history from a social history point of view (Saayman 2007). The focus shifted from institutionalisation (work done by synods or institutions for diaconal service) to the witness and the diaconate of local congregations (Van Niekerk 1997:408-416). Congregations were again recognised to be the primary agent for service and witness.

Since the dawn of the "new" South Africa in 1994, the world opened to many congregations of the DRC. Many members could again travel abroad; thousands chose to emigrate. The focus in many congregations shifted to world mission, to the "unreached" peoples. Para-church mission organisations facilitating this shift mushroomed during the nineties and early years of the first decade of the new millennium. Acts 1:8, especially the reference to the "ends of the earth", became the dominant text. Could this be seen as an escape from the realities and challenges of the southern African context? Was this a brief interlude? It coincided with the growth of new-Pentecostalism and Charismatic churches and the decrease in membership of most mainline churches – especially those within the reformed tradition. The DRC had to redefine and re-

establish its own identity and calling as church within the South African context – now as a much more vulnerable church that lost its previously powerful and beneficial position.

The DRC increasingly identified itself to be part and parcel of the South African context - a context of poverty, HIV/Aids and other diseases, different dimensions of suffering and discrimination, violence, crime, the urgent need for reconciliation in the country, ecological deterioration, etc. - posing real challenges to the church (Meiring 1989, Kritzinger 2002). In 1998 the General Synod of the DRC established a task team to specifically focus on reconciliation, poverty and HIV and Aids (the so called “VAM Kommissie”) and this led to the year 2001 being called the “Year of Hope” as well as some important declarations on the Dutch Reformed Church’s calling in 2002 and 2004 (Van der Merwe 2004:428-439). The DRC deliberately ventured to understand its existence in terms of its calling in the southern African contexts; the 2002 declaration on its calling ends with a hopeful reaffirmation: “Ons het `n Here. Ons is hier. Ons is sy kerk.” (“We have a Lord. We are here. We are his church”). The DRC committed itself to making a contribution towards the healing of the land, but this time round in a more humble way. It realised that these challenges called for a united venture - the DRC would not be able to take up the challenges on its own. Mission partnerships and “unity in mission and mission in unity” (Bosch 1991:463-467) became important facets in the understanding of the calling to service and witness.

3. JOINT STRUCTURE FOR WITNESS

3.1 After a tedious process of negotiation and consultation, a joint structure for witness was formed in 2003. The URCSA, RCA and the DRC joined their witness activities in the General Commission for Witness of the Dutch Reformed Family of Churches. The NGKA initially only participated in observer status. The formation of this body was a breakthrough – whilst the churches still hesitantly discussed the options for unification, the witness ministries already formed a united structure, taking over responsibility for the witness agendas of the participating churches. This newly formed united body arranged an important workshop at Stellenbosch on the eve of Pentecost 2004. Representatives from many parts of Africa: Nigeria, Malawi, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Botswana, Namibia, Swaziland, Lesotho and South Africa reflected together on “our calling to witness in and from Africa today”. The workshop declared: “We experienced deep joy in our fellowship with one another, in the presence of God, knowing that we have many Christian brothers and sisters in Africa. We were blessed and challenged through our diversity by one another’s stories and perspectives. We also shared the pain, the affliction and the groans coming to us from various local contexts on the continent of Africa”. This conference intentionally built on the 1986 workshop on “What is mission?” (Robinson and Botha 1986), listened anew to one another, reflected on the shared calling to witness in unity and the clear need for real hope in and from Africa.

Critical papers were read, on the role and plight of women (a gender sensitive reading of texts), the task of theological training, the role of local congregations, the growth, but also the struggles of the church in Africa in the face of poverty, corrupt governments, civil wars, HIV and Aids, etc. The task of carefully discerning the African context was stressed. The calling to a public witness, partnerships and unity in mission (Pauw 2004) were underlined and especially what it meant to witness about hope in and from the African soil (Botman 2004). Rian Venter, then lecturer in Lusaka, presented a keynote paper on a reformed understanding of mission in an African context (Venter 2004). He challenged the meeting to come to a consistent Trinitarian understanding of ecclesiology and mission. The texts that were mostly considered during these deliberations were John 17 and 20, as well as Ephesians 4 – texts that focussed on the Trinity and

unity. An extensive declaration on “our calling to witness in and from Africa” was formulated by Johan Botha, assisted by Piet Meiring and Gideon van der Watt (Botha 2004). It was adopted by the workshop.

4. A UNITED MINISTRY FOR SERVICE AND WITNESS (2006)

During the last couple of years the DRC entered a process of restructuring its work on general synod level. Although the general synod’s agenda should cover the whole field of the church’s ministry, it was accepted that the functions on general synod level should be distinguished from that of regional synods, presbyteries and local congregations. The general synod’s function is to advise synods, take responsibility for research, planning, coordination, information, guidance and liaising and it may, in the execution of its tasks and in cooperation with synods, launch projects in order to stimulate the actions of synods and congregations. Apart from these functions of general synod, three dimensions or focus areas in the ministry of the church can be differentiated, but should not be separated from each other: the vertical focus on God (worship, confession, etc), a focus on the ministry within the congregation (equipping members, pastoral care, youth work, etc) and a focus on the world (witness and service). This model for structuring the ministry of the church, which was originally adopted by the leadership in URCSA, influenced the thinking in the joint process. The formation of the Kaapse Getuïensinsakie (KGA) – the united structure for service and witness in the Cape Synods - also served as an example to the national process. The core ministry of the church should therefore be structured in such a way as to reflect the three dimensions. Apart from these core ministries, there should also be supporting structures, taking care of finances, church order, theological training, etc. The commissions for service (diaconate) and witness (mission) were consequently structured in one ministry, focussing on reaching out - focussing on the world.

The realisation dawned that service and witness not only belong together for practical reasons, but also in principle. It is not possible to separate the two, neither in principle nor in practice. This reality needed to be reflected in the structuring of the church’s ministry. Firstly, the merging of the service and witness functions into one structure had to be implemented in all the domestic churches of the DRC Family. After that process had been completed, a meeting of representatives of the ministries for service and witness of the respective churches were convened in October 2006. The respective ministries for service and witness of the four churches could eventually become one, united body. A new constitution was adopted for the “United Ministry for Service and Witness”. From now on the four churches, still in the process of re-unification, already started sharing one agenda and joining activities on general synod level. This could only have happened after a breakthrough in the deadlock in the unity process during August 2006, where the leadership of all four churches recommitted themselves to covenant for the re-unification of the family.

5. A NEW UNDERSTANDING OF THE CALLING TO SERVICE AND WITNESS IN UNITY

In a preamble to the constitution for this newly formed unity structure for service and witness, a new understanding of the calling to service and witness in and from southern Africa was formulated and adopted. This formulation resulted from an intensive process of discussion and reflection by the executive committee of the United Ministry for Service and Witness. During a retreat at Achterberg in 2006 all the biblical texts quoted in the document were read and reflected upon by a task group consisting of Johan Botha, Willie van der Merwe, Carl Swart, Hennie van Deventer, Andries Hoffman, Victor Pillay and Gideon van der Watt. During the first

official meeting of the United Ministry for Service and Witness, convened at the Roman Catholic Church's Good Shepherd Retreat near Hartbeespoortdam, under the joint chairmanship of Piet Meiring and Jimmy de Wet, representatives of all synods of the participating churches adopted the declaration. But that only happened after the document had been carefully reviewed again. It really became a joint effort, a historical event celebrating the culmination of a long process of coming together again, at least in terms of the DRC Family's calling to witness and service. The document was built on the 2004 declaration, deliberately defining the church's mission (mission ecclesiae) in the mission of the Triune God (missio Trinitatis Dei), in the love, care and unity flowing from the being and the acts of the Triune God. Mission (service and witness as two sides of the same coin) was understood as a holistic calling, a being in the world, but also an active service in love and a united witness about the faith in Christ as Saviour and King. Mission was to be done through the different modes of being/living before God (coram Dei), through worship and intercession, kerugma, diakonia, koinonia, but also by seeking justice, healing and reconciliation and being involved in the responsible conservation and cultivation of nature. The importance of continuously discerning the challenges posed by the southern African context, as well as the church's calling to public witness was stressed. Mission was not only primarily the calling of congregations, but also of the many other modes of being church. Mission in unity and unity in mission was of utmost importance.

Since the formation of the United Ministry for Service and Witness, this new structure focussed on several projects: working with overseas partner churches (USA, Germany and the Netherlands), on several diaconal projects, on the reception of the Accra declaration, on enhancing intercultural exchange programs amongst youth, violence in our society and possible ways of enhancing reconciliation, on the functioning of a joint HIV Aids forum, literature, ecology, public witness, etc.

In September 2009 a conference, in which representatives of the broader DRC Family of Churches (including the sister churches from Botswana, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Malawi, Lesotho, Namibia, Nigeria, Mozambique, Kenya and even Angola and the Democratic Republic of Congo) partook, was convened. The theme was "mission in partnership", focussing on guidelines, values and the role of leadership in working in partner relationships in our Southern African region. Mission was increasingly understood in terms of relationship (koinonia) and unity, mutuality and respect, collaboration and fellowship.

However, the loss of momentum in the domestic unity process and the deterioration of relationships between leaders hampered the realisation of a legitimate and credible mission in unity. Disunity in the DRC Family remains the biggest stumbling block in coming to a credible participation in God's mission in our southern African context

6. MISSIONAL CHURCH – YET ANOTHER APPROACH?

The South African social, economical, political and cultural context changed dramatically since the emergence of the new democratic dispensation in the 1990's. It occurred simultaneously with other significant global changes apparently only "arriving" in South Africa since 1994: increasing secularism, the phasing in of post-modern thought- and value systems, the dawn of a post Christendom era which also entailed the decline in western mainline churches and the southward shift to what Philip Jenkins call "New Faces of Christianity" (Jenkins 2006, see also Sanneh 2008). Many members of the DRC Family emigrated overseas or inwards, into new forms of laager. These developments put many congregations of the DRC (and our sister churches) under pressure: it became a struggle just to survive or to maintain what was left of the ministry. It became clear that a new vision of identity and calling – especially of local congregations - was of utmost importance.

From a fresh angle, this time the practical theology and congregational studies, a new missional movement or partnership was established. The South African Partnership of Missional Churches came into being, focussing mainly on the missional identity and calling of local congregations. This South African movement was strongly influenced by developments in North America, like the Gospel and our Culture Movement, publications on the new concept of missional church by theologians like Darrel Guder, Graig van Gelder, DJ Hall, Allen Roxburgh, Scott McKnight and Pat Keifert, as well as theologians reflecting on the emerging church movement like Rob Bell and Brian McLaren. Leading role-players in South Africa were, amongst others, Frederick Marais, through *Communitas* and the SAPMC, Jurgens Hendriks through *NetAct* and post graduate training programs and Nelus Niemandt by the publication of his book on the emerging churches movement (Niemandt 2007). Lesslie Newbigin and David Bosch, however, remained the two most influential theologians and guiding lights in this movement.

The essence of the movement lied in the refocusing on the Triune God and the church's participation in the *missio Dei*. It also focussed on the missional nature of the church – especially the local congregation. In this missional ecclesiology there was a clear theological shift from a functional approach (mission as one aspect of the church's ministry) to a foundational approach, based on the church being an agent of the *missio Dei* and deliberately and essentially missional in all aspects of the understanding of the church and its ministry. Miroslav Volf's work "After our likeness: the church as the image of the Trinity" (1998) played a key role in defining this emphasis on the Trinity (Hendriks 2008:3). Another key concept in this movement was the discernment journey in which congregations were guided by dwelling in the Word, especially Luke 10:1-12. The rediscovering the narratives of the early church (the Book of Acts) and the similarities of these contexts to our own situation were also evident. This strategy of discernment coincided with a "season of listening" announced and implemented within the Dutch Reformed Church since 2008 and which is entering a second phase of "listening across boundaries" during 2010

7. TWO DIFFERENT CONCEPTS AND APPROACHES?

It remains a question whether we have had in these latest two movements within the DRC Family, namely the program of the United Ministry for Service and Witness on the one hand and the Partnership of Missional Churches on the other hand, two different concepts of and approaches to the missionary task of the church, or whether it merely represented different focus areas in the ministry. The Ministry for Service and Witness clearly focused on a broader field – on denominational work (institutional) as well as the calling of congregations, on partnerships with other churches, on the church's public witness, on projects and programmes, on evangelisation and diaconal service – in the local environment, but also further a field. Its focus was also clearly on the African context, which is neither necessarily post-modern nor post-Christendom. The Missional Partnership, on the other hand, focuses mainly (although not exclusively) on local congregations, on transforming their identity, on being missional within the local context and not so much on missionary or diaconal programs and actions. The missional movement ventured to find answers for a new generation in a post-modern, secularised society – thus the connection to the emerging church movement in Northern America.

At the 2010 annual theological workshop of the Southern African Missional Society this discourse was taken up again. The debate and creative tension between these two approaches were a healthy development. Currently, there is also a venture to integrate the different approaches into one integrated and all-encompassing "missional ecclesiology" for the DRC family. This poses new challenges. Asking the following questions could be fruitful in the continuous discourse.

7.1 Missio Dei as overarching principle in understanding church?

Participating in the missio Dei as the overarching concept describing the task of the church and formulating a missional ecclesiology is often emphasised. Missio Dei is indeed an important attribute or facet of the essence of the Triune God. But is it all there is to God and our relation to God? The notion of just coming, being or living in God's presence, coram Dei, or worshipping and celebrating communion with God, only to the glory and in celebration of God's goodness and beauty – the movement towards God and not only God's movement towards the world – is just as important. Could mission or participating in the missio Dei therefore be described as the overarching or only task of the church, as is often done in the venture to formulate an overarching missional ecclesiology for the DRC? There is a well known saying: "if everything becomes mission; nothing is mission any more". HW Gensichen's (1971) differentiation between missionary dimension and missionary intention remains helpful. Although there should be a missional dimension to everything the church does, not everything is or could intentionally be missional. By dissolving church in the apostolicity of the church, like in the post Second World War "Apostolaatstheologie" of Hoekendijk and Van Ruler, in activity in the world, for the sake of the world, with the Spirit reduced to the wind in the sails of this activity of the church, the dangers of eroding the term mission as well as church are obvious, not to mention our concept of the Triune God.

In the focus on witness and service, the missional dimension in the liturgy (worship services) is for instance still to be considered properly. The worship service – and especially the Lord's Supper – remains the heartbeat of being church, the centre for changing and equipping and sending out the members and body of faithful as missionaries into the world. But is liturgy merely a missional activity, merely a preparation for the liturgy in the world? The interconnection between mission and liturgy (and the missional dimension of liturgy) needs further reflection.

7.2 New missional language for the African context?

Is the term "missional", instead of missionary, a new discovery (a recent American invention) or is it merely new language (Saayman 2010) for old concepts that existed for many years in the discourse on mission? Continuity with the historical discourse in mission is important. There is indeed a danger in borrowing too much from North American theologians and post-modern, Western contexts. The African Initiated Churches, for instance, are essentially missional without consciously knowing or understanding or participating in this missional discourse and language. The importance of African interlocutors in this discourse and a serious engagement with the African context, which is not necessarily post-modern or post-Christendom, is evident.

7.3 Discernment, texts and hermeneutics?

An important facet in the program of the Partnership for Missional Congregations is discernment – discerning where God is already working and then partaking in that action. A question would be: what criteria are used to measure or discern where God is working? On what basis are specific texts selected, for example Luke 10 or John 4, for the "dwelling in" process during this prolonged season of discernment exercises?

7.4 Focus on congregations?

The focus on congregations is a healthy reaction to the era of denominational or institutional service and witness, but it could also be one-sided. There are other modes of being church as well. Dirkie Smit (2003:55-77) distinguishes at least six such concrete, visible, social forms of the real church, namely worship (1) and the local congregation (2), denominations (3) and the ecumenical church (4), individual believers (5) and voluntary initiatives and activities (6). Is this radical focus on only congregations helping us in the search for greater denominational

unity? What about the programmes (ecology, public witness, ecumenical relations, etc), that can only be implemented on a denominational and national level, and the importance of only really discerning God's will by recognising and partaking in the "catholicity" of the church? "Being" missional is indeed important, but so is "doing" mission, also in a structured way and even from an institutional or denominational point of departure. It is thus a question whether it is viable to formulate a missional ecclesiology, based on this exclusive focus on "being missional congregations" as the overarching or all inclusive principle for the whole ministry of the church.

The South African Partnership for Missional Churches is indeed bringing about welcome change in the participating congregations and the way these congregations perceive themselves as being sent. This honest and sincere engagement, the rediscovery of discernment (listening anew and with others and across borders) and the focus on being missional instead of only doing mission, is to be applauded and supported. It is a well thought trough program (with insights borrowed from social sciences) and it is practically implemented. The question remains whether the United Ministry for Service and Witness, with all its reflections and efforts, are making any meaningful impact on the practical ministry of congregations, individual members and in the southern African society? Is the denominational approach to mission and the way it is structured in the still divided Dutch Reformed Family of Churches valid or effective?

The search for a proper missional or missionary understanding of the church's identity and calling continues. The declaration by the United Ministry for Service and Witness on "Our Calling to Service and Witness in Unity" can be helpful in this discourse.

OUR CALLING TO SERVICE AND WITNESS IN UNITY

1. The mission of the Triune God

1.1 The Church's calling to service and witness in unity flows from the being of the Triune God. The very life of God is characterised by covenant, reaching out, self-communication, mutuality, relation and unity - God is love (*Deus caritas est*), seeking communion. The acts of God, as revealed in creation, scripture and throughout history, are characterised by God's love for the world, inviting people to enter a new world, a Trinitarian space, where the God of communion extends hospitality and care and makes all things new (*missio Trinitatis Dei*).

1.2 The mission of service and witness expresses God's love and compassion to bring salvation in all its dimensions (*shalom*) to all people and the whole of creation. (Ex 3:7-8, Ex 19:5-6, Ex 34: 6-9, Ps 146: 6-10, Luke 4:18-19, John 17:11, 17, 20-23, Matt 28:18-20, John 20:21-22, Acts 1:8, 1 John 4: 7-21, Eph 4:17, Rev 21:5)

2. The mission of Christ

2.1 The Father has sent the Son into the world to gather God's church from all the nations and to send us into the world in the power of the Holy Spirit. (John 3:16-17, John 20:21-22)

2.2 The salvation that Christ achieved is all-encompassing. It includes the forgiveness of our sins, our liberation on all levels of life as well as the liberation of creation. God's salvation of the world is realised in that He builds his kingdom here and now. This kingdom will, however, only come to full realisation with Christ's second coming, when all things will be new and all nations and people will glorify God. (Ezek 47:12 and Rev 22:2, Rev 21:1-5)

3. In the power of the Holy Spirit the Church is sent

3.1 As the body of Christ our Lord and Saviour, the essence of the church is to live as partaker in

God's mission in this world (mission ecclesiae). The local congregation as primary agent of God's mission, but also the church as a whole and all its members, are under the commission of God. Dependent on and guided by the Holy Spirit, we are called as prophets, priests and kings, to:

- Live in the presence of God (coram Dei), obedient to the word of God,
- A ministry of worshipping God and praying for the world (leitourgia),
- Minister the Gospel of God's salvation to all people through word (kerugma), deed (diaconia) and in a relationship of love and unity (koinonia),
- Seek justice, reconciliation and healing, testifying to the hope that we live by and
- Conserve and cultivate creation in the name of God and for the sake of all who live in it.

This we do with the deepest motive of glorifying God and in service of the coming of the kingdom (Rom 12:1-2, Eph 1:10 ff). (Matt 4:23-25, 5:13-16, 9:35-38, 10:7-8, 28:18-20, Luke 6:17-19, 9:1-6, 10:25-37, John 20:19-22, Acts 1:8, Heb 3:1, 1 Pet 2:9-10, 1 Pet 3:15)

3.2 The mission of service and witness occurs where we as the church, in the power of the Holy Spirit, with integrity, in obedience and in following Christ, with compassion and in serving others, in humility but also in boldness, witness about God's love for the world. In reaching out to all people, new borders are continuously crossed and service and witness are not to be separated.

3.3 We are called to service and witness in and from Southern Africa, by

- Prayerfully, and with others, discerning and obeying God's calling for us in and from this context,
- Listening with compassion to the voices crying out for deliverance from sin, enslavement, fear, hunger, sickness, pain, violence and injustice - the suffering in all its dimensions,
- Being a prophetic voice and of service in alleviating the need of people in all communities,
- Respecting, building, celebrating the good in our rich and diverse heritages, cultures, languages, gifts, contributions and the vast potential in all the people of Southern Africa,
- Entering into meaningful partnerships with other churches, ecumenical bodies and governmental- and non-governmental institutions and
- Witnessing to our faith in the Triune God through respectful dialogue with people of other faiths and convictions.

3.4 As the legitimate bearer of this Good News (Gospel), the church of Christ is to be one and to live and work in the likeness of the one triune God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. "As prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the Unity of Spirit through the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit - just as you were called to one hope when you were called - one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all." (Eph 4:1-6)

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KEY WORDS

Dutch Reformed Church Family
missio Dei
missional congregations
witness and service

TREFWOORDE

Nederduits Gereformeerde Kerk Familie
missio Dei
missionale gemeentes
getuienis en diens

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God, Moses and Levinas: On being the other and relating to the other. A perspective on transcendence from religious experience

ABSTRACT

Within the context of religious experience, understood as testimony to transcendence (Stoker), this article focus on a specific constitutive element thereof, namely intentionality. It is discussed as concept in relation to three other concepts, namely religious experience, experience and transcendence. To elaborate on the importance of the qualification of the concept of intentionality, three conversation partners are engaged. The French Jewish philosopher and Talmudic commentator Emmanuel Levinas (1906-1995) since his viewpoint on “The (O)ther” makes the concept of “transcendence” problematic in a very insightful manner. The Dutch philosopher of religion Wessel Stoker and his proposal for “trans-intentionality” as a constitutive element of religious experience, and the experience of Moses with God as narrated in Ex 3. The contributions on transcendence by Levinas and Stoker are finally critically evaluated in relation to the Moses experience.

And God said to Moses: “I will be who I will be” (Ex 3:14)

For if God is God, then it is impossible for God to be given in any intuition or phenomenal experience, to be contained by any concept governed by any principal. But it is this very impossibility – this infinity and incomprehensibility – that makes God “possible” as God. God alone lets God self be defined by indefinable impossibility, for God begins where human possibility ends. What is impossible for us is precisely God’s characteristic possibility, for with God nothing is impossible (Jean-Luc Marion)

Divinity is not transcendent (“wholly other”), but incarnate; and the incarnation, the event “inaugurating the dissolution of divine transcendence” (Gianni Vattimo).

INTRODUCTION

At the conference “Religion and Postmodernism 4: Transcendence and Beyond” in 2003 at the Villanova University, Philadelphia, USA, John Caputo¹ and Michael Scanlon² posed the question: “Do we need to transcend transcendence?” It is a question in contemporary theological debates that in my opinion should be taken very seriously for various reasons, the most important being that it fundamentally determines and permeates the integrity of all God-talk. Put differently: it is a question that touches the very heart of reflection on religious experience, and could simply be rephrased as follow: how do we understand the concept of Transcendence?

The main line contemporary debate is thrusting in two distinct directions, namely “hyper-

1 Caputo is the David R Cook professor emeritus of philosophy, Villanova University.

2 Scanlon is the Josephine C Connelly endowed chair in theology, Villanova University.

transcendence” and “post-transcendence”. The former could be formulated as the thrusting question whether we need a transcendence that is ever more beyond, a still-more transcendent transcendence (eg Levinas, Marion, Kearney). The latter could be formulated as the question whether we should put transcendence behind us (Vattimo, Caputo, Schrag). Does the concept go far enough or does it go too far? An exciting line of reflection within the “post-transcendence” trajectory is panentheism (eg Moltmann, McFague, Clayton). Caputo and Scanlon (2006:2) rightly state and ask:

After all, for all its authority and prestige, the word “transcendent” is a relative term: It depends on what is being transcended, and there is a long list of candidates – the subject, the self, the sensible world, beings, even Beings itself – and so there is nothing to stop us from wondering whether itself is to be added to the list as still one more thing to be transcended.

David Wood (2007:170) captures the core of the “wondering” of Caputo and Scanlon well in the two basic questions that he poses regarding reflection on transcendence:

- Is our thinking of transcendence any more than an unconscious way of being caught up in certain hard-to-shake spatializing and / or representational schemas?
- How far can we interpret / translate the various phenomena of transcendence in terms of modal transformations of the quality of our response to the world and to others, setting aside any and all onto-theological constructions referring to a beyond?

It is not possible in this paper to engage with the entire broad scope of this debate. Nor is it my intention to suggest and justify a better direction of the two, or to formulate final answers to Wood’s questions. I choose to focus on a specific constitutive element within the context of religious experience – understood as testimony to transcendence (Stoker) – namely “intentionality”, and to discuss the importance of its qualification. My choice makes the French Jewish philosopher and Talmudic commentator Emmanuel Levinas (1906-1995) an obvious conversation partner, since his viewpoint on “The (O)ther” makes the concept of “transcendence” problematic in a very insightful manner. My other two conversation partners will be the Dutch philosopher of religion Wessel Stoker and his proposal for “trans-intentionality” and the experience of Moses with God as narrated in Ex 3. Firstly I will describe the terms transcendence, religious experience, intentionality and their connectedness to each other. Secondly the viewpoints of Levinas and Stoker will be briefly discussed with the Moses-experience as textual interlocutor in the concluding discussion and evaluation of reflection on Transcendence.

1. TERMINOLOGICAL CLARIFICATION

In classical theism, *transcendence* is understood as a condition or state of being that surpasses physical existence and in one form is also independent of it. It can be attributed to the divine not only in its being, but also in its knowledge. Thus, God transcends the universe, but also transcends knowledge (is beyond the grasp of the human mind). Although transcendence is defined as the opposite of immanence, the two are not necessarily mutually exclusive (cf Flew 1979:328; Van Huyssteen 2008:1099; Wikipedia). The unavoidable question then is: Can humans experience and know a transcendent God?

The term *religious experience* is highly problematic and questionable. It brings about “double trouble” since both concepts “religious” and “experience” (and subsequently even more as conjugation) defies any easy or comfortable terminological pinpointing. The concept “religion / religious” is met with an overwhelming and inexhaustible spectrum of definitions (cf Leuba),

whereas the term “experience” resist any attempt in all directions of being capture is any definition whatsoever. And that is not even making work of the seemingly self-validating presumptiveness of “experience”! An even worse scenario meets the enthusiastic researcher in trying to establish a common understanding for the origin of and accounting for (Christian) religious experience (eg transcendental-anthropological such as Tillich; analytical-epistemological such as Alston; hermeneutical-phenomenological such as Stoker). For the (workable!) sake of this paper, and within the framework of Christian religious experience, it could be dealt with as “testimony to transcendence” that is: witnessing to the experience of God’s involvement with creation and creature. The daunting question then is: How is such a testimony possible at all, and if, how is it to be understood?

Experience is characterized by transcendence (generally in a non-religious sense) and intentionality. Transcendence as transcendence of oneself to that which is other than oneself is characteristic of human existence as being in the world (Heidegger). It makes intentionality, directed at human beings and things in the world, possible (Stoker 2006:94). Experience is never simply something internal but always has two poles: the human being and her world(s). Experience implies intentionality, the transcendence of oneself. Intentionality is the power of minds to be about, to represent, or to stand for, things, properties and states of affairs. The puzzles of intentionality lie at the interface between the philosophy of mind and the philosophy of language. Franz Brentano towards the end of the nineteenth century rehabilitated the word itself, which is of medieval Scholastic origin. ‘Intentionality’ is a philosopher’s word. It derives from the Latin word *intentio*, which in turn derives from the verb *intendere*, which means being directed towards some goal or thing (Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy). The spontaneous question that subsequently arises is: How is the human being, to whom this-worldly transcendence belongs, open to the infinite, to religious Transcendence?

Do these terminological descriptions – taken together in their connectedness - not lead us straight into an existential space of self-contradiction? If experience implies intentionality, can God be an object of religious experience that one direct herself to if God is not a worldly object to whom we can direct ourselves? Does not the manifestation of God – such as in the Moses-experience (Ex 3) – present itself without any intention on the part of Moses? It is the very question on the possibility of the experience of transcendence that Levinas addresses. I therefore turn to his exposition of “The (O)ther”.

2. BEING TRAPPED: LEVINAS ON THE (O)ther

“It is like answering a call we have never heard” (Levinas)

Levinas provides a salient example of “hyper-transcendence”. His work is a critique of Heidegger and Husserl (thus of Western philosophy) in the service of ethics. He is concerned that it has been pre-occupied with Being, the totality, at the expense of what is otherwise than Being, what lies outside the totality of Being as transcendent, exterior, infinite, alterior, the Other.

Working with the concept of the “wholly (O)ther” (“*tout autre*”) in his “*Totalite et Infini*” (Totality and Infinity), he addresses the classical idea of transcendence as a movement which is trapped within being. Trapped within a sphere of “ontological” immanence, even if and especially when it asserts an ontology of supersensible being. The trap that transcendence springs for him, is to confine all travel within the borders of being – either in the classical movement from a lower mode of being to a higher one; from finite (sensible) being) to infinite (supersensible) being. What is truly called for is “escape” from this trap, that is, a movement beyond beings and Being, whose term is not transcendent being but being transcended; not a higher being but otherwise

than being (cf Caputo & Scanlon 2006:3). Taking the word “being” as an “idol”, - a trap or screen or mirror in which we envisage ourselves, not God – and who has sought accordingly and in manifold ways to think God “without being”, calls for a “liberation” from ontological idolatry! How are we to escape from this trap?

In his “*Enigme et phenomene*”, Levinas (1974a:211) writes:

The ‘great experiences’ of our lives are actually never lived. Do the religions come to us from a past that has never been a pure ‘now’? They owe their greatness to the excess that transcends the capacity of the phenomenon, the present and the memory. To the voice that calls from the Burning Bush Moses answers: ‘Here I am’, but he does not dare look up. The glory-filled theophany that makes so much humility possible fails through the same humility that forces the eyes downwards.

According to Levinas, experiences of actual transcendence are not experiences in the strict sense of the word. They remain alien to us, although they influence us deeply. Why do they remain alien? Because of the difference between God and human beings. A divine revelation means a disruption of our order. And since experience entails intentionality, such a grasp of the object by the subject is excluded in the relationship with God. There it concerns a “riddle”, an “intervention of a meaning that disturbs the phenomenon” in distinction from the phenomenon that belongs to our reality (cf Stoker 2006:92). It concerns a truth that cannot be converted into a phenomenon, and as such no presence can be recognized. Levinas therefore speaks of a “relationless relation” with the Infinite. It is a relationship without intentionality, a thinking no longer characterized by an aim, by a relationship that displays no will or intention. It is a non-intentional consciousness, an indirect consciousness, “immediate, but without an intentional aim; implicit and purely of accompaniment”, that is, pure passivity! It is formulated by Levinas in ethical categories as “bad conscience”: without intentions, without aims, without the protective mask of the character contemplating him/herself in the mirror of the world, self-assured and affirming him/herself. Because of this non-intentional consciousness, this more than subjective ability, the person can be related to God. However not in an I-Thou relationship. Neither as an object nor as conversation partner. God reveals Godself only through our neighbour in an ethical sense, calling into question of the “Same”, calling us to responsibility. The dimension from which they speak to me – beyond being – is that of the third person, who always remains a “He”. The other is found in the tracks of this Absent One who has passed by us in an undiscoverable way – as he did with Moses – who only saw God’s back (cf Stoker 2006:95-6).

Not only does Levinas refute the possibility of the experience of Transcendence, he also speaks of the erasing of the subject. Our awareness of being subjects arises in such a manner that we cannot appropriate the beginning or the origin of being subjects. It is to answer a call, which we have not heard. In his “*Dieu et la philosophie*” (Levinas 1982:110) he states: Being touched by Transcendence is an “implanting without reception, which like consuming fire scorches the place where it is to grow”. Levinas thus distances himself radically from every philosophy that starts with the human being as subject. There is no consciousness or conscience that precedes the testimony. The I is thus constituted by the address of the other. Ethics precedes ontology. This simply means: the human being is not a true human being until (s)he is thus constituted by the radical (O)other. Every presence is impossible, if it concerns the revelation of the wholly (O) other. In his own words:

Does not what we call the word of God come to me in the demand that challenges me and claim me, and before any invitation to dialogue, does it not break through the form of generality under which the individual who resembles me appears to me and only shows himself, and become the face of the other person? ... Does not the challenge make me enter into a non-intentional thought of the ungraspable? (Levinas, 1988:131)

It is precisely then to re-think Levinas formulation of the challenge of entering into a “non-intentional thought of the ungraspable”. From his “escape from ontological idolatry” to the primacy of ethics in the encounter of the (O)ther, I subsequently turn to Stoker’s understanding of “intentionality” within religious experience as testimony of Transcendence.

3. BEING TOUCHED: STOKER ON TRANSCENDENCE

For Stoker (2006:88ff), the Christian faith can be traced back to experiences with God that the first witnesses in the Old and New Testament had. It goes back to narrated events with a history-like character. Root experiences (Fackenheim) are eg the exodus from Egypt, the life and work, death and resurrection of Christ. These acts of Transcendence are celebrated in the liturgy as thanksgiving to God whose acts are experienced as a gift (Brueggemann). These root experiences of transcendence are the starting point and norm for the experiences that Christians can have with God. This gives the hermeneutical (interpretative) character of religious experience a double meaning: the testimony requires explanation but the witness itself is to be explained by the testimony through which the experience of the witness becomes religious (Stoker 2006:88).

For the sake of this paper, I would like to focus on one of the crucial aspects, which Stoker (2006:89ff; 99ff;109ff) describes as one of the three aspects of religious experience (that is, the involvement of the whole human being with Transcendence), namely trans-intentional (that is, being touched by God through which an experience becomes a religious experience). The other two aspects are namely narrative (that is, the object-pole, the content of faith) and affective-cognitive (that is, the subject-pole, being grasped by the content). For Stoker the fundamental question is: In how far can a manifestation or proclamation from God be experienced? The answer lies in a closer explication of the term “intentionality”.

Experience implies intentionality, that is, the intention of a person to direct him/herself at something. It is not only something internal but always has two poles: the human being and his/her world(s). It subsequently implies the transcendence of oneself (Stoker 2006:94). As Heidegger puts it: Transcendence as transcendence of oneself to that which is other than oneself is characteristic of human existence as being in the world. However, this notion seems to conflict with that which is proper to the manifestation of God who presents Godself without any intention on the part of the human being. Indeed, there is a radical difference, an asymmetric relationship between God and the human being. How then is the human being, to whom this-worldly transcendence belongs, open to the infinite, to religious Transcendence? Or to put the problem differently: we can expand our intentions infinitely, but quantitative infinity does not lead to qualitative infinity. Formulated in terms of intentionality, is the human consciousness exclusively an intentional consciousness, a consciousness directed at the world and objects, an object-consciousness? Then God is surely not an object in the sense in which we deal with objects in everyday life, and therefore our relationship with God does not lend itself to being expressed in terms of intentionality. How are we then to proceed?

Stoker (2006:102ff) argues for an understanding of religious experience that does not become an experience of intentionality, but an experience, which is related to it and at the very same time transcends it by being a religious disclosure. He calls it a “trans-intentional” relationship, that is, a relationship that transcends our intentions, our involvement with people and things in this world. By making use of Schleiermacher’s notion of the feeling of absolute dependence and the distinction between intentionality for life and a theoretical intentionality, Stoker proposes how an experience of Transcendence is possible. I start with the latter distinction.

Stoker (2006:98ff) distinguishes between intentionality for life and a theoretical intentionality.

The latter belongs to the distancing attitude of a researcher towards an object. It is to set a human subject over against an object that is to be investigated. The former has to do with everyday life and points to a non-theoretical involvement of the human being with the world, persons and things. It concerns a direct relationship with these instead of an objectifying placing of oneself over against them. The simple enjoyment – and not the study! – of the colour, smell and beauty of a flower is an example of an intentionality of life. And this holds – according to Stoker – for theology in its relationship to the daily religious experience of the believer. Someone's religious experience occurs in his/her life world with its intentionality for life, from which theology, as scientific reflection, is derived. Stoker (2006:99) states:

Our life world is a reservoir of meanings, on which academic disciplines like theology reflect in objectifying and theoretical ways to explain.

What then constitutes that which is unique about religious experience, which occurs in the life world with its intentionality for life? Since intentionality for life has to do with relationships in the world, and religious experience implies involvement with Transcendence, Stoker (2006:99ff) employs Schleiermacher's notion of the feeling of absolute dependence as description for the relationship to God, to connect the two in an original and creative manner³. He argues that the heart of the human being is immediate consciousness, is the original (pre-reflective) consciousness (indicated by the word feeling) and that it precedes knowledge and action. It is however connected to the intentional consciousness with its emotions, actions and knowledge. The passive, pre-reflective consciousness is the hinge, the transition between knowledge and action: it mediates the transition between moments in which knowledge or action is dominant. It constitutes the unity of knowledge and action and is their common ground (cf Stoker 2006:100). For Schleiermacher, Stoker continues, that first moment of religious feeling (that is, being touched in the pre-reflective consciousness) can continue as a mood, a state of mind: the durability of the religious feeling is the mood. It guides all our activities, our thoughts, actions and emotions. However, on the pre-reflective level there is not even any identification yet of a feeling of absolute dependence. That occurs only with the identification of this immediate experience of the human being as a feeling of absolute dependence. Put in another way: It is the immediate self-awareness that becomes an awareness of God. There is thus a development because of the moment of identification. An immediate awareness of dependence of a particular nature is called the feeling of absolute dependence. The "whence" of this feeling of absolute dependence is identified as God (Stoker 2006:101). The immediate relationship to God does not exist in isolation but receives its concrete content in the intentionality for life, in the intentional consciousness. In this sense religious experience does not become an experience of intentionality but is related to it and transcends it by being a religious disclosure.

To conclude: For Stoker, the "religious disclosure" can be understood in the Christian context as "revelation", that is, the manifestation and proclamation of Transcendence which comes to us through experience. But then, in the words of Jean-Luc Marion, as saturated phenomenon, that is, a phenomenon that is saturated with intention. For Stoker, this is not enough (cf Stoker 2006:123). It only covers the trans-intentional aspect of religious experience. It has to be supplemented with a narrative explanation of the story, and specifically, life as a story in the making.

3 It is important to note that Stoker does not interpret this original moment of Transcendence in human consciousness as a universally valid transcendental-anthropological structure of being human, but as a theological-anthropological given that can clarify the contact with God in religious experience (cf Stoker 2006:101).

4. CONCLUDING REMARKS

How are we then to answer the question regarding Transcendence in a postmodern and deeply pluralistic context? Have we succeeded in any manner to move forward with Wood's two basic questions regarding reflection of transcendence, namely: Is our thinking of transcendence any more than an unconscious way of being caught up in certain hard-to-shake spatializing and / or representational schemas? And: How far can we interpret / translate the various phenomena of transcendence in terms of modal transformations of the quality of our response to the world and to others, setting aside any and all onto-theological constructions referring to a beyond? Turning to the focus of this article, we will have to ask: Do Levinas and Stoker guide us in rethinking and re-describing Transcendence in such a context? And with what clues are we presented by taking up a specific OT text – such as Ex 3 – in which an experience of Transcendence is narrated? Or should we ultimately be content only with rumours of Transcendence (Keller 2007) caught between a desire for God and the death of God?

Focusing specifically in this article on “experience and intentionality” within the context of religious experience as testimony to Transcendence, unfortunately does not leave room to answer the above questions comprehensively. However, there are a number of clues and critical questions which I would like to put forward.

In the story of Moses (Ex 3), Transcendence is neither his invention nor his projected intention, but is narrated as a surprising (vertical) call. The self-naming by the Caller – I will be who I will be - does not only confirm the asymmetrical stance (Holy) over against the recipient (Moses covering his face / looking downwards / afraid), but also establishes a (new) relationship, imbedded in an already historically established relationship (Abraham, Isaac and Jacob). It (that is, the Caller in self-naming) also demands acknowledgement and that brings about responsibility with the recipient. The newly established relationship initially takes on an invitational character for Moses as messenger within an ethical context (oppression), but develops in such a manner that the messengers are not only transformed in making work of the call, but are destined to worship the Caller.

In this narration of a testimony to Transcendence the Caller is not reduced to a third person, a “He” (as Levinas argues), but presents himself to Moses in the first person, as an “I”. Nor is the call of the Caller confined to or wrapped in an ethical obligation, although it functions within an ethical context (oppression / deliverance). In this regard I find the critical commentary by Caputo (2007:189) on Levinas appropriate when he states:

“The very meaning of our being turned to God ... is to be deflected or turned by God ...to the neighbour. And nothing more. The name of God boils down without remainder into our being turned to the neighbour, *tout court*. What then is accomplished by ethical trans(a)scendence to the other? In one very definite sense, nothing. Ethics is not for something; it is a non-profit enterprise. Ethics is all the transcendence there is. It does not buy us a ticket somewhere else. There is nowhere else to go”.

I think that Caputo is right to ask whether ethics is all the transcendence there is. Or to put it plainly in a positive statement: Life, meaning and religion are more than morality! Is – for example – love not a more encompassing (relational) concept, and surely more fundamental to the biblical message? Levinas stern warning however still holds good of not turning the Transcendence of God into a one-way genitive – that surely will only harden into ontological idolatry. In this regard I find the aspect of trans-intentionality of experience of Stoker more promising in its focus on consciousness (and specifically on the pre-reflective level), and his distinction between intentionality for life and a theoretical intentionality that (objectively) springs

from it. His emphasis on the qualitative nature of the experience of Transcendence is in my opinion closer to the Moses experience than a quantitative (ethical) obligation that comes from the other. However, Stoker's promising phenomenological-hermeneutical exposition of religious experience as testimony to Transcendence with its aspect of trans-intentionality ultimately runs in the broader religious context – in my opinion - into shallow inter-religious waters. To put it in the words of Wood (2007:182):

There are some ... who think we can discover a pure form of transcendence (the pure gift) as the pinnacle of a series of reductions. Others ... see this as a misuse of phenomenology for theological ends. When we run out of intuitions, what is to stop us simply grafting onto phenomenology the results we would like to see it validate? It would be like dropping fish from the market into the fisherman's nets as they haul them in.

In my opinion Stoker does indeed "drop" a (transcendent) fish into his fisherman's net as he "hauls" the testimony in from inter-religious waters. That however is not to say that his re-working of Schleiermacher's feeling of absolute dependence within an intentionality for life (imbedded in a world-view as anthropological given, and in this framework, the whence is theologically identified as God) as trans-intentional aspect of religious experience, leaves us with a promising insight to pursue.

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Trinity and beauty: The theological contribution of Jonathan Edwards²

ABSTRACT

The article explores the relationship between the trinitarian confession of God and beauty. Special attention is paid to Jonathan Edwards, the eighteenth-century preacher and thinker, who in an exceptional manner viewed God in terms of beauty. The discussion is located in the context of a vigorous international Edwardsian scholarship on metaphysics, the nature of God and aesthetics. The article points out that beauty, according to Edwards, is primarily relational. The article aims at contributing to two neglected scholarly areas – the treatment of the doctrine of God in aesthetic terms, and the study of Jonathan Edwards in a South African context. Areas for further reflection are also identified. The article intimates that a discussion about trinity and beauty may have social ramifications.

