

MARKETPLACE MISSIOLOGY

JOHAN CARSTENS

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PROFESSOR P VERSTER

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JOHAN CARSTENS

Johannesburg

November 2011

FOREWORD

To the author and finisher of mission, Christ Jesus, I wish to express my sincere gratitude. I wish to thank Him for the opportunity He has given me to venture into this study which was birthed through a good mix of inspiration and circumstances.

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To my wife for her patience whilst I tried to be a husband to her, and mentor and father to our children.

Lastly I wish to dedicate this study to my father and elder brother for their encouragement and interest – both passed away in the last lap of this dissertation.

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MARKETPLACE MISSIOLOGY

*MARKETPLACE MISSIOLOGY AS A COMPLEMENTARY MISSIOLOGICAL MODEL
FOR A WHOLE CHRISTIAN MOVEMENT WITNESSING
IN A COMMON HABITAT CALLED
THE MARKETPLACE THROUGH
AND BY ITS WORK.*

THE QUESTION OF A MISSIOLOGY OF THE MARKETPLACE

Western Christianity, and missiology, has entered a post-Christendom era within a globalised context. The axis of Christianity is now pivoting towards emergent nations requiring missiological models which are not primarily built on the financial and political support systems available to a structured Western Christianity. The need is for a movement of all His people, a movement that is self-supporting, sustainable, modular and mobile. It is also one that can provide a legal as well as legitimate presence irrespective of situation or place.

BASIC HYPOTHESIS

The basic hypothesis of this dissertation is that within the context of an ambivalent globalised world, a multi-faceted habitat has emerged where the interactive marketplace provides the platform and relational network for a whole ‘people of God’ movement. The habitat of mankind is the platform upon which the marketplace provides an infrastructure for work. This in turn creates a foundation for building relationships which are important for witness. The eventual result is the ecclesia: congregating in a pluriform expression, serving and witnessing, in a multiplicity of domains.

This hypothesis is considered from *three* different perspectives:

- a. Work, as in the Trinitarian image of the Creator. Work is here interpreted as a primary missional commission and witness gifted to mankind. Work is seen as mankind’s relation with God and the rest of Creation.
- b. Witness, as the missional prerogative of all believers in the event of being an apostolic priesthood.
- c. Being the ecclesia, as expressed in a peripatetic and pluriform reality, executing their commission in the multiplicity of habitats where they work and live.

This hypothesis is divided into *four* chapters with a number of sections based on quantitative literature study, with a final Chapter summarising the way forward:

- a. Chapter I provides the landscape against which the hypothesis is formulated. Factors influencing the hypothesis such as globalisation, migration and the resurgence of ancient religious philosophies are reflected upon, as well as the current status of Christianity in relation to a new-found missiological paradigm.
- b. Chapter II The first pillar of the hypothesis is work being the primary commission given by God to man, who is and redeemed and included in the apostolic priestly commission given by Christ. The first Section gives an overview of the nature of work and the second Section moves towards a theology of work. The ethics and morality of work does not fall within the scope of this study. It is, however, indirectly touched on in both sections where work is related to the image of God.
- c. Chapter III addresses the need to develop a movement of all His people without the contemporary clergy-laity divide. Section I reflects on the history and difficulties defining a movement of all God's people - without the clergy-laity divide - by considering the clergy as instruments of the Church. Section II proposes an apostolic priesthood of all believers as a classless movement of His people.
- d. Chapter IV expresses the ecclesia as a spiritual modular movement. Section I reflects on the ecclesia from a biblical and historical perspective, as well as other pluriform expressions thereof. Section II explicates the calling of the church and its execution in mankind's habitat, and especially in the marketplace.
- e. The Closing section returns to the hypothesis and presents the way forward.

MIGRATION OF HYPOTHESIS

The original hypothesis was centred on the marketplace providing a port of authentic entry into closed or restricted cultures. Globalisation and international migratory patterns have altered and enriched the landscape on which the original hypothesis was based; it has been broadened to the marketplace in the habitat where the people of Christ work and live. Mission is expressed in terms of seeking and reaching the lost more than only in geographical terms. The principles of applying the hypothesis to support authentic access are, however, equally transferable and applicable wherever the people of God meet people.

SCRIPTUREⁱ

“This is what the Lord Almighty, the God of Israel,
says to all those I carried into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon:
Build houses and settle down; plant gardens and eat what they produce.
Marry and have sons and daughters;
find wives for your sons and give your daughters in marriage,
so that they too may have sons and daughters.
Increase in number there; do not decrease.
Also seek the peace and prosperity of the city
to which I have carried you into exile.
Pray to the Lord for it,
because if it prospers, you too will prosper.

- Jeremiah 29: 4-14

ⁱ Bible translation used is New International Version, 1997, unless otherwise indicated.

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CHAPTER I

DISCERNING OUR PRESENT-DAY LANDSCAPE

CHAPTER I

SECTION I

INTRODUCTION

CHANGE

HISTORICAL INTERACTION

1. INTRODUCTION.

The purpose of this study is to find a particular missiological position in the world of place, space and time. In doing so, this study endeavours to complement the contemporary understanding of God's missiological intention for the ecclesia, wherever they live, work and anticipate the future. Historically, the world of the ecclesia has been an ambivalent one and currently it is still so. The ecclesia, then, is not experiencing contemporary changes within itself, or in the world, in isolation from the rest of mankind or Creation. Rather, it experiences the process of, and need for change, in relation to the world as a whole. The history of mankind, and specifically the ecclesia, was and still is being shaped by changes of varying degrees. The future of the ecclesia therefore will also be shaped within the realities of the day and in its relationally interactive environment. As humanity is irrevocably perceived as part of Creation (Childs 1985:199), any commission relating to the mission of God therefore has implications both for humanity as well as the rest of Creation.

Change as a phenomenon is an unavoidable ingredient of being human. It motivates humanity to make decisions that will enable its survival and the enhancement of its habitat. It therefore makes sense to look at and identify the elements that constitute these changes and their corresponding influence. In doing so, the ecclesia can be better equipped for their missional calling now, and in the future. Missiology, as a study of the particular intent of *Missio Dei*, will thus benefit from a similar approach towards change. Missiology as the study of the ecclesia on a mission, also finds its roots in the history of humanity in general, and as God's people in particular. *Missio Dei* thus reflects the multi-disciplinary interaction of God, humankind and the rest of Creation in an ever- changing world.

Finding and defining the present-day realities will therefore enable the ecclesia to live and work meaningfully in the present. In addition, a description of these realities should help equip the ecclesia in providing a platform for the eschatological direction of missiology focussed on the return of the Messiah. In line with the praxis of missiology the fruit of these missiological deliberations will be defined and applied amongst the present contemporary generation.

This Chapter, then, employs various interactive components that will, individually and collectively, influence and shape this thesis. First, in order to understand the mission of the ecclesia in a changing world, is a reflection on the phenomenon of change and concurrently the identification of elements that constitute change. “*Our present confusion about mission, hides the fact that we are facing a fundamental change in how we understand the mission of the church*” (Mead 1993:5). Secondly, our understanding of the *reasons* why *changes* occur and also the *influence* of these changes on Christianity, its congregations and the world as a mission field, is therefore critical. This combines with an historical overview of Christianity and its interaction with as well as responses to our ever-changing habitat. The third component is the anticipated *reaction* that contemporary Christianity might have towards the experienced history and projected phenomena.

These components act as a catalyst shaping our meditation on missiology and our present-day perception concerning the what, who and how of a local congregating (assembling) ecclesia, both as a missional entity and community. It is primarily a reflection on people called Christians who are called to execute the mission of God. They singly and collectively form the golden thread by which *Missio Dei* can be understood and executed. They are Christians called the ecclesia, who are people living and working among fellow citizens of this world in relation to Creation.

Missiology, then, is not an isolationist theology of people living in a compound. It is theology of those who are sent by God, who are in touch with this world, and touched by the world. Bonhoeffer (1976:40) noted that “the only way to follow Jesus was to live in the world.” The stated purpose of missiology further unfolds in the idea of people obedient to the call of God, who give meaning to the present and help shape the

future. They are people called to be the primary change agents in this world and the chosen instruments of God to implement, manage and give meaning to life in the present. Christians are people who push the parameters of life and in the process cause change, are themselves changed and give meaning to the changes – and consequently to Missiology. “It is there that literally millions of people are struggling to understand their own personal sense of mission and to get the strength to pursue it” (Mead 1993:7).

In keeping with the above it is reasonable to assume that these influences brought about by change, can be understood when studied interactively with the experiences of the past. It not only makes sense of the present, but also gives meaning to the missiological purpose and its planning into the future. Unlike natural science, missiology relates not only to the present and the future, but “...also to the past, to tradition and to God’s primary witness to humans” (Küng 1989:194). The position of a contemporary missional Christianity is also irrevocably and undeniably linked to decisions made in the past: “Christianity without historical moorings loses its identity” (Manschreck 1974:1).

The reality and lessons gleaned from the past, teach that the great heights of spiritual achievement, as well as the wilderness of error and moral decay, can be repeated in any generation – also today. It is therefore wise “to help guide our steps aright in the present we must know something of the past; and if the church of God is to escape today the nemesis which always follows on certain lines of action, the church must learn to ponder carefully the experiences of other days” (Renwick 1977:8).

2. CHANGE.

Change is intrinsic to the existence and daily reality of humanity. From change normally emerges a vital form of Christianity (Tickle 2008:17) in a less ossified expression; it is also inclined to be a catalyst exposing the heart of humanity. Therefore every time the encrustations of an overly established era are opened up, new energy is released - resulting in growth. This is also true for the ecclesia: change has historically always led to a renewed spread of the Gospel into new demographic and geographic areas (2008:17).

The phenomenon of change is therefore necessary and important in cultivating a required mindset for moving ahead into a new and enriched paradigm of missional thinking. It is equally importantly an anticipated rediscovery, rebuilding and reinventing of a missional community as the ecclesia progresses into the future. The acceptance of change by a change agent is brought into balance with a cautionary note by Küng (1989:194), that any change must be carried out only on the basis of the Gospel, and because of the Gospel “...never, however, against the Gospel.” Mere change for the sake of change then can be extremely counterproductive and hamper the realisation of the Kingdom.

2.1. THE PHENOMENON.

Change as a phenomenon is not something to fear, nor should it be perceived as (only) evil. History has demonstrated that humans have a God-given ability to manage, engineer and respond to change (Tickle 2008:17). History also validates and complements the fact that through the ages, the ecclesia of God has revealed an almost indestructible ability to adapt to changing circumstances. His people have persistently demonstrated the capacity to give direction during transitional periods - and at times they have even been the cause of change.

Some of the characteristics of change:

- 2.1.1. Change can manifest as a multi-polar phenomenon. It is brought about by the culmination of simultaneous multiple events involving people, human infrastructures and Creation.
- 2.1.2. Change is thus not an isolationist phenomenon. It reflects a mix of multiple power (eg. socio-political) shifts that are accompanied by focal changes, the development of new structures and the emergence of new entities and philosophical/religious expressions.
- 2.1.3. With each changing era, roles, definitions and relationships change, either by evolution or by revolution, and reveal themselves as either constructive or destructive. “Times of transition between ages and paradigms are times of confusion and tumult” (Mead 1993:8). That which is of great value in one age becomes useless in the next and results in what Tickle (2008:16) describes as ‘a rummage sale’. Values, principles and structures are re-evaluated and excesses discarded during this transitional phase. When Paradise collapsed, it brought

about an immense redefinition of what it is to be human, what constitutes worth and the need to deal with a future not yet defined.

- 2.1.4. Change is also a bipolar phenomenon. It can be regarded as positive, as that experienced at Creation. In creating the earth, God made dramatic changes and brought about light, time, life and relationship. God positively changed chaos into order. When sinⁱ changed the course of the human being, it was the beginning of a continuous line of negative and destructive change. However, God again positively changed the human race's destination at the Cross and with the Death and Resurrection of Christ.

With His Second Coming Christ will again change everything (positively), starting with a new heaven and earth.

- 2.1.5. Change is also an individual phenomenon. Any message of the Kingdom is addressed to the individual first, and then also to the collective unit. God deals first with the individual as He did with Adam, Noah, Moses and other change agents of history, before the collective commission is realised. A person's individual calling and creational intent cannot be absorbed into, hidden by, or delegated to communal calling. It is through the individual election and calling of Abraham (Genesis 12:1-3) that the community of Israel was birthed to serve God's purposes (Blauw 1962:23).

Likewise, Moses was called (Exodus 3:1-22) to lead the community of Israel out of bondage and for the individual Joshua (Joshua 1:1-8) to lead them into the Promised Land.

- 2.1.6. Change is a collective noun for an incident or combinations thereof causing the modification, transformation or even revolution of the original status. Change is not a one-off incident or accident, but rather a recurring and sometimes even cyclic phenomenon.

It is also a phenomenon not confined to the religious world, nor is the latter exempt from it. Bosch (1991:366) fittingly feels the need for paradigm shifts to be understood in terms of "both continuity and change, both faithfulness to the past and boldness to engage in the future, both constancy and contingency, both tradition and transformation."

ⁱ The state in which humanity now finds itself after the Fall because of sin. The original sin is radical, affecting all of human life (Migliore 2004:419).

2.2. THE NECESSITY FOR CHANGE.

There can be no growth without incurring change. The day that humanity ceases to experience change, is the day that the world and humanity will cease to exist. However, change should not be construed as growth, as change *per se* does not necessarily translate into growth. Change is essential to cultivate, create and produce a climate conducive for enhancing growth and opportunity. Change also acts as a catalyst for new ideas, culminating in innovative forms of being human. It helps people to identify windows of opportunity and to adopt a mindset of survival as well as expansion. Change assists in bringing a fundamental shift in the mental framework within which people (and the ecclesia) approach the future. Change transforms habits whether they are mental, behavioural or confessional. It will always have a decisive influence in maintaining missiology as both an ambivalent and variable proactive theological entity, now and into the future.

We have seen that change does not necessarily translate into growth; it still is a human choice to act positively or negatively upon the stimulus presented, Christ makes a comparative reference (Mark 2:22) to the (then) present-day problem of announcing a new dispensation. He does so with the metaphor of pouring new wine into old wineskins (Mark 2:22). Jesus was not presenting a patched-up Judaism (Morris 1987:121); no - for Him it was all about concluding an era, by also superseding it. In this scenario it was the old wineskins of Judaism that would not be able to contain or handle the change of content, nor move with the demands of fermentation. Kuhn shows how “almost every significant breakthrough in the field of scientific endeavour is first a break with tradition, with old ways of thinking, with old paradigms” (Kuhn 1970:29). Change, then, is an integrated and comprehensive flow of scenarios involving the spiritual, socio-economic, political and environmental.

2.3. THE REALITY OF CHANGE.

Humanity may interpret the reality of change from different angles. Some might seek the spiritual meaning and symbolism in and of change. Others might, as a reaction to experienced and documented change, turn towards science to provide answers, or search for political and economic solutions to engineer a more stable and controllable future,. Some of the important aspects and implications of major changes are:

- 2.3.1. Without change there would be no creation, no future or history. History is written as a reflection on events of change and our (human) reaction to it. Our commandment, given to us by God, was to manage and develop (see Chapter III). This implies improvement and evolution - and therefore change.
- 2.3.2. There is no BOBO effect (Winter & Hawthorne 1992a:B-6), meaning that our present-day reality is a culmination of circumstances and responses that happened in a linear time-line. Christianity did not ‘blink out’ at a certain time in history and then ‘blink on’ again, nicely packaged according to our contemporary subjective understanding.
- 2.3.3. These changes in a historical context did not happen in isolation, nor were Christians isolated from them. Judeo-Christianity shared (and still share) the same world with all other inhabitants. Major changes impacted all and so also the cross-pollination of reactions and influences. Religions are also an expression of our human attempts to make sense of the mysteries and uncertainties of life.

In the 900 years before Jesus was born David, Elijah and Jeremiah lived – but so did Socrates, Plato and Aristotle. While Scripture was being laid down, other souls wrote the Upanishads, Bhagavad-Gita and history saw the advent of Buddha and “Homer with his epic record of Zeus and fellow gods” (Tickle 2008:30). While the ecclesia was dealing with certain doctrinal issues, Mohammad was born and Islam became a reality.

