



**THE SPIRITUALITY OF BANTU STEPHEN BIKO:  
A THEOLOGY FROM BELOW**

by

Thembelani Elvis Jentile

2014218586

Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements in respect of the Doctoral Degree in  
Theology in the Department of Religion Studies in the Faculty of Theology at the  
University of the Free State

1 June 2018

**Promoter: Prof L. Ntombana**

**Co-promoter: Dr K.T. Resane**

## **DECLARATION**

I, Thembelani Elvis Jentile, hereby declare that the thesis that I herewith submit for the Doctoral Degree in Religion Studies at the University of the Free State (UFS), is my independent work, and that I have not previously submitted it for a qualification at another institution of higher education.

I declare that I am aware that the copyright is vested in the UFS, and that all royalties as regards intellectual property that was developed during the course of and/or in connection with the study at the UFS, will accrue to the university.

I also hereby declare that I am aware that the research may only be published with the promoters' approval.

1 June 2018

## **DEDICATION**

This thesis is dedicated to my sons, Siphosethu Gareapha, Lubabalo Omolemo, and Ntuthuko Oratile Jentile. May Biko's story encourage you to worship God in your own terms and culture; in truth and in spirit! May Jesus Christ of Nazareth's story illuminate the story of Bantu Stephen "Xhamela" Biko in your minds. Biko is your own!

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The journey to complete a thesis is not one travelled alone. Many people have in one way or another helped me in the process of completing this thesis. Their contributions have varied in style and content but it is safe to say they have made the thesis both possible and satisfying.

Dr Luvuyo Ntombana, who served as my promoter, has offered encouragement and patient guidance from the beginning. His invitation to the fascinating literature of religious studies, accompanied by his fresh insights, has been a continued catalyst. Appreciation is also expressed to my co-promoter, Dr K.T. Resane, whose wealth of knowledge concerning black theology and Biko's writings proved valuable in my research.

My heartfelt gratitude goes to the University of South Africa (Unisa), Main Campus, and the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits) libraries for granting me free access to their archives for the duration of the research.

Thank you to the Steve Biko Foundation for opening their doors for me, in particular Mrs Biko and Mr Mwelela, not forgetting Ms Asanda for the tour of Biko sites in Ginsberg, King William's Town, for being ready to assist where possible. I was honoured to be a panellist during the unveiling of Biko's tombstone in 2017. I am also grateful for their resources and willingness to participate without any remuneration whatsoever.

I am indebted to my wife, Refilwe Ntshoe-Jentile, for believing in me and supporting me through the good and the bad, and the frustrating and rewarding times of this study.

She has had to endure my late-night studying, typing, and printing even though she was tired from work and raising our three boys. I am blessed!

To the congregation of Mamelodi Baptist Church and the officers of the Baptist Convention of South Africa, thank you for allowing me to pursue my studies while serving them as a pastor and first vice-president respectively. I am most grateful.

Numerous friends and colleagues have accompanied me throughout the different stages of this journey. Through thoughtful words and kind deeds they took my hand and steered me onward. Words on a page cannot express my appreciation to all of you.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION .....	i
DEDICATION.....	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....	iii
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS.....	ix
ABSTRACT.....	xi

## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

---

1.1	INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.2	BACKGROUND.....	6
1.3	PRELIMINARY LITERATURE REVIEW .....	9
1.3.1	On Biko's biography .....	9
1.3.2	On Biko's legacy.....	10
1.4	THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK.....	12
1.5	RESEARCH METHODOLOGY .....	12
1.6	AIM AND OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH.....	14
1.6.1	Aim.....	14
1.6.2	Objectives .....	14
1.7	PROBLEM STATEMENT .....	14
1.8	MAIN RESEARCH QUESTIONS.....	15
1.9	DELINEATION OF CHAPTERS .....	15
1.10	CONCLUSION .....	17

## CHAPTER 2: LIVED RELIGION: A THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

---

2.1	INTRODUCTION.....	18
2.2	DEFINING RELIGION .....	19
2.2.1	Anthropologists .....	19

2.2.1.1	<i>Evolution</i> .....	20
2.2.1.2	<i>Functionalism</i> .....	20
2.2.1.3	<i>Structuralism</i> .....	21
2.2.2	Psychologists .....	21
2.2.3	Sociologists .....	22
2.2.3.1	<i>Substantive definitions of religion</i> .....	22
2.2.3.2	<i>Functional definitions of religion</i> .....	25
2.3	SPIRITUALITY .....	31
2.3.1	Spirituality and religion .....	31
2.3.2	Christian spirituality .....	34
2.3.2.1	<i>Historical shift from holistic to dualistic spirituality</i> .....	37
2.3.3	African traditional spirituality .....	45
2.3.3.1	<i>The strength of African Traditional Religion (ATR)</i> .....	46
2.3.3.2	<i>ATR and African Christian spirituality</i> .....	47
2.4	LIVED RELIGION.....	54
2.4.1	Robert Orsi and David Hall .....	54
2.4.2	Nancy Ammerman and Meredith McGuire.....	56
2.4.3	Wilhelm Gräb and Ruard Ganzevoort.....	57
2.5	CONCLUSION .....	60

### **CHAPTER 3: BANTU STEPHEN BIKO: BIOGRAPHY AND WRITINGS**

---

3.1	INTRODUCTION.....	62
3.2	BIKO BIOGRAPHY .....	68
3.3	A CHRISTIAN “PROPHET-INTELLECTUAL” .....	69
3.3.1	Christian family background .....	73
3.3.2	Christian schooling .....	74
3.3.3	A “Christian” activist .....	77
3.3.3.1	<i>National Union of South African Students (NUSAS)</i> .....	77
3.3.3.2	<i>University Christian Movement (UCM)</i> .....	78

3.3.3.3	<i>South African Students' Organisation (SASO)</i> .....	82
3.3.3.4	<i>Spiritual support</i> .....	86
3.4	BIKO'S WRITINGS ON RELIGION.....	90
3.4.1	"We blacks".....	91
3.4.2	Some African cultural concepts.....	93
3.4.3	Definition of Black Consciousness.....	96
3.4.4	"The church as seen by a young layman".....	97
3.4.5	"Black Consciousness and the quest for true humanity".....	100
3.4.6	"Martyr of hope".....	104
3.4.7	"An interview with Biko" by Bernard Zylstra.....	108
3.5	CONCLUSION.....	109

#### **CHAPTER 4: BIKO'S SPIRITUALITY**

---

4.1	INTRODUCTION.....	111
4.2	SUMMARY OF THEMES.....	112
4.2.1	Leadership of the church.....	115
4.2.2	Content of theology.....	119
4.2.3	Form of church/religion.....	124
4.3	BIKO'S SPIRITUALITY.....	128
4.3.1	Spirituality shaped by action.....	129
4.3.2	Social activism spirituality.....	132
4.3.3	Was Biko a theologian?.....	141
4.4	BIKO'S SPIRITUALITY AND JESUS CHRIST.....	143
4.4.1	Juxtaposing Biko and Jesus.....	143
4.4.2	Mission comparisons.....	144
4.4.3	Biko's pastoral leadership.....	145
4.4.4	Ideological similarities.....	150
4.4.5	Disappearance, suffering, and death.....	152
4.5	CONCLUSION.....	154



**CHAPTER 5: BIKO’S LEGACY FOR THE CHURCH IN A SECULAR STATE**

---

5.1 INTRODUCTION..... 156

5.2 THE SILENCE OF THE CHURCH POST-1994..... 157

5.3 CHURCH-STATE RELATIONS..... 161

5.3.1 Collaboration ..... 162

5.3.2 Withdrawal, or the escapism of “neutrality” ..... 163

5.3.3 Critical engagement, critical cooperation, or critical solidarity ..... 167

5.4 THE CHURCH IN A SECULAR STATE: LOSS OF RELEVANCE AS THE MAIN CHALLENGE ..... 172

5.5 BIKO’S SPIRITUALITY AS A LEGACY TO THE “RELEVANCE CRISIS” FACED BY THE CHURCH ..... 179

5.5.1 Incarnational presence ..... 184

5.5.2 Religious leaders reconciling religion and politics ..... 190

5.6 CONCLUSION ..... 198

**CHAPTER 6: CONCLUDING REMARKS AND DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH**

---

6.1 INTRODUCTION..... 199

6.2 SUMMARY OF THE STUDY ..... 199

6.3 CONCLUDING REMARKS AND DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH ..... 207

**BIBLIOGRAPHY ..... 230**

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACDP	African Christian Democratic Party
ACSV	Afrikaanse Christelike Studente Vereeniging
AIC	African Initiated Church
ANC	African National Congress
ASSECA	Association for the Educational and Cultural Development of the African People
ATR	African Traditional Religion
BCM	Black Consciousness Movement
BCP	Black Consciousness Programmes
BPC	Black People's Convention
BU	Baptist Union
CANRAD	Centre for the Advancement of Non-racialism and Democracy
CDP	Christian Democratic Party
COPE	Congress of the People
CSA	Christelike Studente Assosiasie
CSIR	Council for Scientific and Industrial Research
DA	Democratic Alliance
EFF	Economic Freedom Fighters
IDAMASA	Interdenominational African Ministers' Association
MK	uMkhonto weSizwe
NILC	National Interfaith Leadership Council
NP	National Party
NRASD	National Religious Association for Social Development
NRLF	National Religious Leaders' Forum
NUSAS	National Union of South African Students
PAC	Pan Africanist Congress

RDP	Reconstruction and Development Programme
SACC	South African Council of Churches
SASO	South African Students' Organisation
SCA	Student Christian Association
Soweto	South Western Townships
SRC	Students Representative Council
UCDP	United Christian Democratic Party
UCM	University Christian Movement
Unisa	University of South Africa
USA	United States of America
WCC	World Council of Churches
WSCF	World Student Christian Federation

## ABSTRACT

This thesis employs the lived religion theoretical paradigm in its attempts to interpret Bantu Stephen Biko's spirituality. Lived religion's strength lies in that it emphasises religion as a lifestyle and focuses on the lived experiences of people. Therefore, of interest is how Biko, a "young layman", challenged the boundaries that delineate the sacred and the profane. The study critically engages selected writings of Biko with the intention of understanding and explaining his spirituality. Three themes were identified on his views and criticism of the church, namely "leadership of the church", "content of theology", and the "form of religion". His spirituality can be defined as a secular spirituality; that is, spirituality lived outside the boundaries of religion. Biko united issues of religion and politics, and by so doing he redefined political activism as belonging to the realm of the sacred. In Biko, activism is seen as imbued with religious meaning and inhabited by forms of religious practice, because in organising black people to see their worth and by confronting injustice, Biko engaged in practices that were at the same time as religious as they were political. He lived his religion, and it became meaningful to him as religious ideas and beliefs were experienced through actions and emotions. He did all this by challenging the boundaries that delineate the sacred and the profane.

**Keywords:** Bantu Stephen Biko, black theology, Black Consciousness, Black Consciousness Movement, lived religion.

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

This study is titled “The spirituality of Bantu Stephen Biko: A theology from below”. One can argue that such a title brings together two concepts that appear to have nothing in common, namely “spirituality” and the name “Bantu Stephen Biko”. Bantu Stephen Biko, as the subject of this enquiry, is known for political activism in the Black Consciousness Movement (BCM). The BCM was a new set of organisations, such as the South African Students’ Organisation (SASO) and the Black People’s Convention (BPC), which emerged in the late 1960s and early 1970s following the vacuum left by the banning of the African National Congress (ANC), the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC), and their leaders after the Sharpeville massacre in 1960. These organisations were united loosely around a collection of ideas described as “Black Consciousness”. Biko (2004:101) defined the philosophy of Black Consciousness as

an attitude of the mind and a way of life [...] Its essence is the realisation by the black man of the need to rally together with his brothers around the cause of their oppression – the blackness of their skin – and to operate as a group to rid themselves of the shackles that bind them to perpetual servitude.

The BCM helped to educate and organise black people, particularly the youth, through the Black Consciousness Programmes (BCPs). The movement may be regarded as “profane” by both the orthodox religious communities and the orthodox religious body of knowledge; and “spirituality”, on the other hand, is associated with religious figures such as Desmond Tutu, who can be said to be representatives of the “sacred” world.

Most people inside the church, and outside the church, argue that church people who are activists in the political arena lack spirituality (Worsnip 1991:32). Church traditionalists accuse Christian political activists of merely “using” the church for their personal political ambitions. In the same breath there is an assumption on the part of activists outside the church “that Christian activists need somehow to measure up to long ingrained, outmoded and traditional notions of what it means to be a Christian” (Worsnip 1991:32).

Some Christians consider it a “spiritual” activity to participate in the struggles of their communities, and are therefore found to be involved in the processes of social revolution (Grassow 1991:52). After 1994, however, there seems to be less interest among church leaders to become involved in issues affecting the community in general (Jentile 2016). In relation to political activism in general, the observation is that the church has withdrawn into denominational maintenance mode or privatised zones, attending only to their own flock (Pieterse 2000; MacMaster 2008). Gerald West (year quoted in De Wet 2016:17) blamed the individualised theology and spirituality we have today. In relation to participation in the society, the majority of church leaders confine themselves to what Crawford (1995:37) and Rasool (2009:5) termed a “welfarist paradigm” or “gap filling”. In comparison to “advocacy”, which seeks to influence the rules, practices, or beliefs of policymakers, and “partnership”, which seeks to cooperate with government in efforts to realise some type of service such as crime reduction, “gap-filling” activities provide services largely independent of government service delivery (Crawford 1995). Handing out food parcels is one example. Gap filling, or welfare, is only about charity instead of development.

This is not the first time the church has found itself in this condition. Biko’s generation found itself confronted with a church that was prone to be “more exclusively spiritual

in orientation and, through time, paid little or no attention at all to socio-political issues” (Motlhabi 1984:44). This similarity provided the impetus for this research, because there seems to be a tension between the main Christian spiritualities of “social-activism” and “contemplation” (Haughey 1976:79). The contention of this study is mainly regarding how Biko, a layman, challenged the boundaries that delineate the sacred and the profane, because in his writings he seems to have understood that religion should be concerned about life holistically, especially issues of social justice. Biko was one of those who challenged the church leaders to stand up and be active in addressing the socio-political issues that affect the community, because “God is not in the habit of coming down from heaven to solve people’s problems on earth” (Biko 2004:65).

Biko’s interest was in the social function of religion, specifically Christianity among the oppressed black population. Social scientists have analysed the function of religion among the ruling class, the middle class, and the working class (Kretzschmar 1997:317). Karl Marx observed that religion was essentially a product of a society divided by class. Inequalities persisted in societies because the ruling class’ values predominate over other values, and Marx believed that these values, such as capitalism, were propagated by religion (Singleton 2014:25). In his *Contribution to the critique of Hegel’s philosophy of right*, Marx (1844:35-36) argued that

[r]eligion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world, just as it is the spirit of a spiritless situation. It is the opium of the people.

Religion does not only legitimise the position of the oppressor, or ruling class, but it also serves as the “opium”, with its soporific effect on the lower class. For the middle

class, religion is personal in character. Niebuhr (1988:82) observed that the middle class not only emphasises personal salvation more than social redemption, but also,

[i]n middle-class symbolism conceptions of heaven in which individual felicity is guaranteed are much more important than the millennial hope of the poor man's faith – a difference, which, of course, is also partly due to the greater satisfaction of the middle class with the temporary order in which it enjoys a considerable number of pleasant advantages.

Niebuhr (1959) further pointed out that the lower-class concept of the deity as the comforter, protector, and saviour has led to the passive-observer posture. According to Max Weber, in his seminal work titled *The Protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism* (1930), however, religion can empower individuals and groups to progress up the socio-economic ladder. That is, in situations where the marginalised are led by captivating leaders, religion could perform a prophetic and subversive function. Instead of propping up the status quo, it could undermine it and initiate a creative process of social transformation (Kretzschmar 1997:318). Biko called on the church to play a prophetic role, but he knew that the “Christianity” preached to and by blacks was a truncated and manipulated version of Christian theology. It was designed to help pacify and compensate them for their inferior position in life. He therefore called for the decolonisation of the Christian religion. Biko and his friends advocated for a more African version of Christianity, which can learn from the values of *Ubuntu* espoused by African traditional religion (ATR).

Having criticised the church, Biko still believed in the existence of God, like many other indigenous Africans. Therefore this thesis seeks to understand Biko's spirituality. Spirituality is a vast theme, which is emphasised in Chapter 2. Defining spirituality has



also proven to be a tedious exercise. Some scholars, like Nolan (2006:xviii), would differentiate between spirituality and theology by suggesting that spirituality concerns itself with experience and practice, whereas theology is focused on dogma and confession. Schneiders (2003) attempted to define spirituality in relation to religion. She defined religion as a socially mediated human relationship to the sacred, the ultimate, the transcendent, the divine; and spirituality as the “experience of conscious involvement in the project of life-integration through self-transcendence toward the ultimate value one perceives” (Schneiders 2003:166). Her definition emphasised experience, implying that spirituality is a personal lived reality. Spirituality is that fundamental dimension of the human being and the lived experience which actualises that dimension (Schneiders 1989:678). The term can therefore be applied to religious and non-religious persons. In this study, spirituality is understood as

the way in which a person understands and lives within his or her historical context that aspect of his or her religion, philosophy or ethic that is viewed as the loftiest, the noblest, the most calculated to lead to the fullness of the ideal or perfection being sought (Principe 1983:136).

The emphasis is on what people understand and do, in this case Biko, rather than on “official” religion, its sacred sources, its institutes, and its doctrines (Ganzevoort & Roeland 2014:93). A study on spirituality actually investigates lived experience (Schneiders 1989:678). It is a search for the “sacred” that looks everywhere, instead of the conventional religious spaces. The scientific study of religion has seen a number of terms developing in the search for the sacred; from the “invisible religion” concept of Luckmann (1967), “implicit religion” of Bailey (1998), and “quasi-religion” of Greil and Robbins (1994), with Greil (1993) distinguishing between “quasi-” and “para-” religions. Demerath (2000:2) called these developments the “sociology of the sacred”,

correctly noting that as important as these developments may be, they use a conventional image of religion as their basic point of reference. In the search for the sacred, Demerath (2000:2-3) further pointed out that researchers using conventional religion as a model tend to narrow the search for the sacred to only those things which are religious in character. Also, the implications are that organisations, experiences, and events that fall short of the model may fail to provide sacred consequences. In a secularised community such as ours, the sacred can be found in the secular, and Biko showed that politics can have a spiritual meaning.

This chapter introduces the thesis. It presents the research problem, the purpose of the research, the demarcation of the research, and the methodology and theoretical framework followed. It concludes with the delineation of chapters that follow and a summary of the chapter.

## **1.2 BACKGROUND**

The year 2017 marked 40 years since the death of Bantu Stephen Biko. The Steve Biko Foundation has had several dialogues in townships such as Soweto (South Western Townships), Ginsberg in King William's Town, Attredgeville in Pretoria, and Seshego in Polokwane, where Biko's ideas were discussed. On 12 September 2017, the main commemoration function at Ginsberg, King William's Town, coincided with the unveiling of Biko's tombstone. This researcher has since took interest in Biko's writings and ideas, and this study was prompted by the visible relevance of Biko's ideologies among the so-called "born-free" youths.

Social commentators and scholars such as Maserumule of the Tshwane University of Technology have noticed that born-frees are increasingly attracted to Biko's Black Consciousness philosophy, and that they are being radicalised when they should be

enjoying the fruits of democracy created by the previous generation. This is seen in the rise of movements such as #RhodesMustFall, #OpenStellenbosch, and #FeesMustFall, which, in a way reminiscent of the BCM, challenge the colonial matrices of power which eluded the making of the post-apartheid state (Maserumule 2015). Reporting on the rise of Black Consciousness thinking in South African student politics, Sikhosana (2017:46) provided reasons behind the resurgence of Black Consciousness. Initially, the students were concerned about the escalating tuition fees of higher education institutions. On a deeper level, they were frustrated at the ruling ANC and its loyalty to neo-liberalism. They felt that the ANC government approached issues in a classist and racist manner, and gave priority to whites and the elites. Like the SASO of Biko, the leaders of the #RhodesMustFall movement felt it important to safeguard the movement from white liberals, even though they appreciated white support (Sikhosana 2017:46). Moreover, the students called for the decolonisation of the curriculum, and that space be given to Africans to formulate their own solutions to their own problems (Sikhosana 2017:46-47). In summary, Sikhosana (2017:47) wrote:

The contemporary student movement, from its inception, has openly declared that it enshrines principles of Black Consciousness and that it views the ANC government as carrying out neoliberal policies on behalf of white bourgeois order and the elite, a stance very familiar to the sentiments of EFF [Economic Freedom Fighters] leader Julius Malema. They blame the ruling party for present-day white supremacy and patriarchy, pointing to the negotiated settlement of 1994.

Biko's philosophy of black pride has been a rallying cry of the youth, whose majority are black and in the lower strata of society. They are struggling to afford tertiary education, which is their last hope of dignity and a better life. There is no doubt that

Biko is being immortalised. There is the immortality of fame, where Biko's story is retold and his name will never be forgotten. There is the immortality of influence, where Biko's influence will not easily die, especially in a country that struggles with inequality. Of further interest is the number of radicalised Christian youths, who, like Biko, lambast the church for its silence on issues that matter; bringing the "religion and politics", the "sacred and the profane" discussion back to the national agenda. In her article, "The role of the church in the #FeesMustFall movement in South Africa: Practical theological reflection", Kgatle (2018) stated that the church has socio-cultural, socio-economic, and socio-political roles in the #FeesMustFall movement. Headley and Kobe (2017) argued that it is important to revisit Christian activism in the heart of the struggle against apartheid, since that can help us to comprehend current struggles. They examined the influence of BCM and the Soweto Uprising on Christian activists, and stated, "We may discover that the new generation is opening 'old/new' debates around reconciliation in South Africa" (Headley & Kobe 2017:1). The old/new debate that this study addresses is that of the spirituality of the BCM activist, credited for fathering the BCM.

Biko called for the decolonisation of religion; it is then surprising that those who call for the decolonisation of institutions and educational subjects seldom talk about the decolonisation of religion, especially the Christian religion. Biko "was deeply conscious of the role religion could play in social upliftment in asserting a common humanity as well as human solidarity" (Pityana 2008:4-5). He therefore wrote extensively on religious issues. Mafuna (2007:88) opined that Biko's writings on spirituality covered much ground, since

[i]t deals firstly with the obvious shortcomings of the so-called Christian message espoused by churches in South Africa during the dark days of

apartheid. But it also delves into the thinking and beliefs of the black people prior to – and after – the arrival of the white people and the conquest of ideas and culture through colonization.

The task of this study is therefore to locate Biko's spirituality.

### **1.3 PRELIMINARY LITERATURE REVIEW**

This research generally relied solely on literature; both the writings of Biko as found in *I write what I like: A selection of writings* (Biko 2017), and writings about Biko.

#### **1.3.1 On Biko's biography**

Several authors have attempted to sketch Biko's life. Among those who documented Biko's life are Woods (1987), Wilson (1991:15-77; 2011), and Mangcu (2012); and there are many other short biographies such as those of Hook (2014) and Stubbs (2004; 2017). These books show Biko's Christian family background, and to a certain extent depict him as a "prophet-intellectual" in the order of other Xhosa greats such as Tiyo Soga, Charlotte Manye Maxeke, and others. Biko was born in 1946, and grew up in the Eastern Cape near King William's Town. Like many other freedom fighters, Biko attended Christian schools (Woods 1987:55; Mangcu 2012:98). Biko later became a "Christian" activist in the National Union of South African Students (NUSAS) (Stubbs 2004:177), University Christian Movement (UCM) (Wilson 2011:34), and in 1968, in the formation of SASO, and eventually became its leader in July 1969 (Gerhart 1978:261). During his banning, Biko was influenced spiritually by the Anglican priest David Russel and later by Father Aelred Stubbs (Hook 2014:28). In 1977, his life was cut short at the age of 30, in the hands of security police in Port Elizabeth.

### 1.3.2 On Biko's legacy

Other authors have reflected on how Biko influenced their lives, such as in *We write what we like: Celebrating Steve Biko* (Van Wyk 2007). In the same book, Mafuna (2007:77-89) noted that Biko wrote extensively on religious issues. There is therefore no talk or writing about the legacy of Biko without reflection on both his views on religion and consequently his spirituality, which is what this study entails. The question that arises is how one defines Biko's spirituality. Mangcu (2012:300) stated that he was at best an "unconventional Christian who was critical of organised religion and denominationalism". Several publications provided ideas on Biko's writings. *The bounds of possibility: The legacy of Steve Biko and Black Consciousness* (Pityana, Ramphela, Mpumlwana & Wilson 2016) contains an important article for the purposes of this study, namely "Steve Biko, Black Consciousness and black theology" by Hopkins (2016). Hopkins (2016 in Pityana et al. 2016:194-200) called Biko an "authentic theologian" whose faith manifested itself in the struggle for social transformation and justice. Hopkins' (2016 in Pityana et al. 2016:194-200) view was that Biko's spirituality was seen in the struggle. Can this view be corroborated by the orthodox meaning of spirituality and religion? In his book, *The law and the prophets: Black Consciousness in South Africa, 1968-1977*, Magaziner (2010) focused on Black Consciousness' influences and evolution by examining its ideology, especially its theological dimension. Even though Magaziner (2010) eschewed Biko's personality, he called all the BCM activists "prophets" who spoke historical truths to power of apartheid law. They did so in student group meetings, in theological seminars, in sermons, and in newsletters and poetry. They then protested, attended rallies, and went through political trials, and later there were uprisings and deaths. By engaging in these practices, which are seen as political or otherworldly, were Biko and his

associates not living their religious beliefs, and by so doing expanding the realm of the sacred to encompass everyday concerns?

*The legacy of Stephen Bantu Biko: Theological challenges* (Du Toit 2008) contains a paper that reflected on Biko's views on the church and Christianity in general (Duncan 2008). In this paper (Duncan 2008) we see how ambivalent Biko's attitude was towards Christianity, but his thinking inspired black theology, which played a significant role in the spiritual liberation of white and black Christians.

Another book is *Biko lives! Contesting the legacies of Steve Biko* (Mgxitama, Alexander & Gibson 2008). Like Du Toit's book (2008), this book also contains an interesting article by Maluleke (2008:115), where he reflected on the growth of black theology under the influence of Black Consciousness. Like Duncan (2008), Maluleke argued that Biko saw black theology as a reinterpretation of Christianity to purge the black masses' faith of the theology of colonial missionaries, which they had come to internalise and which kept them subjugated. Black theology sought to make the biblical message relevant to people struggling for freedom. Thus Christ had to be presented as a militant figure fighting on the side of the oppressed. The current work, without repeating the theological reflections of Duncan (2008), Maluleke (2008), and Hopkins (2016 in Pityana et al. 2016:194-200), seeks to go further and explore how Biko sought to unite issues of faith and justice by redefining activism as belonging to the realm of the sacred. It views Biko as challenging the boundaries that delineate the sacred and the profane, and the public and the private. Biko's combination of a critique of organised faith, and pursuing spiritual expressions by living a particular sense of justice, is of interest.

## **1.4 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

The full discussion of the theoretical framework followed in order to investigate the problem, as formulated below, is found in Chapter 2. One can state here that the lived religion theoretical paradigm was used in the interpretation of Biko's spirituality. This was done because SASO members sought to practise Christianity in their own terms; that is, outside the religion box. Therefore, the theory of lived religion proved to be the favourable theory to utilise, compared to the orthodox definitions of religion. Its strength lies in that it emphasises religion as a lifestyle and focuses on the lived experiences of people. The interest is in what people do rather than what they believe. As such, it begins with where people are, and analyses what is going on in relation to the world.

## **1.5 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This study is literature based, and as such the approach is based on the study of literature in search of Biko's spirituality. As a theoretical literature study, this thesis relied on a critical qualitative engagement with texts such as Biko's biographies, letters, and speeches, as well as recent articles and other related literature.

To answer the questions asked in this study, the research was undertaken from within the hermeneutical methodology. This method is seen by scholars such as Downey (1997:131) and Schneiders (2005a:56) as the most adequate approach in the study of spirituality. Firstly, not only can hermeneutics, or interpretation, be applied to texts, human actions, events, or artistic productions, but all aspects of human life (Perrin 2007:41), but it is also interdisciplinary, cross-cultural, and interreligious in its approach (Schneiders 2005b:5). This method is therefore useful to study an African intellectual who was a political figure raised by Christian parents.



The second relevance of this method to the current research is that, as observed by Sheldrake (2006:23),

[h]ermeneutical methodology moves the study of spirituality beyond matters of content toward a quest for wisdom to live by, rather than technical information held at a distance [...] When we approach our sources we clearly seek information: historical data, a detailed analysis of texts, an understanding of theological frameworks, and an identification of the kind of spiritual wisdom being presented.

Schneiders (2011:26) called this double focus of hermeneutics an “understanding and explanation (the expansion of knowledge), on the one hand, and appropriation (expansion of subjectivity), on the other”. This study did not only seek to understand Biko’s spirituality but also to gain wisdom for the contemporary church.

The hermeneutical process involves three interrelated steps (Downey 1997:129-130; Schneiders 2005a:56-57). Perrin (2007:43) summarised these steps as follows:

- a) A description of the phenomena under investigation is provided.
- b) The information is subject to critical analysis that will help explain the phenomenon with respect to other areas of knowledge. This will involve, inevitably, some theological analysis but may include other disciplines such as history, sociology, psychology, or literary studies.
- c) The phenomenon is interpreted for religious life today. The task is not only to understand the phenomenon in itself and critically analyse it, but also to understand it in the context of the lived reality today.

These steps were followed in this study, as reflected in Section 1.9 (Delineation of chapters).

## **1.6 AIM AND OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH**

### **1.6.1 Aim**

The purpose of this research is to examine Biko's spirituality and explore which of the main or dominant approaches, such as African spirituality, Christian spirituality, black spirituality, liberation spirituality, etc., it aligns with the most; and furthermore to determine the extent to which it may be different from any or all of the noted spirituality models.

### **1.6.2 Objectives**

The objectives of this study are:

- to provide a description of Biko's spirituality;
- to critically analyse Biko's spirituality with respect to other areas of knowledge;  
and
- to investigate the relevance of Biko's spirituality for the contemporary church.

Therefore, this study aims to contribute to the field of Biko studies by bringing to the fore the elements of Biko's spirituality as understood in the Christian religion.

## **1.7 PROBLEM STATEMENT**

Although much research has been conducted on the life and times of Biko (Wilson 2011; Mangcu 2012) and his legacy (Pityana, Ramphela & Mpumlwana 1991; Mngxitama et al. 2008), research on the corresponding spirituality of the father of Black

Consciousness is generally lacking. The overarching research problem that this study investigates is the extent to which spirituality, as articulated by Biko, shaped his philosophy of Black Consciousness.

## **1.8 MAIN RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

The research questions developed to investigate the research problem are as follows:

- What was the nature of Biko's spirituality and what was its relation to African philosophy?
- How was his spirituality relevant to the Black Consciousness philosophy?
- How can Biko's spirituality shape contemporary church and society?

This study theorises that Biko's spirituality was holistic, and its emphasis was on the interconnectedness of life under God. Therefore, for Biko, politics had a spiritual meaning, thereby challenging the boundaries that delineate the sacred and the profane, and the public and the private.

## **1.9 DELINEATION OF CHAPTERS**

The thesis is divided into six chapters, which are followed by a bibliography. Chapter 1 introduces the study; highlighting such issues as the study's background, the research problem, the aim and objectives of the study, the main research questions, the study's research design and methodology, and chapter outline.

Chapter 2 is devoted to the theoretical framework, with emphasis on lived religion, and reviews related literature.

Chapter 3 provides a short biography of Bantu Stephen Biko. It must be noted that the study does not dedicate any particular section or chapter to a literature review as such,

because a literature review was conducted in almost all chapters of the thesis. Therefore Chapter 3 reviews the most relevant and representative publications on the life and times of Biko biographically.

Chapter 4 deals with Biko's spirituality and his views on religion, specifically his writings on God, Jesus, the church, and ATR in general. The process of describing Biko's spirituality begins in this chapter. Chapter 4 does not only describe Biko's spirituality, as it also attempts to answer the first question on the nature of Biko's spirituality and what its relation to African philosophy and liberation of the oppressed was. The information is subjected to critical analysis, with respect to other areas of knowledge and other scholars on Biko's view on religion. The chapter identifies what the most important issues and their relevance to this investigation are.

Chapter 5 answers the third research question of "how can Biko's spirituality shape contemporary church and society?" This chapter examines Biko's legacy for the church in a secular state as it highlights the silence of the church post-1994, as well as the church-state relations during the presidencies of Nelson Mandela, Thabo Mbeki, and Jacob Zuma.

Chapter 6 summarises the study findings and draws conclusions that are accompanied by some recommendations. As noted in Section 1.5 (Research methodology), "the task is not only to understand the phenomenon in itself and critically analyse it, but also to understand it in the context of the lived reality today" (Perrin 2007:43)

## 1.10 CONCLUSION

This chapter introduced this study as a hermeneutical analysis of Biko's writings, in search of his spirituality. The research, conducted from the lived religion perspective, will seek to answer the following questions:

- What was the nature of Biko's spirituality and what was its relation to African philosophy?
- How was Biko's spirituality relevant to the Black Consciousness philosophy?
- How can Biko's spirituality shape contemporary church and society?

The study has value for practice as it enhances the Christian witness and the spiritual approach it adopts in relation to the community. Secondly, it has value for social groups, such as the ecumenical organisations such as the South African Council of Churches (SACC), for Christian leaders to play a prophetic role in their communities, it adds an important angle to that vision. Also, the study has value for the intellectual community in that it benefits theological and sociological students in institutions of higher learning. It produces scholarly debates around issues of the church's role in society. It also contributes to studies on Biko.

Chapter 2 discusses the study's theoretical framework, it defines religion, and questions the attempt to measure Biko's religiosity by determining how orthodox he was. The argument is made that this is not a fair assessment of Biko's spirituality and that the orthodox meaning of religion and spirituality cannot assist one to better understand Biko's spirituality.

## CHAPTER 2

### LIVED RELIGION: A THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

#### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter introduces the theoretical framework followed in this research. Theory, based on reasoning, provides an interpretation of the facts collected. According to May (1993:20),

[t]he idea of theory, or the ability to interpret and understand the findings of research within a conceptual framework which makes “sense” of the data, is the mark of a discipline whose aim is the systematic study of particular phenomena.

Theory is therefore a conceptual framework that provides an explanation of certain occurrences or phenomena. Ammassari (1998:48) explained it better by pointing out that theories consist of logically interconnected propositions. Propositions are generalised abstractions of social reality; they are supported by evidence (facts) and are rationally organised into a coherent whole. Collectively, these logically interconnected propositions provide an explanation. As a conceptual framework, theory prevents fragmentation of knowledge by ordering and at least identifying relationships between phenomena. Theory therefore plays a significant role in research. It provides this study with a focus by suggesting what evidence is needed as a sifting mechanism, making the evidence generated by the researcher more manageable and thus preventing stimulus overload.

Accordingly, the present chapter attempts to define religion and its relationship to spirituality. Moreover, it summarises Christian and African traditional spiritualities and ultimately introduces the theoretical framework that guided this study.

## **2.2 DEFINING RELIGION**

There have been many definitions of religion. Historians explain religion in terms of events resulting from beliefs, whereas theologians concern themselves with the beliefs themselves and people's responses to these beliefs. Sociologists, on the other hand, emphasise the social dimension of religious ideas, while anthropologists relate religious beliefs and practices as they find them in societies. This chapter examines these briefly; however, it is imperative to mention that Durkheim (1915) reported that human beings generally arrange their surroundings by delineating most events, experiences, and even objects as profane (in Latin meaning "outside the temple"); referring to that which is a mundane component of everyday life. However, human beings put aside other things, which Durkheim (1915) labelled as sacred; meaning that they are extraordinary and inspire a sense of reverence, fear, or even wonder. Differentiating between the sacred and the profane is the fundamental nature of all religious belief, and in the quest for the sacred, scholars have engaged in various processes of studying religion.

### **2.2.1 Anthropologists**

Anthropologists view religion as a pattern of human behaviour, which can therefore be studied. In their study of religion, anthropologists explain religion in three ways (Davies 1992:12-13): evolution, functionalism, and structuralism.

### **2.2.1.1 Evolution**

In the last few centuries, anthropologists have studied primitive tribes “because they were interested to relate the new science to the theory of evolution” (Davies 1992:11). Between the years 1870 and 1920, anthropologists such as J.G. Frazer, E.B. Tylor, and W.T. Robertson Smith attempted to identify specific periods through which humanity has passed, by characterising the belief held during these successive eras (Davies 1992:12-13). They named these stages of religious life according to their own, largely speculative, theory of the dominant concern present in each one. It was speculated that as the world evolves, religion will disappear and be replaced by science as a stage in human thought (Davies 1992:12).

### **2.2.1.2 Functionalism**

Early in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, anthropologists asked questions regarding the function of religion in particular communities, instead of the evolutionary question of how religion first originated. Malinowski (1916), for example, gave up the historical study of religion and resorted to deeply study religion’s role in the Trobriand Islands society. He believed that there were scientific laws of culture, and these could be relevant to religion. Religious institutions, like the political and kinship structures, could provide individuals with biological needs such as food, shelter, sex, and security in a social environment. Having observed primitive societies, Malinowski (1916) concluded that religion, along with magic, provided the fundamental uniting drive in the community, for it served as a human response to the desire to survive. Magic, performed in the face of natural calamity, provided psychological support for people’s fears.



### **2.2.1.3 Structuralism**

Subsequent to the 1950s, anthropologists focused extensively on the role of religion as the indicator of the structure of the ideas, values, and beliefs of society. They sketched a picture of the relationships that existed between doctrines. They asked how people argued, how they organised their beliefs, and what the inner logical pattern of a religion was. For example, they asked: “How do Christian groups relate their beliefs about everyday life to the concept of trinity?”. This structuralist approach draws attention to the organisation of human thought, and to the way human beings bring an ordered pattern to their complex world. For instance, the French anthropologist Levi-Strauss (1955:428-444; 2008) studied the question of how this works in the case of myths.

### **2.2.2 Psychologists**

Building from the anthropologists' earlier work on ideas and the mind, in the 20<sup>th</sup> century psychologists focused singularly on the mind. A case is that of Sigmund Freud, who drew excessively from evolutionary anthropology, notably from Smith's (1889) acclaimed *Lectures on the religion of the Semites: The fundamental institutions*. He showed how the underlying power of the human mind, grounded in a kind of sexual energy called the libido, attributed to a god-figure attitude, which originated in the child's relationship with his human father.

An important concept called “projections” arose in religious studies. It combined Feuerbach's (1804-1872) philosophical ideas and Freud's psychological approach. Feuerbach, who influenced Marx and Engels and subsequently the rise of communist society, claimed that statements about God were really to be understood as

statements about man. Man tends to construct ideas of God and then to look at them as though they had a reality of their own (Harvey 1997). For a proper understanding of theology, one should reverse this process and interpret religious doctrine in human terms. In *The future of an illusion* (1927), Freud sees “projection” as an illusion, the human mind leading man away from truth and reality, and should therefore be deplored. Contrary to Freud, James (1902) did not see religion as an illusion with no real future, but as having a positive advantage to human beings. In *The varieties of religious experience: A study in human nature*, James (1902) argued that religion had value in that it helped people to live positively and courageously. Religion helps human beings to accept who they are and life’s conditions rather than falling prey to the infirmities of life.

### **2.2.3 Sociologists**

The early 20<sup>th</sup> century saw the discipline of sociology developing swiftly. In explaining religion, social scientists use one of two types of definitions: substantive or functional definitions (Roberts & Yamane 2012; Singleton 2014:4).

#### **2.2.3.1 Substantive definitions of religion**

Substantive definitions rest on identification of the “essence” of religion, which is about humanity’s relationship with the supernatural, the transcendent, or the otherworldly (Singleton 2014:4).

Typical substantive definitions include those of Tylor and Radin (1958), who defined religion as “belief in spiritual beings”, and Bouma (1992:17), who said religion is

a shared meaning system which grounds its answers to questions of meaning in the postulated existence of a greater environing reality and its related sets of practices and social organization.

These definitions emphasise a specific belief, such as in spiritual beings or in a supernatural realm, or they stress the distinction between sacred and profane realms of experience. They tend to focus attention on the traditional forms of religion. Sociologists recognise that religion is central to virtually every culture, and therefore seek to understand how religious beliefs and practices guide human society. Some recognisable elements or practices can be traced in most religions. Smart (1996:9) provided seven of these elements of traditional religion. She avoided defining religion in terms of its content, because in some religions, notably in Theravada Buddhism, Jainism, and in phases of the Confucian tradition, such beliefs are secondary, to say the least.

She listed the following:

- 1) *The ritual or practical dimension*: This is the aspect of religion which involves such activities as worship, meditation, pilgrimage, sacrifice, sacramental rites, and healing activities. Rituals are deliberate, traditional actions and activities that forge a link between a religious person or religious community and the “transcendent” (Smart 1996 cited in Singleton 2014:5).

- 2) *Doctrinal or philosophical dimension*: Most religions have some formal or accepted teachings that govern the religion, and these usually address matters of belief, practice, and morality.
- 3) *The mythic or narrative dimension*: Every religion has stories. These are stories and teachings shared among members of a religious group. The stories are mostly written in sacred texts, but some are shared by word of mouth (Smart 1996 cited in Singleton 2014:6). An example is Christianity's stories of Christ's birth, life, death, and resurrection, which are clearly central to Christianity.
- 4) *The experiential or emotional dimension*: Religions facilitate religious experiences through rituals and other means. Smart (1996) noted that certain experiences can be important in religious history – the enlightenment of the Buddha, the prophetic visions of Muhammad, the conversion of Paul for Christians, and so forth.
- 5) *The ethical or legal dimensions*: Religions do not only have a set of doctrines, but followers are also required to follow and obey a code of ethics. These are the values and standards of behaviour expected of the faithful.
- 6) *The organisational or social component*: Religion is not something conceived of and practised by just one person. Smart (1996) stated that any tradition will manifest itself in society, either as a separate organisation with priests or other specialists, or as coterminous with society.
- 7) *The material or artistic dimension*, which most religions have, consists of sacred spaces, objects, and places, whether it be a temple, a place in a forest, or a statue.

The reverence for and belief in the existence of the transcendent, coupled with the seven elements, define the substance of any religion. “Religious” people are those who participate in these dimensions (although the strength of this commitment can vary); “the involvement and meaning it has for them in their everyday life is their religiosity” (Singleton 2014:8). Substantive definitions regard religion as essentially a matter of belief. Johnston (2004:12) simply defined religion in these terms as a “system of beliefs and practices by which a group of people interprets and responds to what they feel is sacred and, usually, supernatural as well”.

The boundaries between the sacred and the profane are clearly drawn and defined by the faithful believers. For example, Muslims remove their shoes before entering a mosque to avoid defiling a sacred space of worship with soles that have touched the profane ground outside.

### **2.2.3.2 Functional definitions of religion**

Functional definitions point out the various functions that religion performs for individuals, religious communities, and society at large. Following is a short analysis of the major figures in the theoretical analysis of religion.

#### *(a) Structural-functional analysis: Emile Durkheim*

Durkheim’s famous study, *The elementary forms of the religious life* (1965), was influenced by the same study that influenced Freud, namely the *Lectures on the religion of the Semites: The fundamental institutions* (Smith 1889). The study presented the idea of “projection” and it also presupposed an evolutionary approach to religion, but did not accept the view that religious ideas were simply misleading products of the human mind. Durkheim, as a sociologist, parted ways both with the

psychology of Freud and the speculation of earlier anthropologists such as Frazer. Durkheim (1965) saw something real in religion, and that human beings were not deceiving themselves. In identifying the reality underlying religious behaviour, he also parted ways with theological explanations, for he believed that the reality that influenced religion was society itself. He was preoccupied with the idea of society, as Freud was with the unconscious mind. He believed that society had a power of its own, and it could completely fill the place of God. In religion, people celebrate the awesome power of their own society. Durkheim (1965) consequently pointed out that religion has three major functions in society (see also Macionis 1995:489):

- 1) **Social cohesion:** Religion unites people through shared symbols, values, and norms. Religious doctrines and rituals establish rules of “fair play” that make organised social life possible. Religion also involves the vital human dimension of love. Thus, religious life also underscores both our moral and emotional ties to others.
- 2) **Social control:** Every society uses religious imagery and rhetoric to promote conformity. Societies give many cultural norms – especially mores that deal with marriage and reproduction – religious justification.
- 3) **Providing meaning and purpose:** Religious beliefs offer the comforting sense that the vulnerable human condition serves some great purpose. Strengthened by such convictions, people are less likely to collapse in despair when confronted by life calamities.

It must be noted that some of the most deadly wars that were fought in this world, such as the Crusades, have been fought under the banner of religion. Also, many communities are divided under the differing religious beliefs, which may create conflict in societies, contrary to Durkheim’s (1965) assertions.

(b) *The social construction of the sacred: Peter Berger*

According to Berger (1967:3), society is a human product that continuously acts back upon its producer, the human. Therefore, religion, like all of society, is socially constructed to define the sacred and the profane. An example would be that if we view marriage as only a contract between two people, we can end it whenever we want to. But if partners define their relationship in religious terms, as “holy matrimony”, the bond becomes stronger for them. Therefore Berger (1973:34) would say that “religion is the human enterprise by which a sacred cosmos is established”, and religion brings human society into relation with this sacred cosmos in an attempt to bring social order. Religious rituals are a constant reminder of what must be done in order to maintain social arrangements, roles, and obligations. In ritual, the continuity between the present and the societal tradition is ensured. However, Berger (1973) paid little or no attention to religion’s link with social inequality.

(c) *The social-conflict analysis: Karl Marx*

For Karl Marx (1959), religion was essentially the product of a class society, and therefore the criticism of religion is effectively the criticism of society. His observation was that religion assists the governing upper class by justifying the status quo. To Marx,

[r]eligion may be upheld by the ruling class because consciously or unconsciously it is seen as a force for social control but it may be followed also because the ruling class is itself alienated to a considerable degree. The need to take various measures to maintain privilege leads this class to see the social order as something other than simply the way human beings have chosen to organise themselves and, in a sense, “in the nature of things”. Their perception

is, of course, not that privilege is being preserved but that good order and stability must be maintained. Inequality, superiority, subordination, the distinction between rulers and ruled are all perceived as inevitable features of human society (Hamilton 1995:83).