INTRODUCTION

What name could we assign to the present? What description would best suit our social condition? Examining the challenges of our time – violence, corruption, alienation and cynicism – one may rightly suggest *ugliness* as an appropriate candidate. Our time has become devoid of beauty. Referring to the political past, De Gruchy (2008:1) claims “Apartheid was not only unjust, but also ugly ...”, and continues to assert that there is a close relationship between ugliness and oppression, and between beauty and redemption. What comes into focus is nothing but the claim that beauty and social transformation are inextricably linked. One may, however, probe deeper, and raise the question of the very eclipse of beauty as a social descriptor. Why has our time become one of growing ugliness? Perhaps the *loss of beauty* and the *loss of transcendence* go together (cf. Moore 2004:155ff) or, to put it more positively, the hope for a retrieval of beauty as quality of social life should begin with a restoration of respect for God as public reality.

One of the urgent tasks of constructive theology is to establish reflectively the *relationship* between the Christian understanding of God, that is the *trinity*, and social *beauty*. Interestingly, both these fields have become separate areas of much scholarly interest. The second half of the twentieth century has experienced theologically the so-called Trinitarian Renaissance (cf. Kärkkäinen 2007),³ and an enthusiasm for the Arts and Aesthetics (cf. De Gruchy 2005 & Dyrness 2007).⁴ Despite these encouraging signs, the neglect of both the trinity and beauty in creative theological discourse should not be easily forgotten. Especially in the Reformed Tradition the question should be addressed as to what extent the trinity and beauty have received the

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2 Revised version of paper presented at the occasion of the inauguration of the Jonathan Edwards Center Africa. UFS. March 9, 2010.

3 A large number of theologians have continued the groundbreaking work of Barth and Rahner; e.g. Pannenberg, Moltmann, Jenson, Gunton, LaCugna, Boff and Zizioulas.

4 The foundational work by Von Balthasar is most important. More recently the names of e.g. Begbie, Hart, Dyrness, Farley, Sherry, Viladesau, and García-Rivera can be mentioned.

sustained attention they deserve. Barth (1957:651) has lamented the fact that the Reformation and Protestant Orthodoxy have “completely ignored” the question of beauty. Recently two Dutch theologians (Van den Brink & Van Erp 2009:89) raised the question as to whether Dutch theology, which has deeply influenced theology in South Africa, is “missing the boat” concerning the new interest in the trinity.

The basic *emphasis* of this article is that theology and Reformed theology, in particular, may do well to attend to a voice not particularly known in South Africa – that of Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758). The theological work of this eighteenth-century New England Puritan preacher is surprisingly of particular relevance to twenty-first-century theology. One of his wide-ranging intellectual achievements deserves special attention: his consistent thinking about God in terms of beauty. It is an open question whether any one in the Reformed tradition can match his profound intuition that the biblical God is essentially glorious, excellent and beautiful. The *aim* of this article is to draw attention to his remarkable theological contribution.

1. EDWARDS IN CONTEXT

The question arises about *an adequate entry* to the views of Edwards on God and beauty. Several perspectives should be considered in this instance: the nature of his literary output, the particular historical and intellectual background of his life, and current Edwardsian scholarship. Studies on his metaphysics, his view on God and the trinity, and his aesthetics should be mentioned, in particular, and are relevant for this brief article; notes will be given as background.

The occasional *nature* of his *literary output*, which is unlike the typical systematic treatment of trinitarian discourses in for instance the twentieth century, must be mentioned. Once this is coupled with the *creative* and adventurous nature of his thought, one can understand the divergent interpretations of his thought. In this regard the Jonathan Edwards Centre at Yale University must draw attention to the seminal work.⁵ The primary work by Edwards is available online with critical introductions. The work of Minkema (see e.g. 2004) is important to keep abreast of the burgeoning scholarship on various aspects of Edwards's work.

The research by Sang Hyun Lee is crucial to understand Edwards's contribution to a new *metaphysics* (see 1999 & WJE 21:5). Reality should not be understood in terms of self-contained substances, but rather as essentially “dispositional”, intrinsically dynamic and relational. Being is inherently disposed towards more activities and relationships, or to “further increases of being” (Lee 1999:447). According to Lee, this dispositional ontology undergirds Edwards's understanding of God and the world (1999:446). The implication of this for an understanding of God is obvious: God is dynamic, relational and communicative. In recent years scholars such as Crisp (e.g. 2010) have challenged Lee's influential work. Crisp questions whether Edwards did effectively replace the notion of substance with that of disposition. According to him, Edwards was an occasionalist, who stressed continuous creation and God as sole causative agent. This fascinating debate may eventually have interesting consequences for studies on Edwards.

The debate about metaphysics has ramifications for Edwards's understanding of the *divine nature*. At stake is the question whether his doctrine of God amounts to an innovation in Reformed Theology. Crisp (cf. 2009) has addressed this at length, and emphasised that Edwards viewed himself as in continuation with the views of Reformed orthodox theologians such as Turretin and Van Mastricht. The specific issue is whether Edwards could, on the one hand, maintain allegiance to an *actus purus* account of the divine nature (that is, there is no distinction between act and being) and the corollary of divine simplicity, and make provision for the notion of disposition, on the other. Does this amount to intellectual inconsistency, or a reconceptualisation of theism as

5 See <http://edwards.yale.edu>

suggested by Lee? Crisp argues that Edwards's claim that God is essentially disposed to create is "an innovation of a sort" and rather "a development of a pure act account of the divine nature, rather than a departure from it" (2009:196). Interestingly, these questions have re-opened the conversation on the doctrines of the trinity and the divine attributes, such as simplicity.

Pauw has rendered a particular service to scholarship on Edwards's *trinitarianism* with her work "The Supreme Harmony of all" (2002) and highlights his ability to negotiate *two divergent approaches* to trinitarian construal – the so-called psychological and social models. Edwards's ambidexterity is clearly apparent in his balancing act of employing analogies of both the human mind and society to picture God as simultaneously one and relational. In this "cobbled trinitarianism" with its various language games (2002:189), each avenue enabled Edwards to address different aspects of the history of redemption; each has its distinctive role to play. Although the freedom in trinitarian adventure, as reflected in his notebooks, the so-called *Miscellanies*, does not always match similar attention in his sermons and later treatises, his trinitarianism "ran like a subterranean river throughout his career" (2002:3). Not only did he assert the basic orthodox trinitarian confession, he also interpreted it to meet the challenges of his time. At stake was the ambitious project of offering an alternative interpretation of reality as such. The charges against the very orthodoxy of his trinitarian views could be viewed against this background (cf. Weber 2001). The debate about the character and background of Edwards's trinitarian theology will probably continue. Recently Studebaker (2004) questioned Pauw's proposal about the employment of both models; he contends that Edwards consistently uses the Augustinian mutual love model (2004:482). In the end hermeneutical differences of basic texts will remain, and the in/tolerance for ambivalence and conflict in Edwards's thought by interpreters will be decisive (cf. also Pauw 2004:488).

Considering the association of Edwards with Puritanism and an extreme Calvinist position, one is surprised by the attention to *beauty* in his work (Thiessen 2004:157). Farley (2001:43) even claims that in the literary output of Edwards "beauty is more central and more pervasive than in any other text in the history of Christian theology". Scholarship has been well served by in-depth studies by, among others, Delatrrre (1968/2006) and Mitchell (2003), and this article will also make extensive use of this research. Edwards's exploration of beauty should be situated in the mid-eighteenth century, which experienced a crucial shift in the history of aesthetics from beauty as being to beauty as human self-transcendence. According to Farley (2001:32f), a relocation of beauty has taken place at this time: from an external property to a *human sensibility*. This subjectivist move to human experience has set in motion the eventual relativization of beauty. Edwards participated in this turn, but with a critical difference: *primary beauty is to be informed by God*. He succeeded in combining a subjective and objective notion of beauty (Farley 2001:47); beauty is both being and sensibility.

2. THE VISION OF BEAUTY

The creative exploration of trinitarian resources is not the particular feat of Edwards's theology, but the qualification – beauty – that he introduced to the great mystery at the heart of the Christian faith. To articulate an essentially orthodox Calvinist vision of reality along aesthetic lines remains a singular achievement until the present time. Beauty is the first theological and ontological principle, that is, the distinguishing mark of being as such and of God's perfection.

a. We find in his work a variety of words that belong to the *semantic field* of beauty: Excellency, glory, symmetry, proportion, harmony, consent, union, love and holiness. He further *distinguishes* between simple/complex, and secondary/primary beauty. Primary beauty is found where beings

are capable of choice and love; the well-known definition found in his work is *consent to being*: “This is an universal definition of excellency: The consent of being to being, or being’s consent to entity. The more the consent is, and the more extensive, the greater is the excellency” (WJE Online vol 6:336).

b. At the centre of Edwards’s aesthetic vision is *God*, the beginning and end of beauty: “Because God is not only infinitely greater and more excellent than all other being[s]; but he is the head of the universal system of existence; the foundation and fountain of all being and all beauty; from whom all is perfectly derived, and on whom all is most absolutely and perfectly dependent; *of whom, and through whom, and to whom* is all being and all perfection; and whose being and beauty is as it were the sum and comprehension of all existence and excellence: much more than the sun is the fountain and summary comprehension of all the light and brightness of the day” (WJE Online vol 8:551).

This exclusive theocentric approach to beauty requires careful theological attention. This insight should be emphasised: being and beauty are one in God. The very divinity of God should be understood in terms of beauty:

“... the true notion of divinity: God is God, and distinguished from all other beings, and exalted above ‘em, chiefly by his divine beauty, which is infinitely diverse from all other beauty” (WJE Online vol 2:298).

Beauty gives an insight into the mystery of God. The traditional *divine perfections* must be viewed in this light. For Edwards there is a close connection between beauty and *holiness*. Holiness is the sum of the moral perfections –

“The true beauty and loveliness of all intelligent beings does primarily and most essentially consist in their moral excellency or holiness ... The holiness of an intelligent creature, is the beauty of all his natural perfections. And so it is in God, according to our way of conceiving of the Divine Being: holiness is in a peculiar manner the beauty of the divine nature” (WJE Online vol 2:257).

For Edwards beauty and the divine *glory* are virtually identical; glory is a more comprehensive term than holiness and includes all the good in God; beauty conveys what is peculiar to this glory (cf. Delattre 1968:136f).

The crucial intellectual contribution by Edwards in this instance should be appreciated. Delattre (1968:146) captures this aptly: “the divine majesty was for him a lovely rather than an awful or awesome majesty”. Marsden in his authoritative biography (2003:41ff) refers to the “Copernican revolution” which Edwards *experienced* at a relatively early age, a “whole new perspective” on God’s character and relationship to the world; He is “ineffably good, beautiful, and loving” (2003:43).

According to Edwards, beauty is inherently *relational*; simplicity cannot qualify for being beautiful; beauty requires complexity:

“Again, we have shown that one alone cannot be excellent, inasmuch as, in such case, there can be no consent. Therefore, if God is excellent, there must be a plurality in God; otherwise, there can be no consent in him” (WJE vol 13:284).

The world of Edwards was one of personal relationships (Marsden 2003:503f). The central concern of this article – trinity and beauty – crystallises with this. The perfection, the excellency, the beauty of God is found in the loving and harmonious relations of consent in the triune life

(cf. Pauw 2002:80-83). Beauty is a divine person in relation (Mitchell 2003:12). Only where there is sociality, complex harmony and consent does beauty emerge:

“His infinite beauty is his infinite mutual love of himself” (WJE Online vol 6: 363).

With his major study on beauty in the thought of Edwards, Delattre (1968) highlights the special role of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is God’s eternal consent to being; the Holy Spirit is God’s intra-trinitarian love. The typical Edwardsian way of formulating the trinitarian confession was to refer to “God, and his idea, and his love or delight” (WJE vol 13:368). The Holy Spirit is the beauty of God:

“It was more especially the Holy Spirit’s work to bring the world to its beauty and perfection out of the chaos, for the beauty of the world is a communication of God’s beauty. The Holy Spirit is the harmony and excellency and beauty of the Deity, therefore ’twas his work to communicate beauty and harmony to the world, and so we read that it was he that moved upon the face of the waters [Genesis 1:2]” (WJE vol 13:293).

In the well-known sermon “The excellency of Christ” on Revelation 5:5-6 (1734) the *beauty of Christ* is understood as the uniting of the diverse qualities of divine and human. The more disparate the entities are that are conjoined, the greater the beauty – “Such a conjunction of such infinite highness, and low condescension” (WJE Online vol 19: 566).

c. The term *glory* has two references: the excellency, beauty of the triune life, but also the overflow of this life to creation (cf. Mitchell 2007:39f). Creation is the overflow of divine beauty. This dynamic and dispositional view allows a novel understanding of creation; God has not created *ex nihilo*, and He has not remained unaffected. He created out of the fullness of his divine beauty, and this *enlarged* his own triune life (WJE Online vol 8:461f)! In this way it is possible to assert that beauty is the very structure of being.

d. In Edwards beauty has both an *objective* and *subjective* dimension. Beauty as trinitarian perfection and beauty as gift to creation should be experienced. The pressing issue of his day – the nature of genuine religious experience – received light from this perspective. Mitchell (2007) emphasised that beauty is the structure of religious experience. The sense of the heart is “an experience of God’s beauty that is manifested in beautiful affections” (2007:42 n26). The life of the Christian is a life of beauty experienced and embodied. Primary beauty becomes the foundation of all virtue and ethics. True virtue is nothing but “benevolence to being” (WJE Online vol 8:571).

3. SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER REFLECTION

The advice by Pauw (1999:459) that “Edwards’s spirit of theological adventure is one Reformed Christians would do well to imitate” is worth heeding. The basic compass direction to engage creatively with the intellectual horizon, to concentrate on the trinitarian nature of God, and to explore the mystery of God not kyriologically, i.e. in terms of power, but aesthetically, is most commendable. Time and again a student of Edwards is surprised by his relevance for our day. In many instances his fundamental intuition, e.g. to think relationally, to understand the perfection(s) of God trinitarianly, and to retrieve beauty as theological optic, anticipated central concerns of current theological discourse.

Briefly *four areas* for further reflection – in light of Edwards’s views on beauty and trinity – can be identified:

The very connection of *God and beauty* is a neglected theme in theology and Edwards's achievement can hardly be overemphasised. A comparison with Barth, the one Reformed theologian who has given space to beauty, is interesting. Barth discusses beauty in the context of the glory of God, the sum of all divine perfections. Beauty is the form, the manner of God's glory (1957:650, 654). Insofar as the glory is effective (1957:653), it is beautiful: God's glory "gives pleasure, creates desire and rewards with enjoyment" (1957:651). Despite these bold assertions, Barth remains cautious and registers qualifications: "We speak of God's beauty only in explanation of his glory. It is, therefore, a subordinate and auxiliary idea ... (1957:653). He stresses that beauty has no independent significance in the Bible, and resists bringing the knowledge of God under the denominator of the idea of the beautiful (1957:652f). His preferred expression is: "God is 'also' beautiful" (1957:655). Nothingstanding these provisos, Barth does make profound statements such as God is the "basis and standard of everything that is beautiful" (1957:656). He explicitly connects beauty and trinity. The 'content' of the divine being creates the particular 'form' of the divine being: "the trinity of God is the secret of his beauty" (1957:661). These very ideas warrant further reflection, and should be valued as constructive advances in theological knowledge. In what sense the trinity and beauty are to be viewed together should be further explored.

The vision of the Christian God as beautifying should inform the orientation of *Christian ethics*. Delattre (2003) has made a persuasive plea for this. The Christian ethos should be a *participation* in the divine life. A life of true virtue is a beautifying life (2003:287). Beauty should be a guide for individual, social and ecological ethics. Christian virtuous life has to be in all dimensions a beautifying practice. Consent to being may imply the benevolence to life in all its dimensions. Beauty, trinity and social flourishing belong together. The genius of Edwards, the 'moralization of beauty' (Farley 2001:46) is to be maintained: primary beauty is a moral disposition. God's holiness is what defines his beauty. In benevolence primary beauty and the moral coincide. Such a vision for an 'aesthetic existence' in the South African context has been exceptionally intimated by Barrett (cf. 2004); the key task is to seek beauty in the life of the nation as such. This very line of thinking is worth pursuing further.

Highlighting beauty as the distinguishing perfection of God may be a most effective *apologetical* approach. Argumentation, evidence, logic and reason do not have an impressive record in a secular age. In light of the work by Edwards, Wooddell (2007) rightly raises the question whether there is not space for an alternative – apologetics informed by beauty. Beauty is directly compelling; it is immediately recognised and attractive as such. Influential studies have shown that the loss of faith in the Christian God is often occasioned by tyrannical and oppressive portrayals of the divine, images not informed by his glorious trinitarian nature. Vanhoozer (2006) has observed this with clarity. According to him, apologetics would be better served by arguments that focus on God's identity (2006:42). He pleads for "an enlarged concept of argument" that "render[s] Christian truth artistically as well as argumentatively" (2006:38).

Edwards's explicit connection of beauty and *Spirit* opens a number of avenues in need of further exploration, in particular for *spirituality* and artistic expression. The Cinderella status of the Holy Spirit in theology has had far-reaching negative implications for the church. Retrieving an appreciation for the mutual relationship between aesthetics and pneumatology, as for example advocated by Sherry (2007) in light of Edwards, may result in a fresh appreciation of the arts for Christian life and spirituality. From the earliest human civilisation, as can be found in cave paintings, one can detect an intrinsic spirituality in the experience of beauty. Beauty points to its transcendence. A theological aesthetics recognises that God's glory is the transcendent referent to the experiences of beauty. García-Rivera (2005:360) is arguably correct when stating, "aesthetics is about to become, once again, a companion to spirituality."

The ugliness of our time is not inevitable. The Christian faith testifies to a God who is beautiful and beautifying. Edwards's intellectual labour continues to remind us about this. We are fortunate that our theological explorations, ethical practices, apologetical efforts, spiritual journeys and contextual engagements may be beautiful, because the triune God is excellent.

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KEY WORDS

Jonathan Edwards
Trinity
Beauty
Aesthetics

TREFWOORDE

Jonathan Edwards
Triniteit
Skoonheid
Estetika

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Armoede, gelykheid en 'n herbesinning oor ekonomiese bestaan: 'n Christelik-etiese benadering²

ABSTRACT

Poverty, equality, and a reassessment of economical existence: A Christian-ethical approach

After all has been said and done, the serious question remains: How can people be uplifted, and how can the challenges of poverty, especially in Africa, be addressed. Different ways in which this issue was addressed in the past are discussed. The Marxist-Leninist view is to reach equality by the revolution of the proletariat. The new Marxist seeks the perpetuation of the revolution while the developmental Marxists remain totalitarian but accepts the notion of the Free Market. Other suggestions are those made by the populists and the developmentalists. Partnerships and the way of individualism and communalism are also suggested. Globalization also has a profound effect on the search for empowerment of the poor. This article suggests a way to address the issue from a Christian-ethical view. A Christocentric approach is of great importance in this regard. Christian engagement is suggested as a mediator between individualism and communalism. Christ opens the way of a new engagement with respect for the humanity of all and for uplifting all.

1. INLEIDING

Weens die diepgaande kloof tussen ryk en arm asook die ongelooflike armoede in Afrika word dikwels beweer dat gelykheid moontlik sou wees deur sekere mense af te trek en ander op te hef. Daar is die oortuiging dat deur die gelykmaking van menslike besittings en die uitskakeling van klasseverskil 'n toestand van ewilbrium tot heil van die gemeenskap bereik kan word. Die indringende vraag bly steeds hoe armoede oorkom kan word. Indien armoede nie uitgeskakel word nie, sal daar steeds die gedagte bestaan dat gelykheid in besit tot die gelykheid van die verdeling van hulpbronne en die uitskakeling van enige verskil tussen mense kan lei.

2. NAVORSINGSVRAE

Lei gelykheid in besit, wat veronderstel is om deur bepaalde maatreëls meegebring te word, wel tot gelykheid in bestaan? Sou hierdie gelykheid, wat dikwels bereik moet word deurdat sekere groepe radikaal van hulle besittings ontnem moet word, wel tot heil van die samelewing wees? Kan gelykshakeling in ekonomiese besit armoede uitskakel? Wat sou 'n teologies-etiese antwoord op die vraagstuk veronderstel en hoe sou so'n antwoord betekenisvol in die missiologie

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2 Hierdie artikel is gebaseer op navorsing wat deur die NNR van Suid-Afrika ondersteun is. Alle standpunte, gevolgtrekkings en voorstelle wat gemaak word, is die standpunt van die outeur en die NNR aanvaar geen verantwoordelikheid daarvoor nie. Die navorsing is ook ondersteun deur die UV-kluster: "New frontiers in poverty reduction and sustainable development."

verreken kan word? Hoe moet armoede voorkom word in 'n land waar dit endemies is? Hoe kan 'n diepgaande Christelike antwoord geformuleer word? Sou 'n Christosentriese benadering tot armoede en armoedeverligting die sleutel tot 'n oplossing van die diepgaande verskil in finansiële vermoëns bied.

3. MOONTLIKE OPLOSSINGS VIR DIE PROBLEEM VAN ARMOEDE

3.1 Marxistiese benaderings

Marxistiese benaderings probeer om gelykheid deur die revolusie en die radikale gelykskakeling van mense te bewerkstellig.

3.1.1 *Marxisme-Leninisme*

Die Marxisme hanteer die probleem van armoede vanuit die perspektief van klasseverskil. Die Hegeliaanse beginsel van these, antitese en sintese word op die ekonomiese terrein toegepas, maar Hegel word op sy kop gedraai.³ Die dialektiek van die historiese materialisme lei tot die implikasie dat die radikale omwenteling moet plaasvind waar die kommunisme deur die revolusie en die bemagtiging van die proletariaat as kulminasiepunt van die geskiedenis bereik word. In wese moet die klasseverskil tot die vernietiging van die bourgeois-klas en die gelykskakeling van menslike groeperings lei. Dit loop uit op die oorwinning van die proletariaat wat verenig het en die onderdrukkende magte teengewerk het.⁴ Hierin speel die revolusie die beslissende rol. In die kommunistiese manifest beklemtoon Marx die mag van die proletariaat as die revolusionêre klas (Marx 1978:43e.v.). Die eis tot akkumulاسie in die kapitalisme moet teengegaan word deur die heilbrengende revolusie.⁵ Die Leninisme voer dit verder deurdat die party die middel tot die gelykmakende revolusie word. Absolute beheer word noodsaaklik en die Marxisme-Leninisme loop uit op totalitarisme van die ergste soort. Die Maoïsme vertoon ook hierdie uitgangspunt in die radikale beheer oor die ekonomiese lewe wat in die kulturele revolusie tot uiterstes gevoer is. Die kommunisme kon nie anders as om die wreedste vorme van gelykskakeling denkbaar te probeer bevorder nie, maar met die gevolg dat ongelykheid juis in die totalitêre beheer deur die partyfunksionarisse bevestig word.⁶

3.1.2 *Neo-Marxisme*

Die neo-Marxistiese beweging waarvan Bloch en Marcuse belangrike eksponente is, lewer indringende kritiek op die Westerse verbruikersmentaliteit. Vir Bloch moet die prinsipe van hoop 'n uitweg bied uit die sirkel van ekonomiese verslawing. Die hoop word nie deur religie geskep nie maar deur die trekoorsaak van die toekoms wat op die hede afkom. Hierdie prinsipe is egter

3 Juis in sy kritiek op Hegel skryf Marx (1977:108): "But atheism and communism are no flight, no abstraction, no loss of the objective world engendered by man or of his faculties that have created his objectivity, no poverty-stricken regression to unnatural and underdeveloped simplicity. They are rather the first real emergence and genuine realization of man's essence as something actual."

4 Shaw (1978:155) skryf: "Class conflict need not always play midwife to a socio-historical transformation - anymore than it is the sine qua non of every alteration of the relations of production. On the other hand, the causes of revolution do not entirely coincide with a discrepancy between the productive forces and their relations. Class relations, and thus antagonism and struggle between classes, are a function of society's relations of production, and the normally latent conflict of classes may well materialize in open battle as a result of specific, local issues."

5 Marx (1976:742) toon aan dat die akkumulاسie van kapitaal die grondslag van die kapitalisme vorm: "Accumulate, accumulate! That is Moses and the prophets!"

6 Brzezinski (1990:7 e.v.) toon aan hoedat Lenin en Hitler dieselfde radikale uitgangspunt gehandhaaf het dat die absolute beheer van moraliteit bepaal word deur die beginsels wat hulleself neergelê het.

in die Marxistiese beginsels van gelykheid ingebed. Die hoop wat so geskep word, lei ook tot insig in 'n lewenshouding waar die verbruikersmentaliteit uitgeskakel word.

Die beginsels van *eros* en *thanatos* is beslissend by Marcuse. Die skepping van lewe en die bedreiging daarvan deur die dood noop die vraag na die voortdurende revolusie om die ware lewe te vind. Die plastiek-gemeenskap, gerig op die leë inhoud van welvaart, ontnem die mens juis van haar ware self. Die mens moet gelykgemaak word om sinvol uit die sirkelgang van ekonomiese beheer te ontsnap. Die gemeenskap is egter 'n eendimensionele gemeenskap en daar moet bevryding van die gemeenskap plaasvind (Marcuse 1986:256). Daar is in die ontwikkelde industriële gemeenskap duidelike tekens van die totalitarisme. Die revolusionêre weerstand teen die gemeenskap skep die nuwe voortdurende revolusionêre gees wat noodsaaklik is om die gemeenskap te bevry. Marcuse (1986:256-257) verduidelik hoe die randfiguur juis dié gemeenskap uitdaag: "They exist outside the democratic process; their life is the most immediate and the most real need for ending intolerable conditions and institutions. Thus their opposition is revolutionary even if their consciousness is not. Their opposition hits the system from without and is therefore not deflected by the system; it is an elementary force which violates the rules of the game and, in doing so, reveals it as a rigged game... The fact that they start refusing to play the game may be the fact which marks the beginning of the end of a period."

3.1.3 Nuwe Marxisme

Die nuwe Marxisme bly totalitêr en magsbewus. Marx se beginsels word nagejaag, maar sekere ekonomiese aanpassings word weens die onhoudbaarheid van die Marxistiese uitgangspunte gemaak. Die vryemark word omhels in 'n poging om die ekonomiese mislukkings van die Marxisme te oorkom. Die markeconomie veroorsaak dat daar wel groei voorkom, maar die balanseerpoging tussen klassieke Marxisme/Maoïsme lei tot die bevestiging van totalitarisme⁷. Rykdom word wel geskep, maar die gemeenskap bly steeds onder druk omdat totale vryheid nie geskep word nie. Absolute beheer is dus noodsaaklik en word steeds deur die maghebbers beklemtoon.

3.2 Resente benaderings

Sekere resente benaderings poog om die mens se individualiteit te erken, maar ook om gelykshakering te bewerk.

3.2.1 Populisme

In reaksie op die eksesse van die kapitalisme en die ineenstorting van hoogkapitaal in die resente verlede, maar ook die mislukking van die welsynstaat, stel Schoeman (2010:1 e.v.) die populisme as alternatief vir die mislukking van die welsynstaat voor. Schoeman (2010:13) verduidelik die implikasies van die populisme soos volg: "Populisme is ondubbelsinnig verbind tot die beginsel van respek, en staan daarom direk in opposisie tot die liberale welsynstaat met sy politiek van medelye en bejammering. Dit staan uiters skepties teenoor 'n politiek wat gebaseer is op morele verontwaardiging en selfvoldaanheid wat nogtans almal - veral die historiese benadeeldes - wil vryspreek van verantwoordelikheid en blaam deur die bestaande ongeregte te wil toeskryf aan 'n onpersoonlike oorsprong soos geïnstitusionele rassisme of dergelike sistemiese boosheid." In die populisme is daar erkenning van die morele betekenis van harde werk, respek vir bevoegdheid, die opposisie teen gevestigde voorregte, die weiering om deur die jargon van sogenaamde kenners beïndruk te word en die begeerte om reguit te praat en mense vir hulle dade verantwoordelik te hou (Lasch 1991:68 in Schoeman 2010:13). Lasch (1991:68 in Schoeman

7 Vgl. Brzezinski (1990:150 e.v.) se behandeling van die Chinese eksperimente met Marxisme, Maoïsme en 'n nuwe ekonomie.

2010:13) toon aan dat die liberale kritici wel teen die beweging kritiek inbring, soos die gevare van rassisme, anti-Semitisme, nativisme, anti-intellektualisme, ens. Populisme is dus gekant teen die welsynstaat maar wil juis deur die aanwending van nie-burokratiese oplossings die hulpbronne van die staat aanwend om mense wat verantwoordelik optree, te bemagtig.

3.2.2 *Ontwikkeling*

Om armoede in veral Afrika teen te werk, word dit as noodsaaklik beskou om 'n beleid van ontwikkeling te volg.⁸ Daar is op groot skaal vanuit die Westerse wêreld probeer om Afrika se armoedeprobleme deur middel van ontwikkeling te hanteer. Hierdie pogings tot ontwikkeling het grootliks misluk. Van der Walt (2003:437) beskryf die mislukking van ontwikkeling soos volg: "Development can be regarded as one of the greatest obsessions of the last fifty years of the previous century. For Africa it became a magic word. But we may at the same time call development one of the greatest failures of the 20th century. Seldom has so much effort produced so little. Most of Africa and the rest of the South remain underdeveloped. Poverty and deprivation are ubiquitous." Nuwe weë tot ontwikkeling word gesoek. Steeds word ontwikkeling as uitgangspunt nagejaag maar nou op 'n ander wyse. Aanspreeklikheid bly 'n groot en belangrike aspek van ontwikkeling. Daar is egter verskeie kante van die saak aangesien die groot korporasies dikwels die taal van verantwoordelikheid praat maar die omstandighede van Afrika steeds misken (Fairhead 2004:301). Die beheer oor ontwikkelingsprojekte bly nou in die hande van die moonheid of maatskappy wat die ontwikkeling doen.

3.2.3 *Vennootskap en opheffing*

Verskeie pogings tot vennootskape en opheffing kom oorkant. Die uitgangspunt is dat vennootskape tot die opheffing van groepe kan lei, terwyl hulle self 'n mate van verantwoordelikheid behou. Botes en Abrahams (2008:119 e.v.) wys daarop dat verskeie definisies van vennootskape veral die nastreef van 'n gemeenskaplike doel as raakpunt het. Die partye deel 'n gesamentlike visie en wil dit bereik deur middel van gesamentlike optrede waarin die verskillende partye mekaar as gelyke vennote erken. Botes en Abrahams (2008:122) toon egter aan dat daar inderdaad ook uitdagings en probleme in die pogings tot vennootskape is. Hindernisse op die weg na suksesvolle vennootskape sluit in sake wat wissel van die institusionele karakter van die vennote tot die sosio-kulturele agtergrond en tegniese en logistieke uitdagings. Dit is ook nie 'n towerformule vir al die probleme van onderontwikkeling en armoede nie (Botes en Abrahams 2008:123). Die uitdaging is volgens hulle om vanuit 'n Christelike agtergrond vennootskape, wat op respek en medemenslikheid berus, te beklemtoon. Die verhouding tussen God en mens word in terme van 'n vennootskap uitgedruk en is dus 'n diep geestelike saak (Botes en Abrahams 2008:123). Botes en Abrahams (2008:123) stel die uitgangspunt soos volg: "These Christian perspectives on ethical imperatives like love, trust, respect, fairness, and justice provide the ethical framework and moral obligation to pursue development initiatives in order to reduce spiritual and material poverty by means of partnerships." Ware vennootskape wil dus verder beweeg as blote ooreenkomste. Botes en Abrahams (2008:131) verduidelik: "The main aim of true partnership is linking; bringing people and institutions together in mutually beneficial relationships and in building networks of trust and strengthening relationships of reciprocity and responsiveness - not only for a joint cause, but also for one another's." 'n Weg moet gesoek word waar individuele verantwoordelikhede en bydraes saamgevoeg word om 'n gesamentlike doel na te jaag (Botes en Abrahams 2008:131).

8 Casper (2004:46) verwys na die verskillende aspekte van ontwikkeling en dui aan dat die etiese ooreengangs van die betekenis van ontwikkeling veelkantig is.

3.2.4 Afrika kommunaliteit

Waar die Westerse gemeenskap groot klem op individualiteit lê, lê die klem in Afrika op kommunaliteit. Pogings om die beginsel van kommunaliteit in Afrika te erken, was van groot belang. Van der Walt (2003:133) skryf dat Afrika en die Weste juis op dié punt verskil: "In spite of the fact that we are all human beings, African and Western culture are different. African and Western ontologies (understanding of reality), their anthropologies (views of man), views of society, theories of knowing (how knowledge of reality is obtained) and axiologies (norms and values) are often diametrically opposed. One of the outstanding differences between the two cultures which will immediately be noticed by the careful observer, is that the one (Africa) stressed human community, while the other (the West) emphasises the individual as the most important." Van der Walt (2003:145) waarsku teen die oorwaardering van kommunalisme: "An over-appreciation of the community must of necessity imply under-appreciation of the individual." Vanuit die Westerse benadering van individualiteit word gepoog om Afrika te hulp te kom. Die eie Afrika-kommunalisme word van kommunisme onderskei. Afrika kommunalisme beteken dat daar wel gedeel word, maar dan vanuit die beginsel van groepwaardes.

3.2.5 Opheffing deur globalisering

Globalisering is onstuitbaar en waar daar verskil van mening bestaan oor die wyse waarop dit gestruktureer moet word, is daar weinig wat meen dat die proses omgekeer kan word (Peters 2004:3-5). Globalisering beteken dat die wêreldbevolking in betrokkenheid op mekaar ingesuij word. 'n Eie selfstandige bestaan van die individu of van bepaalde lande is nie meer moontlik nie (Peters 2004:36-39). Voorstanders van globalisering is van mening dat dit juis tot groter verantwoordelikheid teenoor mekaar lei, wat tot groter gelykheid aanleiding gee en ook tot die gesamentlike uitskakeling van armoede (Peters 2004:54-58). Teenstanders beweer op hulle beurt dat die globaliseringsprosesse die speelveld juis uiters ongelyk gemaak het, met die gepaardgaande uitbuiting van die armes en arm lande (Peters 2004:150-153). Peters (2004:192-208) wil juis aandui dat die soeke na 'n voorspoedige lewe verskillende aspekte vertoon en dat die beslissings van die bevoorregtes juis ook neerslag vind in wat met die mense in die tweederdes wêreld gebeur. Peters (2004:208) stel dit soos volg: "While the vision of the good life as reflecting democratized forms of power, intentional care of the planet, and the social well-being of people offers one way forward, we must acknowledge that there is one simple 'solution' to the problems that have accompanied globalization in our world. The devastating inequality and environmental degradation wrought by the dominant forms of globalization make it clear that a healthy and sustainable life on this planet requires a transformation of dominant ideologies as well as unsustainable habits and lifestyles of the global elite. As we continue to examine the globalizing trends and practices of our world, we must strive to ensure that many peoples and voices participate in the conversation that moves us towards a new future. In our search for the good life, we must make sure that we envision a future that offers justice for all God's creation." Die probleem van demokratiese regering teenoor outokratiese en militêre regimes kom ook ter sprake. Goeie regering behoort steeds tot groter voordele te lei. Verantwoordelikheid teenoor mekaar is dus van groot belang. Daar is egter die gevaar dat globalisering tot groter ongelykheid en die daarmee gepaardgaande onreg kan lei.⁹

9 Kline (2005:244) skryf in hierdie verband: "Does globalization portend the evolution of a global society where shared basic values link the welfare of people throughout a diverse world community? Or will the forces of globalization simply serve competitive interests defined by national boundaries or corporate objectives and asserted by political and economic strength? The script for this play, already under way on the world stage, is still being written."

4. CHRISTELIK-ETIESE UITGANGSPUNTE

4.1 Uitgangspunte

Vir die Christelike etiek is daar sekere uitgangspunte wat van groot belang is.¹⁰ B.J. van der Walt verduidelik dat daar 'n Christelike weg tussen die uiterstes van individualisme in die Weste en kommunalisme in Afrika gevind moet word. 'n Gereformeerde lewenshouding waar daar nie 'n dualisme in die lewe voor God is nie, is van belang. Van der Walt (2003:542) skryf: Contemporary Reformed Christianity has lost a great deal of its saltiness. One of the major reasons is the unnoticed infiltration of dualism into a worldview that ought to be integral and holistic. What we badly need in South Africa, in Africa and in the entire world, is a genuine, integral, Reformational worldview to inspire Christians again to be fully present in a suffering and groaning world. We urgently need a salty Christianity which is again capable of healing a wounded world and preventing its increasing decay." Ook die ekonomiese lewe moet getransformeer word om God se betrokkenheid by sy hele skepping te beklemtoon.¹¹ Hierdie weg open die moontlikheid om balans te vind in die vlak van ekonomiese verskille tussen mense.¹² Om in die ekonomie vaste beginsels neer te lê waarin die reg en geregtigheid volgens Bybelse uitgangspunte geld is van groot belang. Die normgewende beginsels van die Bybel is in dié verband van betekenis. Goudzwaard (1972:47-56, 1975:70-71 en 1981:99 e.v.) het in hierdie verband juis ook betekenisvolle bydraes gelewer. Hy is van mening dat in die rigting van 'n ekonomie van omgee beweeg moet word. Dit sou 'n weg open as alternatief en 'n oplossing bied vir die spanning tussen kapitalisme en sosialisme. Goudzwaard is van mening dat die huidige ekonomiese beginsels in baie opsigte deur gierigheid gedryf word. Solank dit die geval is word afgode gedien en nie die lewende God nie. Die grondslag van die ekonomie moet verander van gierigheid na medemenslikheid. Goudzwaard en andere (2007:192) skryf: "Let us adopt a different, richer vision of society and of the growth our society requires - a precare economy. A precare economy places our needs first rather than last on its list of priorities and only then addresses the scope of production. Let us take first steps down the viable, realistic path of promise." In 'n vroeëre werk van Goudzwaard en De Lange (1986:134-161) spel hulle uit wat hulle as beginsels sou neem in 'n ekonomie van herstel. Sake soos die hersiening van die internasionale geldsisteme, hersiening van loon en arbeid, die sorg van gemeenskappe, hersiening van prys en produksie, finansiering van sosiale sekuriteit, bewaring van die omgewing, en beheer oor ekonomiese groei en ander sake word deur hulle voorgestel: "It involves the realization that because of our collective drive for more en and more, we directly damage our *own* well-being. We require another vision of life, a vision in which the word 'enough' plays a positive role. The implementation of such a vision will create

10 Markham (2007:199) skryf in die verband: "What is needed then is to recover a culture of belonging. In many ways, the community demands of religion can be helpful. The basic religious impulse sees the mystery beyond the immediate." Ook Goulet (1995:215) wys op die betekenis van godsdienstige waardes vir die volledige ontwikkeling van menslike potensiaal. Van besondere betekenis is egter Heyns (1982:89) se benadering tot die etiese: "Na ons oordeel kan dus met reg van die Vader as die Skeppingsgrond, die Seun as die Herskeppingsgrond en die Gees as die Voleindigingsgrond van die etiese gepraat word. Daarvoor word dit dan duidelik dat die etiese in sy drie fundamentele aspekte van *ontstaan*, *herstel* uit sy verval, en maksimale *ontplooiing* van sy aard en struktuur, radikaal en totaal van God Drie-enig afhanklik is."

11 Hoe moeilik die ware Christelike etiese lewe is, word deur Mackey (1994:204) aangetoon wanneer hy daarop wys dat Christene soms deur nie-Christene oortref word wanneer dit by die etiese lewe kom. Daar moet dus altyd na Christus self verwys word.

12 Sen (1990:78-79) toon aan dat die etiek en ekonomie juis op mekaar aangewese is indien na die heilsame lewe gesoek word. Vgl. ook Etzioni (1988:239) wat wys op die motivering van arbeiders deur ekonomiese insentiewe.

new possibilities for *neighborliness*, for demonstrating *care for our surroundings*, and for having more *time* available in our harried lives. Such a vision will help to liberate not only the poor but also the *rich*." Die vraag is egter hoe daar na meerdere geregtigheid gestreef kan word en die standpunt wat in hierdie artikel gehuldig word is dat dit juis nie kan plaasvind in 'n sogenaamde "Christelike" stelsel waar gelykheid afgedwing en inisiatief en vryheid ingeperk word nie, daarom sal daar ook met Goudzwaard in gesprek getree word in die volgende evaluering.

Die beginsel van reg en geregtigheid beteken ook dat sowel die arme as die ekonomies welvarende se reg erken moet word.¹³ Dit is noodsaaklik dat albei opgehef word. Die erkenning van menslikheid, maar ook van verskil in vermoëns en die aanwend van Goddelike talente tot die opbou van die gemeenskap is van groot belang. Om hierin te slaag, moet die dualisme juis vermy word. Van der Walt (2003:537) verduidelik die verskil tussen 'n dualistiese en 'n Christelike wêreldbeskouing: "God's word assists us in replacing the false antitheses in dualism, between nature and grace, with the real antithesis. Because grace is an attitude of God which intends to renew (rather than stand opposite, above, or alongside) nature, the nature-grace antithesis is wrong. The grace of God is not even the opposite of sin - the work of man - but the opposite of God's wrath against sin. The real biblical antithesis is between man's obedience to God's will (a result of God's grace) and man's disobedience (earning God's wrath)." (vetdruk Van der Walt).