Although the Reformation is highlighted as an historical milestone with significant changes, its success was complemented by the discovery of the printing press and the Renaissance, all of which played a significant role in enlightening the masses.

- 2.3.4. Major changes are not orderly or timely - that is, from a human perspective.
- 2.3.5. Life’s epochs come to an end, but there is a difference between being moribund and being dead. Despite specific dates given to The Reformation, it did not really start on the 31 October 1517 when Martin Luther nailed his Theses to a Church door. It indicated the pivotal time and circumstances in history introducing the beginning of change that would eventually impact history. Through The Reformation the religious Middle Ages became moribund, though remnants of it still live on.

The ecclesia is again experiencing an age of change. It is therefore important that the ecclesia takes note and captures the essence as well as the core arguments leading to these changes and defines them. It is in a sense easy to look back upon The Reformation and refer retrospectively to issues that were at its heart, like '*sola scriptura*' and the 'priesthood of all believers'. The challenge for the ecclesia is once again to identify what they see as the heart of contemporary changes and their implications. It is important to understand that the culminating and compounded changes of history leave a legacy enabling mankind to define and understand them within its own time frame of history.

3. HISTORICAL INTERACTION.

This section draws on the historical background of what today is perceived as 'church', 'congregation', 'mission', 'religions' and 'being Christian'. The history of Christianity reveals a rich and extremely diverse process. History enables today's ecclesia to understand their position and purpose in life more clearly, and it also provides a platform from where more concrete conclusions can be made. "Any attempt to deal with the present without awareness of what has gone before, can only lead to distorted vision and false judgement" (Newbigin 1986:3).

The reality of humanity is also the reality of the history of this world; both have been intertwined since Creation. Present-day Christianity is a culmination of a continuous historical interaction between mankind and their God-given habitat or environment. Christianity is still constantly evolving through processes of growth and subsequent changes. Some of these changes are directly orchestrated by God, whilst others are through circumstances wrought by choices we, as a human race, have made.

Attempting to divide history into digestible timeslots can be somewhat daunting, as history can be interpreted from various disciplines inside and outside of Christianity. However, in the process of tracing mankind on its creational mission in space and time, this study divides historyⁱⁱ (see Fig. I)ⁱⁱⁱ into four distinguishable segments, namely:

ⁱⁱ Paradigms in terms of this study are seen as philosophical and theoretical frameworks or patterns, as well as disciplines of thought and behaviour.

- a. Kairos Intervention Moments.
- b. Pivotal Phases.
- c. Interludes.
- d. Paradigms.

These are supplemented by interrelated paradigms and their respective time-lines. Various authors are referred to, each taking a different angle and with variable categorising. The first is Phyllis Tickle (2008:13), who divides the history of the ecclesia into four 'Great' circumstantial time-slots. Then there is Loren Mead (1993:9-13) who makes a more simplistic, yet still intensive, two-fold division (Apostolic and Christendom), capturing the change in character in the advent of Christianity.

The third author, Ralph Winter (1992a:B33), outlines ten epochs directed towards the division of the history of Christianity. His contribution is critical because it consistently creates an awareness of those 'not yet reached' with the message of the Kingdom. Collectively these writers cover the same territory, but individually provide different emphasis and conclusions. They are used as historical layers to provide the broad outline below.

3.1. KAIROS INTERVENTION MOMENTS (KIM).

Kairos Intervention Moments indicates a sovereign act of God that begins and brings to a close a global dispensation. There are three Kairos Intervention Moments in the history of the Earth and its inhabitants; namely, Creation, the Flood and the still anticipated return of Christ. Each one introduces a new dispensation involving a total and immediate reorganisation of all facets of life, the material-animate world, or the human race. The characteristics and hallmark of these moments are ones of immediacy and finality.

The first Kairos Intervention Moment is what Christians generally refer to as the moment or act of Creation. It was a sovereign and personal intervention by God. It brought to a close a period in the history of Earth which Genesis describes as being

ⁱⁱⁱ The outline of the table presented in Fig. i was configured by the author of this study to present a visual picture of significant transitional stages in world history.

void of time and one which represented chaos, darkness and the absence of life. In its place God introduced time, order and space as well a habitat consisting of vegetation, the animal world and humanity. In Genesis God also allocated a small portion of Earth called Paradise, where man was introduced to his habitat and commissioned to begin the journey of the fulfilling of his creational purposes.

The Creational history acts as a reminder that:

- a. It was God who laid down those specific parameters containing the elements of chaos.
- b. This is a testimony of the sovereignty of God who had and still has the only mandate and ability to have these parameters moved.
- c. Parameters may even be removed, as happened during the Flood.
- d. The Earth and its fullness belong to God.

The flood in the days of Noah, (Genesis 6), stands as the second Kairos Intervention. It is indicative of God's ability and willingness to regress the creational work towards partial chaos (Anderson 1984:90), should it be His Will. In this incident it was His desire to bring to a close a specific dispensation which became an antithesis of God's original intent of Creation. It was also to facilitate a new beginning.

Scripture indicates that God will do likewise with the anticipated return of the Messiah, when all Creation will be restored. The third Kairos Intervention will accompany a similar, if not more intense intervention by God, with Scripture hinting at a totally new dispensation of a new Heaven and Earth (Isaiah 65:17, 2 Peter 2:13 & Revelation 21:1). Here Scripture acts as an eschatological anchor directing the ecclesia towards the promise and expectation of a final end. It also holds the promise of a final recreation and restoration of what God originally intended at Creation for mankind and the animate world.

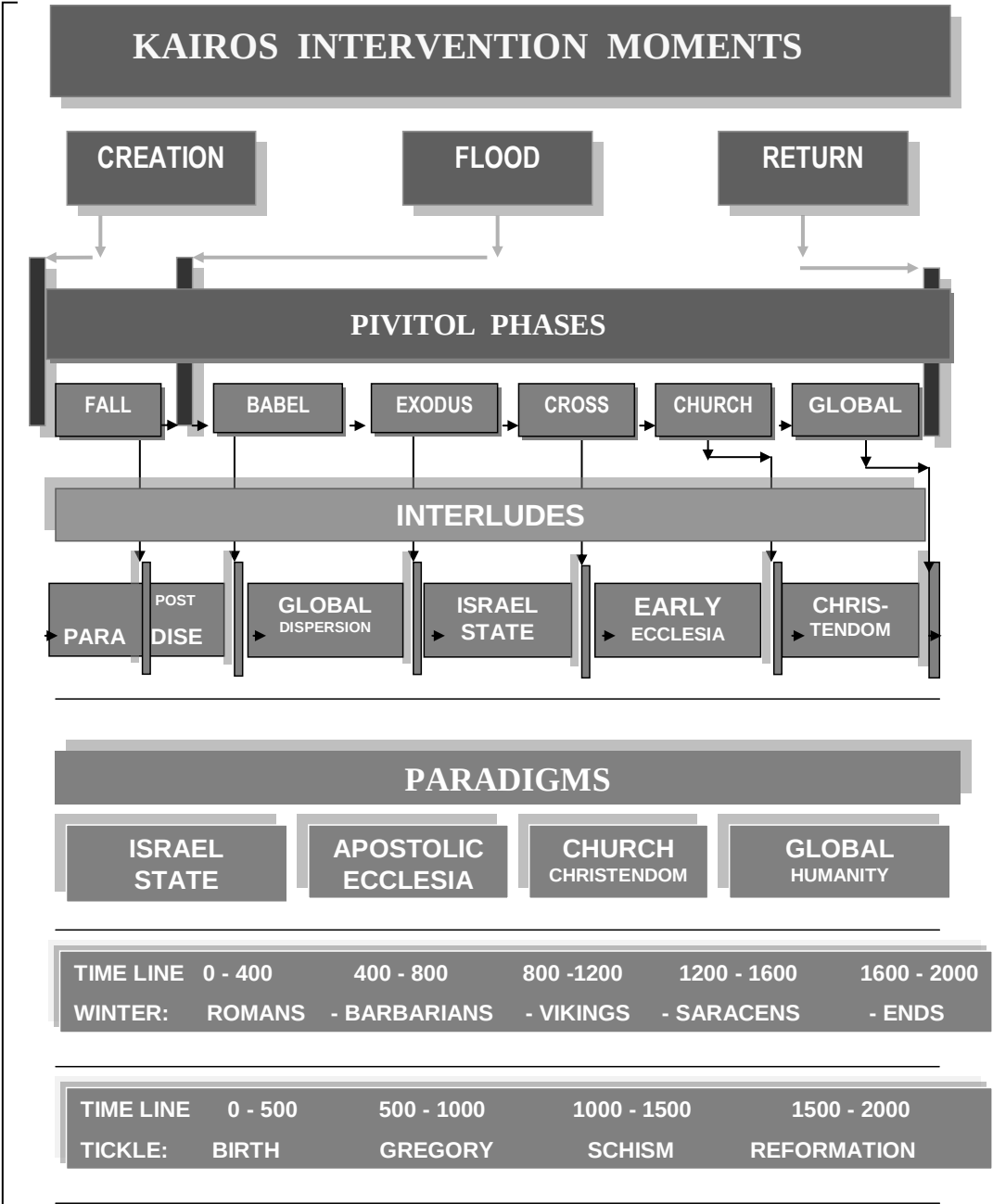


FIG I

Missiological Reflections:

- a. There is a power at work greater than Creation.
- b. This Power is called God. He is primarily introduced through Scripture and through the work of His hands.
- c. God acts according to His sovereign will.
- d. Ultimately history is in His hands.
- e. With every dispensation God brings to a close, He opens up another and with it provides the eschatological hope of His anticipated Return.
- f. The Earth and its fullness – inclusive of all nations – belong to its Creator.

3.2. PIVOTAL PHASES.

The Pivotal Phases signify the time-frame between the end and the beginning of a new Interlude. Whereas the Kairos Intervention Moments are identified as a direct sovereign act of God, the Pivotal Phases are more representative of the evolution and culmination of certain momentums that represent the Interludes. The latter contain the elements and factors that constitute the shift in balance that acts as change agents to introduce Interludes.

In contrast with Kairos moments, each Pivotal Phase is a gradual process building up to a pivotal moment that introduces a new Interlude. It does not influence all of Creation directly, or at once. It is also much more geographic in nature and its parameters defined more by contemporary paradigms and related cultures. However, the effect eventually filters through into all facets of life and its related networks. The effect inevitably challenges the way people live, work and worship.

The Pivotal Phases:

3.2.1. The Collapse of Paradise.

The first Pivotal Phase in the history of mankind (involving all of Creation) is what has become known as The Fall, as is recorded in Genesis 3. It describes the end of a harmonious habitat God created. This Pivotal Phase subdivides the Paradise Interlude into two phases, e.g. pre- and post- Paradise.

3.2.1.1. Prior to its collapse, Paradise depicted a period where mankind enjoyed the gift of life in a habitat where they could live, work and be (see Chapter 2). All of these were done in perfect harmonious relationship with their Creator, themselves and the rest of Creation.

Paradise flowed from the Kairos moment when God radically reorganised the physical world known as Earth and established order with an interactive habitat for His own glory. God later created mankind to represent Him and to manage the created habitat on His behalf. In Paradise God walked daily with Adam and Eve in an open and personal relationship. It was here that mankind executed the primal commission given to humanity to master the ability to subject, nurture and manage the earth.

Missiological Reflections:

- a. Paradise represented a time of the expression and fulfilment of God's will (dream).
- b. It was a time of apparent harmony between God and humankind, amongst humans themselves and also with the rest of Creation.
- c. God was not separated or detached from the habitat. He daily (regularly) walked with Adam and Eve in the habitat prepared for them.
- d. Mankind's workplace was also the meeting place with God.
- e. It was here that Adam (later also Eve) received instruction from God.
- f. The Seventh Day, the first day for humankind, was earmarked as one of rest.

3.2.1.2. All of this came to an abrupt end with the disobedience of humankind. This resulted in the post-paradise Interlude with the loss of relationships as well as the change in character of vocation and life. Paradise ended with a pivotal moment when God sealed (set apart) the original habitat from Adam and Eve. He also appointed an angel to protect the Tree of Life. It began an Interlude that saw humanity being detached from the protective Paradise environment and the nature of their work and existence being changed. The period saw humanity's first recorded religious act, a sacrifice (Genesis 4:3-4) and also the first murder (Genesis 4:8). Life was now lived with death in sight; at the end of this period God was totally despondent and regretful (Genesis 6:6-7) about human degradation and subsequently introduced the second Kairos Intervention Moment, the great flood in the days of Noah.

These two phases prior to and after the Flood are of great importance for missiology. They provide a basis for understanding what the Kingdom on Earth represented. Firstly, they reveal the cause and subsequent need for redemption, as portrayed by the collapse of Paradise. The message of salvation of missiology can thus be understood more comprehensively by understanding and comparing the two phases of Paradise.

Missiological Reflection:

- a. Humankind lost control and power over its appointed habitat.
- b. Eve's apparent difficulty in distinguishing the original truth spoken by God could have been due to lack of instruction (discipleship) from Adam.
- c. Tension developed between Creation and the human race.
- d. Humankind lost its position and also its identity.
- e. God cursed the earth and though the character of work changed, the commandment to work never did.
- f. A complicated interactive network of social, ecological and spiritual relationships were disrupted.

3.2.2. BABEL.

The Flood is the second Kairos Intervention Moment which divided human history into two significantly different Interludes. The first leads to the Flood, and the other works its way towards Babel and the pivotal collapse thereof.

3.2.2.1. The Post-Flood period builds up to the first recorded centralised kingdom, that of Babel. The major hallmark of this period is, however, represented in the “everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth” - Genesis 9:16. It is a promise not only to mankind, but equally to the rest of Creation of “God’s own commitment to creation” (Wright 2006:327). The covenant follows God’s promise that the whole earth will never again be destroyed by water and gave “the rainbow as a reminder to God who might otherwise forget” (Brueggemann 2002:41). It is the remembrance of Noah by God in Genesis 8:1 that stands as the pivotal moment and turns “the narrative away from the destructiveness of the flood toward restoration and renewed fidelity on the part of God” (Anderson (1994:56). The rainbow stands as a witness to the grace of God and His loyalty to His word. God does not only save them from disaster, but the “creational mandate is renewed” (Wright 2006:326); mankind must still fill the earth and subdue its respective habitat.

Missiological Reflections:

- a. All human knowledge and experience of God is carried forward by the eight human survivors of the flood catastrophe.
- b. The knowledge, philosophies and religious practises of humans today stem from this moment of leaving the Ark.
- c. It was only during the next period of this interlude that God would again reveal Himself more specifically to people like Abraham, Isaac and Jacob as well as the people that were to become known as Israel.
- d. God was looking for a redemptive (covenantal) person and found one in Noah. Yet, whilst it is difficult not to overstate the crucial person of Noah, it was not about Noah, but “the God of Israel who freshly embraces His creation” (Brueggemann 2002:40).
- e. All future nations, cultures and groups of people were to flow from the human exodus from the Ark. The “repopulation” (Anderson 1984:147) of the Earth was again about to begin.

3.2.2.2. The result of the Pivotal Phase representing the Babylonian collapse (Genesis 11) was an Interlude that saw the inhabitants of the world “dispersed into linguistic, cultural, spatial and ethnic diversity” (Anderson 1984:166). It also resulted in a very concentrated centripetal urbanised society which was not conducive to the fulfilment of representing God on a universal^{iv} scale. The dispersion from Babel drove the evolution and development of a diversity of languages, cultures and religious interpretations. These interpretations are part of the contemporary religious and cultural landscape that the ecclesia encounters in their interactions. The Babel dispersion thus had a profound significance for the religious and ethnic pluralism (Anderson 1984:177) the ecclesia experience today. The Babylonian dispersion also resulted in the eventual rise of the Egyptian kingdom and the development of the Mesopotamian world. This was where

^{iv} This paves the way for contrasting the concepts of universalism and universality. The dispersion facilitated the spread of religious practises and their cultural interpretations. It also laid the platform for what we understand today as the philosophy of salvation that can be found universally within all religious expressions: “the theological doctrine that all souls will eventually find salvation in the grace of God” (Peters 1972:19), within their own specific religious expressions.