At the same time religion redirects people's attention, especially that of the lower class, from social inequalities, by encouraging people to look hopefully to a "better world to come". Religion serves as the "sigh of the oppressed creature, the sentiment of a heartless world, and the soul of soulless conditions [...] It is the opium of the people" (Marx 1844:35-36). In his criticism of religion, Marx missed the positives that can come out of religion, such as the promotion of equality and the change that religion can bring. In South Africa, the church through the SACC played a significant role in destabilising the apartheid system; and in the United States of America (USA), the Civil Rights Movement was led by clergy. These two examples show how religion can effect social changes.

(d) *Religion and social change: Max Weber*

Max Weber (1864-1920) contradicted Karl Marx by showing a positive function of religion when he argued that religion can support social change. His famous study, *The Protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism*, sought to show how the Calvinist idea of predestination led believers to adopt an earnest and rational life in which they endeavoured to fulfil their calling as good stewards of God's grace.

Calvin held that an all-powerful and all-knowing God has predestined some people for salvation while condemning most to eternal damnation. With each individual's fate sealed even before birth and known only to God, the only certainty is what hangs in the balance: eternal glory or hellfire. Driven by anxiety



over their fate, Calvinists understandably sought signs of God's favour in this world and gradually settled on prosperity as a key symbol of divine favour. This conviction, coupled with their rigid devotion to duty, led Calvinists to become absorbed in the pursuit of prosperity (Macionis 1995:491).

This led to a situation in which commerce and industry could develop rapidly, with maximum investment of capital and minimum loss of energy by those responsible for the production of goods. It must be noted that riches were never to fuel selfish spending, nor were Calvinists moved to share their wealth with the poor, whose plight they saw as a sign of God's rejection.

As agents of God's work on earth, Calvinists believed that their lifelong "calling" was best fulfilled by reinvesting profits and reaping ever-greater success in the process. All the while they practiced personal thrift and eagerly embraced technological advances, thereby laying the ground work for the rise of industrial capitalism. In time, the religious fervor that motivated early Calvinists was transformed into a profane Protestant "work ethic", leading Weber to describe industrial capitalism as a "disenchanted" religion (Macionis 1995:491).

Even though Weber's analysis leaves little doubt as to the power of religious thinking to alter the basic shape of society, it does show how religious ideas can motivate a person into action, rather than as Marx claimed, providing an anaesthetic for worldly life.

The abovementioned theorists have had a great influence on current religious scholarship. Functional definitions of religion's influence come from Tillich (1957), who described religion as that which is a person's "ultimate concern". Geertz (1958 cited in Bocock & Thompson 1985:67) expanded by defining religion as "a system of symbols

which acts to establish powerful, pervasive and long-lasting moods and motivations in men". This definition relates aspects of everyday life to something transcendent or supernatural (Singleton 2014:9). Functional definitions view religion as something that gives a sense of ultimate meaning, a system of macro symbols, and a set of core values for life. Yinger (1970:7) broadened the definitions of religion by asserting that religion helps people deal effectively with life challenges by giving an explanation and by providing a strategy to overcome the loss of hope. On an individual level, religion, besides linking one with the supernatural, contributes to and promotes well-being, personal security, and social connectedness. Furthermore, it can motivate people to be altruistic and civically minded (Singleton 2014:9). Citing Durkheim (1915), Singleton (2014:9) emphasised that beyond influencing individual lives, religion can generate "collective effervescence", especially during religious ceremonies or during a ritual: "The experience of collective effervescence can unite members of the same religion and reinforce group solidarity and collective identity". Singleton (2014:9) added that doctrines and beliefs can also function to consolidate and strengthen the identity of a religious group. However, it must be pointed out that these definitions, which are in most cases influenced by Western thinking, are to a certain extent limited frameworks and methods for studying religion in general and Biko's spirituality in particular.

Biko's closest friends did not think he was an orthodox Christian. Barney Pityana, a close friend of Biko, wrote that Biko was not consciously "religious"; in particular he did not take part in institutional religion and the church (Pityana 2008:4). That seemed to be the case with most of the SASO members. Mafuna (2007:80) put it better this way: "SASO people drank a lot, argued a lot, womanised a lot and apart from Barney Pityana, never went to church".

Ramphela (1996:107) agreed that most of SASO members, including Biko,

came from Christian homes and had a religious basis for our political commitment. But few, if any, of us were practicing Christians; in fact some of us, including myself, actively distanced ourselves from the church, for we saw it as having failed to proclaim the good news to the poor and to fight for the liberation of the oppressed.

Biko was “at best an unconventional Christian” (Mangcu 2012:300). What one gathers from these statements is that observers have attempted to measure Biko’s religiosity, which is the extent of his “religiousness” by determining how orthodox he was. One wonders then if this is a fair assessment of Biko’s spirituality. The question is whether the orthodox meaning of religion can assist one to better understand Biko’s spirituality. It is therefore important to examine the term “spirituality” as it relates to religion to determine whether there is a more holistic approach to spirituality.

## **2.3 SPIRITUALITY**

### **2.3.1 Spirituality and religion**

Western societies use the term “spirituality” as an alternative to religion, and to a certain extent many people believe that there is a difference between religion and spirituality (Singleton 2014:10). In her article, “Religion vs. spirituality: A contemporary conundrum”, Schneiders (2003:164) stated that there are three models for the relationship between religion and spirituality. She noticed that there are those who consider the two as separate enterprises with no necessary connection.

Schneiders (2003:164) wrote:

This is surely the position, on the one hand, of our contemporaries who respect the religious involvements of others but are simply not interested in participating in religion themselves, or of those, on the other hand, who consider correct and faithful religious practice quite adequate to their needs without any superfluous spirituality trimmings.

Secondly, there are those who view spirituality and religion as rivals or enemies, as if they are conflicting realities, in the vein of “the more spiritual one is, the less religious”. Some people reject organised religion in favour of more individualised forms of “spiritual” belief and practice, as they claim to be “spiritual” and not “religious”. Spirituality is indeed not necessarily linked to religion. As a matter of fact, this is seen in the West, for example, where organised religion is decreasing and there is a clear process of secularisation and disengagement of society from religion. Kourie (2009:152) provided the following reasons for the decline of religion:

Firstly, a fanatical intolerance among some religious groups who are totally committed to an ideology, with the result that purely humanitarian feeling and ethical behaviour are ignored; secondly, autocratic systems of religious governance, which do little to encourage critical thought; thirdly, the use of Scripture as “law” instead of life-giving, sustaining and nourishing; fourthly, the treatment of women in many religious groups as second-class citizens; and fifthly, hierarchical divisions which have attributed to an elitism unacceptable to twenty-first century women and men. As a result, one could speak of a certain “allergy” towards religious and ecclesiastical institutions due to their dogmatic or practical intransigence.

According to Schneiders (2003:171), organised religion can generate “empty ritualism, hypocrisy clericalism, corruption, abuse of power, superstition, and many other deformations familiar from the history of religions”. All these could result in disillusionment and jettisoning ties with organised religion. In an age of secularism, spirituality may be the way forward (Kourie 2009:153).

Lastly, there are those who view spirituality and religion as partners; in other words, they are “two dimensions of a single enterprise which, like body and spirit, are in tension but are essential to each other and constitute, together, a single reality” (Schneiders 2003:164-165). Singleton (2014) also stated that in the first instance, spirituality is part of religion, and as such it is something experienced by an individual as a moment of ecstasy, an experience of God or the gods as real, or a mystical vision. On the other end, spirituality has been thought of as something that can exist outside of organised religion. Singleton (2014:11) suggested that

spirituality is any enduring, meaningful experience or consciousness of something greater than the self. This something “greater than the self” might be some ethical ideal, a supernatural concept (like karma or reincarnation), supernatural beings (the spirits of the deceased) or it might be something more nebulous, like a sense of “oneness with all living things”.

In this sense, spirituality is seen as a quality of an individual whose inner life is oriented toward God, the supernatural, or the sacred. Roberts and Yamane (2012:15) further argued that

[g]iven the historical connection between traditional religion and spirituality it may be better to use the term “unchurched spirituality” to refer to religious beliefs and practices that exist outside of traditional religious institutions.

However, these definitions still define “spirituality” in relation to organised religion. Luckmann (1967) suggested the term “invisible religion”; predicting that in modern societies or secularised societies people can choose whether to be religious and, if so, how they are religious. Writing about athletes, for example, Roberts and Yamane (2012:367) observed that

one can more easily be spiritual on one’s own terms, making it easier for athletes to accommodate spirituality in their busy lives. Secondly, for some athletes it can be a form of spiritual practice, and their peak or flow experiences during performance may sensitize them to a spiritual dimension of life in general.

That is spirituality “outside the religion box” or “invisible religion” in that it does not have the social manifestations one normally associates with religion. These definitions point to the lived religion, which emphasises experience and practice. Lived religion is discussed in Section 2.4, but for now attention must be paid to Christian spirituality and African traditional spiritualities, which Biko mentioned in his writings. This study suggests that the two spiritualities emphasise experience and practice. However, it must be noted that Christian spirituality is spirituality in the box of religion, whereas African traditional spirituality is more of a lived experience outside a defined, particular religion.

### **2.3.2 Christian spirituality**

There is a distinction between a “humanist” understanding of spirituality in general and Christian spirituality in particular. Generally, when people use the word “spirituality”, they may mean very different things, as noted above. Spirituality, as Du Toit (2006:59)

wrote, can be interpreted as a “profound spiritual experience to an aesthetic experience; or it can simply fulfil a rhetorical function as an adjective or adverb”. Thomas (2000:267) observed that it is commonly misunderstood that spirituality is optional and it relates only to the inner and interior life. Spirituality is not an optional matter; it is a fundamental capacity in human beings known as “human spiritual nature” (Perrin 2007:18). Perrin (2007:18-19) explained that this nature engages in being thoughtful, being empathetic, and at times making heroic choices that involve intense self-sacrifice. Seen in this perspective, spirituality is a neutral and descriptive term, not necessarily a normative Christian term. As a matter of fact, spirituality cannot be tied to one single faith; in the words of Holt (1993:5), “spirituality is a trans-religious word”. Therefore one can speak of Christian or Muslim spirituality, “or even spirituality not rooted in a particular religion” (Holt 1993:5). Additionally, Thomas (2000) emphasised that spirituality is as much concerned with the outer life (of the body, community, institutions, liturgy, tradition, doctrine, ethics, and society) as with the inner, and that spirituality is as much concerned with the public life of citizenship and work as with private life (Thomas 2000:267-268).

Nevertheless, “the term spirituality was first used among Christians” (Holt 1993), specifically the Roman Catholic theology. Therefore, the contemporary understanding of the word “spirituality” can be traced back to the origins of Christianity, its Scriptures, and to later developments (Perrin 2007:26). An important observation is that “spirituality” is rooted in the Pauline letters (Principe 1983:130-131). However, the idea of the spirit found in the Pauline letters follows the Old Testament usage of the “spirit” as the presence and power of God.

McGinn (2005:26) explained in agreement:

The role of the spirit (*ruach*) of God in the Old Testament was the foundation for the New Testament emphasis on the importance of the “spirit” (*pneuma*) and the qualifier “spiritual” (*pneumatikos*) in the foundational Christian documents.

In the Old Testament, God’s *ruach* (spirit, wind, hand, heat, breath) refers to the creative and dynamic work of the Spirit of God in all creation. God’s *ruach* constantly gives, sustains, and renews life. *Ruach* is the spirit, the power, the life, and heart of God active in the world (Perrin 2007:26-27).

With regard to the New Testament, Principe (1983:130) remarked that “in Latin translations of Pauline letters one finds *spiritus* and *spiritualis* as translations of *pneuma* and *pneumatikos* respectively”. Of Pauline theology, Donahue (2006:74) explained the contrasts between *pneuma* (spirit) and *sarx* (flesh); and in so doing Paul does not reflect a dualistic anthropology but speaks of the whole person as either open to the action of God or turning away from it. In using spirit as the opposite of flesh, Paul did not speak of any opposition between the spiritual and the physical. Rather, he referred to two vastly different ways of living: one being in tune with the Holy Spirit, the other not. In Paul’s thought, material is not the opposite of spiritual. Paul’s New Testament meaning of spirituality referred to the whole life of the Christian lived under the guidance of the Holy Spirit (Perrin 2007:27). There is therefore no dualism in Paul’s theology.

Accordingly, it is impossible to omit the mention of the Holy Spirit when speaking of Christian spirituality. Interestingly, Holt (1993:5) drew us closer to the importance of “spirit” as a root term of spirituality from the biblical perspective. He argued, like



Principe (1983) and McGinn (2005), that Christian spirituality means “walking in the spirit” (Gal. 5:16,18,25):

In both Hebrew and Greek, the same word (*ruach* and *pneuma*, respectively) is used for breath, wind and spirit. The Bible refers both to human spirit and to divine Spirit. How one understands spirit will determine how one understands spirituality. For example, if spirit is separated from physical reality, in a realm of its own, apart from the daily life of human experience, the resulting spirituality will become an escape into another world. But if God created the world good, and later became flesh, as the Gospel of John asserts, then spirit is a dimension of reality compatible with physical existence.

Holt (1993:5) further emphasised that spirituality has a holistic meaning, because human beings are unities of body and mind, and are not divided. Consequently, spirituality “encompasses the whole of human life and will develop in a variety of styles, depending on cultures, denominations, personalities and gifts” (Holt 1993:5).

### ***2.3.2.1 Historical shift from holistic to dualistic spirituality***

It is imperative to note that prior to the 17<sup>th</sup> century, Europe could be described as pre-modern, where the human mind

did not differentiate between natural and supernatural and there were no dualistic distinctions between nature and gods, nature and humankind, or humans and gods. The world was experienced holistically and harmony and disharmony, life and death, the comprehensible and the incomprehensible, were kept in equilibrium (Du Toit 2006:53).

The worldview of many consisted of a unity of spirituality and material reality. However, the Pauline understanding of “holistic spirituality” existed until the 12<sup>th</sup> century. In the 12<sup>th</sup> century, however, *spiritualitas* was employed more frequently and more diversely (McGinn 2005:27). The shift from the Pauline understanding began with the dawn of the age of scholasticism (Perrin 2007:28) or modernism. In scholasticism, the word “spirituality” referred not only to the spirit that animated Christian life, but also to anything that pertained to the soul rather than the body. Principe (1983:131) was also of the view that this shift from Pauline theology brought “confusion of spirituality with disdain for the body and matter that was to mark many later movements”. Dualism characterised Western culture. There was the separation of the mind from matter, science from theology, church from world, natural from supernatural, physical sciences from human sciences, scientific from unscientific, and so on (Du Toit 2006:53).

About the same time, spirituality came to be thought of as ecclesiastical jurisdiction or of persons exercising such jurisdiction (Principe 1983:131). This new meaning of spirituality dominated the Pauline theology and the dualistic theology. Another shift gradually occurred after the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Spirituality moved “toward signifying only the inner dispositions, the interior states of the soul” (McGinn 2005:27). The term became related to strange experiences as individuals attempted commitment to live a Christian life in the quest for perfection based on an isolated life with God. The word “spirituality” eventually disappeared in the mainline Christian vocabulary, and it was substituted by terms such as “devotion” and “piety” (Perrin 2007:30). In a nutshell, modernism, because of its inherent materialism, focuses on human beings to the exclusion of both God and the spiritual nature of human beings. It emphasises individualism and rationalism, which divide faith and reason.

Interestingly, church historians have termed the sacral culture that dominated European society from around the 11<sup>th</sup> century until the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century as “Christendom”. Frost and Hirsch (2003:8) stated that “[i]n the fifth to tenth centuries Christianity grew from infancy to adulthood throughout Western Europe, emerging in the eleventh century as fully grown and in control of the culture”.

With Christianity as an official part of the established culture, the consequences were that members of society were assumed to be Christian by birth rather than by choice, and Christianity moved from being a dynamic, revolutionary, social, and spiritual movement to being a religious institution with its attendant structures, priesthood, and sacraments.

By the end of the era of modernity in the mid-twentieth century, the Christian faith was no longer the centre of Western culture. It had been swept away by the very movement [modernity and enlightenment] it had sought to befriend (Frost & Hirsch 2003:8).

The church became irrelevant and had three major flaws – it was attractational, hierarchical, and dualistic (Frost & Hirsch 2003:18). It was attractational in the sense that instead of infiltrating the community, the church built beautiful buildings and expected that people would come to these to meet God and find fellowship. However, this “Come-to-Us” stance is unbiblical. Jesus, Paul, the disciples, and the early church leaders all had a “Go-to-Them” mentality. The church became hierarchical with its overly religious, bureaucratic, top-down model of leadership; as opposed to one that is more structured around grassroots agendas. Also, the Christendom church could not resist being dualistic. It separated the sacred from the profane, and the holy from the unholy. Church historians noted the sad fact: “Christendom as a paradigm of

understanding, as a metanarrative, still exercises an overweening influence on our existing theological, missiological, and ecclesiological understandings in church circles” (Frost & Hirsch 2003:9).

According to Perrin (2007:29), the results of modernity and Christendom period shifts in the use of the term “spirituality” meant that spirituality became associated with interiority and feelings, separate from theology, which was understood as a body of knowledge and beliefs associated with Christian life, and due to a greater interest in personal spirituality, spirituality became separated from social involvement (such as social justice issues) and public ethics; the clerical state, frequently seen as the heavenly, spiritual way, was seen as separate from and superior to the lay state, frequently seen as the way of the world; and spirituality, as supernatural life shared with God in heaven, was viewed as something added on to the natural life of human beings living on earth.

The late 20<sup>th</sup> and early 21<sup>st</sup> centuries ushered in post-modernism. This period saw a compelling rediscovery of the realm of the spirit (Du Toit 2006:58). Post-modernism says no to moral absolutes, individualism, patriarchy, consumerism, and nationalism. It criticises the materialism of modernism and seeks to open the human understanding of human reality to include much more than what can be measured and perceived by the five senses. Post-modernists pursue an interest in spirituality but reject a connection between spiritual experience and formal religion.

Spirituality began to be used once again to refer to the fullness of life in the Spirit, that is, life modelled after Jesus, a life that was available to all. Spiritual life was once again not seen as separate from physical life; spirituality involved the whole person (mind, body and soul) (Perrin 2007:30).

The dualism that developed since the 12<sup>th</sup> century was being questioned. Therefore most definitions of Christian spirituality stressed both an ongoing encounter with God and the effect of these encounters on human beings and the way people live their lives.

For example:

- Sheldrake (1988:2) stated that spirituality is a useful term to describe how, individually and collectively, we personally appropriate traditional Christian beliefs about God, humanity, and the world, and express them in terms of our basic attitudes, lifestyle, and activity.
- Saliers (1992:460) defined spirituality as a lived experience and a disciplined life of prayer and action, but which cannot be conceived of apart from the specific theological beliefs that are ingredients in the forms of life that manifest authentic Christian faith.
- In addition, Downey (1997:31) recognised the fact that Christian spirituality began with Jesus Christ. Those who profess faith in Jesus Christ and follow him in discipleship, living in the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, are ipso facto living a Christian spirituality.

It appears that Christian spirituality is about a physical and spiritual involvement in this world through a restored relationship with God, facilitated by Jesus Christ, and therefore Biko was right in challenging the church to reinterpret the Scriptures, especially in the context of the struggle.

Kretzschmar (2005b:44) summarised the key elements of Christian spirituality as follows:

Christian spirituality firstly involves an ongoing relationship with God, accepting the gift of salvation, becoming a “Christ follower”, and learning to walk “in the spirit” in obedience to God. The believer both accepts the love of God and learns to love God. Secondly, it involves becoming fully human (or a new creation), and living a holy or virtuous life under the Lordship of Christ. This includes the transformation of personal relationships. Thirdly, Christian spirituality is directed towards the Kingdom of God, which is partly reflected in the Christian community in the here and now. It is in the context of the church community that spiritual and moral formation take place. Finally, the believers are to be “salt and light” in service of the world.

An authentic Christian spirituality, therefore, is holistic in the sense that it is concerned with the whole of life, not artificially separating the spiritual and the material, and it also seeks to relate personal and social existence to God and the universe that God has created (Kretzschmar 2000:40).

Jesus’ response to the law teacher’s question, “Of all the commandments, which is the most important?”, summarised Christian spirituality:

“The most important one,” answered Jesus, “is this: ‘Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’ The second is this: ‘Love your neighbour as yourself.’ There is no commandment greater than these” (Mark 12:29-31).

The emphasis is on love for God, which translates to love for the neighbour. Therefore, Christian mysticism and the Christian passion for social justice must walk hand in hand (Rakoczy 2006). Kretzschmar's (2006:343) other insightful observation is that of Christian spirituality as an "embodied spirituality", since it takes seriously the human body and social reality; thus overcoming earlier dualism between the physical and the spiritual. As such, Christian spirituality ought not to be body-denying.

Kretzschmar (2005b:53) advised:

Feminist, womanist and women's theologies have much to teach us about the proper appreciation of our God-given bodies. Rather than following the Greeks, who separated body and mind, regarding the former as sinful, fleshy and less valuable and the latter as pure, reasonable and very important, we need to be more biblical.

Kretzschmar's (2005b) biblical reasoning was that God created everything "very good" (Gen. 1), including our bodies, relationships, and lives. For example, taking into account the recent gruesome killings of women and children in South African townships, the church cannot allow any form of the abuse of the marginalised and defenceless, either in its ranks or in society in general. In that sense, spirituality is "embodied"; expressed in and through feelings, bodies, and lives, not only through thoughts and beliefs. Furthermore, Kretzschmar (2005b:53) stated that as an "embodied" spirituality, Christian spirituality cannot be regarded as an "otherworldly" form of escapism, which avoids the realities of life. Jesus engaged with life and did not steer clear of the controversies of his day. The prophets also spoke on behalf of God, addressing real issues such as false religion, idolatry (worshipping material objects), injustice, lack of compassion, greed, and selfishness.

There is no denying the existence of the gap between what contemporary Christians believe and what they practise. Christians are capable of loving God with all their hearts, but fail to translate that love to the community. Kretzschmar (1997:312-19) blamed “privatised spirituality” as the main cause of the “non-holistic spirituality”, which results in the widening of the gap between belief and action, and preaching and practice. Her argument was that, first of all, a privatised spirituality is based on dualism, which separates reality into different spheres (as noted above). A dualistic spirituality regards it as a right to seek to be personally transformed by the gospel but will not see it as a God-given task to transform the societies in which one lives. An example is that of some Christians who argue that “spirituality and politics do not mix”.

Secondly, a privatised spirituality spiritualises the gospel. “Spiritualisation” involves a narrow interpretation of what is “spiritual”.

Thus, in relation to passages such as Luke 4:18-20 or Matthew 25:31-46, poverty and hunger, for example, are understood in terms of “spiritual” needs only and not also in terms of physical or material needs (Kretzschmar 1997:314).

The third characteristic of privatised spirituality is that it is acontextual. This refers to Christians who normally “disengage” their minds from debates that are going on around them and seek to distance themselves from social ills such as corruption, poverty, and lack of access to education and resources. As a result, the preaching of Christians sometimes falls on deaf ears because it bears no relation to what people actually experience.

“Individualism” is the fourth characteristic of privatised spirituality. Kretzschmar (1997:314) argued that a distinction must be made between the value of an individual



and the overemphasis on the individual, which may lead to the disregard of the community or social aspects of Christian faith. The implications of salvation in Christ are not purely personal; we are saved in order to serve other persons, families, and communities in general.

### **2.3.3 African traditional spirituality**

The above section showed that biblical Christian spirituality, as a product of the pre-modern world, shares some general features that constitute African spirituality, as Biko noted that “African religion in its essence was not radically different from Christianity” (Biko 2017:102). However, one is mindful of the danger of comparing or contrasting ATRs with Christianity, for whenever a comparison is made, especially by Christian apologetics, ATR is viewed through the Christian lens. This is a trend that marks the scholarship of African religion. P’Bitek (1970) argued the same point; that the early African socialistic theoreticians also tended to view traditional African institutions and ideas, and narrated them in language adopted from Western ideologies. An ATR practitioner, Nokuzola Mndende (2006), also lamented the disrespect for African religion by Western (and African) academics. She wrote:

The practitioners of African religion have always been (and still are) seen as potential converts to the missionary religions. African religion was for a long time defined either nature religion, or secular religion, or not a true religion. Now it is portrayed by outsiders as an unorganised religion and treated accordingly [and] as a result it is always seen as a culture from which everybody can extract whatever they consider valuable and incorporate it into his/her religion. It is perfectly acceptable to learn from African religion, as it is based on good moral values of respect and *Ubuntu*. What is wrong is the wishful thinking of the

churches that they can force the absorption or assimilation of African religion's practitioners into Christianity because some believe the religion is this-worldly (Mndende 2006:153).

Karecki, Kourie and Kretzschmar (2005:92) agreed that Africa's rich spiritual heritage was not always seen in a positive light by Western dualistic scholarship; arguing that early Christian missionaries often ignored the spiritual heritage of the indigenous people of Africa. The 1960s saw a distinctly African theology taking shape, giving academic form to earlier, more "popular" African Christian preaching, insights, and practices (Karecki et al. 2005:92). The "black theology" espoused by South African theologians is in a broader sense part of African theology (Tutu 1997:43). In a limited sense, however, one would say black theology<sup>1</sup> sought to answer the question of the relationship between the Christian faith and political power in South Africa, whereas African theology sought to answer the question of the relationship of Christian theology to the African culture.

### **2.3.3.1 *The strength of African Traditional Religion (ATR)***

The African worldview is a religious worldview based on ATR. It must be noted from the outset that studying ATRs has its own challenges; the first challenge being that there is no single African spirituality. Africa boasts a large variety of diverse religions (Karecki et al. 2005:92). However, there is a plethora of authors, such as Mbiti (1969) and Magesa (1997), who believe there is enough unity in the diversity found in Africa to speak of a common African worldview. Pobee (1983) added lack of sources as the other challenge. Pobee (1983:5) wrote: "In a largely illiterate continent, multiple

---

<sup>1</sup> See Chapter 4 on the introduction of black theology in South Africa.

traditions circulate orally and universal access to them is well-nigh impossible.” One can notice some literacy developments, however, such as the works of Mndende (2006), even if she mainly wrote about the Xhosa traditional religion.

Nevertheless, it must be noted that the strength of ATR is an “experience” or action. In Africa, “religion is more danced out than thought out, heavy intellectual theology wears thin. Such rationalization and theologizing as there are come after experience” (Pobee 1983:6).

There is also the challenge of the complex concept of “Africanness” (Pobee 1983:5). South Africa, for example, consists of Afrikaners and the English who since 1652 and 1820 respectively have known no other home than Africa. One can agree with Pobee (1983:5) that Africans themselves bear the ineradicable marks of foreign influences such as Western culture, Christianity, Islam, etc., resulting to a certain degree in a crisis of identity. Considering the diversity of Africanness and the diversity of Christian traditions, it is appropriate to speak of African spiritualities, in the plural.

Regardless, religion is central to the African people. Mbiti (1969:1) stated that “Africans are notoriously religious, and each people has its own religious system and set of beliefs and practices”. Without going through the religious systems and set of beliefs and practices, it will suffice to examine the “common aspects of Africa philosophy” as they relate to African Christian spirituality.

### **2.3.3.2 *ATR and African Christian spirituality***

Karecki et al. (2005:92-93) tabled five general features that constitute African spirituality. First is the awareness of the deity; as Biko (2017:102) lamented, “we also believe in one God, we had our own community of saints through whom we related to

our God". In Africa there is a strong belief in God as the creator of heaven and earth (Kato 1987:30-31). Consequently, prayer for Africans is based on the belief that the visible world is influenced by, and indeed dependent on, the unseen world (Karecki et al. 2005:92).

The invisible, ever-present Great One can be called upon to grant power to root out evil. As a result, there is an extreme consciousness of the spiritual dimension of life, including God, angels, evil spirits, and Satan among African Christians, for God is not just a name, but a real and powerful presence (Karecki et al. 2005:92).

Secondly, Africans have a holistic worldview, therefore "wholeness of life" defines African spirituality (Pato 2000:93). Tutu (1995a:xvi) explained that

the African worldview rejects popular dichotomies between the sacred and the secular, the material and the spiritual. All life is religious, all life is sacred, all life is of a piece.

The African mind comprehends both realities as a whole. An African myth says that life and death are both sides of the same seed, which is existence (Montilus 1983:52). The world is perceived as a unity and reconstructed as interacting parts, therefore God is not worshiped in isolation from the various aspects of life (Biko 2017:102). A further argument is made by Karecki et al. (2005:92) that "[r]eligion, morality, dancing, praying, eating, laughing and communal worship – everything from the mundane to the mystical – are all part of African spirituality". Thus African Christian spirituality is holistic and incarnational, hence religious leaders, such as Chikane, Tutu, and others, "move effortlessly from prayer to social justice" (Karecki et al. 2005:92).

Thirdly, African spirituality is essentially communal. Biko (2017:32) argued that at the heart of African culture is the oneness of community. That implies two aspects at least. One is that in an African traditional society there are no irreligious people. Religion is part of the life of an individual, as Mbiti (1969:2) explained:

Traditional religions are not primarily for the individual, but for his community of which he is part [...] To be human is to belong to the whole community, and to do so involves participating in the beliefs, ceremonies, rituals and festivals of that community.

The second implication is that ATR is not individualistic. “The rites and ceremonies are always performed by a group – a family, a clan or the population of an area” (Pato 2000:94). Almost all African languages have a proverb that expresses this: “*Umntu, ngumntu ngabantu*”, loosely translated as “a person becomes a person with others”. M’Timkulu (1971:22) argued that “[t]he social ties binding the African to his extended family and clan have always been stronger than the forces of separation that arise from members of different denominations”. Therefore important family occasions like births, marriages, funerals, and clan festivals bring together in one place (of worship) relatives with differing confessional backgrounds (M’Timkhulu 1971:22). Biko (2017:47) added the property angle to the debate by insisting that Africans’ attitudes towards property show how un-individualistic the African is, as a consequence of a community-based and man-centred society. He wrote:

Most things were jointly owned by the group, for instance there was no such thing as individual land ownership. The land belonged to the people and was merely under the control of the local chief on behalf of the people. When cattle went to graze, it was on an open veld and not on anybody’s specific farm.

Farming and agriculture, though on individual family basis, had many characteristics of joint efforts [and] poverty was a foreign concept. This could be really brought about to the community by an adverse climate during a particular season. It never was considered repugnant to ask one's neighbour for help if one was struggling (Biko 2017:47-48).

Likewise, the African Christian experience, as observed by Karecki et al. (2005:93), values participation and belonging to the wider group and particular attention is paid to facilitating harmony and communal well-being. It will therefore be difficult for a leader to be separated from the day-to-day issues that affect the entire community. Pobee (1983:6) noticed how communal spirit is reflected in African Christianity. He noted three examples:

One is the funeral culture that has developed in Africa. People will give up everything for days so as to be present at the funeral. The Christian burial service becomes the focus for the expression of the sense of community. Two is the concept of priest. In a village a Christian priest or minister is not just an official and mediator but a kind of lineage head, to whom both spiritual and secular problems are brought for advice and resolution. He is the type of community head, a general factotum. Third is the case of migrants to the cities. They often do not feel at home in the urban parish. So until they get established in the city, they attach themselves to a sectarian priest in a church. The congregation becomes the surrogate religious kinship group and the priest the head of the kinship group.

Fourthly is Africans' relationship to their ancestors, whom Biko (2017:102) called "community of saints, through whom we related to our God", because they have a

special place next to God. African spirituality has a deep respect for the departed, especially with those who had a positive contribution to the family, clan, or tribe. In an African setting, ancestors are the departed parents, and that dictates a continued relationship. Furthermore, in African culture, parenthood is not limited to the physical relationship. Consequently, “ancestors become mediators between the living and God, the protectors of the family and the guardians of morality” (Karecki et al. 2005:93).

There have been intense and sometimes controversial debates on ancestors among African Christians. Setiloane (1986) made an interesting point regarding ancestors, which is often overlooked by Christians:

Africans, unless they have grown to internalise the Westerners’ views of themselves, strongly resent the suggestion that they worship *Badimo* [“ancestors” in Setswana]. They argue that the European word “worship” does not properly convey the same meaning as that “service” (*tirelo*) which they perform in relation to their ancestors. That “service” which is rendered to *Badimo* is in fact of the same quality and level as that rendered to one’s parents while they are living. In Setswana: “*Redirela Badimo*”: We serve (fulfil all proper duties towards, that is, provide them with the necessities of life, food, clothing, etc.) but “*Rerapela Modimo*”: We pray to *Modimo* [God].

Mbiti (1991) also thought it wrong to call African religion “ancestor worship”. He wrote:

This is wrong because Africans do not worship their departed relatives. It is true that departed relatives are believed to continue to live and to show interest in their surviving families. These families may show their belief by building shrines for the departed and placing bits of food or drink there or on the graves, and sometimes mentioning them in their prayers. But these acts of respect for the

departed of up to four or five generations should not be forgotten [...] Acts of worship such as sacrifices and prayers are only a part of African religion. What is a small part cannot constitute the entire religious system. It is completely wrong to speak of African religion as “ancestor worship” (Mbiti 1991:18).

As a result of the above explanations, some Christians, especially the African independent churches, have embraced ancestors as an essential part of African culture and are seen to be part of the “great cloud of witnesses” mentioned in Hebrews 12:1 (Karecki et al. 2005:93). Other Christians, especially charismatic and Pentecostals, reject ancestors

as part of pre-Christian past. Some African Christians venerate the ancestors as an essential part of their heritage and identity, but not as mediators between themselves and God, since Christ is now the complete sacrifice and mediator (Karecki et al. 2005:93).

Interestingly, other African theologians

portray Christ as the Proto-Ancestor: he is the mediator, who is ever present, giving life and watching over his descendants; he is the Eldest Brother of the Anointed Ones, the model to be imitated; he is also a Healer and Chief; above all he is the Liberator who brings his people out of suffering into the promised land (Karecki et al. 2005:93).

This “service” to ancestors makes sense in a community that values human dignity and value.



The fifth element is that of public worship. As noted above, in an African setting, religion is not something one adds to various aspects of life. As such, ATRs do not have a separate day of worship, like Christians who gather for public worship on a Sunday. Biko (2017:49) explained how religion features in the daily lives of Africans:

We thanked God through our ancestors before we drank beer; married, worked, etc. We would obviously find it artificial to create special occasions for worship. Neither did we see it logical to have a particular building in which all worship would be conducted. We believed that God was always in communication with us and therefore merited attention everywhere and anywhere.

There is also not a separated community of religious people, as noted earlier. Africans are communal; people gather around rites of passage such as birth, puberty, marriage, and death, and everyone who participates in the community automatically participates in its worship, celebration, and community interaction.

African Christian spirituality, especially as reflected in public worship, is filled with music, song and rhythmic movement [and] there is a strong sense of the immediacy of God's presences [...]. In many churches, ample opportunity is provided for extempore and individual responses to God (Karecki et al. 2005:93).

For the above African values to be realised again, missionary Christianity must be decolonised, and the church and Christianity should readopt the biblical posture, which is more African than it is European. That will lead to African cultural values being adopted.

## **2.4 LIVED RELIGION**

A relevant conceptual model (a model understood as a device used to sort out, organise, and simplify more complex processes) employed in this study is a framework of analysis termed by Hall (1997) as “lived religion”. The term “lived religion” comes from the French tradition of sociology of religion “*la religion vecue*” (Hall 1997:vii). Hall is credited for introducing the term in the USA (Neitz 2011:47) and together with Robert Orsi popularised the concept. Wikipedia (2016) defined lived religion as the holistic and ethnographic framework for understanding the beliefs, practices, and everyday experiences of religious and spiritual persons in religious studies.

In the collection of essays, *Lived religion in America: Toward a history of practice* (1997), collected and edited by David Hall, Hall wrote the introduction and Orsi the first chapter. Neitz (2011:47) correctly pointed out that the two chapters serve as a manifesto; positioning the case for lived religion as an analytic concept within academic fields, describing what it is not (not institutional religion, yet not the same as popular religion either), and arguing for the inadequacy of previous formulations.

### **2.4.1 Robert Orsi and David Hall**

Lived religion scholars build on earlier studies in the area of “popular religion”, which has been “taken to mean the religion of the ordinary people that happens beyond the bounds and often without the approval of religious authorities” (Ammerman 2014:190). These scholars rethought what constitutes religion, as Hall (1997:viii) observed:

Popular religion has therefore come to signify the space that emerged between official or learned Christianity and profane (or “pagan”) culture. In this space lay men and women enjoyed a certain measure of autonomy; here they became

actors in their own right, fashioning (or refashioning) religious practices in accordance with local circumstances. Another aspect of this space is that religion encompassed a range of possibilities, some with the sanction of official religion and others not or perhaps ambiguously so. The concept of popular religion has thus made it possible for historians to expand the scope of belief and practice beyond what was authorized by the institutional church.

Therefore, taking a few steps ahead of popular religion, lived religion questions the boundaries of what is considered religious and recognises the laity as players in their own right. For Hall (1997), using lived religion as an approach to the study of religion allows for a wider interpretation of meaning and also provides an opportunity for historians to examine the past and present from many angles. Lived religion embraces popular religion's emphasis on the actions of the laity in creating their own religious practices from available cultural resources (Hall 1997:viii-ix). Lived religion focuses on both meaning (culture) and practice; in fact, meaning precedes practice, and practice of the person in the pew as an actor in one's own right. Hall (1997:xii), however, recognised the weaknesses of the lived religion as being a "fluid, mobile and incompletely structured [...] imperfect tool".

For Orsi (1997:7), "lived religion" recalls the "lived experience" phrase. His argument, and that of the other contributors in *Lived religion in America: Toward a history of practice*, is that religion cannot be neatly separated from the other practices of everyday life. Therefore,

religion is best approached [...] by meeting men and women at this daily task, in all the spaces of their experience [...] religion is not only not *sui generis*, distinct from other dimensions of experience called "profane". Religion comes

into being in an ongoing, dynamic relationship with the realities of everyday life (Orsi 1997:7).

As a result, “theologies are not made in a single venue only – in the streets or in the churches, at shrines or in people’s living rooms” (Orsi 1997:9). However, Orsi (1997:9) warned that

it would be unfortunate if the turn to lived religion meant simply changing the valence of the familiar dualities while preserving them, just substituting religious practices in the streets and work places for what goes on in churches.

Lived religion, as a theoretical framework, offers a more holistic approach to religious studies and also highlights the perspective that religious practices and understanding only have meaning in relation to other cultural forms and in relation to the life experiences and actual circumstances of the people using them (Wikipedia 2016).

#### **2.4.2 Nancy Ammerman and Meredith McGuire**

There are other important titles in the field of lived religion. To mention two, the first is based on the 2003 conference organised by the book’s editor, Nancy Ammerman, *Everyday religion: Observing modern religious life* (2007). She organised scholars to explore how religion is interwoven with activities taking place outside the box of institutionalised religion. Later, Ammerman (2014) addressed the Paul Hanly Furfey Lecture on “Finding religion in everyday life”. Both the book and the article raised questions about what we define as religion and the repercussions of defining a particular activity as religious or not religious. The work asked us to expand the boundaries of what we consider as “religion” beyond the institutionalised forms. Ammerman’s (2014:195) argument was against the theory that “one is or is not

religious, an action either is or not spiritual, a place is either sacred or profane”, and she strongly argued that religion might be anywhere, and that “religious experience” might not fundamentally be different in nature from the “political experience”. Furthermore, religion is not only located in an individual’s conscience, it can also be found in the social processes where it is created and deployed (Ammerman 2014:196). Religion might be in conversations as people gather. It is therefore through relationships and conversations that religion directly or indirectly influences one’s behaviour or work. The lived religion theory can thus assist us to find religion in Biko’s politics.

Meredith McGuire’s *Lived religion: Faith and practice in everyday life* (2008) rather sought to “understand contemporary patterns of religiosity and spirituality by focusing on people’s religions-as-lived” than on religious ideas or beliefs. She confronted the assumption that “individuals practice single religion, exclusive of other religious options”, which has hidden the complex, multifaceted, and dynamic ways that people practise “religion-as-lived”. She further challenged scholars to reconsider how they have constructed boundaries between the sacred and profane in various times and places, for she wanted to provoke her readers to reconsider where the sacred is located, the nature of divine power, the focus of the individual’s religious expression, and the ways we think about the authenticity of religious tradition and group identity (McGuire 2008:22).

### **2.4.3 Wilhelm Gräb and Ruard Ganzevoort**

Immink (2014:132) noticed that “contemporary practical theology has turned towards the study of lived religion”; understandably so, because in the matter of religion, human beings are intentionally involved. Practical theologians see practical theology “as

practical theology of lived religion” (Gräb 2014) or as “hermeneutics of lived religion” (Ganzevoort 2009).

Ganzevoort (2009:3) highlighted two errors in defining religion:

One is the false negatives on the side of newer forms of religion that are easily excluded if we base our definition on traditional forms. The other is the false positives in which traditional forms of adherence count as religious even when there is in fact little transcending or relation with the sacred.

Ganzevoort (2009) avoided these errors by defining religion in functional terms as “the transcending patterns of action and meaning embedded in and contributing to the relation with the sacred”.

Ganzevoort (2009:3) emphasised the “relation with the sacred”, thereby highlighting the theological component of religion. Therefore, practical theologians study religion – lived religion – as theologians. The approach is eventually always theological (Ganzevoort 2009:4). Religion, as a theological study, works with three materials, namely the text (biblical theology), the idea (systematic theology), and the praxis (practical theology). The contribution of practical theology begins with the exploration and understanding of lived religion, and religious sources like the Bible and religious ideas come into play insofar as they relate directly to praxis, often even emerging from the study of praxis. In another paper, Ganzevoort and Roeland (2014:91) reflected on “praxis” as the object of practical theology. Their argument was that praxis emphasises the “action” dimension of religion, or the ways in which religion is lived. This view is traced from Aristotle’s concept of praxis in the context of ethics, which referred to *acting* and *doing* as opposed to theoretical knowledge. Praxis, therefore, is understood as the domain of lived religion and focuses on what people do, rather than on official

institutionalised religious traditions. Furthermore, praxis refers to fields of practices like care, and the patterned configurations of action, experience, and meaning. Ganzevoort and Roeland (2014:99) concluded by stating: “For practical theologians working in a pluralized, secularized, and deinstitutionalised context, praxes such as gardening provide meaningful access into the hidden or implicit spiritual lives of people today.”

Gräb (2014:109) went further than Ganzevoort by stating that “concerning the dimension of the religions, the religious is definitely not to be essentially linked to God”. Gräb (2014) put forward the argument that as far as practical theology understands itself as a practical theology of lived religion, it must define the term “religion” clearly.

Religion is not merely something for people in church or another religious community. Religion is a human endeavour. Religion is a constitutive dimension of humankind. Religion in this sense should not be confused with the positive religions but, rather, belongs to the “*condition humana*”. Positive religions are specific symbolic-ritual elaborations of people’s religious existence (Gräb 2014:109).

This consequently concedes that

[r]eligion that stands for an anthropological dimension of the religious can be found in religious denominations and is lived within them by being a member of one of them. But the religious itself should not be identified with religious groups. This religion is potentially available in each intentional human life. Lived religion is given in life more or less explicitly (Gräb 2014:110).

Gräb (2014) concluded that as a “practical theology of lived religion”, practical theology must conduct research on empirical forms of lived religion:

It has to find out how and where religion as the search for the meaning of life is lived today inside and outside religious communities, inside and outside the church or other established religions. Practical theology has to ask where people have experiences of deeper meaning, religious experiences that become sacred moments of ultimate concern for them in their everyday life. Practical theology has to do research about new forms of sensibility to the spiritual dimensions of life communicated via social media and other forms of popular culture like movies, arts and popular music to investigate the broad field of hybrid forms of religion but also of transformations of the churches and Christian communities and of the spread of other traditional religions. Practical theology has to do empirical research and it has to cooperate with religious and cultural studies (Gräb 2014:111).

## **2.5 CONCLUSION**

In concluding the chapter, one notices that studying Biko proves to be a very complex process. Could it be that SASO members who rejected the church and yet remained vocal on Christian themes such as God, Jesus, etc. sought to practise Christianity in their own terms, outside the religion box? Could it be that Biko as an individual in modern society constructed his meaning systems by drawing from different philosophies and religions, such as Christian spirituality and African traditional philosophy?

The theory of lived religion proved to be the favourable theory for this study compared to the orthodox definition of religion. Its strength lies in that it emphasises religion as



a lifestyle and focuses on the lived experiences of people. The interest is in what people do, rather than what they believe. As such it begins with where people are, and analyses what is going on in relation to the world.

## CHAPTER 3

### BANTU STEPHEN BIKO: BIOGRAPHY AND WRITINGS

#### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

Biko is one of the apartheid children, for he lived and died under the apartheid regime. The word “apartheid” loosely means “apartness” or “separateness” in both Afrikaans and Dutch. Apartheid was a term given to a policy of separating people by race, with regard to where they lived, where they went to school, where they worked, and where they died (Clark & Worger 2011:3). Apartheid policies were legislated in 1948, when Biko was two years old. It must be emphasised that “apartheid” does not merely refer to policies pursued from 1948; it refers to the social, political, and economic arrangements that were in force in South Africa since the Union in 1910, with roots going back much further, in which the position of black people was legally and practically inferior to that of whites. Ruether (2009) divided the apartheid history into two important segments: the proto-apartheid of 1910 to 1948, and the construction of apartheid from 1948 to 1990. However, much had already happened before 1910, and racial discrimination can be traced back to the colonisation of the Cape of Good Hope in 1652 by the Dutch, and the establishment thereafter of an economy based on the use of slaves imported from East Africa and Southeast Asia (Clark & Worger 2011:3). By proto-apartheid, Ruether (2009:215) referred to the fact that the British had already introduced pass laws in the 19<sup>th</sup> century in the Cape Colony and Natal, regulating the movement of black people from tribal areas into those occupied by white people.

Color bars separated whites and blacks in the work place, reserving skilled jobs for whites and barring black workers from striking. But the most important piece of legislation was the 1913 Land Act, which allotted 6 percent (later expanded

to 13 percent) of the land for blacks, 75 percent of the population, in separate parcels, strung along the east coast and northern border, designated for different tribal groups. This left 87 percent of South Africa, including all the prime agricultural land, in the hands of whites. Blacks could not buy or rent land or even work as sharecroppers outside their designated areas (Ruether 2009:215).