Die ekonomiese stelsel wat menslike moontlikhede en ook die potensiaal om verskillende vlakke van inkomste te bereik deur ingrypende totalitarisme beperk, moet teengewerk word.¹⁴ 'n Ekonomiese stelsel moet funksioneer sonder om ander uit te buit, maar juis om vir ander ook lewensmoontlikhede te skep. Die huidige totale krisis in wêreldmarkte word aan die vryemark toegeskryf. Apel (2008:150) toon aan dat 'n duidelike etiese benadering juis ten

13 Dit is van belang om te let op die gang van die Christelike etiek ten opsigte van gelykheid en armoede en rykdom. Gordon (1989) toon aan hoe die probleem van gebrek en armoede reeds van die eerste bladsye van die Bybel ter sprake kom. Die Yahwis is volgens hom van mening dat die probleem deur geloof en ook wysheid opgelos word (Gordon 1989:1-10). Later volg die oortuiging dat die navolging van die wet die oplossing is (Gordon 1989:11-20), maar dit word in die ballingskap deur mediasie en die apokaliptiese oplossing verder gevoer (Gordon 1989:21-32 en 33-42). By Prediker kom die vraag na die reg sterk na vore en Gordon (1989:43-35) is van mening dat die Prediker sterk standpunt teen die gangbare oplossings van die wysheid en die wet inneem. In die Nuwe Testament kom die perspektief van die koninkryk van God sterk na vore. Gordon (1989:45-46) skryf: "The Solution by Seeking the Kingdom, it is clear, involves: trust in the Father; a willingness to recognise personal dependence; and low valuation, in the present, of possible future personal utilities. Also, it involves rejection of one's own material welfare as the focal point of activity. Satisfaction of needs, in that regard, comes as a by product." Dit word deur Paulus verder gevoer (Gordon 1989:51-58). Gordon (1989:85e.v.) verwys ook na Clemens se beskouing oor aktiewe betrokkenheid by die ekonomiese gemeenskap (Gordon 1989:129-132, kyk ook Keeling 1980:95) en Augustinus wat moontlik reeds ekonomiese groei en vooruitgang voorsien het. Vertroue op God is vir die vroeë Christene bepalend, daarna eers volg die ekonomiese aktiwiteit. Tog word aardse seën nie uitgesluit nie wanneer Jesus sy volgelinge verseker "en al hierdie dinge sal aan julle toegevoeg word". Alhoewel daar nie 'n finaal uitgewerkte etiek vanuit die vroeë kerk kom nie, is dit tog duidelik dat die beginsels van lewe met God in die geloof reeds vasgelê is wat ook betekenis het vir die hele lewe, insluitend die ekonomiese lewe (Meeks 1993:216). Keeling (1980:142 e.v.) wys daarop dat die reformasie ten ontregte beskuldig word van ekonomiese individualisme waar iemand soos Calvyn veel eerder die klem op die herstel van die beeld van God en ook selfverloëning wou lê. Faasen (1985:272) meen wel dat Calvyn sekere aspekte van die kapitalisme sou stimuleer: "Alhoewel die Calvinisme nie die grondoorsaak van die kapitalisme is nie, kan dit nie ontken word dat die sobere lewenstyl, gekombineer met energieke en toegewyde arbeid gaandeweg die 'kapitalistiese' ontwikkeling van die maatskappy sou stimuleer nie." Marxsen (1993:310) toon aan dat die begroning van die etiek juis ook in die Nuwe Testament bepaal word deur die feit van die kerk wat gebeur, naamlik waar die liefde na vore kom.

14 Jones et al (2005:139) skryf dat die besigheidsetiek onder andere altyd onrealisties sowel as prakties sal wees om na 'n beter toekoms te streef.

opsigte van globalisering noodsaaklik is: "But a conception of universal ethics as a response to the globalization process should be more than just an agreement on a certain enumeration of words for values (or even norms) that can be made the subject of a declaration, although such a declaration could be very useful and even politically influential, as has been shown by the UN Declaration of Human Rights in 1948. Hence we should indeed have a similar declaration of moral duties or responsibilities, in order to provide a counterweight to the rights talk, which has been accused of being an expression of Western individualism and egotism." Daarom sal daar maatreëls moet wees om dit in die regte rigting te stuur, maar die alternatief van Marxisme en uiterste sosialisme is uiters beperkend op die menslike bestaan. Borsch (2005:11) verduidelik: "During the past two centuries some Christians and others concerned for the common good have advocated for more communally-based economies in which, for example, the natural resources of a country would be seen as commonly owned and so developed by communal means for the benefit of all. Such efforts have, however, come to be seen by many as failures. Communism, in particular, was seen to bring on totalitarianism and produce inferior economic results. Socialism, even in some of its milder forms, was deemed to have similar tendencies. Central planning and ownership, bureaucracy, lack of fiscal discipline, too much regulation and taxation inhibited the rights and incentives of individuals in a world of increasingly complex and dynamic markets. Capitalist and free market economies, on the other hand, it was held, led to the overall common good for the greatest number. Private ownership and corporate growth were among the valued and necessary conditions for such economies. While they may have some dangers and downsides, the accumulation of capital for business investment and the need to treat labor as a commodity seemed to many to be necessary constructs for such development....The benefits of such free-market economies can be sizable, especially to some, but the costs in terms of human livelihoods and lives can be considerable as well."¹⁵ Ten spyte van ernstige probleme met 'n vryemark-ekonomie is daar altyd meer menslike vryheid wanneer almal tot vrye ekonomiese aktiwiteite toegang het as wanneer daar 'n totalitêre ekonomie met absolute beheer oor die individu is (vgl. die verskil tussen Noord en Suid-Korea).¹⁶ Die vraag of daar nie 'n alternatief is waarin daar ruimte vir omgee is sonder om sosialisme te vervalt moet gevra word. Goudzwaard en andere (2007:192) is juis van mening dat sodanige alternatief bestaan in 'n ekonomie van omgee. Die werklikheid waarbinne gemeenskappe funksioneer beteken egter dat maatreëls binne die vryemark veel beter vrugte afwerp, waarbinne die gemeenskap self deur middel van sake soos byvoorbeeld belasting buitensporighede teenwerk, as om die ekonomie in 'n keurslyf waarbinne die sogenaamde geregtigheid afgedwing moet word deur middel van die ontneming van inisiatief en vryheid, in te dwing. Soos demokrasie verskeie leemtes openbaar maar by verre die aanneemlikste vorm van regering in die gevalle wêreld is, so bied die vryemark sisteme wat met maatreëls tot heil van die hele gemeenskap aangewend word steeds die beste vorm van ekonomiese bestaan.

15 Daar kan ook in dié verband na die implikasies van religie verwys word. Die teenstrydighede in religie kan egter ook die positiewe insluit wat op ekonomiese vlak tot heil van die gemeenskap kan lei, volgens Cochrane (2009:30) "Yet religion not infrequently also enters into violence and its preconditions from the opposite side - with capacities to heal, to open up new possibilities, to enhance emancipation. Indeed, this is not a trivial basis for the appeal of religious experience and religious faith to so many people in our time as they struggle with the world we live in or seek to understand and reflect upon it in ways that promise to overcome that which threatens to defeat them. Under conditions of globalization, as at other times in human history, the ambiguities of religion come home to roost. What is bred in the process offers profound clues to contemporary existence."

16 In die verband kan na Beckley (2005:377-378) verwys word met sy standpunt dat 'n goeie ekonomie ook menslike waardigheid verhoog. Casper (2004:229) waarsku egter teen ekonomiese groei as finale uitgangspunt

4.2 'n Christosentriese benadering

'n Christosentriese benadering beklemtoon die aspek van versoening ook op ekonomiese terrein. Wanneer die versoenende werk van Christus sentraal geplaas word beteken dit dat ekonomiese verskille teen die agtergrond van die herstel van verhoudinge beoordeel word. Christus is die een wat ware versoening met God bring. Hierdie versoening beteken dat mense, wie hulle ook al is en wat hulle ekonomiese toestand ook mag wees, voor God gebring word om in herstel met Hom te leef. Hulle leef egter ook in nuwe verhoudinge met mekaar. Armoede in al sy baie voorkomste en gewade roep om herstel. Hierdie herstel word in Christus gevind. Die kosmiese werk van Christus maak dit moontlik om die arme nuut voor God te plaas. Die barmhartigheid van Christus bring egter juis ook meerdere barmhartigheid mee. Hierdie barmhartigheid lei nie tot uitwissing van verskille nie maar tot meerdere respek. Op hierdie wyse verkry die ekonomiese lewe ook die regte plek in die spektrum van bestaan.

Juis in Christus kan die balans tussen ekonomiese welvaart en die opheffing van armoede gevind word. Die volle ontwikkeling van potensiaal is moontlik in Christus en welvaart kan ook bekom word, maar dit word altyd deur medemenslikheid en erkenning van die naaste in balans gebring.¹⁷ Die arme word juis opgehef wanneer die persoon wat tot volle ontwikkeling gekom het haar/sy vermoëns aanwend om die arme op te hef.

Christus maak nuut en skep deur die nuwe lewe wat Hy skep geleenthede vir die mens om nuut voor Hom te leef. Dit hang saam met die eer wat aan Christus as die Here van die skepping toekom. Kolossense 1¹⁸ se lied oor die heerlikheid van Christus bevestig dit in geen onduidelike taal nie. Christus se heerlikheid raak ook die ekonomiese lewe. Deur die erkenning van sy heerlikheid kan die mens ook die ekonomiese lewe binne die regte verhouding plaas. Van groot belang is dat Christus die hele mens herstel in al sy verbande. Dit beteken dat die mens ten volle sy menslikheid in Christus ontvang wat inisiatief en vryheid insluit. Juis omdat Christus die mens heelmaak kan die mens ook geleenthede benut en nuwe sake aanpak. Die norme van geregtigheid en liefde wat Christus self deurgee skep geleenthede tot menslikheid. Ware menslikheid respekteer egter altyd die vermoëns van die mens en die benutting van sy geleenthede. Gelykheid in besit kan daarom nooit armoede ophef nie, omdat dit die mens se menslikheid ontken. Armoede word opgehef waar mense die geleentheid gebied word om met inisiatief en vryheid geleenthede vir baie skep. In Christus is dit juis moontlik omdat Hy die hele mens herstel.

5. PRAKTIESE RIGLYNE

Herstel is noodsaaklik. Hierdie herstel sal nie verkry word deur een onreg met 'n ander te vervang nie. Dit sal ook nie verkry word deur een af te trek om sodoende die ander op te hef nie. Deur almal op te hef, kan die gemeenskap self op dinamiese wyse ook diegene wat ekonomies

17 Borsch (2005:22) verduidelik dat 'n ernstige bevraagtekening van uitgangspunte, groter deursigtigheid, vrye onderneming gepaardgaande met koöperatiewe pogings en die begeerte om die ekonomie van onder op te bou, vrugbaar kan wees: "Maybe, I am arguing, more people than we realize have such faith-based economics. If so, there are good reasons frequently to undertake as honest and careful a look at our reasons and values as we can, and then to apply the best critical thinking and economic wisdom we can muster. An economy that is based in concerns for the common good can be the best way to achieve a sound long-term bottom line for companies and a country. An economy that is part of an oikonomia of living and working together to "provide enough for those who have too little" is a vision and a good that is worthy of the best of us as a people of God and a nation together.

18 Dunn (1996:98) wys op die ingrypende implikasies van die opstanding van Christus vir die hele skepping. Kyk ook na Standhartinger (1999:205-206) en Lohse (1982:86-87).

en andersins gebrek lei, tot vlakke van herstel bring.¹⁹ Dit is nie waar dat die ekonomie net 'n beperkte omvang het en dat diegene wat hulle eie talente en inisiatief ontwikkel diegene wat net op ander steun, se deel van hulle ontnem nie. Selfs op die vlak van die benutting van energie is dit nie waar nie, aangesien daar onuitputlike bronne van herwinbare energie is indien dit ontwikkel word. Ontwikkeling kan alleen verkry word deur 'n bepaalde vorm van die vryemark, maar met die voorbehoud dat daar maatreëls ingebou word waarin vorme van uitbuiting en bevoorregting uitgeskakel word en die speelveld vir almal gelykmaak word.

Respek is dus noodsaaklik by die erkenning van die bydrae van gemeenskappe tot die opbou van 'n land sonder om ander af te trek. Dit beteken dat erkenning verleen word aan die bydrae van hulle wat wel opgebou het, maar dat daar verwag word dat die hele gemeenskap opgehef moet word.

Die gevaar is lewensgroot dat die gewaande gelykheid van sosialistiese of sosialisties-geïnspireerde stelsels tot groot onderdrukking kan lei. Hierdie onderdrukking is dikwels radikaal en volledig.

Eksesse in die vryemark moet egter teëgewerk word. Dit beteken 'n hersiening van die uiterste uitbuiting van ander deur gemeenskappe en leiers wat nie beheer uitoefen oor die inkomste van bepaalde funksionaries nie sodat dit tot totale wanbalanse aanleiding gee. Daar is maatreëls wat getref moet word om die uiterste hoogkapitalisme te bestry sonder om die beginsel van inisiatief teen te werk.

Deur almal op te hef, kan nuwe geleenthede met nuwe moontlikhede geskep word. Die landbouer wat op eerbare wyse werk skep, die fabrieksbaas wat werkgeleenthede skep, die nyweraar wat nuwe geleenthede skep, moet aangemoedig word en kan ook verder opgehef word. Maatreëls teen uitbuiting is noodsaaklik en sal en kan in werk gestel moet word, maar wanbalanse kan nie reggestel word deur die skuld las te laai op diegene wat inisiatief neem en groei bewerk nie.

Die relatiewe betekenis van die ekonomiese lewe is van belang. Die Bybel waarsku teen die ryk dwaas en toon aan dat diegene wat arm is maar dan ook tegelykertyd in God arm is, wel ryk is. Die ekonomiese lewe bepaal nie die hele bestaan van die mens nie. Die mens moet in al sy verbande en bestaanswyses die volheid van die lewe met God ondervind. Dit word bereik waar ware menslikheid in die lewe met mekaar in God deur Jesus Christus gevind word.

6. SLOT

Die mens se lewe voor God bereik hoogtes van diens en gemeenskap as die mens die versoening in Jesus Christus erken. Dit word nie bereik deur mense te verneder, af te trek, van hulle bestaansreg te ontnem of hulle te dwing tot die verlies van kultuur en 'n eenselwige bestaan nie. Die Christelike etiek sal altyd uit die beginsel van liefde tot God en liefde tot die naaste die mens tot nuwe lewe voor God lei.

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19 Wat gelykheid betref, skryf Van Wyk (1988:77) verhelderend: "Dit moet dus aanvaar word dat geregtigheid ook met ongelykheid versoenbaar is, onder sekere voorwaardes. Eerstens moet die bevoorregte posisie van sommiges tot voordeel van die hele samelewing strek en nie net tot hulle eie nie. Verder moet die bevoorregte posisie van sommiges bydra tot die vermindering van lyding, ontbering en armoede. Dit moet dus deel wees van 'n rigting waarin die samelewing beweeg tot vermindering van lyding." Vgl. ook Casper (2004:88) wat "equity" en "equality" onderskei.

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TREFWOORDE

Gelykheid
Armoede
Sosialisme
Vryemark ekonomie
Christosentriese benadering

KEY WORDS

Equality
Poverty
Socialism
Free market economy
Christocentric approach

Religious instruction in public schools in view of the fundamental right to religious freedom: A Christian ethical perspective

ABSTRACT

Religious instruction in public schools in view of the fundamental right to religious freedom: A Christian ethical perspective

This article examines the way religious instruction can be arranged and executed in a liberal democratic society. Several options for the implementation of the fundamental right of religious freedom are investigated as well as the bearing of each of these on religious instruction in public schools. The article concludes that the active plural model for the implementation of religious freedom offers the best solution when it is measured within the framework of religious tolerance and peace. This option entails that pupils in public schools should be permitted to observe their respective religions, to wear religious symbols and to be instructed in the religion of their choice. They should also be taught about other religions in order to develop respect for people of other religious persuasions.

1. INTRODUCTION

Religion and religious freedom have become prominent topics in the contemporary human rights discourse. Where religion was seen in the recent past as a negative force in cultivating an ethos of human rights, scholars nowadays recognise the importance of religion in this process. Witte (2007:335) explains this trend in a recent book where he indicated that: "religion is an in eradicable condition of human lives and human communities. Religions invariably provide many of the sources and 'scales of values' by which many persons and communities govern themselves. Religions inevitably help to define the meanings and measures of shame and regret, restraint and respect, responsibility and restitution that a human rights regime presupposes. Religions must thus be seen as indispensable allies in the modern struggle for human rights. Excluding them from the struggle is impossible, indeed catastrophic. Including them by enlisting their unique resources and protecting their unique rights, is vital to enhancing the regime of human right." For this reason, new ways and structures for the application of the fundamental right to religious freedom are on the agenda of scholars in the various fields of human rights.

At the annual sessions of the United Nation's Human Rights Council, the topic of religious instruction within the framework of the fundamental right to religious freedom is constantly on the agenda for discussion and resolutions. The regular question is whether religious instruction should take place in public schools and if so, how it should be implemented to do justice to the fundamental right to religious freedom in a constitutional state? This constant attention to the specific topic can be attributed to four trends in modern societies. These are:

- The expanding human rights environment due to the influence of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of the United Nations (1948) and the global trend of constitutionalism.

- The growing interest in the ethics of human rights by religions and religious institutions.
- The emerging religious fundamentalism in virtually all global religions with its urge for religious instruction in public schools and its rejection of neutralism and the idea of a secular political dispensation (see Vorster, 2008:83; Antoun, 2001:153 & Riddell, 2004:72).
- The emergence of contemporary religious intolerance due to the rise of religious extremism, which has the potential of social unrest and violence (Milton-Edwards, 2005:70; Aran, 1991:265; Sutton & Vertigans, 2005:76).

This article examines the way in which religious instruction in schools can take place within the framework of the fundamental right to religious freedom. The central theoretical argument is that secularism in school education nurtures the inclination to intolerance and even violence in secular states and that a solution can be found in the implementation of an active plural model in the execution of religious freedom in a constitutional state. I will describe five models for the practical implementation of religious freedom and its implications for religious instruction in schools to explain the idea. These are the *active theocratic model*, the *active state-religion model*, the *active secular model*, the *active universal model* and the *active plural model*. I will conclude with arguments in favour of the *active plural model*.

2. MODELS OF RELIGIOUS FREEDOM AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS FOR RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION

As far as the implementation of the fundamental right to freedom of religion is concerned, Hildegard Warnink, in her recent evaluation of models for implementing religious rights, distinguishes between the active neutral model and the active plural model (Warnink, 2005:1). In my opinion, further reflection on this issue opens doors for identifying another three models that function within the debates surrounding human rights. These three models can be referred to as the following: the *active state-religion model*, the *active universal model*, and the *active theocratic model*. I have explained these models in another publication (Vorster, 2007:149). In this article I intend to apply the implications of these models to religious instruction in public schools and to propose ways in which religious instruction can be arranged in such a way that it can advance religious tolerance and peace in a constitutional democracy.

2.1 The active theocratic model

The term *active theocratic model* refers to a political entity that is defined on the basis of a theocratic view of state and culture. In practice, this model means that a specific religion controls a country's rulers, and that the community at large is arranged according to the principles, laws and criteria applying to that specific religion. Other religions are accordingly either declared illegal or are, at most, tolerated as long as they do not interfere or clash with the ruling religion. History contains many examples of such rule. The great classic example quoted in history was that of the Roman Empire and its cult of the emperors (Walker, 1992:50). The emperor was allocated the status of a son of the gods, and everybody had to honour him accordingly. It is for this reason that Christians were persecuted during the first century after Christ when they desired to serve another God. Christendom, however, later on applied the same model. During the Middle Ages, the idea of *Corpus Christianum*, controlled by the pope, was applied. In terms of those times, this expression indicated a worldwide political entity (Cairns, 1982:165). No other religions were allowed to function. Even Christian movements such as the Cartharians and the Waldenes were prohibited. This model resulted in much bloodshed and was, to a certain extent, responsible for many religious conflicts during the Crusades and the post-Reformation religious wars in Europe.

The idea was also prominent among both the Anabaptists and the Reformers. The Anabaptists wanted to establish the kingdom of God on earth by force (Bonhoeffer, 1995:305). In their view society should be arranged as a visible manifestation of the kingdom of God, and they rejected any notion of a civil authority. Calvin furnished the city-state of Geneva as a theocracy in which all other religions, as well as dissensions from the Reformed doctrine, were prohibited (Vorster, 1993:307; Witte, 2007:47 & Tierney, 1996:46). He insisted that both church and state officials were to play complementary legal roles in the creation of a local Christian commonwealth and in the cultivation of the Christian citizen (Witte, 2007:78). His ideas were also furthered by his followers, such as Beza in Geneva, Althusius in Holland, Milton in England and the Puritans in New England.

The theocratic model has also been applied in Muslim states in the past where the state was organised according to the Shari'a, *i.e.*, the laws of Islam as they developed through the ages (Blei, 1992:31). There is, at present, a revival of this model in various Muslim countries, and it proves to be the cause of many religious conflicts, as well as the violation of other rights — such as those of women, strangers, or foreigners. In some of these countries, it has been compulsory for the head of state to be a Muslim (Hashmi, 2006:1). This prerequisite is further evidence of the implications following in the wake of the active theocratic model. Another example of the active theocratic model can be traced to the Japanese constitution as implemented prior to the Second World War. The first article of this constitution prescribed that the population should acknowledge the godly origin of the emperor from the sun god, and that the emperor should be obeyed as such.

As a result of this model's failure to allow for or grant freedom of religion, speech, and conscience, it has led to extensive persecution, bloodshed, and violence in the past (Vorster, 2004:205). The religious wars that took place after the time of the Reformation could serve as an example of this. Similar religious persecutions take place presently, especially in countries where the theocratic model is actively implemented (United Nations, 2009:11). In modern times the theocratic model has particularly been propagated in the articles of faith of certain strands in the Reformed line of thought, as well as in the Muslim states under the control of the Shari'a.

The theocratic option has far-reaching implications for education. It entails that religious instruction is compulsory for all pupils and that the instruction must be instruction in one single religion. In this way one religion is forced on everyone, and everyone is expected to abide by the spirituality, rules, morals and values of the dominant religion. The purpose of education is to create a society founded on the religious principles and norms of the religion of the state. No other religious or secular norms are tolerated. People of other religious persuasions are forced by law to believe what they do not want to believe. Such a model violates the fundamental right of religious freedom, as well as the right of minorities to observe their own traditions and religious beliefs. Therefore, the fundamental legitimacy and soundness of this model should be questioned.¹ Some remarks in evaluation of this follow:

- The Reformed tradition of the theocratic model causes the kingdom of God to become *de facto* an immanent political entity as Israel had been in times of the Old Testament. Modern Christian theology indicates clearly that neither Scripture nor Christian tradition offers any justification for a Christian theocratic model. Furthermore, the application of the model in this tradition devaluates the spread and sharing of the gospel through churches because society is directed externally by so-called Christian legislation and no longer from within by means of the influence of the gospel on the convictions of people.

¹ In the meantime, confessions have been altered in almost all of the mainstream churches of the Reformed tradition — to such an extent that theocracies, as discussed above, can no longer be deducted from them (*see* Vorster, 1993:307).

It would, in other words, mean that efforts are made to shape people's moral values by way of legislation instead of relying on primary, innermost conviction. In this way, a Christendom society - that cannot necessarily be characterised as a Christian society - is formed.² Some signs of such a distortion of Christian values could be detected during the Apartheid regime in South Africa. The government, for example, prescribed Christian education, protected Christian moral criteria by way of regulations of censorship, and refused other religions the opportunity to use the state controlled media. Such legislation promotes the image of Christianity, but does not actually promote or contribute towards the kingdom of God. It needs to be pointed out that the Kingdom becomes visible when people internalise the kingdom of Christ in their lives and profess and live up to the principles of the Kingdom through inner conviction. Laws do not make Christians - but the gospel indeed does.

- Christianity, Judaism and Islam have noble principles when it comes to respecting the human dignity of all people. This respect does not feature adequately in the active implementation of this model. Religion is a sensitive and highly emotional issue that deeply touches people's feelings and sense of dignity. If people are inhibited in the areas of religion, feelings of aggression and pain are awakened. Love for the fellow being must translate into consideration when it comes to these deepest feelings of others. In this sense, to really "love your neighbour" is rendered impossible by the theocratic model. Religious people should allow all others to lead their lives according to their own religious principles. On the other hand they can bear testimony of their own religion by way of persuasion and not by co-opting the tools of the state for the purpose of building a state-religion such as the Corpus Christianum of the Medieval Ages or the modern Shari'a states. The theocratic model deprives the authority of the day its God-given mission to maintain order and peace and to rule in such a way that everybody will have the choice to live in dignity. By restricting other religions, room is created for aggression and violence - as has been repeatedly proven in history. It would mean that the authority, which should act as peacemaker, turns into the aggressor that uses education and forced religious instruction, according to the religion of the theocracy, to manipulate all citizens into a religious dispensation against the will of many. History proved that such an educational model is a recipe for intolerance and violence.

2.2 The active state-religion model

Closely related to the active theocratic model, but yet also different, is the active state-religion model. This model allows for contemporary rulers to single out and favour a specific religion, and to contribute to the advantage of its interests, while neglecting the others. This model differs from the active theocratic model in that it acknowledges and protects other religions in its rule and operates without using a fundamental text as basis. Even though authority does not base its state government on the ethical principles and criteria of the favoured religion, the freedom of religion is hampered in the sense of equal exposure.

These models existed mainly in the European nation states. The United Kingdom could serve as an appropriate example. The motto attached to external politics was "God, King and Country." Although this model no longer exists in a *de jure* manner, it still actually exists in a *de facto* manner. The queen still remains the head of the Anglican Church. This model can also be traced in the national anthem, "God save the Queen." The same is true of the pledge of allegiance in

² The term "Christendom society" here indicates a society that broadly lives according to Christian norms and that upholds Christian festive days, but which is not necessarily a society of convinced Christians. A Christian society is a society of people who uphold certain principals and norms out of inner persuasion.

the US and its maxim on their currency namely: "In God we trust". However, in the case of the UK and the US these customs are merely seen as ceremonial deism and it has no influence on the education policies.

In the previous dispensation in South Africa and other states within the major religious traditions, the state religion affects educational policies directly. The authority of the day gives preferential treatment to one single religion in public schools by incorporating the values of the state-religion into certain curricula and to arrange the school calendar according to the holy days of this particular religion. People of other religious persuasions are forced out of the system to their own expensive private institutions. Freedom of religion in this model is defined as the "right to arrange your own education and to pay for it".

Certain critical remarks can also be made about this model:

- As is the case with the active theocratic model, certain criteria and symbols are also forced on people belonging to other religions. Would it really be an expression of freedom of conscience if children of other convictions and religions sing "God save the Queen"? According to the theology of religions, it would be possible to reason that each individual can read his/her own god image into this anthem (Vorster, 1994:249). Such an interpretation, though, is not correct. The origin and historic course of expressions clearly indicate that the Christian view of God is prominent in this case.
- Agnostic and minority religions experience this model in the United Kingdom as excluding and discriminating in nature. Christians are forced by the biblical command to do unto others as they expect others to do unto them, to take a serious look at the possibilities of exclusion. A system that impairs proper respect and consideration for freedom of conscience and conviction cannot be regarded as ethically acceptable. Apart from this, the Christian religion is wrongly projected as a political entity, and this is contradictory to the dynamic character of the kingdom of God as a growing reality in the lives of people, and as something directed at innermost conviction and apparent from the witness offered by Christian people. Shaping the Kingdom ceremoniously into a mould of deism would be to darken and obscure the concrete reality of the Christian reign over everything.
- This model also does not answer to the demands and requirements that the Word sets for the leaders of the day. Authority must exercise justice and must protect and preserve peace. Inhibiting people's freedom of conscience, even if by means of symbolism only, cannot be viewed as justice in the fullest sense of the word. In times of the Old Testament, it was expected of even the theocratic government of the nation of God to protect the rights of strangers or 'foreigners' - i.e., those who worshipped other gods (De Vaux, 1988:930 & Vorster, 2004:232). This model also poses a threat to peace as can clearly be seen from the public protest recently arising from among religious minorities in the United Kingdom and Australia.
- Such as model does not protect the religious rights of children and can even be typified as discriminatory because they are excluded from any form of financial assistance by the state. The parents are taxpayers but they cannot ensure the education of their children in the religion or worldview of their choice.

Furthermore, this model promotes inter-religious intolerance because children are in no position to learn about other religions and to develop respect for people of other convictions. They fail to bridge the "us-them" zones, and these divisions proved to be fertile soil for racism. Xenophobia and religiocentrism (Marger, 1994:7).

2.3 The Active Neutral or Secular Model

The neutral model currently functions in many constitutional democracies and the most well

known of these are the USA and France. According to this model, church and state are completely separated. Freedom of religion is moved from the public sphere to the private domain. The government defines itself as secular, makes no religious or ideological choice and guarantees the freedom of all religions that conform to the norms of the constitution and the norms of general order and peace within the community. The government protects religions against discrimination within the limits that the law permits. This model emanated from the USA, and it is based on the so-called “free exercise clause” as opposed to the “establishment clause” that serves as the foundation for an active state religion model (Blei, 1992:112; Chaskalson, 1997:100; Vorster, 2004:209).

In spite of this choice the American Pledge of Allegiance still harbours the expression, “One nation under God,” and the applicability of retaining this is widely debated between legal experts and ethicists within the USA (Kao, 2006:1). On the monetary units of the USA, the expression also appears that reads “In God we trust.” However, as said before, judiciary circles view these expressions not as a movement away from the active neutral model, but as “ceremonial deism.” (Kao, 2006:6). This means that these expressions no longer hold a contemporary religious meaning, and that they have no influence on interpreting the constitution (Van der Vyver, 1999:651). The reference to God is little more than a symbol of the nation’s history.

The most extreme employment of the neutral model is found in the French law (Law nr. 2004-228 of 15 March 2004) in which school children are prohibited from wearing any religious symbols. Christian children are not allowed to wear necklaces with a cross, and Muslim children are not allowed to wear the veil (*hijab*). This law led to uprisings within cities of France in 2005, especially since Muslims are of the opinion that the flag of neutrality actually hides discrimination against them. Irrespective of these protests president Sarkozy of France banned the wearing of the Burkha by Muslim women in 2009. Although he contended that this step had nothing to do with religious freedom, but with the status of women in France, the fact remains that Muslim women can view this step as an infringement on the fundamental right to religious freedom.

The active neutral model moves all religious instruction to the private sphere, which entails that religious instruction becomes the entire responsibility of privately funded schools or religious institutions. In some instances provision will be made for pupils to learn about religions from an “objective” angle of approach. This option is popular in Western Liberal Democracies, but has come under pressure with the emergence of religious fundamentalism and the post-modernist worldview. Fundamentalists emphasise the holistic character of their religions and claim that no single sphere of life can be devoid of a religious praxis. According to their views schools should make provision for pupils to observe their religions by creating space for prayers, study of religious texts and observance of religious symbols such as wearing the hijab in the case of Muslim children and the cross in the case of Christian children. They also expect their own holy days to be respected. Post-modernist views regarding the religious freedom of individuals hold that the right of everybody to observe their religious rites in all public spheres also compromises the active neutral model (Vorster, 2009:163). Furthermore, the complaint by Muslims that the flag of neutrality actually hides discrimination against them is also not without grounds because in many Western Democracies, such as the UK and Australia, Christian holidays are still respected in school calendars and in the planning of academic years.

In addition to these arguments, the following critical remarks can be made about this model:

- Ceremonial deism does not satisfy belief because it is likely that all theistic religions view the degradation of references to God and other images of belief as blasphemous (Van der Vyver, 1999:651). For this reason, this model contains the potential for conflict.
- The Muslim’s experience in France reveals another problem. The question is whether

neutrality is possible. Can a government be ideologically neutral? Is it not so that a constitution and laws are written from within a given paradigm and life - and worldview? To my mind, neutrality is impossible when it comes to one's outlook on life. What Kuhn (1970:VII) and other scientists who followed him have to say about the paradigm drivenness of science also goes for the household of the state. In conjunction with Capetz, it is therefore reasonable to argue that neutrality (or secularism) embodies an ideological point of departure that influences constitutional drafting and the formulation of laws as much as does any other religion, ideology, or philosophy (Capetz, 2004:180).

- For this reason, neutrality cannot adequately guarantee religious freedom. The government must approach belief systems with a paradigm driven perception of what will be good for religions in general. According to Rawls (1987:4), such a perception must lead to the abuse of power. He says, "A public and workable agreement on a single and general comprehensive conception [of what is good] could be maintained only by the oppressive use of power." Indeed, this is what occurs when it comes to the concrete employment of this model in policies of religious instruction. The unrest following the promulgation of Law (nr. 2004-228 of 15 March 2004) in France proves this point.
- The promotion of neutrality in the public sphere cannot avoid limiting the role of religions — for instance, in the educational sphere. Freeing public education from religion opens the door for the promotion of secularism with all the consequences that this entails. Under the flag of neutrality, a value system (that can never actually be neutral) is developed that will determine the life norms of pupils. How can matters like sexual education, the teaching of history, and moral education be treated neutrally? As in the case of an active state religion, pupils are also ideologically influenced in the case of this model. The model therefore fails to guarantee religious freedom because it replaces religion in the public sphere with an ideology that the government of the day holds dear. In a sense it then becomes just another state-religion model. What is it but a violation of the fundamental right to religious freedom when the ideology of the governing party replaces a child's right to receive religious education of his choice in a state school? The same problem surfaces in the belief practices of people in correctional facilities and military units.

The limitation has bearing when religious actions are against the law. An example of this is the announcement by the constitutional court in South Africa that Rastafarians do not have the right to use cannabis as part of the practicing of their religious rituals since the use of this narcotic goes against the law that controls the use of damaging drugs. In the same manner, pacifists that claim religious grounds for their pacifism — for example, Jehovah's Witnesses — cannot necessarily refuse to do military service for the reason that the latter goes against the grain of their religious convictions. The government may determine that this kind of refusal is not in the interest of the country, and they may therefore not view the refusal as a religious right. As a consequence, Jehovah's Witnesses will not be able to claim religious freedom in order to avoid military service. In the same way, religions that practice polygamy will not be able to claim religious freedom when it comes to the practicing of polygamy if the law defines a marriage as a monogamous heterosexual commitment. Neutrality, therefore, has limitations.

2.4 The Active Universal Model

With the development of the theology of religions, the idea is propagated that the good of all religions should be sought — as well as what different religions have in common — and that this should be offered as a type of universal value system to all religious people. This religion is

especially expressed on the level of spirituality and inter-religious worship gatherings, and on the level of the ethical. As a model within the recognition of the fundamental right to freedom of religion, this model implies that a universally accepted view of God is developed through means of an inter-religious education.

People should then understand that the God mentioned in the constitution is the God of all religions and faiths. In schools, in so-called religious education, the acceptability and applicability of each religion are investigated and weaved into a value system that steals the heart of all and is acceptable to people of different religious persuasions. This model can be found in the constitutional thought of India and Namibia. Under the guidance of a former minister of education in South Africa, Asmal, the foundations of the model has been imported into South Africa. It especially features in learning programs of so-called Life Orientation as a compulsory subject for all children. Chidester encourages children's participation in multi-faith religious practices at school because: "Through such participation, pupils can explore the diversity of religious life in South Africa, through sacred times and places, through stories and rituals, and through the different ways of imagining what it means to be human" (Chidester, 2001:31).

With this statement he envisions the aim of the universal model in South Africa.

The following critical remarks can be made concerning this idea:

- Gaining knowledge of the history and values of different religions is acceptable. It is important for pupils to learn *about* other religions besides their own. Such knowledge can even contribute to understanding and respect and can counter negative stereotyping of religions in the volatile, religious conflicts of today. However, the universal religious model goes further than that. It presents a modern active state religion model, or in its extreme form, an active theocratic model. A new religion is forced on everyone, and the same criticism goes for this than for the two above-mentioned models.
- With such a model, the government does not fulfil its God-given calling. Because this new religion is forced on everyone, the potential for religious conflict is large. People lose the space to enact their right to be instructed in the religion of their own choice and to build a value system that flows from their own religion. History teaches that such limitations contain the potential for social unrest, and there is no guarantee that history will not repeat itself in the application of this model.

The active universal model does not answer to the needs of people in a post-modernist and plural environment. It certainly does not solve the problems created by the contemporary search for meaningful religious observance and spirituality in society, particularly in the educational environment. Such an option will, like Van der Vyver (1999:651) argued regarding the ceremonial deism, raise the suspicion of religious intolerance when a religion, or a religious value system is reduced to a few "useful" and "positive" principles. The active universal option does not satisfy belief because it will be, as in the case of the active neutral option, likely that all theistic religions view the reduction of references to God, value and belief systems and other images of belief as blasphemous. This option as a foundation of a policy of religious instruction raises the possibility of religious intolerance because no religious person will feel free to observe his or her religion as a holistic religion comprising the totality of life. Religious people will also reject values emanating from other religious sources that do not bear the hallmark of their own confessions and creeds.

2.5 The Active Plural Model

This model is the opposite of the active neutral model. Where the active neutral model departs from the point of view that all religions should be moved from the public to the private sphere,

this model necessitate that all religions should function in the public sphere. Research does not indicate whether this model functions fully in any constitutional democracy, but it is valid to claim that elements of the model are visible and possible in South Africa at the moment (Van der Vyver, 1999:635). In more detail, it can be said that this model provides all religious people with the opportunity to confess the religion of their choice, to observe it in public worship, and to profess it in the public sphere as long as no one else is placed under any obligation to do the same.

In his evaluation of the situation in the USA where the 'establishment clause' and the 'free exercise clause' provide support for the active neutral model, Hollenbach comes to the conclusion that the active neutral model leads to the total secularisation of the society and a dilapidation of the moral order. He pleads for more involvement of religions in the public sphere because: "There are significant groups of religious believers who are in fact corporately involved in public life and who contribute to the common good in peaceful and freedom-supporting ways" (Hollenbach, 2003:88).

Although he does not spell out his choice, his argumentation also moves in the direction of the active plural model. The implication of this model in the public sphere is the following: Public gatherings and the parliament, as well as opening ceremonies, begin with devotions. These actions can take place in two ways. People of different religions can gather individually, and each group can hold a devotional meeting within the practices and traditions of that religion. For instance, in schools, the parliament, and other public gatherings, Christians can gather for a Christian meeting with reading of Scripture, preaching of the Word, and prayer within the framework of Christian traditions. The same right is offered to other people of other religious persuasions. Agnostics are not forced to attend any of these opportunities, and nobody is forced to take part in a different religious meeting. Where such separate gatherings are not possible due to practical reasons, a single gathering can be held where spokespersons of the different religions get the opportunity to do a prayer on behalf of each religion. Each person is allowed to do it within the traditions and practices of his own religion, and nobody is expected to apply his practices in reduced form to prevent possible offence. Each religion receives the opportunity to function fully, based on its own principal foundations. This practice was in use at the Codesa negotiations for a new constitution in South Africa, and is currently the practice at several governmental events in this country.

In the field of education this model can be realised in the following way: a public school arranges time and space for private religious instruction. Adherents of each of the religions practiced in that particular community convene for separate religious instruction. The religious leaders of the particular religious communities do the instruction. In other words Christian children of a certain denomination convene to be instructed by a local minister or priest, Jewish children come together to be instructed by the local rabbi and Muslim children convene to be instructed by the imam. Children of agnostic persuasion are under no obligation to attend any of these meetings. Children and educators are permitted to wear religious symbols and to speak openly about their faith. This private religious instruction can be complemented with an open religious instruction where children can learn about other religions and where respect for other religions and religious people and willingness for religious dialogue can be nurtured.

The active plural model may encounter the following critical remarks:

- Some scholars argue that this model has the potential to polarise children along religious lines. Hollenbach (2003:92), for example, refers to Smith who warns against a further polarisation of society when these models are applied. He says that religions have a "fissiparous quality," which means that religions tend to draw boundaries between people and define in-group and out-group parties. However, Hollenbach is of the opinion that this

- danger only exists when people are confronted with religious extremism.
- Further to this argument children may experience religion as a separating force. Children are together in all other areas of instruction, but when it comes to religion they are separated.
- Religious extremists may misuse this model in an effort to proselytise children and in doing so may sow the seeds of disruption along religious lines.
- The question can also be asked whether the model is always practically attainable. Is it possible to give public schools, prisons, the Police Service and protection units the opportunity to function fully on equal basis?
- Agnostics and other minority groups may feel that they are ‘engulfed’ by religions, and that there is no space for non-religiosity.
- Furthermore, critics could ask whether this model does not have an element of universalism and will ultimately harm minority religions.

3. CONCLUSION

The five models discussed above have all functioned to some degree in the past or are functioning at present, although the last model is still relatively new in the human rights discourse. However, it seems that the active plural model is the best, and can especially be considered in plural societies. The following arguments can be offered in support of this choice:

- Such a model serves justice to all. Religious people can exercise the fundamental right of religious freedom by having their children educated in public schools in the religion of their choice.
- This model also enables all religions to function within the confines of their own principles without disturbance. Where the universal model wants to reduce religions and let them flow into one universal melting-pot religion, this model allows all religions to move in their own orbits.
- Its application in certain areas in South Africa shows that the model is practically attainable. Public schools can offer churches and other religious institutions the opportunity to draw up learning programs of their own for their religious group and to teach children at times and in places that the schools make available. In this way, the Roman Catholic Church community can teach Catholic children according to their own learning program, while other religions do the same. However, teaching must meet the standards for orderly governing and must not undermine the public order of a peaceful and responsible democracy.
- When this model is applied like this, it cannot move into universalism. Universalism only threatens when minorities do not receive the opportunity to practice or profess their own religion.
- In this model nobody must be forced to attend a certain religious observance or teaching. Agnostics should be free to remove themselves from religious practices.
- The active functioning of religions in the public sphere can contribute greatly to nation building because everyone claims moral principles and norms that are forming and constructive to the people of that religion.
- For Christian believers, this model offers the best space to express “love to all people” because it creates room for people to express their emotions within the spirituality of their religious persuasions. Consequently, the authorities can rest assured with the knowledge that everyone is provided with the space to function.
- Extremism, against which Hollenbach (2003:90) warns, remains a threat, but religious

groups must calm extremist and fanatic groups themselves. The government can only be expected to act against such groups if they transgress the law.

The fundamental right of religious freedom can best be served where room is created for all to be fully human in the public and private spheres. Being fully human means to cradle the spirituality of one's religion and to build one's life on the foundations that the religion offers. That is what religious freedom is all about. Religious freedom aims to build respect for an individual person's own religious identity and not to force people into a whole where their identities are obliterated. Such freedom intends to serve freedom and not state totalitarianism and to further human rights without constraints. To my mind, the active plural model in school education will promote this principle the best.

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TREFWOORDE

Godsdiensvryheid
Godsdiensonderrig
Menseregte
Aktiewe neutrale opsie
Aktiewe plurale opsie

KEY WORDS

Religious freedom
Religious instruction
Human rights
Active neutral option
Active plural option

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Eskatologie in die Evangelie van Lukas

ABSTRACT

Eschatology in the Gospel of Luke

In unfolding his eschatology the author of the Gospel of Luke acknowledges that the final fate of mankind and of the world has not come about and that the Christians are still waiting for the parousia of the Son of man. The eschatology of Luke is primarily determined by quality and not so much by time. Eschatological life means to live as if Jesus could come at any time. This means that in terms of time eschatology is absorbed in ethics. Apart from that the eschatological thinking is developed as part of Luke's Christological thinking.

1. 'ESKATOLOGIE'

Die term 'eskatologie' is in die 17e eeu vir die eerste keer gebruik.² Van toe af tot en met die Dialektiese Teologie was die bedoeling duidelik en ondubbelsinnig: dit is gebruik om te verwys na dogmatiese leerstellings 'oor die eindtye' (de novissimis) en die opvattinge aangaande die finale lot van die individu ('individuele eskatologie'), van die mensdom ('kollektiewe/universele eskatologie'), en van die wêreld ('kosmiese eskatologie').³ Binne die Joods-Christelike tradisie sluit hierdie opvattinge onder andere in: die na-doodse lot van die individu; die herstel van God se uitverkorenes; die opstanding uit die dood; die finale oordeel; die koms van die Messias - die parousia van die verheerlikte Here; die hernuwing van hemel en aarde; en - soos Niebuhr op 'n keer gespot het – 'the furniture of heaven and the temperature of hell'.⁴

Binne hierdie konteks is die betekenis van 'finale einde' en 'finale/laaste dinge' nogal dubbelsinnig, aangesien tyd nie tot 'n finale einde gaan kom nie, maar gaan voortgaan. Om hierdie rede is dit veel meer gepas om 'eskatologie' te verstaan as verwysing na 'voltooiing' of 'voleindiging':⁵ hierdie term verwys na 'n versameling van konsepte wat verwys na die voltooide/voleindigde toestand van die individu/mensdom/die wêreld; en na die gebeure wat hierdie toestand teweeg gaan bring. Die terme 'voleindiging' en 'voltooiing' dui op 'n status wat nooit sal verander nie en vir ewig sal aanhou; asook die gebeure wat dit teweeg bring. 'Die ewigheid' beteken binne hierdie verband nie dat 'tyd' tot 'n einde gekom het nie, maar dat 'n sekere toestand tot stand gekom het wat nooit weer sal verander nie. Slegs op hierdie manier kan die eindgebeure 'finaal' genoem word; wanneer 'eskatologie' nie bepaal word deur tyd nie, maar kwaliteit.