This stands in contrast with the concept of universality (Peters 1972:20) that understands God’s desire for all people (universally) to be reconciled with Him. God’s provision is for the entire human race; however, the way of this salvation is exclusively through Jesus.

God met with Abraham and gave forth His promise to Abraham and the people of Israel (Brueggemann 2002:45).

The period in Genesis 12-50 introduced Abraham as the father of all faith and also those mothers who would influence history so positively, namely Sarah, Hagar, Rachel and Rebecca. With the exception of Hagar, the above-mentioned were instrumental in the development of the community that was to become Israel. The ideological children of Hagar, who today largely resemble the world of Islam, would find their lineage, identification and heritage through Ishmael, the other son of Abraham.^v

Missiological Reflections:

- a. God made a covenantal promise that all people will be blessed and then through one person and nation.
- b. God fulfilled His promise to give land to the people of Israel.
- c. Through God's dealings with Israel, He gave hope to the nations.

3.2.3. PIVOTAL EXODUS.

Following Jacob's move to Egypt (Genesis 46) his offspring initially enjoyed the best of Egypt. They benefited from God's blessing on them which caused them to become numerous and a regional power within the reign of Egyptian Pharaohs. They were exposed to the best leadership, craftsmanship and education the world could offer. Moses himself was trained by the best and most experienced of the Egyptian Kingdom.

It was, ironically, the result of God's blessing the people of Israel that awakened the concern of the Egyptians. The growing numbers and acquired skills raised concern and unease among the Egyptians and eventually caused the suppression and persecution of the Israelites. The calling of Moses (Exodus 3:1-22) and build-up to the Exodus (Genesis 13-14) aided the process of Abraham's descendants becoming a more homogeneous group. The leadership of Moses and the Exodus fostered a national identity: the Israelites started to realise that they were a special people in transit, foreigners amongst fellow human beings, now also wanting to embark on a journey towards a land promised as their own. Their stay in Egypt ended with the plagues

^v Also see 3.2.1. The Collapse of Paradise.

affecting only the people of Egypt and culminating in the Exodus that started with the Passover.

The Exodus from Egypt marked the end a period of landlessness for them and the beginning of a process to occupy the land promised by God. This history is one of the greatest recorded interventions of God for the human race as a collective unit. It presented Israel, and the world, with a testimony of the existence of God, His involvement in history and His covenantal relationship with people. It is thus in the history of Israel that humanity can glean a greater understanding of God and His purposes for mankind. The history of God and the people of Israel also stand as a testimony for Christians who find affirmation for the realities of their faith in Scripture. Here the missiological magnificence of a truly biblical “cross-testamental theology is realised” (Wright 2006:57).

The Exodus, years spent in the desert, and subsequent crossing of the Jordan, introduced the Nation-State Interlude. It was also during this time that an important national mindset was established among the people. The way they began to live, worship and work eventually became integral with their culture, making them distinctly the people of God in Israel. The thought and behavioural patterns which developed in this Interlude would be very influential in the Interludes and paradigms to follow.

The God-intended missionary nature of the people of Israel should not be overshadowed by the miraculous events of the Exodus. The offspring of Abraham was delivered from Egypt to become a nation and a people of YHWH, also for a purpose. God delivered them so that they could represent Him as a nation of priests, and in the process be a light to the nations (Kaiser 1999:15). Israel’s missionary role became a collective, national phenomenon because God was dealing for the first time with humanity as a nation. The “whole nation was to function on behalf of the kingdom of God in a mediatory role in relation to the nations” (Kaiser 1999:16).

The interpretation of God’s will through the people of Israel serves as a platform for the ecclesia to understand for themselves the Will of God in the execution of their missional commission. Israel repeatedly had to deal with a creative tension: that of wanting to be obedient to God, yet also being faced with the difficulty of breaking from

the political and religious world-view from their stay in Egypt. This contributed to their inability to understand that God wanted a nation of priests, rather than a political and religious structure similar to that of Egypt. This is apparent in the decision of the people to move away from a God's desired priesthood of all believers and opt for a person (in this instance Moses) to represent them (Kaiser 1999:13) before God.

This attitude also manifested itself when the Israelites wanted to be like the other nations (1 Samuel 8:5) by having an earthly King, as in Egypt. Sadly, they disempowered themselves; they became the laity, becoming subjects and followers instead of co-governors (Peters 1972:113). With the completion of the Temple another paradigm was added that would influence Israel and also to some extent the ecclesia, to this day. God became 'localised' in the minds of the people; a building became the centre of worship and eventually the centre of religious and political power.

What God wanted, however, was to live among His people. What His people wanted was religion - a micro involvement of (their) God, with them. They failed to see the bigger picture of the Creator and God of all, involved with all of His Creation. Moses now filled the gap for the nation of Israel, instead of a nation fulfilling a role for all the nations. Israel now amicably reflected a socio-political national religion. The build-up to the next Pivotal Phase witnessed a similar creative tension between what had developed as a geographical Judaist religion and the forthcoming apostolic ecclesia to be modelled by Jesus. This had marked missiological implications and will be covered in greater depth in Chapters III and IV.

There are two aspects from this era that are import. The first is the model Israel provided for the ecclesia regarding the great commission. Much of the present-day Western evangelical missional enterprise is built around the commandment by Jesus (Mathew 28:19) to *go* into the world. The Bible text is meant to provide the church's marching orders, supplemented by a whole range of other military metaphors that follow – warfare, mobilization, recruits, strategies, target campaigns, crusades frontline, strongholds, and the missionary force (Wright 2006:52).

The history and purposes of God intended for Israel nevertheless provide Christianity with a much broader and balanced perspective of the mandate to proclaim His

Kingdom. The authority and the reality of the ecclesia's mission are better brought into perspective by studying God's dealings with Israel. God's walk with Israel, as recorded in Scripture, urges the inclusion and broader understanding of the word 'authority'. Oliver O'Donovan argues that 'authority' is "a dimension of reality" (1986: 202). Authority is the predicate of reality, the source and boundary of freedom. It is only in the authority of the Scriptures that there is contact with reality - also a historic reality. This then brings to the fore the reality of His walk with the people of Israel, one of the pillars of witness of His commitment as a covenantal God. It is through what He has done, in and for Israel, that He is known. The existence of ancient Israel stands as a missiological testimony to all nations. What God did for Israel is part of the witness for what His intentions were for those in Christ.

Missiological Reflections:

- a. The history of God deals with and through a specific people.
- b. History is documented as Scripture.
- c. Scripture is authority for being and living as God's people.
- d. There was a history of traditions which left a heritage of Israel as a State and religious nation.
- e. They crossed the Jordan also to secure the place where the Messiah was to be born, crucified and from where He ascended.
- f. The Passover has meaning and implications for the entire world.
- g. God for the first time since Paradise gave people a portion of land – to occupy and manage.

3.2.4. The PIVOTAL PHASE of the CROSS.

This is the axis on which the existence of the ecclesia turns. Without the birth, death, Resurrection and Ascension of Jesus there would be no Christianity. Jesus' own pivotal moment was the Cross. The Cross concluded and introduced a new covenantal era, an era on which the young ecclesia modelled all that was taught by Jesus regarding the Kingdom and how to make it known. The incarnation of Christ, His death on the cross and His Resurrection on the third day are indeed the most important moments for Christianity and the understanding of their mission (Bosch 1991:512). These are pivotal moments that have changed the history of humanity forever. Since these events eternal salvation has become available to those that seek and ask for it.

The incarnation of Christ and the nature and meaning of Jesus' divine Son-ship is clearly stated by John (1-18). In the beginning was the Word, who was with God and was God (John1:1). All things were made by Him (John1:3) and in Him was life (John 1:4), who was the light of man and the Word that became flesh (John 1:14). Here is the Word incarnate (Packer: 1993:57) and not God minus some elements of His deity; no - John 1:14 states: "We have seen His glory, the glory of the One and only." The incarnation of Christ as the Word was God plus all that He had made His own by becoming a man. Yet, it was also a Christ who did not have only a veil of humanity, but a Christ that practised solidarity with the victims of sin and humanity (Lamb 1982:87). He Himself was tempted and achieved perfection in His human life through conflict with the Devil (Packer 1993:58). "For this reason he had to be made like his brothers in every way, in order the he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement for the sins of the people" (Hebrews 2:17).

Understanding the reality of the incarnation has indeed much to say about the nature and content of mission today (Echegaray 1984:56), as people can now "approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need" (Hebrews 4:16).

In this phase Mead (1993:8) identifies three paradigms spanning the two Interludes that are divided by the Christ pivotal moment, i.e. the State of Israel and Christendom. The pivotal birth, life, death and Resurrection of Jesus brought Israel's Nation-State Interlude to a close. It also paved the way for the next Interlude consisting of the latter two Eras. The Apostolic era represents a time of exceptional growth and started with the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in Jerusalem days after Jesus ascended into heaven. It was fanned by the persecution and migratory patterns within the Roman Empire. In this period Paul pioneered cross-cultural and cross-religious expansion of the ecclesia in "that the faith of the Jews as fulfilled in Christ did not require Jewish garments but could be clothed in Greek language and customs" (Winter & Hawthorn 1992b:B-7).

As this pivotal period and its forth-flowing consequences are the crux of Christian confession, it will frequently be referred to, and expanded upon in more detail in the rest of this study.

Missiological Reflections:

- a. It oversees the conclusion and introduction of a new covenant in Jesus the Christ.
- b. The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Mission.
- c. Manifestation of a relatively unprecedented expansion of the ecclesia.
- d. This was also in part due to the social and communication networks provided by the Roman Empire as well as persecution.
- e. Wineskins and paradigms were shattered.
- f. The Bible was completed during this interlude.

3.2.3. PIVOTAL CHRISTENDOM^{vi}.

There seems to be a parallel between Israel and Christianity in the way their worship developed. In the beginning the Israelites were logistically nomadic and this was reflected in their worship and in the mobility of the Tabernacle. As they settled, their worship also became more organised, structured and centralised. Similarly, the early Christian movement was mobile, spontaneous and expressed itself in multiple ways (see Chapter IV). Later, as the early ecclesia became entrenched at almost all levels of society, the foundation for the Christendom era was laid and there developed a symbiotic relationship between the church and state. It was a relationship that culminated during the reign of Constantine and became known (Mead 1993:9) as the Christendom era.

This same bilateral understanding (sometimes ambivalent) that crystallised during Constantine was later carried forward into the Middle Ages. It marked an era of interdependence between the church, headed by the Pope and the Roman Empire (Bosch 1991:274). The relationship that developed between the church and the State worked within the framework that developed into Christendom or *corpus Christianum*. However, the Roman Empire started to disintegrate into several different nation-states and with the advent of the Reformation, the State-Church symbiosis lost its hegemony as the Western church was not longer one body, nor politically united.

^{vi} Christendom here, and in general, is referred to as a time frame from approximately 400A.C. when there was a symbiotic relationship between State and Church. It is also generally referred to as a Western phenomenon. This can, however, be much more complicated as non-Western models of the same relationship existed throughout history.

However, the philosophical principles constituting the idea of Christendom remained intact. As the Empire disintegrated, the church became established as the State Church in almost every European country. It so happened that the Anglicans were in England, the Presbyterians in Scotland and the Reformers ended up in The Netherlands as did the Lutherans in Scandinavia. Within this climate it was difficult to differentiate between political, cultural or religious elements of activities, as they all merged. “This made it completely natural for the first European colonizing powers, Portugal and Spain, to assume that they, as Christian monarchs, had the right of divine policy to subdue pagan peoples and that therefore colonization and Christianization not only went hand in hand but were two sides of the same coin” (Bosch 1991:275).

The influence of the West on the rest of the world increased through The Enlightenment and the subsequent scientific and technological advances that followed in its wake. These factors enabled the West to have an unparalleled advantage over the rest of the world. The West established itself as masters in virtually every field of life – also in religion. It was natural that this feeling of superiority would also rub off on the religion of the West: Christianity. There was no clear distinction between religion and cultural supremacy. What applied to one equally and axiomatically applied to the other. That the Christian West had the right to impose its views on others, displayed a consensus “so fundamental that it operated mainly at an unconscious, a pre-suppositional level” (Hutchison 1982:174). This constituted a typical Christendom paradigm behavioural pattern. The missionary enterprise generally followed suit.

However, in the last 50 years the Christendom paradigm culminated in what Callahan (1990:3) calls the Churched-Culture. Christendom has had a significant effect on the definition and understanding of the role and function of the local church. The churched-culture is part, and the result of Christendom. The fact that churched-culture is very much a phenomenon of Christianity in the West, does not limit its influence, or the practice thereof. This understanding of ‘being Church’ has to a large extent been transferred into the former mission fields where it was adopted as the only biblical model.

However, with the turn of the century (2000) major dramatic global changes impacted on and changed the socio-economic and political landscape of the world. The political power of the world has moved from the West to a multi-polar one, with emerging non-Christian cultures becoming major role-players. It is therefore not surprising that much of the changing paradigm from Christendom to globalisation has had a direct effect on the praxis of being God's people. It has also contributed to changes in the role and function of the local church. The aftermath of globalisation, urbanisation and international migration leaves us with a changed world, a redefined marketplace and habitat. Christianity and mission from a Western perspective were bound to be transformed.

The West is not as homogenous anymore as it was perceived to be. Two distinctly different pictures of the Western role are emerging. The first describes the West as it approached the end of the Christendom Interlude. It represented a period of "overwhelming triumphant, almost total Western dominance" (Huntington 1996:82). Since the disintegration of the Soviet Union the West has had no major power challenging its power and dominance. The only remaining superpower used to be the United States. Together with Britain and Europe they were able to make crucial decisions on political and security issues. To some extent the rest of the world were dependant on the West for achieving and protecting their own goals and interest. The world's monetary and security systems were based upon Western (read 'Christian') principles and the West acted as the world's police force. "The West is the only civilization which has substantial interest in every other civilization or region and has the ability to affect the politics, economics and security of every other civilization or region" (1994:81).

The second, and more current picture of the West, is very different. It is a civilisation on the decline relative to other civilisations. Fundamental economic shifts have taken place; the economic epicentres are moving towards Asia and the Middle East (Huntington 1996:82). With the West's supremacy waning, the balance of political and economic power is shifting. The unification of Europe established a political and cultural identity now separate and distinguishable from American Western civilisation. The quality of life of non-Western populations is also changing. In this globalised world market economics, governments and cultures are becoming interlinked across the globe (Stevens 2006b:105). Non-Western people are now becoming healthier, wealthier,

more urban, more literate and better educated. Traditional non-Western civilisations are rediscovering their indigenous historical mores, languages, beliefs and institutions and are reasserting themselves as they are becoming modern *without* being Western or Christian.

The present Pivotal Phase of globalisation has changed mankind's understanding of being people – also religious people. It has had, and will continue to have, a groundbreaking shift affecting all paradigms of thinking. For global Christianity these changes have major implications for the way Church, mission and being Christian are perceived. The heart of the understanding of the ecclesia on a mission is challenged – not only because of a changing world, but also from the inside of Christianity *per se*. The next section focuses on the possible implications for being the ecclesia.

Missiological Reflections:

- a. Mission, Church and Christianity in general have been conducted in this closing Christendom interlude from a position of political and financial strength as well as perceived cultural superiority.
- b. Relative financial abundance became the backbone of missional processes and programs.
- c. Mission and Church were conducted as separate entities with roles clearly defined.
- d. Mission theology was greatly influenced by North America with an emphasis on the word “go” – implying a geographical transition.
- e. A growing mentality of ‘us’ versus ‘them’.