This growing segregation led to the formation of the ANC in 1912. The formation of the ANC was preceded by the activism of Mahatma Gandhi, who pioneered nonviolent resistance to segregation. The National Party (NP) was formed in 1914, and against this background white Afrikaner nationalism began to organise, forming the secret *Broederbond* (Brotherhood) to promote Afrikaner culture and language. The NP became the governing party of the country, first in 1924, but was in the opposition during World War 2. However, it returned to power and was again the ruling government from 4 June 1948, a tenure that ran for 46 years, and was only unseated by the ANC on 9 May 1994. In 1948, the NP began to implement the infamous policy of racial segregation known as “apartheid”. The apartheid system included the following laws:

- The Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act (1949; 1950), which forbade interracial marriage and sexual relations between whites and those of a different race.
- The Population Registration Act (1950), which required all citizens to be registered as white, black, or coloured.
- The Suppression of Communism Act (1950), which banned the South African Communist Party or any other party that the government labelled “communist”.

- The Group Areas Act, The Bantu Authorities Act, and The Prevention of Illegal Squatting Act (1950; 1951), which partitioned the country into different areas for the different races, created separate government structures for blacks, and mandated the demolition of black housing deemed illegal “squatting”.
- The Reservation of Separate Amenities Act (1953), which forbade those of different races from using the same drinking fountains, restrooms, etc.
- The Bantu Education Act (1953) and the Extension of University Education Act (1959), which created a separate system of inferior education for blacks and abolished alternative mission schools for blacks, and later set up separate universities for whites, blacks, and coloureds.
- The Afrikaans Medium Decree (1974), which forced all schools to use the Afrikaans language – a language spoken only in South Africa – as the medium of instruction in mathematics, the social sciences, geography, and history at high school level.
- The Industrial Conciliation Act (1959), which separated workers by colour, to prevent interracial unionising.
- The Promotion of Black Self-government Act (1958) and the Black Homeland Citizenship Act (1970), which attempted to create the legal fiction that blacks were “citizens” of their own racial reserves and not citizens of South Africa.

The question is, what made Afrikaners devise these laws? Surely, those who propagated the system of apartheid did not all of a sudden come up with these laws. Loubser (1987:xiii) observed a strange coincidence; a convergence of conscious and subconscious philosophical factors that led to apartheid, each with its own impact and history. First is Utopianism. Loubser (1987:xiv) wrote that apartheid arose from a certain “revolutionary” tendency in Western culture, where ideologies such as

socialism, national-socialism, and communism were seen as blueprints for the total reconstruction of society with the purpose of establishing “a heaven upon earth”. The purpose of apartheid was to be a strategy for the radical remodelling of South African society. Secondly, Loubser (1987:xiv) observed the *bureaucracy and technocracy* of the apartheid system, and correctly concluded that it was an invention of the Western culture, “inasmuch as it was a hi-tech design, with whole cities and areas simply being made apart on the drawing boards”. The apartheid plan was implemented by an effective bureaucracy, which would make it impossible in an African setting. Apartheid was also designed as *a natural reaction to a foreign culture* and its influences. Loubser (1987:xiv) wrote:

Where one culture comes into contact with another, it is natural for groups not to mix, but to withdraw into their own ranks. This tendency is balanced by natural curiosity and economic necessities compelling people to cross boundaries. Whenever an element of threat, due to unequal numbers or the disturbance of the balance of power, occurs, a hardening of attitudes will develop.

There is another argument that apartheid was a *decolonisation* tool and as such good news for blacks, since it was a way out of total white domination and an opportunity for self-expression. The sense was that blacks would not cope in Westernised society, and that it would be humane to offer them cultural rights and full citizenship in separate spaces. As a result of these separate developments, white people thought apartheid would help alleviate conflict. Furthermore, apartheid came as the consequence of *anti-imperialism*. The Afrikaners were seen to be reacting to their “century of wrong”, after suffering at the hands of the British imperialists, and when the loss of their freedom and the threat to their culture are taken into account, it becomes understandable why

they opted to ensure the survival of their culture. Lastly, there is the element of *religious accents*. Loubser (1987:xv) asserted that

[t]he reformed religion was originally adopted by the progressive bourgeoisie of sixteenth-century Europe. In Holland it was the faith of the victorious burghers rebelling against Spanish hegemony during their Eighty Years War (1568-1648). In these times scores of Dutch people accepted the reformed religion for political reasons. In South Africa this progressive religion was to revert readily to a conservative religion intent on self-preservation in an alien environment, with self-interest playing a major role in both cases. The Protestant nature of the Hollanders' religion also influenced political thinking on a deeper level.

In addition, because of its fixation on the preaching of the gospel, and the interpretation of the Bible and liturgies into the language of the people, Protestant congregations had a fragmentary effect on their society and their view of the church.

As a result the church was conceived to be a loose or "invisible" unity of homogeneous congregations. The close-knit structure of reformed congregations and the manner in which discipline and supervision by the church councils were implemented, helped to strengthen this homogeneity. Afrikaners had the secure feeling that it was "their" church (Loubser 1987:xvi).

For a lot of white people, the apartheid system was seen as good for everyone, including blacks. The system was, however, dehumanising for black people, for it lowered their standards of living and threatened their lives. For example, compared to whites, the mortality rate for African and coloured infants was 13 times higher, with as much as 25% of African and coloured children dying before their first birthday (Clark & Worger 2011:68-69). Apartheid was damaging for Africans. Other black leaders

such as Mangosuthu Buthelezi made numerous statements in support of aspects of the apartheid policy, and apartheid government “spokesmen”, like Buthelezi, were often cheered by black people (Loubser 1987:xvi). The optimism eventually vanished, because black people felt that they were “being pushed aside by prosperous whites” (Loubser 1987:xvii), who unilaterally decided on segregation.

In “Implications of apartheid for Christianity”, Prozesky (1990) strongly linked Christians to apartheid. He wrote that

[t]he fuller truth is that the long story of racial injustice has often been the work of Christians, of people shaped and nurtured in a biblically oriented and mostly Protestant form of Christianity as orthodox as any other (Prozesky 1990:127).

Consequently, Prozesky (1990:127) defined apartheid as “a legalised injustice which whites who identify strongly with Christianity have imposed by force on blacks in South Africa, the majority of whom are their fellow Christians”.

Biko lived the rest of his short life in this context, and Christianity, which Biko was critical of, played a role in maintaining subjugation and in promoting the Western culture, against the indigenous culture and religion.

Having summarised the context of apartheid, this chapter sketches a brief biography of Bantu Stephen Biko; and it uses written material as its base as it reviewed biographies, conference papers on his legacy, and other related books on the study of Biko.

### 3.2 BIKO BIOGRAPHY

Several authors have attempted to record Biko's life. Among those who recorded Biko's life is Donald Woods (1987), a white newspaper editor, who told the story of his friendship with Biko to the world. This work was also made into a movie, *Cry Freedom* (1987). Ramphele (1995:136) felt that both the book and the film were an inaccurate portrayal of Biko's political life and misrepresented his personal relationships. She stated that what the film did was to maintain a "lie of Steve as a Ghandi-type person respectably married to a dedicated wife who shared his life and his political commitment" (Ramphele 1995:136). The movie cast her in a peripheral role. Sono (1993:100) also lambasted both the book and the film as a maudlin and mawkish cinematic misrepresentation of Biko's life; citing the fact that Woods had spent too little time with Biko to have known him better. Wilson (1991:15-77; 2011) was an independent writer who met a banned Biko in the Eastern Cape. Wilson interviewed many of Biko's colleagues and friends in great depth. In 1991, at the invitation of Biko's friends – Barney Pityana, Malusi Mpumlwana, and Mamphela Ramphele – she wrote a chapter in the book *Bounds of possibility: The legacy of Steve Biko and Black Consciousness* (1991:15-77). Wilson's latest version of the same chapter was published as *Steve Biko: A Jacana pocket biography* (2011). Xolela Mangcu, a founding executive director of the Steve Biko Foundation, penned *Biko: A biography* (2012). Mangcu grew up in Biko's hometown of Ginsberg, King William's Town. Andile M-Afrika (2016), who also grew up in Ginsberg, wrote a political memoir of Biko's life in the rural township of Ginsberg, titled *Touched by Biko*. This was his second book, for in 2011 he wrote *The eyes that lit our lives: A tribute to Steve Biko*. Both books share actual events that took place in Ginsberg where Biko grew up. There are many other short biographies such as those by Stubbs (2017) and recently by Hook (2014).



### 3.3 A CHRISTIAN “PROPHET-INTELLECTUAL”

The Steve Biko Foundation Centre in Ginsberg, King William’s Town, has an apartheid museum. The exhibition commemorating the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Biko’s death was themed “Biko: The quest for a true humanity”. It started by placing Biko among the early black intellectuals such as Tiyo Soga and Solomon T. Plaatje. The first banner read:

Biko, the intellectual, was the product of a rich African intellectual tradition that dates back hundreds of years. Early black intellectuals came from a time when knowledge was developed and transferred to future generations through *izibongo* (praise poems) and the oral tradition. Later a new generation of intellectuals emerged through contact with missionary education and exposure to Christianity. These intellectuals grappled with the often contradictory value systems of the African tradition and the colonial worldview.

Before Tiyo Soga there were “prophet-intellectuals”, such as Ntsikana and Nxele (Mangu 2012:54). In the second chapter of his book, Mangu (2012:33) located Biko among these Xhosa giants. Peires (1981:84) stated that these two prophet-intellectuals represented the contrasting poles of Xhosa retaliation to Christianity and the West, with Nxele representing struggle, and Ntsikana representing submission. Ntsikana (1780-1820) formed an important link between the traditional and the modern worlds (Booi 2008:7). He was the first Xhosa to convert to Christianity, and he founded the first African Christian organisation in about 1815, and was also the first great Xhosa hymn writer and his “great hymns” appear in modern hymn books (Millard 2002:58).

Tiyo Soga (1829-1871) was the first Xhosa to be ordained as a Christian minister and one of the first Africans to study abroad. This education aroused the “national pride

and consciousness that his missionary teachers had denounced” (Ndletyana 2008:17). His ideas, according to Ndletyana (2008:17), were a trendsetter of nationalist thought and planted the seeds of Black Consciousness and black theology in South Africa.

The long list of “prophet-intellectuals”, at least after Tiyo Soga, includes Makgomo Charlotte (née Manny) Maxeke (1872-1939), and James Calata (1895-1983). Maxeke was a leader in the African Methodist Episcopal Church as a lay preacher and the first black woman from South Africa to obtain a BSc degree (Millard 2002:39). She is commemorated for being at the forefront of women’s protest against passes in 1913 in Bloemfontein. A banner at the apartheid museum in King William’s Town reads: “In a time of women’s subservience, Maxeke embodied the spirit of African assertiveness and self-reliance.”

James Calata was an Anglican clergyman whose political activities were rooted in Christian faith, just like Biko. He was also an African nationalist who desired African unity (Millard 2002:12). Calata was a central figure in the social and political life of the Eastern Cape (Millard 2002:12). He may have been influenced by the life of Ntsikana, having been elected the President of the Order of St Ntsikana in 1938.

None of the abovementioned prophet-intellectuals had an impact on Biko like Robert Mangaliso Sobukwe (1924-1978) did. Sobukwe was known as a man of great intellect and charisma. As such, Biko, together with Stanley Ntwasa, met Robert Sobukwe for consultation on political matters (Arnold 1978:147). Mangcu (2012:119) wrote that “the urban legend is that Steve once walked into a room where Sobukwe was present and exclaimed: ‘*Tyhini, noThixoulapha*’ – Phew, even God is here!” He further added that in Kimberley, where he was banished, besides qualifying as an attorney through

private correspondence, Sobukwe became a preacher in the local church and immersed himself in the life of the community. The government eventually realised that he was making political statements in his prayers and sermons (Mangcu 2012:119). Like most Africanists, Sobukwe based his politics on a Christian foundation, for he quoted the Bible frequently in his political proclamations, and in his preaching he spoke of carrying out God's "calling" or "will" through politics (Graybill 1995:58). That is something seen in the birth of Black Consciousness of Biko and his generation. The concept of Black Consciousness was not a new one devised by Biko that thrust itself suddenly on the South African scene. Sobukwe's Africanist views can be traced back to Anton Lembede.

Lembede was an African intellectual who died at the age of 33. He inspired a tradition of Africanism that rejected cooperation between Africans and other groups. Bernstein (1978:12) stated that "Lembede spoke of a pathological state of mind brought about among blacks by racism – the loss of self-confidence, inferiority complex, frustration, and idolisation of whites". Lembede died very young; however, some of the threads of his ideas were taken up by the PAC when it split away from the ANC at the end of 1958 (Bernstein 1978:12). More like Sobukwe, Lembede's legacy would be that he always saw the spiritual dimension to the struggle for freedom and that the freedom of the body would always be preceded by the freedom of the mind (Graybill 1995:50). The same thinking was shared by Biko and the BCM. However, it must be said that even though Biko's views echoed Lembede's ideas, the BCM and Biko embraced the coloured and Indian sections of the population, whereas Lembede emphasised exclusion of all non-Africans (Bernstein 1978:14). Furthermore, Sobukwe perceived the journey towards self-reliance on the part of Africans as a spiritual revolution, making it a religious experience "in which we shall become purer and purer, leaving

all dross of racialism and similar evils behind” (Graybill 1995:51). Biko may have been influenced by Sobukwe’s belief in mental revolution as a prerequisite to political revolution, and Sobukwe’s views on the church and the rocky relationship he had with the church (Pogrund 2009:269-275) must have been known to Biko.

Indeed, as Mangcu (2012:34-39) argued, Biko, like all the abovementioned prophet-intellectuals, had the privilege of being schooled by Christian missionaries (Mostert 1992:1278). As we will see later, this schooling exposed Biko to Christianity and its lessons. The other advantage of being educated in these schools was the exposure to liberalism, as Biko sharply criticised both the church and liberalism. Magaziner’s (2010:5-6) observation was that

[t]he students, clerics, and artists who comprised the Black Consciousness Movement came from South Africa’s small, middle class, those privileged enough to spend time at universities and to read and reflect on their situation. They were thus descendants of previous generations of African thinkers whose ideas featured prominently in works that examine the history of African theatre and poetry, journalism and academia.

Biko was a prophet-intellectual in the order of the Xhosa great elite leaders, such as Tiyo Soga, Robert Sobukwe, and many others. At the same time he was one of the first generations to experience Bantu education. Mostert (1992), a historian, stated that Biko personified many of the characteristics of the missionary-educated African elite that had assumed leadership after the frontier wars. However, he also came to embody a complete rupture with that tradition in a sense that Biko advocated for a break from the stranglehold of white liberalism and advocated for black leadership in

organisations such as NUSAS (Mzamane, Maaba & Biko 2006:122) and the church (Biko 2004:64).

### **3.3.1 Christian family background**

Biko was the third child of Matthew Mzingaye and Alice Nokuzola “Mamcethe” Biko. His siblings were Bukelwa, the first-born sister, Khaya, the elder brother, and Nobandile, the younger sister. The parents “met and married in Whittlesea when Mzingaye was sent to work with Mamcethe’s father, both of them policemen” (Wilson 2011:19). Born in Tarkastad, Eastern Cape, on 18 December 1946, his father named him Bantu Stephen. Wilson (2011:18) explained the significance of the two names:

Bantu literally means “people”. Later Biko called himself “son of man”. Although this was done often with tongue in cheek, Malusi Mpumlwana interprets Biko as understanding his name to mean that he was a person for other people, or more precisely, *umntu ngumntu ngabanye abantu*, “a person is a person by means of other people”. The name Stephen was prophetic of the manner of his death. It connects with that of his biblical namesake, Stephen, who was stoned to death. Stephen accused the Jews of being false to their vocation, of being stubborn, like their forebears, in refusing to acknowledge that truth.

Biko spent his “short and stormy career” (Woods 1987:55) challenging the authorities and his persecutors to acknowledge the humanity of black people. This ultimately led to his death on 12 September 1977. The arrival of the Biko family in King William’s Town coincided with the NP’s ascendance to power under D.F. Malan in 1948, when Biko turned two years old.

Mangcu (2012) recalled that, after his resignation from the police force, Mzingaye joined Fort Cox Agricultural College near Keiskammahoek. Having obtained another job as a clerk in the Native Affairs Office in King William's Town, he studied towards a degree at the University of South Africa (Unisa) (Mangcu 2012:88). Mzingaye and Mamcethe's family was a Christian family. In fact, Biko's grandfather, Mpatsiyana, was a religious leader (Mzamana et al. 2006:121). As such, Mzingaye signed up as a pianist at the local church in King William's Town (Mangcu 2012:89), and Mamcethe was "an extraordinary hard worker, a church leader and a community magnate" (Mzamana et al. 2006:121). Biko grew up in a Christian environment (Wilson 2011:19) as a nominal Anglican (Duncan 2008:119). In 1950, Mzingaye fell ill and was admitted to the St Matthew's Hospital in Keiskammahoek (Wilson 2011:19). "His abdomen became distended with water, which made it difficult for him to take any food, and he died" (Mangcu 2012:89). By then Biko was four years old.

### **3.3.2 Christian schooling**

Biko did not only grow up in a Christian family and attended a Christian church, he also received an education from Christian schools. He had begun his schooling at Brownlee Primary for two years (Woods 1987:55), and continued in 1957, at the age of 10, at Charles Morgan Primary School doing Standard 3, which is now called Grade 5. Because of Biko's brilliance, his Standard 3 class teacher recommended to the principal that he should skip a year and join the Standard 5 class (Grade 7), which was granted (Mangcu 2012:98). Four years later, "the youthful Biko went off to secondary school at Forbes Grant" (Wilson 2011:22). On the political front, while Biko was still at Forbes Grant, the ANC and PAC were banned. This followed the 1960 Sharpeville uprising in which 69 people were killed by apartheid police.

Consequently, 1960/1961 saw the formation of uMkhonto weSizwe (MK), the military wing of the ANC, and Poqo (which was replaced in 1968 by the Azanian People's Liberation Army), the PAC's military wing. The BCM emerged in the mid-1960s in the political vacuum created by the banning of the ANC and PAC, and the jailing of its leaders (Mngxitama et al. 2008:4).

Meanwhile, Biko's academic brilliance came to his advantage again. He was doing so well at school that the Ginsberg community gave him a bursary to go to Lovedale Institution in nearby Alice, where his brother Khaya was already in boarding school (Wilson 2011:23). This kind gesture had a positive impact on Biko, for it inspired him to set up the Ginsberg Bursary Fund in 1975, when he was banned (Mangcu 2012:104). Three months into his studies at Lovedale, the mission school was closed down as a result of strikes by senior pupils; among them Biko's brother, Khaya. Khaya was arrested "and charged for being a member of an unlawful organisation, Poqo" (Mangcu 2012:107). Biko was also arrested in what appeared to be the first of the few that followed. The two brothers were expelled from Lovedale on 2 April 1963 (M-Afrika 2011:64).

The same year (1964) that Mandela and most of the high command of MK were sentenced to life imprisonment in the Rivonia Trial, Biko was admitted to the private St Francis College, a boarding school in Mariannhill, near Durban. The college was a Catholic missionary school, with a tradition, like Lovedale College, of producing leaders who had gone on to serve the African community with distinction (Mzamana et al. 2006:121). St Francis boasts some illustrious alumni; including Benedict Wallet Vilakazi, an early African intellectual; Ben Ngubane, former cabinet minister; Sibusiso Sibisi, head of the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR); and the late Jeffrey Baqwa, Black Consciousness activist and close friend of Biko (Mangcu

2012:109). The college life had a positive influence on the 18-year-old Biko. Because of its progressive political environment, yet structured by religious precepts, the college helped improve Biko's political thinking in many ways (Hook 2014:11). It stimulated Biko's interest in continental and international affairs. He spent endless hours debating with like-minded students and listening to news about Hastings Banda, Ahmed Ben Bella, Oginga Odinga, and many other African voices. In particular, Biko identified with Odinga (Wilson 2011:25). Not only was Biko's thinking stimulated in areas of history, literature, and poetry, but also "in terms of honing his public speaking and debating skills" (Hook 2014:11).

Furthermore, it was perhaps during this time that Biko began to critique church authority and practices. A Catholic nun, who became Biko's friend, discussed with him issues of hierarchy, and the strictly disciplined associations between nuns and monks (Wilson 2011:24). Hook (2014:11) thought that the

rigid and hierarchical nature of Catholicism as he experienced it there seemed to differ markedly from the Christian beliefs that proved such a source of consolation and strength to his mother.

Biko continued to follow with curiosity questions of faith and belief, and he made known his understanding of religion and his disappointment in the church (Wilson 2011:25). For interest sake, Hook (2014) stated that it was around this time that Aelred Stubbs, who had not yet met Biko personally, even though he was known to the Biko family in Ginsberg, received a letter from Biko which posed a string of exploring questions about the "Roman Catholic teachings he was now receiving, teachings which he viewed as either opaque or unacceptable" (Hook 2014:11).



### **3.3.3 A “Christian” activist**

In 1965, Biko matriculated from St Francis College. In 1966, at the age of 19, Biko pursued medical studies by enrolling at the University of Natal Black Section (UNB). He did consider studying law; however, he was discouraged by the popular understanding in the Eastern Cape that equated law studies with political activism (Wilson 2011:28). Studying at this university was one of the few possibilities for good tertiary education, and a privilege of the bright black students with good matric results (Wilson 2011:28-29).

#### **3.3.3.1 *National Union of South African Students (NUSAS)***

While at Mariannhill, Biko seemed to have attended a NUSAS conference (Stubbs 2004:177), hence on his arrival at the university, he immediately followed the organisation by attending its July conference as an observer (Wilson 2011:30). Having been elected to the Student Representative Council (SRC), Biko attended the 1967 NUSAS congress held at Rhodes University in Grahamstown, where he challenged NUSAS to respond to the situation of segregated residential facilities. Upon arrival at the congress, delegates discovered that the university was adhering to a government ruling prohibiting the accommodation of non-whites on the campus. Africans were housed at a church in a nearby township, while Indian and coloured delegates were accommodated in the town of Grahamstown. What was worse was that meals would be served on the campus to whites only (Karis & Gerhart 2013: 95-96).

Biko led a motion to adjourn the conference until they could find a “non-racist venue” (Wilson 2011:31). The NUSAS leadership developed a countermotion, which was to merely censure the university (Karis & Gerhart 2013:96); arguing that the

accommodation issue was the university's decision, not a NUSAS one (Mangcu 2012:125). For Biko, a decisive moment came when a late-night vote of 42 to 9 against his motion was cast. That actually hurt him, as Mokoape confessed to Mangcu: "What happened there hurt him deeply. He saw this blatant hypocrisy I had been telling him about unfolding in front of his own eyes" (Mangcu 2014:125). Later, Biko wrote of the congress: "This is perhaps the turning point in the history of black support for NUSAS" (Biko 2004:12). He realised that no useful forthright opinion could be expressed from within NUSAS (Mzamana et al. 2006:122).

### **3.3.3.2 University Christian Movement (UCM)**

Immediately after the NUSAS congress, Pityana and Biko attended a UCM student meeting in Stutterheim<sup>2</sup> (Wilson 2011:34). At this point Biko and other black students felt that their aspirations were not being met and could not be met within NUSAS. The founding conference of UCM was attended by close to 90 delegates, half of them black. "The new movement did mark a reversal from the now defunct Student Christian Association (SCA), which had maintained a colour bar" (Hirson 1979:70). The SCA was founded in 1896 by Andrew Murray and John R. Mott. The organisation was affiliated with the anti-apartheid World Student Christian Federation (WSCF) (Ndaba, Owen, Panyane, Serumula & Smith 2017:131). De Gruchy (1997:164) stated that in 1965 the SCA split into four racially based organisations as a result of the ideological pressures of apartheid. Resane (2017b:155) further explained:

The SCA had been multi-racial, but pressure from the NGK [Dutch Reformed Church] in the late 1950s and early 1960s led to its fragmentation along the

---

<sup>2</sup> Stutterheim is a small town located about 40 km from King William's Town in the Transkei region (modern-day Eastern Cape).

ethnic lines, with the SCA serving white English-speaking students, and with the parallel organisation for Afrikaners known as the *Afrikaanse Christelike Studente Vereeniging* (ACSV). The Student Christian Movement (SCM) was formed for black students and the *Christelike Studente Assosiasie* (CSA) for the coloured students.

Snail (1993:239) argued that, following the political vacuum of the early 1960s, the church became the platform for Africans to air their views and protest, in an all-black organisation; this happened in the form of the UCM. Walshe (1983:149) traced the re-emergence of African nationalism, usually described as the BCM, to the formation of UCM in 1966.

The movement was an interdenominational formation which sought to explore what the church and individuals could do to bring about change in South Africa (Badat 2009:51). Even though it was termed a movement of Christians, Badat (2009:51) noted that it included students of all faiths, as well as those who did not have faith. It is important to note that the UCM came into existence at a time of radical student politics around the world in places such as Berlin, Madrid, Tokyo, Paris, and Chicago. These developments were influenced by the Civil Rights Movement in the USA, the Chinese revolution, and decolonisation movements in Africa and Europe (Mangcu 2012:151). Mangcu (2012) added that in the years 1968-1972, the biggest player in the world's revolutionary turmoil was the church. There was a turn towards a more secular theology, which inspired Christian students around the world to consider their duty in the "here and now – as opposed to the futuristic orientation of established religions" (Mangcu 2012:151).

The UCM showed interest in the emerging black theology; and Biko was drawn to the UCM, largely to the movement's interest to black theology, the moral dimension of the struggle, and the role occupied by the church in society (Mangcu 2012:152). Black theology originated in the USA as a consequence of the Black Power Movement in the 1960s, and it was one of the earliest exponents, James Cone, who gave black theology content (Motlhabi 2008:1). According to Cone (1970), black theology derived its inspiration from black experience, history, culture, revelation, and tradition. Wilmore (1973:298-302) added that the sources of black theology are black folk religion, the writings and addresses of black preachers and public men of the past, and the traditional religions of Africa (Motlhabi 2008:19). In South Africa, black theology emerged in the Black Consciousness era. Hopkins (1990:94) stated that "Black Consciousness and black theology began during the harsh years at the end of the 1960s and the start of the 1970s". The UCM played a major role in introducing black theology in the South African context. Motlhabi (2008:22) explained:

Through the UCM's Director of Theological Concerns, Basil Moore, black theology as a method of theological reflection was imported from the US and placed under a separate project bearing that name, with its director. Although the name and method were imported, it was made clear that in content and outlook black theology in South Africa was situational, that is, South African and not American.

Furthermore, Motlhabi (2008:23), one of the insiders in the Black Theology Project, asserted that the message of black theology was liberation:

To set at liberty the oppressed. As a liberation theology, therefore, it recognised that blacks needed to be liberated from socio-political bondage, which the

church tended to ignore in favour of a pie-in-the-sky, literal interpretation of passages such as “My kingdom is not of this world” and “Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar’s” [...] Black theology wanted to serve as a challenge to the conscience of the church for the benefit of genuine Christian love and its implications for the struggle for justice.

Therefore, the main reason for the rise of black theology in South Africa

was the seeming irrelevance of the white church in ministering to the psycho-spiritual needs of black people. Not only was the church seen as a colonial church, it was also seen as a status quo (Motlhabi 2008:2).

According to Motlhabi (2008:2), black theology was directed and it assisted mainly the African Initiated Churches (AICs), which protested against white theology, but had no theological answers to the challenge of white domination and oppression. AICs and other Black Consciousness organisations such as SASO, the BPC, and the Interdenominational African Ministers’ Association (IDAMASA), adopted the spirit and approach of black theology. Walshe (1983:149-150) credited the interest in black theology to the emergence of a black caucus, with Biko and Pityana as leaders. The black caucus

was determined not only to understand the long history of black protest in South Africa, but also to draw on the current writings of black Americans, for example Baldwin, Carmichael, Cleaver and Cone. One result was that the UCM started to focus on black theology and its biblical foundations – the Scriptures’ call for the liberation of the poor and culturally oppressed (Walshe 1983:150).

The UCM used the gospel not only to challenge the apartheid establishment, but also to challenge churches to take a more practical, robust approach to counter apartheid and participate to a far greater degree in social change (Wilson 2011:34). It was not long before the UCM had both internal and external problems. Walshe (1983:149) stated that the tension was partly due to the fact that since the Sharpeville massacre, black and white cooperation was becoming difficult, and as a result the UCM could not withstand the pressures resulting from the racial polarisation. Furthermore, the UCM turned out to be less useful as a political cover than the students had hoped. Students were kept under surveillance, halls of residences were raided repeatedly, and leaders were arrested and interrogated (Hirson 1979:71). The UCM was subsequently banned in 1969. In 1968, the black caucus discussed the formation of SASO. Biko had already done ground work long before the 1968 conference. He was a great organiser, synthesiser, and proselytiser who combined theory and action in equal proportions (Sono 1993:102). He “had travelled to a number of black universities across the country to gather support for the idea of a blacks-only student organization” (Hook 2014:17). The UCM eventually dissolved in 1972.

### **3.3.3.3 *South African Students’ Organisation (SASO)***

The 1968 December conference held at Mariannhill, Natal, became a consultative meeting where a name and draft constitution were approved and plans for formal launching were discussed (Khoapa 1972:20). The official launching of SASO was at Turfloop in July 1969, and Biko was elected as the national president. Other leaders were Pityana, Harry Nengwekhulu, Hendrick Musi, Petrus Machaka, Mana Kgware, and Aubrey Mokoape, as well as J. Goolam and Strini Moodley, Biko’s Indian friends (Gerhart 1978:261).

Badat (2009) sketched the historical development of SASO, and many other writings (Sono 1993; Howarth 1994; Karis & Gerhart 2013) analysed the organisation and the philosophy of Black Consciousness. More than anything, SASO, in its eight years of existence, demonstrated that well-planned initiatives by black people could ultimately create changes powerful enough to undermine the prevailing political order and that, in a way, reversed a defeatist pattern of political expectations (Karis & Gerhart 2013:97). Karis and Gerhart (2013:97-98) further noted that the success of SASO was due to three conditions:

First, SASO took root because of its capacity to seek out, recognize, and exploit every potential material and intangible resource that could be wrung out of its resource-poor political environment. Second, its early leadership was skilful in devising tactics that, at least for the first few critical years, were able to outwit the system of rigid controls that kept blacks politically immobilized. Most important was the ability of the early leadership to craft an ideological appeal capable of striking a responsive chord among large numbers of young blacks.

SASO did not only address itself to student challenges, it also looked at broader societal issues of black emancipation. Khoapa (1972:21) explained that

1971 saw SASO rapidly increasing her membership and gradually consolidating her position within the black community. The statement that “we are *black* students and not black *students*” was thoroughly substantiated as SASO set about consulting with many black community organisations in an effort to completely weld the student efforts with those of the rest of the community in this great surge towards attainment of the black man’s

aspirations. Black Consciousness was highly stressed by SASO as the philosophy and approach to be adopted.

Indeed, following three conferences in 1971, an agreement was reached to form a political organisation that would cater for the interests of black people, and at the 8-10 July 1972 conference, the BPC was formally launched. This study is limited in terms of sketching the SASO and BPC history and philosophy, but the focus is on Biko as a leader of SASO and its relation to the religious community. Hirson (1979:78), Gerhart (1978:294), and recently Magaziner (2010) noticed the role played by the religious community in the entire BCM. Right at the beginning of the BPC, SASO leaders turned to religious leaders for support. Hirson (1979:78) stated:

The most important influences on the newly founded BPC were those of the religious bodies, and this was not accidental. Most of the SASO leaders had been in the UCM and, political considerations aside, the student leaders were deeply involved in propagating black theology inside the black church movement. Steve Biko, first President of SASO and Nyameko Pityana, Secretary-General of SASO, both contributed essays to the volume *Black Theology*, first published in 1972.

Black Consciousness fared better among the black clergy, and in fact there was a link between SASO, the BPC, and the African Independent Churches Association. The black clergy, who were in white-run churches, were “a potentially politicised group” because of the hypocrisy showed by their white colleagues in differential salary scales and appointment in positions of authority (Gerhart 1978:294).

It is, however, important to note that not all black clergy were prepared to take direct political action. In fact, Hirson (1979:80) observed that, at best, there were very few



church leaders who showed radicalism that could lead to a meaningful change, and these were not assisted by many church leaders, and still less those of the overwhelming majority of the white laity from member churches of the SACC. Nor, for that matter, did they have the support of most of the African Independent Churches Association.

Those clergy who saw the importance of being actively involved in social issues affecting the community challenged their colleagues, and asked: "To whom or what are you truly giving your first loyalty – to a sub-section of mankind, an ethnic group, a human tradition, a political idea – or to Christ?" (Hirson 1979:80). In addition, the students, Biko in particular, challenged the church and its leaders to be involved in the communal issues as it is seen in his speech, "The church as seen by a young layman" (Biko 2017:58).

Because of the importance of the role of religion, and more directly Christianity and black theology in the development of Black Consciousness philosophy, this study asserts that although Biko was not a theological student or a theologian in a strict sense of the term, through his family background, his education in missionary schools, his involvement in the UCM and SASO, and his close relationship with outspoken theological students such as Stan Sabelo Ntwasa, Mokgethi Motlhabi, Barney Pityana, and Malusi Mpumlwana, he grasped enough of the Christian religion to engage in his own creative reflection on theological matters, particularly as it affected the political plight of the black community. Furthermore, Biko's Black Consciousness concerned itself with religious movements of Ethiopianism and African religious political prophecy, for it drew intellectual and political inspiration from dialogue from the Civil Rights and Black Power movements in the USA, from Negritude and other forms of post-colonial

thinking and writing in Africa (Wilson 2011:42). Further spiritual influence occurred during the years of his banning.

#### **3.3.3.4 *Spiritual support***

Biko's SASO activities inevitably took their toll on his studies. Political involvement had taken precedence over a prospective medical calling and in 1971 he was expelled from the university (Hook 2014:25). In March 1973, Biko and his colleagues, Pityana, Cooper, Koka, Moodley, Nengwekhulu, Modisane, and Mafuna, were banned, and Biko returned to Ginsberg. It was during this banning period that Biko met the Anglican priest David Russel. Father Russell provided both spiritual support to Biko and structural support for SASO and the BPC. Biko was drawn to Russell because of his work with the poor in his community. He was also curious of Russell's explanation that as a priest, he was called to poverty, chastity, and obedience, which included leading a celibate life. Biko tested himself against these in light of his own commitment and wrote a six-page document, which he and Russell discussed at length (Wilson 2011:80-81).

The document discussed issues around the existence of God, and obedience to God. The document showed how Biko was concerned about the tensions that manifested between spiritual belief and political action in the here and now. Biko concluded that obedience to God is "at the heart of the conviction of most selfless revolutionaries" (Hook 2014:28). These words will be discussed further in the study. Suffice it to note that during Biko's banning, many of the theological debates and questions that had arisen from his correspondence with Father Stubbs once again came to the fore.

Wilson (2011:81) boldly declared that “Biko was a religious person in the broad sense of the word”. Indeed Biko saw himself as a committed Christian at an early age. When Zylstra, of the then Canadian Institute for Christian Studies, asked him about how Christianity fit in with Black Consciousness, Biko started by saying, “I grew up in the Anglican church, so this matter is an important one to me” (Woods 1987:117). His answer proved Father Stubbs’ assertions that Biko never repudiated being an Anglican. Stubbs (2004:186) stated that this was due mainly to allegiance to his mother, and to admiration of the quality of her faith. Biko told Father Stubbs his childhood story as a server at a church in Ginsberg, that

“during a sermon he and his pals would retreat under the altar where, concealed from view by the frontal, they would tuck into the communion wine, emerging for the Sanctus with swaying candlesticks” (Stubbs 2017:215-216).

In one of his visits to Ginsberg, Stubbs remembered how, towards midnight, a banned Biko suggested that they might have Eucharist the next morning. Stubbs (2017:203) narrated:

I was startled; I knew by this time his views about the church. But I could see that he was quite sober to know what he was asking for, so I manifested no surprise and agreed. It was his way both of saying that he guessed that he and many of the community wanted a Eucharist as a community, and also of signifying that I was now acceptable not only as a person but also as a priest. I had neither vestments, wafers, wine nor vessels, and only one book.

In the morning, Father Stubbs asked Mamphela to bake scones and they diluted brandy with water. “Malusi Mpumlwana and Sister Moletsane led the singing; and we had our Eucharist in the lounge of the doctor’s house” (Stubbs 2017:203).

Stubbs (2017:203) concluded this story by saying, “It was the only time I was ever able to give Stephen the Sacrament of the body and blood of Christ.” In restriction, Biko continued to work for the movement by establishing the Eastern Cape branch of the BCP in Ginsberg. Under his leadership, the Zanempilo Community Health Centre was established, and the Zimele Trust Fund was also set up to provide support for recently released political prisoners. Other projects included the Njwaxa Home Industries project, the Ginsberg Crèche, and the Ginsberg Educational Trust, which aimed to provide funding for students who would not otherwise have been able to afford a tertiary education (Hook 2014:30). Biko was busy during his banning years. The BCP set up *Black review*, with Biko as editor (1972). The first issue was printed in 1973, dedicated to the banned Biko and Bokwe Mafuna, written under Bennie Khoapa’s name.

The second year of his banning saw Biko being arrested and discharged several times, sometimes charged and acquitted. In 1975, he was detained and held for 137 days without charge or trial. During the year of the Soweto uprisings, Biko was elected honorary president of the BPC just a month before the June 16 massacre. Following that, he was subpoenaed to give testimony in the SASO-BPC trial. Later that year, he found himself in solitary confinement for 101 days. Again in that fateful year, 1977, Biko was in and out of prison; having been arrested, detained, and released in March, and arrested, charged, and acquitted in July. Eventually, in August 1977, he was arrested again, together with Peter Jones, who was a friend and BCP activist. On 12 September 1977, Biko died in prison, at the hands of white police. Bernstein (1978:17) correctly observed that

[a]s long as Biko still remained alive he was a dangerous enemy of apartheid.

His image was untarnished; his prestige among black Africans was high; and

he commanded respect among those whites with whom he had come into contact.

Biko's funeral (25 September 1977) more resembled a political rally than anything else. It had all the elements of Biko's life, family, politics, and religion. Bernstein (1978:25) recalled that a crowd of more than 10 000 people had gathered in King William's Town, and some were blocked on their way to the funeral, with 13 Western nations sending their diplomats. Churchmen were led by the then Anglican bishop of Lesotho, Right Reverend Desmond Tutu. Part of Tutu's tribute read as follows:

God called Steve Biko to be his servant in South Africa – to speak up on behalf of God, declaring what the will of this God must be in a situation of evil, injustice, oppression and exploitation. God called him to be the founder father of the Black Consciousness Movement [...] a movement by which God, through Steve, sought to awaken in the black person a sense of his intrinsic value and worth as a child of God, not needing to apologise for his existential condition as a black person, calling on blacks to glorify and praise God that he had created them black (Tutu & Webster 1990:38).

Tutu's assertion that God "called Biko" is very rich. Protestants refer to "calling" what Catholics would call "vocation" or a theology of vocation. For years, Christians have assumed that one who had a "calling or vocation" was called into a life of ministry in the church, as either a priest or a nun for Catholics, or a pastor or missionary for Protestants. Tutu actually placed Biko on the same pedestal as preachers. More than that, a theology of vocation indicates "if a vocation represents a call of God to serve him in the world, then that vocation is sacred" (Smith 1999:23). Biko's call as a BCM leader and a liberator is sacred because it came from God. The church has always

viewed any work that was “in the world” or involved active engagement with society as secular and probably evil. This came as a result of Hellenistic thought that influenced the early church (Smith 1999:23). Therefore, the spiritual ideal was to leave the world, to be separate from it, and to live a life of prayer and study as far as possible. A belief became deeply imbedded in the psyche of the church: that if you had a vocation, you had to leave “secular” employment and accept the responsibility of service in and through the church. Tutu’s analysis of Biko broke the boundaries between the secular and the sacred, religion and politics, and church and state.

Such spirituality baffled Mafuna (2007:89), who asked “why I had never before seen, heard and understood the man’s [Biko] spirituality?” Indeed Biko was an “authentic theologian”, whose faith manifested itself in the struggle for social transformation and justice (Hopkins 2016 in Pityana et al. 2016:194-200). Biko sought to unite issues of faith and justice by redefining activism as belonging to the realm of the sacred. He is a saint in a secular world (Sono 1993:100).

### **3.4 BIKO’S WRITINGS ON RELIGION**

Biko had interesting thoughts on religion and spirituality. Most of these thoughts are recorded in the book *I write what I like: A selection of his writings* (Biko 2017). The first edition of this book was compiled by Father Aelred Stubbs and Hugh Lewin, after collecting Biko’s seminar and meeting papers in 1978. It is through these papers that one can, in the words of Nkosinathi Biko, “tell the account of the man and his mind” (Biko 2017:xxxii). The editors stated that the writings in the book belonged to the period 1969 to 1972, when Biko was active in the BCM. The book concluded with Father Stubbs’ memoir. The writings are in chronological order.

The 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary edition starts with a foreword by Njabulo Ndebele, followed by the personal reflections of four people who were moved by the BCM and Biko.

There is also Biko's writing to his matric<sup>3</sup> class at St Francis College in Mariannhill; followed by acknowledgements, a preface by Desmond Tutu, and an introduction by Biko's son, Nkosinathi. The first chapter is dedicated to a biographical summary of Biko. From the second to the fifth chapter, one finds nothing on religion, since the chapters are writings on organisational matters concerning SASO. Chapters 5 and 6 appeared in the SASO newsletters as articles under the title "I write what I like", signed by "Frank Talk". In August 1970, Biko wrote "Black souls in white skins" (Biko 2017:20), which was addressed to white liberals. In September, he wrote "We blacks" (Biko 2017:29), addressing the black community. It is in this chapter where we find the first comments on religion.

### **3.4.1 "We blacks"**

Biko noticed that apartheid was a very complicated system connected to white supremacy and capitalist exploitation. He wrote that "material want is bad enough, but coupled with spiritual poverty, it kills" (Biko 2017:30). He deliberately chose to focus on spiritual poverty rather than material want. For Biko, "spiritual poverty" referred to two things. Firstly, spiritual poverty pointed to the low self-esteem among the black population.

But the type of black man we have today has lost his manhood. Reduced to an obliging shell, he looks with awe at the white power structure and accepts what he regards as the "inevitable position" (Biko 2017:30).

---

<sup>3</sup> Today's equivalent of Grade 12.

Consequently, he marked out the starting point to the solution as making

the black man come to himself; to pump back life into his empty shell; to infuse him with pride and dignity, to remind him of his complicity in the crime of allowing himself to be misused (Biko 2017:31).

He then defined Black Consciousness as an inward-looking process, designed to lift up the spirit. Secondly, when he spoke of “spiritual poverty” he referred to the irrelevance of Christianity to an African congregant. The imperialists destroyed the African structures, emptied the African brain, and “distorted, disfigured and destroyed” African history. “No longer was reference made to African culture, it became barbarism. Africa was the ‘dark continent’. The religious practices and customs were referred to as superstition” (Biko 2017:31).

For Biko, African culture had positive virtues such as “oneness of community” and “easiness of communication”. The white man did not leave the black man without a religion. He introduced his religion, Christianity. This religion suffocates the African faithful, because of its irrelevance to his situation. Biko’s (2017:33) view was that

[p]eople involved in imparting Christianity to the black people steadfastly refuse to get rid of the rotten foundation which many of the missionaries created when they came. To this date black people find no message for them in the Bible simply because our ministers are still too busy with moral trivialities. They blow these up as the most important things that Jesus had to say to people. They constantly urge the people to find fault in themselves and by so doing detract from the essence of the struggle in which the people are involved.



The first result of this spiritual poverty is that people are distracted from issues that affect their communities; in other words, the gospel becomes irrelevant to communal issues. The second result is that black people read the Bible with a shocking gullibility. The reaction of the young generation is to drop the church altogether, because they cannot understand the “the well-meaning God who allows people to suffer continually under an obviously immoral system” (Biko 2017:34).

Biko was aware of the impracticalities of convincing the black population to do away with Christianity. He therefore saw black theology as a solution to spiritual poverty. “Obviously the only path open for us now is to redefine the message in the Bible and to make it relevant to the struggling masses” (Biko 2017:34). The argument is that adapting the message to the struggles of the people can only happen if the Christian religion is adapted to fit the cultural situation of the people. Black theology portrays Jesus as a confrontational God who is on the side of the marginalised. According to Biko, those who are oppressed will at some point call on their God,

“Thy will be done.” Indeed his will shall be done but it shall not appeal equally to all mortals for indeed we have different versions of his will. If the white God has been doing the talking all along, at some stage the black God will have to raise his voice and make himself heard over and above noises from his counterpart (Biko 2017:33).

### **3.4.2 Some African cultural concepts**

In 1971, Biko carried the theme of ATR to IDAMASA and the Association for the Educational and Cultural Development of the African People (ASSECA) conference at the Ecumenical Lay Training Centre, Edendale, Natal. He felt that African culture has

been a speciality of foreign observers, who may not necessarily have a first-hand experience of it (Biko 2017:44). His observation was that African culture stands no chance in the “acculturation” process, because the fusion of the African culture and the Anglo-Boer culture is one-sided; like he said, “the African culture had all the trappings of a colonialist culture and therefore was heavily equipped for conquest” (Biko 2017:45). Colonialists equipped themselves with, among other things, “a highly exclusive religion that denounced all other gods and demanded a strict code of behaviour with respect to clothing, education ritual and custom” (Biko 2017:45). This spelled disaster for African culture, for it was considered pre-Van Riebeeck culture, and, as a consequence, time bound. Biko disputed this, citing eternal African fundamental aspects of the African culture. The influence of African writers such as Dr Kaunda was evident throughout Biko’s speech.

Man, or a human being, “*umntu*”, is the fundamental aspect of African culture. In fact, anything done in an African society is in relation to the well-being of “*umntu*”, because “ours has always been a Man-centred society” (Biko 2017:45). This is seen in how intimate Africans are in their communication. This “intimate communication” does not only happen between two friends; but, in fact, between peers anywhere they gather. Caring for others is seen by how people frequently visit and check on one another. Biko (2017:46) wrote:

A visitor to someone’s house is always met with the question “what can I do for you?” This attitude to see people not as themselves but as agents for some particular function either to one’s disadvantage or advantage is foreign to us. We are not a suspicious race. We believe in the inherent goodness of man. We enjoy man for himself. We regard our living together not as an unfortunate mishap warranting endless competition among us but as a deliberate act of God

to make us a community of brothers and sisters jointly involved in the quest for a composite answer to the varied problems of life. Hence in all we do we always place Man first.