Dit is met presies hierdie aspek wat die Dialektiese Teologie vasdraai: met die veronderstelling

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2 'n Geskiedenis hieroor is geskryf deur Hjelde (1987).

3 Hierdie onderskeid volg dié van Filoramo (1999, 1542).

4 Die oorsprong van hierdie frase is onbekend. Die presiese bewoording is: 'It is unwise for Christians to claim any knowledge of either the furniture of heaven or the temperature of hell'. Alhoewel dit gereeld aangehaal word uit Niebuhr, word 'n verwysing nooit voorsien nie (vgl. bv. Sauter 1995, 4; Dixon 2003, 25).

5 Vgl. bv., Härle (1995, 600): 'Die Eschatologie als die Lehre der – von Gott her – vollendeten Welt'.

dat eskatologie die konseptualisering is van 'n voleindigde kwaliteit, d.i. van 'n gefinaliseerde realiteit wat nooit weer verander kan word nie; daar word aanspraak gemaak daarop dat 'n *Christelike* eskatologie moet aandring daarop dat die finale einde reeds gekom het, naamlik in die koms van Jesus Christus (ten opsigte van universele- en kosmiese eskatologie) en in 'n ontmoeting met Hom (ten opsigte van individuele eskatologie). Ten opsigte van eersgenoemde, kan hierdie nuwe bepaling van wat 'eskatologie' is, geïllustreer word met Barth (1933, 500) se beroemde woorde:

The End of which the New Testament speaks is no temporal event, no legendary 'destruction' of the world; it has nothing to do with any historical, or 'telluric', or cosmic catastrophe. The end of which the New Testaments speaks is really the End; so utterly the End, that in the measuring of nearness or distance our nineteen hundred years are not merely of little, but of no importance; so utterly the End that Abraham already saw the Day – and was glad.

En: 'Christentum, das nicht ganz und gar und restlos Eschatologie ist, hat mit Christus ganz und gar und restlos nichts zu tun'. (Barth 1922, 299).

Ten opsigte van die individuele eskatologie het Bultmann en sy aanhangers die term '*presentic*' eskatologie gebruik: in die ontmoeting met die Christelike boodskap (die *kerygma*), maak jy jou besluit oor jou finale eskatologiese lot. Hieruit vloei dat, vir die gelowige, is geskiedenis beroof van enige teologiese betekenis aangesien dit totaal geabsorbeer is deur die eskatologie:

Christ is the eschatological event not as a figure of the past ... but as the Christus prae-sens ... The paradox of history and eschatology is that the eschatological event has hap-pened within history and happens everywhere in preaching. That means: eschatology in a true Christian understanding of it is not the future end of history, but history is swallowed up by eschatology. Henceforth history must no longer be understood as saving history, but as profane history. But the dialectic of human life as historical existence is brought to light, and in consequence the history of man as person can no longer be understood as a function of world-history, but is set beyond world-history (Bultmann (1954/55, 15-16).

In hierdie opsig het Ebeling (1979, 399) 'Christologie' verstaan as 'perfektiese eskatologie' (*perfektische Eschatologie*). Vir Klein (1982, 270) is Christus se sterwe en opstanding 'n 'final event, qualifying time and history' en hy definieer eskatologie as 'expression of an attitude, namely of an understanding of time and history which constitutes early Christian faith' (Klein 1982, 271). Dit beteken dat die persoon wat in Christus glo, het reeds, hier en nou, eskatologiese verlossing (sien Härle 1995, 605) – al is hy of sy steeds gebind binne sy of haar liggaamlike bestaan aan 'n ongeredde, onvoltooide onvoleindigde wêreld. Hierdie toestand veroorsaak 'n spanning wat veral aandag kry binne die Pauliniese briewe, Johannes, Kolossense en Efesiërs. Hierdie siening van die eskatologiese karakter van God se selfontsluiting (*Selbsterschließung*) in Jesus Christus, en die ontmoeting met die *kerygma*, beroof tyd en geskiedenis van enige teologiese betekenis. Die gelowige se geloof in Jesus Christus en sy sekerheid dat 'niks in staat is om ons te skei van die liefde van God wat daar is in Christus Jesus, ons Here' (Rom 8:39) nie, veroorsaak dat hy 'eskatologies' bestaan alhoewel sy/haar liggaam en die wêreld om hom/haar steeds wag vir hulle eskatologiese transformasie.

Dit bring ons by nog 'n aspek wat aangespreek moet word in hierdie inleidende opmerkings: alhoewel eskatologiese voltooiing altyd 'n ewigdurende situasie tot gevolg het, beteken dit *nie* dat van hierdie oomblik af *alles* voortaan dieselfde sal bly en niks ooit sal verander nie. Om die

waarheid te sê, ons moet noukeurig definieer wat staan in beskikbare eskatologiese uitsprake naamlik dat dit vir ewig sal aanhou en dat ons moet erken dat kort hiervan is daar altyd plek vir verandering en wysiging.

Laat ek dit illustreer met die volgende voorbeeld: volgens Openbaring 22:5 sal die dienaars van die Here 'reign for ever and ever'; d.i. 'they participate as worshiping servants in the eternal rule of God' (Aune 1998, 1181). Hierdie moet letterlik verstaan word; dat in hierdie spesifieke situasie - die ewigduurende heerskappy van die dienaars van God - wat nooit ooit sal verander nie en dat hierdie heerskappy nooit ooit by hulle weggeneem sal word nie. Die verwagting wat hier uitgespreek word beteken *nie* dat alles gevries sal word of dat lewe in die Nuwe Jerusalem gaan verander tot 'n eindelose herhaling van heelyd dieselfde ding nie. Al word die ewigduurende heerskappy van God se dienaars nooit opgehef nie, laat die verwagting wat hier geskep is meer as genoeg ruimte vir diversifikasie en aanpassing van die bestaan van die inwoners van die hemelse Jerusalem.

2. ESKATOLOGIESE VERWAGTINGS IN LUKAS

Daar sal eers 'n kort oorsig gegee word van Lukas se eskatologiese verwagtings, waarna aandag gegee sal word aan 'n individuele teks waarin spesifieke en interessante besonderhede van Lukas se eskatologiese verwagtings nagespeur kan word.

Ten opsigte van die toekomstige vervolmaking van die mensdom en die wêreld en die gebeure wat dit teweeg gaan bring, stem Lukas saam met min of meer al die verwagtings wat gevind kan word in die res van die Nuwe-Testamentiese geskrifte.

Volgens Lukas 17:22-37,⁶ 'n teks wat Lukas aanpas uit Q, verwag Hy die koms van die Seun van die mens 'soos die weerlig wat uitslaan (en) die hele lugruim van die een kant na die ander verlig' (v. 24). Dit beteken dat die koms van Jesus oral sigbaar sal wees en dat dit die hele wêreld gaan beïnvloed. Daarom is daar geen rede om agter mense aan te loop wat beweer hulle weet die spesifieke plek waar die Seun van die mens gaan verskyn nie. Dit is veral die taalkundige geladenheid en die ruimtelike universalisme van $\epsilon\kappa\ \tau\eta\ \upsilon\pi\epsilon\theta\ \tau\acute{\omicron}\nu\ \sigma\upsilon\varsigma\rho\rho\rho\nu\ \epsilon\iota\varsigma\ \tau\eta\nu\ \upsilon\pi\epsilon\theta\ \sigma\upsilon\varsigma\rho\rho\rho\nu$ ⁷ wat die teenstelling aantoon met die bywoorde van plek naamlik; 'daar' en 'hier'.

Die vergelyking van hierdie koms met die koms van die vloed in die dae van Noag en met die koms van die vuur en swael by Sodom in die dae van Lot (verse 26-30) het in gelyke mate beide 'n vertroostende en paranetiese funksie: die volgelinge van Jesus - hetsy die historiese dissipels of die bestemde lesers - word vertroos, want die beskrywing van die toekomstige vernietiging van hulle wat Jesus se boodskap verwerp het, bevestig hulle besluit om die boodskap te aanvaar. Gelyktydig, en dit is veral waar vir die bestemde lesers, word hulle gewaarsku om gereed te wees vir die koms van die Seun van die mens (vgl. ook Nielsen 2000, 205v.).

Die onderskeid tussen 'saamgeneem' ($\pi\rho\rho\rho\lambda\alpha\mu\beta\acute{\alpha}\nu\epsilon\sigma\theta\alpha\iota$) en 'agtergelaat' ($\alpha\varsigma\phi\acute{\epsilon}\sigma\theta\alpha\iota$) in verse 34-35 verduidelik waarskynlik na die feit dat diegene wat gereed gaan word van die vernietiging van die wêreld, 'saamgeneem' sal word voor die vernietiging begin.⁸ Hierdie konsep is nie so vêr verwyderd van die verwagting wat veronderstel word in 1 Tessalonisense 4:16-17 nie: hierdie teks verwag dat met die *parousia*, wanneer die 'Here sal neerdaal uit die hemel', die Christene

6 Vgl. Schnackenburg (1970, 213-234); Rigaux (1970, 407-438); Zmijewski (1972, 326-540); Geiger (1973, 53-149); Friedl (1996).

7 Hierdie Griekse uitdrukking verwys na die totaliteit van die wêreld; vgl. Eksodus 17:14; Deuteronomium 25:19; 29:19; Spreuke 8:26; Job 2:2; 5:10; 9:6; 18:4; 34:13; 38:18, 24; 42:5; Bar 5:3 ('God sal jou heerlikheid openbaar oral onder die hemele'); T. Levi 18:4 (aangaande die messiaanse hoëpriester: 'Hy sal skyn soos die son op die aarde en alle duister onder die hemele verwyder').

8 Vir die vertaal van $\pi\rho\rho\rho\lambda\alpha\mu\beta\acute{\alpha}\nu\epsilon\iota\upsilon$ 'na die hemel', vgl. 2 Hen 17:1; T. Levi 17:4, 6; T. Abr A 15:1; 16:5; vgl. also Friedl 1996, 184vv.

'saam met hulle op die wolke weggevoer word, die lug in, die Here tegemoet'. In Lukas 17:34-35 kondig Jesus 'n radikale geïndividualiseerde verspreiding van redding en verwerping aan: selfs twee mense wat ten tyde van die *parousia* so na aan mekaar is soos 'n man en vrou wat saam in die bed lê of twee vroue wat saam meel maal se lot sal verskil.

Die *parousia* van die Seun van die mens sal voorafgegaan word deur kosmiese tekens: Daar sal tekens wees aan son, maan en sterre. Op aarde sal daar radeloosheid onder die volke wees uit angskom van die gebulder van die see en sy vloedgolwe. Die mense sal beswyk van vrees en spanning oor die dinge wat oor die hele wêreld aan die kom is, want die kragte van die hemelruim sal ontwig word. En dan sal hulle die Seun van die mens met groot krag en majesteit op 'n wolk sien kom. As hierdie dinge begin gebeur, staan dan regop en lig julle kop op, want dan is julle verlossing naby (Lukas 21:25-28).

Algemene eskatologiese verwagtings is ook teenwoordig in die jukstaposisie van die saligsprekinge en die weë in Lukas 6:20-26: die algemene koninkryk van God sal 'n omkeer van die goeie en slegte lot van mense teweeg bring. Die armes, hongeres en die onderdrukte sal die rykes en magtiges word en omgekeerd. 'n Individualistiese voorbeeld van hierdie verwagting word ontwikkel in die verhaal van die ryk man en die arme Lasarus in Lukas 16:19-31; en dieselfde konsep word uitgedruk in 18:29-30 met: 'Daar is niemand wat ter wille van die koninkryk van God afgesien het van huis of vrou of broers of ouers of kinders nie, of hy ontvang in hierdie tyd al baie keer soveel terug, en in die tyd wat kom, die ewige lewe'.

Volgens Lukas 12:8-9, 42-46 en 47-48 sal 'n finale oordeel gehou word waar elkeen geoordeel sal word vir sy of haar daad in die breedste sin van die woord; d.i. het hy of sy die Seun van die mens voor ander bely of nie en het hy of sy gedoen wat van hulle verwag is. Buiten dit wys die oordeelstoneel in Lukas 19:16-26 dat Lukas nog steeds 'n oordeel verwag het vir gelowiges volgens hulle daad. Hoewel dit duidelik is dat met hierdie oordeel dit nie die alternatief van verlos of nie is wat ter sprake is nie, maar 'slegs' die eer of 'skaamte' onderskeidelik - om dit te sê in die woorde van 1 Korintiërs 3:14-15; die alternatief van *μισθὸν λαμβάνεσθαι* aan die een kant en *ζημιούσθαι* aan die ander kant. Hier is Lukas se konsep van die oordeel nie vër van 1 Korintiërs 3:13-15 nie (Konradt 2003, 258vv.); tog verskil dit in karakter van Matteus 25:30, waar die 'nuttelose' slaaf vir ewig verdoem is.

Lukas 20:27-36 verdien ook deeglike aandag; die rede is dat ons in hierdie aankondigingsverhaal van Lukas 'n verrassend redelike en oor die algemeen onbekende detail van Lukas se eskatologiese verwagtings vind. Lukas het hierdie verhaal oorgeneem uit Markus 12:18-27. Die verhaal handel oor die verwagting van die eskatologiese opstanding uit die dode; en die Sadduseërs skep 'n fiktiewe verhaal om hierdie verwagting te bring tot *ad absurdum*. Hulle vrae veronderstel 'n verwagting wat vandag nog algemeen onder Christene geglo word: baie mense verwag dat met die opstanding na die dood 'n herstel van die voor-doodse omstandighede sal plaasvind. In Lukas, is Jesus se reaksie die volgende:

³⁴ οἱ υἱοὶ τοῦ αἰῶνος τοῦτου γαμοῦσιν καὶ
γαμίσκονται

³⁵ οἱ δὲ καταξιώθεντε τοῦ αἰῶνος ἐσκεῖνου
τυχεῖν καὶ τῆ ἀναστασεως τῆ ἐκ νεκρῶν οὔτε
γαμοῦσιν οὔτε γαμίζονται”

³⁶ οὐδὲ γὰρ ἀποθάνειν ἔτι δύνανται

ἰσάγγελοι γὰρ εἰσιν

καὶ υἱοὶ εἰσιν θεοῦ τῆ ἀναστασεως υἱοὶ
ὄντε

³⁴ Jesus sê vir hulle: “In hierdie wêreld
trou die mense met mekaar,

³⁵ maar dié wat waardig geag is om
deel te hê aan die toekomstige wêreld en
aan die opstanding uit die dood, trou daar
nie meer nie.

³⁶ Hulle kan ook nie meer sterwe nie;
hulle is soos die engele. Hulle is kinders van
God, omdat hulle uit die dood opgestaan
het.

Lukas se byvoeging tot sy *Vorlage* is in kursief. Dit is ’n duidelike aanduiding van die spesifieke profiel van Lukas se eskatologiese konsep: hy maak dit duidelik dat die vraag van die Sadduseërs belaglik is, aangesien daar na die opstanding uit die dood geen seksuele omgang meer sal wees nie. Hierna verwys *γαμοῦσιν καὶ γαμίσκονται* - en nie na troues nie.⁹ Die rede vir hierdie verandering in die omgang tussen man en vrou is voor die hand liggend: die opgestanes sal nooit meer sterf nie, maar vir altyd leef. Daarom is daar geen rede meer om die voortbestaan van die mensdom te verseker deur voortplanting nie. Dit is dus nie die verwagting van die opstanding wat absurd is nie, maar die vraag van die Sadduseërs, want dit is gebaseer op die veronderstelling dat die opgestanes nog seksuele omgang nodig sou hê. Hulle is in hierdie opsig ‘soos engele’ (*ἰσάγγελοι*): want engele sterf nooit, maar leef vir ewig en omdat hulle getalle beperk word, het hulle geen nodigheid vir seks nie.

Dit is interessant om te besef dat hierdie eskatologiese konsep ’n onderliggende teologiese verband het met Genesis 3 en die verhaal van die sondeval, wat versteekte seksuele betekenis het. Die verhaal draai om die feit dat Adam en Eva seksualiteit ontdek het: uit 2 Samuel 19:32-35¹⁰ is dit duidelik dat om ‘goed en kwaad’ te ken (Gen 3:5) ’n eufemisme is vir die vermoë om seksuele omgang te hê.¹¹ Die slang belowe vir Eva ‘julle (m.a.w. sy en Adam) sal soos God wees’ - hierdie verwys na die vermoë om mense te maak. Dienooreenkomstig, nadat Adam en Eva die vrug eet, ‘besef hulle dat hulle kaal is’ en was hulle skaam vir mekaar (3:7; vgl. 2:25). In 3:22 regverdig God hulle verbanning uit die tuin deur vir Homself te sê: ‘Die mens het nou soos een van Ons geword deurdat hy alles kan ken. As hy nou maar net nie sy hand uitsteek en die vrug van die boom van die lewe vat en daarvan eet en altyd bly lewe nie’. Hierna kom dit as geen verassing dat die eerste ding wat Adam en Eva doen na hulle verbanning uit die tuin, is om voort te plant nie (Gen 4:1-2). Genesis 3:1-4:2 en Lukas 20:27-36 is verbind aan mekaar deur die fundamentele menslike besef dat ἔρω en θάνατο’ onskeibaar aan mekaar verbind is.

Laat ons nou beweeg na daardie aspekte van die eskatologie wat uniek aan die evangelie van Lukas is, en as gevolg daarvan die fokus is van ons belangstelling.

9 Die betekenis van *γαμείν* as verwysend na seksuele omgang word bewys in Lukas 17:27 en 1 Timoteus 4:3; *Anthol. Graeca* 5: 94; *Ps. Lukian, Asin.* 32; Callimachus, *Hymn. Del.* 240f; Xanthus, *FGH* 3c, 765; *Frgm.* 31; Philo, *Cher.* 92. Sien ook Liddell, Scott & Jones⁹ (1992), s.v. *γαμέω* I.2: ‘van blote seksuele omgang’; van Tilborg (2002, 802-810).

10 Hier sê Dawid vir die 80-jarige Barsillai: ‘Kom oor na my toe en ek sal vir jou sorg in Jerusalem aan my sy’. Barsillai antwoord: ‘Hoeveel jaar het ek nog om te leef dat ek sou opgaan met die koning na Jerusalem? Vandag is ek 80 jaar oud; kan ek onderskei tussen goed en sleg? Kan u dienaar proe wat hy eet of drink? Kan ek nog luister na die stemme van singende mans of vroue? Hoekom dan sou u dienaar ’n ekstra las wees vir my koning en heer?’

11 Vgl. ook Engnell (1955, 115); Michel (1968, 114vv.); Westermann (1984, 243v.).

3. DIE ESKATOLOGIESE KARAKTER VAN JESUS SE BEDIENING

Die soektog vir Lukas se eskatologie is vir dekades gevorm deur Conzelmann se invloedryke studie oor die teologie van Lukas (*The Theology of St Luke*),¹² gepubliseer in 1960. Volgens hom het Lukas die vroeg Christelike eskatologie vervang met die teologiese konsep van *Heilsgeschiede* (verlossingsgeskiedenis).¹³ Hy – Lukas – het die verlossingsgeskiedenis ingedeel in drie tydgleuwe: die era van Israel, wat strek tot by en met Johannes die Doper; die era van Jesus; en die era van die kerk. Die era van Jesus ('die middelpunt van tyd' in die oorspronklike Duitse boek), wat hierdie artikel op fokus, was volgens Conzelmann gekarakteriseer deur Lukas as vry van die invloed van Satan, soos hy aangedui het deur te verwys na Lukas 4:13 en 22:3. Tesame met hierdie siening van die verhaal van Jesus gaan 'n 'greater awareness that the events of Jesus lie in the past' (Tuckett 1996, 34v.). Vanuit die perspektief van die skrywer en die lesers van die Lukas evangelie wat geleef het in die era van die kerk, is die verhaal van Jesus nie eskatologie nie, maar geskiedenis. Die soektog na die eskatologie in die evangelie van Lukas is dus oorgedra op die soeke na tyd en die uitstel van die *parousia*.

Ek wil nie betrokke raak by 'n diskussie oor of Conzelmann reg is of nie, of in watter mate hy reg is nie; ek wil slegs my eie standpunt teenoor syne stel. My interpretasie is gebou op twee basiese veronderstellings:

Vir Lukas behoort die verlossingsgeskiedenis; d.i. die geskiedenis wat geïnterpreteer word as gerig deur God; nie in drie dele verdeel nie (soos Conzelmann aanneem) en ook nie in twee dele nie (soos sommige van Conzelmann se teenstanders beweer nie).¹⁴ Hierteenoor moet daar vasgehou word aan die feit dat die Lukasverhaal deel is van 'n enkele oorkoepelende geskiedenis; wat begin met die vaders van Israel (vgl. Hand 7:2; 13:17); aangaan verby Jesus (Hand 13:23) tot by die lesers van Lukas-Handelinge; en steeds aangaan: die geskiedenis van Israel as die geskiedenis van die uitverkorenes van God. Dit is die geskiedenis waarvan 'n greep vertel word in Lukas se twee volume werk, met die intensie om te verduidelik hoe Israel die ongewone vorm aangeneem het wat dit tans het: sommige glo in Jesus en ander nie (Wolter 2008, 26vv.). Slegs *onder* hierdie vlak kan ons in Lukas se konsep van die geskiedenis twee groot bewegings waarneem van aankondiging tot *vervulling*: van die geskrifte tot by Jesus (vgl. Luk 4:21; 24:25–27:44); en van die tyd van Jesus tot die tyd van die getuies (vgl. Luk 2:34; 24:47-49).¹⁵

Die eerste deel van hierdie greep uit die geskiedenis van Israel, die storie van Jesus, word vertel deur Lukas as verhaal uit die verre verlede. Lukas se verhaal is nie so inklusief soos die evangelies van Matteus en Johannes nie. Lukas se interpretasie van die verhaal aan die ander kant, wys duidelik dat hy aanspraak daarop maak dat hy eskatologiese gebeure oortel. In Lukas se evangelie sien ons oortelende eskatologie, en dit is hierdie stelling wat ek wil bewys met die volgende:

Aan die begin van sy verhaal, die geboorteverhaal in Lukas 1–2, mobiliseer Lukas die betroubare karakters van Gabriël, Maria, Sagaria, Simeon en Hanna as interpreteerders van God se inisiatiewe om Johannes en Jesus op te rig as 'profeet van die Allerhoogste' (1:76) en as 'horing van heil' (1:69 OV), die vervulling van Israel se eskatologiese hoop. Johannes se bediening word geplaas teen die interpretatiewe agtergrond van Maleagi 3:1 en 4:5; aangesien hy beskryf word as die een wat die Here moet vooruitgaan met die krag van Elia (1:17, 76). Wat

12 London 1960 = 1982; Duitse oorspronklike 1977.

13 Vir 'n kort oorsig van Conzelmann se siening vgl. Tuckett (1996, 33v.).

14 Vgl. bv., Kümmel (1972, 158); Schneider (1980, 136v.); Korn (1993, 272).

15 D.i. van Lukas 24:48 tot Handelinge 26:29. Ek beskou hierdie tekste as beperking van die tydperk van die getuies want Lukas 24:48 is die eerste keer, en Handelinge 26:22 die laaste keer, wat die term *μαρτυρ* voorkom in Lukas-Handelinge (vgl. Wolter 2008, 791).

Jesus betref, die eskatologiese karakter van God se inisiatief word veral uitgedruk in 1:54, waar Maria Gabriël se aankondiging interpreteer deur die woorde van Jesaja 41:8-9 as vervulling van God se beloftes aan die voorvaders van Israel – 'n uitbreiding van εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα. Dieselfde is die geval met Sagaria se seën: God wat Jesus oprig as die 'horing van heil uit die huis van Dawid' (1:69 OV) is 'n eskatologiese gebeurtenis omdat dit redding bring 'uit die hand van ons vyande, (en ons) Hom sonder vrees kan dien, in heiligheid en geregtigheid voor Hom, *al die dae van ons lewe*' (πάσαι τὰί· ἡμέραι· ἡμῶν) (1:74-75). In 2:10-11 word die pasgebore kind Jesus geïdentifiseer aan die skaapwagters as die lang-verwagte eskatologiese verlosser van Israel, die messiaanse koning. Lukas vertel die hele verhaal met behulp van motiewe en sinspelings op die Goue-eeu-eskatologie van die Romeinse Herderspoësie Tradisie (Wolter 2000, 501-517). Die verband met die *eerste Herdersdig* van Calpurnius wat kommentaar lewer op die begin van die regering van Nero wat die Goue eeu sou inlei is duidelik: twee skaapwagters vind 'n inskripsie by Faunus, die god van skaapwagters en die landvolk. Dit openbaar dat die regering van Nero die Goue eeu teweeg sal bring (v. 42). Die skaapwagters en al die nasies word aangespoor tot blydskap (*gaudete*: v. 36; *exsultet quaecumque...gens*': v. 74) en 'veilige vrede' (*secura pax*) word aangekondig (v. 42). Hierby moet onthou word dat Lukas 2:9 se 'en die heerlikheid van die Here het rondom hulle geskyn' laat die lesers God se eskatologiese beloftes in Jesaja 35:2 en 40:5 onthou; en Jesaja 60:1 en 19 sluit in sy glorie op aarde.

Binne die korpus van die Lukas narratief word hierdie gedagtelyk voortgesit in Jesus se eie interpretasie van sy bediening deur sy sinspeling op en aanhaling van profetiese beloftes. In sy Inwydingsboodskap, gelewer in die sinagoge van Nasaret, haal Lukas se Jesus nie net Jesaja 61:1-2 en 58:6 aan nie (Luk 4:18-19), maar deur sy kommentaar in vers 21 ('Vandag is hierdie Skrifwoord wat julle nou net gehoor het, vervul') dui Hy ook aan dat die doel van sy bediening niks anders is nie as die teweeg bring van die eskatologiese transformasie van ellende na verlossing wat God beloof het vir sy volk. In 7:22 sinspeel die Lukaanse op 'n reeks tekste uit Jesaja, waar *God* se eskatologiese ingryping tot die voordeel van Israel aangekondig word en hy maak aanspraak daarop dat dit sy, Jesus, se bediening is wat hierdie aankondigings verwesenlik; Hy maak sy teenwoordigheid die teenwoordigheid van God se eskatologiese teenwoordigheid aan sy volk, aangesien dit aangekondig word in Sagaria 1:78 en deur die publiek gesê word in 7:16. Lukas 11:20 stem hiermee ooreen ('Aangesien Ek dus deur die vinger van God bouse geeste uitdryf, het die koninkryk van God inderdaad tot by julle gekom'); en veral 17:20-21, waar Jesus antwoord op die vraag van die Fariseër oor wanneer die koninkryk van God sou kom, d.i. die vraag oor die *tyd* van die koninkryk - deur te verwys na die *kwaliteit* daarvan: 'Die koms van die koninkryk van God kan nie uit voortekens bereken word nie. Hulle sal nie kan sê: "Kyk, hier is dit!" of: "Daar is dit!" nie, want die koninkryk van God is hier by julle'.¹⁶ Hierdie is – aangesien ons die stelling moet interpreteer – deur die teenwoordigheid en bediening van Jesus.

By hierdie tekste kan ons voeg Lukas 10:1, 9; waar Jesus sy dissipels stuur 'na elke dorp en plek waarheen Hy van plan was om te gaan' en hulle instruksie gegee het om te sê: 'Vir julle is die koninkryk van God baie naby!'. Dit is deur niks anders as deur Jesus se eie teenwoordigheid wat die koninkryk van God teenwoordig sal wees by die mense nie.

Hierdie eskatologiese konsep van Lukas is vorm gegee en van 'n fondasie voorsien deur 'n kenmerkende Christologie: alhoewel Lukas nie Jesus en God met mekaar identifiseer nie - God bly altyd die Vader en Jesus die Seun – skep hy 'n vae nabyheid tussen hulle. Volgens 1:76 sal Johannes 'voor die κύριος' uitgaan om sy pad gereed te maak'; en daar is geen twyfel dat dit *God* is van wie Lukas se Sagaria hier praat nie, waar dit eintlik *Jesus* se weg is wat Johannes gaan gereed maak. Dieselfde vae prentjie, waar dit onmoontlik is vir die leser om onderskeid te tref tussen God en Jesus, is die aanhaling van Jesaja 40:3-5 in Lukas 3:4-6; en die sinspeling op

Maleagi 3:1; en 4:5 in 1:17. hierby moet ons voeg 'n feit wat besonders is aan Lukas onder die Sinoptiese Evangelies: Jesus word κύριο' genoem nie net deur die karakters in die narratief nie, maar ook deur die verteller self.¹⁷ Dit is definitief nie per ongeluk dat Lukas hierdie gebruik begin in 7:13, waar Jesus die weduwe se seun uit die dood opwek nie.

Die gevolg van hierdie eskatologiese aard van Jesus se bediening is dat 'n ontmoeting met Hom eskatologiese gevolge het. Verlossing en veroordeling by die finale oordeel, wat nog moet kom, hang af van hoe mense gereageer het op Jesus se boodskap en implisiete Christologiese aanspraak. Die mees insiggewende teks is sonder twyfel 13:23-28 waar die Lukaanse Jesus vertel van 'n toekomstige situasie waar 'baie' (πολλοί) sal klop aan die deur waaragter die eskatologiese fees gaan begin, want hulle wil daarin deel. Hulle kan egter nie ingaan nie (οὐκ ἔσθυσον), want die deur is gesluit en die eienaar weier hulle toegang. Die rede word weergegee in ἀγγωνίζεσθε εἰσελθεῖν aan die begin van vers 24: hulle het nie daarna gestreef om deur die smal deur in te gaan waaragter die eskatologiese fees plaasvind nie. Die imperatief ἀγγωνίζεσθε verseker dat dit reeds in die teenwoordigheid van Jesus is waar die besluit geneem word oor wie deur die smal deur sal ingaan in die huis waar die eskatologiese maaltyd aangebied sal word, en wie verwerp sal word. Ek kan nie enige verskil sien tussen die interne struktuur van hierdie eskatologiese denke en die van Johannes 5:24 nie.

Hierdie metaforiese wyse van eskatologiese konseptualisering het sy nie-metaforiese parallel in 'n ander groep tekste: die weë teen Gorasin en Betsaida in 10:13, want hulle weiering om in sak en as te sit en berou te toon is sematies gelyk aan die weiering van ἀγγωνίζεσθε εἰσελθεῖν in 13:24. Dieselfde is waar vir 'hierdie generasie' in 11:29-32, of volgens 13:1-5 vir hulle wat weier om hulle te bekeer. Die klimaks van Jesus se bediening en die sleutel tot die verstaan van sy eskatologiese impak is egter 'n ander gebeurtenis: sy opstanding.

4. DIE KLIMAKS VAN JESUS SE BEDIENING: SY ESKATOLOGIESE TROONBESTYGING EN EWIGDURENDE HEERSKAPPY

Dat Lukas Jesus se opstanding uit die dood en sy verheerliking in die hemel interpreteer as eskatologiese gebeure is alreeds duidelik uit Gabriël se aankondiging van Jesus se geboorte en toekomstige lot in Lukas 1:32-33:

32 οὐτο' ἔσται μέγα' καὶ υἱοῦ υἱοῦ υἱοῦ
κληθήσεται καὶ δώσει αὐτῷ κύριο' οἱ θεοῖ'
τὸν θρόνον Δαυῖδ τοῦ πατρὸς αὐτοῦ 33 καὶ
βασιλεύσει ἐπὶ τὸν οἶκον Ιακώβ εἰς τοῦ'
αἰῶνα καὶ τῆ' βασιλεία' αὐτοῦ οὐκ ἔσται τέλος

³² Hy sal groot wees en die Seun van die
Allerhoogste genoem word. Die Here God sal
Hom die troon van sy voorvader Dawid gee,
³³ en Hy sal as koning oor die nageslag van
Jakob heers tot in ewigheid. Aan sy koningskap
sal daar geen einde wees nie.

Die eskatologiese karakter van Jesus se opstanding en hemelse troonbestyging as Dawidiese koning, is duidelik te sien uit die feit dat sy heerskappy vir ewig sal hou en sy koninkryk geen einde sal ken nie. Hierdie aankondiging is reeds vervul toe Lukas sy evangelie geskryf het en die spesifieke karakter van Jesus se eskatologiese heerskappy oortref elke Messiaanse verwagting in antieke Judaïsme.

Hier loop twee strome van Joodse eskatologiese hoop in mekaar: Een van hierdie strome is

¹⁷ Hierdie besonderse verwysing na Jesus vind ons slegs in Lukas se spesiale materiaal (7:13; 10:39, 41; 13:15; 16:8; 18:6; 19:8) en as redaksionele byvoeging tot die materiaal van *Q* (7:19; 10:1; 11:39; 12:42; 17:5, 6) en van Markus (22:61; 24:3); vgl. de la Potterie (1970, 117-146); George (1978, 237vv.); Rowe (2006, 119v).

die verwagting wat gebaseer is op Natan se belofte (vgl. 2 Sam 7:13, 16; Ps 89:3-5; 132: 11f; Jes 9:6; Eseg 37:25; PsSal 17:4; 1 Makk 2:57): die Dawidiese dinastie sal vir ewig bestaan en die lyn Dawidiese konings wat regeer oor Israel sal nooit verbreek word nie. In Gabriël se aankondiging word hierdie verwagting saamgevat in *een individuele Dawidiese koning*, wat terselfdertyd impliseer dat hy geen opvolger sal hê nie. Dit is nie net die Dawidiese dinastie wat vir ewig sal aanhou nie, meer een en dieselfde Messiaanse koning. Deur hierdie aankondiging beklemtoon Lukas dat die Skrif se beloftes hulle onweerlegbare en finale – dit wil sê eskatologiese – vervulling kry in Jesus, wat selfs die stigter van die Dawidiese dinastie oortref. Dit is vanselfsprekend dat dit slegs deur die opstanding is wat 'n nimmereindigende heerskappy van een en dieselfde persoon teweeg gebring kan word, terwyl op die aarde slegs sterflike konings heers. Hier het ons 'n goeie voorbeeld van die twee vlakke van realiteit van eskatologiese beskouings.

Die ander stroom is net so belangrik: in soverre as wat dit gesê word dat Jesus se βασιλεία nooit sal eindig nie, word 'n karaktertrek wat tradisioneel met *God* geassosieer word op hom oorgeplaas aangesien ewigdurende kontinuïteit tot hier toe net toegeskryf is aan die koninkryk van *God* (vgl. bv., Ps 145:13; 146:10; Miga 4:7; Dan 2:44; 3:33; 4:31; 6:27; PsSal 17:1, 3, 46; Jub 1, 28; 1 Hen 84, 2; OrSib 3.49v.). Dit is net die Seun van die mens en die 'heilige volk van die Allerhoogste' aan wie soortgelyke verwagtings toegeskryf word volgens Daniël 7:14 en 27. Die kritieke eskatologiese belangrikheid van Jesus se opstanding en hemelse troonbestyging vir Lukas – en ek waag om te sê vir elke Christen – kan verklaar word deur twee verdere gevolge.

Aangesien Jesus se opstanding 'n integrale deel van sy totale bediening vorm as eskatologiese gebeurtenis, is Conzelmann se beperking van die verhaal van Jesus tot 'n gedane verlede 'n fundamentele misverstaan van Lukas se teologie. Jesus se aardse bediening is Israel en sy teenswoordige heerskappy oor die huis van Jakob, behoort onlosmaaklik aan mekaar. Net soos die aardse bediening van Jesus in die verlede eskatologiese betekenis het, so het sy huidige hemelse heerskappy. Dit was die opstanding van Jesus wat die vooronderstellings teweeg gebring het om die eskatologiese karakter van sy bediening uit te brei verby sy dood tot in die huidige geskiedenis van Israel. En dit is in hierdie gees, wat nie bloot net 'n plaasvervanger is vir die *eschaton* nie, maar die aardse verteenwoordiging van Jesus se eskatologiese heerskappy tussen sy gemeenskap van dissipels.¹⁸

Die tweede onmisbare funksie van die opstanding vir die verstaan van Jesus se totale bediening verhoed dat hy en sy bediening verstaan word in terme van 'n tradisionele Joodse messiaanse hoop; d.i. as 'n nasionale bevrydingsbeweging. Dit is moontlik om hierdie aspek uit twee verskillende gesigspunte te beskryf: met betrekking tot die 'konteks van ontdekking' (*Entdeckungszusammenhang*) moes Lukas daarin slaag om die spanning te handhaaf tussen sy verdediging van die teologiese aanspraak dat Jesus Israel se messiaanse verlosser is aan die een kant, en aan die ander kant, die historiese feit dat hy duidelik nie Jerusalem en Israel gered het uit vreemde heerskappy gedurende sy aardse heerskappy nie. Met betrekking tot die 'konteks van verduideliking' (*Begründungszusammenhang*), waarvolgens dit 'n misverstand is om die vervulling van Israel se hoop te verwag bloot net deur die aardse bediening van Jesus en om nie sy opstanding in te sluit by eskatologiese beslissings nie.

Lukas verwys kortliks na hierdie aspek in die inleiding tot die gelykenis van die troonaanspraakmaker in 19:11, wat vertel word om mense se misverstand te korrigeer dat – omdat Jesus naby Jerusalem was, die koninkryk van God onmiddellik sou verskyn – en hy ontwikkel hierdie aspek uitdruklik op die pad na Emmaus (24:17-24). In verse 19c-21a beskryf die twee dissipels Jesus aanvanklik as 'n profeet wat homself onderskei het deur sy woorde en dae. Met hierdie karakterisering skiet hulle ver tekort aan wie Jesus regtig is. Deur hierdie opinie aan te wend wys Lukas duidelik wat oor is van Jesus se bediening na sy dood (v. 20);

18 Vgl. die bydrae van Ulrich Busse in hierdie volume.

indien hy bloot ver wag word – soos wat die twee dissipels in die begin ver wag het – om Israel se politiese verlossing teweeg te bring (v. 21); die herinnering is van ’n baie gerespekteerde en indrukwekkende slot tot sy lewe – maar niks meer nie. Indien Israel se eskatologiese hoop slegs gerig is op die aardse bediening van Jesus, word hulle radikaal weerlê deur sy lyding en dood – die tradisionele lot van Israel se profete. In kontras hiermee maak vers 26 dit duidelik dat sonder Jesus se opstanding uit die dood is daar geen vervulling van Israel se eskatologiese verwagtings nie. So lank as wat hierdie onmisbare verbintenis nie in gedagte gehou word nie, degradeer Jesus se lyding en dood hom bloot tot niks meer as ’n ‘profeet wat magtig was in woord en daad voor God en die hele volk’.

Ter opsomming: ja, Jesus is die messiaanse koning op wie Israel se eskatologiese hoop gerig was; en hy gaan beslis Jerusalem verlos en God se volk red van vreemde heerskappy en die koninkryk van Israel herstel. Maar, hy sal dit doen op ’n manier wat totaal anders is as wat oorspronklik ver wag is deur sy mede-Jode en die Emmaus dissipels. Dis sal gebeur wanneer die Seun van die mens ‘kom, beklee met sy heerlikheid en die heerlikheid van die Vader en van die heilige engele’ (9:26; vgl. ook 21:26). En daarby sal Israel ’n totaal ander vorm aanneem as wat dit gehad het in die tyd van Jesus: dit sal bestaan uit almal wat glo en wat geglo het in Jesus as eskatologiese verlosser wat God vir Israel gebring het (Hand 13:23; vgl. ook 3:23). Hiermee het ons gekom by die vraag wat die hoofokus was van werk in die Lukas departement vir verskeie dekades in die ‘eskatologiese kantoor’ (Troeltsch): die soeke vir die wanneer van die *parousia* en die uitstel daarvan.

5. DIE SOEKTOG NA TYD

Hierdie deel kan kort wees, want hierdie probleem is sterk gedebatteer vir meer as drie dekades sedert die bogenoemde studie van Conzelmann;¹⁹ en kan nou beskou word as afgehandel. Die *parousia* van die verheerlikte Here, soos dit belowe is in Handeling 1:11, moet nog kom; maar Lukas weet nie wanneer dit sal gebeur nie. Lukas is ook nie seker dat daar lank gewag sal moet word nie, aangesien hy dink dat die Seun van die mens binne die volgende paar dae mag kom. Aan die ander kant, kan dit nie beslis gesê word dat hy hierdie koms in sy eie tyd ver wag het nie, aangesien hy die moontlikheid oorweeg dat die *parousia* uitgestel kan word vir ’n onberekenbare lengte van tyd.²⁰

Selfs Lukas 18:7-8, waar Lukas se Jesus belowe dat God ‘aan sy uitverkorenes ... reg sal doen (πολιτήν ἐκδικήσῃ) ... en gou ook (ἐν τάχει)’, kan nie dien as aanduiding dat Lukas van gedagte was dat die *parousia* om die draai was nie, aangesien hierdie aankondiging verwys na die vernietiging van Jerusalem: die waarskynlikheid van hierdie interpretasie word gesien in die feit dat in 21:22 Lukas hierdie gebeurtenis karakteriseer as byvoeging tot sy *Vorlage* (Mar 13:16-17) en deurdat Hosea 9:7 aangehaal word as ‘die tyd (letterlik die dae) van afrekening’ (ἡμέραι ἐκδικήσεως).

Aan die ander kant sluit die waarskuwing in Lukas 21:8 (‘Pas op dat julle nie mislei word nie, want baie sal onder my Naam kom en sê: “Dit is ek!” en: “Die tyd het aangebreek [οἱ κάρῳ]

19 Die volgende boeke en artikels gee hieraan aandag: Conzelmann (1977); Flender (1968); Wilson (1969/1970, 330-347); Ellis (1972); Dupont (1973, 37-47); Hiers (1974, 145-155); Schneider (1975); Ernst (1978); George (1978, 285vv.); Mattill (1979); Grässer (1979, 99-127); Schnackenburg (1985, 249-265); Erlemann (1995, 157-174); Onuki (2004, 186-198); vgl. ook die omvattende verslag van Plümacher (1983, 1-56, hier 35vv.).

20 Teen bv. Mattill (1979, 111): ‘He still believes in the return and does not expect it to be long delayed’, en: ‘That Luke’s imminent hope could be denied is one of the marvels of modern criticism’ (112); Erlemann (1995, 167).