4. CONCLUDING REFLECTIONS.

When Man walked outside the protected parameters of Paradise, he started a journey into the unknown. From that day forward he would search for something that was lost and would try to make sense of his now uncharted future. Mankind's last appointment with God was when He clothed them (to the detriment of Creation) and seemingly did not walk with them again as He did in Paradise. The central paradigms carried forward were:

4.1. FOREVER WALKING.

Since Paradise mankind has not stopped walking in search of meaning. Migration has never stopped. The search for an arable habitat, the search for cultural relevance since

Babel, and the search for the Promised Land after Egypt typifies mankind's lost-ness and restlessness. Migration has now culminated in the population of the whole Earth. For the ecclesia of Christ migration was threefold:

- a. In obedience to the given commission of Jesus.
- b. As a response to persecution.
- c. as a response to the apostolic thrust.

Missional migration is the crux of the commission given by Jesus. It is a walk into the world finding people who are in search of meaning. It is the ecclesia who are tasked to give meaning to those who search, and to become a meaningful community reflecting the image and goodness of God.

4.2. SEARCHING FOR HABITAT.

For Christians, Paradise is still the benchmark against which all environmental existence is measured. For the rest of humanity this also holds true. The re-creation of a communal habitat with harmonious interrelated disciplines is the conscious goal of all humanity. These have been expressed through the ages in terms of kingdoms, cities and societies.

4.3. SEARCHING FOR IDENTITY.

The walk of humanity is a search for identity. Humanity is still faced with the improbability of reconstructing their position in relation to themselves, God and the rest of Creation. It comes as a dualism as they know they, on their own, cannot undo history. There is also the reality that life demands a meaningful redefinition and a re-engineering of a suitable way of life outside the original habitat, but now in the presence of God.

4.4. IN SEARCH OF MEANINGFUL WORK.

Paradise lost also marked the end of a three-part working environment that implied the accessibility to the Creator, the co-operation of nature and an anointing of the original commission given to mankind. Working in a post-Paradise environment saw the character of work change. The commandment given to man was and is the same – but the character of work has changed with the Fall of man. The meaning and character of work, as a primal commission, have however been restored at the Cross.

4.5. CONCLUSION.

At the heart of every search is a search for God - and also a search for an anticipated redemption and re-birth of Paradise Lost. People are trying through various religious expressions to make sense of who, what and where they are. Others may deny that there is a God. For some, God might be there, but for them He is not involved anymore in this world. It is into this world that Jesus is sending His people.

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CHAPTER I

SECTION II

LANDSCAPE OF THE NEW WORLD

STATE OF THE KINGDOM ON EARTH

1. INTRODUCTION.

Christians share the same world with the other citizens and inhabitants of this planet. Change affects them no more and no less than they do other people. Their responses should generally be different, as Christians perceive and react to change from an alternative world-view. They generally perceive change as a sovereign act of God. They also pin their hopes of coping with these changes on the historic event of the Cross and the anticipation of a reunification with their Creator. Christians are thus not divorced from change or the effect these changes might have.

The current Pivotal changes are affecting all of Creation, as they are a global phenomenon. They are, however, not dissimilar from the time prior to the birth of Jesus. The Roman Empire was the ruling world power which effectively prepared the way for facilitating the most effective and simple spread of the Gospel. The Empire accepted Greek as the official language and developed effective communication systems as well as the logistical and political infrastructure in which commerce could bloom. In effect the Roman Empire was a prototype of the globalised village humanity experiences today. Although the world does not have a single or united government as it did with the Empire, the constraints on any super power acting unilaterally are maximised. Multi-polar states with interdependent economies and communication levels unprecedented in history exert control and maintain a certain balance. The global economy is the driving force behind globalisation, allowing for greater access to the marketplace and subsequent migration patterns.

There are also important differences between the era of Roman Empire and the current globalised world. It is only now that there can be talk of a globalised world as it is only now that the planet as a whole is known to be populated? It is only now, in the current

Interlude, that all the world's people are reachable through various means of communication and travel. Modern communication has 'shrunk' the world, brought people closer to one another and enabled them to communicate with anyone - to the doorstep of almost every household. There is another important difference. Whereas the ecclesia was born in the Roman Empire and after 300 years more or less was limited to the parameters of the State, there is today for the first time in history an ecclesia gathering of people among all major cultures of the world. The availability of the Gospel is now for the first time a global reality.

The following pages give a synopsis of the changes and the present state of the world and missional landscape.

2. WORLD POPULATION.

According to the United Nation's Population Division (2010), global population is projected to grow and climax by the year 2050. The world's population will then stabilise at 9.15 billion people. This projection is based on a medium growth path; the latest revision of the database estimates today's population to be 6.83 billion, or close to 7 billion (Kritzinger 2011:52). The missiological interest in global humanity is important because it defines the scope of world evangelism. It is also of interest to know how the global population is composed, distributed and what current demographic trends are. These enable the ecclesia to position itself and to anticipate change. Questions and observations such as those listed below might help the ecclesia to understand their current role in relation to their missional commission:

- a. Where and why are certain populations growing, and why are others on the decline? In which countries are the populations getting older and in which countries are populations getting more youthful? How do these changing demographics influence populations across regions and phenomena like migration and war?
- b. Changing demographics can release a push-and-pull factor, causing the migration of people and skills. The ecclesia should ask what these causes are, where these 'hotspots' manifest themselves and what migration patterns look like.

As missiology was until recently largely based on European and American initiatives, it stands to reason that the resulting demographic changes will have far-reaching implications for both the West and the emergent^{vii} ecclesia. In the last two hundred years Christianity experienced a major shift towards, and then away from, the West. These factors were as much biologically based, as due to effective missional endeavours. It so happened that approximately 20% of the world's people lived in Europe and Russia at the beginning of the 18th Century. By the eve of the First World War Europe's population had more than quadrupled and more people lived in Europe than in China. The proportion of the world's population living in Europe and in former European colonies of North America had risen to more than 33% of the world's population.^{viii}

However, after World War II, this trend started to reverse and by 2003 the combined population of Europe, the USA and Canada accounted for only 17% of the global population. A further decline (to 12%) is expected by the year 2050, constituting a population of less than it was in 1700. These historically Christian countries thus have not only experienced shrinkage in global representation, but also in the global percentage of world religions. Walls (1996:22), makes the following perceptive comment: "...the recession of Christianity among the European peoples appears to be continuing. And yet we seem to stand at the threshold of a new age of Christianity, one in which its main base will be in Southern continents, and where its dominant expressions will be filtered through the culture of those countries." The net effect of these population and missional changes has seen the epicentre of global Christianity moving away from the West towards South America, Africa and The East (Kritzinger 2011:53).

The religious map of the world today stands in sharp contrast to the demographic position of Christianity at the beginning of this century. Scottish missiologists Andrew Walls (1996:22) describes it as a "massive southward shift of the centre of gravity of the Christian world." Christianity has not moved away from the West, but rather its

^{vii} Emergent church/ecclesia refers to emerging non-Western Christianity. The perfect tense (emergent) is used to indicate that they are (part of) the body of Christ in every aspect.

^{viii} United Nations Population Division 2010.

future missional thrust is no longer exclusive to the West. The ecclesia is now embodied in all major cultures.

The United Nation's data review projects additional shifts that will fundamentally alter the world's population over the next four decades:

- a. The relative demographic weight of the world's developed countries will drop nearly 25%, shifting the economic power to developing nations.
- b. The developed countries' labour force will substantially age and decline, constraining economic growth in the developed world and raising the demand for immigrant workers. These workers will also be from non-Christian countries, adding to the changing religious landscape of the West.
- c. Most of the world's expected population will increase and be concentrated in today's poorest, youngest and most heavily Muslim countries, which have a "dangerous lack of quality education, capital and employment opportunities" (Goldstone 2010:32).
- d. For the first time in history most of the world's population has become urbanised (see Fig. iii). . The largest urban centres are in the world's poorest countries, where policing and sanitation are often scarce, if not non-existent. The urban population of the world now equals the total world population of 1965.

The above implies a dramatic global restructuring of our understanding of governance, economics, and socio-religious interactive structures – and therefore mission. The management of the human habitat is transforming. The urban cycle is strategic and cities have become the new frontier of missions (Greenway 1979:53) because of their size, influence and strategic positioning. Cities are where people are concentrated - and so are their power and wealth. Communication networks flourish in, and flow from, cities.

In the relentless movement towards urbanisation, the cities with their accumulation of intellectual sophistication, wealth, and educational and medical services, have attracted masses. Yet the migration towards cities has not seen an end to human injustice, but to some extent it is now concentrated there. Escobar (2000:31) laments the fact that the same greed, injustice, and abuse that were the marks of feudal structures in the rural world

have turned the hearts of these cities into a jungle of concrete and asphalt, where humans live in alienation and despair.

3. GLOBAL ECONOMIC CHANGES.

On the economic front the world's gross domestic product has not lagged behind population growth; on the contrary, it has out-performed global population growth. Barring a cataclysmic climate crisis, or a complete failure to recover from the current economic malaise, "global economic output is expected to increase by two to three percent per year, meaning that global income will increase far more than population over the next four decades" (Goldstone 2010:31).

The implication of an increase in world-wide GDP and outstripping population growth, is an increase of activity within the work and marketplace of the global world. However, the increases and changes are not only experienced in their historical monetary context. The implications of the population decline of the West are having a dramatic impact on the economy of the West. For centuries the West has been the major resource contributor to world mission, backed by a vibrant economy. The population decline and current economic and demographic changes in the world have explicit missiological implications.

Since the advent of the Industrial Revolution, Europeans have become more numerous and also per capita considerably more affluent than the rest of the world. According to the economic historian Angus Maddison (Goldstone 2010:33), the proportion of the GDP of Europe, United States and Canada accounted for a remarkable 68% of the world's total output in 1950. A reversal of this trend is, however, already evident. The proportion of the global GDP of these nations fell to 47% in 2003, and it is estimated that by 2050 it will be less than 30% – which is less than it was in 1820. Also, according to Goldstone (2010:33), nearly 80% of all growth in the world's GDP between 2003 and 2050 will take place in countries outside of Europe, like China, India and the Middle East which are not Christian.

The economic changes have currently created a middle class of almost 1.2 billion people, which is a rise of 200% since 2005. This implies that the world's developing middle class will be larger than the total population of Europe, United States and

Canada combined. The new drivers in global economy are likely to be Brazil, China, India, Indonesia, Mexico and Turkey. Translating that into religious, and more specifically, missiological terms will mean that the new economic powers will either be Catholic, communist, atheist, Hindu or Muslim.

The economic influence on globalisation can accentuate social disparities in the world. On the one hand, it can generate new wealth and unprecedented comfort, placing the most sophisticated technologies within the reach of the average citizen in rich nations - and unfortunately only in the hands of the elite in the poor nations. The latter phenomenon results in a larger proportion of people who are being driven into extreme forms of poverty. According to Schreier (1982:7): “This is caused partially by global capitalism’s quest for short-term profit, a quest that precludes long-term commitment to a people or place; and partially by the destruction of traditional and small-scale societies and economies by the centrality of the market.”

4. MIGRATION.

In his address to the Third Global Forum Migration and Development Congress in Athens (4/11/2009), the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Ban Ki-Moon placed migration and diaspora under one umbrella. For the purpose of this study the ‘migration’ umbrella is sufficient as it also hosts the phenomena of human trafficking and forced movement of people. Migration in this Pivotal period is here also referred to as the age of mobility.

Today the number of international migrants is greater than at any time in the world’s history, with 214 million people living outside their country of birth. Migration, however, must not only be seen as a movement of people, but also as the transferring and exchange of technology, skills and work. The latter accompany people and are imbedded in them. When people migrate their skills migrate; when their skills are in demand they migrate towards the demand. In countries of destination, migrants fill gaps in the labour market where there are demands for skills. They contribute to the economy of that particular country, region or city making it more productive. Human migration, work and living conditions of migrants continue to be treacherous. Human trafficking and sexual exploitation are disturbing realities for many migrants burdened with high costs of migration and mostly a lack of vital information.

There are three challenges that should be noted:

a. The Economic (or financial) Crisis

The global recession of the first decade of this century has highlighted the vulnerability of migrants and particularly recent migrational patterns. Unemployment rates are usually higher among migrants and foreigners. Migrants also lack 'safety nets' and many cannot return home which makes them even more vulnerable to predatory practices. On the plus side, migrants tend to complement, rather than to displace local workers. They also generate additional demand and often perform jobs nationals do not want to do, even at times of economic crisis.

b. The Effect of Global Warming.

At least 10% of the world's people live in low-elevation coastal zones that would be the first to suffer from rising sea levels. Although climate change and environmental projections differ widely, even the lower range of predictions can and will cause major population movements. Presently, global catastrophes like tsunamis, earthquakes and severe climate changes like drought and/or flooding normally cause migration within particular countries. But that might change over time: populations might in future relocate due to extreme weather conditions, including prolonged droughts and severe weather patterns.

c. Victims of Human Trafficking, especially woman and children: it is unclear how many people are involved in this as statistics are vague or not available.

4.1. MIGRATION AND WORK.

Gallup has been conducting the World Poll for 100 years. Yet, according to Jim Clifton (2011:3) the Chairman and CEO of Gallup, one of the single biggest discoveries Gallup has ever made is that "the whole world wants a good job" (Clifton 2011:3). For Gallup this discovery is the single most searing, helpful, world-altering fact. When this information is used appropriately, it may change and influence the way leaders run their countries. This discovery could influence every policy, every law and every social initiative. Clifton (2011:4) states that "all leaders, policy makers, presidents and prime

ministers, parents, judges, priests, pastors, imams, teachers, managers and CEO need to consider every day in everything they do.”

Work is a key to unlock, or to enhance every habitat of mankind. It is also a key element of Marketplace Missiology and is dealt with more extensively in Chapter IV of this study. Similar polls were conducted 25 years ago, revealing that humans desire love, money, food and shelter. Reflecting on the message of the ecclesia over the same period, it is very apparent that the content of that message reflects these human needs. The Gospel was expressed in terms of ‘God is Love’ as well as the shift towards a theology of prosperity and abundant humanitarian programmes providing shelter and food.

Today the essential need is to work. People want good jobs. It is the new state of mind and influences people’s relationship with their habitat, country and the world around them. The yearning to have good work is also the primary driving force behind international migration. With this also in mind, Clifton (2010:4) sketches five reasons why this discovery changes man’s attitude to his environment:

- a. Securing jobs is becoming the new currency for leadership. Everything leaders do must consider this new global state of mind. If not, they could put their countries at risk.
- b. Educationists must think beyond core curricula and graduation rates. For students it is not enough just to graduate – their education needs to result in a good job.
- c. Law-makers need to be sensitive to whether or how new laws attract or repel a wide range of value systems. The wrong laws, or inadequate application of good laws, can suffocate job creation.
- d. Military leaders must consider the possibility of changing a population’s desperate and violent state of mind by providing an alternative in good jobs.
- e. In the same way the decision makers of every city or village should consider the impact of providing a stable habitat by stimulating work in the marketplace.
- f. A recent study by the ‘Forced Migration Study Program’ of the University of The Witwatersrand, by Tara Polzer (2010:2) indicates that internal migration represents by far the largest volumes of population movement. The latter means

the movement of residents in a country that is not restricted where residents are not required officially to register their place of residence when they move.

- g. Migration in general can also refer to asylum seekers, immigration, emigration, refugees and deportations.

Xenophobia, or a hatred and fear of foreigners as “strangers”, is becoming a concern in the global mix of people. Although there are entrenched prejudices against non-nationals, it is yet unclear to what extent violence against them is always motivated by political sentiments and attitudes of hatred. Some targeting of nationals appears to be motivated by a desire for material or political gain. While not a direct cause of violence, widespread anti-outsider sentiment serves as a resource for ethnic, economic and political entrepreneurs and criminals. Outsiders can easily become scapegoats of economic hardship; they are also vulnerable to robbery and attack, because they lack documentation. They also carry cash because of banking barriers and are less likely to have the support of the general residents of the area.

Migration is an important key in addressing missiological models of the future. Xenophobia is also a phenomenon that alerts the ecclesia to the temporary nature of maximising the opportunity to reach those in transit.

4.2. MIGRATION AT WORK.

Ever since The Fall, mankind has been walking. The human race is forever seeking and searching for a place of contentment and rest. Mankind used to explore new hunting grounds, or search for natural resources. Now the search is for work, resulting in migration towards cities. Cities today are the most likely place to maximise innovation and entrepreneurial talent or skills. It is becoming the ‘average and general’ habitat of mankind.