At the foundation of African religion is communalism instead of individualism of the capitalistic system. Africans' songs join us together; the songs make us endure the hardships of life and in war they embolden us. These songs are never individualistic; they are "group songs". Communalism is also seen by how property is owned. In a community-based and human-centred society

[m]ost of the things were jointly owned by the group, for instance there was no such thing as individual land ownership. The land belonged to the people and was merely under the control of the local chief on behalf of the people (Biko 2017:47).

As a result, poverty cannot be experienced by an individual but rather by the community. The community as a whole is prepared to go through hardship, and accept natural disasters as beyond its power; contrary to the Westerners who deal with problems cognitively, disregarding the supernatural. Biko agreed that Africans are a deeply religious race since they believe in the existence of the supernatural, the existence of God, and that the ancestors mediate between people and God. Unlike Westerners who worship on a specific day at a particular time in a certain building, Africans worship everywhere and anywhere. Religion for Africans could not be

featured as a separate part of our existence on earth. It was manifest in our daily lives. We thanked God through our ancestors before we drank beer, married, worked, etc. (Biko 2017:49).

Missionaries confused Africans with their Christianity. They introduced scary concepts such as hell and eternal fire, and labelled African religion as superstition while their religion was regarded as scientific. Biko (2017:50), however, showed the humility of the African by suggesting:

I am sufficiently proud to believe that under a normal situation, Africans can comfortably stay with people of other cultures and be able to contribute to the joint cultures of the communities they have joined.

Biko called on Africans to reject everything in the Western culture that seeks to destroy the most cherished beliefs of African society. Man ought to be the centre of the society, “not just his welfare, not his material well-being but just man himself with all his ramifications” (Biko 2017:51). As Westerners contribute to the world with technological advancements, Africa’s contribution will be in the field of human relations.

### **3.4.3 Definition of Black Consciousness**

The ninth chapter of *I write what I like: A selection of his writings* (Biko 2017) defined Black Consciousness. Having noted the above, Biko still emphasised the role of aspects such as education and the distortion of history: “We are aware of the terrible role played by our education and religion in creating amongst us a false understanding of ourselves” (Biko 2017:57). Apartheid said blacks were subhuman, and religion rubberstamped that. To a certain extent, therefore, Black Consciousness sought to undo the damage caused by religion in destroying the spirit of the black man. The black man, as a result, hates himself and his culture, does not see himself as a normal human being, and consequently seeks to be a “normal” white man. Biko argued that

by seeking to emulate the white man, blacks are effectively insulting their creator, who made them who they are:

Black consciousness therefore takes cognisance of the deliberateness of God's plan in creating black people black. It seeks to infuse the black community with a new-found pride in themselves, their efforts, their value systems, their culture, their religion and their outlook to life (Biko 2017:53).

#### **3.4.4 “The church as seen by a young layman”**

In 1972, in the same place where IDAMASA and ASSECA had their 1971 conference, Biko addressed another conference of black church leaders organised by Black Community Programmes. The tenth chapter of *I write what I like: A selection of his writings* (2017) was prefaced with the following observation:

Ministers of religion have an importance in black society which a secularised Westerner will find hard to understand. At the same time the pressures on them to conform to the status quo are formidable. Ben Khoapa, executive director of BCP, and Steve realised the importance of trying to “conscientise” this key section of the black community (Biko 2017:58).

Indeed, Biko knew the importance of religion generally, and the role it could play in the struggle for the emancipation of black people. In his words,

no nation can win a battle without faith, and if our faith in our God is spoilt by our having to see Him through the eyes of the same people we are fighting against, then there obviously begins to be something wrong in that relationship (Biko 2017:64).

This chapter sums up Biko's criticism of Christianity. Nevertheless, he was mindful of giving solutions to some of the challenges faced by the church of his day. Biko defined religion in two ways. First, he defined religion as an attempt by human beings to relate to a supreme being or force to which they ascribe all creation. As such, all religions have similar characteristics: they form a man's moral conscience, they all attempt to explain the origin and destiny of man, they all claim a monopoly on the truth about the nature of the supreme being, and they are all ritualistic (Biko 2017:58-59). Secondly, Biko defined religion in general and Christianity in particular as "a social institution attempting to explain what cannot be scientifically known about the origin and destiny of man" (Biko 2017:59), and for this reason, religion is necessary, perhaps more for Africans than Europeans, who will use intellect or science to explain the unknown (Biko 2017:48).

Setting up the stage for the criticism of the Christian faith, Biko said almost all human beings are religious; mainly, religion in a complex manner is intertwined with the rest of cultural traits of society.

In a sense this makes the religion part and parcel of the behavioural pattern of that society and makes the people bound by the limits of that religion through a strong identification with it (Biko 2017:59).

Logic therefore dictates that every religion should be adaptable to the people's culture, otherwise people will reject it. The key word in Biko's speech is "adaptability". Christianity ought to be adaptable in order for it to convey its message to the people among whom it is operative (Biko 2017:59-60). Biko's concern was the inability of the missionaries to "adapt" Christianity to the African culture and context. Biko (2017:60) called this a "colonialist-tainted version of Christianity". Instead of adapting to African

culture, this “rigid” version of Christianity dictated that converts (*amagqoboka*) throw aside “their indigenous clothing, their customs, and their beliefs which were all described as being pagan and barbaric” (Biko 2017:60). As a result, this Christianity divided the converts from the pagans (*amaqaba*), both religiously and relationally. How the church operated in Biko’s day should not be separated from how it was introduced. Biko (2017:61) stated:

If Christianity in its introduction was corrupted by the inclusion of aspects which made it the ideal religion for the colonisation of people, nowadays in its interpretation it is the ideal religion for the maintenance of the subjugation of the same people.

After criticising the type of Christianity Africans has received, Biko turned to the church. First, he criticised how the Scripture has been interpreted. The interpreters made Christianity a “turn the other cheek” religion. Biko’s concern was that in the midst of all the struggles people were going through, the church added “to their insecurity by its inward-directed definition of the concept of sin and its encouragement of the *mea culpa* attitude” (Biko 2017:61). There was an artificial analysis of the situation of the people; in fact, the preachers rehearsed the attitude of the whites, that black people were lazy, thieves, sex-hungry, etc. Secondly, he criticised both the bureaucratic posture and the institutionalisation of the church. Interpretation of religion has been made a specialist job, where it becomes difficult for individuals to interpret the Scripture for themselves and apply it to their everyday situation “without being stopped by orthodox limitations” (Biko 2017:62-63). Christianity’s understanding is the monopoly of the so-called theologians. Furthermore, this bureaucracy and institutionalisation tend to remove the church from important priorities and tend to concentrate on secondary and tertiary functions like structures, finances, etc., and because of this, the church has become

very irrelevant and in fact an “ivory tower”, as some people refer to it. The third criticism was that churches are led by whites, who do not know black people, “and in most cases do not have the interests of black people at heart” (Biko 2017:63). Biko’s view was that white Christians within the churches were actually preventing it from being relevant to the black communities, for churches are also modelled on Western lines.

Biko advanced two solutions to the above challenges: that black ministers ought to gain control of the churches where they are in the majority, and thereafter turn the Western model into one relevant to the African context. This takeover can only happen when black people master the art of “caucusing”, where the elected blacks will be faithful to the caucus’ mandate. Secondly, the church would do well to learn and understand black theology. Black theology contextualises the gospel, for it

is a situational interpretation of Christianity. It seeks to relate the present-day man to God within the given context of the black man’s suffering and his attempts to get out of it (Biko 2017:64).

Black theology shifts the focus from minor or petty sins to major sins in a society, thereby encouraging people to stand up and confront injustices. The focus of black theology is that of the entire BCM; it seeks to awaken the black person to take responsibility for his and her well-being, for “God is not in the habit of coming down from heaven to solve people’s problems on earth” (Biko 2017:65).

### **3.4.5 “Black Consciousness and the quest for true humanity”**

According to the editors of *I write what I like: A selection of his writings* (2017), Biko’s contribution to the book *Black theology: The South African voice* (Moore, 1974) is the best thing he ever wrote. The paper repeats some of the ideas found in Biko’s previous



papers. Biko urged readers to re-examine and question the values adopted by the black community. Coupled with the dire living conditions of the people, the man-made system of apartheid, and white supremacy, the black person lost his humanity when he lost his culture and religion. Black people were treated as inferior and less than human, and subsequently many in the black community adopted or envied the white culture.

Biko, even though he thought missionaries were the first people to come and relate to the indigenous people in a human way, placed them at “the forefront of the colonisation process” (Biko 2017:104). Missionaries were responsible for introducing schools and Christian religion with its institutions, the churches. The two “tools” of colonialism proved detrimental to the black humanity. The educational system was designed to teach black children

under the pretext of hygiene, good manners and other such vague concepts, to despise their mode of up-bringing at home and to question the values and customs of their society. The result was the expected one – children and parents saw life differently and the former lost respect for the latter (Biko 2017:104).

Not only was this education system designed to destroy African values, its historical content also distorted African history. The misrepresentation of facts left poor, black students without heroes who resisted white domination and systems. Furthermore, Biko argued that African stories told by the colonisers distorted the facts, such as that our history started in 1652, the year of the arrival of Van Riebeeck.

There is a tendency to think of our culture as a static culture that was arrested in 1652 and has never developed since. The return to the bush concept

suggests that we have nothing to boast of except lions, sex and drink (Biko 2017:106).

Biko strongly emphasised the importance of the person, and the importance of sharing in black culture. He added that

[b]lack culture above all implies freedom on our part to innovate without recourse to white values. This innovation is part of the natural development of any culture. A culture is essentially the society's composite answer to the varied problems of life (Biko 2017:106).

Black people were not only losing their humanity, but they were also unable to solve their problems because they did not have a way of doing so, which is their culture. Biko raised the black theology subject, which the paper was actually about. Again, Biko brought up the significance of religion to Africans, but he was quick to point out that Christianity and African religion were not totally different. Like Christians, Africans also believe in one God. Even though Africans share the same practice or experience of worship, the difference is that Africans do not worship God in "isolation from the various aspects of our lives" (Biko 2017:102). Other differences include the place of worship and the day of worship. For Africans,

worship was not a specialised function that found expression once a week in a secluded building, but rather it featured in our wars, our beer-drinking, our dances and our customs in general (Biko 2017:102-103).

Biko added that "there was no hell in our religion", and further said: "We believed in the inherent goodness of man – hence we took it for granted that all people at death joined the community of saints and therefore merited our respect" (Biko 2017:103).

Additionally, Biko felt that there was a serious need for a re-examination of Christianity, even though he did not want to doubt the “heart of the Christian message”. The reason for this “re-examination” was the “adaptability” of Christianity. The hypocrisy of missionaries was highlighted for they defined African religion as a superstition and theirs as scientific, even though Biko defined the birth stories of Christ as superstition. Nevertheless, this was the missionaries’ way of substituting the African religion with Christianity, which caused strife in communities between the *amaqaba* and the *amagqoboka*. When Africans accepted Christianity, they also accepted a European or white value system and their cultural values suffered.

Because a large number of South Africans are Christians, black theology is the answer to the “colonialist-tainted version of Christianity” (Biko 2017:60), and as such it is a significant feature of Black Consciousness. Biko (2017:104) explained that black theology

seeks to relate God and Christ once more to the black man and his daily problems. It wants to describe Christ as a fighting God, not a passive God who allows a lie to rest unchallenged. It grapples with existential problems and does not claim to be a theology of absolutes. It seeks to bring God to the black man and to the truth and reality of his situation. This is an important aspect of Black Consciousness, for quite a large portion of black people in South Africa are Christians still swimming in a mire of confusion – the aftermath of the missionary approach. It is the duty therefore of all black priests and ministers of religion to save Christianity by adopting black theology’s approach and thereby once more uniting the black man with his God.

All of the above suggestions demand that black people stand together in solidarity, and, most importantly, everyone should be “totally involved” as that is the main principle of Black Consciousness.

#### **3.4.6 “Martyr of hope”**

“Martyr of hope” is the personal memoir of Biko’s spiritual mentor, Father Stubbs, whom Biko regarded “as Father in Christ, to whom they could turn in time of need” (Biko 2017:176). Indeed, Father Stubbs played an important role in Biko’s family, and in Biko’s life, especially after the departure of Reverend David Russell, Biko’s friend during his banning. Biko appreciated correspondence from Father Stubbs as it helped him to develop a strong faith in God (Biko 2017:193).

In this memoir, Father Stubbs shared with the reader some of the intimate moments he shared with Biko, some of the work he did for the BCP, and, most importantly, the correspondence between himself and Biko, and between Biko and David Russell. The letters give a glimpse of Biko’s thoughts. The memoir paints a picture of Biko as a man of action, and as a Christian martyr of hope in the proportions of Jesus Christ. Father Stubbs reflected on Biko returning home in February 1973, at the age of 26:

He would seem to the local community to have failed in every respect. He had not qualified as a doctor, which would have been a great honour for the Ginsberg community and a special pride to his mother, who had sweated for his education [...] In all the main black educational centres of the country Steve had attained an almost messianic status. But his own community, close to the

harsh realities of poverty and unemployment, *looked more for deeds than words. They were now to see them*<sup>4</sup> (Biko 2017:184).

The community saw the establishment of BCP “in the King area to be a showpiece of community development unsurpassed anywhere in the country” (Biko 2017:184). According to Father Stubbs, projects such as Zanempilo Community Health Clinic were started for the purposes of instilling a sense of community, “to conscientise people to the facts of their situation, not so much by *talking as by doing*<sup>5</sup>, that is by example” (Biko 2017:190). Father Stubbs emphasised action more than talking, and that Biko was a man who put people before ideology. In a way, summarising Biko’s spirituality, Stubbs (Biko 2017:235) wrote:

I had in for more than two years been drawn to a more contemplative way of life, and I had discussed with him my idea for living a life of prayer on an old mission station between King and East London. He was against this primarily because he considered that my gifts were best exercised in direct contact with people.

The last section of the memoir answers the questions: “What did Steve die for? In what sense, if any, can he be called a Christian martyr?” Father Stubbs analysed and quoted heavily from a memorandum Biko sent to Reverend David Russell in 1974, wherein Biko put forth his ideas about obedience, Christ, the church, and God.

Biko believed in the existence of a supernatural power to which all power, all wisdom, and all love could be ascribed to (Biko 2017:236). He was not too concerned about God’s nature; as a man of action he would “rather like to know God in terms of his

---

<sup>4</sup> Researcher’s emphasis.

<sup>5</sup> Researcher’s emphasis.

characteristics". Biko's problem was the church. He lambasted, like he did in the previous papers, denominationalism, bureaucracy, and institutionalism. Biko's view was that churches actually complicated religion and theology. He was of the view that theology did not result in action, and that organised worship "is not a prerequisite for proximity to God" (Biko 2017:238). Attending church is no proof of godliness; one can reject organised religion and still be godly. Biko (2017:238) said:

In my view the truth lies in my ability to incorporate my vertical relationship with God into horizontal relationships with my fellow men; in my ability to pursue my ultimate purpose on earth, which is to do good.

Biko (2017:238) also emphasised that the church, even in its "limited service", should be able to help in shaping his "calling", otherwise he chose to withdraw from the church. Biko had no doubt that Jesus was a historical figure; he only questioned the dogmatic pronouncements that seek to explain "Christ's advent and subsequent role on earth". The church stripped Jesus of his humanity by first undermining Joseph's role as a father, and by elevating Jesus into the status of God. The church chooses to overlook the context of Jesus Christ. To a certain extent, Biko (2017:239) placed blame on the Apostle Paul:

His Roman citizenship tended to colour a lot of his interpretations. He saw Rome not as the enemy people were hoping to be rid of by the advent of the Messiah but as an institution to which God had given sanction and somewhat urged people to accept her authority. Calvinism as represented in the strongly conservative Dutch churches fetches its origin from his philosophy. My dilemma then regarding Christ starts here. My God – if I have to view Christ as such – is so conservatively interpreted at times that I find him foreign to me. On the other

hand if I accept him and ascribe to him and his work, then I must reject the church almost completely.

Biko seemed caught between the historical Jesus and the Jesus of the church. He chose to reject the church and propagate black theology, which seeks to make Christ relevant to the black masses. Father Stubbs correctly observed that “it was not Christ he rejected, only the ‘unbelievable’ church dogmas about him” and that “black theology seemed to give him hope”. Black theology is the spirituality of the oppressed Christian revolutionaries, and Biko (2017:240) found it attractive as offering “spiritual praxis”:

Certainly the insights of “black theology” only make sense as black Christians try to express them in their lives. At the heart of black theology is the perception that Jesus belonged historically in a situation of oppression, that he was a member of an oppressed people in an oppressive society, and that he came to set his people free. The classical text around which the whole of black theology clusters is Isaiah 61, quoted by Christ as the text of his first sermon (Luke 4:18) [...] This provides the basis for a meaningful spirituality for the man in a situation of oppression, but it does not have anything to say about God (except for the one vital fact that he is against oppression and with the oppressed, working in Christ with them for their liberation) nor about Christ as God.

Biko saw a “selfless revolution” as obedience to God; a call to men of conscience to offer their lives for eradication of evil. Father Stubbs saw this “selflessness” as the reason Biko died for his people: “I suggest that it would be more in accordance with the mind of Christ to look at Steve’s actual achievement” (Biko 2017:242).

### 3.4.7 “An interview with Biko” by Bernard Zylstra

This interview is not found in the book *I write what I like: A selection of his writings* (2004; 2017), but it does contain Biko’s views on religion. Zylstra conducted the interview with Biko in July 1977. The interview basically summarised Biko’s writings. Zylstra (1977) wrote that he spent the entire day with Biko and his friends in the Ciskei homeland just outside of King William’s Town. One of the questions he asked was: “How does Christianity fit in with Black Consciousness?” (Zylstra 1977:9). The following was Biko’s verbatim response:

I grew up in the Anglican Church, so this matter is an important one for me. But it is a troublesome question, for in South Africa, Christianity for most people is purely a formal matter. We as blacks cannot forget the fact that Christianity in Africa is tied up with the entire colonial process. This meant that Christians came here with a form of culture which they called Christian but which in effect was Western, and which expressed itself as an imperial culture as far as Africa was concerned. Here the missionaries did not make the proper distinctions. This important matter can easily be illustrated by relatively small things. Take the question of dress, for example. When an African became Christian, as a rule, he or she was expected to drop traditional garb and dress like a Westerner. The same with many customs dear to blacks, which they were expected to drop for supposed “Christian” reasons while in effect they were only in conflict with certain Western mores. Moreover, although the social hierarchy within the church was a white/black hierarchy, the sharing of responsibility for church affairs was exclusively white. This meant that the nature, especially of the mainline churches, was hardly influenced by black fact. It cannot be denied that



in this situation many blacks, especially the young blacks, have begun to question Christianity. The question they ask is whether the necessary decolonisation of Africa also requires the de-Christianisation of Africa. The most positive facet of this questioning is the development of “black theology” in the context of Black Consciousness. For black theology does not challenge Christianity itself but its Western package, in order to discover what the Christian faith means for our continent (Zylstra 1977:12-13).

### **3.5 CONCLUSION**

This chapter attempted to sketch the biography of Bantu Stephen Biko. It relied heavily on scanning biographies and other related books and literature to the study of Biko. It was noted that Biko falls among the early black intellectuals; like his predecessors, he was more of a “prophet-intellectual” in the order of the Xhosa great leaders such as Tiyo Soga and Robert Sobukwe. He grew up in a Christian family. At an early age, he attended the Anglican Church and was schooled in missionary schools before going to university, where he became an activist. Mngxitama et al. (2008:2) summarised Biko’s life; observing that he was “an activist, strategist, and above all, intellectual force who developed his ideas through long debates and discussions”. Most importantly, for this study, Biko was a Christian theologian who approached the issues of spirituality from a colonialist angle. He saw Christianity as one of the tools used by the colonisers to capture the minds of Africans and destroy their cultural values. The outcome was that being a Christian meant being a Westerner. Biko felt that this clouded the entire Christian message, which was adaptable to any context. For him, theologising was a cultural task. As a religion, Christianity is enforced through schools and churches, therefore it would make sense to decolonise the church as the proclaimer of the

gospel. This process can only start with black clergy assuming leadership in churches. With that will come the voice of the black God speaking in black churches, and there will be a relevant interpretation of the Bible, especially the Christ event. The church will do itself a huge favour if it can address the issues of “specialisation” in preaching the gospel, which is the direct result of hierarchy.

## CHAPTER 4

### BIKO'S SPIRITUALITY

#### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter sketched Biko's biography, noting how Biko was not only surrounded by Christians but also had interesting thoughts on religion and spirituality. These thoughts on religion are found in his papers, "We blacks", "Some African cultural concepts", "Definition of Black Consciousness", "The church as seen by a young layman", and "Black Consciousness and the quest for a true humanity", as well as in "Martyr of hope" (the personal memoir of Biko's spiritual mentor, Father Stubbs), and lastly in "An interview with Steve Biko" by Zylstra (1977). This chapter examines the themes that arise from the above writings, with emphasis on Biko's religious thoughts – hence the choice of these writings.

Several theologians have done this exercise before, and only two studies are mentioned here. The current study goes further than just tabling the themes; it seeks to define Biko's spirituality. In his article, "Racism and God: Steve Biko in context", Davis (1986) examined Biko's mission and message. His assertion was that Biko's message appears to have been centred on three major themes, namely (a) the centrifugal power and meaning of Black Consciousness, (b) the need for a re-proclamation of the gospel, and (c) the imperative search for a New Humanity (Davis 1986:8). In the re-proclamation of the gospel, black theology has a significant role to play. Another theologian to give themes to Biko's writings was Engdahl (2012), in a paper titled "Theology as politics in Afrikaner nationalism and Black Consciousness: A close reading of F.J.M. Potgieter and Steve Biko". Engdahl (2012) also noticed three themes, namely complicity, African humanism, and black theology. The two studies

attempted to summarise all of Biko's writings; however, the current study is limited to his religious and theological views, as was Hopkins' (1991), Duncan's (2008), and Maluleke's (2008) studies.

Before proceeding, this study notes that Biko's writings are minimal and occasional, and there are many recurrences and restatements (Engdahl 2012). Also, it is noted here that Biko "never became bogged down with strict doctrinal or theological categories of thought or elaborated long-winded treatises"; in fact, Biko was "involved in theological issues pertaining to the very life and death of his community" (Hopkins 1991:194).

#### **4.2 SUMMARY OF THEMES**

Biko's writings are best understood in the context of the 1960s and 1970s. Better still, Boesak (2014:1062), with first-hand experience of those years and the 1980s, wrote that the defiance campaign of the 1950s "was so much characterized by a spirituality of politics, so inspired by prophetic faithfulness, so infused with sacrificial commitment". Sadly, he noted that the church lost this spirituality from the 1960s, during the unprecedented suppression of all political parties that resulted in the Sharpeville massacre, the Rivonia Trial, exile to Robben Island, bans, and persecution on a scale not experienced before. Since that period, the voice of the prophetic church fell silent and "would not be so explicitly reclaimed until the final phase of the struggle against apartheid in the 1980s" (Boesak 2014:1062). Boesak (2014) conceded, however, that the church largely allowed fear of the apartheid government to overwhelm prophetic faithfulness and its fear of the Lord. The church acted as if the exile of the liberation movements was also the exile of the prophetic church, and as if

the imprisonment of the political leaders was also the captivity of the prophetic church (Boesak 2014:1062).

There were of course voices that made them heard throughout that difficult decade, mainly through documents and declarations, and not for one moment do I underestimate their value and the expressions of protest they represented at the time. But in truth they were by and large the voice of white Christian leadership, moderate voices who could not authentically reclaim the radical, nonviolent, Christian militancy of an Albert Luthuli, for example. Nor could they speak with any credibility for the black masses or for the black church. At best, these voices may have represented a theology of protest, while what we actually needed was a theology of resistance (Boesak 2014:1063).

What of the black preachers in black churches? They continued to preach almost every Sunday. However, as Biko (2017:61) found, the church added to the insecurities of the people

by its inward-directed definition of the concept of sin and its encouragement of the *mea culpa* attitude. Stern-faced ministers stand on pulpits every Sunday to heap loads of blame on black people in townships for their thieving, house breaking, stabbing, murdering, adultery, etc. No one ever attempts to relate all these vices to poverty, unemployment, over-crowding, lack of schooling and migratory labour.

Such preaching did not help the people; it only confirmed what white missionaries said about black people when they described them as thieves, lazy, sex-hungry, etc.

Boesak (2014:1063) put it bluntly:

We preached a colonized, domesticated, de-justicized, depoliticized, spiritualised Jesus, as if Jesus speaking in Luke 4:16-20 did not exist, or did not speak of us. We preached a Jesus that knew nothing of justice or of judgement on injustice. The black church preached a Jesus that would not be offensive to the apartheid regime, not cause discomfort for those whose approval we sought, nor constitute a danger to ourselves.

Biko arose in this context. He criticised both the white missionaries and the black church. The missionaries and white church used religion to justify oppression. Like Karl Marx<sup>6</sup> predicted, religion may be upheld by the ruling class because consciously or unconsciously it is seen as a force for social control. The need to take various measures to maintain privilege leads the ruling class to view the social order as something other than simply the way human beings have chosen to organise themselves and, in a sense, it is how things ought to be. Their perception is not only that privilege is being preserved but that good order and stability must be maintained. In that sense, religion becomes a tool for subjugation. Biko criticised and in fact challenged the black churches too, for they “were the ones whose interpretation of the Bible became what he called a ‘poisoned well’ from which our people were forced to drink” (Boesak 2014:1064). This section of the study summarises Biko’s criticism of the church and Christian religion. The following themes summarise his concerns: leadership of the church, content of theology, and the form of religion.

---

<sup>6</sup> Marx is discussed briefly in the second chapter.

#### 4.2.1 Leadership of the church

In this regard Biko was concerned about two things. One was about who led the church. His observation was that most churches had about “70, 80, 90% of their membership within the black world” (Biko 2017:62); however, the controlling power rested in the hands of white people.

Maluleke’s (2008:118) observation was correct:

Biko was unflinching in his conviction that as long as black people looked for and accepted white leadership in all spheres, including religion, they were not yet ready to take their future in their own hands.

The absence of black leadership raised serious concerns; in fact, it “was a generalised social problem” (Maluleke 2008:118). For starters, if the leaders were white, surely the church would reflect the interests and practices of a white God (Hopkins 1991:196). Not only would the church be white, but it would result in Christianity being irrelevant, for the God who would be speaking would be foreign. A foreign God may not necessarily be sympathetic to the struggles of the black faithful, nor would this God be considerate to the culture and the values of the black congregants. Biko is seen as having been concerned about black people imbibing white theology, which would keep them in bondage. Therefore the black God had to speak in black churches, and counter the noises of the white God (Biko 2017:33). Perceiving God as black, Biko “criticises the cultural inferiority of blacks who fail to perceive an ebony divinity that looks like them” (Hopkins 1991:196). The black God would surely be political in nature, and the vessels would be African in outlook. Therefore, “a black God speaks to the urgency of organising politically for revolutionary change against the evil structures of [...] apartheid” (Hopkins 1991:196).

It must be noted, however, that what Biko did not highlight was the inferior education black leaders had, which would have had an impact on how they viewed themselves. Their training would not have prepared them for denominational or church leadership. The researcher is familiar with the Baptist tradition in South Africa, and therefore uses the Baptist Union (BU), as a case study. During the period 1960 to 1980, at the height of resistance against apartheid, the Baptists decided to retract. Kretzschmar (1998:243) wrote:

Baptists were uncomfortable with the direction that the SACC and the WCC [World Council of Churches] were taking, and at the Assembly, voted (151 for and 65 against) to relinquish membership of the SACC and retain only observer status. In 1976 the BU withdrew its observer status.

The BU, which had many black ministers and churches in almost all the townships, was led by white people. Kretzschmar (1998:245) observed that their segregated structures

more closely resembled those of the Afrikaans-speaking churches, the views of black members were ignored, consequently their protests were not very outspoken. They did engage in limited criticism but essentially they conformed to the status quo.

The BU's theology was essentially privatised, and the more they excluded black ministers from participating in decision-making processes, the more they excluded the majority of their members. Eventually, "they were unable to break free of the stranglehold of white interests" (Kretzschmar 1998:245). The white Baptists controlled theological education, which was to keep black members, and most importantly black ministers, theologically inferior. There were racially separate theological colleges.



The reasons given for these were that it would be impossible to train both races in the same college due to unequal economic and political circumstances, and it was difficult for blacks to obtain even a basic education (Kretzschmar 1998:253). Black students were also excluded from colleges that were in white areas. White preachers were trained at Parktown College, and black preachers were sent to Debe Nek, near King William's Town. Theological education did not prepare the students for the social dilemmas they would face in their communities. Mhlophe (1990:54) stated that the requirement for entrance to this college was Standard 8 (Grade 10), and the pastors left the institution with a diploma, which was a very low standard. He further wrote that the

theological training of Convention pastors was subjected to the standards imposed by the white Baptist Union. Our potential was limited. The curriculum was foreign in all respects. It became an insult to our dignity and humanness. Our prophetic and evangelistic role in apartheid South Africa's situation was neutralised and clouded by our associational status within the complacent white-dominated Baptist Union. From that Institute, we were expected to go out and minister in our oppressed context (Mhlophe 1990:54).

Interestingly, Mhlophe (1990:54) further stated:

The main effect here should not be overlooked. When the curriculum is foreign, so is the graduated pastor. He will then try to force this "package" onto the lives of his people. When they look and listen to him, he only challenges their sinful condition. After conversion he assures them of the next helicopter that will snatch them to heaven.

This theology was not only foreign, it was “escapist” or heavenward in orientation; it taught that people were “saved” for heaven rather than being of help in their socio-economic environment (Molebatsi 1990:69). It was then going to be difficult for ministers to be in leadership in these white-led churches; hence, in 1987, the Baptist Convention of South Africa, which predominately consisted of black ministers, decided to quit the white-led BU. In an almost similar manner, SASO was born out of NUSAS.

The second criticism Biko levelled against church leadership was around the issue of who does theology, and how. His problem was “the tendency by Christians to make interpretation of religion a specialist job” (Biko 2017:62). The result is the lack of interest among the youth to take on the task of interpreting Christianity, “and extract from it messages relevant to them and their situation without being stopped by orthodox limitations” (Biko 2017:63). Two aspects arise from this criticism. First is that making interpretation of religion a specialist job tends to make those who are lucky to be in leadership positions concern themselves with bureaucratic issues such as finances and structures. Secondly, making religion and theology a specialist job sets boundaries that were against the reformed principle of priesthood of all believers (Duncan 2008:122). Baptists, for example, understand priesthood of all believers to mean

that each Christian has direct access to God through Christ our High Priest, and shares with him in his work of reconciliation. This involves intercession, worship, faithful service and bearing witness to Jesus, even to the end of the earth (Kretzschmar 1998:350).

A top-down theology was problematic for Biko because until then people who determined theology were specialists and managers, and not ordinary people on the

street. Theology flows from the human struggle of people organising for life, as argued by Hopkins (1991:199). Molebatsi (1990:68) lambasted specialists who had never understood the travail that qualifies men and women to speak in the name of the Lord, yet they seek to determine what the working class should do in terms of explaining and living out their faith.

Furthermore, Molebatsi (1990:68) stated in simple terms:

It is a challenge to me as a preacher of the gospel to realise that members of my congregation travel up to four hours every day to and from work. Have you ever been on those trains? Have you been on the factory floor to see what they experience? How can I then come up with a theology that will enable them to live within that context?

Biko understood that black theology and all Christian theology came from below and not from above and that the masses of unlettered people, and not abstract systematisers, do theology (Hopkins 1991:199).

#### **4.2.2 Content of theology**

The second theme, which is related to the previous theme, is that of the content of theology. Biko advocated a new interpretation of the Bible guided by black theology. He urged black priests to save Christianity by embracing black theology (Biko 2017:64), which would assist in doing away with the spiritual poverty of the black people (Biko 2017:34). Engdahl (2012:19) was correct in his view that black theology played an integral of Biko's writing: "It is as natural as it is natural for him to talk about Black Consciousness." For Biko, black theology had a significant role in the reinterpretation of the gospel, therefore more needs to be said here on black theology

and culture. This study views black theology as a decolonising tool. Decolonisation refers not only to the overturning of the colonial structure, but also the realisation of the freedom of the indigenous people and their cultures. It means an active and meaningful resistance to the forces of colonialism that perpetuate the subjugation and the exploitation of our minds, bodies, and land (P. White 2015:2). In this study, decolonisation means, in Biko's terms, the rejection of Western values (Biko 2017:51).

The youth of Biko's generation found itself confronted with a church that "tended to become more exclusively spiritual in orientation and, through time, paid little or no attention at all to socio-political issues" (Motlhabi 1984:44). Biko believed that spirituality is a lived reality that is shaped into a holistic way of life. It is this study's view that authentic biblical spirituality is, in contrast to the "missionary Christianity", more holistic. In fact, Biko was correct that biblical spirituality is not radically different to ATR (Biko 2017:102). It is amazing that Biko, even though not a "specialist theologian" and a youth, realised the difference between the "missionary Christianity" and the "biblical Christianity"; it shows how well read he was.

The question of decolonising Christian faith or de-Christianising Africa therefore becomes relevant. In the interview with Zylstra in July 1977, Biko alluded to the fact that many young blacks were beginning to question Christianity and "the question they ask is whether the necessary decolonisation of Africa also requires the de-Christianisation of Africa" (Zylstra 1977:12). This question arose because Christianity in Africa is tied up with colonisation. Biko asserted that

Christians came here with a form of culture which they called Christian but which in effect was Western, and which expressed itself as an imperial culture as far as Africa was concerned (Zylstra 1977:11).

One learns how Biko ended up raising the “development of black theology” in the context of Black Consciousness; a solution in the search for practical religion that spoke to the practical needs of black people (Mangcu 2012:173). It must be noted that Biko and his friends realised how far, wide, and deep Christianity has made inroads into African people, and that it would be close to impossible to de-Christianise Africa. The better option is to decolonise the Christian faith and make it relevant to Africans and their affairs, since the “colonialist-tainted version of Christianity” derails the struggle against injustice; hence the importance of black theology, which can roughly be referred to as “Black Consciousness in Christianity”. In addition, Biko was aware of the similarities between ART and biblical Christianity as it came out of the struggle in the Middle East. There is therefore a historical reason why Biko was correct in calling for the decolonisation of the Christian faith (this was expanded on in Chapter 2). The key word in Biko’s argument on the arrival of Christianity in Africa is “adaptability”. His reasoning is that any religion must observe the requirements of specificity of the context; in the failure to do so, such a religion must be “sufficiently adaptable to convey relevant messages to different people in different situations. For indeed, each religion has a message for the people amongst whom it is operative” (Biko 2017:59-60).

The missionaries overlooked this fact in Africa, but in Europe Christianity had gone through rigorous cultural “adaptation” from ancient Judea. Biko showed brilliance again here, in the sense that the integral feature of Christianity from the beginning has been that it never existed except as “translated” into a culture (Bosch 1996:448). The “Acts 15” Council in Jerusalem showed how important cultural issues were, and the debate was won by the argument that there would be no need for Gentiles to be Jews first before they could be Christians. Biko would have argued the same; that there is no need for one to adopt the colonisers’ culture as a prerequisite for being a Christian.

Indeed, Stackhouse (1988:58 cited in Bosch 1996:448) was correct that the early church, in straddling the Jewish-Gentile worlds, was born in a cross-cultural milieu, with translation as its birthmark, that all cultures, such as Greeks, barbarians, Jews, and others, were able to feel welcome. However, the church became the bearer of culture after Christianity became the religion of the state after Constantine. The missionaries, as they “spread” the gospel with colonisers or as part of colonisation, branded themselves as a superior culture of civilised people moving to the savages of inferior cultures. Accordingly, Christian mission, with the exception of some Asian cultures, as a matter of course presupposed the disintegration of the cultures into which it penetrated (Bosch 1996:448). Biko (2017:102) put it this way:

Our culture, our history and indeed all aspects of the black man’s life have been battered nearly out of shape in the great collision between the indigenous values and the Anglo-Boer culture.

Barbarism is what white missionaries and colonisers labelled black culture. Why is culture so important? Reading Biko’s writings, one realises that culture meant the patterned way in which people do things together. These things have been learned or passed from one generation to the next (see “Some African cultural concepts”, Biko 2017:44). A more comprehensive definition is that of Bowen (1996:82), who saw culture as

the integrated system of learned patterns of behaviour, ideas and products characteristic of a society. Culture involves the belief, values, customs and institutions which bind a society together with a sense of identity, value, security and continuity. Culture is both a bridge which links different generations of

people to one another, and a wall which separates people from others who want to invade or change their culture.

Bowen (1996:82) added that because culture is within people, it is impossible to escape one's culture, but one can deliberately choose to adopt a new culture. African Christians adopted the European culture together with Christianity. Bosch (1996:448) stated that Western Christians were unaware of the fact that their theology was culturally conditioned; they simply assumed that it was supracultural and universally valid; and since Western culture was implicitly regarded as Christian, it was equally self-evident that this culture had to be exported together with the Christian faith. This study argues that Western colonisers were aware of what they were doing. For them, Western values and culture equalled progress and civilisation; Christianity was therefore their teaching tool and religion. However, what was more unfortunate was that African Christians were indeed ignorant to the fact that the missionary theology was culturally conditioned.

Furthermore, culture and worldview are closely related, because culture does not only define people but also distinguishes them at a very deep level. It determines people's worldview, what connections they make between various areas of reality, how they see their own lives, and how they feel about the basics of human life. All of that comprises the world image of a group. Therefore, the world image of a group is the core of people's culture, and whatever they do or think will be related to their world image. One can imagine the challenges faced by the biblical reader in an African setting, using Western theology. The Bible is culturally determined, and as result it will be important for an African reader to understand that culture but an African will have to go through the Western culture to get there. Biko and his friends therefore advocated black theology, as opposed to Western theology. Mangcu (2012:173)

stated that the turn to black theology came in the context of a search for practical religion that spoke to the practical needs of black people. He wrote that

their critique of the secular theology as it was playing out within the UCM and among white scholars did not lead them to the African theology of people like John Mbiti, who were arguing for a return to a purist African religion. They also did not follow the road of their ancestors in the African independent churches by seeking to recover the rituals of lost African religious practices. This they could have done – but it surely would have had no meaning to the coloured and Indian members of the movement (Mangcu 2012:173).

Consequently, the BCM adopted James Cone's black theology, simply because it (a) departed from African theology because of its apolitical and sometimes conservative stance, and (b) departed from the strictly secularist interpretation of Christ that had no meaning for many black people of faith (Mangcu 2012:174). Rather than de-Christianising Africa, Biko and his colleagues sought to amend both the missionary Christianity and African Christianity, making it relevant to black people's struggle. This new interpretation entailed (a) radically representing Jesus as a fighting God (Biko 2017:34) with whom Africans could identify in their struggles, and (b) a hermeneutical shift away from "petty sins to major sins in a society, thereby ceasing to teach the people to 'suffer peacefully'" (Biko 2017:34).

#### **4.2.3 Form of church/religion**

Biko felt that, in its current form, the church was not adding value to the quality of black people's lives. Therefore, the preachers must repent, the theology must change, and, importantly, the church must reflect its context. To understand Biko's criticism of the



church, one must understand that his worldview was firstly anthropological (Engdahl 2012:18). He said, “one of the most fundamental aspects of our culture is the importance we attach to man” (Biko 2017:45). The exploitative system of the “Anglo-Boer culture” made black people and their culture feel inferior and less human. An inferiority complex caused blacks to seek to adopt the white culture and individualistic values of capitalism, which use people instead of relating to them with respect. Therefore, Black Consciousness

[i]s the manifestation of a new realisation that by seeking to run away from themselves and to emulate the white man, blacks are insulting the intelligence of whoever created them black (Biko 2017:53).

The logic is that black people are not made in the image of the white man, and neither were they made by white people. Therefore, black people must realise that there is a higher authority than the whites, white churches, and white leadership, and they need not bow down before the apartheid structures (Hopkins 1991:197).

Black Consciousness therefore takes cognizance of the deliberateness of God’s plan in creating black people black. It seeks to infuse the black community with a new-found pride in themselves, their efforts, their value systems, their culture, their religion and their outlook to life (Biko 2017:53).

Biko pointed to the African cultural heritage of the spirit of community, the ease of communication, and the warmth of human relationships when he raised religious issues with church leaders. The study noted in the second chapter that African traditional philosophy has a holistic worldview. Therefore theology, according to Hopkins (1991:199), is not unrelated to political and economic structures because there are no dichotomies between the sacred and the secular, the material and the

spiritual; all life is religious and therefore all life is sacred. Also, African spirituality is essentially communal; there is oneness of community (Biko 2017:32). In an African society there are no irreligious people and religion is not individualistic. The danger in a capitalist society is that the very nature of capitalist political economics breeds the inherent exploitation of people. People relate to one another for the primary reasons of utility and not for communal purposes (Hopkins 1991:199). In addition to that, Africans value public worship, to such an extent that religion is not something one adds to various aspects of life. As such, a separate day of worship, like Christians who gather for public worship on a Sunday, is not “African”. Biko emphasised that Africans “believed that God was always in communication with us and therefore merited attention everywhere and anywhere” (Biko 2017:49).

The most important feature of the African philosophy is the human being (man). ATR was called “anthropocentric” or “man centred” by Mbiti (1969:90):

African peoples see everything else in its relation to this central position of man. God is the explanation of man’s origin and sustenance: it is as if God exists for the sake of man.

Gehman (1993:50) strongly contended that ATR is not a religion as understood in the West, a set of dogmas, but is life, experiential, and its focus is indeed on man. ATR centres on human beings. “The whole emphasis is upon man gaining the power needed to live a good life. Life revolves around man and his interests and needs” (Gehman 1993:50).

The emphasis of ATR is that a person is not an individual but a member of a community. In his speech “The church’s role in society”, Nyerere (1987), the former

president of Tanzania and an African Christian, made a strong case on development in Africa. He claimed that

[t]he purpose of development is man. It is the creation of conditions both material and spiritual, which enable man the individual, and man the species, to become best [...] If the church is interested in man as an individual, it must express this by its interest in the society of which those individuals are members (Nyerere 1987:110-114).

Arguing that man is at the centre of ATR, Biko (2017:46) observed how

Westerners get surprised at the capacity we have for talking to each other – not for the sake of arriving at a particular conclusion but merely to enjoy the communication for its own sake. Africans believe in the inherent goodness of man. We enjoy man for himself. We regard our living together not as an unfortunate mishap warranting endless competition among us but as a deliberate act of God to make us a community of brothers and sisters jointly involved in the quest for a composite answer to the varied problems of life.

Therefore, the unfortunate individualism of the capitalist approach to life is foreign to Africans, as Pato (2000:94) narrated:

African culture and spirituality consider as primary the value of good and harmonious human relationships. Personal ambition and pursuit of self-interest are played down and take second place to family or community interests. Similarly, great value is placed on co-operation and the sharing of resources rather than competition against others. This value, in turn, discourages the instinct of acquisition and hoarding. It creates requirements of sharing and

redistribution of resources so that no individual accumulates and hoards resources that become unavailable to others when they need them. Also, the central importance of humanness and solidarity is paramount. Africans dread those who renounce their duty and responsibility of solidarity with all of humanity. Those who are notoriously cruel, self-centred, quarrelsome or unkind are often labelled as witches.

Black theology calls on South African churches to alter their theological anthropology by rooting out the individualistic system of capitalism. Biko challenged the church to take a form that would express concretely the gospel message of fellowship, sharing, sacrifice, mutual respect, and common worship. In addition, the church must be where people are and share in people's struggles. It must not necessarily be the community for the poor, or of the poor, but the poor community, as it reflects the poor community. It must be a struggling church. Davis (1986:14-15) put it this way:

“Church” must be understood as the authentic reflection of the active and living word of God-made flesh, structured in such a way that all its members, and its peripheral acquaintances, experience the joy of abundant life through dependence on God rather than compliance with any system of domination.

#### **4.3 BIKO'S SPIRITUALITY**

Maluleke (2008:123) was correct in that for a layman, Biko's theological insights were breath-taking. This study has allowed Biko to speak for himself, and has identified some themes. It is thus proper to locate Biko's spirituality. However, it is important to always note that without giving the entire history of the 1960s and the 1970s, the social and political context into which Biko was born shaped his thinking and theology.

That is very important because he could not divorce himself from the struggles of the people.

#### **4.3.1 Spirituality shaped by action**

If there is single word to summarise Biko's spirituality, it would be "action", or better, "praxis". Everything he wrote and said about religion emphasised "action". Therefore Biko's spirituality cannot be found in what he believed, said, or wrote only, but also in what he did. Biko's childhood friend, Pityana, wrote the following about him:

Biko built his political system on spiritual foundations. For him "spiritual" owes less to Plato and the rationalist movement than to Tillich and the existential school; spiritual is not being discrete but concrete, holistic, bringing the fullness of humanity to bear on the material and objective world (Pityana 1991:254).

Biko saw "religion as action", and this study notices how he redefined the realm of the sacred by challenging the boundaries that separated the sacred (religion/church) and the profane (politics), the public (struggle for societal freedom), and the private (personal spirituality). Mangcu (2012:241) compared Biko's life to that of Amilcar Cabral; he noticed that the two also shared the "theory of action". For Biko, the projects of the BCPs were one of the "ways of ensuring a real cross-class alliance between students and their communities. Steve shared with Cabral the idea of politics as action" (Mangcu 2012:241). The study will later make the point that Biko shared with Jesus Christ of Nazareth the idea of religion as social action. Badat (2009:101) also observed that, for Biko, "action, rather than sophisticated theory and detailed social analysis [...] was more urgent and important". Badat (2009) was correct because even Biko's reading style was motivated by action, rather than just theory seeking. Biko was

surrounded by a group of avid readers in the BCM. Pityana (2008:4) wrote that there was a culture of reading, which was followed by intellectual engagement. These engagements were vigorous and even opinionated. What was important in these engagements with books and friends was that the social analysis led to “reflection and action” (Pityana 2008:4). The key participant in these discussions was Biko; who listened, challenged ideas, concretised ideas, and brought them back for further formulation. Pityana correctly stated that in such an environment, it was difficult to point out the sources of an idea; however, Biko “translated that common idea into essays that went into his column ‘Frank Talk: I write what I like’” (Pityana 2008:4).