ἡγγικεν]” Moenie agter hulle aanloop nie!)²¹ nie uit dat Lukas gedink het dit is *moontlik* dat die tyd van die *parousia* ver weg was nie: die Jesus in Lukas waarsku sy hoorders – en moontlik ook die lesers van Lukas se evangelie – om nie te maklik beïndruk te wees met die boodskap van sommige messiaanse profete²² en hulle te volg nie. Indien hierdie boodskap ’n verwysing is na Lukas se lesers, is die waarskuwing gerig teen diegene wat onrus gesaai het aangaande die Christelike *parousia* soos diegene wat genoem word in 2 Tessalonisense 2:2 en in Hippolyt, *Comm.* in Daniël 4:19. Die twee slagspreuke funksioneer primêr as ’n karakterisering van dié profete en sekondêr die aanvoer dat die tyd van die *parousia* nog vêr is nie. Lukas los eenvoudig die vraag oop, eendag sal dit beslis naby wees.

Die oplossing vir die probleem word voorsien deur 21:25-31. Volgens vers 31 kan die finale verlossing herken word as ‘naby’ wanneer die gebeure wat beskryf word in verse 25-28 sal plaasvind. Die vraag oor die wanneer van die *parousia* is eenvoudig misplaas, want niks word gesê oor die temporele afstand van hierdie gebeure nie: dit mag wees dat hulle net om die hoek is, maar dit mag ook wees dat dit nie is nie. Selfs die apostels is nie toegelaat ‘om die tyd en omstandigheid te weet wat die Vader in sy eie mag bepaal het nie’ (Hand 1:7); en Lukas is beslis nie verheve bo die apostels nie – nog minder is die lesers van sy evangelie (vgl. ook Wolter 1999, 307-324).

’n Besondere probleem in hierdie konteks word op die tafel gesit deur vers 32, waar Lukas se Jesus sê dat ‘hierdie geslag (hJ genea; au{th) sal sekerlik nie verbyggaan voordat alles gebeur het nie (ε’ω’ ἂν πάντα γένηται)’ (OV). Die kritiese vraag is ongetwyfeld die betekenis en verwysing van ‘hierdie geslag’ (ἡ γενεᾶ αὐ’τη).²³ Dit is redelik onwaarskynlik dat Jesus se tydgenote bedoel word, want toe Lukas geskryf is was hulle reeds dood; die tekens van vers 25 het ook nog nie plaasgevind nie en die Seun van die mens het ook nie gekom nie. Sommige neem aan Lukas verwys na die mensdom in die algemeen,²⁴ of die generasie mense wat toe geleef het,²⁵ maar dit sou heeltemal niksseggend wees: die versekering dat die mensdom nog sal leef wanneer die Seun van die mens kom vereis beslis nie so plegtige inleiding soos αμῆν λέγω υ μί nie. Daarom is dit baie waarskynlik dat γενεᾶ nie ’n temporele verwysing is nie, maar aanduiding is van ’n ‘spesie’ of ‘persone in ’n familie’,²⁶ en as verwysend na die dissipels van Jesus in die wydste sin van die woord.²⁷ In hierdie geval waarborg Lukas se Jesus sy dissipels – en sy lesers ook – dat tot die Seun van mens kom sal die ‘Christen spesie’ nie uitsterf nie.

Aan die ander kant plaas hierdie waarborg ’n verpligting op die Christene in Lukas 21:34-36: Wees op julle hoede dat julle gees nie deur onmatige etery en drinkery en deur die sorge van die lewe afgestomp word nie en dat daardie dag julle nie onverhoeds soos ’n vangnet oorval nie. Daardie dag sal skielik op al die bewoners van die hele aarde neerkom. Maar wees waaksaam en bid altyddeur dat julle die krag kan ontvang om deur al hierdie dinge wat gaan gebeur, behoue deur te kom en om voor die Seun van die mens te verskyn.

Veral 12:35-48 wys duidelik dat Lukas die vraag oor die tyd van die eskatologiese voleinding van die wêreld en die vraag oor die uitstel van die *parousia* verander het tot ’n vraag oor die

21 Die deurslaggewende punt is dat οJ καρδ’ ἡγγικεν nie voorkom in Lukas se Vorlage (Mar 13:5), en dat Lukas op sy beurt Markus 1:15 weglaat, waar Jesus verklaar dat ‘Die tyd het aangebreek, en die koninkryk van God het naby gekom (πεπλήρωται οJ καρδ’ καὶ ἡγγικεν ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ.

22 Vgl. Handelinge 5:36; 21:38; Josephus, *Bell.* 2:258-262; 6:285, 288; 7:437-440; *Ant.* 18:85-87; 20:97f, 167f, 170, 188.

23 Vgl. die oorsig van interpretasies deur Maddox (1982, 111vv.) en Bock (1996, 1688vv.).

24 Vgl., onder andere, Conzelmann (1977, 281v.).

25 Vgl., onder andere, Schneider (1980, 60); Fitzmyer (1985, 1353); Bock (1996, 1691v).

26 Liddell, Scott & Jones (1992, 342 s.v. geneav I).

27 Vgl. ook Lk 9:41, waar γενεᾶ na dieselfde verwys (sien Wolter 2008, 358).

korrekte optrede in die lewe van Christene: hulle moet altyd gereed wees soos diensknegte wat die terugkeer van hulle afwesige meester enige oomblik verwag. Dit is genoodsaak vanweë die feit dat hulle oplaas nie weet wat die datum is van hulle meester se terugkeer nie.

6. SLOTPMERKINGS

Die voorafgaande afdelings stel ons in staat om die unieke profiel van Lukas se konsep van die eskatologie op te som in 'n paar sinne: Lukas se eskatologiese denke hou gedeeltelik verband met die feit dat, sedert die tyd van Jesus, die finale lot van die mensdom en die wêreld nog nie aangebreek het nie en omdat Christene nog wag vir die *parousia* van die Seun van die mens. In reaksie op hierdie situasie ontwikkel Lukas 'n konsep wat hom toelaat om eskatologie te konseptualiseer – soos gepostuleer is aan die begin van hierdie artikel – as primêr bepaal deur kwaliteit; en slegs sekondêr deur tyd. Om in hierdie sin 'eskatologies' te bestaan beteken dat Christene altyd moet leef asof die Seun van die mens agter die deur staan. Hieruit volg dat: in terme van tyd, is eskatologie ingesluk deur etiek; d.i. deur die soeke vir die gepaste lewenswyse. Die teologiese belangrikheid van die eskatologie word slegs ontwikkel as deel van Lukas se Christologie.

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TREFWOORDE

Eskatologie
 Lukas Evangelie
 Lukaanse eskatologie
 Etiek

KEY WORDS

Eschatology
 Gospel of Luke
 Lukan eschatology
 Ethics

Conference on reconciliation Konferensie oor versoening

Stellenbosch University
Faculty of Theology
20 May 2010

Universiteit van Stellenbosch
Fakulteit Teologie
20 Mei 2010

The adornment of evil. Narrativity, evil and reconciliation

1. INTRODUCTION

Are we at all able to *recognise for what it is*, that phenomenon which in contemporary political opinion, in our philosophical and theological traditions, but also in prayers such as the Lord's Prayer, is designated 'evil'? And here I mean: are we able to *think* it without betraying it, without 'changing the subject', without reducing it to something more reassuring, not *reconciling it prematurely*, but at the same time without being seduced by it, by positing it as omnipotent or imbued with an implacable necessity? This seems to be no easy task, for as the proverb goes, 'the devil is the master of disguise'.² He tricks us, and seduces us to self-deception. Evil goes *incognito*, and, in a society such as ours, where power – according to Michel Foucault's well-known statement – is no longer primarily aimed at repressing or prohibiting something, but rather at promoting usefulness, productivity and health, it not infrequently assumes the form of the forces of humanity and the humanitarian, as the implementation of good within a recalcitrant world.

A second introductory consideration. Our actions - therefore also our bad ones - are, in Hannah Arendt's definition, inseparable from words and narratives. That which I do, I identify by means of an account or a description; in turn others produce accounts concerning my actions. Moreover, these accounts – my own and those of others – are always evaluative. Therefore cultures or even small communities such as towns or families manifest as series of more or less contesting accounts or stories.³ With the three modalities of the French verb 'to answer' (*répondre*) are given the three different types of narrative here at play. When responding to the concrete other (*répondre à*), I respond to a question, a request, an appeal, a declaration of war, a plea, etc. In this regard, for example the Taliban's initial response to the US government's demand to hand Osama bin Laden shortly over after 9/11: a narrative rooted in the Pashtunwali code of asylum (*nanawastai*), which, as hosts, prohibited them from handing over any person which had sought refuge in their midst. In the second instance, when I 'vouch for myself' (*répondre de*), I am busy weaving at my self-understanding and my private narratives, my private mythology. And finally, when answering to a community (*répondre devant*), I combine the first two narratives, for instance in the form of an apology or criticism, with the narrative of collectivity - for instance that of the national or constitutional community. Also within a collective such as the national state (hegemonial) narratives concerning the identity of the political community alternate. In this

1 Dr. Theo W.A. de Wit (1953) teaches Social Ethics and Political Philosophy at the University of Tilburg, Faculty of Catholic Theology. He wrote a (cum laude) Dissertation on the Political Philosophy of Carl Schmitt (in Dutch: *De onontkoobaarheid van de politiek*, Nijmegen 1992; *The Unevitability of Politics*) and is the (co)editor of seven books, among other things on Solidarity, Religion and Politics, Toleration, and Humanism and Religion. He wrote several essays (in Dutch, German, English) on Carl Schmitt, Walter Benjamin, Jacob Taubes, Alain Finkielkraut et al.

2 Frans De Wachter, 'Hoe radicaal is het radicale kwaad'? in *Tijdschrift voor Filosofie*, 65^e Jg.nr 1, (2003), 33-59; 52.

3 See for similar formulations Seyla Benhabib, *The Claims of Culture. Equality and Diversity in the Global Era*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002, 6.

regard, think of a narrative such as that of the multi-cultural, inclusive South African 'rainbow nation'.

As a final introductory consideration, the intrinsic link between narrativity, self-delusion and conflict. A public intellectual such as the French philosopher Alain Finkielkraut has over the course of years become increasingly conscious of the polemical dimension of the narratives discussed above. He sketches the background as follows: 'our fantasmatic activity knows no interruption. Our interior has become a permanent cinema. We are ceaselessly consuming and producing stories. Even when we grow tired, we do not flag: all facts are cashed in as anecdotes, whatever happens is told. The most significant obstacle between the world, and us indeed between us and ourselves is Romanesque in nature. The veil which is cast over the world, just as much as its unveiling, has a narrative texture. While in this time of the new media one may perhaps justly worry about the future of the book, one has absolutely no reason to worry about the disappearance of the fable.'⁴

As we may already suspect from this last comment regarding our fabulating nature, the narrative texture of our conception of reality and ourselves also represent an inexhaustible source of self-deception, both with regard to ourselves as singular persons, and as collectives. In a recent American philosophical discussion on self-deception, this link between self-delusion and narrativity was seen as primarily related to our deeper longings, such as those for recognition and love, and the fantasies these engender. Thus we are far more prone to fooling ourselves when it comes to making a judgement call on our position within a romantic relationship - than for instance on choosing a new car or calculating the time needed to get to an appointment. And our assessment of the relationship with the beloved is by no means fixed, but prone to re-evaluation. For example: should I regard the security and stability of my relationship as signs of its emptiness and superficiality, or are these exactly the qualities, which define what is great about it?

As a result of these two aspects (our narrative fantasy is unceasingly at work; it easily gets carried away when our deeper longings and fears are at play) we are extremely vulnerable to self-deception. In her article on fantasy, depth and self-deception, Julie Kirsch therefore pleads for constantly submitting ourselves to being corrected by others, especially our friends.⁵ After all, it is far easier to spot the self-delusion in friends and colleagues than in oneself. According to Kirsch, people who have rich emotional lives and are capable of making subtle emotional and moral distinctions, are, as a result of this interplay of fantasy and the power of deeper longings, at certain moments especially prey to illusion, self-delusion or the blind pursuit of self-interest. And it is hardly surprising that this entire structure of narrative identity, fantasy, deeper longings and self-deception becomes even more intensely manifest when deeds which have at some time been labelled misdeeds, are at issue.

2. THREE EXAMPLES CONCERNING THE LINK BETWEEN NARRATIVITY, EVIL DEEDS AND (PREMATURE) RECONCILIATION

(a) Let me start with a classic example of a political-philosophical diagnosis in which the link between evil deeds and narrative self-deception is explicitly made. In one of his most striking pieces of political analysis⁶, concerning the successful *coup d'état* of the dictator Louis Bonaparte

4 Alain Finkielkraut, *Un coeur intelligent*, Parijs: Stock Flammarion, 2009, 279-280.

5 Julie E. Kirsch, 'Maladies of Fantasy and Depth', in: *Social Theory and Practice*, Vol. 35, No1, jan. 2009, special Issue: Self-Deception, 15-28.

6 Karl Marx, *Der achtzehnte Brumaire des Louis Bonaparte* (2^e druk 1869), Ned.vert. *De Achttiende Brumaire van Louis Bonaparte*, Amsterdam: Pegasus, 1976.

in France in 1851, Karl Marx writes these now famous words:

‘Man makes his own history, but not out of free will, not according to self-chosen conditions, but to ones which are directly given, inherited. The tradition of all the dead generations weighs as a heavy burden upon the minds of the living. And precisely when they seem about to turn themselves and the things around, create something which has not existed before, precisely during such times of revolutionary crisis, they fearfully summon the spirits of the past into their service, derive names, battle cries, costumes from them in order to act out a new act in the history of the world, dressed-up in these respectable disguises, and using these borrowed languages. In this way Luther donned the disguise of the apostle Paul, the revolution of 1789-1814 cloaked itself initially as Roman republic, then as Roman empire, and the revolution of 1848 was unable to come up with anything more original than now parodying the revolutionary tradition of 1789, now that of 1793-1795.’⁷

And Marx concludes with a sentence in which the narrative structure of our identity and its transformation is described as follows:

‘Thus the novice, having learnt a new language, continues to translate this back into his mother tongue. Only once he becomes able to move within this new language without a memory of his own language, forgets his mother tongue within her, does he manage appropriate the spirit of this new, allowing him to freely produce within it’.

Why do people need to dress up like this – need these ‘world historical exorcisms of the dead’ as Marx calls it – when describing themselves? Marx suspects the answer may be the following: No matter how *unheroic* modern bourgeoisie society – ultimately the result of the modern revolutions he refers to in the passage above: the Reformation, the French revolution and the uprisings of 1848 – may be, according to Marx ‘heroic courage, sacrifice, terror, civil wars and battles between peoples were required to bring her into the world’. And the necessary courage for enmity and violence, to sacrifice self and others, could only be acquired by means of an imaginary identification with the greats of the past. And here Marx uses the word ‘self-deception’. The gladiators which established bourgeoisie society, we read in Marx, ‘found in the classically strict traditions of the Roman republic the ideals and forms of art, the *self-deception*, which they required in order to conceal the limited middle class content of their struggle from themselves, to keep their passion on par with great historical tragedy.’⁸

The meaning of this regression therefore lies in a form of self-deception, which all the same had a very clear function: to create the enthusiasm without which people are not capable of revolutionary - and thus risky - behaviour. A powerful sublimation, exaltation, exaggeration, adoration seems required in order to bring about such a turn-about: ‘The resurrection of the dead during these revolutions therefore served to exalt the new fights, not to parody the old; to exaggerate the task at hand, not to flee from its realisation; to retrieve the spirit of revolution, not to set her spectre wandering’.⁹ Further in the text Marx even goes so far as to speak of the ‘intoxication’ of the self.¹⁰ (And in fact, this has always - literally - been the case: the most gruesome crimes and atrocities are still almost invariably committed by drunk or drugged-up militias, regular army units, child soldiers, hooligans and youth gangs). This self-deception and ‘concealment of reality from the self’ (to Marx, with regard to the examples he uses above, reality

7 Marx, o.c., 19.

8 Marx, o.c. 20 (my italics)

9 Marx, o.c. 21.

10 Marx, o.c. 22: ‘The earlier Revolutions needed world-historical memories to stupify themselves with their own content.’

is the realisation of the self-interest of the 'third estate', regicide, the merciless persecution of the so-called 'enemies of the Revolution', respectively) assumes the form of a certain kind of ecstasy. During these civil revolutions, according to Marx's observation, 'people and things appear to be encrusted in diamonds, ecstasy permeates the atmosphere of the everyday'.¹¹ But, observes Marx, in the aftermath of such a giddy high a kind of hangover is inevitable, before society is able to soberly appropriate the achievements of its *Sturm und Drang* period.

A psychoanalytical reader of Marx's text referred to this phenomenon as 'functional regression'.¹² Returning to the past is functional, for it gives us the courage for deeds and misdeeds by which a new social reality may become established. A return to hallowed Roman past is the ideological form by which people seek to give *universal* effect to their own *particular* interests.

(b) But now a second example. Here evil is reconciled and thereby legitimised, for it brings *mankind to its destiny*. This is the famous Hegelian *List der Vernunft* (cunning or trickery of reason): the rational World Spirit also – dialectically – requires its opposite – that is, the irrational and evil deeds – in order to arrive at its destiny. Since Leibnitz the cunning of reason has been a major strategy by which modernity sought to give meaning to evil, *reconcile* it with a greater whole, in short, take the edge off it – a phenomenon that Odo Marquardt appositely refers to as the 'amelioration of evil'.¹³ But are we still capable of believing in the cunning of reason? I have to confess that I, in common with many others born after the Second World War, have lost that faith; a fact, which I can once more illustrate by means of good old Marx, this time, read against the grain. In a short English article dating from the same period as the *Eighteenth Brumaire*, entitled *The British Rule in India* (1852), Marx presents a merciless analysis of British colonialism in India. In India, says Marx, the British managed to accomplish something, compared to which the perennial disasters, famines, invasions and revolutions which she has historically been accustomed to, appear as mere epiphenomena. In a relatively short period of time the British had managed to completely and irrevocably lay waste to the basal structure, the very socio-economic fabric of Indian society (that is, village communities, based on agriculture, spinning and weaving). The result is a sea of hitherto unknown poverty and suffering, with the loss of the old and familiar world borne with a uniquely Indian sense of melancholy.

However, towards the end of his text the great philosopher-economist suddenly pulls a magic rabbit out of the hat. For, as obviously criminal and 'disgusting' the sea of misery colonialism had brought about may be to anyone endowed with the capacity of 'human feeling', on a balance of factors, one is nevertheless forced to give one's blessing to the more encompassing historical process in the name of Progress. 'For can humanity reach its destiny', Marx solemnly proclaims, 'without a fundamental revolution in the social state of Asia?'. Thus the crimes of the British should ultimately be seen as an 'unconscious instrument' in the hands of history.

Marx thus believed – as did many other nineteenth century thinkers as a matter of fact – in history as the world-historical march of progress, best understood as the self-completion and the *self-realisation of humanity*. Only after the First World War would this faith in progress start to decline. The massive bloodbath which was the 'Great War' lead many to suspect that 'humanity' may after all not be set on course of perpetual progress. 'Also humanity is mortal', writes Valéry. But only after Auschwitz, and certainly after the all too visible failure of communism, would the link between truth and history which had underpinned this ideology of progress, become firmly rejected. To Levinas,

11 Marx, o.c. 23.

12 Paul-Laurent Assoun, *Marx et la répétition historique*, Parijs, 1978, 129 e.v.

13 Odo Marquardt, 'Entlastungen. Theodizeemotive in der neuzeitliche Philosophie', in: id., *Apologie des Zufälligen*, Stuttgart: Reclam, 11-33; 13.

Lyotard and many others, this belief in the indifferent march of history is nothing but a relentless, secularised version of the traditional *theodicee* (the doctrine which exonerates God from evil). 'Belief in progress is in conflict with human dignity', in the harsh assessment of Hannah Arendt, for, after Hitler, she herself had no more illusions about the innocence of the union between truth and historical becoming.¹⁴

In this political narrative the link between evil deeds and self-deception assumes the form of the *inscribing* of evil into a grand narrative centred on themes of a universal mission, a necessary destiny or an exalted utopia. In a sense the evil deeds increase in stature, for they are embedded within a grand context.

(c) A third example: personal narratives as the instrument of rational reconciliation. Already at the start of the twentieth century the Jewish thinker Walter Benjamin parted ways with orthodox Marxism and communism's massive faith in progress. 'All those who have ever triumphed, march along in the victory parade of the rulers over those who have bitten in the dust. In well-established fashion, they parade the plunder. Plunder: cultural goods. (...) These cultural goods thank their existence not only to the exertions of the great geniuses that had created them, but also to the anonymous servitude of their contemporaries. No document of culture ever existed which was not by the same token a document of barbarity.'¹⁵

This quote is a good example of Benjamin's views on the past, on the anonymous toil of labourers and slaves.

After all, here Benjamin touches upon an immense question, for in essence each and every universalistic ideology of emancipation aimed at the *Wiedergewinnung des Menschen* (Marx) is placed before the question of what status to give to the innocent victims and 'enslaved ancestors' who had toiled in the service of a better future for subsequent emancipated generations. Has their suffering ceased to be of any significance? Does only visible suffering constitute an obstacle to happiness? Should we forget their fate in order to avoid the risk of poisoning our happiness? Or should emancipated generations rather acknowledge their debt towards 'the work of the past' (Benjamin)? But, states Marx Horkheimer, one of Benjamin's friends who were very sensitive to the question: 'No *quid pro quo* is possible with regard to past injustice'. Therefore, he continues, 'perfect justice cannot be realised in history. For even if a better society was to emerge from current disorder, it will neither redeem the poverty of the past, nor the injustices which have been visited upon non-human nature'. Is some form of 'anamnetic solidarity', attuned to the voices of our ancestors, therefore not the precondition for a truly historically minded emancipation movement?¹⁶

The 'Angel of History' constitutes an important motif in the thinking of Benjamin. In Benjamin's conception, one should think of it as something like Paul Klee's fragile *Angelus Novus*, floating in an empty space, with its 'gaze fixed on the past'. And, continues Benjamin: 'What we perceive as a chain of events, she sees as one huge catastrophe, a relentless heaping before her feet of one ruin on top of another'.¹⁷ Here Benjamin seems to be saying that for us humans it is *impossible* not to repress the catastrophic dimensions of history, to recognise history in its totality: that we are condemned to self-deception. At any rate not when assuming that 'nothing which has ever

14 Koestler, geciteerd bij J.L. Heldring, 'In de schaduwen van morgen', in: *NRC-Handelsblad* 5/03/09.

15 Benjamin, *Maar een storm waait uit het paradijs. Filosofische essays over taal en geschiedenis*, Nijmegen: Sun, 1996, 146-147.

16 Horkheimer, quoted in Lenhardt. The expression 'anamnetic solidarity' is forged by Christian Lenhardt, 'Anamnetic Solidarity: The Proletariat and its *Manes*', in: *Telos* 25 (1975), 133-154. See also Theo. W. A. de Wit, 'De verloren onschuld van de solidariteit', in: Theo de Wit en Henk Manschot (red.), *Solidariteit. Filosofische kritiek, ethiek en politiek*, Amsterdam: Boom, 17-74; vooral 40 e.v. .

17 Benjamin, o.c. 144.

happened may be seen as lost to history'.¹⁸ Whereas the angel is mesmerised by the terrors of events, 'we' are compelled to act with our futures in mind.

Elsewhere he expresses this idea of history-as-catastrophe by means of a concept derived from Carl Schmitt, namely the 'state of exception'. But unlike for Schmitt, Benjamin's state of exception does not signify an extreme situation in which the law is no longer able to function, where an authoritarian intervention has become necessary. Rather, seen from the perspective of the oppressed, the state of exception describes the continuity of everyday life, in other words, the whole of history – to which the 'messiah' will make an end by establishing an 'actual, real state of exception, the perpetually awaited miracle'.¹⁹ 'The real catastrophe is that things continue as they do', states Benjamin; being fated to live within a (mythical) order devoid of law. To me, it seems that only on the basis of this conception of history can Benjamin's strategy to maintain inherited theological themes within politics – specifically in appealing to figures such as the 'angel' and the 'messiah' – be understood.

Let me give an example from modern history to explain the *ratio* of Benjamin's thinking – one which, to anyone used to a more or less stable political-juridical order, is likely to come across as extreme or even Gnostic. A single example, in which Benjamin's call for anamnestic solidarity with our enslaved ancestors is heeded while at the same time all kinds of philosophical-historical triumphalism are firmly kept at bay, is perhaps constituted by the work of South Africa's *Truth and Reconciliation Committee* (TRC) during the 1990's.

It is common knowledge that during the late 1980's and early 1990's South Africa was frequently poised on the brink of catastrophic civil war. Unlike when Apartheid was still formally entrenched as government policy, that experience which Jacques Derrida in a text dedicated to Benjamin had termed the 'experience of aporia'²⁰ (to make a decision in an situation without solution) was now faced by all parties to the conflict. Take for example a statement by President De Klerk's from this period: 'We do not want to simply replace one dictatorship with another'. This statement, aimed at the ANC, is remarkable, for here De Klerk explicitly acknowledges the illegitimacy of his own government: a 'dictatorship'. His statement also underscores the gravity of the situation in the country at the time: the absence of *any* legitimacy. In such a situation, Derrida's paradox – which I paraphrase here – comes into play: On the one hand it seems to be *simpler* to criticise the founding power (that power creating a new beginning), for it is unable to appeal to any prior given legality, unable to justify itself, and is thus bound to appear unrestrained and wild ('another dictatorship' in De Klerk's words). On the other hand, it is more *difficult* to criticise this founding power, for one is not able to summon it before any existing law; after all, the moment it establishes a new state of law, it ceases to recognise the hitherto existing state of law (for its part, the ANC regarded the then incumbent government as an illegitimate 'dictatorship').²¹

In this context, the statement made by a woman in Soweto amidst all the manifestations of violence and counter-violence at the time, is less incomprehensible and irrational than it may appear at first glance. 'Perhaps God needs to kill us all tonight, so that tomorrow there can be a new beginning with new people'. In other words, she is referring to a force, a ruling and an origin, which, in some kind of Day of Judgement scenario, will lay waste to existing legitimacy and legality in all its forms, in order to make possible a new beginning. I do not think I will be

18 Benjamin, o.c. 146-147;143.

19 See about the relation Benjamin-Schmitt: Marin Terpstra en Theo de Wit, 'Walter Benjamin en Carl Schmitt: een politiek-theologische confrontatie', in: *Benjamin Journaal*, number 5, Historische Uitgeverij, Groningen 1997, 56-75.

20 Jacques Derrida, Force de loi : Le « Fondement mystique de l'autorité », in : *Cardoso Law Review* Vol 11, juli-aug. 1990, 5-6 ; especially 946 e.v.

21 Derrida, o.c. 1000.

doing Benjamin any injustice were I to relate this to the 'miracle' and the 'divine violence' of which he speaks in conclusion to his *Zur Kritik der Gewalt*. Stronger still, I even suspect that exactly the catastrophic interrelationships of culpability which this woman evokes, and the 'us' (which includes both her friends and enemies) to which she refers, were instrumental in enabling the new beginning, the 'miracle' of South Africa's transition into a democracy which so astounded the world.

Also the establishment and activities of the TRC, through which the disclosure of the 'truth' by Apartheid's victims and perpetrators was formally structured, publicly ritualised, deservedly drew worldwide attention. After all, the TRC represented an unprecedented experiment in coming to terms with a violent past; one, which managed to partially, transcended the narrow confines of (criminal) law. Also this can be seen as consistent with Benjamin's thinking, where he, in *Zur Kritik der Gewalt*, makes a case for a non-judicial (for instance diplomatic) approach to and settlement of conflicts.²²

But as a number of analyses have shown in the meantime, in the admirable method of the TRC also laid the aporia of the whole enterprise. For how can the singular accounts of victims and perpetrators simultaneously serve in the disparate interests of reconciliation, of nation building and of establishing a new respect for the law within the fledgling *non-racial democracy*? How can these extremely gripping, but all the same personal, narratives manage to simultaneously generate the meta-narrative of national reconciliation? In short, how to accomplish a fair 'exchange' between truth and amnesty, between the acknowledgement of accounts of suffering, and forgiveness? Only by committing treason against the very victims which were given the opportunity to relate their accounts. Because the necessity of national reconciliation was fixed as 'framing narrative' (the alternative being a relapse into the Hobbesian 'state of nature' of civil war), the individual accounts were by necessity subordinated. For this reason the TRC more or less silently found some accounts more useful than others; in other instances (of for instance almost unimaginable atrocities) accounts were plainly found disruptive, and had to be sacrificed to oblivion.²³

Here we are able to catch Benjamin's 'catastrophic' history in the act: once the *instrumentalisation* of the suffering of preceding generations becomes of vital necessity to a new political project (such as South African democracy, but no less that of Israel and the Palestinians; Serbia, etc), then justice is unavoidably betrayed. Does Benjamin not precisely invoke the 'Angel of History' as emblem of the acknowledgement of this betrayal? For it is only through the Angel of History - capable of not flinching from the vision of 'one huge catastrophe, a relentless heaping of one ruin on top of another' - that we are able to speak of 'progress'. After all, this angel is driven into the future by 'a storm blowing from paradise'.

22 Benjamin, 'Een kritische beschouwing van het geweld', in: id., *Maar een storm waait uit het paradijs*, o.c. 53-79; 66.

23 See the excellent analyses of Leonhard Praeg, *African Philosophy and the Quest for Autonomy: A Philosophical Investigation*, Atlanta/Amsterdam: Editions Rodopi, 2000, especially Chapter 4, 'Truth and Reconciliation: a social contract', 220-300.

Reconciliation: The theological challenge

ABSTRACT

This paper argues that reconciliation is the Christian theological response to the challenge presented by a world of atrocities. While commonly articulated as a doctrine, reconciliation is primarily a *narrative* enacted through *liturgy* within Christian worship. This liturgy shapes a Christian response to a broken world, but is also provoked and challenged by that world. Within this movement, the church confesses that its practices of reconciliation are both *incomplete* and *anticipatory*. And yet these practices participate in the fullness of reconciliation made visible at the coming of the Kingdom. Anticipating this fullness allows Christian theology to articulate *parables* of reconciliation, and one example of this is South Africa's own Truth and Reconciliation Commission. The paper concludes with a reflection on what "the parable of the TRC" says back to the church.

1. A WORLD OF ATROCITIES

An oil spill (fuelled by North Americans' lust for cheap petroleum) threatens the vulnerable ecosystem of the American Gulf coast; squatters in Hout Bay are forced to walk about in their own faeces while less than a kilometre away others live a lifestyle of opulence; and more stories of endemic corruption wherein officials bearing public trust enrich themselves on the backs of the poor. A glance at any morning paper will confirm the view that we live in a world of atrocities. Christian theology¹ claims that the roots of such a world lie in human alienation from God, from other humans, and from creation. The answer to such a world is God's action in Jesus Christ, to which the doctrine and the practice of reconciliation bear witness.

1 There is a remarkable convergence amongst Ecumenical, Evangelical, and Roman Catholic thinking on reconciliation as the mission of God. For representative documents, see Simon Oxley, *Telling the Truth About Ourselves and Our World: A Study Guide to Help Individuals and Churches to Continue to Reflect and Act Together as the 2001–2010 Decade to Overcome Violence—Churches Seeking Reconciliation and Peace is Celebrated at the International Ecumenical Peace Convocation* (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 2009); Lausanne Committee on World Evangelization, *Reconciliation as the Mission of God: Faithful Christian Witness in a World of Destructive Conflicts and Divisions*, Lausanne Occasional Paper no. 51, Ed. Chris Rice, Lausanne Occasional Papers (2004); Synod of Bishops (special assembly for Africa), *The Church in Africa in Service to Reconciliation, Justice, and Peace*, Instrumentum Laboris (Vatican City, 2009). Thanks to Martijn van den Boogaart of Ekwendeni, Malawi for drawing my attention to these documents. A concise history of the development of the doctrine of reconciliation, including the rise of forensic and individualistic theories that separate it from the radically new sociality I'll argue is a crucial component. For that, see John W. de Gruchy, *Reconciliation: Restoring Justice* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2002) 57–67.

The perspective taken in this paper is informed by a number of sources, representing Protestant, Catholic, and Orthodox traditions. The dominant voice pulling them together is that of St. Augustine: an African Bishop who lived in the late-fourth and early-fifth centuries of the Common Era. While usually identified with Latin Christianity, Augustine's thought is now being rethought as a significant African contribution to global Christianity. Thomas C. Oden, *How Africa Shaped the Christian World: Rediscovering the African Seedbed of Christianity* (Downer's Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2008).

I want to unpack this claim in what follows. I will give a brief outline of a Christian theology of reconciliation, then discuss the practice of reconciliation within the church, which is God's reconciled and reconciling people. I will do this in two ways: first, by presenting a sketch of the narrative of reconciliation presented by the Bible; second, by offering a description of Christian worship in the church. In the latter, I will be following currents in contemporary scholarship, which suggest that liturgy, which marks our participation in God's action, shapes theology and ethics. These currents also suggest that all human, communal activity is liturgical. Thus an account of the contrast between Christian and other cultural liturgies will be suggested. Finally, the church as community of reconciliation does not mean that reconciliation remains confined to its walls. A growing consensus identifies reconciliation as *the* mission of the church. Indeed, church theologians and leaders were involved in the debate about reconciliation in South Africa, and were key in forming and fronting the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC). Hence I'll finish by speaking about the TRC – a parable of reconciliation, which speaks both to the world and to the church.

2. THE DOCTRINE OF RECONCILIATION

John de Gruchy suggests that, for Paul, "reconciliation is the controlling metaphor for expressing the gospel."² The Pauline term for reconciliation is *katallassō*, commonly used in the first century to mean "exchange". Its noun form, *katallege*, was used commonly for currency exchange, but could also speak of the reuniting of estranged marriage partners. For Paul, it denotes "a transformation or a renewing of relations between God and humans" – ultimately for Paul the exchange of enmity for peace.³ The term *allassō* (from which *katallassō* is derived) carries meanings of otherness, alienation, and estrangement. Thus the Christian idea of reconciliation points to the overcoming of estrangement and the establishment of peace.⁴ But what is the nature of this estrangement?

2.1 The disruption of the world in Adam

While universal, the estrangement Christian theology speaks of is neither original, nor necessary. Its origins are narrated in the biblical story of the fall (Gen 2-3). A good and harmonious creation existed, with humans serving as divinely appointed caretakers. The role of humans was marked out within a primal covenant, which stipulated the generous boundaries within which human flourishing could take place.⁵ But this original harmony is disrupted through humans seeking to assert their autonomy, to stand over and against the boundaries God sets for them, and to redraw those boundaries around themselves. They listen to the "cunning" (*arum*) taunt of the snake, which leads them to think God is hoarding knowledge, keeping it to himself (3:1-4). In the act of violating given limits, they receive not knowledge that liberates but an awareness of their "nakedness" (*arummim*) that drive them into hiding (7-8). The consequences follow: though the man (*adam*) was taken from the ground (*adamah*), and tasked to care for it, there shall be a new relation of antagonism (17-19); though the woman (*ishah*) was taken from the man (*ish*) to be his

2 de Gruchy, *Reconciliation*, 45.

3 Ceslas Spicq, "Katallassw, katalleghv," *Theological Lexicon of the New Testament*, translated and edited by James D. Ernest, vol. 2 (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1994) 263.

4 Stanley E. Porter, "Peace, Reconciliation," *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters*, Gerald Hawthorne and Ralph P. Martin (Leicester: InterVarsity Press, 1993) 694–99 See also de Gruchy, *Reconciliation*, 51–55.

5 Brueggemann suggests this primal covenant was characterized by the threefold commandment of Gen 2:15-16: a vocation (to tend the creation); a permission (to eat from any tree); and a prohibition (except for the one tree) Walter Brueggemann, *Genesis, Interpretation: A Commentary for Preaching and Teaching* (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1982) 46.

partner, there shall be a new relation of domination (16). While the word plays (*adam–adamah; ishshah–ish*) originally denoted harmonic difference (the *ish* and the *ishshah* nevertheless as “one flesh”), or mutually beneficial distinction (the *adam* cares for the *adamah*, the *adamah* provides for the *adam*), they now give way to violent separation, antagonism, and privacy. Soon, humans will be asking, “am I my brother’s keeper?” (Gen 4:9),⁶ and will threaten *all* boundaries in multiplying violence (23-24). Ultimately, the earth will be filled with violence (Gen 6:11), and the bounds of creation themselves will burst in destructive fury against human corruption.

A rupture is therefore created, tearing humans apart from creation, from God, and from each other. All relationships bear the marks of this rupture in various forms of dysfunction, ranging from wanton acts of environmental exploitation and destruction (humans against creation) to the wars that pit humans against other humans. While environmental disasters and wars are things that capture the attention of mass media, this dysfunction is also manifest in things we take-for-granted, such as the governing of everyday human relations by the distinction between “mine and thine” – a distinction policed here in South Africa with razor wire and armed response teams.⁷ Dysfunction penetrates to the depths of the internal wars raging amongst our conflicted desires. Desperate to regain mastery over the world we continue Adam’s project of remaking the world to suit our interests, our agendas, and ourselves.

Our attempts to overcome this “universal situation of disaster” only make the problem worse, since “every attempt to alter this situation is subject to the conditions created by the disaster.”⁸ We try to consolidate the conflicting desires within ourselves, but by separating-out one desire and suppressing others. In the West this is predominantly sexual desire, which in turn feeds a host of culture-industries which, in turn, transform the good gift of sex – a profound expression of the “one flesh” of human relations – into a tradable, objectifiable commodity.⁹ Our attention alights on things we think can bring order out of the chaos: a national flag, the uniform of a sports team, and the slogan of a political party. We unify the nation, but only by distinguishing ourselves from other nations, and often by threatening those not of our national tribe with violence.¹⁰ We assert human rights, but by claiming the modern, liberal state as the normative form of human community on a large scale. A peaceful, stable world is a world of nation-states.¹¹

6 Unless otherwise indicated, all biblical quotations are taken from *The Holy Bible: New Revised Standard Version* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1989).

7 Thus Hill suggests that Augustine would have seen the very idea of private property as a manifestation of the chaos unleashed in the wake of Adam’s fall. “The desire for private possession is a kind of mark of Cain, the stigma of man alienated from God.” Saint Augustine, *The Trinity*, trans. and Ed. Edmund Hill, O.P., *The Works of Saint Augustine: A Translation for the 21st Century* (Hyde Park, NY: New City Press, 1991) 340n.42.

8 Walter Kasper, *The God of Jesus Christ*, trans. Matthew J. O’Connell (New York: Crossroad, 1984) 160, as quoted by L. Gregory Jones, *Embodying Forgiveness: A Theological Analysis* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995) 117.

9 Still one of the best theological treatments of this is John Francis Kavanaugh, *Following Christ in a Consumer Society: The Spirituality of Cultural Resistance* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1981).

10 Consider that while intensive nation-building was going on in South Africa during the 1990s, the conditions for the “perfect storm” of the xenophobic attacks of 2008 were being put into place. See South African Migration Project, *The Perfect Storm: The Realities of Xenophobia in Contemporary South Africa*, res. rept., series ed Jonathan Crush, Migration Policy Series no. 50 (Cape Town; Kingston: IDASA; Southern African Research Centre, Queens University, 2008). The geographical accident whereby some were born north of the Limpopo meant they were, as non-South Africans, not subject to the same rights and privileges of those who, by another geographical accident, were born south of the Limpopo. It’s no coincidence that faith communities, which have a *transnational* identity, were among those giving shelter to victims of the attacks.

11 For a powerful criticism of the ubiquity of rights discourse in secular modernity, and its reliance upon a

Modern political theory – which has its own doctrine of reconciliation in the idea of the social contract – is characterized by recognition of the tragic inevitability of conflict; something John Milbank terms “an ontology of violence”.¹² All the different ways we assert our need for stability within such ontology are sustained by a refusal to face the truth about ourselves. Enmeshed in webs of self-deception, we “exchange the truth for a lie” (Rom 1:25). And yet, at the heart of each of these strategies of denial is a restless nostalgia for the communion we were originally created for, a restlessness that, as St. Augustine famously stated, finds its rest only in God.¹³

The point of all this needs to be stated clearly: the situation, which the Christian understanding of reconciliation seeks to address, is not simply that of *individuals* antagonistic to God. Neither is it simply that of individuals at enmity with other individuals. Nor is it of rivalry between communities. All these are but local productions of the universal, *human* drama, which has been scripted since that primal act of rebellion.

2.2 The healing of the world in Christ

Christian theology claims that the reconciliation that reconnects us to God, to other humans, and to creation has to come from *outside* ourselves, from something other than the conflicted self or community, from a love that knows no interest except the interest of the other. The source of this love is the Triune God, who exists in an eternal relation of giving and giving back, of offering and accepting, of generosity and receptivity. But while this love is outside ourselves – in the sense that we can neither create nor control it – it is also profoundly *with us* in the incarnation of God in Jesus Christ. In him, the divine fullness (Col 1:19) has interrupted the violence of the world, opening up space wherein may face the truth of our own complicity in violence, and encounter the other our violence has excluded.

When Christians confess that Jesus was “sinless”, they mean that he lived as God originally intended humans to live. This meant a life of trust in God’s abundant provision, “though he had “no place to lay his head” (Matt 8:20), and a life of perfect receptivity to the other. Jesus’ scandalous welcome undoes the exclusions of the world based on religious worthiness, social status, and political patronage.¹⁴ Indeed, his association with those of no social status is a refusal to relate to person in terms of their “usefulness”. His announcement “of a final compassion which confuses all barriers of purity and probity” explodes the categories of the world.¹⁵ Unable to bear Jesus, the world’s conclusion is, “he’s got to go”. Ironically, in its judgment on Jesus, the nation finds its unity. Think of Caiaphas’ “better to have one man die for the people” speech (John 11:49-50), or of the Jerusalem mob that with one voice called for his execution by the hated Romans (Matt 26:20-25). The world also finds its unity in its judgement on Jesus. Think of Pilate and Herod – mortal enemies who, according to St. Luke (23:12), became friends the day they agreed Jesus should die.

“systematic indoctrination” which displaces the possibilities of other kinds of social formation, see Joan Lockwood O’Donovan, “A Timely Conversation with *The Desire of the Nations* on Civil Society, Nation and State,” *A Royal Priesthood? The Use of the Bible Ethically and Politically. A Dialogue with Oliver O’Donovan*, Craig Bartholomew, Jonathan Chaplain, Robert Song, and Al Wolters (Carlisle, UK; Grand Rapids, MI: Paternoster Press; Zondervan Publishing, 2002) esp. 391.

12 Defined as “a reading of the world which assumes the priority of force and tells how this force is best managed and confined by counter-force.” An ontology of peace, by contrast, “is the sociality of harmonious difference” which is both the divine origin of the world, and its true destiny. John Milbank, *Theology and Social Theory: Beyond Secular Reason* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1990) 4–5.

13 St. Augustine, *Confessions*, trans. and Ed. R. S. Pine-Coffin (London: Penguin, 1961) 21 (I.1).

14 John Dominic Crossan terms this Jesus’ “open commensality”. John Dominic. Crossan, *Jesus: A Revolutionary Biography* ([San Francisco]: HarperSanFrancisco, 1995) 69.