4.3. MIGRATION PATTERNS and INDICATORS.

In dealing with migration *per se* and related patterns and movements, the pertinent question ‘why do people migrate?’ deals with overall motivation behind the process. The overriding motivation mentioned above is work. People migrate to places that, if only as a perception, can offer a better environment for them to achieve this primary need. But there are very important spin-offs to the process of migration itself. The first

is what Clifton describes as “the new Holy Grail of global leadership – brain gain.” People migrate to accessible places that have the highest potential to maximise innovation and entrepreneurial talents and skills. According to the Gallup Report, ‘brain gain’ should be treated as the ‘big bang’ theory of economic development. Wherever there is a significant movement of people, the reasons are natural or human catastrophes, or more likely, a habitat that offers the potential ingredients for development.

The challenge to world leaders and the ecclesia alike is to take note of the work-related migration and empower His people for the workplace. The ecclesia can play a significant role in impacting their habitat through active participation in the marketplace. This can have a two-fold effect. First, the enhancement of the local habitat will not only improve the quality of life for its inhabitants, but will in time also act as a magnet that draws people to participate in the success thereof. These people, in the global context, can be from all nations and may take the mission-field home. Secondly, the empowered ecclesia might find it easier to find work in countries where the Gospel has not yet been presented.

Some fifty years ago Abraham Maslow identified the foremost needs of people to be food and shelter. It still is one of the most important needs of mankind – the other need that can provide the means to be self-supportive, is work. People also seek work and shelter within an environment of stability. There are seven key conditions that people consider in migration and which cultivate ‘brain gain’: work, food and shelter, law and order, economics, health, well-being and citizen engagement. The greater the success in satisfying these critical conditions, the more successfully a habitat can be developed.

5. GLOBALISATION.

The process that has become known as globalisation has largely driven the changes of our time. It can be seen as the phenomenon of our era and has inspired numerous competing definitions and interpretations (Croucher 2004:10). Yet, in the broader sense as mentioned below, globalisation has missiological implications to the degree it affects people and Creation. Globalisation refers in general to a process within which regional societies, cultures and economies are being integrated through a globe-spanning network of communication, transport and trade.

Globalisation is thus commonly driven by a combination of economic, technological, socio-cultural, political and biological factors (Bellagamba 1992:6). These alone have a deciding influence on the movement of people, because it effects the trans-national circulation of ideas, languages or and popular culture through acculturation. Globalisation aids the micro-processes of de-nationalisation - of what is construed as being national such as the capital, urban space, political, policies, temporal frames, or any other of a variety of dynamics and domains. However, the very basis of the process of globalisation is not new. The current realisation of this phenomenon already started in the late 19th century. Its essence dates back many centuries (Hopkins 2004:4). An early form of globalisation was already evident during the Hellenistic era when commercialised urban centres were focused around the axis of Greek culture. It stretched from Spain to India, involving cities like Alexandria, Athens and Antioch as its centre. Trade was widespread between these cities which were also known as '*Cosmopolis*' or world cities.

But an earlier form of globalisation that centred on the Roman Empire, with trade links with the Parthian Empire and the Han Dynasty that is also important. The focus is not on the extent of an interconnected world, but rather on the outcomes of such a world. Globalisation today provides the same platform for the trajectory of the Gospel as it did in the days of the Roman Empire. Both then and now it provided the early ecclesia with a world that more or less had a lingua franca. This was aided by a universal information and communication network of systems, interlinked and coupled with interdependent monetary systems, as well as relatively inexpensive intercontinental travel and a more accessible marketplace. When the early ecclesia was scattered through persecution, the advance of the Gospel was mainly 'piggy-backed' on an infrastructure driven by economics and political ideals. Today the same reality seems to apply and with this (reality) comes the acceptance of the existence of a global culture, language and marketplace (Escobar 2000:25-34).

Although the process of globalisation seems to be a process that no one controls, it is very much market-driven. This in turn has a direct influence on people (and missiology) and drives phenomena like urbanisation and migration. While the formation of a unilateral global political infrastructure seems unlikely at this stage,

governments are not acting in isolation anymore and are becoming more accountable to their global neighbours. Because world economies are very much market driven, political actions as well social unrest are not without market repercussions. “Financial markets stand ready to pounce on any government perceived to be sacrificing fiscal prudence, or social objectives” (Rodick 1997:43).

5.1. COMMUNICATION.

Globalisation provides people with the possibility of gaining equal access to identical information and entertainment. Information empowers people to be educated and empowered beyond the restrictions of their respective cultures and subcultures. It combines all the various ways human goods, services and ideas are exchanged. The Information Highway has already transformed cultures “as dramatically as Gutenberg’s press in the Middle Ages” (Gates 1995:8). As the latter changed Western culture forever, so the Information Highway has assisted in paving the way for the acceptance of a global culture.

The availability and presence of universal communication media have contributed to a shrinking landscape. Communication and information used to be relative to landscape and geography - a difference between points - and implied that you had to travel to get from one place to another. The availability of the new communication technology introduced the most remarkable aspect of eliminating distance and creating presence.

Communication is generally not restricted any longer by geographical distance, cultural barriers, and language inadequacies - or even political and religious constraints. The global information market gives access to the exchange of various ways, services and ideas. It provides people with a broader choice of cultural influences, money matters, specialised interest groups and greater access to, and awareness of, the global workplace. Global travel and mass tourism is shrinking the world, bringing once distant people, cultures and religions not only face-to-face, but more into the open.

The survival and even resurgence of regional languages is not to be seen as a dichotomy in the advent of a global language. Local indigenous languages will always be important in aiding cultures and subcultures to formulate their identity.

The global language is, however, defined as the *other* or second spoken language. English is fast becoming the world's lingua franca. According to Crystal (1997:53), "English is increasingly becoming entrenched as the language of choice for business, science and popular culture. Three quarters of the world's mail and 80% of the electronic mail on Internet is currently written in English."

5.2. MODERNISATION.

We can conclude that the process of globalisation is largely driven by the economies of the world. The direct aftermath is the modernisation of the world - albeit that this concept will always be interpreted differently by any particular culture and within a particular time-frame. What is important is the view of Huntington (1996:20), who correctly affirms that modernisation is distinct from Westernisation and should also not be equated with such. Equally important is the erroneous assumption that the acceptance of modernity (read Western) is equal to accepting Christianity. It is based on an ageing perception (albeit of Christians only) that being Christian means being from the West and that the success and modernity of the West is a product of Christianity.

Modernisation as a global phenomenon is not producing either a new civilisation, or a universal civilisation of any meaningful dimension, and also not the Westernisation of non-Western societies: "Rather a civilisation-based world order is emerging: Societies sharing cultural affinities cooperate with each other; efforts to shift societies from one civilisation to another are unsuccessful; and countries group themselves around the lead or core states of their civilisation" (Huntington 1996:20). To enter these civilisations, is to add value to their societies and build trust. The natural port of entry into societies is the workplace and the understanding that work is ontological to being human and part (if not the primary part) of the Christian witness.

Globalisation has thus contributed to the rest of the non-Western world becoming modern, industrialised and technologically advanced. This modernisation will have an effect in developing, at least in theory, the creation of a global society with a pastiche-like culture, interdependent currencies, that will be more religiously relativistic and have a mono-lingual global communication medium. Societies themselves are also sourcing workplace expertise and services to enable the ideal of modernisation.

5.3. PASTICHE-CULTURE.

Pastiche is defined in the Oxford Dictionary (Fowler & Fowler 1998:1357) as: “A medley, musical composition, picture of pieces made up from various sources.” It is a blend without extremes. It is also derived from the Italian root word for pasta, which means a blend of ingredients of which not one is dominant. This underlying cultural development within a globalised, modern urban context can be a missiological key unlocking societies that were not previously susceptible to new influences. Globalisation assists the acceptance of new cultural avenues because it builds on the desire of people to become modern and wealthier.

People move between their own culture and the adopted version without experiencing any dichotomy, because the adopted culture has the same pastiche make-up. It blends with the local cultures and languages of an international makeup of people who are themselves from a variety of backgrounds, cultures and languages. In this pastiche cultural development the nationalisation of the person is not mandatory (in an obvious way) and is therefore less threatening. The pastiche culture does, however, allow for a seedbed of creativity within which the tolerance for change is higher. It touches on the ideal of belonging to and being part of a global village.

5.4. POWER BALANCE.

In the modern world the balance of financial, political and cultural power is shifting. The West is experiencing a relative decline in world influence. Asian civilisations are expanding their economic, political and military strength and Islam is becoming a similar world force, coupled with population growth on a global scale. Non-western civilisations are “reaffirming the value of their own cultures” (Huntington 1996:20) and at the same time questioning the values of a seemingly morally bankrupt Western society. The modern world is therefore once again claiming its modernity, without necessarily being Western. Throughout history the expansion of political and economic power of any civilisation has also seen the flowering of its culture. To create a universal civilisation would therefore need universal power. Huntington makes this very clear when he says: “the distribution of cultures in the world reflects the distribution of power. Trade may or may not follow the flag, but culture almost always follows power” (1994: 91).

It is important to note that The West is promoting a new world order built on democratic Western values divorced of its Christian heritage. Yet the West is still perceived as being Christian by non-Western civilisations. A rejection of The West by the rest of the world will undoubtedly lead to the questioning of the Gospel and its representatives. This process of ‘divorce’ will on the other hand have great advantages for the Gospel, provided the separation is complete and timely. The Church will lose its perceived advantage of being protected by the State and might feel alienated and betrayed in the process. This could nevertheless be the biggest factor in revitalising the core values of the Christian religion and restoring its lost credibility.

On the other hand, it will also lead to some feeling that the God of the Church and State has failed them. This may not imply that they will become less spiritual, but rather that the truth that they are seeking could be found in another religion, especially those from whom the State and Church might have estranged them. In the process of becoming urbanised people went through stages, from being rural where agriculture was the dominant means of livelihood, to urbanised dwellings. This state of affairs persisted until the 1800s when the advent of the Industrial Revolution “not only changed the economic order, but also the pattern of residence” (Rose 1982:23).

6. MISSIOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS and REFLECTIONS.

Urbanisation and migration are just two phenomena of our time but also two valuable vehicles to be utilised by the ecclesia. With work being the undercurrent motivation for these phenomena, it stands to reason that our approach to preparing, sending and nurturing the ecclesia should be directed towards optimising opportunities provided by the issues of our day (also see Chapter IV).

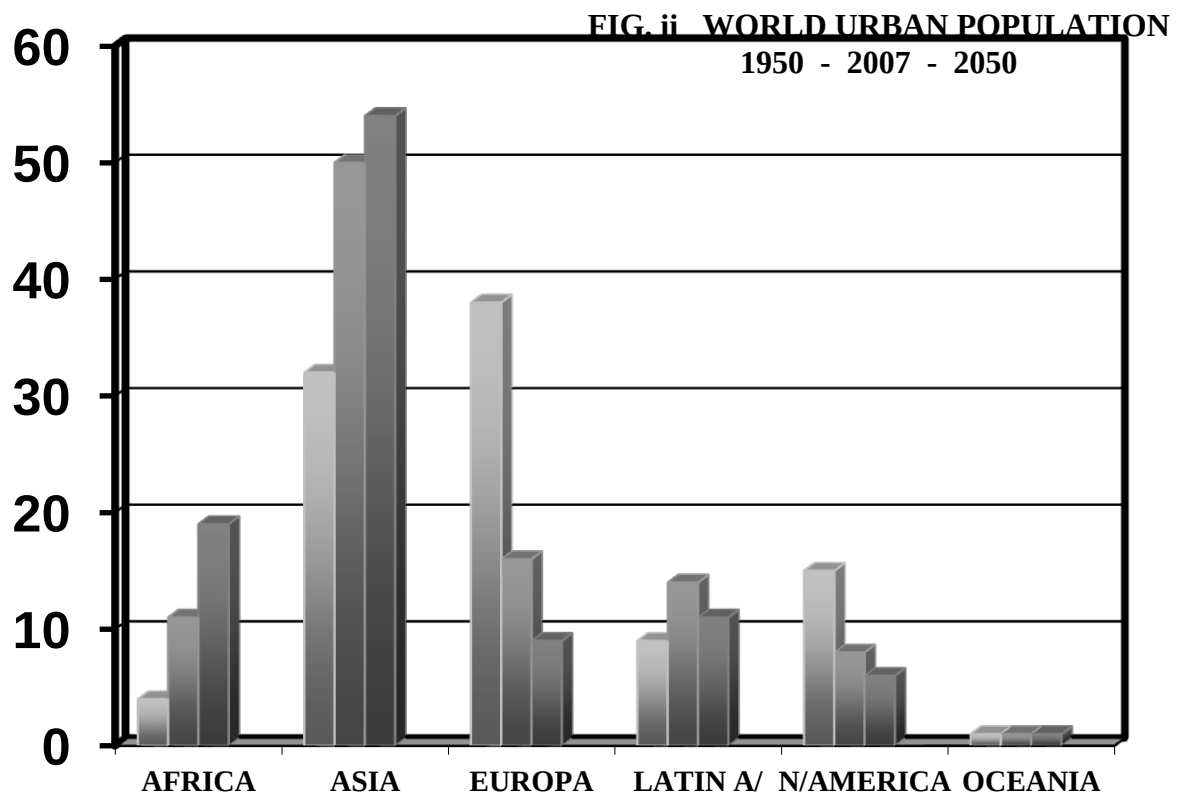
The migration ‘hotspots’ of the world have also become missiological heavens, in the sense that they attract people from all over the world. People from all cultures and religious alliances gather in these places – to work. Work is thus the focal point rather than culture or religion. Cities offer potential and people absorbed into a more neutral ‘pastiche culture’ find cross-religious conversations easier and more natural.

In view of the above, it is safe to assume that:

- a. The content of sermons, teaching and training should provide the ecclesia with a biblical foundation and understanding of the concept of work.
- b. Training institution, like seminaries, should provide a broader theological base that also includes a theology of work, networking and interacting with the private sector to enhance the content and meaning of training.
- c. The focus of the ecclesia is to provide a seedbed of entrepreneurial thinking that stimulates the preparedness and leadership of its citizens for the marketplace.
- d. Training and perhaps re-training of the existing ecclesia should be aimed at meeting the demands of the habitat where the ecclesia reside.
- e. The same underlying theological philosophy of preparedness for the marketplace should be grounded into the minds and hearts of newcomers into the ecclesia.
- f. Missional organisations should first accommodate and then enhance the phenomena of work and migration as part of their missional structures. Becoming part of the natural migration into urbanised settings has distinct advantages, and even more so when dealing with ‘creative access’ countries. It provides for working people:
 - i. a natural port of entry.
 - ii. a legal port of entry.
 - iii. authentic presence.
 - iv. a legitimate vehicle of presence.
 - v. a potential sustainable presence.
 - vi. the platform for wealth creation and
 - vii. the opportunity to enhance the habit of residence.

Making a difference in and being part of this changing world is up to God’s people. The remainder of this Chapter will focus on the position, advances and challenges of the ecclesia as citizens of this world. It will also discuss the mainly Western missiology that is overly based on the little word ‘go’ in Matthew 28:19. It has had an overriding geographical interpretation (Kritzinger 2011:52), to the neglect of the missional realities that have always knocked on the very door of Christianity, at home and in the multi-cultural market spaces of the globalised world.

oooOooo



YEAR	URBAN POPULATION
1950	736 796
1955	854 955
1960	996 298
1965	1 160 982
1970	1 331 783
1975	1 518 520
1880	1 740 551
1985	1 988 195
1990	2 274 554
1995	2 557 386
2000	2 853 909
2005	3 164 636
2010	3 493 607
2015	3 844 644
2020	4 209 669
2025	4 584 233
2030	4 965 081
2035	5 341 341
2040	5 708 869
2045	6 063 186
2050	6 398 291

FIG. iii

FIG iv

**INTERNATIONAL MIGRANTS AS A
PERCENTAGE OF WORLD'S
1990-2010 POPULATION**

YEAR	PERCENTAGE
1990	2.9
1995	2.9
2000	2.9
2005	3.0
2010	3.1

United Nations Department of Economic and
Social Affairs/Population Division
World Urbanization Prospects: The 2007 Revision

CHAPTER I

SECTION III

STATE OF THE KINGDOM - ON EARTH

1. INTRODUCTION.

The end of the Christendom Interlude announced the advent of a new globalised world. It is on the one hand a culmination of 2000 years of being the ecclesia of Jesus; and on the other, the pioneering of a new age of being Christians on a mission. The recent Interlude has had a profound effect on our understanding of being His ecclesia. We therefore need to reflect on this last phase. In part it has given us the tools of history, the praxis thereof and an unprecedented bank of information.