Biko agreed with Pityana in that BCM people were avid readers (Gerhart 1978); however, he personally did very little reading and others were much more avid readers than he was, for “they do a lot of reading, they do a lot of writing, interpretation, and so on” (Gerhart 1978). Biko’s reading style proves that he was action driven. Gerhart (1972) described Biko’s style as follows:

I rarely finish a book, I always go to find something from a book. Otherwise I read a book over a long period, when I’m going to sleep and so on [...] like Cone’s book; I’ve read parts of it, on black theology.

This style of reading was “an active search for that type of book, for the kind of thing that will say things to you that was bound to evoke a response” (Mngxitama et al. 2008:24). Indeed, for Biko, reading

was not a passive activity but a philosophical action grounded in practical necessities [...] For Biko ideas are not academic but alive and books are active repositories that are part of ongoing discussions about philosophy and strategy (Mngxitama et al. 2008:24-25).

The statement that “God is not in the habit of coming down from heaven to solve people’s problems on earth” sums up his reason for taking action. Maluleke (2008:119) correctly perceived that this statement was Biko’s “earnest concern”. In the “We blacks” article, the same statement was also used in an altered appearance, where it “linked the white liberal ‘theory of gradualism’ that meant to keep blacks confused and always hoping that God will step down from heaven to solve their problems” (Maluleke 2008:119). Analysing the context of this statement further, Maluleke (2008:119) wrote that it meant two things:

First, that black people had to take the initiative if ever the church was to retain relevance for fellow blacks, especially young blacks; second, that God does not do theology, human beings do and that the time had come for our own theologians to take up the cudgels of the fight by restoring a meaning and direction in the black man’s understanding of God.

Father Stubbs’ memoire, especially the letter Biko wrote to Reverend David Russell, stressed “action” at the centre of Biko’s spirituality, especially the words:

In my view the truth lies in my ability to incorporate my vertical relationship with God into the horizontal relationships with my fellow men; in my ability to pursue the ultimate purpose on earth which is to do good (Biko 2017:238).

This statement is enough for one to call Biko an authentic believer in God. However, his was a special brand of discipleship, for it was mainly exogenous to the institutional church; “for Biko had come to a position where his attitude to authentic godliness was hardly helped by any close association with the church” (Davis 1986:12).

### 4.3.2 Social activism spirituality

This section considers two models or types of spirituality, which can assist in explaining Biko's spirituality. The first model, which is older, is that of Haughey (1976), and the second one is the more recent Mason, Singleton and Webber (2007) model. Typology can be defined as a set of types, or categories, and can be inferred from qualitative or quantitative data, or both (Singleton 2014:178). Quoted in Singleton (2014:178-179), Smith and Snell (2009:166) noted that types or models can bring helpful analytical clarity to what would otherwise be a complex mass of data. Furthermore, regarding models, Collins (1999:18) stated:

They are ideal cases, organizing images which give a particular emphasis, enabling one to notice and interpret certain salient aspects of experience [...]

A model is a simplified representation of the real world and, as such, includes only those variables relevant to the problem at hand. It may not include all relevant variables because a small percentage of these may account for most of the phenomenon to be explained.

Caution ought to be taken when one uses "models" or "types" to define Biko's spirituality. Firstly, not every person will fit comfortably into a type or model and people are very difficult to classify, therefore it should not be presumed that people enact religiosity in a constant, congruent fashion befitting a type (Singleton 2014). Collins (1999:18) further cautioned that

many of the simplifications used, produce some error in predictions derived from the model, but these can often be kept small compared to the improvement in operations that can be extracted from them.



Models are a “world of science” notion. Regarding their usage in theology, Dulles (1974:22) advised that one may divide the use of models into two types; the one explanatory, the other exploratory or descriptively. On the explanatory level,

models serve to synthesize what we already know or at least are inclined to believe. A model is accepted if it accounts for a large number of biblical and traditional data and accords with what history and experience tell us about Christian life (Dulles 1974:22).

On the other hand, the exploratory use of models means “their capacity to lead to new theological insights”, although every discovery may be “validated in terms of what was already given in Scripture and tradition” (Dulles 1974:23). The following models or types are therefore used with caution that people’s spiritual practices or religious ideas are generally “fragmented, compartmentalised, loosely connected, and unexamined, and context dependent” (Chaves 2010:2).

- *Haughey’s model*

One of the important passages when studying Biko is his advice to Father Stubbs (Biko 2017:235), when the latter wanted to spend more time in a contemplative way of life. Biko was against it for he thought that Stubbs’ gifts were best exercised in direct contact with people. Biko saw himself as a leader of and among the people. In the same breath, Biko in a way joined the discussion on contemplative spirituality versus social activism spirituality. Within Christianity there is a tension between these two emphases (Evans 1993:221), simply because theology has a profound impact on spirituality. The dispute is actually around issues of belief and action, and the resulting dualism. In the debate on contemplative and social activism, Biko’s spirituality could be called what Haughey (1976:79) termed “autogenous spirituality”.

In the debate between contemplative and social activism spiritualities, Haughey (1976) wrote that doctrinal and theological conflicts are all effects of the differences on how one imagines God, approaches him, experiences him, and articulates this experience to the self. He suggested that there are at least three main spiritualities which are the ordinary ways in which contemporary Christians see and relate to God and ultimately see themselves and others. He described these three spiritualities as programmatic, autogenous, and pneumatic. He started by explaining what he meant by “programmatic spirituality”. In this model, the church and its tradition or programme is at the centre. “The person’s experience of God has come about in and through the church. The medium in which his relationship with God has been developed and is sustained is ecclesiocentric” (Dulles 1974:79).

This is in a sense that a person’s reaction to God is clearly stipulated for him or her by the teachings of the church, whether these are liturgical, devotional, moral, or doctrinal. Obedience to authoritatively given teachings is encouraged. It is clear that even though Biko grew up in a Christian home, was educated in Christian institutions, and that some of his friends were Christians, his spirituality cannot be said to be programmatic. He in fact became vocal against the institutional church, as we saw earlier.

The second model is described as “pneumatic spirituality”. The word “pneumatic” is coined from the Greek (*pneuma*), meaning “breath” or “spirit”. Pneumatics

claim to have a sense of immediacy of the presence of the Risen Lord that only the Spirit can produce [...] They do not live according to the meaning their understanding educes from the gift of faith but according to a felt knowledge, an inner unction the spirit provides (Dulles 1974:83).

If programmatic spirituality emphasises church doctrine, pneumatics emphasise prayer. Social responsibility is seen by pneumatics as the consequence of their effective prayer life and union with Christ. This model cannot be applied to Biko either. “Pneumatics”, like “programmatic”, even though a little more flexible, is found to be dualistic, and also emphasises cooperative prayer more than cooperative action. Thirdly, Haughey (1976:81) introduced what he termed the “autogenous” spirituality model. He argued that autogenous spirituality

by definition has its origin in the “self”. Not the self of the flesh in Paul’s sense, but the self that is open to and hungers for meaning [...] The medium in which he approaches and experiences God is the making of meaning.

Biko wrote that the goal of Black Consciousness was to attain “the envisioned self”. The “self” is the reflection of the universal human spirit in human beings. “It is the essence of the spirit of God in us and it resides in our hearts. This is what makes us human beings” (Mafuna 2007:88). By way of contrasting this spirituality with the first two spiritualities, one can safely say that autogenous devotees are selective to what they take seriously from the teachings of the church. It is fair to say that the locus of authority has shifted from the church to the self. In fact, “the institutional church itself would be constantly judged by him according to its capacity to act meaningfully and justly on the world” (Haughey 1976:81).

In relation to prayer, the autogenous “scrutinizes the activity of prayer more often than he prays, since it still suffers from being among the ‘oughts’ of his past” (Haughey 1976:82). Since intelligibility and meaning are more important than feeling,

autogenic Christians have been behind most of the social causes that have sensitized the church and assisted the world in recent years. The causes of

peace, civil rights, ecology, the needs of the Third World, and the innumerable causes of justice [...] have all received attention and concern.

This model, with all its limitations, takes us closer to understanding Biko's spirituality in the debate between contemplative and social activism, yet the major challenge is that Biko had left the church. Davis (1986:14) argued that Biko never left the church, which is the community of the redeemed and faithful, but that the institutional church left him.

- *Mason et al.'s (2007) typology*

Mason et al.'s (2007) book, *The spirit of Generation Y: Young people's spirituality in a changing Australia*, investigated the spirituality of young people in Australia. They surveyed a group that can be associated more with the Internet and social media than the church pew, and it offered important and innovative reading of the impact of dramatic socio-cultural changes on young people's spiritual lives in late modernity. It described in detail the three major types of spirituality found among them: traditional, New Age, and secular. Traditional spirituality refers to those who are grounded in the tradition of a major world religion, like Christianity. New Age refers to those people who show signs of spiritual life outside the bounds of traditional, organised religion or spiritual paths. These youths have explored other spiritual traditions such as yoga, Eastern meditation, tai-chi, and tarot cards (Mason et al. 2007:183). Secular spirituality refers to those who reject both traditional religion and New Age spirituality and base their spirituality on human experience and human reason. The following chapter of this study explains the concept of secularisation. It is sufficient to note here that secularisation refers to a decline in the salience and significance of religion culturally, politically, institutionally, and within individual consciousness (Mason et al. 2007:204).

Secularisation is the result of rationality, empiricism, science, individualism, and humanist philosophy's dominance of society.

The authors noted that the secular spirituality type is divided into three discrete sub-types, which are the non-religious, the ex-religious, and the undecided (Mason et al. 2007:207). The undecided youth are those who are unsure if they believe in God, and who do not presently identify with a religious tradition, nor hold an eclectic mix of New Age beliefs. The non-religious are the youth who have never believed in God, do not engage in religious practices, do not hold an eclectic mix of spiritual beliefs, and do not affiliate with spiritual beliefs. Of interest for this study are the ex-religious youth, who may not be too different from both the undecided and the non-religious group. The ex-religious are people who “[p]reviously believed conventionally but now did not; previously felt that they belonged to or identified with a Christian denomination, but did so no longer, or only minimally” (Mason et al. 2007:167).

These ex-religious are labelled as “questioners”. The questioner is defined as

a transitional form of spirituality *in adolescence* among those whose spirituality type in childhood was traditional; it is characterised by *questioning* their previous spirituality: significantly reducing or suspending former beliefs and practices, sometimes also abandoning their former identification with a denomination (Mason et al. 2007:168).

Just like Biko's mother and father played a spiritual role in his formative years, the “questioners” spirituality was first influenced by their parents (Mason et al. 2007:218; Singleton 2014:183). The reason for this is that people are socialised largely and primarily in a family environment. Normally, what parents think and do shape the practices and attitudes of their children (Singleton 2014:183). “The religious beliefs of

the adolescent are strongest when parents are committed, when these values are transmitted to the children, and when the parent-child relationship is healthy” (Mason et al. 2007:218). Non-religious parents have a higher possibility of forming non-religious youth. It was noted in the third chapter that Biko’s parents raised him in a Christian environment, and that he admired his mother’s faith to a certain degree. However, like the questioners, as Biko grew he started to have questions.

Singleton (2014:183) added the importance of peer influence on spiritual formation. A young person who finishes high school and leaves home for university is likely to find peers who may engage one critically on spiritual issues, or other friends may lead one to commit to a certain spirituality. Mason et al. (2007:218) wrote that living away from home affords a certain level of independency which may result in a person developing a stronger sense of what they believe in – or not. Biko, as seen in the previous chapter, had a group of friends who questioned religious teachings and how religion, especially Christian religion, was relevant to the black person. Besides family and friends, Mason et al. (2007:220) noticed that secular spirituality is associated mostly with male, rather than female, youths. The reason is that “the secular path has long been associated with traditional ‘masculine’ values and norms, such as reason and rationality” (Mason et al. 2007:220). A profile of a secular spirituality (non-religious/ex-religious) candidate will be a male, who may have grown up in a religious or non-religious family, and was educated away from home to a certain level of degree. Biko was not far from this description. Ex-religious or non-religious people give at least three reasons why they no longer believe like before. One reason is “studying further”, especially science. They believe that explanations about life, offered by science, render belief in God and Scripture questionable, and therefore there is little evidence of God’s existence (Mason et al. 2007:222). Also, many ex-religious people are disappointed with the

churches or organised religion, especially when the church fails to answer the question, “Why does God allow suffering?” Biko and his friends were likewise disappointed with the church as the custodian of Christian principles and values of justice.

The last aspect that is of interest in Mason et al.’s (2007) study is that secular spiritualists are mostly humanists. It must be noted that humanists exist in both religious and secular forms, and in other cases religious people may show admirable characteristics. However, it is important to note here that ex-religious people have shown an impressive ethical drive; a strong social conscience and extensive generous involvement in individual and group activities for the benefit of others (Mason et al. 2007:224). Their ethical drive may not necessarily be motivated by the Bible or any Scripture, but by how they value human beings.

Arguably, the fundamental value exalted by humanism is the infinite worth of the human individual, and the inviolability of personal freedom and autonomy: freedom in cultural, artistic, sexual, political and economic terms; freedom from every kind of restriction, censorship, oppression or discrimination – whether based on race, ethnicity, nationality, social class, gender, sexual preference or age (Mason et al. 2007:225).

Du Toit (2006:62) correctly considered African spirituality as secular spirituality, in a sense that it is a spirituality of the marketplace, outside the organised church, denomination, or religious control. He noted that African spirituality is holistic and its spirituality has always been bodily. One example of African secular spirituality is “struggle spirituality” (Du Toit 2006:62). Struggle spirituality “is discovered amongst those who participate in the struggle for liberation” (Grassow 1991:52), and the

participation in the struggle is seen fundamentally as a spiritual task. It is this spirituality that “make[s] as much of the secular as sacred as possible” (Worsnip 1991:46). In fact, such spirituality views the church as a site of struggle, which should not be seen in isolation from the struggling community. In a true African sense, Du Toit (2006:62) observed that struggle spirituality was collective:

It was characterised by a spirit that united and motivated black people collectively, a secular spirituality because it was experienced as spiritual in this world – a world where oppression prevailed and a will to freedom was alive [....] Struggle spirituality was born of the struggle against poverty and political oppression, in which mutual dependence created a remarkable solidarity and unity, expressed in the *Ubuntu* concept of “caring and sharing”.

Therefore, such spirituality is from bellow, and is actually born out of circumstances and lifestyle (Du Toit 2006:63). Biko’s spirituality was that of the struggle; it is this worldly spirituality, a bodily spirituality, which cannot be divorced from life.

The Western concept of spirituality is not always appropriate when used outside its original cultural context. It is found to be ill-fitted to define the African reality. An example is that in the West, spirituality may refer to an individual’s relationship with God. It concerns the soul. It is not like that in an African setting. We see in Biko’s life that the African systems do not pose a dichotomy between spiritual and corporeal (body), and spiritual and material (matter); the African mind grasps both realities as a whole. The essence of Biko’s spirituality is holism.



### **4.3.3 Was Biko a theologian?**

Can Biko be called a theologian? It is true that Biko was not an academic theologian, and he would have refused to be called a theologian because that would mean “specialist” (Duncan 2008:128). However, Biko did theologise and was seen among theological students (Vellem 2007:288). There must have been an interconnected relationship between Black Consciousness philosophy and black theology. Pityana (1991:16) noted that the father of Black Consciousness built his political system on a spiritual foundation; in other words agreeing with Vellem (2007:4) that in its defining moments, black theology harnessed the Black Consciousness philosophy. Biko himself mentioned the influence of James Cones’ book on black theology (Mngxitama et al. 2008:24). Therefore his consciousness and spirituality cannot be separated. They actually define his spirituality, because in Biko’s thinking and acting, he never differentiated between issues of consciousness and theology (Duncan 2008:128). In fact, among the BCM students, Biko and Pityana were leaders in the fields of politics and theology (Wilson 2011:46). As noted above, Biko knew that theologising is a cultural task (hence his advice to black leaders to assume leadership positions) exposed to a whole range of cultural influences. As a result, no theology or dogma may be absolutised. To theologise is to put the content of the Bible into a new cultural package. Each presentation, whether Western, African, Asian, or whatever other cultural variety – provided it has been done responsibly – is equally valid. Biko was clever enough to note that the Western presentation of theology appeared irrelevant to people from other cultures; not the Bible itself. This transferring of the Bible to another culture calls for critical hermeneutics. In doing theology, it could be said that Biko did not follow the traditional method of theologising; he followed the methodology of involvement. Theologians Villa-Vicencio and Hulley (1996:157-161) clearly

explained these methods in theological ethics. Whereas the traditional method begins with biblical material, followed by an attempt to clarify historical data related to the church, with the final phase being the proclamation implementation; the methodology of involvement begins where the traditional method seeks to end – in the world, engaged in the complexities of life and involved in the tensions of the day. It seeks to analyse the problem; to understand precisely what is going on. Emphasis is placed on the situation; seeking to define the problem in its possible uniqueness and certainly in its complexity. To do so, certain sociological tools of analysis are required, but also a first-hand involvement in what is taking place. Biko did exactly that. In “The church as seen by a young layman”, he advised preachers to “analyse situations a little deeper than the surface suggests”, and, without condoning bad behaviour, his concern was the following:

Stern-faced ministers stand on pulpits every Sunday to heap loads of blame on black people in townships for their thieving, house breaking, stabbing, murdering, adultery, etc. No one ever attempts to relate all these vices to poverty, unemployment, overcrowding, lack of schooling and migratory labour (Biko 2017:61).

The second phase is to decide what to do in response to this analysis. Practical involvement is on the basis of one’s analysis, and the analysis is undertaken on the basis of practical involvement. Biko was active and involved in his community; his spirituality was a daily lived experience. Biko’s theology could be defined as theology from below. Theology from below recognises human needs. While theology from above starts from the text of the Bible, theology from below starts with people and seeks to make the Scripture relevant. In so doing its goal is to expound scriptures in a way that the Bible appropriately meets people’s special needs. Inevitably, like Biko

did, theologians will be selective in their choice of biblical passages, and they will focus on passages that one thinks people in a particular context and culture will be able to understand. The organised church or religion emphasises theology from above, and therefore clashes with Biko were inevitable.

#### **4.4 BIKO'S SPIRITUALITY AND JESUS CHRIST**

The spirituality of Jesus Christ of Nazareth can illuminate Biko's spirituality. Comparing Biko to Jesus must, however, be done with great care (see Section 4.3.2 on models), because it is a very sensitive exercise, simply because orthodox Christianity believes that Jesus possesses divinity, i.e., is God. The story of Jesus is not simply a religious story; it is part of the ordinary history of the Jewish nation and perhaps the whole human race (Bowen 1996:40).

##### **4.4.1 Juxtaposing Biko and Jesus**

It is not unusual to read about Biko and Jesus in comparison. For example, in the article, "Steve Biko Christ-figure: A black theological Christology in the Son of Man film", Mokoena (2017) examined the first film in the Jesus-film genre with an entirely black cast. In this film, Jesus speaks isiXhosa and is black in an apartheid South African context. Mokoena (2017) used a black Christological perspective to analyse the nature of Jesus Christ in the film, and his findings were such that Jesus embodied the life of Biko and Biko was thus given a Christ-figure around four aspects: non-violence, ideology, disappearance, and death. Importantly, it appears that Biko made this comparison while still alive, for it is said that he called himself the "son of man" – identifying himself with the greatest revolutionary of all times (Mafuna 2007:84).

Even though he criticised the institutional church, Biko believed in God and had insight into Christ's teachings (Wilson 2011:16). Biko

truly believed in the teachings of the Son of Man. One of his favorite verses was from Luke 4:18-19: "He hath sent me to heal the broken hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised" This became the centre piece of the BCM's approach towards religion and politics and the guiding light for our activities (Mafuna 2007:84).

#### **4.4.2 Mission comparisons**

The Luke 4:18-19 scripture is very important in the ministry of Jesus, for it sets a scenario in which Jesus or God takes the side of the poor. Masango (2010:1) correctly asserted that this text suggested that Jesus began his ministry by participating in the public sphere, focusing especially on the poor and the oppressed people.

He launches a ministry of caring for them, articulating how he is going to address the issues of their marginalisation in the community [...] He seriously addresses the experience of the rejected and their ways of survival as they seek to discover the meaning of their own suffering. Jesus brings them back to the centre of life (Masango 2010:1).

The text gave the impression of a Jesus who was a liberator of the oppressed and the marginalised. Black theology sought to bring this awareness of Jesus back to the minds of the oppressed people of South Africa; a fighting Jesus is a liberating Jesus! The Luke 4:18-19 text shows Jesus to be concerned for all parts of human life. Missiologist Bowen (1996:31) noted characteristics of Jesus' ministry.

Studying specifically the book of Mark, he noticed that Jesus used the ordinary language of the world in his teaching and related his teaching to the needs people really felt in daily life. Jesus could only use such language if he spent time with people, like Biko did, for Biko spent time in beer halls and sports grounds as much as he did on campuses with other student activists. Also, Jesus was open to outsiders such as the Samaritans (Luke 9:51-56) and the Gentiles (Luke 4:25-27), unlike the religious leaders of his time. Therefore he came into conflict with those leaders and they called Jesus the friend of sinners (Luke 7:36-50; 19:1-10; 23:43). In addition, Jesus delivered people from oppression of all kinds – physical, social, religious, and political. Therefore he came into conflict with the demonic powers of evil; the Greek word *eleutheria* translated as “freedom” means “release from sin” (Luke 5:20; 7:47) but also “release from captivity and handicap” (Luke 13:16), and one can also add freedom from sickness, hunger, poverty, ignorance, and oppression. Freedom from all these kinds of calamities is good news, and Luke 4: 18-19 has a clear message of good news both in word and in deed. Jesus did not only do these things by himself; he taught others and commissioned the 12 apostles who were closest to him to continue his work of liberation. These 12 were commissioned and sent in Luke 9:1, and the 70 disciples in Luke 10:17. It continued in the Apostolic Church (Mark 16:17; Acts 16:16-18; 19:11-17), and it was a major strand in the advancement of Jesus’ teaching and person.

#### **4.4.3 Biko’s pastoral leadership**

Father Stubbs, who seemed to be the first, besides Biko himself, to suggest the Biko-Jesus comparison in the literature about Biko, called Biko an “authentic disciple” of Jesus Christ (Stubbs 2017:218); implying that Biko learned his craft from Jesus, and that his calling reflected the historical Jesus. Father Stubbs (2017:217-218) equated

Biko's extraordinary leadership to that of Christ, even though Mangcu (2012:300) warned about the "great man" syndrome danger, which was seen in Woods' statement that Biko, "I later came to realize, was the greatest man I ever had the privilege to know" (Woods 1987:37). Stubbs said he would have to go back to Jesus himself to find parallels to this extraordinary pastoral care which Biko had for his own people.

In his mind this "extraordinary pastoral care" could be the reason he was inclined to commit himself completely to the care of his leadership. "In this particular area I trusted him with the same kind of trust I have in Jesus" (Stubbs 2017:217-218).

Biko's "pastoral care" is seen in a letter he wrote to Father Stubbs (Stubbs 2017:200). In it he spoke of his major problem, which was "a strange kind of guilt" because many of his friends were in prison, for the programmes of the movement he helped to start, and yet he was not with them. What seemed to Biko a sense of guilt was rather a deep sense of compassion. Davies (1986:12) captured this scenario expertly: "The quality of compassion which characterised his relationship with his colleagues was deeply pastoral – it was a 'suffering with' rather than a 'sorry for'."

Surely, a ministry of compassion can be rightly compared to that of Jesus Christ, whom the Bible records that "when he saw the crowds he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd" (Matt. 9:36). Biko's compassion is said to have been coupled by humility as a leader. Stubbs (2017:218) wrote: "Whereas other leaders tend almost insensibly to become Leaders with a capital L, I never saw a sign [of this] at all happening with Steve."

Interestingly, the historian Lindy Wilson (2011:78) noted a conversation between Biko and his mother after the banning order:

His mother remembers saying to him: “Bantu, things are now hard for you. You are at home. You are doing nothing. When I was educating you I thought that by now I would be able to rest. Now, I am not resting. I cannot rest. You are imprisoned forever.” Biko responded to her in the paradigm she best understood and asked her what Christ’s mission on earth had been, and she replied, “To save the oppressed.” Then he said: “I too have a mission.”

It is this “mission” of Biko that can be compared to that of the historical Jesus. It is important to first examine the intention or the ministry of Jesus. What was the historical Jesus’ intention? New Testament scholar Stanton (1989) asked a similar question when he searched for that single aim or overriding theological principle which lies behind all Jesus’ teachings and actions (Stanton 1989:273-274). He argued that there was more to Jesus than just “a pastor par excellence”. Stanton (1989:274) explained that the key to understanding Jesus’ mission was at the end of his story:

Jesus went up to Jerusalem for the last time not simply in order to “minister” to its inhabitants. He went to Jerusalem in order to confront the religio-political establishment with his claim that the kingdom of God was at hand. On the basis of his convictions about the presence, power, and the will of God, Jesus called for a reordering of Israel’s priorities. In that sense he sought the renewal of Judaism. Renewal movements generally involve a rediscovery of basic principles and a call for loyalty to an inherited tradition [...] Jesus certainly did not intend to found a new religion. He did not repudiate Scripture, though on occasion he emphasised some scriptural principles at the expense of others

[....] He did challenge established conventions and priorities. Jesus believed that he had been sent by God as a prophet.

During Biko's day, the missionary church could not explain this side of Jesus' ministry. Hence Biko and his Black Consciousness friends emphasised black theology, which views the historical Jesus as belonging to a situation of oppression, that he was a member of an oppressed people in an oppressive society, and that he came to set his people free (Stubbs 2017:240). Jesus, from whom Biko learned, lived in a colonial situation like Biko and was a public prophet like Biko, who "was a prophet who foresaw that unless black people stood up for their rights and responsibilities nobody else would ever do it for them" (Mafuna 2007:89). Jesus sought the renewal of Judaism. In other words, he did not intend to start Christianity. Biko and the BCM did not intend to establish a new religion that was completely African. Snail (1993:255) wrote that the BCM realised that the problem was not Christianity as such, but the way in which it was introduced and spread among the oppressed Africans. The BCM observed that

80% of the black population was Christian, and that to convert it into a new religion was impossible. They also realized that that the black masses, being so deeply rooted in Christianity, would resist any attempt to sway them away from it (Snail 1993:255).

The only option they had was to renew Christianity and make it relevant to the oppressed South Africans. Judaism became irrelevant to the oppressed Jews; people began to accept their conditions under the Roman Empire. To borrow from Biko, they were more like "empty shells" (Biko 2017:31). Hence Jesus focused most of his time addressing institutional morality (see below) instead of addressing personal morality; just like Biko, who felt that the message preached to people was that of self-



condemnation and blaming oneself for misfortune. It caused black people to point a finger at themselves, rather than at the oppressive system. Also, Jesus was not necessarily against the Mosaic law; however, Jesus was aware of the distortion of the law, because Jews added many “sub-laws” to the main laws. Also, Jesus said he came not to abolish the law but to fulfil it (Matt. 5:17). Jesus was then able to switch between what was God’s and what was human made. Likewise, the Biko Christ-figure in the movie prioritised the core of the societal problems that are not God’s will but are man-made. The township problems were not caused by black people, but by the economically greedy white minority who institutionalised poverty and land dispossession (Mokoena 2017:2).

The mission of both Biko and Christ was to be non-violent. As the Biko Christ-figure is portrayed in the film, Biko was committed to non-violent means to achieve the goal of liberating the minds of the oppressed and dismantling the institutions that caused the oppression. In the film, Jesus is arrested and tortured. His response to the elders is that “it is no good trying to beat me into agreement, it would not work”. Biko uttered the same words when he was interrogated by the security branch: “Do not try any form of rough stuff, because it just would not work” (Mokoena 2017:2). A Biko Christ-figure does not give in to fear and intimidation, and is prepared to die for what he believes in. However, that does not mean that he was passive. More (2014:214) explains “at the personal and individual level, Biko certainly did not subscribe to the pacifist principle”. Biko recounted stories where he had to defend himself by violent means. When he was arrested, “some guy tried to clout me with a club. I went into him like a bull”, and in another incident recorded by Woods (1987:89), he said he hit a police man against the wall and “bust his false teeth”.

Indeed, Biko, as More (2014:214) observed,

was against two of the fundamental pillars of Christian pacifism: the “turn the other cheek” philosophy and the “love your enemies” precept. He did not think it made any sense to address such a philosophy to an oppressed and destitute people.

#### **4.4.4 Ideological similarities**

Jesus preached the Kingdom of God, which was entered into by the renewal of the mind and a change of heart (Matt. 4:17). Biko’s renewal of the mind was Black Consciousness. A convincing argument is made that Jesus’ parables picture him as a social prophet. While Pilch (2010:147) analysed Jesus’ healing activities as political acts, Van Eck (2010:3) made the point that Christ’s parables consistently addressed two “social illnesses” of his day: religious exclusivism (as advocated by the Jewish temple elite in their understanding of God in terms of his holiness) and social injustice (as practised by the Roman and Jewish elite). The ordinary people at that time were under foreign rule and in debt to tax collectors. Because of their religious impurity, they were often excluded from worshipping in the synagogue and the temple, which was only for the “righteous”. Jesus’ message was relevant to what they felt they needed and they welcomed it, even though others rejected it (Bowen 1996:42). The privileged people and the ruling class have a tendency of reading Jesus as if his message is only a matter of words and spiritual ideas, but in fact it holistically brings a definite and material challenge to their lives. Like Jesus, Biko was a public theologian. Understanding public theology in Van Aarde’s (2008) terms, that it is not about professional theologians or pastors doing theology in the public square but is about public theologians such as neighbourhood saints, strangers, and fellow citizens doing

theology in public. They come from almost every walk of life, their theological reflection has many faces, and the contents of their theological reflection are regularly political and social issues.

Jesus Christ valued people. That is seen in choosing not to condemn the woman who was caught in the act of adultery (John 8). Jesus preached that human beings were made in the image of God and therefore ought to be respected. In Mark 12, he was questioned about taxes, whether it is right to pay these to Caesar, who was the oppressor. He ended up asking them whose inscription is on the Roman Empire's coin, and they said it was Caesar's image. He said they must give Caesar what belongs to Caesar and give God what belongs to God. The implication was that if the coin has Caesar's image and they are in God's image, they ought to realise that they do not belong to Caesar, but to God. So they must give themselves totally to God, which would mean that they should allow themselves to be oppressed as if they were Caesar's possessions. In the story of the lost sheep, the lost coin, and the lost son (Luke 15), the emphasis on the woman cleaning and sweeping the house to find the coin gives a clue to the prodigal son's acceptance back at home. The coin had Caesar's inscription, therefore it was valid. The prodigal son had the father's image, therefore he was accepted back at home. He thought things that mattered in life were eating and drinking, or stature in the community, and neglected Lazarus who was made in the image of God. Biko, like Christ, valued humanity and expressed principles of humanness towards others. Biko (2017:45) wrote that "one of the fundamental aspects of our culture is the importance we attach to man" because "ours has always been a man-centred society".

He further wrote that unlike the white society which was driven by suspicion and capitalism,

Africans enjoyed man for himself. We regard our living together not as an unfortunate mishap warranting endless competition among us but a deliberate act of God to make us a community of brothers and sisters jointly involved in the quest for a composite answer to the varied problems of life. Hence in all we do we always place man first and hence all our action is usually joint community-oriented action rather than the individualism which is the hallmark of the capitalist approach (Biko 2017:46).

To be a human being, or to be black, was not a mistake – it was a deliberate act of the creator. In fact, Black Consciousness is a step in the right direction in the quest for true humanity. Africa’s greatest contribution to the world will be “a more human face”.

#### **4.4.5 Disappearance, suffering, and death**

Biko (30), like Jesus (33), died very young. The two did not only share the mission and the philosophy, they also shared the nature of death, and the consequences of their deaths left a mark on the world. Jesus, being arrested at night and with some of the disciples escaping and leaving him alone, “disappeared” from those who followed him and whom he loved; he suffered in the hands of the religious elite and the ruling elite alike. Pilate had every reason to stop the death, but he chose to sentence Jesus to death. However, Jesus’ death gave birth to the Jesus Movement, for his disciples went on from there preaching in his name (Acts 4:7; 5:28), and he influenced ordinary people with his love.

Now as they observed the confidence of Peter and John and understood that they were uneducated and untrained men, they were amazed, and began to recognize them as having been with Jesus (Acts 4:13).

Likewise, Biko was interrogated and disappeared the night of his arrest; his family could not determine his whereabouts at first. Biko suffered! The 15-day inquest into Biko's death revealed that during his detention in a Port Elizabeth prison cell, he had been chained to a grill at night and left to lie in urine-soaked blankets. He was naked and kept in leg irons for 48 hours in the cell. A scuffle with security police caused brain damage. He was then driven, naked and manacled, in the back of a Land Rover to Pretoria, where he died unattended in a cell on 12 September 1977 (Mokoena 2017:3). Just like Jesus' crucifixion, Pityana (2008:1) stated Biko's death was not extraordinary:

After all, it was not unusual for political activists to die in detention. He was in fact the 42<sup>nd</sup> person to die while detained by the South African security police, the Special Branch. Almost all those who died were young.

However, Biko's death, similar to that of Christ, caught the attention of the world. The people he spent his time with, the ones he influenced, such as Woods and Stubbs, spread the news of his death. It showed the cruelty of the white system, just like crucifixion showed the cruelty of the Roman oppressors. Biko's death was indeed a politicising event, as he said.

Jesus' spirituality was lived outside the orthodox, but that does not mean that he did not start in the temple as a child (Luke 2), and it also does not mean that he did not attend synagogue. What is meant here is that he was not part of the religious elite, and instead of spending most of his time or instead of preaching only in the synagogue or the temple, Jesus spent his time in the fields, in the mountains, and even in boats

by the seaside teaching people, living among people, and speaking people's language. His theology was indeed relevant to the struggles of his communities. Jesus' teaching was a mixture of the religious and political situations people found themselves in. He did not seem to subscribe to any dualistic thinking, and his sermons were communal rather than individualistic. That is Biko's spirituality; an incarnational spirituality, rooted in the community and its religious and political life without the dualistic outlook. It is theology from below, not necessarily a theology of specialists, but the theology of the people. Biko's religion was seen in his lifestyle outside the structures of orthodox religion. He was found among friends, colleagues, and family, and he even influenced his own enemies. God was indeed seen in Biko's life; fighting for the acceptance of one race by another, and this God takes sides with the oppressed.

#### **4.5 CONCLUSION**

Limiting our exploration of Biko's spirituality to Christian spirituality may not give us the full picture. Using the church or Christian terms to define Biko may also not be fair in the quest to define his spirituality. Quoted in Stubbs (2017:243), Lawrence Zulu, Bishop of Zululand, is recorded as having said after Biko's death: "He was too big for the church." Biko did not live his spirituality in the church. He was among the African people who were struggling. He in fact criticised organised religion or faith, while pursuing spiritual expressions by living a particular sense of justice. Father Stubbs called him the martyr of hope because

Steve died to give an unbreakable substance to the hope he had already implanted in our breasts, the hope of freedom in South Africa. That is what he

lived for; in fact one can truly say that is what he lived. He was himself a living embodiment of the hope he proclaimed by word and deed (Stubbs 2017:243).

In a true African way, Biko united issues of faith and social justice. In that way he actually redefined activism as belonging to the realm of the sacred. This is seen in his argument against the “highly exclusive” worship in Christian religion (Biko 2017:45); that for Africans worship is manifested daily. For Africans, religion could not be featured as a separate part of their existence on earth. Biko challenged the boundaries that delineate the sacred and the profane, and the public and the private. Based on ATR, Biko understood that religion should be concerned about issues of justice. Therefore, for Biko, activism was a realm of the sacred imbued with religious meaning and inhabited by forms of religious practice. By organising black people to see their worth, by confronting injustice, Biko engaged practices that were at the same time as religious as they were political. Biko showed religion as action.

The following chapter seeks to apply Biko’s spirituality to the current South African context. It examines the role played by the church in society, and how certain theological concerns can be addressed by Biko’s spirituality of incarnation.

## CHAPTER 5

### BIKO'S LEGACY FOR THE CHURCH IN A SECULAR STATE

#### 5.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter examined and defined Biko's spirituality. The main finding is that Biko's spirituality was a daily lived experience, which sought to unite issues of religion and politics. He actually redefined political activism as belonging to the realm of the sacred. In Biko, activism is seen as imbued with religious meaning and inhabited by forms of religious practice, because in organising black people to see their worth, and by confronting injustice, Biko engaged in practices that were at the same time as religious as they were political. He lived his religion, and to him it became meaningful as religious ideas and beliefs were experienced through actions and emotions. All this he did by challenging the boundaries that delineate the sacred and the profane. Biko understood that faith should be concerned with issues that affect the community and issues of social justice. The current chapter takes its cue from the previous as it seeks to move from just defining Biko's spirituality to examining his spiritual legacy for the church and theologians. The life and times of Biko provide for the theologian who comes from, and who theologises for, the underside of history; that is, the world of the oppressed, some imperatives for theological reflection, and engagement in praxis.

After the attainment of democracy, the church was faced with new challenges. Most of these challenges were the direct results of the apartheid system. Post-1994, De Gruchy and De Gruchy (2004:223-260) noted the challenges faced by the church as it moved "from church struggle to church struggles". The noted challenges were national reconciliation, concerns for the livelihoods of the poor, issues of human sexuality and gender justice, the reality of pluralism in a secular state, and the promise



and peril of globalisation. Indeed, the early 1990s saw theologians proposing that the church's new mission should include the promotion of democracy and democratic values and participation in reconciliation and nation building (Egan 2007:452). At the same time the church was called to examine contemporary issues such as HIV/Aids and the related problem of socio-economic inequality, "including questions of poverty, inequality of distribution of wealth and landlessness in a profoundly unequal society entering a globalised economy" (Egan 2007:452). Both Egan (2007) and De Gruchy and De Gruchy (2004) have written on these challenges facing the church; the current study, however, focuses on the major challenge of being a church in a democratic, pluralistic, and/or secular state.

## **5.2 THE SILENCE OF THE CHURCH POST-1994**

In 1994, the church lost its voice for the second time (Boesak 2014:1066); the first time being in the 1960s after the banning of political parties and leaders. However, after the 1960 silence, the church, especially the ecumenical prophetic churches, was "stunned, then shamed, then converted by Biko's critique on Christianity and more specifically, on the black church" (Boesak 2014:1063). Eventually, due to the banning of the liberation movement, ecumenical leaders assumed a political role by default (De Gruchy & De Gruchy 2004:207). Tutu (1995a:94) wrote that during the struggle against apartheid, the churches occupied a prominent position. Furthermore, the ecumenical prophetic churches were united, because they had a common enemy called apartheid.

Nothing unites a disparate group so effectively as having to face a common enemy. Church leaders representing widely divergent theological and political views came together to march to parliament and to be arrested together. It was not only Christian leaders who found a common foe so unifying. We were able

to walk-in-arm with leaders of the Muslim, Jewish and other faiths on an inter-faith witness against the evil of apartheid (Tutu 1995b:96).

However, post-apartheid, Tutu realised that the once-united church was faced with an “identity crisis”. The common enemy which used to unite them was now on its knees, and it was not easy to say what they were for or standing for as the church (Tutu 1995b:96). The crisis is further seen in the choices they had to make on whether to remain political or “do church work”. Tutu wrote that the Anglican Synod of Bishops decreed that no ordained Anglican priest would be permitted to be a card-carrying member of any political party. Tutu (1995b:97) seemed to be for this view:

Perhaps there will come a time when South Africa is normal, when the bishops could rescind their decision, but all I have seen in Africa and elsewhere confirm in me the view that no officially ordained representative of the church should be involved in party politics. If a pastor wants to be a party politician then he or she should resign his or her clerical position and thereby save the church from embarrassment of compromise.

In all, the church did not respond well to the transition from before to post-1994. There was no more significant church or ecumenical action regarding some of the most burning issues in South Africa (Boesak 2004:155); especially issues relating to poverty, and inequalities as tabled by De Gruchy and De Gruchy (2004). Boesak (2014:166) stated that the church was outmanoeuvred by democracy. With the advent of democracy, prophetic leaders felt that the time had arrived to give space to the released prisoners and the exiles, and some felt that the church leaders were in a hurry to withdraw from political activity (De Gruchy & De Gruchy 2004:207).

Boesak (2014:1066-1067), who is regarded as one of the insiders to church-state politics, summarised the outmanoeuvring of the church by democracy as follows:

- “We forgot the lessons we have learnt from our earlier understanding of the workings of power. We forgot that it is never just who is in power, but how they use their power when in power.
- More importantly perhaps, we have not reckoned with the fatal, seductive power of power and that, in its inverse imitation of God, it is not a respecter of persons.
- We forgot what John Calvin had taught us: that the true measurement of a just government is how justice is done to the poor, the wronged, and the oppressed.
- We focused on access to political power with closeness to the throne of God. We exchanged our prophetic faithfulness for what we called ‘critical solidarity’ except that our solidarity was more expedient than critical. More tragically, but unavoidably, our solidarity with those in power all too soon replaced our solidarity with the poor and the oppressed, because, in the new situation of black power politics in South Africa, there was so little *benefit* in it.
- We surrendered the terrain of prophetic faithfulness and allowed it to become the playground of political expediency and propaganda. So before we knew it, Thabo Mbeki and Trevor Manuel (and presently Jacob Zuma and Cyril Ramaphosa) were more at ease with using the Bible to expand their particular brand of state theology than we were able to offer prophetic witness to the nation standing on the truth of that very same Bible.
- We confused Nelson Mandela’s South Africa, ‘a nation at peace with itself and the world’ with the shalom of the kingdom of God. And we did that because as

a church we no longer stood where Christ stands, and is always to be found. Instead, we found our place and took the elevated and lofty view from the hill where the Union Buildings stand, and no longer looked from the depths of the flooded valleys of misery and poverty where the neglected and the destitute still cry for freedom and justice.

- Finally, and perhaps more important than we dare to admit: in a much more intimate, but simultaneously spiritual and political way, as we became more and more mesmerised by Mr Mandela, we became more and more embarrassed by Jesus.”

De Gruchy and De Gruchy (2004:208) indicated other factors which affected the political involvement of the church. First was the loss of international support for the SACC. Tutu (1995b:96) wrote that after 1994,

things were changing quite rapidly. Donor partners wanted to have from us something new and exhilarating which they could sell to their subscribers and supporters, the old “being opposed to apartheid” strategies were no longer automatic winners.

Lack of financial muscle had a negative impact on many ecumenical programmes. This led to less ecumenical meetings, and churches “no longer have anything much to constrain us to seek the support of our sisters and brothers of other faiths, and so interfaith cooperation” was another casualty of post-apartheid South Africa (Tutu 1995b:96). Adding to the lack of funding, church activities did not receive attention from the media, because the spotlight moved towards the returning exiles and freed prisoners. These men and women were new spokespeople for the struggle. Also, De Gruchy and De Gruchy (2004:208) correctly pointed out the growth of the charismatic

and fundamentalist “mega-church” trend. These churches entered the public life “after years of silence and which, with a remarkable ability, gained media attention for their own conservative ideas” (De Gruchy & De Gruchy 2004:208). With the exception of Tutu, the Christian voice in the media was given to these churches for their fundamentalist stereotypes. At same time, “[t]he ecumenical church was not good at countering this image of Christianity, especially at a time when world-wide attention was focusing on religious fundamentalism of all kinds” (De Gruchy & De Gruchy 2004:208).

This study will show that “religious fundamentalism” is one of the aspects of the church’s reaction to secularisation. For, as Egan (2007:458) noticed, churches as institutions tend to be socially conservative, and therefore it makes it difficult for them to adapt to a new socially liberal culture. This “new socially liberal culture” also meant the “[s]hift from a state-supported Christian hegemony to a situation in which all religious traditions were regarded equally within a secular state” (De Gruchy & De Gruchy 2004:208).

Christian fundamentalists, especially those who were silent during apartheid, who did not take part in the interfaith marches and struggles, find it difficult to accept this new reality. However, the ecumenical churches, which in most cases lost their leadership, with some being incorporated into the government sector and others going into retirement, discussed how they can relate to the government.

### **5.3 CHURCH-STATE RELATIONS**

Theologians such as Egan (2007) and Kretzschmar (2012:133-140) discussed general approaches to church-state relations in South Africa. Kretzschmar followed the historical journey of the church’s relation to the state as being “collaboration”,

“neutrality”, and “critical engagement”; whilst Egan, focusing mostly on the contemporary situation, noted “withdrawal”, “opposition”, and “critical engagement”.

### **5.3.1 Collaboration**

By collaboration Kretzschmar (2012:133) meant that there was no critical distance between the church and state, “resulting either in the church dominating the state or, more often, a church that is subservient to the state”. This collaboration was seen in South Africa for most of the apartheid period, where the Dutch Reformed Church collaborated with the South African nationalist government.

Especially from 1948 onwards, many Christians in South Africa supported the policies of this government despite limited, but fierce, critiques from within the Afrikaans-speaking churches, the firm or muted responses of the English-speaking churches, and resistance from within the ranks of black Christians (Kretzschmar 2012:133).

Many white Christians, especially from the Dutch Reformed Church, are living with the guilt of collaborating with the apartheid system; and what is worse is how, post-1994, people view the white church with suspicion. Kretzschmar (2012:135) called collaboration a “trap” for the church, because her observation was that church leaders who associate with the political and business elite tend to lose sight of their calling as servants of God: “Unlike Jesus (Luke 4:5-8), they may fail to detect or resist the temptations of idolatrous glory and authority” (Kretzschmar 2012:135). Also, these leaders may fail to expose and resist the abuse of power because of their close proximity to the government. Uncritical spiritual leaders put the church in danger, especially when the leaders become blindly obedient to an individual political leader,

party, or ideology. The apartheid history is a case in point, where the oppressive system was aligned with the purposes of God. As a result, the church struggles to lead the causes of the poor and the oppressed. The post-apartheid church lost a number of leaders to the ruling ANC party. One of these leaders was Frank Chikane, and unlike Desmond Tutu, whenever Chikane speaks, it is regarded as the ANC speaking, and worse, he is regarded as part of the factions within the ruling party. Chikane is regarded as former president Mbeki's pawn, because while he was in the president's office, he defended the disastrous HIV/Aids policy of the then ANC.