15 Rowan D. Williams, *The Truce of God*, rev. ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005) 72.

Jesus bears the full wrath of Rome, the Jerusalem establishment, and the inflamed population. The cross, that instrument of the *pax Romana* wherein Rome keeps its subjects in line, is now the instrument by which humans kill God in the name of maintaining their peace. The cross, it turns out, is the violence and self-deception of the world fully revealed.¹⁶ Here we get as close as we can to “evil unadorned”, and the crisis – and resolution – of the catastrophe we call “history”.¹⁷ For the rupture of the cross is at the same time the rupture that heals our rebellion. “The blood of the cross” is the instrument by which God makes peace (Col 1:20), reconciling all things to Him.

Jesus, then, is the place of exchange between God and humanity. Fully divine, he reveals our creational origin to us; fully human, he reveals our eschatological destiny. He is the “son of man” (Ps 8:4) we were always called – but refused – to be. And he is the God that we in our thirst for autonomy have always wanted to murder. On the cross, God stands in the place of victimage, as we presume to stand in God’s place of judgement. I say, “presume”, because God’s place is revealed not as one of vengeance and punishment, but of mercy and forgiveness. In his resurrection Jesus confronts the world as the face of its victim – indeed, of *all* its victims.¹⁸ But instead of taking vengeance he offers a new way of life. A different justice is shown: a justice that breaks our cycles of vengeance, that heals and restores, that calls forth a new world.

2.3 Embodying a new world in the church

The great transaction that creates a new world is captured in one of St. Paul’s best-known passages on reconciliation:

[Christ] died for all, so that those who live might live no longer for themselves, but for him who died and was raised for them. From now on, therefore, we regard no one from a human point of view... So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us. So we are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us; we entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God (2 Cor 5:15-21).

This exchange, which means that Paul sees everyone and everything in the light of God’s reconciling work in Christ, is at the heart of the Christian understanding of salvation. Far more than a transaction between the individual soul and God, the full, theological and biblical understanding of reconciliation imagines nothing less than a radically new social world.¹⁹ This

16 One could also read the cross as the killing of God in the name of God, insofar as Jesus was accused of blasphemy.

17 “Evil unadorned” and “the catastrophe of history” are references to Prof. de Witt’s paper given earlier in the day.

18 For this insight, see Rowan D. Williams, *Resurrection: Interpreting the Easter Gospel*, 2 (Cleveland: Pilgrim Press, 2002), 1982.

19 The individualism with which reconciliation is usually identified is a particularly regrettable trend amongst Protestants, and the misunderstanding of the Eucharist it generates provides one clue as to how apartheid could take root in the church. Chris Loff, “The History of a Heresy,” *Apartheid is a Heresy*, Ed. John de Gruchy and Charles Villa Vicencio (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983) 10–23.. I’ll return to this point below. To what extent it continues to inform discourses of reconciliation amongst South African Reformed Christians is an interesting question. Some of the evangelicals at the Truth and Reconciliation Faith Community hearings also assumed this individualistic understanding, and so were ambivalent

new social world “in Christ” is made visible in the way those baptized into Christ transcend the taken-for-granted social divisions in their world: between Jew and Gentile, slave and free, and male and female.²⁰ That this reconciliation is more than simply the substitution of one (new) particularity – namely “Christianity” – for the old particularities is the significance of “new creation”. The rebellion that undid the original harmony between humans and creation has been healed. A new creation means a new humanity indwelling “a new heaven and a new earth” (Rev 21:1).

The embodiment of this reconciliation – horizontal and vertical – is seen in the “mystery” (*sacramentum*) of the body of Christ (Eph 5:32) – something that recalls the “two as one flesh” relation of the *ishah* and the *ish* (c.f. Gen 2:19).²¹ In the body of Christ, God is reconciled to humans; in the body of Christ, humans are reconciled to each other. Differences are now gifts as the enmity that places one particularity against another – the enmity between Jew and Gentile in the Jewish world, and civilized and barbarian in the Greco-Roman world – is overcome. I’ll return to this below.

But Paul goes even further: in this new body, the division between the private world of the household (where women, children, and slaves found their place) and the public world of the city (where men found their place) is undone. This made (and makes) the church as *ekklesia*²² as much a challenge to its context as Jesus was to his. For now women and children, slaves and foreigners, had the status of citizens in God’s *polis* (Eph 2:19). And their ethnic or class origins mattered not. This meant that they are no longer subject to the social control of the Empire.²³ Hence we can understand the apprehension in which the first Christians were held. Just as Jesus could not fit the agendas of the world, so the church as body of Christ will never fit comfortably in the world – or at least if it *does* fit comfortably in the world, it should wonder why. As the second century letter of Diognetus stated,

For the Christians are distinguished from other people neither by land, nor by language, nor customs; for they do not inhabit cities of their own, nor use a particular language, nor lead a life that is unusual.... But inhabiting Greek as well as barbarian cities, according to each person’s lot... they display to us their wonderful and admittedly paradoxical ways of life. They inhabit their homelands, but as strangers... Every foreign land is their homeland, and every homeland a foreign land.²⁴

towards “horizontal”, interpersonal reconciliation if it did not include “vertical” reconciliation. Research Institute on Christianity in South Africa, “Faith Communities and Apartheid: The RICS Report,” *Facing the Truth: South African Faith Communities and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission*, Ed. James R. Cochrane, John W. de Gruchy, and Stephen W. Martin (Cape Town: David Philip, 1999) 64.

20 Though as Richard Longenecker pointed out several years ago, it’s taken 2,000 years for the church to realize this kind of reconciliation concretely in class and gender terms). *New Testament Social Ethics for Today* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: W.B. Eerdmans, 1984).

21 I side-step the question of Pauline authorship, since Colossians (and Ephesians) if not by Paul certainly represent a continuity with his thought. I’m happy to say they are “Pauline”, even if not from Paul’s hand.

22 In choosing this term, the early Christians were doing two things: firstly, they were identifying themselves with the *qahal*, the assembly of the people of Israel called by YHWH to submit the entirety of their lives, whether social, economic, or political, to God; secondly, they were deliberately describing themselves not as a *koinōn* (a private association in the Graeco-Roman world) but as the assembly of citizens, gathered to debate important matters of public life. See Bernd Wannenwetsch, *Political Worship: Ethics for Christian Citizens*, trans. Margaret Kohl (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2004) 138–45.

23 Richard A. Horsley, “I Corinthians: A Case Study of Paul’s Assembly as an Alternative Society,” *Paul and Empire: Religion and Power in Roman Imperial Society*, Ed. Richard A. Horsley (Harrisburg, PA.: Trinity Press International, 1997).

24 *Epistle to Diognetus* 5, as translated by Dale T. Irvin and Scott Sunquist, *History of the World Christian Movement* (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 2001) 96.

At the same time, because the church – if it really *is* the church – does not compete for space in the present world-that-is-passing-away,²⁵ it can become a place where people representing opposite viewpoints have genuine encounter. That is, insofar as the church is a reconciled community, it can function as reconciler. But the word *can* ought to be underscored here. The church to which Paul addresses his message of reconciliation was a community where factional rivalries (1 Cor 1:10-17), lawsuits (1 Cor 6:1-11), sexual impropriety (1 Cor 5:1-5), and class divisions (1 Cor 11:17-22) made it far from an exemplary model. Indeed, the church has throughout its history more often than not sought détente with the world, thereby securing its existence, but at the cost of its identity and mission. As Rowan Williams puts it,

The Church cannot begin to claim that it consistently lives by this; its failure is all too visible, century-by-century. But its credibility does not hang on its unbroken success; *only on its continued willingness to be judged by what it announces and points to*, the non-competitive, non-violent order of God's realm, centred upon Jesus and accessible through commitment to him.²⁶

In the final section of this paper, I'll discuss how the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, which emerged in part from the South African churches' discourse of reconciliation, also functioned as a mechanism for self-evaluation and repentance for them.

3. THE PRACTICES OF RECONCILIATION

I've tried to show that reconciliation in the New Testament is not simply the creation of a peace between individuals, or between individuals and God. Reconciliation is *incorporation* in a new social body, the church, which is called to bear witness to the reality of a new world. This incorporation is *performed* (and the church re-formed) through a rehearsing of the biblical narrative in liturgy, and through the sacraments, which concentrate the key moments of that narrative: baptism and Eucharist. In rehearsing that narrative, and in enacting it in the sacraments, the church holds open the invitation to all humans to be reconciled.

3.1 Performing reconciliation: modernity

A new generation of theologians, Orthodox, Catholic and Protestant, is rediscovering Christian liturgy as the presupposition of theology and ethics.²⁷ I say *Christian* liturgy because accompanying this recovery is an anthropology that identifies the human person as *homo liturgicus*.²⁸ We are created beings whose subjectivities are formed and reformed through liturgical practices. The

25 This is a profound theme in the theology of Rowan Williams, and deserves much more attention than I can give it here. See for starters Rowan D. Williams, "Faith Communities in a Civil Society--Christian Perspectives," address, Christian-Muslim Forum Conference (Cambridge, 2007).

26 Williams, "Faith Communities in Civil Society."

27 Most significant in theology are those who contributed to Routledge's *Radical Orthodoxy* series. See John Milbank, Catherine Pickstock, and Graham Ward, eds., *Radical Orthodoxy: A New Theology* (London ; New York: Routledge, 1999), and the volumes that followed. For an example of the fruitfulness of this approach in theological ethics, see Stanley Hauerwas and Samuel Wells, eds., *The Blackwell Companion to Christian Ethics* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Pub., 2004).

28 Most helpful as an introduction is James K.A. Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom: Worship, Worldview, and Cultural Formation*, Cultural Liturgies (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2009) A 2005 issue of the journal *Liturgy* explored, from a number of angles, the liturgical practices of "the church" and "America", arguing that societies are enacted performances of an imagined world. See especially William T. Cavanaugh, "The Liturgies of Church and State," *Liturgy* 20.1 (2005): 25–30.

great Orthodox theologian Alexander Schmemmann writes that *leitourgia* denotes “an action by which a group of people become something corporately which they had not been as a mere collection of individuals.”²⁹ Bodies politic are therefore liturgically constituted and maintained. In particular, liturgy “enacts and maintains community by the ritual remembering or representation of foundational narratives, thereby helping to construct the perceived reality in which each member of the community lives.”³⁰ Liturgy is that process whereby a “multitude” becomes a “people” or *res publica*. By implication, then, liturgies are processes of “conciliation”, or perhaps even “re-conciliation”, whereby the many discover their common interest, agreeing to share their “common objects of love”.³¹ Hence, it’s not *only* Christians that perform liturgies. Indeed, while a previous generation was fascinated by American civil religion as a set of ideas,³² currently that religion is being fruitfully examined as a set of rituals, as a national liturgy, as ritual sacrifice.³³

William Cavanaugh has shown that ontologies of violence also try to enact narratives of reconciliation. The modern, western narrative provides an example, where “the war of all against all” is identified with “the state of nature” – individual competing self-interests in which there is no common good, and which self-preservation is the social goal. For the sake of self-preservation, the many agree to give some of their power over to a sovereign, which allows them to realize a measure of freedom without endangering or being endangered by others. The sovereign “protect[s] the freedom of individuals from interference.”³⁴ This is how, at least in Thomas Hobbes’ view, the many are reconciled within this “artificial man”, this “body politic”,³⁵ which Cavanaugh claims is a monstrous parody of the body of Christ. For John Locke, the fear of death is subordinated to the search for sustenance. “From this search arises private property, the right to which is the most fundamental right and the foundation of the political order.”³⁶ Locke’s paradigmatic man is “the industrious and the rational”, who is able to convert property and perishable goods into currency (“imperishable gold”).³⁷ This process of conversion is the true state of nature (different from the state of war), though we still need to adjudicate “mine and thine”. For that we need the state. For Locke “there is no room in the political arena for the discussion of common goods, but only the management of varied civil interests.”³⁸ However, “the priority of freedom over the good... makes conflict inevitable: since there is no common good to adjudicate competing claims, all that remains is the force of will against will.”³⁹ Thus the

29 Alexander Schmemman, *For the Life of the World* (Crestwood, N.Y.: St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 1988) 25.

30 Cavanaugh, “The Liturgies of Church and State,” 25.

31 Here the insight is Augustine’s. See St. Augustine, *City of God*, trans. Henry Bettenson (London: Penguin Books, 1984) XIX: 24. An extended commentary on this is Oliver O’Donovan, *Common Objects of Love: Moral Reflection and the Shaping of Community: The 2001 Stob Lectures* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans Pub., 2002).

32 The classic work is that of Robert N. Bellah, “Civil Religion in America,” *Beyond Belief* (New York: Harper & Row, 1970).

33 In addition to Cavanaugh’s work, see Carolyn Marvin and David W. Ingle, *Blood Sacrifice and the Nation* (New York: Cambridge UP, 1999).

34 William T. Cavanaugh, “Discerning: Politics and Reconciliation,” *The Blackwell Companion to Christian Ethics*, Stanley Hauerwas and Samuel Wells (Malden, PA: Blackwell, 2004) 198.

35 Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan. Or the Matter, Forme, & Power of a Common-Wealth Ecclesiasticall and Civill* (London: Andrew Crooke, 1651).

36 Cavanaugh, “Discerning: Politics and Reconciliation,” 198.

37 John Locke, *Two Treatises of Government*, *The Works of John Locke* (London: Tegg, Sharpe, and Son, 1823) V:34.

38 Cavanaugh, “Discerning: Politics and Reconciliation,” 199.

39 Cavanaugh, “Discerning: Politics and Reconciliation,” 200.

drama of history is a tragic one.

Locke and Hobbes are key figures in narrating modern liberalism's account of origins.⁴⁰ While there are significant differences in their accounts, they share a common creation myth that understands humans as by nature in competition. The world they imagine is not a world of abundance, but a world of scarcity. In such a world, violence is inevitable – even if undesirable. The state (or the sovereign) is that body which polices and orders the clash of interests, thereby allowing for a space of human freedom within the chaos. The state is “saviour”. But the insertion of this saviour into history is also an act of violence, suggests Cavanaugh. The so-called “wars of religion” – which are typically narrated in such a way as to provide warrant for the de-publicization of religion – were necessary to the conciliation of interests and the consolidation of territory both within and between states.⁴¹

The modern nation-state also has its liturgies, from the annual commemorations that form its patriotic imagination to the sacred calendars that mark moments in its salvation history.⁴² Its sacred text takes the form of constitution public officials is sworn to protect. Its saints are those who have paid with their blood defending its precepts. Catechetical instruction is given to the youth, highlighting not only the essential, distinguishing features of the “national character”, but seeking to so form their subjectivities that they would also, if called up, be willing to make the same sacrifice. The modern nation-state also has its sacred hymns, symbols, and creeds. While no place serves as a better example of all this than the United States of America, it's been interesting to note South Africa's own debate around a pledge of allegiance. Notable also in the US context is its motto, *e pluribus unum* (“out of the many, one”), which contrasts somewhat with South Africa's “rainbow” identity. But for all modern nation-states – and granting important differences among them – the single act of national participating in nation making is the election. Here the single, discrete actions of millions become the single act of “popular will”. The people speak.

I dwell on this point to extend the idea that discourse on reconciliation is not a matter of “theological” vs. “political” ideas. The Christian theological understanding of reconciliation I'm sketching here is *political*, because it also forms a “body politic”. But the “secular” or “political” view of reconciliation is also based on a *theology* enacted liturgically. The question, then, is not theology or politics, but rather *which political theology* makes most sense of the brokenness of the world and the need for healing.

3.2 Performing reconciliation: church

The biblical story of reconciliation is also enacted in a liturgy that begins with gathering – a gathering that repeats God's gathering of Israel in the Hebrew Bible and Jesus' gathering of his disciples as reconstituted Israel in the Gospels. The gathering of the *ekklesia* is in response to God's call, which is echoed in many churches by a “call to worship” at the beginning of the liturgy. James K. A. Smith suggests that the call to worship echoes God's original “let us make humans” in Genesis one, in which the creation of humans as divine image was aimed at placing

40 Cavanaugh also discusses Rousseau, whose understanding of the state of nature is more optimistic than that of Hobbes and Locke. Nevertheless, “all agree that the state of nature is one of individuality; individuals come together on the basis of a social contract, each individual entering society in order to protect person and property.” William T. Cavanaugh, *Theopolitical Imagination: Discovering the Liturgy as a Political Act in an Age of Global Consumerism* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 2002) 17.

41 Cavanaugh's seminal article in this regard is “A Fire Strong Enough to Consume the House: The Wars of Religion and the Rise of the State,” *Modern Theology* 11.4 (Oct 1995): 397–420. It is also published as chapter one of *Theopolitical Imagination*. There's much more to be said about Cavanaugh's work, though space does not permit it.

42 On what follows, see the essays in *Liturgy* 20:1 (2005), as well as Marvin and Ingle.

them as priests in the cosmic sanctuary.⁴³ In gathering to worship, Christians are doing nothing other than enacting bodily what it means to be human – not simply true to their origins, but to their destiny as part of that multitude gathered “a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages” (Rev 7:9).

The second act of the Christian liturgical drama has the church listening. As in the first, this act positions members of the *ekklesia* as primarily *addressed*. But here the address concerns the order for which humans are created – something that contrasts sharply with modernity’s “rejection of teleology”.⁴⁴ If the accounts of Hobbes and Locke leave us with an empty freedom (freedom *from* the imposition of the desires and interests of others), the reading of scripture in the church demonstrates that the freedom for which God has created humans is a freedom *for* relationship with God, humans, and creation. Smith continues,

[W]e inhabit not “nature” but *creation*, fashioned by a Creator, and there is a certain grain to the universe – grooves and tracks and norms that are part of the fabric of the world. And all of creation flourishes best when our communities and relationships run with the grain of those grooves. Indeed, the biblical vision of human flourishing implicit in worship means that we are only properly free when our desires are rightly ordered, when they are bounded and directed to the end that constitutes our good.⁴⁵

As the gathered listen, however, they become aware of their profound failure to be so bounded and directed. Confession is the only response in this case. That this is structured into the liturgy – albeit at different points, depending on the church – forms the gathered as a people that do not disguise their complicity in violence and exclusion. They may bear the shame of Adam and Eve, but unlike the primal couple they do not hide themselves; they may be complicit as was Cain, but they do not defer responsibility. Moreover, the confession is not simply an admission that the gathered have disobeyed an abstract or arbitrary law. The confession is made *to* the one who has gathered and addressed them. No goods or services can remedy this:⁴⁶ only a further word of pardon from God.

At this point, two important practices, might take place: baptism and Eucharist. Both of these are called “sacraments”, because they are ways the gathered are incorporated into the *sacramentum* or “mystery” of the body of Christ. In Protestantism, sacraments are sometimes termed “an outward sign of an inward grace”, and this is true to a point. However, as in the doctrine of reconciliation, some Protestants have so individualized the sacraments that the “inward grace” is seen to be exclusively something that happens in and for the person, apart from the gathered community.⁴⁷ More recently, theologians have begun to recover baptism as a communal act, not only linking the baptized to the church, but the church to the history of salvation.⁴⁸

Baptism is the passing from death to new life through twofold identification. The first is with

43 Smith, 163. On the “cosmic sanctuary” motif in the Ancient Near East, see J. Richard Middleton, *The Liberating Image: Interpreting the Imago Dei in Context* (Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2005) 81.

44 Smith, 175.

45 Smith, 176.

46 Smith suggests this as a contrast with cultural liturgies that shame the consumer into a sense of his or her own inadequacy, but promise repair through the purchase of a slimming programme, a newer fashion accessory, or a costly make-over. Smith, 180–81.

47 This criticism could be developed further, especially in relation to the way Protestant churches have functioned under the sovereignty of the modern nation-state. That is, the corporate nature of the church is displaced onto the body politic of the nation-state. The church becomes a club, essentially consisting of private individuals united by an interest they hold in common.

48 de Gruchy, *Reconciliation*.

the people of Israel as they pass through the Red Sea (1 Cor 10:1-2), though there also are echoes elsewhere in the New Testament of an older judgment and deliverance through water (1 Pet 3:20-21). In Ancient Near Eastern cosmology, the sea represented chaos and was personified in figures such as the Babylonian Tiamat. The priestly account of creation (Gen 1:1-2:4a) imagines God as sovereign over the waters: creating through dividing the waters to create “sky”, then gathering them together to create “land”. While the notion of the waters as primordial chaos is demythologized in this account,⁴⁹ nevertheless when moral chaos breaks out in the world after the Fall, God judges through releasing the waters in destructive fury. Similarly, the creation of Israel is “through the waters” – the Red Sea gathered on either side as they walk through the dry bed, while the chaos of Egyptian oppression is represented by the release of the waters to destroy Pharaoh’s army (Ex 14).

The second identification baptism signals is with Christ in his death and resurrection:

Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? Therefore we have been buried with him by baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. We know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be destroyed, and we might no longer be enslaved to sin. For whoever has died is freed from sin (Rom 6:2-9).

The descent into the waters of baptism marks the end of the old life, which Paul calls “the body of sin”; the ascent from the waters marks the beginning of the new life in Christ. But again we must not miss the corporate language here. Paul is addressing a baptized *people* – a people who by virtue of their baptism bear a new, corporate identity. This is made clear in another passage:

As many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus (Gal 3:27-28)

Here I pick up the thread left in section two concerning the identity of the body of Christ. It is baptism, which effects this transformation from a world of warring particularities and disordered loves to the “sociality of harmonious differences” (Milbank) that characterizes life in Christ. We might call this “an ontological transfer”. Another passage combines the idea of dying with Christ with the idea of putting on a new identity, giving baptism a special, ethical point:

Put to death, therefore, whatever in you is earthly: fornication, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed (which is idolatry). ... Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have stripped off the old self with its practices and have clothed yourselves with the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge according to the image of its creator. In that renewal there is no longer Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave and free; but Christ is all and in all! As God’s chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful. (Col 3:5-15)

49 Tiamat may be present in the Genesis account in the person of the “sea monsters”, which far from being the fearsome and bloody deities of Babylonian cosmology are for the Priestly writer good creatures of God. In Ps 103, another sea monster, Leviathan, is imagined as a plaything of God. On the relationship between Genesis and ANE mythology, see Middleton, *passim*.

The ontological transfer calls forth what we might call “an ethical transfer”. Baptism, for Christians, marks the end of the old life – a life of striving for autonomy; a life lived from self-interestedness, a life of estrangement. The characteristic vices of this life are listed in verse 3. Each vice is something, which inhibits, disrupts, or erodes human community.⁵⁰ The preparation for the end of life “according to the flesh” is marked by the stripping of candidates for baptism prior to their immersion. On the other side, the newly baptized are clothed with garments reflecting their new identity in Christ. Hence the accompanying virtues are listed in verses 12-14. Significantly, among the things they do *not* carry through the waters are the old, social identities (which Paul says elsewhere also belong “to the flesh” – Phil 3:4). Instead, they understand themselves to be members of one body, characterized by harmony and cohering in love.⁵¹

Baptism names the way Christians are brought into this reconciled community. Eucharist is how this community is ongoingly sustained during the world. The Eucharist begins with the offering of gifts. Originally the offering was not a matter of people dropping coins onto a plate (something that likely became widespread from the Reformation⁵²), but consisted in the bringing of the elements to share in Eucharist, as well as other items for the meal that would follow. This is “the beginning of the new Creation’s harvest”.⁵³ Just as the people have gathered in response to the call of God, so now the gifts of bread and wine are brought forth and placed on the altar.⁵⁴ The wine is mingled together and the bread presented as the living sacrificial offering of the people. The bread and the wine represent the people themselves as stewards of creation. After all, what is presented is not grain and grapes, but bread that is *made* from many grains, and wine that is *made* from many grapes.⁵⁵

But this sacrifice is taken up into the Trinitarian economy I spoke of earlier, wherein the offering of the people to God becomes at the same time God’s offering to the people.⁵⁶ Dom

50 Brian J. Walsh and Sylvia Keesmaat, *Colossians Remixed: Subverting the Empire* (Downer’s Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2004) 151–68.

51 The question of what happens to particularities such as language, ethnicity, and gender is a live one. If *katallassō* is the overcoming of estrangement, is it also the subsuming of alterity? This would entail another form of violence, and would fail to be faithful to the trinitarian norm of harmonic unity-in-difference. But what differences belong to this harmony? and what belong to the strife created by fallenness? See E.A.J.G. Van der Borgh, “The Most Segregated Hour: On Racial Reconciliation as Unfinished Business for Theology in South Africa and Beyond,” Inaugural Lecture. Desmond Tutu Chair in Youth, Sports and Reconciliation (Free University of Amsterdam, 2009). My intuition (which I’ve intimated already) is to understand difference in terms of a gift to be received and shared. See also note 51 below.

52 Dom Gregory Dix, *The Shape of the Liturgy*, New ed. (London: Continuum, 2005) 661–62.

53 William T. Cavanaugh, “Eucharistic Sacrifice and the Social Imagination in Early Modern Europe,” *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 31.3 (Fall 2001): 599, quoting Rowan D. Williams, *Eucharistic Sacrifice—The Roots of a Metaphor* (Nottinghamshire: Grove Booklets, 1982) 10.

54 See also the play of sacrifice and spiritual gift within the context of “we being many are one body” in Romans 12:1-8, which echoes the Eucharistic language of 1 Corinthians 10:17.

55 Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, trans. The Fathers of the English Dominican Province (New York: Benziger Bros., 1947) 3.74.1.

56 Cavanaugh, “Eucharistic Sacrifice,” 601–02. Cavanaugh claims that modernity lost this trinitarian logic and embraced a “zero-sum-gain” view of sacrifice, such that the offering, the one(s) making the offering, and the recipient of the offering were separated. The tortured meditations of Jacques Derrida on the (im) possibility of pure gift bear witness to this loss. Jacques Derrida, “Forgiving the Unforgivable,” public lecture (University of the Western Cape, 1998). To the contrary, a pre-modern, trinitarian logic celebrates a circulation of gifts in communion. Writes Cavanaugh, “The antinomy of gift and exchange is overcome in the Body of Christ, for no thing is transferred from one to another. In the intratrinitarian relations, the exchange of love is simply the return of God to Godself, the infinite return of the Son to the Father through the Holy Spirit. Human creatures’ return to God is only our participation in the perfect return of

Gregory Dix explains the ancient practice,

Each communicant from the bishop to the newly confirmed gave himself under the forms of bread and wine to God, as God gives himself to them under the same forms. In the united oblations of all her members the Body of Christ, the church, gave herself to *become* the Body of Christ, the sacrament, in order that receiving again the symbol of herself now transformed and hallowed, she might be truly that which by nature she is, the Body of Christ, and each of her members of Christ... In Christ, as His body, the church is 'accepted' by God 'in the beloved'. Its sacrifice of itself is taken up into His sacrifice of Himself."⁵⁷

Just like the old saying, "you are what you eat", Christians eat and drink the body and blood of Christ, in order that they might become the body of Christ *for* the world; in order that they might represent the new covenant in his blood *to* the world.

Baptism and Eucharist are each a microcosm of the story that is told in the larger movement of the liturgy. Both of them are the means by which the gathered people are incorporated into the body of Christ – initially in baptism and ongoingly in Eucharist. But both of them also have a "be what you are" thrust. Just as in the 2 Corinthians passage in the previous section, in the Romans and Colossians passages we've just looked at, the already-baptized are called to "put to death" those things that belong to the old ways. Hence in many churches, when someone is baptized, the other members will at the same time renew their baptismal vows, and be sprinkled afresh by the celebrant. Likewise, those about to partake in the Eucharist, the "new covenant" meal, must be at peace with each other. A third century document reports that during the kiss of peace, immediately prior to the eating and drinking, the Deacon would cry out, "Is there any man that keepeth ought against his fellow?"⁵⁸ Remembering that Jesus explicitly commanded his followers *not* to offer their gift to God *until* they were reconciled with their brother or sister (Matt 5:23-24) tells us that the Eucharist is not to be participated in lightly. Paul chided the Corinthians for not discerning the presence of the Lord's body – meaning that they were treating the Lord's Supper like any other meal at which status positions would be reinforced. For this, "many of you are weak and ill, and some have fallen asleep." (1 Cor 11:30) If baptism signals a kind of death, as William Cavanaugh puts it, "the Eucharist can kill you."⁵⁹

Not only do church members need to ensure they are participating in the new world reconciled in Christ, the church as body does as well. The fact that the church's record – in and outside South Africa – is far from spotless is nothing less than a scandal. This is also part of the theology of reconciliation: the church is identified as that people only too aware of their failures to live up to their identity as reconciled and to their mission as reconcilers. This failure marks the present dispensation as suspended between promise and fulfilment, between this age and the age to come. It is something that marks what Paul calls the "groaning" of the church, longing for the fullness of redemption (Rom 8:23-25). This groaning also leads to ongoing repentance.

In some churches, the end of the service is marked by a deacon chanting the words, "*ete missa est*", "the mass is concluded".⁶⁰ The word "mass" is derived from "mitte", which means, "to

the God-man to God." Cavanaugh, "Eucharistic Sacrifice," 601.

⁵⁷ Dix, 117.

⁵⁸ Dix, 106–07. John de Gruchy suggests in this regard that the sacrament of Penance needs to be recovered, especially by Protestants engaged in reconciliation. Indeed, this sacrament is the model which the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in large part followed. de Gruchy, *Reconciliation*, 102–07.

⁵⁹ William T. Cavanaugh, *Torture and Eucharist: Theology, Politics, and the Body of Christ*, Challenges in Contemporary Theology (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1998) 231–32.

⁶⁰ This phrase, retained in the contemporary Roman rite, has also been revived by Anglo-Catholics. F.L. Cross and Elizabeth A. Livingstone, "Mass," *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, 3rd rev. ed. (Oxford; New York: Oxford UP, 2005) 1058.

send”.⁶¹ Once “the mass is concluded”; the mission now begins. The church is co-missioned to go, to baptize, and to teach (Matt 28:19-20). The exaltation and sovereignty of the crucified Lord is not simply good news for the church; it is good news for the world. The gathering continues as the church opens itself out to the world, inviting it to find its identity in Christ. As Reformed theologian Klaas Schilder suggests,

It is in the Church, as the mother of believers brings forth the ‘new’ me who, also as far as cultural life is concerned, bear the burdens of the world. Only the Church joins them together into an unbreakable communion and teaches the norms for all the relationships of life, even outside the Church.⁶²

4. THE TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION COMMISSION

How does the church bear witness to reconciliation in the world? And does the world have anything to say to the church concerning reconciliation? Since reconciliation, understood theologically, is both reality and process, the church also enlists the world to assist its own witness, even while demonstrating to the world its own ultimate shape in Jesus Christ. I think a good example can be found in South Africa’s recent history, an example that also shows how the world poses a question back to the church.

South African theologians and church leaders played a significant role in thinking about reconciliation in the South African context during the late 1980s and early 1990s. Despite not insignificant differences over the relation between justice and reconciliation, in the mid-1980s both the Kairos Document and the National Initiative for Reconciliation demonstrated rigorous theological thinking about the shape of a new, reconciled society.⁶³ The Rustenburg Conference of 1991 brought together a spectrum of black and white church leaders, from the mainline Anglicans to the Dutch Reformed to the newer Pentecostal and Charismatic churches. The Conference and the Statement issued were “of great significance and the confessions there anticipate those given at the TRC hearings.”⁶⁴ Following this gathering, which marked the beginning of their own reconciliation, the churches – through such instruments such as the National Peace Accord and the Church Leaders Forum – also made significant contributions in sustaining the negotiations during the vulnerable years of 1992 and 1993, and in preparing the population for the elections of 1994.

In the founding of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, the idea of a space within which polarized South Africans could confront the truth about their complicity in violence and embrace the other they had violated became a reality. This space was liturgically founded in a special service that opened the proceedings, sustained in prayers and moved about in pilgrimage throughout the country, visiting the places of violent exclusion and painful memory. Its Chair, decked out in purple cassock and pectoral cross, functioned as priest-confessor to the nation. Its mission was one not simply of investigation and adjudication, but of healing. In doing this,

61 Cross and Livingstone.

62 Klaas Schilder, *Christ and Culture*, trans. G. van Wrongen and W. Helder (Winnipeg: Premier Printing, 1977) 106, quoted in Smith, 207.

63 For the NIR, “what needed to be reconciled were ‘groups’, defined racially or ethnically. Apartheid was analysed as a racist ideology. Other Christians, especially the authors of *The Kairos Document*, claimed that the South African problem was systemic economic inequality, rather than simple racial prejudice. Racial antagonism and racial policies were at the surface, rather than at the depths of the problem. Redressing injustice and bringing about social transformation was therefore the first step to real reconciliation.” Research Institute on Christianity in South Africa, 58–59.

64 Research Institute on Christianity in South Africa, 57. What follows in this section is indebted to RICA’s Report.

the TRC would re-narrate South Africa's violent history, mapping it onto a Christian-like fall-redemption grid. This narrative would be one "owned" by all South Africans.⁶⁵ Hence, like the reconciliation space of the church, the TRC sought to establish a new basis for relationships that would "repeat forward", issuing in a different people that conform their lives to the quest for reconciliation – what theology calls "sanctification", albeit through a "national" spirit.

This "theological reading" of the TRC is one I've developed in more detail elsewhere.⁶⁶ But the religious dynamics have been evident also to "secular" figures, such as former cabinet minister Kader Asmal. For Asmal, the Commission served as "a civic sacrament".⁶⁷ Certainly the nature of the TRC was contested, even though its mandate was clearly marked out in the Promotion of National Unity and Reconciliation Act. Its mandate was six fold: to establish [1] "as complete a picture as possible of the nature, causes and extent of gross violations of human rights committed during the period [1 March 1960 to 6 December 1996]; [2] to adjudicate "the granting of amnesty to persons who make full disclosure of all the relevant facts relating to acts associated with a political objective committed in the course of the conflicts of the past during the said period"; [3] to allow victims "an opportunity to relate the violations they suffered"; [4] to make recommendations concerning "the granting of reparation to, and the rehabilitation and the restoration of the human and civil dignity of, victims of violations of human rights"; [5] to report "to the Nation about such violations and victims"; and [6] to make "recommendations aimed at the prevention of the commission of gross violations of human rights" in the future.⁶⁸ These six objectives stood behind the Human Rights Violations, Amnesty, and Reparations committees, as well as the Research department (which would produce the final Report). But the discourse of reconciliation was nevertheless divided between "minimalists", who saw the role of the Commission strictly in terms of the granting or denying of amnesty, and those with a thicker understanding of the possibilities of reconciliation, who saw the role of the Commission in terms of a larger, religious narrative of redemption. When looked at in light of our discussion in section 3 above, we can see both of these as understandings of "reconciliation": the former consistent with the modern, liberal narrative which seeks to strengthen the social contract through removing the occasion for vengeance; the latter consistent with the Christian account of reconciliation as restoration of communion.⁶⁹ Of course, those who championed this more substantive account did so without the explicit ecclesiology attending a deeper, Christian account.⁷⁰ Nevertheless, this understanding of reconciliation "as a common good, defined by confession, forgiveness, and redemption, and the exclusion of vengeance" stood in stark contrast to the "discursive invisibility" of the notion of reconciliation in those favouring the first account.⁷¹

65 This was certainly a sticking point for critics of the TRC: it was far *too* Christian. For a representative criticism, see Richard A. Wilson, *The Politics of Truth and Reconciliation in South Africa: Legitimizing the Post-Apartheid State* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2001) 109–21.

66 Stephen W. Martin, "Civic Sacrament and Social Imaginaries in Transition: The Case of the Churches and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission," *Political Theology* forthcoming (2010).

67 Kader Asmal, Louise Asmal, and Ronald Suresh Roberts, *Reconciliation Through Truth*, 2nd ed. (Cape Town: David Philip, 1996) 47.

68 Government of South Africa, *Promotion of National Unity and Reconciliation (TRC) Act No. 34 [Amended]* (1997).

69 For the debate within the Commission from an insider's perspective, see Piet Meiring, "The *Baruti* Versus the Lawyers: The Role of Religion in the TRC Process," *Looking Back, Reaching Forward: Reflections on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa*, Ed. Charles Villa Vicencio and Wilhelm Verwoerd (Cape Town; London: University of Cape Town Press; Zed Books, 2000) 113–31.

70 A nation-state was the new social reality—a nation-state reflecting the Westphalian model of early modernity. See Martin.

71 Wilson, 109, 106. Wilson also identifies a "mandarin-intellectual" narrative, which saw the significance of the TRC as providing "a transcendental basis" for nation-building "through the emergence of a shared

Ultimately the TRC would be widely judged to have failed in effecting its mission of reconciliation, however defined. At a conference commemorating the tenth anniversary of the first hearing, those involved in the TRC on the side of the Commission and those who stood before it agreed that, while significant, the TRC could not have accomplished reconciliation with finality. Limitations were evident in the question of whether South Africa is “a reconciled nation” after the TRC. Reflecting on some of the research of the Institute for Justice and Reconciliation, Don Foster observed that the socio-economic conditions that obtain ten years later show that social equality is far away. Moreover, South Africans continue to live in separate worlds. “In South Africa,” he concluded, “continued *de facto* racial segregation remains the norm.”⁷²

And yet, while it would be “more regularly lauded in the rest of the world than at home”,⁷³ the TRC had opened up a fresh possibility, demonstrating something of what reconciliation could be. Following Paul Lederach, Pumla Gobodo-Madikizela suggested this possibility as the creation of a moral imagination, “the capacity to imagine ourselves in a web of relations that includes our enemies”. In this web “rehumanization... a space where the incompatible yet inextricable stories of victim, victimizer, and bystander meet”, becomes a possibility.⁷⁴ But this possibility remains something in need of actualization by ordinary South Africans, not simply leaders or representatives. Reconciliation, admitted Desmond Tutu, “is not an event, it is a process and it is one in which all of us, not just a commission, have a stake.”⁷⁵ And Nohle Mohapi, who lost her husband in 1976, observed “it’s up to us now to make truth and reconciliation our business”.⁷⁶

Tutu’s claim that, despite its flaws, “the world thinks the South African TRC has set a benchmark against which every other TRC can be measured”,⁷⁷ is significant. For the TRC stands as a parable of the Kingdom of God. It provided a glimpse into what South Africa *could* be, and beyond South Africa demonstrated a new way of being human in which past sufferings do not hold sway over future possibilities. It constituted a place where victim and victimizer could meet, where the former could confront the latter with truth, and where both could find a new basis for relationship. The fact that my own country of Canada has initiated its own “Truth and Reconciliation Commission”, investigating abuses in aboriginal residential schools, is part of South Africa’s living legacy.⁷⁸

As a social body that lives not from itself but from an act of generosity that remakes the world, the church is “custodian” of this vision of reconciliation.⁷⁹ But it doesn’t control reconciliation, nor does it stand over against the parties needing to be reconciled. For the TRC was also a challenge to *the church*. In November 1997, the Commission called on churches and other faith communities to give a public account of their activities during the period 1960-1994. And they came: Catholic and Protestant, evangelical and ecumenical, Pentecostal and independent.⁸⁰ This gathering, in full public view, before a panel empowered to call them to account, was unparalleled in the

vision of a single nation.” Wilson, 108.

72 *Truth & Reconciliation in South Africa: 10 Years On*, Ed. Charles Villa-Vicencio and Fanie du Toit (Cape Town: David Philip, 2006) 83.

73 Charles Villa-Vicencio, in *Truth & Reconciliation in South Africa: 10 Years On*, 164.

74 In *Truth & Reconciliation in South Africa: 10 Years On*, 73–74.

75 In *Truth & Reconciliation in South Africa: 10 Years On*, 190.

76 In *Truth & Reconciliation in South Africa: 10 Years On*, 11.

77 In *Truth & Reconciliation in South Africa: 10 Years On*, 10.

78 Part of the mandate of the Canadian TRC is establish a new basis for the relation between aboriginal and non-aboriginal Canadians. Sheila Whyte, “Some Big Questions for the Slow-Starting Commission” (2009), [Http://www.cbc.ca/canada/story/2009/07/10/f-trc-slow-start.html](http://www.cbc.ca/canada/story/2009/07/10/f-trc-slow-start.html).

79 Rowan D. Williams, “Public Religion and the Common Good,” address (St Andrews Cathedral, Singapore, 2007).

80 A complete list may be found in Research Institute on Christianity in South Africa, 191–98.

history of South Africa – or of anywhere else.⁸¹ Virtually across the board the churches identified themselves as victims, perpetrators, and opponents of human rights abuses. In their testimonies the iconic figures of Beyers Naudé, Allan Boesak, and Desmond Tutu were justly celebrated.⁸² But they also spoke of pastors that, Sunday after Sunday, encouraged the perpetuation of abuses through their affirmation of “whatever” the good Christians in the security police were doing to protect the Christian nation from godless communism.⁸³ Even more scandalous were the stories of black, activist members of churches tortured by white members of the same church who were working for the regime.⁸⁴ Most scandalous were the ways churches rejected – implicitly through unequal distribution of resources between white and black parishes, or explicitly through church apartheid⁸⁵ – the meaning of baptism and Eucharist. The sacraments themselves were twisted into a means to legitimate violent exclusion.⁸⁶

Following their acts of confession, churches committed themselves to bringing their considerable resources to the project of reconciliation and reconstruction. Grand plans were announced for special services, projects, and conferences. Churches committed themselves to land audits, the equalization of clergy stipends, and denominational consolidation. They offered pastoral care to victims who had testified, facilities to aid the reconstruction of communities, and greater involvement in promoting a culture of accountability.⁸⁷ Unfortunately, no one (to my knowledge – and I *have* been asking!) has gone back to those plans to see how they were implemented.⁸⁸ Indeed, it seems as if, much as the rest of the Commission, the appearance of the churches in public, once called by John de Gruchy the closing chapter of the church struggle in South Africa,⁸⁹ has been virtually forgotten. The church – like the nation after the TRC – has gotten on with its life.

5. CONCLUSION: THE MESSAGE OF THE GOSPEL IN A WORLD OF ATROCITIES

It's been nearly 2,000 years since the church began to proclaim the good news of reconciliation in Jesus Christ. During that time there have been gains, but also losses. Some ask, has anything *really* changed – especially when “the people of the solution” have so often become part of the problem?⁹⁰

Things are of course more complex than they seem. The reconciliation spoken of by the church is parodied in different ways in the post-Christian secular state, and it has been argued that the thin, secular form of reconciliation discussed in section 3.1 above is but a secularization of a prior Christian narrative.⁹¹ The Christian view is also anticipated in thicker, non-Christian

81 John W. de Gruchy, “Giving Account: Churches in South Africa,” *The Christian Century* Dec. 17 1997.

82 Though one of the most moving parts of the testimonies came when Michael Nuttal, Bishop of Natal and former chaplain to Desmond Tutu, apologized on behalf of Anglicans to the former Archbishop for their ambivalence towards his message. Research Institute on Christianity in South Africa, 42.

83 Research Institute on Christianity in South Africa, 36–38.

84 Research Institute on Christianity in South Africa, 38.

85 Research Institute on Christianity in South Africa, 39–40.

86 Uniting Reformed Church of Southern Africa, *Submission to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission*, submission (Johannesburg, 1997).

87 Research Institute on Christianity in South Africa, 61–64.

88 The RICSA Report called for a monitoring agency to track the progress of faith communities in all this. Research Institute on Christianity in South Africa, 75.