The challenge now is to discern what has contributed to the present-day cultural expressions of the ecclesia. Also, what the scriptural principles are, that should be carried forward to enhance and expedite the reality of the Kingdom on Earth. The emergence of a new world has changed and still is changing, the landscape of the world. The wonderful inventory of what is generally referred to as Christianity leaves today's ecclesia with opportunities unparalleled in history. In this section we need to look at the effect of global changes, the legacy of (the now post-) Christendom and the position of Christianity in the new world.

2. CHRISTENDOM.

The effect of the Christendom paradigm of the last 50 years culminated in what Callahan (1990:3) defines as a Churched Culture. Christendom has had a significant effect on defining and understanding the role and function of the local church. Churched culture is both part of and the result of Christendom. The position of the church in society evolved from the time Emperor Constantine made Christianity official: "The church was blended into a half-civil, half-religious society, Christendom. It has covered a whole civilization with its authority, inspired a politic, and had become an essentially Western reality" (Mehl 1970:67).

That the church-culture paradigm is very much inherited from Christianity in the West does not limit its influence, or the practice thereof. It has to varying degrees been adopted and transferred into former mission fields where it is accepted as biblical. But as in the West, this model of being Christian can only work in an environment that has already been 'Christianised'. Christendom flourishes with the presupposition of the predominance of Christianity in Western or dominant societies. It involves a certain degree of influence of Christian ideas and principles on the social life of nations and on their international policies. Nevertheless, it is important to remember what historian Latourette (1948:8) said: "No civilization has ever incorporated fully the ideals of Christ."

Therefore much of the changing paradigm from Christendom to globalisation has had a direct effect on the praxis of being God's people and is increasingly changing the role and function of the local church. The aftermath of globalisation, urbanisation and international migration leaves the ecclesia with a changed world, a redefined marketplace and humanity with the option of multiple habitats. Today the influence of Christianity has declined, and not even lip service is paid (Escobar 2000:32) to elements such as compassion and fairness in the national or international policies of the rich and developed nations where Christianity still may be an established religion.

2.1. The LOCAL PASTOR.

The demographic changes also impacted the Christendom-mould of being a pastor (Callahan 1990:3): "The day of the professional pastor is over. The day of the missionary pastor has come." Callahan advocates the need for a reformation of classical thinking regarding the role and function of the local church. The need is to look upon the local habitat as a mission-field, simply because its demographics have changed. This view complements what is already happening to the church of Jesus Christ in the non-Western world. With it comes the need for a new understanding of being pioneers in God's Kingdom and the possibility of acting as a conduit, facilitating and creating a new mindset to steer the present Church into the new era.

Callahan (1990:4) expounds on the development of this concept in view of the current demographic changes. The terminology was developed in the late forties and early fifties of the twentieth century and represented the mood of the time. The professional

ministers' paradigm was a product of the church's ability to change with and within the culture it resided. It is this very ability and freedom that is now needed again in the repositioning of God's ecclesia. If this evolutionary adaptability goes forward, then the past can be commended as a reflection of God's people being relevant in their particular time.

2.2. PROFESSIONALISM.

The above concept evolved into a cultural movement of professionalism. Up to World War II the primary focus of people in the West was on vocation and calling. After the War this focus shifted towards profession: doctors, lawyers and teachers began to think of themselves as professionals. The professional minister similarly became a reality in religious circles, reflecting and representing the cultural movement toward professionalism and specialisation in society. The church was therefore responding to the socio-cultural needs of the day. Being church and being a pastor were therefore also culture expressions of the day.

As private sector educational training excelled with a resultant increase in the number of degrees required for entering various professions, so the church followed suit and fell in line with the culture: degree for degree, status for status. The pastor thus went from pedestal to professionalism. The professional paradigm change was enabled through a process of interactive evolution. This developmental interactive relationship between the church and the culture can be noted again and again across the centuries of the church's mission. Reflecting on the success of the latter cultural adaptation, Callahan touches on a very important aspect when he states that much was gained through this process of change, but very importantly "it worked as long as the culture was a churched culture" (1990:8).

2.3. CHURCHED CULTURE.

The development of the professional minister was as a process evolutionary rather than revolutionary. It evolved over decades and so also did the rise of churched culture, coinciding with the professional pastor. With the acceleration of specialisation and the broad cultural movement of professionalism, the church naturally began to focus on the minister specifically as professional, and expected the office to act in accordance. The evolutionary change however also resulted in the focus of the church turning inward

and to a large extent its attention was on representative homogenous groups. For the professional minister the focus of ministry and leadership was now inside the church or community of faith.

Mission in its classical form was conducted by equally effective paid professional people called missionaries. In this age of specialisation, the church followed the trend and mission became a specialised office, department and industry recruiting, training and sending people. In this paradigm the essence of mission also started to be divorced from the local church. Mission for all purposes became a tax or special offering, a silencer of the conscience and something remotely involved with and conducted next to the church. Church growth and church planting became the watchwords – the former by the Church and the latter by the mission industry.

This era has led to an over-simplification and reduction of world evangelism to a manageable enterprise of “statistics, quantifiable objectives and desired outcomes” (Taylor 1989:5). Being a people congregating on a mission, evolved into a church with mission. The concept of mission changed from a verb to a noun; it became a ‘department of foreign affairs’ and comfortably and conveniently treated as such. As the need for specialisation increased with demands on their time and ministry, committee and organisational structures were set up to administer the busy programmes. The role of the pastor became one of an effective administrator. Also, only modest efforts of evangelism were needed by the pastor and leadership, to keep the church at a comfortable statistical level.

Church became programme driven (Neighbour 2000:39). It also typified weak or delineated definitions of being the ecclesia, mainly expressed in terms of church and denominations. Manual Escobar (2000:45) attributes these trends to a growing religiosity and the subsequent need for spiritual revitalisation at the base. The missiological consequences (Taylor 1989:4) are a reduction of the Great Commission to proclamation alone, the use of emotive slogans to drive the missional task and a definition of being effective gleaned from marketing strategies and secular concepts.

Yet this transition was successful within the Christendom context (Taylor 1989:5), because:

- a. The value of the church was also a major value of the culture. However, the value of the church no longer enjoys this status in the culture and Christianity is no longer the only (and acceptable) religion.
- b. A substantial number of persons were seeking out churches on their own initiative. Now many are not seeking churches on their own initiative; by and large, people live life as though the church does not substantially matter.
- c. These persons readily and actively participated in church work. Today the tendency is to make financial contributions enabling specialists to execute the missional mandate of the ecclesia.

The understanding of the nature of ministry leadership inherent in a churched-culture is that:

- a. The minister serves inside the church.
- b. The laity ministers in the world.
- c. The professional missionary ministers in the field.
- d. The world is seeking out the church.

The above premises worked as long as it was a churched culture. They worked very well as long as ‘the world seeks the church’ held true. However, the question the ecclesia face is what to do now that the world is no longer seeking out the church. Callahan (1990:9) adds a rather sombre note to the outcome and conclusion of the Christendom Interlude: “We are left with pastors hell-bent with a preoccupation of institutional survival, unfit, untrained and inexperienced in the role of a missionary pastor.” At best we are left with either pastoral directors in small towns or preaching administrators in the cities.

3. STATE OF THE ECCLESIA.

The religious landscape of the world has also changed. These changes have also awakened an awareness of major religions on the back of political and economic awakening. Religions such as Buddhism and Islam, as well as religious philosophies like animism and New Age pantheism are becoming more visible (albeit only for Western Christianity) and missional. A sober analysis of the demographic spread of Christianity reveals a scenario calling for a re-evaluation of the road forward.

First is the sombre reality that Christianity has never in the last 100 years broken through the 34% ceiling of representation of the world's population. According to a report published by the Centre for the Study of Global Christianity, "one interesting observation is that, despite all of these changes within global Christianity, the percentage of the world's population^{ix} that is Christian has changed little over the last 100 years, declining slightly from 34.8 percent in 1910 to 33.2 percent in 2010 (Barrett 2010:29)."

This naturally begs the question whether the current praxis of 'being Church' and the concurrent mission industry is the way forward.

From the same report the religious breakdown of the world in mid-2010 is:

- | | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| a. Christianity 32.7% | b. Islam 21.1% | c. Buddhism 6.8% |
| d. Hinduism 13.4% | e. Agnostic 10.8% | f. Other 15.2% |

If the ecclesia, as the torch bearers of the Gospel of the Kingdom, want to fulfil the missiological ideal of discipling the nations, they will have to discard the present paradigm of being the ecclesia. More so, they need to make room for alternative and creative paradigms to emerge. This is not negating the formidable awakening of the emergent ecclesia which has now numerically surpassed the traditionally global North: "Analysis shows that the future trend would however be steady inclined to Christianity in the Global North which is now surpassed by the rise of Christianity in the Global South" (Barrett 2010:29). The challenge is much more to discern what of the global North Church can still be carried forward and what lessons and resources can be taken by the emergent ecclesia, to equip themselves on the way forward.

Gleaning from the same report (2010: 30-36) it becomes clear that financial resources alone are not the answer (also see Fig.v). A reported \$32 billion was spent on foreign mission by 2010 yet leaving 29,3% of the world un-evangelised. A projected \$60 billion will be spent on foreign mission by 2050. Yet this spending will only reduce the un-evangelised population of the world by a mere 0,6% to 28.7% of the world's population. There are arguments that the non-Christian world has had a bigger increase

^{ix} Also see Kritzinger 2011:53.

in birth-rate than the Christian West. Yet, in Africa and Asia most regions saw a profound transformation in terms of Christian growth. One can quickly see that the most dramatic changes in the period occurred in Africa as a whole. Africa was 9% Christian in 1910 and nearly 50% by 2010. Yet there are words of caution:

- a. The Emergent Church has had similar birth rate patterns as most of the non-Western world. Dependence on a biological birth rate is running against the commission to proclaim the Gospel and gain subsequent entry into the Kingdom through conversion.
- b. One must not over-estimate the shift of Christianity to the emergent ecclesia. This might result in misplaced expectations regarding the role of the emergent ecclesia in the future.
- c. This is even more the case if the expectation is to clothe the emergent ecclesia in the proverbial armour of the West.
- d. There is also the need to probe into the reasons why Christianity in Africa has grown proportionally stronger than in most regions, they (African countries) are still of the poorest in the world and also have the highest unemployment. Questions to the relating theology taught are relevant and in need of correction.

Another factor stemming from the publicised IBMR report (Barrett 2010:29) is that by 2010 ecclesiastical crime had outstripped missional giving by \$3 billion and will be an estimated \$10 billion more by the middle of this century. Although this is a cause for concern, the bigger underlying problem might just be one of inadequate training. It could also be attributed to greed as well as a shallow and delineated understanding of the Gospel of the Kingdom.

Then there is the aspect of resources and where the Church applies them. According to the IBMR-report, the un-evangelised population continues to increase. It also illustrates that the Church mainly focuses on the already-evangelised. For every dollar donated to the Church in the West, 87% thereof is invested back into the Church and its infrastructure to keep it going. A further 10% is released to minister to people within the geographical area of local churches. A mere 3% is made available to reach those that have not yet been presented with the Gospel and a paltry .03% to those ministering among the 'out of reach' of the world.



FIG v.

Yet, the biggest disparity lies within the Church – amongst the members. Especially in the West a paradigm of being Christian has developed that centres on the local Church and the clergy. Mission is conducted as an industry running next to the Church. Members can be involved in mission by giving money and praying. Mission has become something that you are called into and entails the average member resigning from work to be trained in missiological (read Western) methods and crossing geographical borders.

4. QUO VADIS.

The ecclesia is at the end of an Interlude and at the beginning of a new one. The paradigms within which the ecclesia operated have changed due to the effects of globalisation, migration and resultant demographic changes. The day of the churched-culture 'laager' has drawn to a close. The West does not live in a churched-culture anymore and with this comes the grappling with questions of how to live in a post-Christian civilisation. That the local habitat (residence and workplace) is a mission field (outpost) is slowly being recognised again. As with its beginning, the era of the professional pastor is coming to an end, or will evolve into a newly defined religious role.

The emergent ecclesia living in rest of the World does not operate within the confines of Christendom or resulting church-culture. Neither can the ecclesia effectively import that paradigm. There is therefore a need for a new paradigm, a multi-disciplinary understanding of being the ecclesia on a mission. The current Pivotal Phase allows the ecclesia to be radically de-centralised as it is “no longer primarily a religion of the western world or of the northern hemisphere” (Stanley 2009:16).

People lead in direct relation to the way they experience being led. Within the previous Interlude the minister's focus was inside the congregation. It created a laity-culture and one whose focus remained inside the church. In the post-church culture, ministry is best understood as focusing outside the previous domain of Christian activity, called Church. The focal point is the world and it is still an unreached world – but which is now on ministry's doorstep and at work.

A fresh understanding of ministry will - and needs to - be developed where the fundamental understanding of ministry is focused on the Kingdom in the world and not in the Church. It must become a ministry that empowers and releases, rather than lectures and controls. It will entail that ministry will be more proactive and less reactive; a ministry that is more intentional and less passive, more relational and less organisational, more missional and less institutional. Three areas have been identified which will be covered in the next chapters. Together they constitute a missiology of the marketplace:

4.1. A MOVEMENT OF PEOPLE.

Globalisation, urbanisation and migration have changed our missional landscape for the better. It provides the people of the world with a place to communicate outside the boundaries laid down by political and religious constraints. With these opportunities at hand also comes the need for the rediscovery of ministry as a calling of all God's people - rather than that of a profession limited to a specialised elect. It might even entail the abolishment of the concept of the laity.

4.2. MOVEMENT OF WORKING PEOPLE.

Restoring the priesthood of all believers involves more than mere semantics. It is restoring the ecclesia to their redeemed position as citizens of His Kingdom. The restoration of our position in Christ also entails the rediscovery of our creational intent as

working citizens. It brings us to the understanding that work is what man has been created for. Work is also the primary witness presented to the people among whom God has placed His people, be it their habitat or workplace.

It is only when the ecclesia can come to an understanding of their redeemed creational purpose in terms of work, that they will impact the marketplace. The workplace is also the place where people meet outside of their personal communal restraints. In many cities of the world the marketplace has displayed the ability to become “migrational hotspots and missiological heavens” (Carstens 2009:17) in a new world of mission.

4.3. A MOVEMENT OF CONGREGATING PEOPLE.

The afore-mentioned changes do not imply that the local congregation has become irrelevant; rather, the way churches are conducting their leadership and missional perceptions, is no longer relevant. The local congregation should view their living and working communities as a mission field. Christians should see themselves as the agents to reach the people of their habitat. The spirit of a mission-outpost-congregation is one of mission, whereas the spirit of a churched-culture-local-church is one of maintenance.

5. PARAMETERS DEFINED.

The marketplace is the infrastructure or grid that facilitates the various disciplines that constitute a habitat. The habitat is the space and place where human beings find an address to interact with Creation, fellow humans, family and friends, whether at home, at work or on social platforms. Marketplace Missiology must:

- i. be scripturally based.
- ii. be incarnational, adapting without compromising the heart of the Gospel. Any effort to launch a new Christian lifestyle, or enriching existing movements will be stifled and misdirected if they imitate current expensive and elaborate Western models. The “incarnational approach modelled by Jesus and Paul is the key” (Escobar 2000:43).
- iii. be attainable and affordable, within the socioeconomic realities of the people discovering the truth of the Scriptures.