### **5.3.2 Withdrawal, or the escapism of “neutrality”**

What Kretzschmar (2012:135) called “escapism of neutrality”, Egan (2007:458) referred to as “withdrawal” by the churches from the political arena and further away from the public sphere. Egan (2007:458) acknowledged the complexity of the withdrawal of churches from the political arena. He noted that South Africans in general have withdrawn significantly from politics, considering the low turnout on election days, the low membership of political parties, etc. Churches as institutions have drawn even further away from the public sphere, with local churches in almost all denominations becoming less “political”. The contributing factors include the haemorrhaging of the “vanguard” of the activist leadership of the religious sector into government or well-deserved retirement (Egan 2007:458). There are several reasons for this withdrawal. Egan (2007:459) evaluated several churches and denominations and observed that one of the reasons could be because individual church members are either non-aligned or are members of different parties. Therefore, it becomes difficult for church leaders to be politically active, be it in party politics, or even comment on a ruling party. The solution is to remain neutral and avoid hurting

relations. In addition, Kretzschmar (2012:136) pointed out two reasons; one being indifference to the suffering of others, deliberate ignorance, fear of ridicule, or exclusion from one's social group and selfish self-interest. Neutrality as a model of church-state relations avoids the responsibility of the courageous witness. The second reason is a false theology due to limited or privatised understanding of the gospel.

Jentile (2016) found that there is less interest among church leaders in getting involved in issues affecting the community in general. Initially, Jentile's study examined issues relating to the high number of moral failures among the newer charismatic and Pentecostal churches in Soweto, Johannesburg. The main findings, as justified by the data of the study, were that there was no specific and purpose-driven way of grooming and developing leaders within most of these churches. Moral formation was not being intentionally pursued. This was found to have a direct impact on the manner in which young ministers generally behave and perform their ministerial duties. Young ministers venture into the world of church ministry raw, without any guidance and/or theological/pastoral education/training, nor any intention to pursue it later in life. Furthermore, theological training is generally seen as irrelevant, and therefore a general trend is that qualifications held by the ministers and those pursued later in life are almost all in fields other than theology. Jentile's (2016) study managed to identify what might be the main cause for all the problems experienced with the pastors in question. Lack of guidance by senior pastors and formal theological training in general appear to be the main culprits. Consequently, these affected how young ministers related their theology to their communities, and their theology could not assist them to minister to their communities. As a result, in relation to participation in society, the majority of church leaders confine themselves to a "welfarist paradigm" (Rasool 2009:5) or "gap filling" (Crawford 1995:37). In comparison to "advocacy", which seeks



to influence the rules, practices, or beliefs of policymakers, and “partnership”, which seeks to cooperate with government in efforts to realise some type of service such as crime reduction, “gap-filling” activities provide services largely independent of government service delivery (Crawford 1995). Handing out food parcels is one example. One finds that churches feel very much proud that they have distributed food hand-outs to poor families, but few ask why these people are starving in the first place. Biko would have encouraged churches to conduct a deeper analysis of the socio-political issues, and refrain from blaming people for their poverty. Currently, many prosperity gospel preachers put the blame on the congregants for their poverty, claiming that poor people are not praying enough, or that they lack sufficient faith to be blessed by God.

In South Africa, poverty has colour and gender. The face of poverty is black, and its gender is female (Chitiga-Mabungu, Mupela, Ngwenya & Zikhali 2016:181). What is worse is that in the face of abject poverty, there seems to be a new minority on the rise – a black elite (Southall 2016). Richardson (2009) observed that while a few have become rich, live in extravagant houses, and drive luxury cars, the unemployment rate is at least as high as it ever was. Materialism, coupled with individualism, and consumerism are rife (Richardson 2009:55). A recent analysis showed that churches are fostering individualism and materialism (James 2014:209), and these are the hallmarks of Western Christianity. The problem of dualism still haunts the modern-day church. Few ministers of the gospel are able to move freely from the pulpit to the streets where people are struggling. An example is the absence of church leaders during the students’ #FeesMustFall campaign, which led some student activists to ask, “Where are the church leaders?” Again, the observation is that the church has withdrawn into denominational or privatised zones, attending only to their own flocks

(Pieterse 2000; MacMaster 2008). De Wet (2016) wrote that despite the church's influence in society, church leaders,

have no ambition to be politically active, little power to convince their congregants to vote as a block, not a great deal to offer the country philosophically, and are actively making themselves less relevant with every passing day.

Quoted in De Wet's article, West (2016) blamed the kind of theology and spirituality found today: "It doesn't know what to do with political power [...] It doesn't know how to engage it." The church has settled for a highly individualised form of theology, "where there is no engagement with more systematic dimensions of life, and the prophetic is almost entirely absent [...] The churches have retreated into what you can call 'maintenance mode'" (West 2016 quoted in De Wet 2016:17).

Indeed, post-1994, most churches began to focus on denominational issues and remained neutral. As Kretzschmar (2012:139) observed, however, neutrality leads to disengagement, which, in turn, results in exclusion. Notwithstanding the withdrawal of churches, some felt to oppose the ANC-led government as composed of Christian political parties. There are several of those, including the African Christian Democratic Party (ACDP), the Christian Democratic Party (CDP), and the United Christian Democratic Party (UCDP), which are self-conscious Christian parties who run on the ticket to create a faith-based state (Egan 2007:459). But support for these parties has not grown to even a mere 5% of the electoral vote, therefore these parties are not making political inroads in South African communities. Egan (2007:461) argued that this could be because "the ANC remains the party of liberation for the majority of citizens and that tradition plays a major role in maintaining old political loyalties".

The ecumenical churches, represented by the SACC, saw the withdrawal model as the wrong option, and therefore responded by adopting what Kumalo (2013) called “critical solidarity”.

### **5.3.3 Critical engagement, critical cooperation, or critical solidarity**

In the article, “Facts and fiction: The development of church and state relations in democratic South Africa from 1994-2012”, Kumalo (2013:631) provided a historical overview of church-state relations. An important pattern of the church-state relationship is identified, and critical solidarity is the latest model adopted by the church. The pattern is as follows:

- 1652: uncritical acceptance
- 1800: critical acceptance
- 1911: critical opposition
- 1960: prophetic witness
- 1990-1994: mediation
- 1994: critical solidarity

It was only in August 1995 that the church adopted the critical solidarity model, and this was at the SACC conference, themed “Being a church in South Africa today”. The conference noticed two dominant temptations facing the church in its relation to the state, which must be resisted.

The one is to cringe before the complexities and problems of a new democratic order and leave everything to the politicians. The other, equally unhelpful, is simply to demand utopian goals from government – without also paying

attention to the necessary intermediate steps required to reach these goals (Pityana & Villa-Vicencio 1995:166).

The conference resolved that

[w]e need to be in critical solidarity with the Government of National Unity, engaging with it in the creation of a new and just social order, fully involving ourselves in reconstruction and development (Pityana & Villa-Vicencio 1995:166).

The church was challenged to work in solidarity with the state and communities and to engage in social justice and nation building. That meant opposing all that was unjust, and at the same time supporting programmes that enhanced economic renewal. In all this the church was to retain its integrity and remain prophetic in its service, “affirming what is just and good and raising its voice against all social and political evils” (Pityana & Villa-Vicencio 1995:166). Nolan (1995:152) added:

The prophetic role of the church in South Africa today includes being critical of itself, of its own institutions, of the organizations and actions of the people, being critical of businesses and big corporations, of people involved in corruption and fraud – even those close to it – as well as being critical of the elected government.

Critical solidarity can thus be summed up as the church accepting the authority and legitimacy of the government and pledging its support and solidarity where needed and necessary. “However, the support was to be marked by the maintenance of a critical distance from the government” (Kumalo 2013:633). The two establishments were to retain their relative autonomies from each other. The church refused to be co-

opted by the government as uncritical collaborators, and would engage with government representatives without losing its independence. Caution must be taken when seeking to maintain balance between being critical and cooperating at the same time. Therefore, the *how* part of this engagement is crucial. Notably in 1998, the SACC set up a small office in parliament to monitor parliamentary activity. The office focused on five areas: policy and legislation development; advocacy of church concerns; informing churches on policy; conducting advocacy training workshops for churches; and pastoral care to members of parliament (Egan 2007:462). This was a calculated move by the SACC; taking into consideration the complexities around law making and the unpreparedness of churches to handle it. The parliamentary office analysed legislation, particularly new tax laws, and put together manuals to help clergy and churches deal more proactively with the state (Egan 2007:462).

The SACC amended the relationship from “critical solidarity” to “critical engagement” in 2001 (Kretzschmar 2012:139) because the church realised that it could not be a junior partner to the state. The Mandela government, and later the Mbeki government, expected the church to join the ANC-led state in its initiatives of development. Resane (2016:4) wrote that “Nelson Mandela’s administration recognised and publicly acknowledged the role of the church during the liberation struggle and in transforming the society”. Furthermore, quoting Mandela’s biographer<sup>7</sup>, Resane (2016:4) noted that Nelson Mandela found more encouragement from churches, he reached out to all the main churches, with a politician’s eye for future friends, he even congratulated Dr Gqubule on becoming the president of the Methodist Church, and remarkably, Mandela welcomed the wind of change within the Dutch Reformed Church, the original seedbed of apartheid. “It is clear that Mandela gave churches the pavilion of honour

---

<sup>7</sup> Simpson, 1999, *Mandela: The authorised biography*.

in transforming South Africa,” wrote Resane (2016:4). However, although Mandela invited the church to work with the government, he did not take kindly to criticism by the church (Kumalo 2013:634).

Thabo Mbeki also expected the church to assist the government in implementing its policies, as a junior partner who could not think, analyse, and speak critically to power (Kumalo 2013:635). Mbeki, addressing the SACC in 2004, was quoted by Kumalo (2013:635) as having challenged the SACC thus: “To play its part among the forces in our country that have defined themselves as actors for the progressive reconstruction and development of our country.”

The SACC has had a tumultuous relationship with the state, because in the minds of the two presidents, the SACC was just one of the many civil society bodies. Mbeki can be commended, like Mandela, for reaching out to the churches. Resane (2017a:3) argued:

The Mbeki era saw the enhancement of the inter-faith movement leaders. By 2001, Mbeki and the churches were walking far apart from each other. On 7 April 2001, a historic event happened when the president convened a meeting with church leaders.

Under President Mbeki, however, the government encountered a great deal of criticism for corruption (Resane 2017a:4), silent diplomacy on Zimbabwe, and the HIV/Aids denials. The church-state gap was felt especially when corruption escalated. President Mbeki has since lambasted the church for its silence on issues that matter, even after his tenure as the country’s president. In 2013, on 6 October, Mbeki addressed the Anglican Conference in Johannesburg, where he conscientised the church of its important role in society.

Mbeki

criticized the country's churches for not playing a greater role since the end of apartheid and has hit out at churches all around Africa for not speaking louder on issues facing the continent [...] He concluded his speech by highlighting "[t]he leadership of the church is sorely missed" (Resane 2017a:3-4).

Instead of improving, relations between the church and state worsened with the arrival of Jacob Zuma. Nelson Mandela's government formed the National Religious Association for Social Development (NRASD) in 1997. In 2003, the body was converted to an interfaith National Religious Leaders' Forum (NRLF), under Mbeki. This body consulted regularly with both Mandela and Mbeki (Kumalo 2013:637), and it received large amounts of money to assist with development. The ascendance of Zuma to the presidency saw the formation of a third interfaith body called the National Interfaith Leadership Council (NILC), led by Ray McCauley, who then was not a member of the SACC. The SACC was not informed about the formation of the NILC, nor was it invited. Kumalo (2013:638) indicated: "The SACC saw this as the ANC's response to its refusal to become a formal ally of the ruling party by adopting CS [Critical Solidarity] model". Interestingly, Zuma's era saw the

promotion, elevation, and commendation of the president and some of his cabinet ministers by the leaders of African Initiated Churches, especially those of charismatic inclinations. Constantly one sees, reads, or hears of the visits of these ministers to some cultic centres where they are being prayed for and affirmed in public. One hardly hears from these ecclesiastical formations, any prophetic voice rebuking the wayward conduct of politicians or religious leaders (Resane 2017a:4).

Kumalo (2013) suggested that the “bad blood” between the ANC-led government and the SACC was due to fact that SACC clergy campaigned for the Congress of the People (COPE), the breakaway party of the ANC. However, it must be noted that there has been bad blood between President Zuma and the SACC since his rape case and subsequent acquittal. Under the Jacob Zuma presidency, the SACC has found its voice, due to the many errors of and corruption accusations against the president. These stretch from the arms deal cases, Nkandla-Gate, and lately state capture – to mention a few.

Critical engagement leaves the church with a challenge of educating the ministers to learn to engage the state. Without the sharpness of the minds of leaders, the church will remain silent and marginalised, and at worst withdraw from public life. Post-1994, life has been difficult for the church, for it had to contest for space with the ruling ANC and the growing opposition of the Democratic Alliance (DA), the EFF, and other vocal civil society actors.

#### **5.4 THE CHURCH IN A SECULAR STATE: LOSS OF RELEVANCE AS THE MAIN CHALLENGE**

The church is not only fighting for space in the political public discourse; it also faces the question of relevance in society in general. The decline in relevance is also the aftermath of 1994. In post-apartheid South Africa, the country’s Constitution was crafted in a way to facilitate an ongoing contribution of religion to and in politics (Rasool 2009:3). Rasool (2009) mentioned three options that were discussed in talks about the relationship between the church and state. The first option was to be an “atheistic state”; meaning that the state has nothing to do with religion, and does not encourage it, and at worst it becomes hostile to religion. But this option could not see the light of



day because, as in Biko's day, society was "fundamentally religious" and this would betray the role played by religion in attaining freedom (Rasool 2009:3). The second obvious option was a "theocratic state", but Rasool argued that this option had too many complications because "South Africa has its own problems in terms of its diversity". It is no surprise then that a Christian political party such as the ACDP has never made serious inroads in the general population, for it sought a to create an explicitly Christian state (Egan 2007:460). The agreement was to develop a "secular state", where "religion operated in the private sphere, where individuals believed what they choose, as long as there is tolerance of the religious sentiments of our people" (Rasool 2009:3).

A secular state, according to De Gruchy (1997:94), meant the following:

Firstly, it refers to the freedom of religious association and means that each religious community is allowed to conduct its own life according to its own beliefs. Secondly, it means that each religious community is free to propagate its own beliefs and gain converts. Thirdly, it means that each religious community is free to express support for, or criticism of, the state. Fourthly, it means that the liberty of individual conscience, which in many respects is the essence of the freedom of religion, must be respected.

There is much confusion around the term "secular state". Kretzschmar (2012:137) correctly observed that

[t]he adoption of a secular state does not mean that all forms of religious commitment are to be abandoned within society as a whole, nor does it mean that religious individuals or groups should be denied a public role.

The Constitution, which was opposed by the ACDP at its adoption in 1996, guarantees the equality of all religions in status. That is, “No one religion [...] should be afforded special privileges or position by the state; there is a separation between the church and state” (Kretzschmar 2012:137).

Hovland (1992) predicted, however, that the attainment of democracy and freedom would bring with it greater challenges for the church. He wrote that churches and religion in general will not necessarily be persecuted or harassed, but the churches will be ignored, marginalised, and privatised (Hovland 1992:65). Both marginalisation and privatisation are part and parcel of secularisation. South Africa has a secular constitutional dispensation, and religion is no longer as distinctive a feature of South African national public life as it was before 1994. The South African parliament no longer opens with Christian prayers, but with prayers from a range of religious traditions. In some events, the African traditionalists take the lead through the burning of incense as they communicate with the ancestors.

Sociologists call this decline process “secularisation”. Secularisation points to a declining influence of religion in everyday life for society; however, for the religious organisations, becoming more secular means that they direct attention less to “otherworldly” or supernatural issues and more to worldly affairs such as politics and economics. Dobbelaere (2011:600) stated that the sociological explanation of secularisation is that “religion becomes a subsystem alongside other subsystems”. Furthermore, Dobbelaere (2011) distinguished between secularisation that operates at the individual level and at the societal level. At the societal level, the emphasis lies on functional differentiation: sectors of society which historically were controlled by the church begin gradually to emerge as separate and autonomous spheres. No longer do people look to the church as the provider of services such as healthcare, education,

or social services. The responsibility belongs to the state, which grows in stature as the churches diminish (Davies 1992:49). All that the church does is fill the gaps left by the state. On the individual level, religious activity decreases and more people stop going to church. Apostolides and Meylahn (2014) wrote:

More and more people are leaving traditional churches and seeking meaning and answers to their ultimate questions elsewhere. Particularly the youth (adolescents) struggle to find meaning in the ancient texts of Scripture as the metaphors and language of the Bible is foreign to them.

This does not necessarily mean that the youth is not fascinated by “religious” questions; they are particularly not interested in traditional institutionalised religion (Apostolides & Meylahn 2014:2). Therefore, contrary to those who predicted the demise of religion in society, people are practising religion in their own terms and focusing on individual piety. Secularisation is also present on organisational level, according to Dobbelaere (2011:608). On that level secularisation represents an adjustment of religion to new conditions evident in, for example, modern trends in ecumenism. Often, the process of secularisation leads to secularism. Casanova (2011:66) defined secularism as referring to a whole range of modern worldviews and ideologies concerning religion. Casanova (2011:66) stated that these worldviews “may be held and reflexively elaborated or, alternatively, which have taken hold of us and function as taken-for-granted assumptions that constitute the reigning epistemic *doxa* or ‘unthought’”.

For Christians, secularism is the worldview that individuals, society, and the world itself have no need for God, and that God probably does not exist.

This is seen in Braaten's (1972:69) "signs of secular times":

First, there is a decline of religious influence in the world. Many traditional symbols, doctrines and institutions have lost their force. They are ignored or forgotten [...]. Second, those who still practice a religion are not manifestly different from those who don't. The religious are themselves secularised, since they have turned their attention away from the mysteries, myth, magic and miracle, and to the things of this world [...]. Third, "we are secular" means that the public realms of government, industry, and education are totally autonomous, and we brook no interference from religion [...]. Fourth, the secularising process means that history is not experienced as a field in which divine and anti-divine powers are struggling for victory. History is not grounded in God and it has no goal. Man is the measure of what is happening in the world. We proceed as though God does not exist [...]. Fifth, the world becomes rationalized and desacralized. The experience of the holy in man's communion with nature is transposed into an objectifying attitude, changing nature into material resources, to nourish the insatiable appetites of the machines that technological man has made. Sixth, the secular society first loses the religion and then morality that derives from it, so that eventually ends are forgotten for means, values exchanged for facts, endless growth in place of final goals, etc. Man is then created in the image of the machine that he has made, abandoning his self-image as the very image of his Creator.

Responses towards secularisation vary. Progressives see secularisation as liberation from the all-encompassing beliefs of the past, thereby affording people greater responsibility for what they choose to believe. However, conservative people tend to see the erosion of religion as a mark of moral decline. A number of religions view the

development of “fundamentalism” as a religious reaction to secularism. Macionis (1995:507) defined fundamentalism as “a conservative religious doctrine that opposes intellectualism and worldly accommodation in favour of restoring traditional, otherworldly spirituality”. This phenomenon is found in many religions and in many countries. As a matter of interest, earlier it was noted that post-1994, fundamentalists “entered the public arena after years of silence and which, with a remarkable ability, gained media attention for their own conservative agendas” (De Gruchy & De Gruchy 2004:208).

Religious fundamentalism is distinctive in several ways (Macionis 1995:507). Fundamentalists tend to interpret the Scriptures literally. This is seen in monotheistic religions of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam in particular, for these have developed fundamentalisms whose adherents insist on scriptural truths being utilised as the foundation of society’s moral and legal life (Chryssides & Geaves 2007:371). Fundamentalists would then use the Scriptures literally to counter excessive intellectualism and general secularisation. Also, fundamentalists do not accept religious plurality, because in their minds, tolerance and relativism water down personal faith. They maintain that their religious beliefs and ideas have validity while those of others do not. They pursue the personal experience of God’s presence. In contrast to “worldliness” and intellectualism of other religious organisations, fundamentalism seeks to propagate “good-time religion” and spiritual revival.

Being a follower of Christ, or being “born again”, is expected to be clearly seen in a person’s everyday life. Fundamentalists like a particular separation between the

insiders and outsiders, true believers and unbelievers, but this is directed not only to other religious adherents and the secular world, but also to those within

the same religious affiliation who do not accept the fundamentalist version of history or interpretation of Scripture (Chryssides & Geaves 2007:374).

Furthermore, fundamentalists oppose “secular humanism” – the tendency to look to scientific experts rather than God for guidance on how to live because the changing world undermines religious conviction. When it comes to politics, many fundamentalists would likely endorse conservative political goals. Some fundamentalists have entered politics to counter what they see as the “liberal agenda” of gay rights, abortion, etc. This is evident in the policies of the Christian political parties mentioned earlier.

However, a “secular state” offers the church more advantages than disadvantages. In agreement is Pieterse (2000:84), whose opinion is that “[t]he general theological view here [South Africa] and abroad is that Christian churches (and naturally all other religions) in the modern world are better off in a secular state”.

In a secular state, the biblical view of separation of church and state, and religious liberty and the expression of Christian convictions, can be achieved peacefully (Pieterse 2000:94). Moreover, a secular state does not only offer religious freedom, but it also offers the possibility for religious activism, as Rasool (2009:4) noted, where religious people, in particular churches, would be able to share God’s desire for the well-being of all human beings. Churches, as part of society, should seek and stand for the justice of all citizens, even those who are not Christians. Also, “[f]or religious belief to be sincere and effective it must be freely chosen. Faith cannot be compelled upon a person” (Foster 2012:172).

In a secular state, a church ought to make it its goal that all are equal before the law, and that the poor of the poorest are taken care of. The major threat to state-church relations post-1994 is that the church is pushed to the margins, but the church has also chosen to abandon its political role and democratic contribution. If the church does not, or when it does involve itself in society issues, it is always too insignificant. The church must realise its societal responsibility. The societal responsibilities of the church include being the conscience and guide of society in both political and economic spheres (Hovland 1992:69-72). This study therefore turns to ways in which churches need to learn so that they can appropriately engage society.

## **5.5 BIKO'S SPIRITUALITY AS A LEGACY TO THE "RELEVANCE CRISIS" FACED BY THE CHURCH**

Biko has become a contested figure. In the book, *Biko: Philosophy, identity and liberation*, More (2017) correctly observed that scholarship around Biko locks him to the biographical moment of political activism. His argument is that Biko has multiple identities, one of which is that of a philosopher; More (2017) joins Sono (1993:90) in that view. However, More (2017) warned that Biko was not a philosopher in the academic sense of a university professor, but more precisely a man of theory and action; in the words of Sono (1993:102), an "organising philosopher". More (2017:2) located Biko within the philosophical terrain; more pointedly, the Africana existentialist tradition. Maluleke (2008) said that Biko was an activist social theorist in the traditions of Fanon, Luther King Jr., and Malcolm X.

The current study contests that Biko can also be claimed by the religious sector as an authentic disciple of Jesus (Davis 1986:12; Stubbs 2004:218) and an authentic theologian (Hopkins 1991:196; Maluleke 2008:121). However, Biko was not a

professional theologian; he was a “layman” who theologised “from below”, from among the struggles of the ordinary South Africans, and most notably he theologised outside the church institutions. Biko was no saint, yet circumstances made him a hero (Pityana 1991:254). His childhood friend, Pityana (1991:255-256), summarised Biko’s legacy as manifested in two areas: the first area is the psychological awakening of the black person to realise that he or she is a human being; and the second area is black leadership. Pityana (1991:255) said:

Arguably its greatest or deepest manifestation has been best expressed in those hidden and unquantifiable virtues that make people human. Infused blacks with a spiritual fibre, a mettle and a fighting spirit.

Pityana (1991) is not the only one to analyse Biko’s legacy in this way. The recent Biko memorial lectures<sup>8</sup> almost unanimously agreed that Biko has left the country with a challenge of searching for a more humane society. In the 2004 lecture, ten years after democracy, former president Nelson Mandela (2009:76) conceded that the nation has crucially fallen behind what he referred to as the “RDP<sup>9</sup> of the soul”. He noted that

[t]he values of human solidarity that once drove our quest for a humane society seem to have been replaced, or threatened, by a crass materialism and pursuit of social goals of instant gratification (Mandela 2009:76).

Mandela noticed that the challenge is to re-instil in the consciousness of South Africans a sense of human solidarity, of being in the world for one another and because

---

<sup>8</sup> Since the year 2000 to date (2018) there have been memorial lectures in several universities around the country. The Steve Biko Foundation and the University of Cape Town have produced and put together a publication of these into a booklet (*Steve Biko memorial lectures: 2000-2008*). A more recent copy is in the publication process. Following on their example is the Nelson Mandela University’s Centre for the Advancement of Non-racialism and Democracy (CANRAD). It has also hosted and published a memorial lecture series (*Steve Bantu Biko lives: The quest for a human face: 2011-2016*).

<sup>9</sup> RDP stand for Reconstruction and Development Programme. It was a South African socio-economic policy framework implemented by the ANC government of Nelson Mandela in 1994.



of and through others. “It is, as Biko did at that particular moment in history, to excite the consciousness of people with the humane possibilities of change” (Mandela 2009:76). Biko wanted black people to be treated with dignity, and that black bodies were respected as fully human. Unfortunately, the treatment of black people, not only by white people, was appalling. Tutu (2009:97) told of how black domestic workers would declare proudly that they did not work for a black employer, even if they paid more than the white counterparts. The reason being that there are no greater exploiters of blacks than their fellow blacks (Tutu 2009:97).

There seems to be no respect for black people, and Tutu (2009:97) used the example of how badly people drive in townships as a sign of disrespect. Mangena (2017:10) blamed low self-esteem among the black population. Black Consciousness sought to restore pride and dignity, humanity, and self-worth in the black person. However, it is not like that today.

It held then, and we still hold that now, that physical freedom without psychological liberation is problematic. It is clear to some of us that psychological chains remain a deficit that devalues the political freedom [...] It is clear to some of us that most among the black petit bourgeoisie do not rate themselves highly; their self-esteem is highly suspect, and they therefore do not, subliminally and otherwise, believe that black people deserve better. You cannot take pride in your work. Similarly, you cannot be ashamed of your shoddy and substandard work if you do not rate yourself highly (Mangena 2017:10).

There are many cases of ill-treatment of black persons by fellow citizens, the government, and even in the private sector. Cases of black children falling into pit

toilets<sup>10</sup> at primary schools, the Marikana<sup>11</sup> massacre in 2012, and the recent Life Esidimeni<sup>12</sup> tragedy will always be a constant reminder of how cheap black lives are.

Related to the psychological awakening of the black person, in fact an integral part of the Biko event and the entire BCM, is the lesson that can be extracted from the Black Community Projects. After his expulsion from medical school in 1972, Biko was hired by the BCP (Hadfield 2016:53) as a field officer, where he “collected data and communicated with different groups” (Hadfield 2016:56). Biko’s banning, Hadfield (2016:57) wrote, had positive implications for the BCP, because it naturally expanded geographically and had a great sense of purpose, because “activists increased their creativity, and the BCP involved more people in running its programs. After the banning orders, the BCP field officers became directors of regional branches”.

Biko ran the programmes in King William’s Town. Biko and Malusi Mpumlwana began spending time with communities and “listening and talking” to people in local public places in Ginsberg. Hadfield (2016:58-59) explained that projects on health, education, and economy came as a result of these “listening” encounters with communities. What is of interest too is that these projects were not just projects of “charity”, but these were projects of development, self-help, and transformation (Pieterse 2011:7).

---

<sup>10</sup> A Grade R learner, Michael Kompane, died in 2014 when he fell into a pit toilet at Mahlodumela Primary School outside Polokwane. Early in 2018 Viwe Jali died at Luna Primary School in Bizana, Eastern Cape. She was also found in the toilet pit.

<sup>11</sup> The Marikana massacre, the worst mass murder in a democratic South Africa, saw the South African Police Services opening fire on a crowd of striking mineworkers at Marikana, in the North West province on 16 August 2012. Police killed 34 mineworkers, and left 78 seriously injured, with 250 arrested.

<sup>12</sup> “Life Esidimeni” was a Gauteng Department of Health project that sought to forcefully remove 1 700 mentally ill patients from Life Esidimeni facilities into ill-equipped illegal NGOs. The failed project left 144 patients dead. Retired judge and former Deputy Chief Justice Dikgang Moseneke described the project as “torture” and cruel.

Ramphela (1991:156) explained that it was a deliberate move “from hand-outs to development”, because

[t]he dual onslaught of political impotence, induced by state repression, and economic dependency, resulting from poverty and welfarism, wrought havoc on the self-image of black South Africans, who lost self-confidence as a people.

The goals of these projects were not just the practical manifestations of the Black Consciousness philosophy – they were active programmes for liberation from white dominion. They led to self-reliance, and therefore built self-esteem. Biko’s event left the church and the government with a legacy of moving from welfarism to development. The government has, for an example, involved more people in social grants, 14 million in 2010, but the gap between rich and poor increases (Pieterse 2011:3). Characteristics of the poor are diseases caused by bad circumstances, lack of proper housing, lack of good education, joblessness and helplessness, and vulnerability. Wepener and Cilliers (2010) added that poverty is actually the exclusion of the poor from society. The poor are denied their identity as human beings and as members of society. Development brings back the dignity of people. Ramphela (1991:157) defined development as the “process of empowerment which enables participants to assume greater control over their lives as individuals and as members of society”.

Returning to Pityana’s analysis of Biko’s legacy for the black community, Biko and the entire BCM ensured that black South Africans were never without their own leaders. He wrote:

During Biko’s time many black people were trained and had experience of leadership, planning, strategizing and mobilising, and yet drew closer to the

broad masses of people in their suffering and pain and frustrations (Pityana 1991:255).

It is the “drawing closer to the broad masses of people” that the event of Biko provides an imperative for theological reflection and engagement in praxis for a theologian who comes from and who theologises for the oppressed. The Biko event demands that the church examines missiological options if it seeks to be relevant to a secular society.

### 5.5.1 Incarnational presence

The Biko event is lived religion or theology; first in that the political climate of his day created an environment where “communities” became “churches”, in which people were exposed to glimpses of “Christ”, in a person they could identify with, speaking in a language they could understand. In fact, Mangcu (2012:230) wrote that in taverns<sup>13</sup> Biko sang “church songs and freedom songs [....] Steve loved the Anglican Church’s *Imvanaka Thixo* in particular”. Singing is central to African lives. Pobee (1976:3-4) agreed, stating that,

[w]hen an African works on his farm, he sings; when he goes fishing, he sings. When a carpenter or a mason hammers away, he sings. In songs are laid bare *Homo africanus* in his hopes and fears, his joys and sorrows.

Hymn singing can be placed alongside church activities such as missionary work, worship, social concern, preaching, administering of the sacraments, and praxis generally (De Gruchy 1991:8-9).

---

<sup>13</sup> “Taverns” are places of entertainment in residential areas, especially townships. In these places adults socialise over drinks (mostly alcohol) and food.

Furthermore, singing of songs and hymns is a form of action, according to De Gruchy (1991:11):

The singing of songs and hymns is a sub-set of all human action – and there is thus a dialectical relationship between singing and hands-on political activity. In other words the way we preach, pray and sing will relate at a fundamental level to the way we conduct our lives as individual Christians, and as church communities in political society.

De Gruchy (1991:12) further noted that hymns and songs are dialectically related to a person's convictions and commitments. Biko took his conviction and commitments to where the people were. This "church" among the people challenged those who listened to Biko and those who study Biko today to rethink their understanding of a church. In a secular world, the church as an institution is losing relevance; however, there are many people who claim to be "spiritual" but not "religious". This points to the post-modern church that is "post-congregational", in the words of McNeal (2011). The church is no longer a "what" but a "who". McNeal (2011:25) explained this further:

Seeing church as a *what* is seeing it as something outside ourselves, something we go to, a place where certain things happen, a vendor of religious goods and services, something we support, something we invite people to attend.

Biko (2017:49) spoke against the view of a place of worship as a place people go on a special day once a week. Biko advocated for the view of the church as a "*who*". He wrote that Africans "believed that God was always in communication with us and therefore merited attention everywhere and anywhere" (Biko 2017:49). The implication is that wherever people were, there was the "church". This understanding of the church dictates that the church be thought of more as a verb rather than a noun.

Davis (1986:14) called for a reinterpretation of the “church” in the light of the Biko event. He stated that the church “must be understood not as a community *for* the poor, or *of* the poor but the poor community” (Davis 1986:14); echoing liberation theology’s “God’s preferential option for the poor” idea. However, emphasis should be drawn to the fact of the church taking the form of the society it finds itself in. The church therefore can take a cue from Biko and be “present” in its context. Being “present” means “standing alongside”, “suffering with”, “identifying with”, and even “learning from” the culture the church finds itself in. Biko advised against the cultural presumptions and theological dogmas of the missionary age; therefore the current church should be present in the context of culture. Therefore, for a church to be effective in a secular state, it ought to remain true to the principle of incarnation. Incarnation theology emphasises the coming of Jesus from his heavenly home to be born as a very ordinary human being, belonging to a particular place, culture, and time. The incarnation principle dictates that the church identifies, as Jesus did, with a particular culture to which it witnesses. Bowen (1996:44) added, “even if it is our own culture which we know well”. He lamented the fact that Christians struggle to make contact with the secular culture that surrounds them, because they lose touch with their own culture when they join the church, or it may be that they were born into a “church culture” (Bowen 1996:46). Bowen’s (1996:68) argument, which was supported by Bosch (1996), was that the church should go down rather than climb up, and identify with people with every kind of need. The church should get involved with people in the ordinary matters of life, not just in religious matters. The incarnation principle states that the church must become like the people to whom it is sent, it must listen to the agenda of those people, and relate the message of the gospel to them.

The more radical Bosch (1996:513) explained incarnation theology as follows:

One is not interested in a Christ who offers only eternal salvation, but in a Christ who agonizes and sweats and bleeds with the victims of oppression. One who criticises the bourgeois church of the West, which leans toward Docetism and for which Jesus' humanness is only a veil hiding his divinity. This bourgeois church has an idealist understanding of itself, refuses to take sides, and believes that it offers a home for masters as well as slaves, rich and poor, oppressor and oppressed. Because it refuses to practice solidarity with victims, such a church has lost its relevance. Having peeled off the social and political dimensions of the gospel, it has denatured it completely.

As Frost and Hirsch (2003) saw it, the incarnation principle is a direct opposite of the Christendom church; recalling that the missionary church took the form of a Christendom church in terms of operation and theology. The Christendom church was attractational, dualistic, and hierarchical – as Biko saw it. However, the church that is true to its mission is incarnational, not attractational, in its ecclesiology. It simply does not create sanctified spaces into which unbelievers must come to encounter the gospel, but disassembles itself and seeps into the cracks and crevices of a society in order to be Christ to those it seeks to witness to. A worship area is not necessarily a particular building, but everywhere one finds oneself; that is, in the factories, in schools, in the streets, under bridges, etc. Furthermore, by definition, an incarnational church is messianic, not dualistic. It adopts the holistic worldview of Jesus, rather than the Western worldview that divides the sacred from the profane. In an incarnational church, all people are important; all are involved in the leadership and in the interpretation of the gospel. Interpretation is not left to religious professionals but open to all, as Biko stated in his speeches. In an incarnational posture, the church is best

positioned to facilitate transformation in society. It appears that Jesus Christ of Nazareth knew that his followers would find themselves in a secular state. His advice was “be the salt of the earth”:

**Matthew 5:13:** “You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt has become tasteless, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled under foot by men.”

**Mark 9:50:** “Salt is good; but if the salt becomes un-salty, with what will you make it salty again? Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with one another.”

**Luke 14:34-35:** “Therefore, salt is good; but if even salt has become tasteless, with what will it be seasoned? It is useless either for the soil or for the manure pile; it is thrown out...”

Jesus uses this imagery because salt works silently and penetrates irresistibly. That is how the church ought to work. It must work in society and penetrate the structures of society. The prophets of the Old Testament were the salt of the Land of Canaan, but the apostles were the salt of the earth, for they must go into the entire world to bear witness. In the earth they will find different cultures and different structures, therefore the church, as “the salt”, ought to penetrate these cultures and structures of the community.

Incarnation can be referred to as a “radical spirituality”. D.W. White (2015:61) preferred “rooted” instead of “radical”. Nevertheless, the advent of Christ taking the form of his community was a radical departure from the prevailing religiosity of his day. Jesus spent time with the “nobodies” of the community, ate with sinners, and sought to reform the temple-centred religion of Judaism. He lived a religious life on his own terms.



Biko can also be seen as having had a radical spirituality. Kee (1983) defined radical spirituality as political radicalism coupled with Christian convictions. He traced radical spirituality from the period 1964-1970, which saw

[n]ew forms of idealism both in America and in Europe. Among young Americans central issues were life-styles and the values which were embodied therein. Vietnam was the logical outworking of the warfare state. In Europe the rediscovery of the young Marx led to alienation from “bureaucratic” control, whether in the state, industry or education. Many young Christians became involved in these movements, indeed considered it part of their Christian responsibility to participate actively (Kee 1983:329).

In their participation, these radical young Christians joined non-Christians and did not examine the traditional forms of religion and spirituality when making an input at a critical level. Biko was one of these radical young Christians in South Africa. These young people lived their religion on their own terms and outside the religious bureaucracy. An incarnational church, therefore, does not only take the form of the community, but individuals can also be the “church” they want to be. In other words, they can live their religion on their own terms like Biko and his peers did.

In his book, *Church emerging from the cracks: A church IN, but not OF the world*, Meylahn (2012:47) added to this discussion that being a church is to do community theology, prophetic and poetic theology, and contextual theology. Community theology entails active listening to the narratives of the particular local community within particular narrative settings, identifying the dominant themes, and bringing these themes into dialogue with the Scriptures. This means that doing theology is no longer the responsibility of the expert (pastor), but it becomes a community process of

listening to one another and listening for the whisper of the traces of God's incarnational involvement within these stories. The pastor (professional theologian) no longer enters the community as the expert on theological answers, but he or she enters the community as a facilitator of listening spaces. Prophetic and poetic theology actually proclaims the traces of God's involvement; proclaiming the event of incarnation that is God's loving involvement in the narratives of the local community. In order to do that, the prophet needs to find words to express God's love as a poet. Contextual theology is theology that weaves together the narratives of the community with their dominant deconstructed themes with the narratives of Scriptures and together with the traces of God's involvement.

### **5.5.2 Religious leaders reconciling religion and politics**

The Biko event does not only deal radically with the definition of the "church" and its relevance in society, but also said much about church leadership. Biko (2017:58) was concerned about the division between the priests and the laypeople, the professionals and the ordinary. Such division belonged to the Constantine church tradition (Jørgensen 2004:566). Therefore, breaking this tradition would imply a radical change with regard to the role and work of a church leader both in the "institutional" church and in the community.

To a certain extent, Biko left the church with a desirable example of leadership if it is to be relevant to its context. Stubbs (2004:218) called this "extraordinary pastoral care", obviously using a Christian term; however, the terms "pastoral", "pastor", or "shepherd" in reference to church leaders must be used with caution. The term "pastor" is originally a Latin word that translates to "shepherd" in English. The word "shepherd" appears in the Old and the New Testaments, literally describing the profession of

taking care of sheep, and metaphorically referring to leaders (Ezek. 34) of the people or even to God (Ps. 23; Ps. 80:1) and Christ (John 10). It can be critically asked if the “shepherd”, or “pastoral” model, with all its good characteristics and intensions as mentioned in Scripture, is sufficient to meet the pastoral expectations of the day. Klammt (2006:162) wrote that

there is a logical weakness of the metaphorical use: the image suggests an ontological difference between “shepherd” and “sheep” that is not applicable for the relationship of pastor and church member.

Binau (2011) weighed in on the “pastoral” metaphor discussion. He wrote that a student of his complained:

I have never understood the church’s fascination with the whole shepherding thing. If people in congregations really thought through what it means to a sheep I don’t think they would want to sustain that image. Sheep were not raised to be domestic house pets. Sheep were raised with one fate in mind: death (Binau 2011:23).

Therefore the model of the shepherd does not provide a comprehensive picture of the relationship of the congregation with its leaders, and more worrying is the relationship of the “shepherd” with the “sheep” outside one’s care. First, people are not sheep; they have a choice to follow or not to follow. Secondly, the pastor is not the only leader in the church. Other leaders have their personal leadership styles too.

Liftin (1982) agreed that the model of the shepherd is not intended to be a complete model for the pastoral ministry.

That is why the term “pastor” is buttressed by other terms such as “elder” (1 Tim. 5:1, 17; Titus 1:5; James 5:14; 1 Peter 5:1) and “overseer” (Acts 20:28; Phil. 1:1; 1 Tim. 3:1; Titus 1:7) (Liftin 1982:58).

Liftin (1982) noted that the “shepherd” image is evocative but imprecise, instructive but incomplete. Stubbs referring to Biko as an extraordinary pastor was due to Biko’s concern for others and how Biko allowed others or his followers to have “a freedom to be themselves” (Stubbs 2004:218). In a society where the church is no longer a central institution of society but rather a movement operating from the margins, a kind of leader is needed who is of Biko’s calibre. The leader ought to be an empowering servant leader. He or she should never be authoritarian or abusive. Abusive leaders, “lord it over others”, are legalistic, cannot abide being criticised, and are very concerned with their image (Kretzschmar 2005b:57-58). Hierarchical forms of leadership will always be viewed with suspicion in a secular society. In a plural society, a “know-it-all” specialist or professional is outdated, and so is the one-size-fits-all approach to people’s needs. The kind of the leader the church will seek to develop is a leader who will not fail or be threatened in recognising the calling of laypersons in the world. Such leaders will encourage followers to play a role at work, in their families, and in society in general, and not be isolated from the community. Furthermore, these leaders must possess:

- “A lively intellectual curiosity; an interest in everything, because everything is related to everything else and therefore to what we are trying to do, whatever it is.

- A genuine interest in what other people think and why they think that way” (Gibbs 2005:57).

Biko left the church with a leadership example that “followed more than it led”. Even though Biko was instrumental in starting SASO, he did not cling to power but made it a point that “black people were trained and had experience of leadership, planning, strategizing and mobilising” (Pityana 1991:255). Such leadership is explained better by Banks and Ledbetter (2004:55), who wrote that “[l]eadership is never devoid of good followership. The faithful leader is a servant first, and from that emerges the desire to lead”.

In his article, “Discipleship as leadership”, Copeland (2013:11) emphasised that he was drawn to leaders who followed as much as they led:

The distinction can be difficult to detect, as it’s usually a matter of disposition, self-awareness and spiritual practice. But the fact is that God calls all of us to follow Jesus Christ.

Humility is one of the most important qualities of a true church leader (Segler 1987:7). Accountability is the other quality of a leader who is also a follower. Kraft (2010:25) wrote that “Christian leaders are first and foremost, servants (bond slaves of the Lord), and second, servants of those they are leading”. One is therefore accountable to Christ by being accountable to the church and society in general. Leaders need to take responsibility in the way in which they lead. Do they nurture or dominate people? Leaders also need to take responsibility for the direction in which they lead others (Kretzschmar 2005b:109); that is, accountability.

The other important element of the Biko event was how he brought religion and politics together. This alignment can be a daunting task for religious leaders; thus, religious leaders who yearn to engage in politics will have to make means to bridge the gap between their political allegiances and religion. Biko showed how one can reconcile religion and politics; he appealed to black theology and the African traditional worldview as means towards closing the space between religion and politics. Kee (1983) observed that radical spirituality, as personified by Biko and his generation, is a synthesis of action and contemplation in which both activism and contemplation are transformed. Activism has been transformed, the political gatherings and community gatherings are sacred places, and political action for political ends is not enough. Traditional spirituality is also transformed because it calls Christians to responsible action. The development of the spiritual life is not for the benefit of the individual, for his or her salvation, but in order that God's will may be done on earth. Radical spirituality, as politicised spirituality, is transformed in a sense that it ends the privatisation of religion.

The church leader is faced with the challenge of the gap between political activism and church work. In a quest to close this gap, today's church leader is faced with a problem of the decline in status in the community. This may be due to the rise of other activists such as lobbyists and community organisers, and as a result pastors retract from community leadership. That, coupled with several issues such as immoral acts by pastors, drives pastors to a corner where the pastor chooses to focus on a church rather than community, and even the sermons emphasise individualism and target individual outcomes rather than social reform.

Church leaders who spend most of their time in church offices and in doing church administration miss out on the one thing that matters – listening to human beings and

their communal needs. Practical theologian Osmer (2008:33) wrote of a “spirituality of presence”. Although Osmer (2008) spoke of spirituality of presence in the context of congregational leadership, this concept can be applied to communal leadership. Spirituality of presence is the spiritual orientation of attending to others in their particularity and otherness (Osmer 2008:34). Osmer (2008:34) emphasised the term “attending”, which means

relating to others with openness, attentiveness, and prayerfulness. Such attending opens up the possibility of an I-Thou relationship in which others are known and encountered in all their uniqueness and otherness.

A religious leader who spends some time in community engagement may be on the advantageous side to one who spends time in offices. “From below”, where people are, the preacher can find reasons to pray. Furthermore, one can find sermon and illustration ideas to make a meaningful contribution to people’s thoughts and lives. Spirituality of presence is a matter of attending to what is going on in the lives of communities, individuals, and families; a church leader will be in a position to attend and therefore be able to lead as he or she builds meaningful relationships in the process.

Biko read, socialised with, and engaged his community and the state on matters that affected people. Engaging society can be a daunting task and a question that follows would be “how are such leaders formed?”, because in South Africa there is a decline in academic ability generally, and furthermore there is little ecumenical interaction (Neuman 2012:142). In this regard, Kretzschmar’s (2012) essay, “The Christian formation of South African believers for engagement with state and society” is of help. She proposed a model which is relevant to this discussion.

Kretzschmar (2012) obviously vouched for the “critical engagement” between religious leaders and the representatives of the state and society as a whole, as it was suggested by the SACC in 2001– without church leaders losing their independence of mind and action (Kretzschmar 2012:139). She outlined a four-fold Christian way of life that included intellectual formation and engagement (knowing); the formation of Christian identity and character (being); the formation of the right relationships (relating); and the formation of the ability to perform the right actions.