89 See de Gruchy, “Giving Account: Churches in South Africa”.

90 In the words of N. T. Wright *Evil and the Justice of God* (Downer's Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2006) 53f.

91 Hence Cavanaugh's title suggesting secular modernity as parody of Christianity. “The City: Beyond Secular Parodies,” *Radical Orthodoxy: A New Theology*, *Radical Orthodoxy: A New Theology*, Ed. John Milbank, Catherine Pickstock, and Graham Ward (London ; New York: Routledge, 1999) 182–200.

traditional practices. This is to be expected, if as Bonhoeffer writes, “the reality of the world has been marked once and for all by the cross of Christ, but the cross of Christ is the cross of reconciliation of the world with God, and for this reason the world also bears at the same time the mark of reconciliation as the free ordinance of God.”⁹² At the very least we can say theologically that to pursue costly reconciliation is to act “with the grain of the universe”.⁹³ Or to quote South Africa’s most famous reconciler,

There is a movement, not easily discernible, at the heart of things to reverse the awful centrifugal force of alienation, brokenness, division, hostility and disharmony. God has sent in motion a centripetal process, a moving toward the centre, towards unity, harmony, goodness, peace and justice; one that removes barriers.⁹⁴

The church bears this possibility in its story, in its structures, and in its understanding of mission. As “moral imagination”, reconciliation is sustained in the church’s liturgy and enacted in its sacraments. And yet the exemplars of reconciliation (such as the TRC) also speak back to the church, calling it to repentance and challenging it to be more fully reconciled reconcilers.

In speaking of the challenge of reconciliation, I want to say two things in conclusion. Firstly, it’s important to reiterate that reconciliation is not just an idea or ideal, but the very *reality* of the world in Christ. And this reality calls for practices that bear witness to it – practices that anticipate the time when the whole *world* will see itself – and the world will see itself *whole* – in Jesus Christ. Until then, the church is called to act vicariously, on behalf of the world. It was Bonhoeffer who put matters thus.⁹⁵ But living the reality of a world reconciled in Christ can and will be costly, as Bonhoeffer’s example also reminds us. It requires martyrdom (*martyrion* being the New Testament word for “bearing witness”). That will, at minimum, mean a laying aside of self – and class, and volk, and perhaps even national – interest. Paul talks about this under the phrase, “being crucified with Christ” (Gal 2:20). But it may also require the laying aside of one’s bodily life as the most profound testimony to the reality of reconciliation, laying bare the *untruth* of a world that can maintain itself only through violence.⁹⁶ Secondly, as a practice, reconciliation is not simply something that takes place from the top down, but from the bottom up. Just as the Word became flesh “and moved into the neighbourhood” (John 1:14, *The Message*), reconciliation has to take on flesh in a local context. This was an opportunity I think the churches missed in the mid-1990s. Certainly national church leaders were making grand, public gestures of reconciliation. But what was happening in local parishes? That’s the question I’ve been trying to get an answer to during my time here in South Africa. In the late 1990s, my former parish initiated a process of story-telling that had great promise to open up space for healing in the present and for the future, especially for the many families who were long-standing members and were displaced because of Group Areas legislation. Regrettably, this research project remained just that.

There have been laudable initiatives, from the growing number of black clergy in historically white, Anglican parishes to the structural reconciliation of churches divided into racialized sections. The movement for restitution, initiated by some evangelical churches in the Western

92 Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Ethics*, trans. Neville Horton Smith (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1995) 206, as quoted in de Gruchy, *Reconciliation*, 72.

93 John Howard Yoder, “Armaments and Eschatology,” *Studies in Christian Ethics* 1 (1988): 58. Yoder’s fuller statement is, “people who bear crosses are acting with the grain of the universe”.

94 Desmond Tutu, *No Future Without Forgiveness* (New York: Doubleday, 1999) 212.

95 Dietrich Bonhoeffer, “The Church and the Jewish Question,” *Between Christ and Caesar*, Ed. Charles Villa-Vicencio (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986) 106–08.

96 Rowan D. Williams, *Christ on Trial: How the Gospel Unsettles Our Judgment* (Grand Rapids; Toronto: Eerdmans; Anglican Book Centre, 2000) 111.

Cape, recognizes the way whites as beneficiaries of apartheid have a responsibility to participate in social and economic empowerment. Rather than looking to the state to address inequality, whites voluntarily pay into a fund that is used for literacy and other programs.⁹⁷ And yet, NG and VG Kerk members continue to worship in separate churches. The mainline churches, which bear in their histories (and often in their physical buildings⁹⁸) the marks of the past, are currently being displaced by new Pentecostal and charismatic churches, which are “in tune” with the new ethos, and which can claim to have sprung into being post-apartheid. Unsurprisingly, the same new elite that has “put the TRC behind it” has embraced these newer forms of Christianity.⁹⁹

But I digress. Let me get back to the question by phrasing things differently: if local parishes were taking the example of their national leadership seriously, we should, fifteen years later, be able to see the fruit of that *now*. So the question – and the challenge – becomes: what do *local parishes* look like in 2010? This is not a call to name “values” but to spell out, concretely, whether the reality of parish life conforms to the reality of reconciliation in Christ. The 1960s activist Abbie Hoffmann once said: “Don’t tell me what you *believe*. Let me watch what you *do*. Then I’ll tell you what you believe.” To address readers who are involved in the church: when people look at *your* parish, do they say to themselves, “God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself”? Or do they say something else?

In a world beset by atrocities yet under the scandalous promise of grace, *that* is the theological challenge of reconciliation.

97 <http://www.restitution.org.za>

98 Part of this concerns what churches do with monuments within their walls. For instance, some years ago many members of the congregation at Grahamstown Cathedral take great offence at the use of “the ‘K’ word” in the wall plaques, and called for their removal. Others claimed that, as offensive to current sensibilities as those things are, the past cannot simply be erased. The compromise was to glue bits of marble over the contentious words. When I looked at these plaques on visiting the Cathedral in 2008, it struck me that, as inadequate as this solution was, here was a church at least struggling to come to terms with its ambiguous history.

99 Mandy Roussouw, “Zuma’s New God Squad Wants Liberal Laws to Go,” *M&G Online* Sept. 11 2009, [Http://www.mg.co.za/article/2009-09-11-zumas-new-god-squad-wants-liberal-laws-to-go](http://www.mg.co.za/article/2009-09-11-zumas-new-god-squad-wants-liberal-laws-to-go).

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‘To be ashamed.’ On the meaning and theological fruit of a phenomenology of negative self-awareness

Over the course of this presentation, I will simply work through each of the elements of my title. I will first explain what phenomenology is. Then I will make some phenomenological remarks about shame – that is the longest section. Then I will have a brief summary of what was achieved, in which I will present a thesis – or better, a generalizing supposition – regarding what one experiences about human self-awareness in the phenomenon of shame. Then, finally, I will turn to the theological fruit.

1. WHAT IS ‘PHENOMENOLOGY’?

‘Phenomenology’ is the title of a philosophical method that finally goes back to Edmund Husserl. Essentially, rather than speaking about concepts, it is about going back to the ‘things themselves,’ to which the concepts refer. But concepts do not just refer to ‘things,’ rather to the experience of things: Concepts are summaries of experiences that we have in contact with reality. The concept ‘apple’ or ‘orange,’ for example, gathers a host of experiences together – an experience of touch, when we have taken the orange into our hands: a smooth, porous surface; the cool meat of the fruit; the colour we see, a particular odour, and a sweet-sour taste. Whoever uses the word ‘orange,’ summarizes with it all these experiences under a single concept. And whoever has had these experiences, understands what the concept ‘orange’ means.

All *science* about oranges, the questions that biology asks and answers, are subsequent to this experience. Of course I can ask how this specific orange came to be; I can ask how the plant in general came to be in the course of evolution; I can ask which chemical reactions occur when my tongue senses the taste of the orange. But I can only ask all these questions because I know what an orange is. And I know this from contact with it, through the experiences that my senses have had with it – with the orange – and these experiences the concept summarizes.

This is the basic insight of phenomenology: At the beginning is not a concept or language but plain experience, called ‘mute experience’ by Husserl. All discourse about ourselves, all discourse about reality, is the result of this contact to the world we call ‘experience’. We cannot speak first of ourselves, then of the world, and in the third place of our contact with the world. Rather, the possibility to discourse about the world and ourselves is something we only have because we have contact with the world and, while being in the world, have contact with ourselves. What we know and say of ourselves and what we know and say of the world stems from the experience, stems from subject and world being together. First comes the experience, then the subject and the world. Our concepts are summaries of the experience, not language about things themselves.

Still, all phenomenologists presume that our concepts separate themselves from these experiences that they summarize. Then we draft great theories about the world, its origin, its existence, its constitution; or theories about the subject, its abilities, its freedom; and we forget that ‘the world’ is that which we experience here and now, and that the concept ‘world’ summarizes only this. We forget, that we, who experience the world, are ourselves the subject. We forget, that the concepts ‘subject’ and ‘world’ only summarize that we experience and what we experience. What matters, according to the phenomenologists, is to rediscover the experience that corresponds to the concepts we use, to which these concepts refer.

If that were true: What about the concept 'God'? Does this concept also summarize 'experiences'? If yes: Then it must be possible to rediscover and describe the experience contained by the concept 'God.'

Now this thesis – that the concept 'God' summarizes certain experiences – is much older than the phenomenological philosophy of the 20th century. Luther, for instance: "What does it mean to have a god, and what is that: a god"? Luther asks this in his Large Catechism in the exposition of the 1st commandment, and does not answer: 'God is a highest being, a pure spirit, most perfect intelligence and all governing will'. No, he answers – I summarize: A god is that, from which you expect good and where you go to save yourself in times of need. The presupposition in Luther is that man is, in his life, working through a basic problem: Man knows himself threatened and knows he is dependent on aid. He is always grasping for something from which he can expect aid and rescue – and exactly *this* is what everyone means, when they say 'God.' In prayer and not in theological speculation is man directed toward the reality indicated by the concept 'God.' Anyone who wants to explain what God is must describe this situation of waiting to be rescued.

Luther introduces the concept 'God' by indicating and describing the experience in which we are directed toward what is meant by the concept of God. Back to my orange-example: I only understand what an orange is when I remember the fullness of experiences that these fruits awaken when I come into contact with them. Accordingly, it becomes clear to me what the concept 'God' intends through the description of the experience that the concept summarizes: Prayer, to feel ultimately dependent, to reach out for help: That is to understand what the term 'God' means. In the passages cited, Luther clarifies what is meant by a common concept or it's meaning, in that he describes the experience in which someone refers to that which the concept intends. In the following, I will refer to that as the recourse to the 'initial situation'.

Such a procedure presumes that there is a common understanding, a semantic content, associated with terms; in other words that we more or less understand what we mean, when we say 'God.' Namely, a "highest spiritual entity" or the "embodiment of all reality," etc. The phenomenological method begins in all of its forms with the presumption, that such conceptually fixed pre-understandings have loosed themselves from the initial situation, from the actual seeing and experiencing of the thing intended. We just speak; we just have the concept – without any perception that corresponds to it. For the concept of God, explicated with the help of Luther: He presumes that God is the 'highest good,' the embodiment of all good things; but to have actually grasped and understood what is meant by the concept, I have to place myself into the attitude of reception – of faith – and to pray. The *concept* 'God' implies exactly what I make reference to, what I also presume *in* this attitude of faithful and confident hope. Awaiting all good things, I refer to the reality the concept 'God' summarizes. And if I do not find myself in this attitude of reception, then I have nothing to do with what is intended with the concept 'God.'

So phenomenology is the recourse from concepts to the experience in which that to which the concepts actually and originally refer, shows itself and is grasped. Terms for objects summarize experiences in which an object appears to a subject – they do not simply describe the object *per se*. To clarify the meanings of terms means describing the subject and its experience. And to describe the subject means describing the world that contains it. Theologically, with Bultmann: whoever wants to understand what God is, must speak of himself – and above all, vice versa: Who exegeses himself cannot avoid making use of the concept of God.

2. SHAME AND 'BEING ASHAMED'

That was the basic program of phenomenology as Husserl and his students, who critically followed him, present it. Now, finally, to 'being ashamed':

2.1 'Shame' in the theological tradition

I have called it a "negative self-awareness", and implicitly asserted that an engagement of this phenomenon could be theologically fruitful. Traditionally – in the sense of 'pre-Reformation'-tradition – the term has a meaning outside of ethics in the context of two institutions in middle-age theology and religion: First in the description of hell. The punishment of hell, as for example in Honorius of Autun, is not only of bodily, but also of spiritual nature. It consists in the shame that springs from having the life of man uncovered and laid out before all, such that nothing in it can be hidden: Everybody sees me as the person or sinner I am. The second institution is the sacrament of penance, where shame also plays an important role: Shame is the extreme of the contrition, which is necessary for a valid confession. The sacrament of penance is the place, in which the shame conflict is handled and removed in a controlled fashion. This conflict leads, in the absence of such a place of coping, to hell, which is the pain of being seen the way we are, and that itself – according to Luther – is hell, be that on earth or hereafter.

With these few remarks about the connection between the sacrament of penance and damnation or judgment, the background is called to mind, without which Luther's theology, at least historically speaking, cannot be understood. Historically, Luther's theology presumes the expectation of a judgment, the consciousness of being lost, and the inescapable nature of hell, out of which man is rescued through the promise of the gospel. The objective content of this background – of the judgment as of the sacrament of penance – is lost for us. But the concept of shame associated with both we know – and, when it is pursued, it shows itself to be an initial situation of the described sort, in which the central driving force of Luther's theology is explicated.

2.2 Phenomena

Now a few steps toward a phenomenology of shame, for which, on the one hand, Scheler, and on the other, Sartre, but not just they, provide something of an aid – for this is what we have to do: read and interpret the self-awareness of being ashamed and what is hidden inside it, as one would normally read and interpret texts.

2.2.1 *Shame and blushing*

I begin with a phenomenon attached to shame: 'blushing.' The experience of shame has this characteristic, that we blush, and in a very particular manner: in the face, on the neck, and in extreme cases – trust me! – on the upper part of the chest, that is – this insight is unfortunately not mine – on parts of our body that is hidden to *our own* sight, but subject to the sight of *others*. And if you recall situations when you were ashamed, you in fact realize that they are so structured, that we know ourselves to be seen by others. For example, another person barging into our intimate personal space causes shame. We feel shame, when we publically fail, but also, when we are too highly praised. Then we blush in those places, where we are seen – on the face and neck. Shame is connected to a situation of being seen, as Sartre says: connected to the phenomenon of another's gaze.

2.2.2 *To have to see oneself through the eyes of another*

Shame grows out of knowing oneself to be gazed upon – someone is looking at me. But is that enough? That most of you are looking at me here does not embarrass me very much. A sense of shame would appear, if I would suppose that you are internally accompanying my lecture with the lost question of what I might actually be trying to get at. But in reality, also that would fail to produce a sense of shame, because I trust myself to make this clear to you in the course of my lecture. But the sense of shame would be truly unavoidable, if I suddenly, while speaking,

would come to the realization that even I myself cannot say what this analysis of shame is supposed to accomplish. This shows, first of all: The sense of shame comes not when a foreign gaze coincidentally falls on me, but when it evaluates. To be even more precise, shame has to do with a disapproving gaze. And second is shown: Not every disapproval evokes shame. The sense of shame comes much more first then, when this disapproval ceases to remain on the side of the foreign gaze. The foreign gaze does not remain foreign, but enters at the same time into me and becomes my gaze upon myself. Shame comes from the disapproval that we are forced to agree with. The sense of shame presumes that we have nothing with which to counter the disapproval, that we can do nothing else than adopt this gaze and the judgment in it. Shame has to do with the interesting phenomenon, whereby the gaze of another becomes my own gaze upon myself.

Thus shame has to do not only with the foreign gaze, but also with a change of perspective. It is the experience of the disapproving gaze of another becoming my own view of myself: Without being able to counter with anything, I have to see myself with someone else's eyes and I cannot but accept the foreign disapproval.

2.2.3 Shame as the rupture of 'friendship with oneself'

Admittedly: The acceptance of disapproval alone awakens no shame. Someone disapproving of my being a lousy mathematician embarrasses me very little. He is right, I agree – but so what? Shame arises, when this judgment of the other person has a rupturing character, when the gaze of the other, which seeks to become mine, forces me into a judgment over myself, one, which foils my original judgment about myself. The sense of shame only arises when I am first in accord with myself, an accord that one can call – using a phrase from Plato's *Politeia* – 'friendship with oneself.' Shame appears when this feeling of friendship with myself is no longer possible, because the gaze of the other not only externally contradicts it, but also forces me to concur. Shame is the experience of self-contradiction, into which I am placed by the disapproval of another that forces me into agreement.

Shame therefore presumes this basic 'feeling of friendship with oneself,' when it ruptures exactly that.

2.2.4 'Friendship with oneself' as 'consciousness of being approved'

But also this is not yet the centre. This 'friendship with oneself' is for its part no simple phenomenon – something seen most easily, when one considers the phenomenon of 'being ashamed of someone else.' Here too, an example: I was at a football game with my son. Somehow my reactions were failing to correspond to those of the other spectators, and so after a half hour, I asked my son which team was actually the one we supported. It turned out that I had been cheering for the wrong team, which my son acknowledged with the words: "Wow dad, you are *embarrassing!*" He was ashamed of me, and this has a number of implications: First, we can only be ashamed of someone else, when we somehow identify him or her with ourselves – to this I will return. My son found me, with whom he identifies, to be the object of the disapproving gaze of others, and could not avoid concurring with it. This tells us not only that shame is preceded by a state in which my son stands in a relationship of friendship to me, but also that he reckons in this relationship of friendship, that, usually, his dad is the object of the approving gazes of others. Before I behave such that he becomes ashamed of me before others, he is aware that not only he, but also all others who are relevant, approve of me. This requires further development – but it points toward a property of the 'feeling of friendship with oneself': The experience of shame is not preceded by the state wherein no judging gazes of others fall on me, and I am in accord with myself, but rather the state in which I am silently aware of being

approved of, of being recognized by the world around me. The situation of shame is not only the rupture of *self*-approval, but also the rupture of the consciousness of being approved by others ('honour'). The feeling of friendship with oneself is just as externally induced as the shame. It is the consciousness of being approved or of being recognized. Shame grows out of the change of this gaze of others, and the sense of shame draws attention to the fact that this change of gaze realizes itself in the one who is ashamed.

2.2.5 Shame as conflict

At the same time, the example of being ashamed of others makes the following clear: Shame is related to the fact that I cannot, without further ado, adopt the judgment of another. Just as my son is at the same time bound in the connection to his father and cannot completely distance himself from me, so in general, a person who has to adopt the disapproval of others is bound in the connection to himself, in the approval of himself. In the experience of shame, he can do nothing else than to disapprove of himself, but he can also do nothing else than to hold to himself. Shame springs from the inability to become another person, in two senses: For one, it is the inability to change oneself as the object of the disapproving gaze, such that the disapproval ceases and one can be united with oneself. And it is also the inability to become one with the gaze of another and thus to distance oneself from oneself.

2.2.6 The tendency of shame to over-generalize

A penultimate observation: Shame experiences have an unusual tendency toward generalizations. Who is ashamed of himself, is not ashamed of an individual remark or mistake that is the cause of the shaming, rather of himself. One notices this, in that shame experiences are experiences of annihilation, or rather are accompanied by the desire to annihilate oneself or at least to dissolve – this comes to expression in sayings like: "I'd just have soon sunk into the floor." Or: 'I wish I was invisible!' The disapproval experienced in the gaze of another and adopted in the moment of shame allows for no approval to exist alongside it. It intends, regardless of the usually insignificant cause, my whole person.

Shame is the feeling that indicates the whole – and not only the partial – rupturing of 'friendship with oneself.' It stems from the necessity of adopting the foreign, disapproving gaze as one's own gaze on oneself, and thus from the inability to be united either with oneself, or with the foreign gaze.

To this belongs the fact that shame tends to separate itself from the situation in which it was born. The experience of shame is more than a non-participating observer sees in the moment. It cannot be rationalized, and usually does not go away when the one who has been shamed makes clear to himself that he is standing before a limited group of people and experiencing disapproval for a limited mistake. Even if shame only has something limited as its trigger, still it provides the situation and the instance before which one is ashamed, a quality that transcends the moments of the situation. He who is ashamed of himself experiences in the thing that triggered disapproval and in the instance, for which he is ashamed, more than just a limited failure and just a random group of people. And this is true, in reverse, and to an even greater extreme, for the feeling of 'friendship with oneself' that lies at its base. It is not just the consciousness of the approval of certain people or certain qualities, but an encompassing feeling of being approved, that may have individual qualities and individual attentions as its trigger, but that transcends them in their importance as experiences. The consciousness of being approved, as the consciousness of disapproval that ruptures it, is encompassing and general, and not bound to the particular persons and particular situations in which it came to be.

3. A GENERALIZING CONJECTURE ON THE BASIS OF NEGATIVE SELF-AWARENESS: THE MEDIATED CHARACTER OF SELF-AWARENESS

This has only been a piece of all the observations that could be presented on shame – but it allows a generalization: Shame – and all forms of negative self-awareness – grasps the *mediated character of self-awareness*. The negating, disapproving relation to myself is a most unnatural relation. It arises not in an isolated subject but takes place by means of another person whose gaze at me is integrated into my own self-awareness. This integration of the foreign gaze, though, does not begin with shame. We have seen, that the antithesis to shame, ‘self-approval,’ the rupture of which shame shows, is no pure relation to self, but a ‘knowing oneself to be approved.’ And this allows the following generalizing conjecture: This integration of the foreign gaze does not appear first with the shame; rather, we have always only been aware of ourselves by means of the foreign view: We know ourselves to be ‘for others’ and we are related to ourselves by the means of this foreign perspective. This does not mean that we are constantly performing painful analysis of the behaviour of others toward us, looking for approving or disapproving gazes. Rather, in our sense of self, in the immediate self-realization, the foreign gaze through which we are in accord – or discord – with ourselves, is, strangely enough, always present. Our relation to self is always simultaneously the internalized foreign perspective. Foreign subjects are not just the forums before which we lead our lives. Foreign subjects are, at the same time, constitutive for the perspective of ourselves that we maintain.

In Sartre, whom I have followed on several points, the analysis of shame has the function of demonstrating that the subject, which we all are, is just as originally the ‘I among others’ as it is self-relation. This is introduced in Sartre through the experience of the gaze of another, and he describes being with others as an extremely conflict-laden relation. But this is not the interesting part. Rather, interesting is the condition, via which this gaze of another does not first belong to us when another appears; rather – I draw on an expression from Heidegger here – it is existential. Existential are the determinations of the subject, which first make certain relations possible. This requires a long explanation, but I will save all of us that and allow myself an only partially appropriate abbreviation of the concept ‘existential’: You can translate “existential” with “predisposed toward...”: In the described characteristic of the self relation, it can be seen that we are predisposed to have the world and fellow men. Even if I had never had contact with other men, I would still be structured as “being among others” and predisposed to perceive myself through the medium of foreign approval or disapproval. The gaze of another does not first achieve reality, when it is actually directed at me; rather, the subject is structured, that it has always known itself to be the object of a foreign gaze. The foreign gaze does not first come to be with the actual existence of another, rather, it adheres to me. The foreign gaze is not the actual gawking of another, but actually an enduring consciousness of being seen, of being subjected to approval or disapproval. This enduring consciousness is simply actualized in concrete experiences – and this is the reason that this actual being-seen can so suddenly generalize itself, that I feel as though I were standing defenceless in every relation and naked before the whole world.

The consciousness of ourselves, the sense of ourselves – that we are, always has a consciousness of a foreign gaze weaved into it, namely the accord or conflict with that gaze. The phenomenon of shame, if it is analyzed with regard to these foundational existential structures, is borne by a consciousness of being approved and of the always present possibility of being shamed – the possibility that this approval could be ruptured by a disapproval that translates itself irresistibly into a disapproval of self. We are, in our knowledge of ourselves – or better, in our sense of ourselves – not free.

4. THEOLOGICAL FRUIT: THE FOREIGN-DETERMINED SHAME CONFLICT AS EXPERIENCE OF GOD

With that, I have come to the theological fruit of these considerations, and so I will first summarize. The analysis of shame presented led to the insight, that the human relation to self is so constituted, that, in it, man not only knows of himself, but also judges himself, and in the case of shame, in the *modus* of disapproval of self. I attempted to show that this negative relation to self of shame is in fact the indicator for a positive relation to self, which is ruptured in the shame experience. I called it a sense of 'friendship with oneself'

Then we saw that this disapproval of self and the self-approval that it ruptures present no autonomous process in the sense of the subject originally and actually only having to do with itself. Rather, it has to do with self-awarenesses, for which the integration of a foreign gaze is constitutive. The self-referential evaluation is the consciousness of being evaluated; the accord with oneself is the 'consciousness of being approved.'

Finally, it became clear that the phenomenon of shame – and correspondingly the foundational self-approval – is all-encompassing and depicts the experience of the negation of the whole person, not only certain individual aspects of it; further, that it has a tendency to generalize, to separate from the particular others who disapprove of me, as also from the particular qualities which are the object of disapproval.

And finally, we have determined that these externally introduced self-awarenesses are no ontic equipping of the man, but rather an apriori basic structure of his self-realization. The man is essentially in relation to himself through others.

Shame is the indicator that this evaluative self-awareness or this self-sense does not lie in our hand, and that, as such, it is endangered.

Thus I come to the first theses regarding the theological fruit of these considerations: *Christian discourse about God – I leave the question open, whether this also holds for all religious discourse about God – Christian discourse about God brings this foreign determination and endangering of the self-sense into words and concepts.*

This thesis is less obvious than it sounds. One could understand it, such that I might mean to say, that the God of which Christian tradition speaks is being claimed as the source and precipitant of this self-sense. That would be relatively boring. It would mean, firstly, that we (wherever from) know, that such an entity 'God' exists, and second, that this entity precipitates (however) a sense of self in us.

But I want to say more with this thesis, namely: This self-sense is the introductory situation for the concept 'God.' The term 'God' does not indicate a transcendent reality with an existence that can be initially fixed without reference to us, which then could come into question as the elicitor of self-evaluations. Rather, the concept 'God' describes much more none other than a moment in the described self-evaluation. In the basic structure, I'm following Schleiermacher here: *The concept 'God' indicates nothing else than the foreign evaluation co-supposed in the self-evaluation, as a "whence" of the sense of self.* And indeed, it is, in the consciousness of the foundational affirmation, co-supposed as creator – and God saw, that it was very good; also in the consciousness of being negated, as the hidden agent and also as judge – "when you take away their breath, they die..." (Ps 104). The discourse about God in creation and judgment are understandings of the foundational self-awareness of knowing oneself to be affirmed, and of the experience of knowing oneself to be negated. Put differently: Where I experience myself as foundationally affirmed or totally disapproved of, I have the experience, the 'whence' of which tradition gathers under the term 'God.'

Admittedly, this includes the thesis, *that this negative and positive self-awareness cannot be otherwise expressed than through the adoption of the concept 'God.'* This means: The

phenomenon itself requires us to not be satisfied with identifying certain other people or a certain foreign gaze with the 'whence' of the shame or the 'friendship with oneself.' Only in that we speak of God, can we put to words what the phenomenon of shame entails. And I believe that this can be shown – I have indicated above that the experience of shame or the foundational consciousness of being approved cannot be reduced to a rational analysis of the moments and relations accessible in the situation. It is typical for the shame or for the consciousness of being affirmed, that more comes to expression in the situation than is actually present in it. The person or the people 'before' whom one is ashamed acquire a wholly different quality through the sense of shame. The thesis is thus not just that the concept of 'God' puts this aspect of the human self-awareness to words, but also vice versa: It is not possible to properly describe the phenomenon that is this self-awareness of shame and the foundational consciousness of being approved without implicitly or explicitly operating with the concept of "God." If I want to know what exactly the term 'God' is indicating, I can begin by spelling out the situation of externally induced self-evaluation, to which the phenomenon of shame (among other things) belongs. And vice versa, the traditional concept of 'God' is then understood as the summarizing formulation of that which we experience in this situation.

The specifically Christian concept, or better: the specifically Christian discourse about God – and thus I come to a second round of theses – depicts a certain way of dealing with the instability and endangering of this sense of self.

I want only to touch on this here, and I will begin at the Markan passion narrative. This is, without a doubt, the description of a situation of shaming. In it, Jesus' fate is fit into the structures of the experience which the psalms and Jeremiah describe using the Hebrew term 'bosch – to be shamed.' There, exactly that is meant, which is formulated in Ps. 22 or 35, namely, the situation in which the praying man puts his trust in something, makes a claim – and this claim clearly comes short, fails. Around the concept 'bosch' are arranged, on the one side, this failure, and on the other, the mocking of the observers. But the concept itself summarizes what happens to the subject in this situation: That it knows itself to be the object of appropriate mocking, which it would participate in, if it were not selbst the object. 'Bosch' indicates this situation.

The description of the cross in Mark is a description of such a shame situation: the rupturing of a very tense expectation and the friendship with oneself in this expectation. Consider the mocking of the observers at the cross, of the people, the soldiers, and the scribes. The crucified not only has nothing with which to oppose this mocking. In reality, he interprets it himself with his cry – my God, my God, why have you forsaken me – as the consciousness of a final and irreversible disapproval, that is, as an experience of God.

The resurrection is the contradiction to the mocking of the crucified. The resurrection is, in the first place, not a fact, but the object of proclamation. "He was awakened," proclaim the disciples. A counter-judgment manifests itself therein – the disciples assert that the failed crucified one was affirmed in God's judgment, that God confirmed him and contradicted the mockers – the same God who was experienced on the cross as the source of shame.

This judgment – that the crucified, who appeared to be rejected by God, is not rejected – is at the same time the determination, that also the last and final disapproval of us is not irrevocable; that behind and beyond the final judgment we have to speak over ourselves, a further judgment *can* arise, that removes this final judgment. In that case, man is called to understand himself in this new, affirming judgment as in contradiction to the self-judgment of shame. He is called to adopt this judgment – of the gospel – into his self-judgment.

In the moment, when this happens: when the thus promised Christ-event takes its place in the consciousness of being approved, thus breaking through the consciousness of disapproval – in this moment the crucified shows himself to be alive, the resurrection witness of the disciples

to be true, the crucified to be God. For whence the self-contradiction of man is replaced with the “yes,” – that is truly man’s God.

These few remarks are an attempt in which the principle is more important than the particular application, which is surely in need of improvement. The principle consists in this: the soteriological assertions of the Christian faith are described as contact and engagement with the endangered self-awareness of man; this endangering is, on the one hand, interpreted, and on the other, overcome. The suggestion continues to consistently interpret the concept ‘God’ in each of these relations as something that correlates to the endangered (because externally induced) self-awareness of man. This self-awareness does not lie in the hand of the man; it depicts rather a consciousness of being seen. Where this being-seen acquires final and encompassing character – as in the moment of shame, as in the knowing oneself to be affirmed, that is presumed by the shame experience, as in the promise of unconditional affirmation. – There, what the term ‘God’ traditionally describes, and what cannot be put to words or interpreted with implicit or explicit recourse to this concept, is experienced.

The pastoral church as a space for healing and reconciliation

ABSTRACT

People experience healing and reconciliation in spaces outside of their congregations. This causes them to grapple with the question: Why they do not experience healing and reconciliation within their own local congregations? Another important question people raise is: What is pastoral about pastoral counselling? Both these questions indicate that congregational leaders and the congregations itself are struggling to create spaces within their ministry to assist people in need of healing and reconciliation. This contribution will therefore try to indicate whether pastoral care and counselling are experiencing an identity crisis in terms of its calling. I will further argue that it is essential for a pastoral theology to be rooted in theology. Link to this I will share some thoughts on the congregation as a space for healing and reconciliation.

1. INTRODUCTION

I had the privilege of attending many healing of memory workshops over the last 15 years. The goal of these workshops is to engage people from different racial backgrounds to journey with one another on the road to healing and reconciliation. At these workshops we try to create a safe space whereby people can deal with reconciliation in a sensitive and active way within their own contexts.

The journey is an individual and collective experience exploring the effects of the apartheid years. The emphasis is on dealing with these issues on an emotional, psychological and spiritual level, rather than an intellectual level. During the journey, time is given for individual reflection, creative exercises, and opportunities to share in small groups. We end off the workshop with a liturgy created by the participants to represent their journey thus far and to symbolically assist them on their future journey. This liturgy is filled with symbols, created contributions from participants, readings, rituals and end off with a communion.

I am always amazed how victims and perpetrators move into the safe spaces of the small groups to share their stories, expose their hurts, pain, fears and anger of the past. I am even more amazed by the power of this healing liturgy and the effect it has on the participants participating. In trying to explain this to myself I thought that this must be because people feel safe within the space created to share their brokenness with one another.

I was further puzzled why participants, after workshops, frequently ask why they struggle to see and experience their congregations as a safe space to deal with their brokenness. Instead, their experience were that their congregational leaders¹ (Osmer, 2008:15) and the way the congregation practices are performed does not take their pain seriously and do not help them on their journey towards healing and reconciliation. The point is: It they want to address the pain of the past they need to look for spaces outside the church to deal with their pain.

With this in mind I was challenged with the term pastoral church. What does pastoral mean?

1 In this contribution I will use the term congregational leader instead of pastor or minister.

What is the meaning of pastoral church? Does the pastoral church create a space for healing and reconciliation? Is pastoral care and counselling still part of the primary tasks of the church? Is there an identity crisis within pastoral care and counselling within the church?

In this contribution I will therefore try to indicate whether pastoral care and counselling are experiencing an identity crisis in terms of their calling. I will further argue that it is essential for a pastoral theology to be rooted in systematic theology. Link to this I will share some thoughts on the congregation as a space for healing and reconciliation.

2. IDENTITY CRISIS IN PASTORAL CARE AND COUNSELING

There has been a shift in the latter part of the 20th century, within the field of pastoral care. It can be described as a move away from the theology frame of pastoral care to a psychological frame for pastoral care. It is almost as if pastoral care has lost its plot in terms of its true identity. Gerkin, as quoted in Deborah van Deusen Hunsinger (1995: 2) already stated in the mid nineties that through the first four decades of the modern period in pastoral care and counselling, psychological and psychotherapeutic concerns have unquestionably been dominant within this field. She continues to state that the theological competency have more or less been taken for granted while the primary focus has been on developing the theoretical (i.e. psychological) and clinical competence of the pastoral care practitioner.

In an address by Dr Loren Townsend to the Convocation of the Presbyterian Theological Seminary in Louisville, in the beginning of 2009, he reflected on the following essential question (closely linked to identity): What's Pastoral about Pastoral Counselling? "If you had asked me in 1979 what pastoral counselling was, I would have had a swift and certain answer. Historically, pastoral counselling was what clergy did with folk in their congregation. By the mid-twentieth century this had expanded to mean the counselling provided by specialized clergy who had extensive training in psychotherapy" (Townsend 2009).

Townsend continued to argue that from the very beginning of specialization (mid- 1950s) there were intense debates about how close pastoral counselling specialists should be to parish ministry. One could make the assumption that there were basically two views on this. The one view is that it is impossible to think of pastoral care and counselling as something that happens outside of a church. He refers to the Presbyterian Seward Hiltner (1964) and Southern Baptist Wayne Oates (1962), who believed that pastoral counselling by definition must be anchored in congregational ministry. To them the idea of "pastoral" counselling outside the walls of the church made no sense--it was a violation of the basic character of ministry, and was probably unethical.

The other view is that pastoral counselling is professional counselling and therefore does not belong to the church. This is confirmed by Kuether (1963), in Townsend (2009), one of the founders of AAPC (the American Association of Pastoral Counsellors). For them counselling was not about an institution but about the caring for the inner lives of individuals and families. This view was further support by Clinebell (1964), in Townsend (2009), who claimed that a pastoral counsellor was known by their personal identity and not by their church affiliation. This school of thought made it very clear that pastoral counsellors were highly trained therapists who stood on equal footing with psychologists, social workers, and marriage and family therapists. For them pastoral counsellors, after all, were trained in exactly the same theories and therapy methods as other professionals.

Based on the strong emphasis on professionalism there is a trend to segregate pastoral care and counselling from congregational life. They are convinced that people in need were more likely to be honest outside the walls of the congregation as within, confidentiality is easier to

protect outside as within, and counselling could be unconstrained by theological, ideological, or practical boundaries usually associated with the congregation and its congregational leaders. This view contributed largely to pastoral counsellors becoming highly professional counsellors. As one can imagine, this fast growing clinical sector of specialists within pastoral counselling created the need for accreditation, certification and minimum qualification standards for training to manage this fast growing sector.

This emphasis on the professionalization of pastoral counselling resonates well within the pastoral care and counselling context of South Africa. The emphasis on specialized pastoral counselling training has developed into clinical masters programs such as the program in Stellenbosch, the ITD narrative program etc. Many congregational leaders have followed and still follow these programs with the goal to specialize in one way or the other. As more and more people want to specialize the need for accreditation, certification and minimum qualification standards for training has come into play. The battle for accreditation has been a long, difficult and challenging process. At present there is a process-taking place for the professionalization (and legalization) of pastoral workers in South Africa, driven by the SAAP (The South African Association for Pastoral Work). The dream and mission of SAAP is to work for rightful recognition of pastoral work that can be done and fully involve all aspects of health care.

Another concern is: because of the professionalization of pastoral counselling the training of congregational leaders in pastoral care and counselling have been more and more scaled down, just enough to know how to refer congregants to pastoral counsellors. As a result of this many congregational leaders has put their emphasis on becoming good managers, planners, visionaries, organizers, preachers and multimedia presenters. Congregational leaders are therefore less and less focused on attending to the need of congregants. The focus on pastoral counselling as indicated in scripture is less and less evident in the ministry of pastors within the church today.

3. THE NEED FOR PASTORAL CARE AND COUNSELLING TO BE WELL GROUNDED

From the above it is clear that the development within pastoral care and counselling has lost its plot in terms of its scriptural calling, its connectedness to the calling of the church to those in need. One could say there is an identity crisis because of the expansive development to specialized counsellors. This is echoed by Louw (1998:18) when he warns that when pastoral care is identified exclusively with the professional pastor consulting from a professional office, there is a real danger that pastoral care will become removed from the life of the congregation and isolated in the study of a so-called informed and trained pastor.

One could also say that practical theology, under which the focus area of pastoral care and counselling is situated, has neglected its normative intellectual operation whereby it enters in dialogue with dogmatic theology, Christian ethics etc (Osmer, 2008:241). Therefore it is essential that we realize that pastoral theology is closely linked to systematic theology. In other words systematic theology forms the basis for pastoral theology.

This is in a sense illustrated by Naude (1990:110) when he calls the dogmatic of our very own, Stellenbosch theologian Willie Jonker, as pastoral dogmatic. His dogmatic is pastoral because his theology is: (i) is firmly rooted in Scripture and derives its rationality from faith, (ii) is essentially a hermeneutically endeavour (iii) and the ultimate aim of theology as *Scientia eminens practica*, is the pastoral reality of the church, and specifically the preaching of the Word.

The question would then be. How will we define a pastoral theology based on the above?

In his quest for defining pastoral theology Purves (2004: xii) distinguishes between Pastoral theology and a theology of pastoral care. Although I think this distinction is a little forced it does

in a way emphasize the importance of connecting systematic theology to pastoral theology and then to pastoral care. According to him Pastoral theology is principally concerned, first with the practice of God that is with what God does as a result of who God is. Secondly, it moves to reflection on the participative practice of the church within that theological perspective through our own union with Christ.

According to Purves (2004:xviii) Christian pastoral theology must be developed in a Trinitarian way, "insofar as we must speak concerning God and Christological, soteriological and eschatological, insofar as we must speak concerning God with us and for us in the flesh of Jesus, son of Mary, Lord of all." This will enable us to understand pastoral theology as theology of the care of God for us in, through, and as Jesus Christ. This is according to him an expression of the gospel of revelation and reconciliation. He further emphasizes that Jesus Christ, as the mission of God forms the basis for the church ministry of care. When we therefore define pastoral theology in this way, the interconnections among the Christian doctrine of God, the person and ministry of Jesus Christ and the life and ministry of the church are demonstrable.

He therefore argues that pastoral theology guides the practice of the church in speaking forth and living out the gospel by bringing to expression the meaning of our life in union with Christ, who is both God's word of address to us and the fitting human response to God. As such pastoral theology has both a perspective and a self-critical responsibility explicitly in the light of the gospel (Purves 2004:xx).

With his understanding of pastoral theology in mind Purves defines a Theology of pastoral care as follows: it is principally concerned with theological reflection on actual churchly practice, and to that end is likely to move into appropriate conversation with auxiliary disciplines like psychology, psychotherapy, sociology, anthropology, and so on. It is not purely practical or just applied theory.

What is clear from the above is the fact that the church plays a significant role within pastoral theology. The body of Christ must not be idealized in the sense that it is an almost perfect community that just needs to be well managed, planned, organized, preached and well presented to attract people. It is also not only a space for communion with each other. It needs *communio* of Christ according to Berkhof (1979:395), because without this *communio* the communication would remain body-less, individualistic and no more than an inner experience. But without the communication of Christ as its basis, the mutual communion becomes purely that of a religio-social club. Christ does not live apart from his church. And the love of God-in-Christ and that to the neighbour are one and indivisible. The body of Christ is for the love of God and the love for humans.

The body of Christ always needs to guard against being exclusive. Berkhof (1979:396) reminds us that the community of the body of Christ lives in a state of high tension. On the one hand it must be all-inclusive and on the other hand all the members must be inspired to act communally through their obedience to the one head. Christian community can exist only as a purely gratuitous gift from the Spirit. For one can endure this tension only if he stands in the love by which central and marginal groups vanguard and rearguard, extremists and conciliators take each other seriously as members and thus do not neglect each other. Swinton (2007: 243) reminds us to offer hospitality to all, not only to the church members when he says, "The price we pay for offering hospitality can be rejection, hurt and sometimes even violence. The epistemology of the broken body of Christ informs us that this was so, for God has offered his hospitality to the world in Christ." This has to do with negotiating the space between us.

The body of Christ is a moral community whose goal is the common good of all. In this regard Ackermann (2001:24) rightly says, "Such a community upholds the integrity of life values the dignity of the human person, includes those who are on the margins or excluded, while not avoiding the reality of structural sin."

4. THE CONGREGATION AS A SPACE FOR HEALING

The congregation is therefore a place and a space where we need to accept each other for Christ's sake and where precisely the "weak" in which we recognize ourselves, are treated with consideration (Berkhof, 1979:395). This space is life-giving to people. Louw (2004) helps us when he states: "Where two or more people encounter one another within a spirit of availability, acceptance (unconditional love) and appreciative awareness, a space of intimacy occurs. This is the kind of space, which human beings need to be healed and to grow to maturity. Within this space human dignity is safeguarded and fostered. The occurrence of space (intimacy) can be called the sacred space of encounter and the soulfulness of embracement. Within the space of intimacy (belongingness), meaning is discovered". Therefore we can agree with Berkhof (1979:395) when he says, "We are accepted as we are, but not left as we are".