- iv. be sustainable. It must also be done in such a way that it does not create any form of paternalism and cultivation of dependence whether of resources, personalities or the process towards maturity.
- v. be replicable.
- vi. leave a remnant, if not a legacy.
- vii. be inviting, creating a platform for acceptance and inclusion.

6. CONCLUSION.

Change is never comfortable. The monumental shifts that the Roman rule introduced to Israel were politically and religiously devastating. Yet from there flowed one of the greatest spiritual revivals in recorded history. Likewise, the invasions of the Goths and Vikings were challenging times for Christianity in Europe, yet these people experienced the communities of Jesus and themselves became Christian. By 1346 the Bubonic plague had wreaked havoc in Europe. Yet the turmoil and “poverty, confusion and lengthy travail led to new birth of the greatest reform yet seen” (Winter & Hawthorn 1992a: B-18).

The next three Chapters endeavour to captivate the same spirit of change and global shifts. They aim to present a missiology that will encapsulate the modern habitat of mankind, also as mobile and forever migrating people^x on their modern-day trade routes as they interact with people. These Chapters will question or propose:

- a. what does it mean to be the ecclesia of Christ?
- b. a more modular understanding of being the ecclesia: one that empowers and accommodates the contemporary ecclesia as communities for God, wherever they are.
- c. the essence of being the ecclesia, that pre-empt the deliberation of a classless movement of all of Christ’s people as *laos tou Theou*, a charismatic apostolic priesthood of all believers.
- d. the intent to rediscover the creational meaning of work, as ordained by God for mankind: work as the magnetism that draws people into migration, whether from rural to urban settings, or at an international cross-border level - work that is ontological and one of the essential pillars of marketplace missiology.

oooOooo

^x Which includes the refugee highway movement (Taylor 1989:3).

CHAPTER II

TOWARDS A THEOLOGY OF WORK

CHAPTER II

SECTION I

TOWARDS A THEOLOGY OF WORK

INTRODUCTION

TOWARDS A THEOLOGY OF WORK

PARADISE LOST

IN SEARCH OF PARADISE

THY KINGDOM COME

A BRIEF HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

1. INTRODUCTION.

Moving towards a movement of working people will inevitably generate reconsideration of a variety of views relating to what it entails to be Christian. First is a movement towards being representative of the Kingdom at work, and through work. Additional factors, such as a pluriform understanding of the ecclesia and the ecclesia as a movement of His people will be dealt with in the next chapters. In this section the focus will thus be on the phenomenon of work. The purpose is to uncover the essence of work, by developing an ontological understanding of it. Once work is defined, it will complement mankind's understanding of self, and more specifically, the mission of humanity in relation to the Creator.

Exploring and moving closer to a theology of work and subsequent presentation of a definition requires an historical overview of work, and a glossary of interpretations from different theological perspectives. The grid for this understanding will be provided by employing three theological approaches; namely protology, Christology and eschatology.

1.1. INTENTIONS.

As a study with missional intent, the objective is to transform the more contemporary understanding of work from a mere tool of operation for either financial success, or for mission societies' entrance and legitimacy. The focus is work as understood as the

primal gift and ministry imparted by God, to man. It is a particular giftedness, enabling mankind to execute its individual and corporate creational purposes. The result is intended to be a liberating understanding of work and, in the process, of the human race as well as the place where people interact: the marketplace. The marketplace is then irrevocably linked to the rest of Creation as the habitat of man from which he interacts with the rest of Creation.

It is intended to be liberating due to the transformation wrought by a corrective understanding of work: as something that enhances and not inhibits, as widely perceived by Christians, a person's spiritual development. This negative mindset appears to be a major stumbling block, reflecting a theology with a bias against work and what it entails to be Christian – that is, work simply stands in the way of true spirituality. Such contemporary thinking prescribes a frame of mind among believers to look forward “to the day when they would grow spiritually to the place where they, like the missionaries, could cast off the burden of their daily work and go out and serve God” (Cosden 2006:i).. This perceived spirituality disconnected from the meta-physical world underlies a general worldview held by Christians relating to work.

An adapted view of work will, however, enhance the realisation that man does not work his way to Hell, and does not enter the Kingdom by resigning from what work is perceived to be. By also rediscovering the creational essence of work, comes the realisation that work in itself does not compete with the creational existence of mankind. It also does not complement our unique makeup; no, work is what we are. Work *per se*, is then part of *who* we are.

Therefore work is also part of what has been redeemed and can thus not be excluded from the message of the Gospel of Salvation.^{xi} We have been salvaged as human beings – we are recreated in Christ to live our creational purposes, as beings worshipping, working and living together. Understanding work in a pre- and post-Paradise context brings us closer to the empowerment of Jesus and the Holy Spirit in the sending of His people to bring the good news that *that* which Jesus came to seek and save that was lost, is indeed found and restored.

^{xi} From the Greek word *soteria*, meaning rescue from mortal peril, deliverance from sin and death through God in Christ Jesus (Migliore 2004:423).

Yet, a redeemed understanding of work finds teleologically its hope and surety in the eventual new Heaven and Earth. Work is not something that is left behind when Jesus returns, it is carried through to the new and as such has eternal value. Work in its creational intent has evolved in character and value since the Fall. However, it was restored on the Cross and is irreversibly linked with the message of the Kingdom to come.

The evangelical comprehension of the Great Commission^{xii} can be broadened when seen in the light of the Creation in both its pristine and fallen state. The basis of our perception of what was lost is found by comparing the two. Man's hope and anticipation is complemented by the work of Jesus on the Cross and the anticipated new Creation. A re-evaluation of the mankind's creational intent as *imago opus Dei* will hopefully lead to a redefinition of what is understood as our commission to the world. Reflections on the above will bring us closer to the development of a theology of work as a fundamental in the understanding of a Missiology of the Marketplace - a movement of redeemed working people.

1.2. PRELIMINARY CONSIDERATIONS.

The advent of capitalism and culmination of what can be termed the 'Protestant work ethic' gave birth to the Western "world of total work" (Pieper 1963:21). Work has come to permeate all facets of human life, be it in the way of inexorable industriousness or later the pursuance of leisure. However, work also came to be understood as a matter of duty, a means to profitability and ultimately a necessity to survive.

^{xii} "Although the 'Great Commission' as an appeal from Matthew 28:18-20, also featured during the Reformation and Protestant Orthodoxy, the person really to be credited with putting it on the map, was William Carey in his 1792 tract entitled 'An Enquiry into the Obligations of Christians to Use Means for the Conversion of the Heathen', in which he, with the aid of a simple yet powerful argumentation, demolished the conventional interpretation of Matthew 28:28." (David Bosch 1991:340)

'Great Commission' is an appeal of obedience to the last instruction of Jesus to go into the world and preach the Gospel. During the 19th Century it "was never the one and only motive, dominant and in isolation" but "was always in connected with other motives." (Johannes van den Berg 1956:165). It has evolved from a more inclusive appeal to a primary act of obedience. Hutchison (1987:1919) says many "sought to reinstate the Great Commission as a leading, or even as an entirely sufficient, justification for mission."

In the process mankind came to understand itself as working beings whose highest earthly destiny was to work. More so, man's very being consists of the process of becoming something through work that he would not have been otherwise. So it developed that more and more philosophies like "liberalism and its younger estranged sibling, socialism, centred their anthropologies and political theories around human work" (Volf 2001:3).^{xiii} For marketplace missiology the aim is to go beyond work as a means to one's own (also spiritual) advancement towards the common good in a post-industrial age where work is "primarily a form of civic virtue" (Bellah 1985:4) that is intrinsically important and a central requirement for a revitalised society. Such a transformation of the meaning and application of work will not be achieved by fine-tuning economic institutions alone, but by changing the essence (heart) which in turn requires a deep cultural, social and even psychological transformation (Volf 2001:4).

Many Christians experience the concept of work and ministry generally as a dualism and these two concepts stand, almost as a dichotomy, one against the other. Work is accepted as an essential part of being able to live and to glean personal identity or as an instrument of measure for worth. Being Christian, and being Christian in ministry, seems to be somewhat acceptably articulated in terms of roles and position, as clergy and laity. Yet, when the concept of work is added to either of the equations, it does not seem to fit into general ministry paradigms. Cosden (2006:i) sees this as an acute problem: daily work seems meaningless and not a place to find God – never mind allowing one's work to be a witness or being a witness of the Kingdom as a working person. These concepts need to act in unison and call for a break from the mindset that compartmentalises human life into segments.

Work has always been a vital component in all major movements in the world, be it during the Industrial Revolution, Communism or more recently the Information Technological age. The common approach was to define work in relation to the then, present challenges, and to draw on theological treatises and philosophies to underpin whatever position or system needed justification or direction. This also applies today. Modern societies are dynamic (Bella 1985:271) and mono, salaried and lifetime

^{xiii} Miroslav Volf is the Henry B. Wright Professor of Systematic Theology at the Yale Divinity School and director of the Yale Centre for Faith and Culture. He earned doctoral and post-doctoral degrees with highest honours from the University of Tübingen in Germany.

employment has given way to multiple and frequently changing professions. Given the significance of work and its modern-day implications for social life, health and environment, writers are turning their attention to the essence of work, seeking work as an instrument of empowerment and not merely a means to mankind's own advancement. The interest is in a transformation of the meaning and relation to work and the need for "a deep cultural, social and even psychological transformation" (1985:272).

There are a variety of reasons for this greater openness towards ministry methods while the value and spiritual dimension of work is being rediscovered. There is the very basic human need for work, noted in Chapter I. It is also a need motivated by a desire for a better lifestyle for people and their families, as well as social concerns. Ruth Siemens (1992:D246) cites recent pivotal events i.e. globalisation and political turmoil that have radically altered the world's landscape of nations, as the main reason. These factors have multiplied the opportunities and the need for ministry defined as working people (1992:D246). This renewed interest "has resulted in a number of popular theological treatments of the topic" (Volf 1991:6).

There is also a general awakening towards the trend of working ministers and ministries. The concept is also acknowledged by mission agencies and is increasingly applied in the mission field. Howard (1977:144) sees the renewed interest and application as 'a new day'. He is reflecting a cautious, yet growing optimism among some evangelical leaders in the West, towards this rediscovery of working people embodying a new era with a wider and more inclusive definition of ministry. This in turn has aided the re-evaluation of what a missionary and ministry are, and can be.

There has, however, been some resistance from mission leaders (an aspect that will be dealt with in this Chapter). They still look upon working people somewhat negatively, and see them as a threat to their structures. The result is the rejection of qualified candidates merely because they do not fit into the inflexible organisational structures. Livingstone, having been a pioneer in the modern tentmaking paradigm and former director of a mission agency, reflects that "some mission agencies are in danger of going the way of the defunct railroad companies, who forgot that their business were not trains, but transportation " (1993:50).

The above highlights the need for theological bases that can address the biblical foundation of work. This will help formulate adapted missiological paradigms and move away from traditional thinking. Both history and tradition teach us how and why the challenges of a particular time were addressed. The conclusion about how is here of less importance than the principles and sources drawn from. Discerning the need for, or the place of work in ministry are valid practical deliberations.

The arguments for a working concept of ministry should not be driven primarily by circumstance or inherited methodology; these are mainly financial and logistical constraints. There are deeper, more urgent contemporary reasons to address the issue of a working ecclesia:

- a. The emergent ecclesia is to a great extent a communal people without the need for additional religious facilities and not always in a position to have trained clergy. Many Christians from emerging nations do not belong to any formal congregation or denomination (Bellagamba 1992:3). It is a people movement and then specifically a working people within a communal environment.
- b. The global phenomenon of migration requires a supportive theology of individual enhancement, as Christians working away from home are doing so because of need and not as a result of having a call from God. A clear understanding of the 'spiritual' nature of work and a Creator God, in control of even the sparrow, is needed.
- c. The pivotal changes not only require a new perspective on work, but also as working Christians and people in transition expressing their contemporary nature in the way they congregate. They need an alternative expression of being an assembly. These issues are dealt with in the next Chapter.

These are thus essentially theological issues. Though contemporary phenomena need greater clarity relating to what work is, the intrinsic factor revolves around the ontology of work. But there is another concept that has been the vehicle through which Christianity has interpreted working people in ministry – it is tentmaking. In developing a missiological concept of a movement of working people, tentmaking should not be ignored. There is too much valuable common ground that can only complement both philosophies and contribute to expanding the praxis of working

ministers. Years of deliberation has left the ecclesia with an adequate pool of resources to give substance, understanding and structure to making a philosophy such as marketplace missiology, a viable one.

It is from this pool of resources that marketplace missiology can be defined and the fundamental differences to tentmaking can be outlined. These dissimilarities are of critical relevance. Discerning and comparing the similarities and differences will release a creative tension, and help to crystallise the principles of both. The broadening of the definition of the ministry of working people goes beyond a mere practical approach to fulfilling a revived interest in mission (Livingstone 1993:48). It is motivated by a historical perspective of being the ecclesia in need of a renewed expression of the cultural make-up of Christianity today, backed by theological substance.

A synopsis of what tentmaking is, and the core difference between the two philosophies, follows. There will then be a more in-depth study of a theology of work and its influence on present philosophies, such as 'tentmaking'.

1.2.TENTMAKING.

The essence of the traditional 'tentmaker' model finds its roots in the way Paul conducted and sustained his ministry, in conjunction with his attitude towards work. From this train of thought a Pauline missiology known as tentmaking was derived. The concept of working disciples is not new (Wilken 1980:12). The tentmaking movement (Gibson 1997:39) was "first popularised in the late 1960s. However, the concept itself is as old as the church."

Two people instrumental in reviving the concept and subsequent enlightening of new possibilities in ministry, were Ruth Siemens and Christie Wilson (1987). They stimulated discussions that supported a paradigm for people wanting to minister through their work and not necessarily having to go to seminaries, or serving under mission agencies. Christians equipped with professional and life skills became more attentive to the fact that they could be disciple-makers in countries simply by being engineers, teachers or whatever they had been trained for.

This paradigm switch - serving as working people in countries - was on the one hand unnoticed, yet as it gained momentum it was subtly opposed by mission agencies (Livingstone 1993:50). The reason given was that the accommodation of people 'making tents' by sending agencies and training institutions was, and still is, at an experimental stage. For years the marketplace was not part of the training, strategies or models implemented by mission societies.

At best, work was seen as a temporary exercise until a desired entrance could be made into a country. Work was and still is seen by mission agencies as something temporary and one of the aspects that will need to be addressed in this Chapter. Using the concept 'tentmaking' also implies that work is a means to an end and only a step towards being 'full-time' again. People working in the mission field and ministry were thus to some extent stigmatised as the not-so-spiritual and those who failed to convince their supporting churches to back them financially.

1.1.2. TOWARDS UNDERSTANDING TENTMAKING.

Finding or compiling a contemporary definition is complex, simply because the term in its modern application is once again being reformulated. Recent definitions are inclined to reflect a more historical context. Newer approaches to the theme e.g. marketplace missiology tend to have a broader approach and complementary theological basis. In the new Interlude, theologians from a non-Western background will most certainly give new impetus and meaning to the term and will ultimately shape the definition of being a tentmaker and the concept of tentmaking, differently from how it was defined before.

The varied approaches toward the concept are a product of the fact that 'tentmaker' and 'tentmaking' in context of ministry are not mentioned in the Bible. They derive from biblical evidence that Paul worked by making tents in the process of advancing the Kingdom. But they are just that: deductions. These deductions crystallised into a line of thought that interprets Paul's working lifestyle as tentmaker into two important categories.