Intellectual formation is not only about acquiring information, but a formation of people with an orientation that opens their lives up to the love and wisdom of God, the insights of others, and in which they engage in a comprehensive investigation of what life is about. Kretzschmar (2012) argued that profound knowledge and wisdom are imperative if the church is to engage with others on intellectual and practical levels. A leader should conduct private and communal study, prayer and reflection, as these will assist one to embark on a rigorous and honest intellectual journey (Kretzschmar 2007:14).

How a religious leader relates to others is important, because leadership is about relationships – not only in the church but in the entire immediate community. It is said that John Wesley’s leadership began with the people, not necessarily an ideology or vision of an individual (Bentley 2010:557). In fact,

Wesley looked for leaders among the people, not above the people, because they had a genuine love and awareness of the realities of daily life. The nature of Wesleyan leadership was that it followed the people [...] (Bentley 2010:558).

Leaders must also have a healthy relationship with the community. It is suggested that a leader can do well to read the struggle stories of others as these can transform the



mind of a leader and consequently the relationship between the leader and the community (Kretzschmar 2007:20).

Lastly, Kretzschmar (2007:21) suggested “doing”, or conversion of hands: “The conversion of the hands is dependent on the other conversions, namely of the mind, heart, will and relationships”. It is being aware of our contextual and cultural realities. For example,

Wesley never allowed those who claimed to belong to Christian faith to lose sight of their contextual realities [...] Wesleyan tradition created real leaders, sometimes from the most unexpected situations and backgrounds, who would in turn change their world for the better (Bentley 2010:562).

Foster (2001:33) explained this conversion of the hands clearly. He wrote of *contemptus mundi*, our being torn loose from all earthly attachments and ambitions, and *amor mundi*, our being quickened to a divine but painful compassion for the world.

In the beginning God plucks the world out of our hearts – *contempus mundi*. Here we experience a loosening of the chains of attachment to positions of prominence and power [...] We learn to let go of all control, all managing, all manipulation (Foster 2001:33).

For believers, becoming relevant in the world will assist with many social ills. Mulholland (2013:11) argued: “No healthy spiritual formation in Christ is possible apart from mission with Christ. Similarly, no transformative mission with Christ is possible apart from formation in Christ.” It is in ministry, in communities, where leaders will prove to be disciples of Christ. By their fruits people will know them; that is what the Scripture says (Matt. 7:16).

## 5.6 CONCLUSION

This chapter examined Biko's spiritual legacy for the church and theologians. It concedes that Biko's legacy has been strongly contested; however, this study adds that there is a religious side to the Biko event, which is either taken for granted by scholars or deliberately overlooked. The post-1994 church faces many challenges, including the "loss of relevance" due to church leaders taking a back seat or joining liberation movements such as the ANC; also, significantly, due to the secularisation of the South African society. A secular state is seen as a desirable environment for religious practitioners since all religions have equal status. The Biko event is important for a church in a secular state. Biko drew closer to the masses of the people and as such left the church with the example of spirituality of presence, and more biblically, the theology of incarnation. In taking such a posture, the church, like Biko, will challenge the boundaries that delineate the sacred and the profane. The church will theologise from below as it seeks to take the form of the community. The church in a secular state ought to be the "who" rather than the "what". The Biko event also left church leadership with an example of leadership that is not intimidated to share authority with the "laypeople" where hierarchy is no longer relevant. Such leaders are more than "pastors" in function, and must be formed to critically engage the state and society.

# **CHAPTER 6**

## **CONCLUDING REMARKS AND DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH**

### **6.1 INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of this research was to explore the spirituality of Bantu Stephen Biko. The research relied on a critical qualitative engagement with texts such as Biko's biographies, letters, and speeches, as well as recent articles and other related literature. The study was undertaken within the hermeneutical methodology as the most adequate approach in the study of spirituality because it is an interdisciplinary, cross-cultural, and interreligious approach that can be applied to texts, human actions, events, and all aspects of human life (Schneiders 2005b:5; Perrin 2007:41). The hermeneutical methodology moves the study of spirituality beyond matters of content toward a quest for wisdom to live by, rather than technical information held at a distance. The intention was therefore to understand and explain, that is to expand knowledge, on the one hand, and appropriation, that is expansion of subjectivity, on the other hand. This study sought to understand Biko's spirituality; in addition, it sought to gain wisdom for the contemporary church, as seen in Chapter 5.

### **6.2 SUMMARY OF THE STUDY**

A description of the phenomena under investigation is provided in the study as the spirituality of Bantu Stephen Biko. "Spirituality" is understood in its broader sense as not only referring to an awareness or consciousness of a divine being other than human reality, but also refers to the totality of human understanding and experience in relation to culture and religion. Therefore, contrary to the prevailing tendency of

using spiritual traditions such as the “Benedictine spirituality”, “Ignatian spirituality”, and “Quakerism” to study religious leaders’ spirituality, this research uniquely studied someone who is hardly referred to as a religious person. That was done because all people are spiritual, and spirituality does not necessarily refer to the inner and interior life, including religious people as well as those whose spirituality is not rooted in a particular religion.

The challenge was, if Biko was not an orthodox Christian or religious person, how best can his spirituality be studied? The study therefore subjected Biko’s writings to critical analysis, using the lived religion theory. This theory assists in making sense of the religion of ordinary people, religion that takes place outside the bounds of religious institutions, and commonly without the sanction of religious bodies. The study has found in Biko’s writings, which are found in the book *I write what I like: A selection of his writings* (2004), his criticism of the church and general views on religion. The selected writings were “We blacks”, “Some African cultural concepts”, “Definition of Black Consciousness”, “The church as seen by a young layman”, and “Black Consciousness and the quest for a true humanity”, as well as “Martyr of hope” by Father Stubbs and “An interview with Steve Biko” by Bernard Zylstra.

From these writings three themes were identified as summarising Biko’s views and criticism of the institutional church, namely “leadership of the church”, “content of theology”, and the “form of religion”. His concerns about the leadership of the church were that it was not in the hands of the majority and that had something to say about which “God was doing the talking” because of the cultural differences between white and African people. Furthermore, Biko was concerned about *who* did theology. His concern was that the only people who had the right to theologise were the “professional” preachers and not ordinary laypeople. These theologians concerned

themselves with bureaucratic or structural issues, which in a way neglected ordinary people and their conditions under oppression. Biko was contesting for space in the area of theology. He was concerned about the boundaries that separated the laypeople and the “holy people” or professional theologians. On the content of theology, he encouraged the church to reinterpret the Bible, guided by black theology. The black priests will save Christianity from irrelevance by embracing black theology and this theology will assist with doing away with the spiritual poverty of the black people. Black theology is seen by Biko as a solution in the search for practical religion that speaks to the tangible and practical needs of black people. Biko is not only contending for space in the interpretation of Scripture, he also seeks space for the black experience in the same Scriptures. That leads to the form of religion Biko envisaged for the African experience of oppression. For Biko the preachers must repent and desist from privatising theology; moreover, the theology must change and reflect the black experience, and, importantly, the church must reflect its context. It must adapt to and adopt African cultural heritage of the spirit of community and the warmth of human relationships. Biko’s argument was that the gap between the church and community is as wide as the gap between holy and the profane. If the church is to exist in isolation from the community, then the religion becomes foreign to the day-to-day issues of black people and the church will remain “holy” and separated from reality.

The main argument in this study is that Biko’s spirituality was a daily lived experience. It is possible to identify many factors which have influenced Biko’s spiritual outlook. That he was *umXhosa* reflects his cultural background. His story points to the importance of parents in shaping an individual’s spirituality, particularly in childhood and adolescence. Initially, Biko embraced Christian spirituality and attended the

Anglican Church. As Biko grew older, he began to reflect critically on his religious upbringing, and upon reaching adulthood he had a greater scope to make his own choices. Also, Biko's story confirms "peer support" and engagement as important factors that influence one's spirituality. At the broadest level, cultural and demographic factors influenced Biko's spirituality greatly. In addition, age, socio-economic factors, and gender can be added as other contributing factors to his spirituality. Biko united issues of religion and politics. He actually redefined political activism as belonging to the realm of the sacred. In Biko, activism was seen as imbued with religious meaning and inhabited by forms of religious practice, because in organising black people to see their worth, by confronting injustice, Biko engaged in practices that were at the same time as religious as they were political. Biko lived his religion, and to him it became meaningful as religious ideas and beliefs were experienced through actions and emotions. All this he did by challenging the boundaries that delineate the sacred and the profane. Based on ATR, Biko understood that faith should be concerned about issues that affect the community, as well as issues of social justice. Borrowing a theological term from missiology, Biko's event was an "incarnational" one. He surely took the form of his community and was found at the heart of the struggle with the people. Biko challenged the church to be incarnational if it wanted to be relevant in society. His spirituality was that of presence, and his theology was from below. He first analysed the community and its condition and then approached the Scriptures; avoiding a situation of bringing biblical answers to the questions never asked by the community. He listened first and then theologised, instead of theologising and then listening.

Biko's spirituality is essential for the church in an increasingly secular society like South Africa. In such a society not all religion is to be found inside the "God boxes"

such as the church, temple, or the synagogue. Biko can be lauded as one of those who practised “thinking outside” the box of religion, who observed the social changes taking place in modern society and the religious adaptation that was required. In a modern society, religion has become more and more privatised, and as such, people can choose to be religious or not, and if they do choose to be religious, they choose how they are religious. In Biko’s event, he chose to make religion part of his identity as an activist or to make activism part of his religious identity. However, it cannot be argued outright that Biko was “religious”. He was not, especially if religion is defined in association with tradition and dogmatic beliefs. Biko was spiritual, in a sense that sees spirituality as a quality of an individual, particularly as it relates to his or her personal experience. This distinction raises the possibility that Biko was more spiritual but not religious; so are many people in a secularised country like South Africa. People become spiritual in their own terms, making it easier for them to accommodate spirituality in their schedules and consequently in their everyday lives. It can therefore be said that for Biko, activism itself was a form of spiritual practice.

It was also noted in this study that Biko’s spirituality can be compared to that of Jesus of Nazareth, who left his spirituality outside the box of his modern-day Judaism. Even though Jesus as a child, in other words through his parents, observed all that was required by the Jewish law, he soon realised that religion as it was practised in his day was becoming irrelevant to the socio-economic issues faced by the oppressed Jews under the Roman rule. Jesus therefore spent most of his time outside the mainstream religious circles and spent his time with the outcasts, the poor, and even the rich who gave him audience.

Biko’s spirituality is closest to *The Iona Document on Spiritual Formation’s* (see Amithram & Pryor 1989:154-157) ten marks of Christian spirituality. These were

compiled after analysing Jesus Christ's life and death at the WCC's consultation on "A spirituality for our times" in 1984:

- The spirituality we seek is *incarnational*. It is in the here and now, as in the words we hear and speak, the people with whom we live, and the life situations in which we find ourselves. Spirituality is expressed in human activity and the daily unfolding of life. It is available to all. Every human person is made in God's image and is able to encounter the Spirit of God. Incarnational spirituality is informed by a sensitivity to culture and language, by the specific history and symbols of a people and an involvement in life and struggles, and the aspirations and hopes of people. The language of spirituality must not distance itself from the language of the people and the life experience of those who participate in the life and liturgy of the church.
- The spirituality we seek is *reconciling and integrative*. It is directed towards the wholeness of persons and communities. Spirituality expresses itself in the integration of the whole person (mind, body, and soul) and in the wholeness of the community (transcending social, economic, political, and cultural boundaries by transforming them into new kinds of community).
- The spirituality we seek is *rooted in Scripture* and nourished by prayer. We need times of silence for communion with God. We need to recognise the Spirit in the midst of our daily activities. We need time to meditate on the roots of our daily existence. We need to experience God's presence in the ordinariness of life. Rather than posing a conflict between action and reflection, they comprise the rhythm of our life. We are to be immersed in the word of God, heard and interpreted in the midst of our historical realities, and we are to be immersed in the world of God, with its complexities and ambiguities. Both in our personal



and our communal life there must be an interaction of contemplation and compassion. Attempts to separate and isolate these two lead to false spiritualities. We seek a spirituality for engagement, but one that is formed by the habit of prayer and reflection. The pain and pressures experienced by those in front-line ministries of peace and justice often drive them to the strength and guidance of prayer.

- We are speaking of a *costly and self-giving spirituality*. It takes seriously the reality of the cross of Jesus in this world and in the life of so many people and is opposed to any “cheap spirituality” offering religion as the opium of the people. There is a kind of “religious spirituality” that is being used for the incessant and desperate desire for magical power to achieve economic wealth and physical health. It prevents the impoverished and oppressed people from seeking to expose and combat the root causes of their misery and from fighting and struggling for their own liberation.
- The spirituality we seek is *life-giving and liberative*. Christian spirituality is to be understood in terms of Jesus’ sermon in Nazareth: “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, and to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord” (Luke 4:18-19). Christian spirituality keeps us in touch with the source of life, the life of the Trinity made available to us in the incarnation. It gives us the liberative power to share in the human search for fullness of life. It entails readiness to share in the life of others wherever possible. “Spirituality is like motherhood giving space for life to grow”.

- The spirituality we seek *is rooted in community, and centred around the Eucharist*. In the Eucharist, the banquet of the kingdom, we taste the fullness of life in unity and celebrate the gift of life. We worship as members of a community baptised into Christ's death and resurrection. The Eucharist reminds us that we are to live with the same care and love for people that Christ has for all. The broken body of Christ is a reminder of our commitment to heal the brokenness of society and the brokenness in all relationships. In the Eucharist we also participate in the suffering of Christ and, therefore, in the suffering of the people.
- Christian spirituality *is expressed in service witness*. There is no spirituality without commitment. The Christian church is called to be a servant church with a concern for the needs of its neighbours and willing to divest itself of the allurements of power, fully involved in the daily struggles of the people, witnessing to God's kingdom.
- Christian spirituality is about waiting for God's own surprising initiative, rather than trying to force God into human planning or to handle God's presence, to see God in God's full glory (Ex. 33). We are reminded that the Bible tells us about a presence of God over which we have no power. As we are told, it is more important that God knows us than for us to know all about God and see God face to face. We can only in all humility seek to be open to the presence of God without attempting to domesticate and manipulate that presence.
- The spirituality we seek is about the unfolding of the loving purposes of God here on earth; it is inspired by the prayer that God's will may be done on earth as in heaven. The transcendent and the imminent dimensions of God are inseparably linked together. Spirituality is at once deeply rooted in history and

directed towards a life under the guidance of the transcendent, lifting up the whole creation in intercession before the Almighty.

- Finally, the Christian spirituality we seek is open to the wider *oikoumene and other kinds of spirituality*. As members of the universal church, we benefit from one another's gifts through mutual learning, accountability, and support. The diversity of expressions of spirituality in the universal church ensures that our spirituality does not become captive to our culture; that it is challenged to new awareness and risks, and that it is enriched in the process of mutual encounter.

### **6.3 CONCLUDING REMARKS AND DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH**

Maluleke (2008:117) considered Biko's life as a great challenge to today's youth. He was struck by

how young he was both when he died and when he bequeathed us – through his writings and initiatives – testimonies of his great intellect and his great love for this country and its people [...] Steve Biko died a youth. At twenty-five years of age, he was already a banned and a restricted man. But his legacy and contribution is that of a grown man way above his chronological age. Indeed, the revolution Biko led was a revolution led by people in their early twenties, most of whom were banned and restricted by the time they were barely twenty-six.

In this observation and comparison, Maluleke (2008) examined the Biko event through political lenses as he admired Biko's life. Surely, Maluleke knew that Biko, like any other young person of his day, was nowhere near sainthood. The struggle for better lives of the black majority was on the top of Biko's agenda; however, while he focused on that noble moral and ethical task of liberation, ethical questions around his personal

life cannot be avoided by community workers such as church leaders; especially now that South Africa faces a serious morality crisis (Van Niekerk 2009:101), where life, especially the life of black women, has become very cheap. Van Niekerk (2009:101) invited us to look at the attitude of people to one another: the role models in our country whom young people admire, the quality of our marriages and family lives, white-collar crime, the lack of a general sense of responsibility, the failure to get involved and do the right thing, the type of entertainment that appeals to us, the films and advertisements that engage us, the way in which we resolve our differences, the use of bad language and swearing, the abuse of alcohol and drugs, the exploitation of and disregard for animals and our natural environment, the selfish use of scarce resources such as water and electricity, and the lack of in-depth reflection and contemplation on the part of institutions and leadership groups about morality. In his article, "Morality and life", Van Niekerk (1998) argued that morality is important for three reasons. Firstly, it provides an orientation to life for individuals. It is a map to find our way in life. Secondly, morality is the fabric of society, and provides the structure and glue that keeps society healthy and functional. Ethics thus holds things together. Thirdly, morality is indispensable for the future of life. It helps us to make difficult decisions now in order for life to improve in the future. In short, morality is essential to all aspects of life, and this includes leadership. Moral leadership is essential for the progress of the country or any organisation. The presidency of Jacob Zuma has raised many discussions around moral leadership, with many of Zuma's supporters claiming that his work as the president of the country and his personal issues should be separated, and that people should judge him based on his performance as the head of state. Personal morality is advised in all spheres of life. Personal morality is a neutral phrase that refers to patterns of conduct – whether good or bad, or just ordinary. In popular

usage, however, a “moral person” is a good person. A leader is expected to be a good person (Showalter 2007:59-60). Daft (2008:152) advised that moral leadership is about distinguishing right from wrong and doing right, and seeking the just, the honest, the good, and the right conduct in achieving goals and fulfilling purpose. He further wrote:

Leaders have great influence on others, and moral leadership gives life to others and enhances the lives of others. Immoral leadership takes away from others in order to enhance oneself. Moral leadership uplifts people, enabling them to be better than they were without the leader (Daft 2008:152).

Leadership necessitates both competence and morality (Kretzschmar 2002). The base of moral leadership is moral norms and values. Kretzschmar (2009b:157-158) agreed with Daft on the importance of moral leaders. Moral leadership

is focused on both doing what is right and in bringing about positive (good) consequences for those who have given their allegiance to the leader. Moral leaders are leaders of moral character who are just and compassionate in their dealings with others.

South Africa has grown to realise that there is no easy and quick solution to morality problems, and the government will not be able to solve these problems alone, and neither can the church or religious society. Jentile’s (2016:97-108) research found important mediums of moral formation. He noted that moral development touches all the dimensions of persons, such as thinking, attitudes, and action. To solve moral crises, the country needs moral exemplars, or role models. Rasmussen (1995:184) called them the “cast of moral characters” – the representatives and exemplars of good behaviour. Every society and community has its representative types who teach

morality by embodiment and whose morality is learned by imitation (Jentile 2016). Kohlberg (1981) argued that when people see moral principles embodied in the action of moral exemplars, principled moral reasoning and behaviour becomes familiar to those who otherwise struggle with the inadequacy of lower-stage reasoning. Kohlberg (1981:392) saw in the writings and actions of Martin Luther King Jr., for example, the formation of the principles of justice that were the culmination of moral development. Also, “acting morally” has a way of influencing others to make ethical decisions. Rasmussen (1995:183) remarked that practice may or not make perfect, as the saying goes, but it does seem the case that “practice makes morals”. Habit (ethos) makes character (ethos), in the language of the Greeks, and character makes the people (ethnos) what they are. Moral community is the third medium of moral development. Institutions like the church, for example, if their purpose is properly understood, can play a significant role in moral development. In fact, some authors such as Schwartz (1999) called the church a moral community. The church is the moral community; that is where moral discussions take place and ethical issues are important to the church. The church does not only discuss ethical issues, it is a community of common ethical commitment. Choosing to belong to the church means conscious moral choices, and beyond just being a community of moral commitment, the church is the community of common ethical action (Jentile 2016). Rasmussen (1995:184) commented that a particular ordering of any church is already both a creation and reflection of its way of life. A polity is already ethic and morally formative. How personal abilities are ordered and roles assigned and carried out is not so much the prelude to relationships with the world around us, but already a way of being in it. Structures channel behaviour and, by so doing, form character and conduct. Rasmussen (1995:184) further noted that morality is learned by taking on specified roles and carrying out the responsibilities

tioned to them. Jentile (2016) also mentioned “moral education”, where ethics are incorporated into spirituality. Specific instruction on virtues and vices, values and obligation, must be given in schools and religious bodies (Rasmussen 1995:185). Moore (1983) added that moral content in education is unavoidable, because it is communicated through social structures, relationships, subject matter, and methodologies.

Biko’s event raised curiosity on the connection between spirituality and morality. In the previous chapters it was noted that Biko’s spirituality could be termed “secular”. Secular spirituality reflects an attempt to locate optimal human experience outside institutional forms of religions. The supposed goal of religion within institutions is to serve and respect the “other”. Religious people would perform and participate in spiritual practices for the purposes of “living right”. Botha (2006:107) wrote,

The critical detachment from ourselves affirms and/or reveals the pressure of a fundamental “other” linked to a concern for human beings in need. Far from natural, it is the appeal for help from others and the compassionate giving over to that which lies outside ourselves (exteriority) that must be the key to religious content. Seen thus, spirituality would be action inserting itself in our realities to critically establish ways of being in this world.

The general understanding of secular spirituality is that of an inherent good of human nature. Biko (2017:46) echoed the same sentiments, when he wrote that Africans “are not a suspicious race. We believe in the inherent goodness of man. We enjoy man for himself”. That is contrary to Christian spirituality and ethics, which believe that humanity has left God’s original intention (Kretzschmar 2009a:18); in other words, human beings are inherently evil. For Christians, “humanity needs to respond to God’s

invitation of salvation through Christ atoning death, so that personal moral formation can begin” (Kretzschmar 2009a:18). Furthermore, Kretzschmar (2009a:29-30) explained crucial elements for a person to be better. She called these grace, choice, and application. For Christians, morals do not come purely as the result of people’s birth, efforts, and/or struggle, because human beings cannot live a fully moral life without God’s intervention and help. Morals are a gift of grace from God in Christ Jesus (Ephesians 2:8-10). Therefore, grace comes first, followed by works.

The person who accepts, follows and lives in the company of Jesus is increasingly enabled to live according to not just the letter, but also the spirit of the law (Matthew 5:17:30), and is thus enabled to fulfil the intent of God in their life (Kretzschmar 2009a:29).

The second element of moral formation is “choice”. Kretzschmar (2009a) explained that human beings’ choice determines who they will become, and more often than not, what people choose destroys themselves and others. Christians can therefore learn to train their desires, by learning to cooperate with God by repeatedly choosing the good and thereby forming moral identity and character (Vest 2000:59,62). Kretzschmar (2009a:30) wrote that

[t]he desires of the human heart need to be changed by God (Jer. 31:31-34). Instead of anger, people can choose compassion, instead of greed, generosity, and instead of lust, self-control. Thus, if we learn to desire the right things, we will act in moral ways.

The last essential aspect is the application of the Christian ethic to life. Johnson (1989:28) said that “one cannot become a Christian without learning to pray, to confess and repent, to search Scriptures, or to seek justice for the socially cast off”.



Kretzschmar (2009a:30) agreed that once the life of God in the believer has taken root, “the moral teaching of Aristotle is very helpful. He taught that moral (or immoral) attitudes and behaviour develop as the result of repeated action”.

However, what Christians struggle to explain is a contradiction of a good and holy God who creates an evil person in his own image. Augustine argued that in creating human beings or nature for that matter, God did not create evil. “Evil originates in an evil will that turns away from God instead of towards God” (Kretzschmar & Van Niekerk 2009:68). It is said that evil is the result of the original sin of Adam and Eve who became disobedient to God. “Even today, moral evil exists in the world because people decide to abandon what is good and choose to do what is evil (John 3:16-21)” (Kretzschmar & Van Niekerk 2009:68).

Nevertheless, secular spirituality exists in the inherent goodness of human nature. Again invoking Aristotle, Botha (2006:115) noted that practical wisdom is good action having itself as its own end:

When appropriated for the description of spiritual practices, this understanding has the felicitous implication that such practices are not deemed good because they earn some otherworldly reward. An activity as a disciplined practice expressive of a secular spirituality should regard the distinctive good of its practice as something intrinsic, having itself a unique capacity for enhanced vitality and human excellence.

The question would be: did Biko’s spirituality result in him leading a moral life under the circumstances he and his community found themselves in? The reason for this question is that African ethics, which includes truthfulness, generosity, and respect for the community and elders, is partly deontological in decision-making processes,

because Africans draw from moral customs, rules, and obligations that the community is expected to obey. These include cooperation with the community and commitment to one's clan or family (Kretzschmar & Van Niekerk 2009:94-95). African ethics is arguably very strongly teleological or consequentialist in orientation. This is due to the strong emphasis on the maintenance of harmony within the community. African ethics asks how will a decision or behaviour affect the community. In such communities, laws and values can be easily ignored in a process of ensuring that harmony is not disturbed (Kretzschmar & Van Niekerk 2009:95).

There is no doubt that the fight against white domination was a noble and moral task. However, Sono (1993:93) stated that Biko's public and private personae contrasted sharply. Biko's public image was decent and moral, and as Sono (1993:93) indicated, "[h]is public ideological stance was unimpeachable, while his private epicurean tendencies remained of course highly questionable till death". For Biko, "the cause of liberation overrode the claims of private morality" (Sono 1993:96). Stubbs (2017:194) recorded that he heard "distasteful" stories about Biko and his colleagues in Durban. Mangcu (2014:205) reported that after being angered by Biko's serial adultery, his wife, Ntsiki, eventually moved out of their home, and by the time of his death, she had begun divorce proceedings. Biko had also had an extramarital relationship with Mamphela Ramphela. In 1974, she bore him a daughter, Lerato, who died after two months. A son, Hlumelo, was born to Ramphela in 1978, after Biko's death. Biko was also in a relationship with Lorrain Tabane, who bore him a child named Motlatsi in 1977 (Wikipedia n.d.).

The “distasteful stories” included excessive drinking and excessive womanising; and these occurrences did not go well with older activists such as Robert Sobukwe.

[I]n 1972 Robert [Sobukwe] had told me he did not like the stories he was hearing about the social habits of the SASO leaders. He said it would lead to a loss of respect from the rank and file for the leadership [...] African men might have different standards to Christian norms as far as drinking and women were concerned (Robert was a deeply committed Christian), but they expected the leadership to be beyond reproach in these areas (Stubbs 2017:195).

Mafuna (2007:82) agreed with Stubbs that during Biko’s day, male-female relations were a serious moral issue. He said of Biko:

I was not sure whether I admired or envied his success with the ladies in those days; we were all caught up with the illusion of “conquests”. I certainly realised later that this was a serious problem in the political life of our country (Mafuna 2007:82).

Mafuna’s (2007) assertion was that today’s society cannot learn much in terms of issues of personal morality from the person of Biko, especially the youths in the townships who are struggling with issues such as alcohol abuse that perpetuates domestic violence and abuse of women and children. Had Biko not died earlier, he could have been one of the national leaders, said Mafuna (2007:82); however, he noted that

Steve’s frankness about his love life might have led him to be seriously compromised in the jungle of politics and could have become a weakness in

the area of moral issues that are facing our people today. Truthful he was, but wise perhaps he was not (Mafuna 2007:82).

In Biko's defence, Sono (1993:93-94) agreed that Biko

failed dismally to resolve his personal dilemma of choice between his wife and his mistress. He seemed unable to decide between his wife Ntsiki and paramour Mamphela. Perhaps the reason was that his heart had reasons which his head was unwilling to understand or resolve.

Furthermore, blaming Biko's political foes for viciously attacking Biko's personality, Sono (1993:95-96) painted a picture of a helpless and vulnerable Biko:

This obnoxious calumny of Biko's character did not even have fairness to recognise that Biko was perpetually parrying the advances of desperate women. Numerous amorous entrapments were laid in his way, and not the other way around, as it is often claimed [...] Heroic figures are human, after all, with flaws, and Biko would have been the first to concede this. But he certainly was no sexual athlete. He had no one (outside his family) to protect him from the advances and flirtations to which university students often succumb; presumably because many of his colleagues, friends and followers never had the temerity to differ with him on things that were, after all, outside the realm of their concern.

Sono (1993) blamed "desperate" women for Biko's behaviour; however, Stubbs' assertion could be true that African men had complicated relations with women. Biko's silence on gender issues in his writings is coupled with the usage of words such as "blacks", "black people", or "black men", but never "black women" (Sono 1993:95-96).

Pityana did the same when he repeatedly called for the “black man to realize that he was on his own” (Magaziner 2010:32). Sono (1993:94) said Biko “reflected more the values of African culture than a materialist conception of reality”. What does African culture have to do with Biko’s drinking and womanising? This was actually masculinity at best. Magaziner (2010:33) observed the interesting relations between male and female activists or the male/female relations in the community in general: “Manhood anxieties plagued oppressed black communities – and often prompted male activists to seek out power in the only place available, namely, their relations with black women.”

Sono (1993:96) further invoked Blokes Modisane’s (1963) term, “blame me on history syndrome” as the standard excuse for black males’ unethical treatment of women. Using Modisane’s (1963) memoir as an example of toxic masculinity, Magaziner (2010:33) said:

The relationship between male feelings of emasculation and a concomitant ill treatment of women is an old trope in South Africa. Bloke Modisane’s memoir, for instance, makes this explicit. Images of emasculation pepper the book. Apartheid “castrates”, Modisane wrote, and he responded by sleeping with every available woman, so that “perhaps one day I might earn the respect and admiration of at least one man”. The hierarchy here is clear: although the white state denied the black male member, women allowed Modisane, through sexual conquest, to prove “myself to myself”. It is no wonder that one critic suggested Modisane’s *Blame Me on History* might just as well have been named “Blame Me on Masculinity”.

It could also be suggested and argued that Modisane's *Blame me on history*, might as well have been "Blame me on secularisation". Indeed, Biko had, after leaving a religious family setting, developed in a liberal setting.

From the relatively liberal atmosphere at his high school in Natal he went straight to another liberal institution, the UNB, where for a couple of years he was exposed, and inducted into the liberal NUSAS organisation. He was even chairman of a local NUSAS branch. Thus he began his serious political reflection as a liberal. Deep down he remained a liberal (Sono 1993:103).

Sono (1993:103) quickly qualified his statement that Biko was not a superficial, conventional liberal:

Biko's liberalism was of the more profound type: a core of tolerance, a cast of mind and a code of conduct. This is the liberalism I am referring to as regards Biko, not the multiracial tea parties and the political chameleonism with which the term "liberal" has come to be associated [...]

Universities were liberal spaces; and ethicists have long argued that individuals' moral sense is intimately connected to the community within which that individual lives (Kretzschmar 2005a:150-151). This suggests that Biko was showing signs of a liberal student facing the serious predicament of being caught between a traditional and modern society.

In his own defence, Biko "reacted vigorously, saying that theirs was a student movement" (Stubbs 2017:195), meaning that they cannot be expected to behave like old activists, such as Robert Sobukwe. Father Stubbs (2017) agreed that student mores had changed since the 1950s. Biko further felt that there must be a separation

between his private life and his political life. He wrote Father Stubbs a long letter in this regard, after the latter had confronted him. Biko felt that Father Stubbs should not have raised the matter of him having a relationship with a woman which threatened the organisation's credibility (Stubbs 2017:196). Here is the letter Biko wrote to Father Stubbs:

I felt like writing to you about the matter you raised just as you were going. First let me say I raised the issue with both parties concerned and with a mutual friend of ours in P.E. [Port Elizabeth]. Our initial reaction is simply that it was unfortunate that you raised this in the way you did. I am in no way ashamed to talk about that matter with anyone, and indeed I find aspects of it very good illustrations of the complexities of the human nature. Often an observation of myself in the context of the relationships involved here offers a good basis for a study of my own personality. However the point about the way you raised it is that it presupposed a very thorough discussion of myself and my emotional relationships with others by friends, none of whom had ever had the guts to raise the issue with me directly first. The tendency then with the human mind is to ask an endless string of "whys". I have resolved even this aspect of it finally – which is why I am now writing to you. I have assumed that your motives are completely altruistic – that you see a situation which is potentially explosive and you wish to share with your friend your fears about the possible outcome and if possible help in the formulation of some kind of solution. My response of course is that I regard topics of this nature as being extremely private. I am in many instances aware of the complexity that can be introduced by a willingness to accommodate the feelings of friends in a matter that is essentially private between two – or in this case three – parties. I have never, ever, found it

necessary to reflect on my friends' private activities except in so far as I thought they affected at any one stage their political standing and their performance. Similarly, I could never wish to ask you about your love life, your sexual life, etc. because I regard that as strictly speaking your business. If I have confidence in your general leadership qualities I must have a basis to believe you will adequately take care. On the other hand, if you do experience problems and you wish to share I will only be too ready to do that. Or for that matter if you experience success I will share with you in that as well. But otherwise I restrict my friendship even with my best of friends to topics that are generally voluntarily declared by both parties. This brings me to an analysis of your own contribution in situations of this nature... there is a profound difference in the way Westerners basically believe in character analysis to that adopted by us here. In many discussions I used to have with David [Russell] I agreed with him in comparing our attitude on the whole to that of European working-class approach to life. When you guys talk about a person, you tear him apart, analyse the way he speaks, looks at someone, thinks; you find a motive for everything he does; you categorise him politically, socially, etc. In short you are not satisfied until you have really torn him apart and have really parcelled off each and every aspect of his general behaviour and labelled it... now most blacks do not indulge in reflection upon the self or upon others. They never form therefore any cut and dried opinions that thereafter govern their relationship with others. Of course this tendency is wrong in that on the whole for evaluation and redirection of oneself in life, a bit of reflection and self-analysis is necessary. But this has to be checked and not allowed to reach excesses... When you talk to me about my own relationship, do not operate on the



assumption that I am not aware of the “imminent dangers” involved. When I brush aside what I regard as undue inquisitiveness with the comment: “things will be sorted out”, do not labour the point with a backhander “just like in the political situation, these things do not sort themselves out, someone has to do something about them”. Allow a friend to subtly close a topic when he does not see any value in discussing it... I would not like you to continue with any aspect of this debate as I believe there is nothing to be served by it and it remains a private matter. I have in some parts of this letter spoken very frankly – not to kill my friendship with you but rather to preserve it...

One may be sympathetic to how difficult the situation was in which Biko found himself; however, the “separation” of his public and private life was and is problematic, although the picture painted by writers such as Stubbs is that Biko was later remorseful and sought to amend broken relations with his comrades because of his “private” life utterances (Stubbs 2017). Biko would have known that there is no absolutely private life (Botha 2006:118); private life cannot be detached from public life and public life cannot be detached from identity. “The public’ is better thought of as a dimension of identity, an expression of the individual self” (Botha 2006:118). Could it be that Biko’s separation of “private” and “political life” was informed by the liberal community and environment he found himself in or by African ethics? In one of his articles, Biko (2017:46) wrote that in an African setting, youth, for example, would commonly share “their secrets, joys and woes. No one felt unnecessarily an intruder into someone else’s business. The curiosity manifested was welcome. It came out of a desire to share”. This “separateness” seems to betray African ethics or moral virtues of holism, vitalism, communality, and *Ubuntu*. Holism means the perception of reality as a whole rather than in “separateness” or in a dualistic way, as Biko argued. On the onset, the

traditional African thought of holism is against the isolation of morality as a topic separable from the whole of life of the community (Richardson 2009:45). There are no departments in life, but only life as a whole. Therefore, Biko's activism cannot be discussed in isolation from his private moral standing on issues pertaining to women in particular.

African thinking is holistic. In African tradition, morality is woven into the entire fabric of life, especially if it is to be characterised by well-being and success for the group of which the individual is a member (Richardson 2009:51).

Furthermore, holism "highlights the dependence of people on one another, and of human beings on their natural environment" (Richardson 2009:44). It encourages the common good, which includes women and children. Therefore the freedom of blacks that Biko and the entire BCM advocated for included the freedom of women as part of the community. Related to holism, is the ethic of vitalism. Vitalism means appreciating and appropriating the life force of the person and community. When combined with holism,

it is easy to see how one's well-being and that of the clan is inextricably bound up with the well-being of others. In contrast to the "winner-takes-all" of the West, there is in African tradition a strong inclination towards a "let-us-all-win-together" approach (Richardson 2009:46).

Looking after the well-being of the "weak", "less fortunate", or "marginalised", like women in society, is actually saying, "let us all win together". Richardson (2009:47) added the ethic of communality as central to African ethics. It is in communalism where holism and vitality can have meaning. Communality is important for both personal morality and identity, because a person is not necessarily seen as an individual.

In Africa, “I am a person through other people”, the “other people” include women. Related to communalism is the *Ubuntu* concept, which places value on human dignity. Tutu (1999:31-32) stated that the *Ubuntu* concept simply means “I am human because I belong, I participate, I share... What dehumanises you inexorably dehumanises me”; therefore when women are ill-treated, it does not matter how noble the battle against apartheid was, it dehumanised women, and consequently, the same abuser of women. The dominance of patriarchy during Biko’s day, and today, was as evil as was apartheid; for it excluded women. To this day, women and children are the most marginalised in society.

Biko (2017:108) wrote,

We have set out on a quest for true humanity, and somewhere on the distant horizon we can see the glittering prize. Let us march forth with courage and determination, drawing strength from our common plight and our brotherhood. In time we shall be in a position to bestow upon South Africa the greatest gift possible – a more human face.

The glittering prize is freedom for women and the more “human face” is that of a respected and emancipated black woman, who faces difficult challenges to this day. Du Toit (2009:181) correctly analysed ethical issues that arise out of the marginalisation of women and children. The first challenge is related to labour, in that women still earn less on average than men. Research has shown that in Africa, men earn twice as much as women and in the world generally men earn more than women in the same positions and in the same companies (Muntemba & Blackden 2001:93). At the same time, women are expected to look after the household needs, resulting in women spending more of their income on children than men. The other issue is that

of education, where women are far less educated than men in developing countries, with a difference of 20% between the literacy levels of men and women (Du Toit 2009:182-183). This leads to women accessing low-paying and low-skilled jobs if they do gain any employment. Related to this is the inequality of access by the girl child to education.

Studies show that while the gap between African girls and boys completing primary education has narrowed, “domestic chores [...] caring for younger children and fetching fuel and water” continue to limit girls’ access to education and a better life (Du Toit 2009:183).<sup>14</sup>

Female children are either denied education or are too poor to attend school. An example is that of girls who leave school to take care of their siblings after the death of parents due to illnesses such as HIV/Aids. Female health is the third serious ethical issue facing women. Women, especially in rural areas, are more likely to be malnourished and less likely to attain medical help, clean water, and sanitation (Du Toit 2009:184). Snyman (2009:199) investigated the relationship between HIV/Aids, women, and poverty. She stated that women are more vulnerable to HIV/Aids because of at least four reasons:

- *Feminised poverty*: There are more poor women than men in Africa. Therefore a lack of financial resources means that there is insufficient food and medical attention for women in dealing with HIV/Aids conditions. Moreover, women are often economically powerless and financially dependent on a “male protector”. Not only does their low financial and social status compound women’s

---

<sup>14</sup> See also Muntimba and Blackden (2001:94) and *The Millennium Development Goals report* (United Nations, 2008:17).

dependency on men, it also influences their ability to negotiate safer sexual practices.

- *Social disempowerment*: This means that male dominance is pervasive in all aspects of a woman's life, including the legal, religious, institutional, and family domains. The social disempowerment of women is illustrated by the link between violence and HIV. Women want men to use condoms, but they have little power to enforce it. In many cases women risk violence from their husbands if they insist on condom protection.
- *Socio-economic factors*: In South Africa, many corporate companies rely on migrant labour to work in the mining industry, and this has influenced the spread of HIV/Aids. This mobility separates families and increases extramarital sexual activities. Miners often leave their families in the rural areas and adopt "city wives". When they return home to their "rural wives", they spread HIV/Aids.
- *Physiological factors*: These increase women's vulnerability to HIV/Aids. Due to the fact that the vagina has a greater surface area than the penis, women are at greater risk of exposure to HIV. In some cultures, women submit to men's preference for "dry sex" and the resultant vaginal tissue damage provides easy entry points for the disease.

There is therefore a link between poverty, illness, oppression, and gender inequality (Snyman 2009:203). Violence against women, which can be domestic abuse and sexual trafficking, is a serious global challenge (Du Toit 2009:185). This violence is often in the hands of friends and close family members. Cases of gender violence are rarely reported because of the reluctance of law enforcers to investigate such cases, because "they are culturally viewed as a domestic matter" (Du Toit 2009:186).

Lastly, the issue of patriarchy and culture is at the root of the challenges faced by women, both in our generation and that of Biko:

Most societies still maintain the superiority of the male gender and in some countries, women are still regarded as legal minors. This situation contributes to the issues of violence, trafficking, and on women's rights of access to education, labour and assets. Within patriarchal cultures, women are often viewed as the possessions of men and are recognised through their relationships with males as daughters, mothers or wives (Du Toit 2009:186).

The liberation of women from black men and white domination was and is still critical for the total emancipation of humanity. Abuse of women in the "private lives" of men is as bad as the abuse of men and women in public society. Therefore morality needs to be applicable to the whole of life, and it must be worldly in emphasis (Kretzschmar & Van Niekerk 2009:62).

Preachers of Biko's day spoke about certain moral issues on the pulpit and in fact Biko did raise this issue in the context of immorality in the townships. He felt that the church emphasised these "little" sins more than "real" sins, which were actually the driving force behind these sins. He was in a way saying "blame the youth's behaviour on apartheid" and coupled the poverty of wealth with the poverty of faith. With that in mind, can it be asked that even though Biko's spirituality brought him closer to his community and that the same spirituality assisted him to analyse his community situation, Biko struggled with uniting his spirituality with ethics? He may have correctly asserted that apartheid and white supremacy were unethical, but he did not denounce abuse of alcohol, abuse of women, adultery, child pregnancy, etc., as these are top of the challenges facing our post-apartheid communities. The Biko event brings before

our generation questions of “spirituality and ethics”. The question that arises from the Biko event is how a spiritual experience connects with a person’s moral behaviour. This study recommends that future research on Biko needs to investigate Biko’s spirituality and ethics. There seems to be a separation of spirituality and ethics in societies in general (Kretzschmar 2005b:60-71). There is no doubt that a neglect of ethics in religious people’s lives, where moral beliefs and behaviour (ethics) are not always consistent with claims to be spiritual persons, impacts negatively on religion. Kretzschmar (2005b:66) warned that religious institutions that neglect ethics and emphasise spirituality end up focusing on their maintenance, rather than on living according to the values of their beliefs.

Jentile (2016) observed that the failure to incorporate ethics in spirituality has had dire consequences at least on personal life, academic theology, church life, and social life. With regard to academic theology, in many modern universities and seminaries, spirituality has seldom found its place in the formal courses taught in academic Protestant theological institutions. This is the result of the enlightenment, rationalism, and modernism, where “spiritual theology and practices such as prayer, liturgy, worship, personal devotions and spiritual retreats were [...] regarded as improper subjects of the ‘academic’ study of theology” (Kretzschmar 2005b:65). This separation has led to a problem of decision makers who have no moral formation, where thinking is divorced from living. The study of theology cannot be pursued on the basis of reason alone, because human beings are more than their intellectual capacities. Pascal wrote in the 1600s that “[t]he heart has its reasons, which the reason does not know” (Dowley 1977:485). Perhaps Biko was referring to this in a letter to Father Stubbs, when he wrote of “complexities of the human nature”, where the “heart had reasons which his head was unwilling to understand or resolve” (Sono 1993:94).

Jentile (2016) asserted that the separation of spirituality and ethics has had dire consequences on social life as well, where a person's faith becomes irrelevant to its context. "It becomes so heavenly minded that it is no earthly good" (Kretzschmar 2005b:66). Spiritual experience cannot be separated from social justice in general or racial reconciliation in particular. Furthermore, the separation of ethics and spirituality has led to many people struggling to live lives of integrity – a life inconsistent with claims of being a believer. There is much hypocrisy, where one lives a life totally different from what one professes. Arguably, if there is no connection between the two, the result will not be different from the white minority Christian believers who boasted of their Christian spirituality but remained ruthless and showed appalling behaviour towards the black majority. If spirituality is divorced from ethics or vice versa, the result may be a black majority which got into power on a high moral ground but eventually ended up abusing power and stealing from the same people they were fighting for and fighting with in the trenches.

The other point of interest raised in this study is the importance of bringing together the social activist spirituality and contemplative spirituality. This follows the above argument of spirituality and ethics. When religious people neglect social activism, their religion closes its eyes to injustices, and by so doing becomes part of the injustice. Contemplative spirituality focuses on an individual, and social activism is communal. Individual transformation is not sufficient by itself – it must be seen in the community. At the same time, without individual transformation, social action becomes an exercise in futility, for old oppressive power structures are merely replaced by new ones that are quickly corrupted by individual egoism generating new forms of oppression.

Also, activist spirituality without contemplative spirituality becomes dogmatically secular and materialistic, ignoring the powerful spiritual dimensions of good and evil



in human life. Therefore the two traditions need to be in a creative tension and mutual critique, and each perspective must be emphasised in a particular life situation. Hebblethwaite (1997:197-198) argued that the world needs both the social dynamism of eschatological spirituality and the inner integration of cosmological spirituality. However, he warned that

if one needs both eschatological and cosmological spirituality, one has to be alert to the dangers of each type when developed to an extreme. The danger of allowing eschatological spirituality to develop too far in the direction of radicalism is that of a religious activism which finds God only in needs of the poor and the oppressed. This way spirituality tends to evaporate into ideology. The danger of allowing cosmological spirituality to locate the meeting point of the religions solely in “the cave of the heart” is that of ignoring the religious dimension to the cry for social justice (Hebblethwaite 1997:197).

The nature and bounds of this study prohibited expanding into other areas, such as African Christian spirituality as embodied by Biko. Further research could be conducted on how Biko merged the African religion and tradition with Christian spirituality. This study touched on that but it was not sufficient. In addition, this study’s main weakness is that it did not use questionnaires. Biko’s wife, close friends, and children are still alive and very accessible, and could therefore have offered valuable insights into his life.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

AMITHRAM, S. & PRYOR, R. (EDS.)

1989. *Resources for spiritual formation in theological education*. Geneva, Switzerland: WCC Programme on Theological Education.

AMMASSARI, P.