Cilliers (2007:15) describes space in a special way by defining the Greek word Chora, which "means space or place and could also be interpreted as the attitude through which humans fill space with values, perceptions and associations, resulting in a created relational environment, a systemic and hermeneutical arena for living with meaning and dignity. Chora represents a nourishing and maternal receptacle, a womb that defines the quality of the places (topoi) where we encounter one another. Indeed it is a space we cannot exist without one another; it is where we meet in our diversity and unity, but also as perpetrators and victims".

Congregations need to offer a supportive and empathetic space for all members to search for meaning in life. This is possible because the body of Christ is a healing community where everybody will experience koinonia in the form of unconditional love. The congregation as body of Christ is therefore a space of being. When people suffer and are in desperate need of healing they are vulnerable and can easily experience isolation or be ostracized by the community of believers. Because of this, the body of Christ as Christian community needs to create a space where those who suffer can voice their need and can grow towards healing.

Based on the above I especially want to argue that the key to form a pastoral space whereby people could find healing and regain meaning in life is compassion. Pastoral care and counselling need to embody a hermeneutics of compassion.

In this regard Louw (2008:14) explains that one of human's deepest needs is compassion. The word compassion is derived from the Latin words *patior* and *cum* which together mean 'to suffer with' (Boyle & Smith 2004: 9). It implies that caregivers not only need to understand the suffering of others, but also must allow themselves to suffer with those suffering, and stand alongside them. Van der Ven (2003:37) rightly states that compassion does not come naturally to human beings. We need to learn to be compassionate. Therefore caregivers need to learn to present compassion in a genuine, unselfish and loving way. To make sure that caregivers understand this quest, it is necessary to unpack the meaning of compassion.

Compassion is a truly biblical term. Although the Hebrew word for compassion means love and mercy for a person in need, it is also deeply rooted in God's covenant with his people. The meaning of this covenant is based on the relationship God has with his people. As the story of the Old Testament unfolds, God's compassion for his people is clearly indicated in Scripture, and only becomes a reality within God's relationship with his people. God's compassion is consistent and continuous.

Within the New Testament the term compassion means stressing mercy by assistance. This is also based on God's covenant with his people and acted out by his holy begotten son, Jesus Christ. His ministry to the ill, marginalized and others bear witness to his compassion for the people of God. The life of Jesus is a true model of the compassion of God for his people. This is illustrated in Matthew 9:36: "When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were

harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.” Literally, the meaning of compassion in this text has to do with the functions of the inner body being distressed. One could paraphrase this by saying that the organs inside his body were distressed when he saw them. This is a clear indication of the compassion of Jesus Christ for us as human beings. It is about remembering the story of the compassion of Jesus Christ. In this regard the theology of the cross reveals the passion and compassion of a suffering God (Louw 2008: 441). It is therefore our duty as Christian caregivers to continue to pass the compassion of God on to his people.

The meaning of compassion has to be defined and understood against the backdrop of the biblical meaning. Louw (2008:281) helps us understand when he defines it as follows: “compassion indicates sensitivity. It describes the virtue of unconditional love and the willingness to become involved. Part and parcel of compassion is empathy, the capacity to enter, understand and respond to another’s frame of reference.” This is echoed by Johnson (Johnson 2001:35) when she states that the key component to compassion is empathy. Empathy is to try to feel what the other person is feeling, to climb into his/her shoes and look at the problem from his/her point of view. This kind of communication is concerned with loving community, sensitivity and listening with understanding. Consequently, compassion cannot be separated from community. Compassion happens within community. In compassion people support each other, and by doing so they create freedom (Lanser, Van Nijen, Stark, Stoppels 2003:118).

The space within the body of Christ or the community of believers where compassion is embodied is not confined to a church service or a prayer meeting. This space must be created on all levels of ministry within the congregation. It could be in the liturgy in a Sunday service where people in need for healing can experience the therapeutic value of the Holy Communion. Serving Holy Communion is a therapeutic event, which provides comfort in the midst of disruption and crisis. It confirms peace and harmony, which also have a positive physical and psychological effect (Louw, 2008). It could also be via the preaching within a service. In this regard Theron (1990:586) describes the dogmatic of Noordmans, the well-known Dutch theologian as pastoral dogmatic. Although he refers to his dogmatic as pastoral within the context of the preaching he explains the space created by preaching as “ ‘n uitbeelding van die Heilige Gees op heterdaad betrap, besig om ‘n gemoed te troos.”

It could also be space created by the community of believers within a small group meeting. It could also be in space created in the office of the congregational leader. The emphasis here is that pastoral care wishes to link believers by means of Scripture to God’s fulfilled promises (promissiotherapy) so that, out of gratitude, they can accept their suffering as a challenge to exercise faith. The distress of suffering becomes an opportunity to live God’s victory and to demonstrate faith, hope, love and joy (Louw, 2008).

It is within this space that the purpose of pastoral healing takes place and that is to understand our new being in Christ. Through faith we can partake in the dimension of victory in our new spiritual being. Those that suffer are only ‘cured’ when they discover what their position already is through the reconciliation and resurrection of Christ. The Holy Spirit convinces those who are in need of healing of this by means of certain Scriptural passages (Louw, 2008). Congregational leaders are merely an instrument of the Spirit.

This contribution began to with the story of people attending a healing of memories workshop where they experienced healing and meaning and at the same time grappling with the fact why they do not experience healing within their own local congregations. I also discussed the question raised by Townsend: What is pastoral about pastoral counselling? In both these narratives they try to raise the same issue. The fact that the congregational leaders and the congregations itself are struggling to create spaces within their ministry to assist people in need of care, healing and reconciliation. It is easier for the congregation leader to refer people in need to workshops or

counselling outside the congregation as to develop these spaces within the congregation.

I want to argue that the congregational leader needs to rediscover the importance of practicing a responsible practical theology or as Omer (2008:4) says, a practical theological interpretation. According to Omer (2008:4) the four tasks of practical theology is able to assist the congregational leader practice practical theological interpretation. The four tasks are:

- Descriptive-empirical: gathering information
- Interpretive: drawing on theories to understand
- Normative: using theological concepts
- Pragmatic: determining strategies of action.

These four tasks explain the essence of what needs to be done in all fields of the practical theology, especially within the field of pastoral care and counselling. This places a huge responsibility on pastoral care and the congregational leader who needs to practice and integrate these tasks within the congregation who are embedded within the web of life where ministry takes place. Therefore Osmer (2008:19) proposes that the congregational leader needs to be a pastoral interpretive guide that can practice and integrate these tasks in order to take the congregants on a journey into new territory. The congregational leader travels with congregants on their journey towards healing and wholeness. In this way the congregational leader is able to regain and reclaim the calling to care for all as a body of Christ.

5. CONCLUSION

For pastoral care and counselling to regain the plot in terms of its spiritual calling, its connectedness to the calling of the church to those in need of healing and reconciliation, it needs a clear identity. This is possible if pastoral care will take its normative intellectual operation seriously whereby it enters in dialogue with the systematic theology. When pastoral theology is firmly grounded within systematic theology it will be able to be church. It will be able to create spaces for healing and reconciliation. Congregational leaders will need to become pastoral interpretive guides that are able to assist those in need of healing and reconciliation on their journey towards healing and wholeness. This will pave the way for congregants, families, groups, communities and nations to enter into the healing space without fear and resentment. The pastoral church is the vehicle that allows human beings to go on a journey from despair to healing and from brokenness to wholeness.

Creating spaces for healing within the congregation as the body of Christ is nothing new. It essentially belongs to the *being* of the church. If we are true to being church we will realize that we are all broken and on a journey towards healing and reconciliation.

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Politico-philosophical perspectives on reconciliation

ABSTRACT

The article is an analysis of the philosophical meaning and political prospects of the idea of reconciliation between all South Africans. The author is sceptical about this prospect. While he regards reconciliation as an admirable theological doctrine, he doubts whether it is easily translatable into socio-political practice in South Africa. The settlement reached in the aftermath of apartheid is not primarily to be explicated in terms of a model of reconciliation where people forgive and learn to like one another, but rather in terms of the Hobbesian model of a “war of all against all”, redeemed by the restoration of basic values. The author analyses a variety of conceptions of reconciliation that were developed in the aftermath of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission process. In South Africa, the emphasis should be on the “*concilium*” aspect of reconciliation, i.e. the (re-) constitution of an assembly for social, political and economic deliberation. A general commitment of all South Africans to the values embedded in the South African constitution holds far more promise for a peaceful future than and narrow emphasis on the idea of reconciliation.

Let me state up front that I shall make a few remarks about the notion of reconciliation as a *social and political*, and *not a theological*, ideal, as is particularly pertinent in the context of recent South African history. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) of the late 1990’s was instrumental in launching the term to a position of remarkable prominence in the political discourse of this country. Although the high fever about reconciliation that accompanied the proceedings and report of the TRC has somewhat abated over the past few years, the term continues to crop up expectedly and unexpectedly in the ongoing discourse about South Africa’s recovery from apartheid. I see today’s event as an indication that it has not lost its prominence.

At the same time I must, at the outset, apologize for the fact that I am not enthusiastic or starry-eyed about the idea that reconciliation ought to be out most prominent social and political ideal. I am particularly sceptical when the discourse about reconciliation is couched in a romanticist language that seemingly envisages a day when everybody will, again, like everybody else. If that is what is hoped for, no single society on earth is reconciled or, for that matter, has ever been. I therefore intend to be provocative and controversial, not merely for the sake of mischief, but rather for the sake of stimulating debate and the exchange of opposing, yet constructive ideas.

Too many starry eyes about reconciliation are, in my opinion, the result of the non-applicability to hard politics of the kind of discourse, which is relied upon by many reconciliation fundi’s. There is too much of a tendency to understand reconciliation with reference to the theological context that is often widely presupposed by well-meaning Christians who engage in this debate. The theological understanding of reconciliation draws heavily on St. Paul’s argument, in 2 Cor. 5, that God has, in Christ, reconciled the world with Himself, and that that provides the basis for the ministry of inter-personal reconciliation that is bestowed on all believers. The reconciliation with God is essentially the fruit of the atonement of sin through Christ; hence the ministry of reconciliation is basically aimed at the absolution of inter-personal guilt.

While I find this a wonderful religious doctrine, I am sceptical about its applicability in a socio-political context. For if Paul is to be believed, its implication is that reconciliation is to be understood as an event that occurs between individuals (as was also strongly promoted by the TRC) and that is aimed to create a situation where personal acrimony is transformed into demonstrable mutual friendship and amicability between individuals. Though one cannot but admire the moral sublimity of such a construction, I cannot see that this can ever be translated into workable political practice. In the proceedings of the TRC we saw that something resembling this transformation of mortal enemies into good friends can, in exceptional circumstances occur, but it is simply unrealistic to think that this could be the norm for a workable society.

In politics, and particularly South African politics, considerably different heuristic models are, unfortunately, more applicable. Apartheid South Africa was much rather an obscene demonstration of Thomas Hobbes's vision of people in their "original state of nature" (Hobbes 1946). That was the state where man (let's keep it male!), driven by sectional interests and racist sentiments towards the "other", is for his fellow man a wolf (*homo homini lupus*), and where we are/were in a "war of all against all" (*bellum omnium contra omnes*) (Hobbes 1946; See also Sorell 1986: 96-145). In such a state, the issue is not whether we can learn to like one another or to forgive each other's sins. The issue is whether people can learn to survive in a way that will not only stop the war, but will restore basic values (above all *safety*, but also dignity, self-esteem, prosperity) to people in a way that is successful in preventing the former "have-nots" to treat the former "haves" in exactly the same way that they (the former "have-nots") have been treated.

If reconciliation can have any meaning of real consequence in the new South Africa, I can only with difficulty see it meaning anything more than this: a society where people feel safe, where human dignity is guaranteed by law to everyone, where discrimination is illegal, where fair and equal opportunity is restored and where rectification of rectifiable past injuries is accomplished, without relying on projects that will significantly hamper universal economic prosperity. In a society where this is achieved, there is no need for reconciliation in the personal sense of everybody liking everyone else. This is a society where the ideals of justice and prosperity for all are taken much more seriously than the unachievable and unenforceable concern with what happens in people's hearts and minds when they pass each other in the streets or serve each other as clerks or clients. It is a society where we are not waiting for reconciliation as an abstract ideal, but where concrete problems that call for immediate action are identified and dealt with in a piecemeal manner. It is a society where we are less concerned about the greater good for everyone – an ideal that is similarly unattainable – and where we are much more attuned to the range of concrete needs that people experience here and now, and that constitute attainable goals through concrete and immediate action.

I would therefore argue that, rather than drawing on the New Testament and St. Paul for our understanding of reconciliation in this country, it is wiser to draw on the original etymology of the Latin word "reconcilium". This word originally meant the reconstitution of an assembly for deliberation. Note the differences with St Paul: here is no mention of an event that primarily occurs in the interaction between God and humans, and that is then applied to interpersonal relations in a way that creates the impression that what God did to me, I, in turn, graciously ought to bestow on my fellow human beings. Rather, reconciliation is seen as the reconstitution of an assembly where I, in conversation with others, and in an ongoing process, deliberate about a humane life and a humane society. (Of course, one of the problems in SA is exactly the difficulty of identifying anything that we might return to. Maybe it's therefore better to think of the "concilium" that need to be "reconstituted" as a construct of our collective imagination, fed and kindled by what we know and read about communities that have successfully negotiated viable societies and polities.)

To refer back to Theo de Witt's earlier remarks (De Wit 2010) about narrative: I am inclined to place more emphasis on the narratives that deal with the vision of a workable society, rather than the narratives that reveal the diversity of identities of the narrators. Narrative does not only encapsulate the past and the tragedies of our common and separate histories; it also envisions the possibilities of the future, thereby contributing markedly to our capacity to transform the past and the present into something better.

There is another danger of too much emphasis on the idea of reconciliation in SA. Antjie Krog rightfully refers to this when she remarks that the notion of reconciliation "...is used most often by Afrikaner politicians" (Krog 1998:109). The all too frequent emphasis on the need for reconciliation easily creates the impression that the past is all too easily forgotten. Underlying this tendency is a sinister utilitarian ethic that refuses to take full responsibility for the past, particularly for the action guiding influence that the past has on the future. A premature emphasis on reconciliation creates the impression that everything can easily become hunky dory, as long as we forget what happened earlier. But Krog argues that there is an even more sinister aspect of Afrikaners' infatuation with reconciliation. Afrikaner political leaders namely "...use it as a threat: give us what we want, or we *won't* reconcile with a black government. They use reconciliation to dictate their demands" (1998: 109, Krog's italics).

If we move from white political leaders in this country to black ones, the confusion over the meaning of the term "reconciliation" does not seem to become less. Krog notes the significantly different notions of reconciliation adopted by, respectively, the chair of the TRC, bishop Desmond Tutu, and the then president of SA, Mr. Thabo Mbeki. Tutu is predictably inspired by the theological-Paulinian notion that was referred to earlier: "You must forgive because God has forgiven you for killing His Son...You can only be human in a humane society. If you live with hatred and revenge in your heart, you dehumanize not only yourself, but your community". (quoted by Krog 1998: 110). For this idea, he also draws on the philosophy of Ubuntu as the special achievement of black Africans: one forgives and seeks reconciliation for the sake of healing the community, because one cannot live humanely in a fractured community. "Reconciliation for Tutu is therefore the *beginning* of a transformative process...one must be able to transcend one's selfish inclinations before one can transform oneself and one's society" (Krog 1998:110, my italics).

When assessing the attitude of Thabo Mbeki on reconciliation, one enters a different world. Mbeki is essentially a politician who interprets reconciliation fully within the ambit of the political program of the ANC. For him, there can be neither talk nor understanding of reconciliation before the complete transformation of society. He states in a speech: "The point we have sought...is that given the history of our country, true reconciliation can only take place if we succeed in our objective of social transformation. Reconciliation and transformation should be viewed as an interdependent part of one unique process of building a new society" (quoted in Krog 1998: 111).

Transformation, for Mbeki, means Africanization. As Krog writes when she compares the two: "Tutu believes that black people have access to an almost superior humanity, which enables them to do things that surpass cold logic...What the world lacks, black people have. In his view, the main thrust of reconciliation is between people of all colours – embodied in the idea of the 'rainbow nation'. Mbeki, on the other hand, doesn't necessarily care about what the world lacks...He wants black people to work together to transform the country and the continent. He talks about an African Renaissance. He wants to show the world that black people can run a country and a continent successfully. For him, reconciliation should take place among all black people, with white people in peaceful co-existence" (Krog 1998: 111). Reconciliation in SA might also be the goal, but it is for Mbeki a process, which can be encouraged and accelerated or

deferred and undermined. (Boraine 2000: 351). In that respect his view coincides with that of Alex Boraine, the deputy chair of the TRC who writes, "Reconciliation...is not a sure-fire escalator which takes one consistently and steadily to new heights. It is a process of fits and starts, of going forward and going back, of reaching heights and plumbing depths" (Boraine 2000: 346).

The views just discussed reinforce my impression that the debate about reconciliation in SA is not only confusing in terms of the different notions that inform it and the imprudence of mixing theological and political discourse at a level where they do not match. It in fact draws us into idealizations that are both conceptually incoherent, politically and socially unrealistic and that, as such, hamper us in our efforts to create a viable society in SA.

Is the more pertinent question in SA not rather the establishment of a true democratic culture in which people, irreconciled as they may well be to one another on the personal level, are nevertheless committed to the constitution and the framework of law that at last have been established as the mechanisms by means of which to regulate and manage conflict in society? It is much more important to look at realizable goals than to hanker after an ideal that will indefinitely remain too distant.

Because of the uniqueness of our situation, experience and history, I do not easily or lightly propose roll-models for SA to follow. But let me today make an exception for the sake of argument. I refer to the society, which, in spite of all its blunders and acknowledged shortcomings, remains widely acclaimed as the greatest democracy of our time, viz. the USA. This is an ever more diverse society, racked by a monstrosly inhuman and violent past (as was evident in slavery, the civil war, the treatment of blacks in the South and the civil rights movement that rectified it). Not nearly all of those issues have been resolved. But that society moves forward and reaches heights that are incredible – not least of which, for example, is the history of aviation that started with a flight by the Wright brothers in 1903 that was shorter than the wing span of a Boeing 747, and that culminated in one of the brothers experiencing the breaking of the sound barrier in 1946, and who served in the commission that became the NASA that landed the first man on the moon only 66 years after the brothers' epic first flight.

What make the USA work? A reconciled population? I very much doubt that. What makes that society work is a political culture committed to the Rule of Law and to their (27 times amended) Constitution with its Bill of Rights. That is the Hobbesian *Leviathan* that keeps them from flying apart as a result of the centrifugal forces of the state of nature and the *bellum omnium contra omnes*.

This is what I plead for South Africa. If we wait for reconciliation, we'll wait forever. I personally belong to the first generation of white South Africans that did not bear a grudge against the British people (and thus against white English speaking South Africans) in the aftermath of the Boer War. There is fundamentally only one reason why those animosities became obsolete in the ranks of Afrikaners: the old, grudging generation (and they had excellent reasons for their grudges!) became extinct.

Of course we must work for better relations between people of all races, creeds and classes in SA. Of course this will be a better society if whites are not simply sorry for blacks, but are really offended and appalled by racism (Nozipho January-Bardill). But how do we establish that, short of invoking some kind of bizarre, Orwellian thought police that try to monitor what happens inside people's minds. The more prudent way is the way of law and commitment to values that everyone might well not always like, but that no one in the future of this almost tragic, yet ever hopeful society, can ever transgress or deny without the risk of universal rejection.

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- Boraine, A. 2000. *A country unmasked*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- De Wit, T.W.A. 2010. *De opsmuk van het kwaad*. Narrativiteit, kwaad en verzoening. Unpublished lecture.
- Hobbes, T. 1946. *Leviathan, or, The matter, forme and power of a commonwealth, ecclesiastical and civil*. (Introduction by Michael Oakeshott), Oxford: Blackwell.
- Krog, A. 1998. *Country of my skull*. Cape Town: Random House.
- Sorell, T. 1986. *Hobbes*. London: Routledge.

BOEKBEKENDSTELLINGS

1. OU TESTAMENT (SAAMGESTEL DEUR PROF SD SNYMAN)

Bos, R 2008. *We have heard that God is with you: Preaching the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids: W B Eerdmans. [UK Alban Books]

Die boek wat oorspronklik in Nederlands geskryf is, is nou ook in Engels beskikbaar. Dit bied belangrike riglyne vir verantwoordelike prediking van die Ou Testament.

Coogan, M 2008. *The Old Testament: A Very Short Introduction*. New York: Oxford University Press

Vir iemand wat 'n oorsig oor die Ou Testament wil hê, is dit 'n goeie boek om op die boekrak te hê.

Wright, C H J 2004. *Old Testament Ethics for the People of God*. Leicester: IVP

Daar is min werke beskikbaar oor die Etiek van die Ou Testament. Wright het die grootste deel van sy akademiese loopbaan bestee aan 'n studie van die etiek van die Ou Testament. Aktuele temas soos Ekologie en die aarde, die land, geregtigheid, ekonomie en armoede, die reg, ensovoorts word aangespreek – temas wat ook veral aktueel vir ons Suid-Afrikaanse konteks is.

Zenger, E (ed) 2010. *The Composition of the Psalms*. Leuven: Peeters

Die boek bevat 'n seleksie van referate wat gelewer is by 'n kongres met dieselfde tema as die titel van die boek. Dit is 'n boek wat die jongste stand van navorsing op die Psalms weergee en ook die uitleg van 'n aantal Psalms.

Zenger, E (ed) 2008. *Einleitung in das Alte Testament*. Stuttgart: Kohlhammer.

Zenger se inleiding tot die Ou Testament is waarskynlik die standaard inleiding op die Ou Testament wat vandag beskikbaar is. Dit is 'n boek wat daarin slaag om die jongste stand van navorsing op elke boek van die Ou Testament weer te gee op 'n beknopte en leesbare manier. 'n Winspunt van die jongste uitgawe van die boek is die byvoeging van 'n geskiedenis van Israel.

2. NUWE TESTAMENT (SAAAMGESTEL DEUR PROFF DF TOLMIE & HC VAN ZYL)

Du Toit, Andrie (ed) 2009. *Focusing on the Message. New Testament hermeneutics, exegesis and methods*. Pretoria: Protea Book House. ISBN 978-1-86919-259-4.

Bespreek die verskillende sinkroniese metodes wat vandag in NT-tekstuitleg en -verstaan gebruik word. Is terselfdertyd die afsluiting van die bekende reeks: *Handleiding by die Nuwe Testament*.

Porter, S.E & Adams, S.A. Eds. 2010. Ed. *Paul and the Ancient Letter Form*. Leiden: Brill. 9004181636.

Nuutste navorsing oor die toepassing van die epistolografie op die Pauliniese literatuur.

Sampley, J.P & Lampe, P. Eds. 2010. *Paul and rhetoric*. New York: T & T Clark International. 056702704X.

Goeie samevatting van die nuutste navorsingstendense in die retoriese analise van die Pauliniese literatuur.

Schnelle, U. 2009. *Theology of the New Testament*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic. 0801036046.

Engelse vertaling van Schnelle se *Theologie des Neuen Testaments*, tans een van die standaardwerke op hierdie terrein.

Schreiner, T R 2008. *New Testament Theology. Magnifying God in Christ*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic. ISBN 978-0-9010-2680-5.

Benader die teologie van die Nuwe Testament tematies, vanuit die sentrale gedagte, wat God in Christus vir ons gedoen het.

Tolmie, D F (ed) 2010. *Philemon in Perspective. Interpreting a Pauline Letter*. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter. (BZNBW 169.) ISBN 978-3-11-022173-2.

Is die resultaat van die vyfde *International Colloquium on the New Testament* wat by die Fakulteit Teologie, UV, in Augustus 2008 gehou is. Bevat verskillende perspektiewe op die interpretasie van Paulus se kort briefie aan Filemon.

3. SISTEMATIESE TEOLOGIE & ETIEK (SAAMGESTEL DEUR PROF R VENTER)

Conradie, E 2009. *Uitverkoop? In gesprek oor ... die verbruikerskultuur*. Wellington: Lux Verbi. BM. ISBN: 978 07963 1047 7

Dié produktiewe Suid-Afrikaanse teoloog, wat veral bekendheid verwerf het met sy besinning oor ekologie en teologie, verras met 'n boek wat 'n uiters aktuele onderwerp omvattend behandel – die hedendaagse verbruikerskultuur.

Harrison, P (ed) 2010. *The Cambridge companion to science and religion*. Cambridge; Cambridge University Press. ISBN: 978-0-521-71251-4

In die Cambridge Companion reeks het reeds werke van hoë gehalte verskyn. Hierdie volume, wat oor die gesprek oor godsdiens-wetenskap handel, stel nie teleur nie. 'n Groot aantal bekendes soos Stoeger, Murphy, en Haught is hier aan die woord oor 'n veld wat net in belangrikheid gaan toeneem.

Hauerwas, S 2010. *Hannah's child: A theologian's memoir*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans. ISBN: 978-0802864871

Die aangrypende outobiografie van hierdie toonaangewende teoloog, wat wye bekendheid verwerf het met sy verstaan van o.a. sosiale etiek, deugde en narratiewe teologie.

Kretzschmar, L, Bentley, W & Van Niekerk, A (eds) 2009. *What is a good life? An introduction to Christian Ethics in 21st century Africa*. Kempton Park: AcadSA Publishing. ISBN: 978-1-920212-40-7.

'n Tydige boek oor die Etiek deur Suid-Afrikaners oor dringende etiese vrae: Onder andere kom vrae rondom etiese leierskap, etiese besluitneming en morele vorming aan die orde. Aktuele etiese kwessies soos die grondkwessie, MIV/vigs, en die ekonomie word behandel.

Plantinga, R J, Thompson, T R & Lundberg, M d (eds), 2010. *An introduction to christian theology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. ISBN: 978-0-521-69037-9

'n Verrassende goeie een-volume Dogmatiek! Die skrywer vertoon 'n antenna vir talle ontwikkelinge in die teologie, onder andere die nuwe belangstelling in die sosiale triniteitsleer

en globale teologie. Die tradisionele leerstukke word telkens vanuit drie perspektiewe behandel: 'n Bybelse, historiese en sistematiese perspektief.

Smit, D J 2009. *Essays on being Reformed. Collected essays 3*. Stellenbosch: SUN MeDIA. ISBN: 978-1-920338-20-6

Die derde bundel van versamelde artikels deur hierdie bekende en bekwame teoloog. Hierdie volume bevat belangrike opstelle oor onder ander Calvyn, Barth, Barmen, Belhar. Smit se verstaan van gereformeerde-wees in Suid-Afrika verdien 'n wye leserskring.

Vanhoozer, K J 2010. *Remythologizing theology: Divine action, passion, and authorship*. Cambridge; Cambridge University Press. ISBN: 978-0-521-47012-4

Dié bekwame Evangeliese teoloog wat onder andere werk van hoë gehalte oor die Hermeneutiek gelewer het, ontgin hier op diepgaande wyse die implikasies van 'n trinitariese – dit wil sê relasionele – verstaan van God. Hy toon die betekenis van kommunikatiewe handeling aan vir etlike teologiese kwessies, soos goddelike soewereiniteit en menslike vryheid.

4. PRAKTIESE TEOLOGIE (SAAMGESTEL DEUR PROFF W J SCHOEMAN & J-A VAN DEN BERG)

Drummond SB. 2009. *Holy clarity. The practice of planning and evaluation*. The Alban Institute: Herndon, Virginia. (ISBN 978-1-56699-387-6)

Die leierskap van gemeentes is gereeld besig met analise en evaluering van die gemeente en haar aktiwiteite, daaruit vloei gewoonlik 'n beplanningsproses. Sarah Drummond wil met die praktiese boek help om van die angels uit die prosesse te haal. 'n Winspunt is haar pogings om dit met die postmoderne tyd in verband te bring. Dit is 'n boek wat op gemeentevlak deur 'n proses van evaluering groter helderheid behoort te bring.

Long, T.G. *Preaching from memory to hope*. 2009 Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press. ISBN 978-0-664-23422-5.

In dié boek van die internasionaal bekende Thomas Long word belangrike homiletiese perspektiewe, met die klem op verantwoordbare eskatologiese prediking, waarin hoop vir vandag deel is van die verkondiging, verwoord.

Osmer RR. 2008. *Practical Theology. An introduction*. Michigan: William B Eerdmans. (ISBN 978-0-8028-1763-5)

Nadenke oor die aard en vertrekpunte van die Praktiese Teologie bly altyd belangrik. Dit is nie net 'n akademiese proses nie, maar raak ook die grond op gemeentevlak. Rick Osmer wil deur vier basiese vrae te vra rigting aan die proses op akademiese en gemeentelike vlak gee. Die vier vrae is: Wat is aan die gang?; Hoekom is dit aan die gang?; Wat is veronderstel om te gebeur?; Hoe moet ons reageer? Hy gebruik die vrae en hulle antwoorde as merkers in die boek. Die boek behoort 'n standaard verwysingspunt in die Praktiese Teologie te word.

Schipani, D.S. & Bueckert, L.D. 2009. *Interfaith spiritual care. Understanding and practices*. Ontario: Pandora Press. ISBN 978-1-926599-07-6.

Dié werk bied 'n verskeidenheid van perspektiewe aan op die uitdaging van inter-religieuse pastorale sorg. Vanuit 'n interkulturele perspektief waarin verskeie uithoeke van die wêreld geakkommodeer word, word 'n diverse aantal aspekte verhelderend bespreek.

Weiss, H. & Temme, K. 2009. *Treasure in earthen vessels. Intercultural perspectives on pastoral*

care facing fragility and destruction. Berlin: Lit Verlag. ISBN 978-3-8258-1138-9.

Dié sesde volume in die "ContactZone: Explorations in intercultural theology"-reeks, bied 'n oorsig oor die ontwikkelende aard van die pastorale praktyk soos blyk uit 'n verskeidenheid van bydraes wat aangebied is tydens die 8ste internasionale kongres van die International Council on Pastoral Care and Counselling in Augustus 2008 in Pole.

Wepener C, Van der Merwe J. 2009. *Ontdekkings in die erediens*. Lux Verbi.BM. (sbn 978-0-7963-0838-2)

Die erediens bly in die sentrum van die gemeente se lewe en is daarom van groot belang. Die boek poog om langs die weg van die her-ontdekking van die wortels en verskeidenheid binne die erediens weer op 'n verantwoordelike manier nuwe weë oop te breek. Die boek wys op veel wat daar is wat wag om net weer ontdek te word.

5. SENDINGWETENSKAP

Balia, D and Kim, K (Eds). 2010. Edinburgh 2010. Vol.11. *Witnessing to Christ Today*. Oxford: Regnum..

Hierdie werk is voor die Edinburgh 2010 Konferensie gepubliseer en is 'n omvattende oorsig oor getuienis in die wêreld.

Bevans, SB & Schroeder, RP. 2006. *Constants in context: a theology of mission for today*. Maryknoll, New York: Orbis.

'n Volledige en goed nagevorste oorsig oor die sendinggeskiedenis en die implikasies van sekere konstantes vandag.

Oduro,T, Pretorius, H, Nussbaum, S and Bron, B. 2008. *Mission in an African way*. s.l.: CLF.

'n Deeglike handboek ten opsigte van die Afrika Onafhanklike Kerke

Van der Walt, B.J. 2007. *Transforming power: challenging contemporary secular society*. Potchefstroom: Institute for contemporary Christianity in Africa.

'n Gerformeerde beskouing oor die uitdagings wat gestel word deur die wêreldbeskouings van die huidige gemeenskap.

Wright CJH. 2006 *The mission of God: unlocking the Bible's grant narrative*. Nottingham: InterVarsity.

'n Hoogs aanbevole werk wat die Bybelse begroning van die sending op bevatlike maar ook op volledige wyse deurgee.

6. RELIGIEKUNDE (SAAMGESTEL DEUR DS M SUKDAVEN)

Bhalla, P Prem. 2009. *Hindu Rites, Rituals, Customs and Traditions. A to Z on the Hindu Way of Life*. New Delhi: Hindology Books. ISBN: 978-81-223-0902-7.

This is really a book of HOW and WHY of the Hindu faith with regards to rites, rituals and customs.

Euben, L Roxanne (ed.), Zaman, Muhammad Qasim (ed.). 2009. *Princeton Readings in Islamic Thought. Texts and Contexts from al-Banna to Bin Laden*. Oxford: Princeton University Press.

ISBN: 978-0-691-13588-5 (pbk.). ISBN: 978-0-691-13587-8 (hbk.).

This is an anthology that looks critically at issues of the Muslim faith both dogmatically and politically.

Kruger, JS, Lubbe GJA, Steyn HC. 2009. *The Human Search for Meaning. A Multireligion. Introduction to the Religions of Humankind*. Pretoria: Van Schaik (2nd Edition). ISBN: 978-0-627-02761-1

An excellent introduction to mainline religions in South Africa especially for those entering the teaching profession.

Olson, RE. 2009. *God in Dispute. Conversations among Great Christian Thinkers*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic. ISBN: 978-0-8010-3639-2 (pbk.)

Olson creates an imaginary dialogue of the different church fathers by way of addressing issues pertinent to the arguments of the day.

Riglyne vir die persklaarmaak van die NGTT

Guidelines for the preparation of articles for the NGTT

U word vriendelik versoek om artikels aan te bied volgens die volgende riglyne. Artikels wat nie hieraan voldoen nie, sal ongelukkig teruggestuur word.

We cordially request that you submit articles according to the following guidelines. Articles that do not apply to these guidelines, must unfortunately be returned.

1. ALGEMEEN

1. GENERAL

1.1 Alle artikels moet in **drievoud** aangebied word sodat minstens twee kopieë beskikbaar is om aan keurders te stuur. / *All articles must be submitted in triplicate, so that at least two copies are available to be sent to referees.*

1.2 Alle artikels moet van 'n "abstract" in Engels van ongeveer 150 woorde voorsien wees. In die geval van 'n Afrikaanse artikel, moet die "abstract" ook van 'n Engelse titel voorsien word. / *All articles must have an English abstract of approximately 150 words. In the case of an Afrikaans article, the abstract must also have an English title.*

1.3 Die naam van die outeur mag slegs op een van die drie kopieë verskyn. Alle verwysings in voetnotas wat die outeur kan identifiseer, soos die aanduiding van waar die referaat gelewer is, mag slegs op die eerste kopie verskyn. / *The name of the author must appear on only one of the three copies. All references that could identify the author, such as an indication where the paper was read, may also appear only on the first copy.*

1.4 Geen CD moet aanvanklik saamgestuur word nie. / *No CD need to accompany the initial submission of the article.*

1.5 Ná die aanvanklike keuring van 'n artikel sal dit, indien nodig, met kommentaar na die outeur teruggestuur word, wat dan alle verbeteringe moet aanbring en die artikel weer in tweevoud moet aanbied. / *After the initial selection of an article, it will, if necessary, be returned to the author who will then implement all alterations. Thereafter, the article must be submitted in duplicate.*

1.5.1 'n CD van die verbeterde stuk moet nou ook die twee kopieë vergesel. Slegs die volgende rekenaarprogramme is aanvaarbaar: Microsoft WORD. / *A disk or CD of the final product must now be included with the two copies. Only the following computer programs are acceptable: Microsoft WORD.*

Meld asseblief op die plakker van die CD u eie naam, die naam van die artikel, van die legger (naam waaronder die artikel op die CD verskyn) en watter program u gebruik het. / *Please write your own name, the title of the article and that of the document (the code of the article on the CD) and which program was used, on the CD label.*

1.6 Die redaksie behou hulle egter die reg voor om ook die verbeterde kopie weer aan keurders voor te lê indien hulle dit nodig ag, en dit selfs 'n tweede keer terug te stuur na die outeur. / *The editorial staff retain the right to again submit the improved copy to the referees, should they deem this necessary, and even return it once more to the author.*

1.7 Indien die artikel ná die eerste keuring aanvaar word, sal die redaksiesekretaris die outeur versoek om ook die CD aan te stuur. / *Should the article be accepted after the first selection, then the editorial secretary will require the author to submit the CD.*

1.8 Daar word van alle outeurs verwag dat alle bydraes taalkundig goed versorg en finaal geredigeer sal wees. Indien daar ooglopende taal-, spel- en tikfoute is, sal dit teruggestuur word vir verbetering. (Weens die hoë drukkoste van die tykskrif kan die redaksie nie administratiewe

hulp hiervoor inkoop nie. As artikels vol foute verskyn, sal die akademiese standaard van die tydskrif verlaag word.) / *All contributions must be linguistically correct and be edited. Should there be conspicuous linguistic, spelling and typing errors, the article will be returned for correction. (As a result of the high printing cost of the journal, the editorial staff cannot afford special administration costs in this respect. And should articles teeming with mistakes be published, the academic standard of the journal will deteriorate.)*

2. DIE OPSKRIF BO DIE ARTIKEL

2. THE TITLE OF THE ARTICLE

Gebruik asseblief 'n eksemplaar van die NGTT as voorbeeld en gebruik dieselfde lettertipes. Die skrywer se naam kom boaan, gevolg deur die instansie waaraan hy of sy verbonde is (gewone hoof- en kleinletters). Op 'n volgende reël volg die titel van die artikel (in vetdruk: hoof- en kleinletters). / *Please refer to an edition of the NGTT as an example and use the same font. The author's name appears first, followed by the institution with which he/she is associated (in normal upper and lower case). On the next line the title of the article appears in bold, upper and lower case.*

3. DIE ARTIKEL SELF

3. THE ARTICLE ITSELF

3.1 Artikels moet breë kantlyne hê, in dubbelspasiëring en net aan die een kant van die blad getik wees. Artikels moet verkieslik nie langer as 5 200 woorde wees nie (sien punt 4 oor BLADGELD). Die eerste reël van 'n paragraaf na 'n hofie, tabel of blok (van bv 'n aanhaling van 4 of meer reëls of 'n lys met nommers of "bullets") word nie ingekeep nie, maar wel alle ander gewone paragrawe. Geen reëlspasie tussen paragrawe nie. / *Articles must have broad margins, be typed in double spacing on one side of the page only. Articles should preferably not be longer than 5 200 words (see par 4 on PUBLICATION FEES). The first line of each paragraph after a title, table or block (of eg a quotation of 4 or more lines, or a list with numbers or bullets) is not indented like normal paragraphs. No line spaces between paragraphs.*

3.2 Wanneer van hofies gebruik gemaak word, moet die belangrikste hofie getik word in gewone HOOFLETTERS, die tweede hofie in vetdruk in hoof- en kleinletters, en die derde hofie in kursief in hoof- en kleinletters. Voor alle hofies en slegs na 'n HOOFLETTERHOFIE kom 'n spasie van een reël. / *Main headings of sections of the article must be typed in CAPITAL LETTERS, the second heading in bold (upper and lower case), and the third heading in italics (upper and lower case). Before all headings and only after a heading in CAPITAL LETTERS a space of one line must be inserted.*

3.3 Indien van voetnotas gebruik gemaak word, moet dit korrek genommer wees en verkieslik onderaan die bladsy geplaas word. / *Should footnotes be used, they should be numbered correctly and, preferably, at the foot of the page.*

3.4 Afkortings kan in die voetnotas gebruik word (sonder punte), maar liefs nie in die artikel self nie. Afkortings mag wel in die artikel tussen hakies gebruik word. / *Abbreviations may be used in footnotes and in parentheses, but preferably not in the text of the article.*

3.5 Daar moet van die Harvard-verwysingstelsel gebruik gemaak word. / *The Harvard reference system must be applied.*

3.6 Die bibliografie aan die end moet volledig wees, maar slegs bronne bevat waarna in die artikel verwys word. / *The bibliography at the end of the article must be complete, but must contain only the sources referred to in the article.*

3.7 Alle Hebreeuse en Griekse woorde moet in getranskribeerde vorm weergegee word, behalwe as die outeur self met die uitgewer kan ooreenkom oor 'n "font" wat vir die drukker aanvaarbaar is. / *All Hebrew and Greek words must appear in transcribed form, unless the author has arranged with the publisher on a font acceptable to the printer.*

3.8 Aanhalings uit die Bybel word nie deur die redakteur gekontroleer nie en is die verantwoordelikheid van die outeur self. / *Quotations from the Bible will not be checked by the editor. These are the author's responsibility.*

3.9 Wenk: Skrywers word verwys na Jansie Killian se riglyne (Form and style in theological texts: A guide for the use of the Harvard reference system. Pretoria: University of South Africa) ingeval van probleme met formatering, ensovoorts. / *Suggestion: In case of problems with formatting, etcetera, authors can refer to Jansie Killian's guidelines (Form and style in theological texts: A guide for the use of the Harvard reference system. Pretoria: University of South Africa).*

3.9 Trefwoorde: Elke skrywer moet aan die einde van sy/haar artikel drie tot vyf trefwoorde voorsien. Skrywers moet asseblief kyk na die thesaurus van Religions Index ten opsigte van die standaardlys van trefwoorde. / *Key Words: Authors must provide three to five key words at the end of his/her article. Authors must please look at the thesaurus of Religions Index with regard to the standard list of key words.*

4. BLADGELDE

4. PUBLISHING FEES

4.1 Die huidige (2010) bladgeld vir publikasies in die tydskrif is R150 per bladsy. / *The current (2004) publishing fees for publications in our journal is R150 per page.*

4.2 Bladgeld word gevra vir die aantal gedrukte bladsye in die tydskrif. / *These publishing fees are charged for the number of printed pages in the journal.*

Riglyne vir keurders Guidelines for referees

Lewer asseblief u kommentaar aan die hand van die volgende vrae.
Please provide your comments in respect of the following questions:

Opskrif of titel van die artikel (vul dit ook asseblief hier in):
Title of article (kindly repeat it here):

Voldoen die artikel aan die vereistes, ook wat taalkundige versorging betref, wat in die riglyne gestel word? Dui asseblief taal-, spel- en tikfoute aan.

Does the article meet the requirements, also in respect of the linguistics?

Lewer die artikel bewys van deeglike navorsing en bekendheid met die jongste debat en literatuur op die vakgebied?

Do you deem the article to be proof of thorough research and knowledge of the most recent debates and literature in this field of study?

Reflekteer die artikel 'n goeie wetenskaplike standaard van argumentering?
Does the article reflect a good scientific standard of reasoning?

Lewer die artikel 'n wesentliche bydrae tot die spesifieke vakgebied?
Does the article make a fundamental contribution to the specific field of study?

Wat is u mening oor die teologiese gehalte van die artikel?
What is your opinion of the theological quality of the article?

Wat is die wenslikheid van plasing in die NGTT?
What is the desirability of this article being published in the NGTT?

Onveranderd?
Without alterations?

Met die volgende wysigings:
With the following alterations:

Liewer nie:
Preferably not:

Enige ander aanbeveling(s)?
Any other recommendation(s)

Naam en adres van keurder:
Name and address of referee:
(U naam en adres sal nie aan die skrywer bekendgemaak word nie.
Your name and address will not be divulged to the writer.)

U word vriendelik versoek om u verslag in tweevoud aan die NGTT te stuur. Op die een kopie moet u naam ontbreek sodat dit net so aan die outeur gestuur kan word.
Please send your report in duplicate to the NGTT. On the one copy, which will be sent to the author, your name must not appear.