1998. Robert K. Merton: The relation between theory and research. In: C. Mongardini & S. Tabboni (eds.), *Robert K. Merton & contemporary sociology* (New Brunswick, USA: Transaction Publishers), pp. 45-60.

AMMERMAN, N.T.

2007. *Everyday religion: Observing modern religious life*. Oxford, United Kingdom: Oxford University Press.

AMMERMAN, N.T.

2014. *Sacred stories, spiritual tribes: Finding religion in everyday life*. Oxford, United Kingdom: Oxford University Press.

APOSTOLIDES, A. & MEYLAHN, J.A.

2014. The lived theology of the Harry Potter series. *HTS Teologiese Studies / Theological Studies* 70(1):01-06.

ARNOLD, M. (ED.)

1978. *Steve Biko: Black Consciousness in South Africa*. New York, USA: Vintage Books.

BADAT, S.

2009. *Black man, you are on your own*. Johannesburg, South Africa: Steve Biko Foundation.

BAILEY, E.I.

1998. *Implicit religion: An introduction*. London, United Kingdom: Middlesex University Press.

BANKS, R. & LEDBETTER, B.

2004. *Reviewing leadership*. Michigan, USA: Baker Academic.

BENTLEY, W.

2010. The formation of Christian leaders: A Wesleyan approach. *Koers* 75(3):551-565.

BERGER, P.L.

1969. *The social reality of religion*. London, United Kingdom: Faber.

BERGER, P.L.

1973. *The social reality of religion*. London, United Kingdom: Faber.

BERNSTEIN, H.

1978. *No. 46 – Steve Biko*. London, United Kingdom: International Defence & Aid Fund.

BIKO, S.

2004. *I write what I like: A selection of his writings*. (reprinted edition.) Johannesburg, South Africa: Picador Africa.

BIKO, S.

2017. *I write what I like: A selection of his writings*. (40<sup>th</sup> anniversary edition.) Johannesburg, South Africa: Picador Africa.

BINAU, B.A.

2011. Pastoral theology for the missional church: From pastoral care to the care of souls. *Trinity Seminary Review* 34(1):11-28.

BOCOCK, R. & THOMPSON, K. (EDS.)

1985. *Religion and ideology: A reader*. Manchester, United Kingdom: Manchester University Press.

BOESAK, A.A.

2014. A hope unprepared to accept things as they are: Engaging John de Gruchy's challenges for "Theology at the edge". *NGTT [Dutch Reformed Theological Journal]* 55(S1):1055-1074.

BOOI, V.

2008. Ntsikana. In: M. Ndletyana (ed.), *African Intellectuals in 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century South Africa* (Cape Town, South Africa: HSRC Press), pp. 7-16.

BOSCH, D.J.

1996. *Transforming mission: Paradigm shifts in theology of mission*. New York, USA: Orbis Books.

BOTHA, P.

2006. Secular spirituality as virtue ethics: Actualising the Judeo-Christian tradition today. In: C.W. du Toit & C.P. Mayson (eds.), *Secular spirituality as a contextual critique of religion* (Pretoria, South Africa: Research Institute for Theology and Religion, Unisa), pp. 95-126.

BOUMA, G.D.

1992. *Religion: Meaning, transcendence and community in Australia*. Melbourne, Australia: Longman Cheshire.

BOWEN, R.

1996. *So I send you: A study guide to mission*. London, United Kingdom: SPCK.

BRAATEN, C.E.

1972. *Christ and counter-Christ: Apocalyptic themes in theology and culture*. Philadelphia, USA: Fortress Press.

CASANOVA, J.

2011. *Public religions in the modern world*. Chicago, USA: University of Chicago Press.

CHAVES, M.

2010. Rain dances in the dry season: Overcoming the religious congruence fallacy. *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 49(1):1-14.

CHITIGA-MABUGU, M., MUPELA, E., NGWENYA, P. & ZIKHALI, P.

2016. Inequality, poverty and the state: The case of South Africa 2006-2011. In: D. Plaatjies, M. Chitiga-Mabugu, C. Hongoro, T. Meyiwa, M. Nkondo & F. Nyamnjoh (eds.), *State of the nation South Africa 2016: Who is in charge? Mandates, accountability and contestations in the South African state* (Cape Town, South Africa: HSRC Press), pp. 181-204.

CHRYSSIDES, G.D. & GEAVES, R.

2007. *The study of religion: An introduction to key ideas and methods*. London, United Kingdom: A&C Black.

CLARK, N.L. & WORGER, W.H.

2011. *South Africa: The rise and fall of apartheid*. London, United Kingdom: Routledge.

COLLINS, K.J., DU PLOOY, G.M., GROBBELAAR, M.M., PUTTERGILL, C.H., TERRE BLANCE, M.J., VAN RENSBURG, G.H. & WIGSTON, D.J.

2000. *Research in the social sciences*. Pretoria, South Africa: Unisa.

COLLINS, P.

1999. *Spirituality for the 21<sup>st</sup> century: Christian living in a secular age*. Dublin, Ireland: The Columbia Press.

COLLINS, P.

2009. *Spirituality for the 21<sup>st</sup> century: Christian living in a secular age*. (2<sup>nd</sup> edition.) Dublin, Ireland: The Columbia Press.

CONE, J.H.

1970. *A black theology of liberation*. Philadelphia, USA: Lippincott.

COPELAND, A.J.

2013. Why lead? Discipleship as leadership. *The Christian Century*, 8 November:11-12.

CRAWFORD, S.E.S.

1995. Clergy at work in the secular city. Doctoral dissertation. Indiana University, Bloomington, USA.

DAFT, R.L.

2008. *Leadership*. (5<sup>th</sup> edition.) Boston, USA: Cengage Learning.

DAVIES, D.

1992. The study of religion. In: J. Bergman, M.S. Langley, W. Metz & A. Romarheim (eds.), *The world's religions* (England: Lion Publishing), pp. 10-18.

DAVIS, K.

1986. Racism and God: Steve Biko in context. *The A.M.E. Zion Quarterly Review* XCVII(4):2-19.

DE GRUCHY, J.W.

1997. Christian witness in a secular state: Rethinking church-state relations in the new democratic South Africa. In: M. Guma & L. Milton (eds.), *An African challenge to the church in the 21<sup>st</sup> century* (Johannesburg, South Africa: SACC), pp. 86-96.

DE GRUCHY, J.W. & DE GRUCHY, S.

2004. *The church struggle in South Africa*. (25<sup>th</sup> anniversary edition.) Minneapolis, USA: Fortress Press.

DE GRUCHY, S.

1991. Singing the Kairos. In: M. Worsnip & D. van der Water (eds.), *We shall overcome: A spirituality of liberation* (Pietermaritzburg, South Africa: Cluster Publications), pp. 5-31.

DEMERATH III, N.J.

2000. The varieties of sacred experience: Finding the sacred in a secular grove. *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 39(1):1-11.

DE WET, P.

2016. Why the church is a nonplayer politically. *Mail & Guardian*, 24 March:17.

DOBBELAERE, K.

2011. The meaning and scope of secularization. In: P.B. Clarke (ed.), *The Oxford handbook of the sociology of religion* (Oxford, United Kingdom: Oxford University Press), pp. 599-615.

DOLAMO, R.T.

2017. The legacy of Black Consciousness: Its continued relevance for democratic South Africa and its significance for theological education. *HTS Teologiese Studies / Theological Studies* 73(3):a4587.

DONAHUE, J.

2006. The quest for biblical spirituality. In: B.H. Lescher & E. Liebert (eds.), *Exploring Christian spirituality: Essays in honor of Sandra M. Schneiders* (New York, USA: Paulist Press), pp. 73-97.

DOWLEY, T.

1977. *Eerdmans' handbook to the history of Christianity*. Michigan, USA: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing.

DOWNEY, M.

1997. *Understanding Christian spirituality*. New York, USA: Paulist Press.

DULLES, A.S.J.

1974. *Models of the church*. New York, USA: Doubleday & Company Inc.

DUNCAN, G.

2008. Steve Biko's religious consciousness and thought and its influence on theological education, with special reference to the federal theological seminary of South Africa. In: C.W. du Toit (ed.), *The legacy of Stephen Bantu Biko*:



*Theological challenges* (Pretoria, South Africa: Research Institute for Theology and Religion, Unisa), pp. 115-140.

DU TOIT, C.W.

2006. Secular spirituality versus dualism: Towards post-secular holism as model for a natural theology. In: C.W. du Toit & C.P. Mayson (eds.), *Secular spirituality as a contextual critique of religion* (Pretoria, South Africa: Research Institute for Theology and Religion, Unisa), pp. 49-73.

DU TOIT, C.W. (ED.)

2008. *The legacy of Stephen Bantu Biko: Theological challenges*. Pretoria, South Africa: Research Institute for Theology and Religion, Unisa.

DU TOIT, N.B.

2009. The marginalisation of women and children: Ethical perspectives. In: L. Kretzschmar, W. Bentley & A. van Niekerk (eds.), *What is a good life? An introduction to Christian ethics in 21<sup>st</sup> century Africa* (Kempton Park, South Africa: AcadSA Publishing), pp. 181-197.

DURKHEIM, E.

1915. *The elementary forms of the religious life* (trans. J. Ward). New York, USA: Macmillan.

DURKHEIM, E.

1965. *The rules of sociological method* (trans. S.A. Solovay & J.H. Mueller). New York, USA: The Free Press.

DURKHEIM, E.

1976. *The elementary forms of the religious life*. (2<sup>nd</sup> edition.) London, United Kingdom: Routledge.

EGAN, A.

2007. Kingdom deferred? The churches in the new South Africa, 1994-2006. In: S. Buhlungu, J. Daniel, R. Southall & J. Lutchman (eds.), *State of the nation 2007* (Cape Town, South Africa: HSRC Press), p. 448.

ENGDAHL, H.

2012. Theology as politics in Afrikaner nationalism and Black Consciousness: A close reading of F.J.M. Potgieter and Steve Biko. *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa* 144:4-25.

EVANS, D.

1993. *Spirituality and human nature*. New York, USA: SUNY Press.

FORSTER, D.A.

2012. God's kingdom and the transformation of society. In: W. Bentley & D.A. Forster (eds.), *Between capital and cathedral: Essays on church-state relationships* (Pretoria, South Africa: Research Institute for Theology and Religion: Unisa), pp. 73-88.

FORSTER, R.J.

2001. *Streams of living water: Essential practices from the six great traditions of Christian faith*. New York, USA: Harper One.

FREUD, S.

1927. The future of an illusion. In: J. Strachey (ed.), *The complete psychological works: Standard edition*, volume 21. London, United Kingdom: Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psychoanalysis.

FROST, M. & HIRSCH, A.

2003. *Shaping of things to come*. Melbourne, Australia: Forge Mission Training Network.

GANZEVOORT, R.R.

2009. *Forks in the road when tracing the sacred practical theology as hermeneutics of lived religion*. Available at: [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/238070309\\_Forks\\_in\\_the\\_Road\\_when\\_Tracing\\_the\\_Sacred\\_Practical\\_Theology\\_as\\_Hermeneutics\\_of\\_Lived\\_Religion](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/238070309_Forks_in_the_Road_when_Tracing_the_Sacred_Practical_Theology_as_Hermeneutics_of_Lived_Religion).

GANZEVOORT, R.R. & ROELAND, J.

2014. Lived religion: The praxis of practical theology. *International Journal of Practical Theology* 18(1):91-101.

GEERTZ, C.

1985. Religion as a cultural system in religion and ideology. In: R. Boccock & K. Thompson (eds.), *Religion and ideology: A reader* (Manchester, United Kingdom: Manchester University Press), pp. 67-75.

GEHMAN, R.J.

1993. *African traditional religion in biblical perspective*. Nairobi, Kenya: East African Publishers.

GERHART, G.M.

1978. *Black power in South Africa: The evolution of an ideology*. California, USA: University of California Press.

GIBBS, E.

2005. *Leadership next*. Illinois, USA: InterVarsity Press.

GRÄB, W.

2014. Practical theology as a theory of lived religion conceptualizing church leadership. *International Journal of Practical Theology* 18(1):102-112.

GRASSOW, P.S.

1991. Spirituality and the struggle. In: M. Worsnip & D. van der Water (eds.), *We shall overcome: A spirituality of liberation* (Pietermaritzburg, South Africa: Cluster Publications), pp. 52-57.

GRAYBILL, L.S.

1995. *Religion and resistance politics in South Africa*. California: USA: Greenwood Publishing Group Inc.

GREIL, A.L.

1993. Explorations along the sacred frontier: Notes on para-religions, quasi-religions, and other boundary phenomena. In: D.G. Bromley & J.K. Hadden (eds.), *The handbook of cults and sects in America* (USA: Emerald Group Publishing), pp. 153-172.

GREIL, A.L. & ROBBINS, T.

1994. *Between the sacred and the secular*. Greenwich, USA: JAI.

HADFIELD, L.A.

2016. *Liberation and development: Black Consciousness Community Programs in South Africa*. Michigan, USA: Michigan State University Press.

HALL, D.D. (ED.)

1997. *Lived religion in America: Toward a history of practice*. New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press.

HAMILTON, M.B.

1995. *The sociology of religion: An introduction to theoretical and comparative perspectives*. London, United Kingdom: Routledge.

HARVEY, V.A.

1997. *Feuerbach and the interpretation of religion*. (volume 1.) London, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press.

HAUGHEY, J.C.

1976. *The conspiracy of God: The Holy Spirit in us*. USA: Image Catholic Books.

HEADLEY, S. & KOBE, S.L.

2017. Christian activism and the fallists: What about reconciliation? *HTS Theologese Studies / Theological Studies* 73(3):a4722.

HEBBLETHWAITE, B.

1997. *Ethics and religion in a pluralistic age*. Darton, Edinburgh: T&T Clark.

HIRSON, B.

1979. *Year of fire, year of ash. The Soweto revolt: Roots of a revolution?* London, United Kingdom: Zed Press.

HOLT, B.P.

1993. *Thirsty for God: A brief history of Christian spirituality*. Minneapolis, USA: Fortress Press.

HOOK, D.

2014. *Steve Biko: Voice of liberation*. Pretoria, South Africa: HSRC Press.

HOPKINS, D.N.

1990. *Black theology – USA and South Africa: Politics, culture, and liberation*. New York, USA: Orbis Books.

HOPKINS, D.N.

1991. Steve Biko, Black Consciousness and black theology. In: B. Pityana (ed.), *Bounds of possibility: The legacy of Steve Biko and Black Consciousness* (Cape Town, South Africa: New Africa Books), pp. 194-200.

HOVLAND, T.H.

1992. The role of the church in a pluralist society. *Journal of Theology for South Africa* 80:65-75.

HOWARTH, D.

1994. The ideologies and strategies of resistance in post-Sharpeville South Africa: Thoughts on Anthony Marx's lessons of struggle. *Africa Today* 41(1):21-38.

IMMINK, G.

2014. Theological analysis of religious practices. *International Journal of Practical Theology* 18(1):127-138.

JAMES, D.

2014. *Money from nothing: Indebtedness and aspiration in South Africa*.  
Redwood City, USA: Stanford University Press.

JAMES, W.

1902 [1982]. *The varieties of religious experience: A study in human nature*.  
Harmondsworth, United Kingdom: Middx.

JENTILE, T.

2016. The moral formation, pastoral leadership and contemporary  
Pentecostal/Charismatic churches in Soweto. Master's dissertation. University  
of the Free State, Bloemfontein, South Africa.

JOHNSON, S.

1989. *Christian spiritual formation in the church and classroom*. Nashville, USA:  
Abingdon Press.

JOHNSTON, S.I.

2004. *Religions of the ancient world: A guide*. Cambridge, USA: Harvard  
University Press.

JOHNSTONE, R.L., MONAHAN, S.C., MIROLA, W.A., EMERSON, M.O. &  
MCCLLENON, J.

2007. *Religion in society: A sociology of religion*. Thousand Oaks, USA: Sage  
Publications.

JØRGENSEN, K.

2004. The emergence and challenge of the Missional Church concept in the  
West. *Swedish Missiological Themes* 92(4):551-571.

KARECKI, M., KOURIE, C. & KRETZSCHMAR, L.

2005. African spirituality. In: P. Sheldrake (ed.), *The new SCM dictionary of Christian spirituality* (2<sup>nd</sup> revised edition.) (London: SCM Press), pp. 92-94.

KARIS, T. & GERHART, G.M.

2013. *From protest to challenge, Volume 5: A documentary history of African politics in South Africa, 1882-1990: Nadir and resurgence, 1964-1979*. Pretoria, South Africa: Jacana Press.

KATO, B.H.

1987. *Theological pitfalls in Africa*. Nairobi, Kenya: Evangel Publishing House.

KEE, A.

1983. Radical spirituality. In: G.S. Wakefield (ed.), *A dictionary of Christian spirituality* (London, United Kingdom: SCM Press), pp. 328-330.

KGATLE, M.S.

2018. The role of the church in the #FeesMustFall movement in South Africa: Practical theological reflection. *HTS Teologiese Studies / Theological Studies* 74(1):1-8.

KHOAPA, B.A.

1972. *Black review*. Johannesburg, South Africa: Ravan Press.

KLAMMT, T.

2006. A systematic theological investigation of the marks of the pastor according to contemporary Baptist theology in South African and German contexts. Doctoral dissertation. Unisa, Pretoria, South Africa.



KOHLBERG, L.

1981. *Essays on moral development: Volume 1. The philosophy of moral development*. New York, USA: Harper & Row.

KOURIE, C.E.T.

2000. What is Christian spirituality? In: C.E.T. Kourie & L. Kretzschmar (eds.), *Christian spirituality in South Africa* (Pietermaritzburg, South Africa: Cluster Publications), pp. 9-33.

KOURIE, C.E.T.

2006. *Postmodern spirituality in a secular society: Secular spirituality as a contextual critique of religion*. Pretoria, South Africa: RITR.

KOURIE, C.E.T.

2007. The "turn" to spirituality. *Acta Theologica* 27(2):19-40.

KOURIE, C.E.T.

2009. Spirituality and the university. *Verbum et Ecclesia* 30(1):148-173.

KRAFT, D.

2010. *Leaders who last*. Illinois, USA: Crossway.

KRETZSCHMAR, L.

1996. A holistic spirituality. *Journal of Theology in Southern Africa* 95:63-75.

KRETZSCHMAR, L.

1997. The gap between belief and action: Why is it that Christians do not practise what they preach? *Scriptura* 62:311-322.

KRETZSCHMAR, L.

1998. *Privatization of the Christian faith: Mission, social ethics and the South African Baptists*. Accra, Ghana: Legon Press & Asempa Publishers.

KRETZSCHMAR, L.

2000. Being and doing: Towards an integrated spirituality. In: L. Kretzschmar & C.E.T. Kourie (eds.), *Christian spirituality in South Africa* (Pietermaritzburg, South Africa: Cluster Publications), pp. 37-54.

KRETZSCHMAR, L.

2002. Authentic Christian leadership and spiritual formation in Africa. *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa* 113:41-60.

KRETZSCHMAR, L.

2005a. What can theological educators in Africa learn from the contemporary upsurge of interest in Christian ethics and spirituality? *Theologica Viatorum* 29(1):31-57.

KRETZSCHMAR, L.

2005b. *Ethics and spirituality: Study guide for CGM304-V*. Pretoria, South Africa: Unisa.

KRETZSCHMAR, L.

2006. The indispensability of spiritual formation for Christian leaders. *Missionalia: Southern African Journal of Mission Studies* 34(2/3):338-361.

KRETZSCHMAR, L.

2007. The formation of moral leaders in South Africa: A Christian-ethical analysis of some elements. *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa* 128:18-36.

KRETZSCHMAR, L.

2009a. Choose life, not death: Who is a good person and what is a good life?

In: L. Kretzschmar, W. Bentley & A. van Niekerk (eds.), *What is a good life? An introduction to Christian ethics in 21<sup>st</sup> century Africa* (Kempton Park, South Africa: AcadSA Publishing), pp. 11-41.

KRETZSCHMAR, L.

2009b. The call to moral, life-giving leadership. In: L. Kretzschmar, W. Bentley & A. van Niekerk (eds.), *What is a good life? An introduction to Christian ethics in 21<sup>st</sup> century Africa* (Kempton Park, South Africa: AcadSA Publishing), pp. 157-179.

KRETZSCHMAR, L.

2012. The Christian formation of South African believers for engagement with state and society. In: W. Bentley & D.A. Forster (eds.), *Between capital and cathedral: Essays on church-state relationships* (Pretoria, South Africa: Research Institute for Theology and Religion, Unisa), pp. 137-171.

KRETZSCHMAR, L. & VAN NIEKERK, A.

2009. Ethical theories and decision-making in Africa and elsewhere. In: L. Kretzschmar, W. Bentley & A. van Niekerk (eds.), *What is a good life? An introduction to Christian ethics in 21<sup>st</sup> century Africa* (Kempton Park, South Africa: AcadSA Publishing), pp. 57-100.

KUMALO, S.R.

2013. Facts and faction: The development of church and state relations in democratic South Africa from 1994-2012. *Journal of Church and State* 56(4):627-643.

LEVI-STRAUSS, C.

1955. The structural study of myth. *The Journal of American folklore*  
68(270):428-444.

LEVI-STRAUSS, C.

2008. *Structural anthropology*. New York, USA: Basic Books.

LIFTIN, D.

1982. The nature of the pastoral role: The leader as completer. *Bibliotheca Sacra* 139(553):57-66.

LOUBSER, J.A.

1987. *The apartheid bible: A critical review of racial theology in South Africa*.  
New York, USA: Hippocrene Books.

LUCKMANN, T.

1967. *The invisible religion: The problem of religion in modern society*. New  
York, USA: Macmillan.

MACIONIS, J.

1995. *Sociology: Annotated instructor's edition*. (5<sup>th</sup> edition.) New Jersey, USA:  
Prentice Hall.

MACMASTER, L.L.M.

2008. Where have all the pastors gone? A case for public pastoral care in a  
democratic South Africa experiencing growth pains. *Journal of Theology for  
Southern Africa* 132(3):3-15.

M-AFRIKA, A.

2011. *The eyes that lit our lives: A tribute to Steve Biko*. King William's Town, South Africa: Eyeball Publishers.

M-AFRIKA, A.

2016. *Touched by Biko*. Pretoria, South Africa: Unisa Press.

MAFUNA, B.

2007. The impact of Steve Biko on my life. In: C. Van Wyk (ed.), *We write what we like: Celebrating Steve Biko* (Johannesburg, South Africa: Wits University Press), pp. 77-89.

MAGAZINER, D.R.

2010. *The law and the prophets: Black Consciousness in South Africa, 1968-1977*. Auckland Park, South Africa: Jacana Media.

MAGESA, L.

1997. *African religion: The moral traditions of abundant life*. New York, USA: Orbis Books.

MALINOWSKI, B.

1916. Baloma: The spirits of the dead in the Trobriand Islands. *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland* 46:353-430.

MALULEKE, T.S.

2008. May the black God stand please! Biko's challenge to religion. In: A. Alexander, N.C. Gibson & A. Mngxitama (eds.), *Biko lives: Contesting the legacies of Steve Biko* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan), pp. 115-126.

MANDELA, N.R.

2009. Ten years of democracy: 1994-2004. In: *The Steve Biko memorial lectures 2000-2008* (Johannesburg, South Africa: The Steve Biko Foundation and Macmillan), pp. 73-78.

MANGCU, X.

2012. *Biko: A biography*. Cape Town, South Africa: Tafelberg Publishers.

MANGENA, M.

2017. Bantu Biko, an unequal symbol of liberation. In: A. Zinn (ed.), *Steve Bantu Biko lives: The quest for a human face. Steve Biko memorial lecture series: 2011-2016* (Port Elizabeth: Nelson Mandela University / CANRAD), pp. 6-10.

MARX, K.

1844. Contribution to the critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right. *Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher* February 7 and 10.

MARX, K.

1859 [1964]. *Pre-capitalist economic formations*. New York, USA: Eric Hobsbawm.

MASANGO, M.J.

2010. Is prophetic witness the appropriate mode of public discourse on the global economy? *HTS Teologiese Studies / Theological Studies* 66(1):1-3.

MASERUMULE, M.H.

2015. Why Biko's Black Consciousness philosophy resonates with youth today. *The Conversation*, 4 September. Available at: <http://theconversation.com/why-bikos-black-consciousness-philosophy-resonates-with-youth-today-46909>.

MASON, M., SINGLETON, A. & WEBBER, R.

2007. *The spirit of generation Y: Young people's spirituality in a changing Australia*. Victoria, Australia: John Garratt Publishing.

MAY, T.

1993. *Social research: Issues, methods and research*. Philadelphia, USA: Open University Press.

MBITI, J.S.

1969. *African philosophy and religion*. New York, USA: Praeger.

MBITI, J.S.

1991. Where African religion is found. In: E.M. Uka (ed.), *Readings in African tradition religion: Structure, meaning, relevance, future* (New York, USA: Peter Lang), pp. 69-75.

MCGINN, B.

2005. Mysticism. In: P. Sheldrake (ed.), *The new SCM dictionary of Christian spirituality* (London, United Kingdom: SCM), pp. 19-25.

MCGUIRE, M.B.

2008. *Lived religion: Faith and practice in everyday life*. Oxford, United Kingdom: Oxford University Press.

MCNEAL, R.

2011. *Missional communities: The rise of the post-congregational church*. San Francisco, USA: Jossey-Bass.

MEYLAHN, J.A.

2012. *Church emerging from cracks: A church IN, but not OF the world*.  
Bloemfontein, South Africa: Sun Media.

MHLOPHE, P.F.

1990. The effects of apartheid on Baptist Convention pastors in South Africa.  
In: D. Hoffmeister & J. Gurney (eds.), *The Barkly West national awareness  
workshop of the Baptist Convention of South Africa* (Johannesburg, South  
Africa: BCSA), pp. 53-58.

MILLARD, J.A.

2002. *Malihambe: Let the word spread*. Pretoria, South Africa: Unisa Press.

MNDENDE, N.

2006. Spiritual reality in South Africa. In: C.W. du Toit & C.P. Mayson (eds.),  
*Secular spirituality as a contextual critique of religion* (Pretoria, South Africa:  
Research Institute for Theology and Religion, Unisa), pp. 153-173.

MNGXITAMA, A., ALEXANDER, A. & GIBSON, N.C.

2008. *Biko lives! Contesting the legacies of Steve Biko*. New York, USA:  
Palgrave Macmillan.

MODISANE, W.B.

1963 [1990]. *Blame me on history*. New York, USA: Simon & Schuster.

MOKOENA, K.K.

2017. Steve Biko Christ-figure: A black theological Christology in the Son of  
Man film. *HTS Teologiese Studies / Theological Studies* 73(3):1-8.



MOLEBATSI, C.

1990. From protest to action. In: D. Hoffmeister & J. Gurney (eds.), *The Barkly West national awareness workshop of the Baptist Convention of South Africa* (Johannesburg, South Africa: BCSA), pp. 63-67.

MONGARDINI, C. & TABBONI, S. (EDS.)

1998. *Robert K. Merton & contemporary sociology*. New Brunswick, USA: Transaction Publishers.

MONTILUS, G. 1983.

*Dompim: The spirituality of African peoples*. Tennessee, USA: Winston-Derek.

MOORE, B. (ED.)

1974. *Black theology: The South African voice*. London, United Kingdom: C. Hurst & Co. Publishers.

MOORE, M.E.

1983. Questioning assumptions: God, goodness, and human nature. In: D.M. Joy (ed.), *Moral development foundations: Judeo-Christian alternatives to Piaget/Kohlberg* (Tennessee, USA: Abingdon Press), pp. 163-182.

MORE, M.P.

2014. The intellectual foundations of the Black Consciousness Movement. In: P. Vale, L. Hamilton & E.H. Prinsloo (eds.), *Intellectual traditions in South Africa: Ideas, individuals and institutions* (Pietermaritzburg, South Africa: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press), pp. 173-196.

MORE, M.P.

2017. *Biko: Philosophy, identity and liberation*. Cape Town, South Africa: HSRC Press.

MOSTERT, N.

1992. *Frontiers: The epic of South Africa's creation and the tragedy of the Xhosa people*. New York, USA: Alfred A. Knopf.

MOTLHABI, M.B.G.

1984. *The theory and practice of black resistance to apartheid: A social-ethical analysis*. Johannesburg, South Africa: Skotaville Publishers.

MOTLHABI, M.B.G.

2008. *African theology/black theology in South Africa: Looking back, moving on*. Pretoria, South Africa: Unisa Press.

M'TIMKULU, D.

1971. *Beyond independence: The face of the new Africa*. New York, USA: Friendship Press.

MULHOLLAND, M.R.

2013. Spiritual formation in Christ and mission with Christ. *Journal of Spiritual Formation & Soul Care* 6(1):11-17.

MUNTEMBA, S. & BLACKDEN, C.M.

2001. Gender and poverty in sub-Saharan Africa. In: D. Belshaw, R. Calderisi & C. Sugden (eds.), *Faith in development* (Oxford, United Kingdom: Regnum), pp. 91-110.

MZAMANE, M.V., MAABA, B. & BIKO, N.

2004. The Black Consciousness Movement. In: South African Democracy Education Trust (comp.), *The road to democracy in South Africa: Volume 2 (1970-1980)*, (Pretoria, South Africa: Unisa Press), pp. 99-159.

NDABA, B., OWEN, T., PANYANE, M., SERUMULA, R. & SMITH, J.

2017. *The Black Consciousness reader*. Auckland Park, South Africa: Jacana Media.

NDLETYANA, M.

2008. *African intellectuals in 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century South Africa*. Cape Town, South Africa: HSRC Press.

NEITZ, M.J.

2011. Lived religion: Signposts of where we have been and where we can go from here. In: G. Giordan & W.H. Swatos (eds.), *Religion, spirituality and everyday practice* (Dordrecht, The Netherlands: Springer), pp. 45-55.

NEUMANN, P.

2012. Whither Pentecostal experience? Mediated experience of God in Pentecostal theology. *Canadian Journal of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity* 3(1):1-40.

NIEBUHR, H.R.

1954. *The social sources of denominationalism*. Brooklyn, USA: Shoestring Press.

NIEBUHR, H.R.

1959. *The kingdom of God in America*. New York, USA: Harper & Brothers.

NIEBUHR, H.R.

1988. *The kingdom of God in America*. (1<sup>st</sup> Wesleyan edition.) Connecticut, USA: Wesleyan University Press.

NOLAN, A.

1995. Church and state in a changing context. In: B.N. Pityana & C. Villa-Vicencio (eds.), *Being the church in South Africa today* (Johannesburg: SACC), pp. 151-160.

NOLAN, A.

2006. *Jesus today: A spirituality of radical freedom*. New York, USA: Orbis Books.

NYERERE, J.

1987. The church's role in society. In: J. Parratt (ed.), *A reader in African Christian theology* (London, United Kingdom: SPCK), pp. 117-128.

ORSI, R.

1997. Everyday miracles: The study of lived religion. In: D. Hall (ed.), *Lived religion in America: Toward a history of practice* (New York, USA: Princeton University Press), pp. 3-21.

OSMER, R.R.

2008. *Practical theology: An introduction*. Michigan, USA: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing.

PATO, L.

2000. African spirituality and transformation in South Africa. In: C.E.T. Kourie & L. Kretzschmar (eds.), *Christian spirituality in South Africa* (Pietermaritzburg, South Africa: Cluster Publications), pp. 92-99.

PEIRES, J.

1981. *The house of Phalo: A history of the Xhosa people in the days of their independence*. Johannesburg, South Africa: Ravan Press.

PERRIN, D.

2007. *Studying Christian spirituality*. New York, USA: Routledge.

PIETERSE, H.J.C.

2000. Where have all the prophets gone? Prophetic silence and the incapacity of religions to take us forward. In: C.W. du Toit (ed.), *Violence, truth and prophetic silence: Religion and the quest for a South African common good* (Pretoria, South Africa: Unisa Press), pp. 82-97.

PIETERSE, H.J.C.

2011. A church with character and its social capital for projects amongst the poor. *HTS Teologiese Studies / Theological Studies* 67(3):64-69.

PILCH, J.J.

2010. Jesus's healing activity: Political acts? In: D. Neufeld & R.E. DeMaris (eds.), *Understanding the social world of the New Testament* (Philadelphia, USA: Taylor & Francis), pp. 147-155.

PITYANA, N.B.

2008. Reflections on 30 years since the death of Steve Biko: A legacy revisited. In: C.W. du Toit (ed.), *The legacy of Stephen Bantu Biko: Theological challenges* (Pretoria, South Africa: Research Institute for Theology and Religion, Unisa), pp. 254-256.

PITYANA, N.B., RAMPHELE, M., MPUMLWANA, M. & WILSON, L.

1991. Bounds of possibility. In: B. Pityana (ed.), *Bounds of possibility: The legacy of Steve Biko and Black Consciousness* (Cape Town, South Africa: New Africa Books), pp. 100-110.

PITYANA, N.B. & VILLA-VICENCIO, C.

1995. *Being the church in South Africa today*. Paper delivered at the consultation on "South Africa in regional and global context: Being the church today". Vanderbijlpark, South Africa, 19-23 March.

POBEE, J.S.

1976. Aspects of African traditional religion. *Sociological Analysis* 37(1):1-18.

POBEE, J.S.

1983. African spirituality. In: G.S. Wakefield (ed.), *The SCM dictionary of Christian spirituality* (London, United Kingdom: SCM), pp. 5-8.

POGRUND, B.

2006. *How can man die better: The life of Robert Sobukwe*. Jeppestown, South Africa: Jonathan Ball Publishers.

PRINCIPE, W.

1983. Toward defining spirituality. *Studies in Religion / Sciences Religieuses* 12(2):127-141.

PROZESKY, M. (ED.)

1990. *Christianity amidst apartheid: Selected perspectives on the church in South Africa*. London, United Kingdom: Macmillan.

RAKOCZY, S.

2006. *Encountering the spirit: The charismatic tradition*. New York, USA: Orbis Books.

RAMPHELE, M.

1991. Empowerment and symbols of hope: Black Consciousness and community development. In: B. Pityana (ed.), *Bounds of possibility: The legacy of Steve Biko & Black Consciousness* (Cape Town, New Africa Books), pp. 154-178.

RAMPHELE, M.

1995. *Mamphela Ramphele: A life*. Cape Town, South Africa: D. Phillip.

RASMUSSEN, L.

1995. Moral community and moral formation. *Ecumenical Review* 47:181-187.

RASOOL, E.

2009. Religion and politics in South Africa. In: D. Chidester, A. Tayob & W. Weisse (eds.), *Religion, politics, and identity in a changing South Africa* (New York, USA: Die Deutsche Bibliothek), pp. 97-102.

RESANE, K.T.

2016. "Ichabod": The glory has departed. The metaphor showing the church's prophetic failure in South Africa. *Pharos Journal of Theology* 97:1-12.

RESANE, K.T.

2017a. The church's prophetic role in the face of corruption in the South African socio-political landscape. *Pharos Journal of Theology* 98:1-13.

RESANE, K.T.

2017b. *Communion ecclesiology in a racially polarised South Africa*. Bloemfontein, South Africa: Sun Media.

RICHARDSON, N.

2009. Morality and communality in Africa. In: L. Kretzschmar, W. Bentley & A. van Niekerk (eds.), *What is a good life? An introduction to Christian ethics in 21<sup>st</sup> century Africa* (Kempton Park, South Africa: AcadSA Publishing), pp. 42-56.

ROBERTS, K.A. & YAMANE, D.

2011. *Religion in sociological perspective*. Thousand Oaks, USA: Sage Publications.

RUETHER, R.R.

2009. *Christianity and social systems: Historical constructions and ethical challenges*. Maryland, USA: Rowman & Littlefield.

RYBA, T.

2006. Phenomenology of religion. In: R.A. Segal (ed.), *The Blackwell companion to the study of religion* (USA: Blackwell Publishing), pp. 91-121.



SALIERS, D.E.

1992. Spirituality. In: D.W. Musser & J. Price (eds.), *A new handbook of Christian theology* (Nashville, USA: Abingdon), pp. 460-62.

SCHNEIDERS, S.M.

1989. Spirituality in the academy. *Theological Studies* 50(4):676-697.

SCHNEIDERS, S.M.

2003. Religion vs. spirituality: A contemporary conundrum. *Spiritus* 3:163-185.

SCHNEIDERS, S.M.

2005a. A hermeneutical approach to the study of Christian spirituality. In: E. Dreyer & M. Burrows (eds.), *Minding the spirit: The study of Christian spirituality* (Baltimore, USA: Johns Hopkins University Press), pp. 49-60.

SCHNEIDERS, S.M.

2005b. Christian spirituality: Definition, method and types. In: P. Sheldrake (ed.), *The new SCM dictionary of Christian spirituality* (London, United Kingdom: SCM), pp. 1-6.

SCHNEIDERS, S.M.

2011. Approaches to the study of Christian spirituality. In: A. Holder (ed.), *The Blackwell companion to Christian spirituality* (Oxford, United Kingdom: Blackwell Publishing), pp. 15-33.

SCHWARTZ, W.

1999. Church and ethical orientation. *Ecumenical Review* 51(3):256-265.

SEGLER, F.M.

1987. Theological foundations for ministry. *Southwestern Journal of Theology* 29:2,5-43.

SETILOANE, G.M.

1986. *African theology*. Cape Town, South Africa: Lux Verbi.

SHELDRAKE, P.

1988. *Images of holiness: Explorations in contemporary spirituality*. London, United Kingdom: Darton, Longman & Todd.

SHELDRAKE, P.

2006. Spirituality and its critical methodology. In: B.H. Lescher & E. Liebert. (eds.), *Exploring Christian spirituality: Essays in honor of Sandra M. Schneiders* (New Jersey, USA: Paulist Press), pp. 15-34.

SHOWALTER, R.

2007. Personal morality. In: J.D. Berkley (ed.), *Leadership handbook of management and administration* (USA: Baker Books), pp. 59-60.

SIKHOSANA, N.P.

2017. Black Consciousness revived: The rise of Black Consciousness thinking in South African student politics. Master's research report. University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa.

SIMPSON, A.

1999. *Mandela: The authorised biography*. New York, USA: HarperCollins Publishers.

SINGLETON, A.

2014. *Religion, culture and society: A global approach*. Thousand Oaks, USA: Sage Publications.

SITHOLE, T.

2016. *Steve Biko: Decolonial meditations of Black Consciousness*. Maryland, USA: Lexington Books.

SMART, N.

1996. *Dimensions of the sacred: An anatomy of the world's beliefs*. New York, USA: HarperCollins Publishers.

SMITH, C. & SNELL, P.

2009. *Souls in transition: The religious and spiritual lives of emerging adults*. Oxford, United Kingdom: Oxford University Press.

SMITH, G.T.

1999. *Courage and calling: Embracing your God-given potential*. Illinois, USA: InterVarsity Press.

SMITH, G.T.

2011. *Courage and calling: Embracing your God-given potential*. Illinois, USA: InterVarsity Press.

SMITH, W.R.

1889. *Lectures on the religion of the Semites: The fundamental institutions*. London: United Kingdom: A&C Black.

SNAIL, M.L.

1993. *The antecedents and the emergence of the Black Consciousness Movement in South Africa: Its ideology and organization*. Munich, Germany: Akademischer Verlag Munchen.

SNYMAN, D.

2009. HIV/AIDS, women and poverty. In: L. Kretzschmar, W. Bentley & A. van Niekerk (eds.), *What is a good life? An introduction to Christian ethics in 21<sup>st</sup> century Africa* (Kempton Park, South Africa: AcadSA Publishing), pp. 199-219.

SONO, T.

1993. *Reflections on the origins of Black Consciousness in South Africa*. Pretoria, South Africa: HSRC Press.

SOUTHALL, R.

2016. *The new black middle class in South Africa*. Suffolk, United Kingdom: Boydell & Brewer.

STACKHOUSE, M.L.

1988. *Apologia: Contextualization, globalization, and mission in theological education*. Michigan, USA: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing.

STANTON, G.N.

1989. *The gospels and Jesus*. New York, USA: Oxford University Press.

STUBBS, A.C.R.

2004. Martyr of Hope: A personal memoir. In S. Biko, *I write what I like: A selection of his writings* (reprinted edition) (Johannesburg, South Africa: Picador Africa), pp. 175-244.

STUBBS, A.C.R.

2017. Martyr of hope: A personal memoir. In: S. Biko, *I write what I like: A selection of his writings* (40<sup>th</sup> anniversary edition) (Johannesburg, South Africa: Picador Africa), pp. 175-244.

THE HOLY BIBLE.

2011. New International Version (NIV). Colorado, USA: Biblica Inc.

THOMAS, O.

2000. Some problems in contemporary Christian spirituality. *Anglican Theological Review* 82(2):267-282.

TILLICH, P.

1957. *Systematic theology: Volume two: Existence and the Christ*. London, United Kingdom: James Nisbet and Co.

TUTU, D.

1966. Black theology/African theology: Soul mates or antagonists. In: J.H. Cone & G.S. Wilmore (eds.), *Black theology: A documentary history. Volume 1: 1966-1979* (New York, USA: Orbis Books), pp. 483-491.

TUTU, D.

1995a. Towards a relevant theology. In: M.P. Joseph (ed.), *Confronting life: Theology out of the context* (Delhi, India: SPCK), pp. 149-158.

TUTU, D.

1995b. Identity crisis. In: P. Gifford (ed.), *The Christian churches and the democratization of Africa* (Leiden, The Netherlands: E.J. Brill), pp. 96-97.

TUTU, D.

1997. *The essential Desmond Tutu* (No. 85). South Africa: Cape Town, South Africa: New Africa Books.

TUTU, D.

2009. South Africa: A scintillating success waiting to happen. In: *The Steve Biko memorial lectures 2000-2008* (Johannesburg, South Africa: The Steve Biko Foundation and Macmillan), pp. 93-100.

TUTU, D. & WEBSTER, J.

1990. *Crying in the wilderness: The struggle for justice in South Africa*. England: Mowbray.

TYLOR, E.B. & RADIN, P.

1958. *Religion in primitive culture*. New York, USA: Harper & Brothers Publishers.

UNAIDS (JOINT UNITED NATIONS PROGRAMME ON HIV AND AIDS).

2008. *Report on the global AIDS epidemic 2008: Executive summary*. Geneva: UNAIDS.

UNITED NATIONS (UN).

2008. *The Millennium Development Goals report*. New York, USA: UN. Available at: [http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/2008highlevel/pdf/newsroom/mdg%20reports/MDG\\_Report\\_2008\\_ENGLISH.pdf](http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/2008highlevel/pdf/newsroom/mdg%20reports/MDG_Report_2008_ENGLISH.pdf).

VAN AARDE, A.

2008. What is "theology" in "public theology" and what is "public" about "public theology"? *HTS Teologiese Studies / Theological Studies* 64(3):1213-1234.

VAN AARDE, T.

2016. Black theology in South Africa: A theology of human dignity and black identity. *HTS Teologiese Studies / Theological Studies* 72(1):1-5.

VAN ECK, E.

2010. A prophet of old: Jesus the 'public theologian'. *HTS Teologiese Studies / Theological Studies* 66(1):1-10.

VAN NIEKERK, A.

1998. Morality and life. In: L. Kretzschmar & L. Hulley (eds.), *Questions about life and morality: Christian ethics in South Africa today* (Pretoria, South Africa: Van Schaik Publishers), pp. 13-20.

VAN NIEKERK, A.

2009. How are good people formed? In conversation with Johannes A. van der Ven. In: L. Kretzschmar, W. Bentley & A. van Niekerk (eds.), *What is a good life? An introduction to Christian ethics in 21<sup>st</sup> century Africa* (Kempton Park, South Africa: AcadSA Publishing), pp. 101-129.

VAN STADEN, E.

2016. Journey within: The spirituality of Thomas Merton (1915-1968). Master's dissertation. University of Free State, Bloemfontein, South Africa.

VAN WYK, C.

2007. *We write what we like*. Johannesburg, South Africa: Wits University Press.

VELLEM, V.S.

2007. *The symbol of liberation in South African public life: A black theological perspective*. Doctoral dissertation. University of Pretoria, Pretoria, South Africa.

VEST, N.

2000. *Desiring life: Benedict on wisdom and the good life*. Boston, USA: Cowley.

VILLA-VICENCIO, C. & HULLEY, L.D.

1996. *Theological ethics: Study guide for TEB303-J*. Pretoria, South Africa: Unisa.

WALSHE, P.

1983. *Church versus state in South Africa: The case of the Christian institute*. London, United Kingdom: C. Hurst & Co.

WEBER, M.

1930. *The protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism*. London, United Kingdom: Unwin Hyman.

WEPENER, C. & CILLIERS, J.

2010. Ritual and the generation of social capital in contexts of poverty. In: I. Swart, H. Rocher, S. Green & J. Erasmus (eds.), *Religion and social development in post-apartheid South Africa* (Bloemfontein, South Africa: Sun Media), pp. 417-430.

WHITE JR., D.W.

2015. *Subterranean: Why the future of the church is rootedness*. Oregon, USA: Cascade Books.



WHITE, P.

2015. Decolonising Western missionaries' mission theology and practice in Ghanaian church history: A Pentecostal approach. *Die Skriflig* 51(1):a2233.

WIKIPEDIA.

n.d. Steve Biko. Available at: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Steve\\_Biko](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Steve_Biko).

WIKIPEDIA.

2016. *Lived religion*. Available at: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lived\\_religion](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lived_religion).

WILMORE, G.S.

1973. *Black religion and black radicalism: An interpretation of the history of African Americans*. New York, USA: Orbis Books.

WILSON, L.

1991. Bantu Stephen Biko: A life. In: B. Pityana (ed.), *Bounds of possibility: The legacy of Steve Biko & Black Consciousness* (Cape Town, New Africa Books), pp. 15-77.

WILSON, L.

2011. *Steve Biko: A Jacana pocket biography*. Auckland Park, South Africa: Jacana Media.

WOODS, D.

1987. *Biko, cry freedom*. New York, USA: Macmillan.

WORSNIP, M.E.

1991. Situating spirituality within the struggle. In: M. Worsnip & D. van der Water (eds.), *We shall overcome: a spirituality of liberation* (Pietermaritzburg, South Africa: Cluster Publication), pp. 32-51.

YINGER, J.M.

1970. *The scientific study of religion*. Oxford, United Kingdom: Macmillian.

ZYLSTRA, B.

1977. An interview with Steve Biko. *Christian Science Monitor* 10:18-19.