1.1.3. WORK AS A MEANS TO AN END.

Much of missionary tentmaking thinking^{xiv} is formulated in the interpretation of the reason Paul worked, as a means of support to conduct his ministry. This opened the door for, and incorporated, deductions such as:

- a. ministry and work are two separate and even opposing entities.
- b. work is secular and being in ministry deals with the sacred.
- c. The basis for the present understanding of the clergy and laity^{xv} is in itself gleaned from a Christendom approach to work and knowledge:
 - i. Clergy should, ideally, not work; this will help them to focus on the things of God.
 - ii. The laity's role is that of a support agent for those who have been relieved from work.
- d. Ruth Siemens adds to the clergy:laity divide by concluding that "tentmaking cannot be equated with lay ministry because it is a missionary mode, a missions strategy" (Lai 2005:13). This is reminiscent of the reductionism applied to ministries within Christianity; at the root lies a class distinction which effectively, whether conscious or not, places the concept of working people between the laity and those who are full-time in His Work.
- e. Work is a means to an end, and when the end is achieved whatever work that was done can be discarded. The Tentmaker is a fully prepared missionary, accountable to a mission board, mandated to plant a church, who uses an occupational cover to enter a restricted access country.
- f. Work can provide strategic entrance into 'creative access' countries (Chia, in Lai 2005:13). With an increase in hostility towards traditional missional work and workers, as well as the ease of global migration (across borders and urbanisation) there is a serious re-evaluation of missional strategies. "At present about 80% of the unreached world is off-limits to the traditional missionary and it is estimated that by the year 2010, 83% of the non-Christians in the world will live in countries closed to traditional missionary approaches" (Barrett 2010:34).

^{xiv} There is a subtle, yet important distinction between 'tentmaking' and 'missionary tentmaking'. The latter refers to the merging of the missionary, the sending agency and the local church. It implies working and ministering cross culturally and with people from a different religious make-up. Tentmaking is general refers to people working (for whatever reason) and ministering within their own religious (not necessarily Christian) and cultural context not necessarily connected to or sent from a controlling body or church.

^{xv} The Laity and Clergy are covered in greater detail in the next Chapter.

- g. As a result of the above, work is seen by Christians as a disposable entity with no or little eternal value.
- h. This approach and perception of work is transferred to those who are receptors of the Gospel living in other cultures.
- i. It also conveys a perception of dishonesty, because the reason for being in a particular culture is not valid anymore – it has a deceptive edge to it.
- j. Tentmaking has a temporal theme to it. This can be attributed to associations regarding the word ‘tent’. A tent is something you use when camping. Should it however rain or the purpose of the exercise be fulfilled, the tent is stored until needed again for a specific purpose. It is also then a tool in the hands of the military and once again, it is only a tool towards a purpose.
- k. The above exposes the heart of the concern relating to the concept. In ministry it is used as a tool to reach a particular and predefined ideal such as entering into a creative access country. When the purpose is fulfilled, the work done as a tentmaker is discarded.
- l. It is not a lifestyle-ministry. The essence thereof is reflected by William Carey when he said: “My business is to witness for Christ. I make shoes to pay my expenses” (Gibson1997:9). Work is and was not part of his witness, it was a tool securing an end.
- m. The result is an underlying ‘tentmaker mentality’ that work is something that stands between a Christian becoming a successful worker in His sight.

1.1.4. WORK AS A LIFESTYLE.

The fundamental difference between the two concepts of being a tentmaker and being a marketplace worker is an understanding of ‘work’. It is the one critical area that ultimately distinguishes the two. Within the understanding of marketplace missiology, work becomes a central and permanent principle and irrevocably part of being human. It also goes beyond individual advancement and adds to the good of all. It is work that “is one of the central requirements for a revitalised social ecology” (Bellah 1985:36). When work is seen as temporal, this ideal cannot be achieved.

The basis on which marketplace as a missiological concept is built is different. Missiology of the marketplace is a working philosophy, literally and figuratively. It entails an understanding of the meaning of work. From a Christian world-view, work is

not something that has been added to mankind, or inherited because of The Fall. It is both foundational and fundamental. Work is what we have been created for. Work is something that Jesus also died for.

Work is an essential part of being human and one that will be carried forward and experienced in the new Creation (Cosden 2006:87). Work is part of what we do and who we are. An eschatological expectation provides the compass direction towards the realisation of the redemptive work of Jesus on the Cross and our (re-found) position in the present age and the one to come. The motivations for the above may vary, but the underlying perception that work is a tool to achieve an end, is the same. It is a fundamental perception and is a key issue in need of correction. It reflects a very narrow understanding of work: its spiritual meaning is inadequate. These are secondary, albeit important arguments. The above is, however, partly due to a delineated theology, and secondly, the way our theology directs our spiritual lives. More so, is also foreign to the theology and praxis of what Paul's central missional strategy was (second section of this chapter).

1.1.5. MARKETPLACE MISSIOLOGY.

The principles of tentmaking apply to marketplace missiology as well. However, marketplace missiology distinguishes itself from tentmaking in this one regard: that work is ontological. Stated another way, it can be said that Paul was not a tentmaker – Paul made tents. Work is here perceived to be humanity's primary commission and the basis from where other commissions and promises of God flow. No commission of God and its intended goodness is removed from this primary commission of work. It is the channel or vehicle through which God blessed and wants to be a blessing to the nations. Making work central to humanity's commissions implies that work is spiritual. Work does not compete or stand in the way of being obedient to serve the purposes of God. On the contrary, to work in the image of the Triune God is (now again redeemed) mankind's worship and calling. Obedience is found rather in executing the general calling of God for all humanity to work and in the specific instructions per individual, as to where and how.

Therefore, working as a leader remunerated within an ecclesiastic function^{xvi} or working in the market square (or both) do not define spirituality or connection to any position, function or role within the ecclesiastic movement of Christ. Classic tentmaking perceives work as a facade, or a means to an end and tool of entry into specific communities with the primary and exclusive aim of making converts. Adding to the goodness of God and subsequent value to the community is merely incidental. Marketplace missiology, however, dictates that work is ontological to any ministry conducted. Work says what and who a person is and it cannot be divorced from being human or the person's commission. Rather, people expect people to be what they are and will build trust and respect and will accommodate alternative views. More so, people lose respect for people who abandon who and what they are, with a resultant loss of trust-acceptance (Mayers 1987:49).

Within marketplace missiology work is the first (and continuous) witness of His greatness, reflected through the work and life of the disciple adding value throughout the marketplace and through the proliferation of the goodness of God (Wright 2006:398). Work is therefore a prerequisite for trust and acceptance. Work is also the instrument that allowed people like Paul^{xvii} to identify with his community, achieve acceptance and credibility (Allen 1962:53). It also helped establish a model of being His ecclesia of working people. To achieve the above within marketplace missiology, work is seen as:

- a. Gifted by God.
- b. Ontological to being human.
- c. Reflecting the glory of the Triune God.
- d. The primary revelation of God in Scripture and through Creation.
- e. Humanity was, and is again recreated in Christ to reflect the image of the Triune God of Creation through their work.
- f. The primary commission: work has never changed or been made redundant – it has only changed in character, but was again restored in Christ.

^{xvi} Within marketplace missiology the borders between clergy and laity as well as the positional realisation of the space within which the ecclesia manifest, are blurred, as the following Chapter will indicate.

^{xvii} See also closing Chapter V under heading 3.1 Trust and Acceptance.

The need to differentiate and support a working lifestyle needs to be undergirded by a theology of work.

2. TOWARDS A THEOLOGY OF WORK.

The essence of the dissertation hinges on work as gifted by God and the essence of being human – also in being the ecclesia as a witnessing community of God. In working towards a missiology and theology of work, the tendency is to turn towards articles and books that take the question of work, in its crystallised context, as a starting point. This literature comes in the form of theological, biblical, pastoral or sociological analyses of work. The common denominator among them is that the manifestation of work itself, is a primary object of exploration (Cosden 2006:39). Although these studies do provide a modern proposal and a more comprehensive picture of work, they are intended primarily to focus on the *phenomenon* of work and not the *essence* of work. In the process some perspective is lost and they generally fail to recognise that work is only a part, albeit a fundamental part, of human life.

These studies are nonetheless very important as they help develop a more comprehensive reflection on work, as well as a deeper exploration of important themes. This process enhances our own understanding of work, and then also within a contemporary context. There is (like almost everything in life) the danger that the treatment of work *per se*, can become so broad that all of life is presented as a subcategory of work. This means one can lose sight of work as an ontological reality.

Contextual studies tend to be very practical and more devout of abstract and detached theoretical pronouncements normally associated with research which is narrowly focused on work itself. It has as its core values, difficult and contextual problems of the day. It is in that sense also very contemporary and reflects issues such as the exploitation of nature, unemployment and the exploitation of the poor; racial and sexual discrimination at work, and basic human rights. There are limitations to this approach. The most significant is that “when trying to make a related ethical point, it becomes too easy to distort work’s nature and meaning by over-emphasizing one or another of its important aspects e.g. instrumental or relational” (2006:39).

2.1. A PROTESTANT UNDERSTANDING.

Martin Luther originated the concept of work as vocation (Volf 2001:105). He developed this concept within his doctrine of justification by faith. It was done against the backdrop of medieval monasticism (Bosch 1991:239) in general and particularly against the reductionism of vocation as a calling to a particular religious way of life. Protestants almost instinctively interpret work as something of a calling, or occasion. They either assume that this model of vocation is the starting point for a reflection, as something to go through or to work through, something to bypass or something to use as a foundation or springboard to define something else.

Evangelical missiologists, like most Protestants writing on the subject, continue to argue about the context of work, as a vocation from God and life. The active working life is thus positively a part of one's continued spiritual growth. Obedience, as a call from God, in daily life translates into work; the incentive to work is a means to meet the needs of others, through work. This continues to be a reformational emphasis that most Protestants want to retain in some form (Cosden 2006:40).

After the Second World War, Protestant thinking veered more towards the problem of work (Richardson 1952:35-39). The end of the war signalled an era of tremendous change in the world as well as in the world of work. The effects of industrialisation, the prior global economic depression, unemployment and unstable workforce, the growing tension between capitalism and socialism as well as the varied effects of industrialisation, compelled many Protestants "to re-examine their own theological understanding of work and to bring them more into line with contemporary realities" (Cosden 2006:40). The traditional understanding of work as vocation appears to be too inwardly orientated, individualistic, with limited social concerns and too defined for static forms of society.

The vocational model of work has remained a dominant feature of Protestantism. It has again and again proved to be an enduring understanding of work and that has shown the ability to be re-casted, reformed (Shiver 1995:539) and able to stay relatively relevant. Towards the end of the 20th century Protestants again took up the discussion on the vocational model for interpreting work. Some, like Miroslav Volf, have been critical, calling Protestants to move away from the tradition, while others like Lyland Ryken

and Lee Hardy^{xviii} appeal for a more refined return and rediscovery of the reformation and Puritan doctrines of vocation.

The consistent return to the vocational understanding of work implies the validity and influence thereof. Though no longer the only voice, this view endures and exhibits its ability to be reformed. This makes it an indispensable hypothesis when considering a theology of work, or the presentation of any alternative.

2.1.1. WORK AS VOCATION.

Distinct yet interrelated beliefs regarding Christian vocation include the following:

- a. By advocating the priesthood of all believers, Luther view of work can be interpreted as vocation. It affirms the personal role and responsibility (Holl 1958:238) of believers in all facets of life.
- b. All Christians, not only monks and priests, have a vocation.
- c. Any work performed by Christians can be a vocation.

Vocation is thus not a call to a select group or person within the larger Christian fellowship to a special kind of life - it is a call to all believers. Luther spoke (Volf 2001:105) of a double vocation for every Christian: spiritual vocation (*vocatio spiritualis*) and external vocation (*vocatio externa*). The spiritual vocation is for all who answer God's call to enter into the Kingdom, which in turn comes to a person through the proclamation of the Gospel. This call is common to all Christians for whom it is the same in that (especially in the case of Luther) it comes through a mandatory conversion experience (Bosch 1991:125).

The external vocation is a call to serve God and humanity at large and then through one's standing or profession in life. Luther consistently tried to link the daily work of every Christian with the centre of Christian faith. Work in every profession, and not only in ecclesiastical professions, rests on divine calling. This reveals the heart of his understanding of vocation: valuing the fulfilment of duty in worldly affairs as the highest form which the moral activity of the individual could assume. "The only way of living acceptably to God was not to surpass worldly morality in monastic asceticism,

^{xviii} Books by Lee Hardy *The Fabric of This World* (1990) and Lyland Ryken *Work and Leisure in Christian Perspective* (1987).

but solely through the fulfilment of the obligations imposed upon the individual by his position in the world” (Weber 1958:80).

Since every vocation rests on God’s commission, every vocation is fundamentally of the same value before God.

2.1.2. BACKDROP OF THEOLOGY.

The other important factor shaping the theology of Luther was his belief that every believer can and should stand in direct, personal relationship with God. The way it was practised by the Anabaptists, who actually carried the concept to its logical conclusion, forced him to fall back on a more rigid understanding of office: “he denied the validity of any office that was not linked to the existence of geographically defined parishes” (Volf 1991:242).

Luther still valued the ‘Church’ as a centripetal phenomenon and the gathering of people. It was the Anabaptist who has taken it to its coherent end of movement of people. This aspect will be covered in the next Chapter, but it needs to be noted that any centralisation of authority, whether in the religious realm or otherwise, opens the door for a bi-vocational interpretation of work in terms of class and position, and not as ontologically realised. The Reformation then did not completely break with the medieval understanding of relationship between State and Church, except in its Anabaptist manifestation. The only difference was that Protestants concluded that “since the exercise of absolute power by the papal church was wrong its exercise by the opponents of the papacy was right” (Niebuhr 1951:29).

2.1.3. PROBING NEW FRONTIERS.

In a process of exploring work theologically, Protestants generally have a strong dependence on the various doctrines surrounding the initial Creation, or protology (Cosden 2006:42). The reasoning is that Creation was the theological and ethical starting point for a reflection on work, and this has been a dominant view for most recent Protestant writers. Emil Brunner exhibits the same approach, seeing work as a command grounded in the initial Creation, as a “creation ordinance” (1952:387). Likewise, Bonhoeffer considered work as sharing in the primary creational mandate,

though he was somewhat apprehensive of using the word ‘ordinance’ due to its ideological abuse by the Nazis during his lifetime (Cosden 2006:42).

The focus on protology, as the doctrine through which to explore work, concurs with this study, and is seen as an essential component moving towards the development of an ontology of work. It is an important tool in the process of uncovering and defining the nature and meaning of work in the very structure of Creation, and supports the attempt to see work move beyond being simply an instrument of activity.

2.2. PROBING OTHER AND ALTERNATIVE DISCIPLINES.

Theological anthropology has been very prominent among doctrinal deliberations of ‘who we are, why we are and how we came to be where and what we are’. Every doctrine in some way relates to and affects a theological anthropology. It is therefore a field that should not be ignored.

2.2.1. ANTHROPOLOGY.

Most Christian anthropologies have humanity as an integral part of their formulation. Their particular angle is mainly on the doctrine of the image of God, and then specifically in humanity. Though the embracing of the image of God in humanity is not exclusive to anthropology, neither is it entirely built around it. The anthropological approach of the image of God in mankind, gives prominence to the concept - also as a symbol of meaning that aids the process of its overall formulation. Millard Erickson (1983:489) suggests three fundamentally different ways to understand the image of God concept from an anthropological approach. The three views he suggests are the substantive, the functional and the relational.

2.2.1.1. SUBSTANTIVE VIEW.

The substantive view incorporates many formulations of the *imago Dei*. It argues that there are essential and substantive characteristics, qualities and faculties within a person which either in themselves correspond to God, or that constitute a person as being in the image of God. These capacities or endowments “are the keys for understanding what it means to say that the person is a person and in God’s image” (Cosden 2006:103).

The substantive view is essentially a substantive ontology because it draws upon other substantive ontologies. Therefore, 'being' and as a consequence 'human being', is defined and essentially understood to be a combination of various substances and qualities. The person is a person because he or she *has* body, soul, emotions, will and intellect. There is a tendency that the substantive view generally emphasises the image of God, in terms of reference to the individual. The substantive anthropological view has a natural tendency to see the '*what*' of the human being is, taking preference over '*who*' the human being is. In substantive anthropology the question of what the person is, stresses a distinction between body and the spirit soul (Gunton 1989:48). Matter and spirit are here perceived as separate and mostly distinct substances that constitute a single person.

They are the 'things' that a person possesses and that constitute or make the person (Cosden 2006:104). The composition of substances leads to another line of thought in questions of 'comparativeness' (Gunton 1989:49), which in turn pan out into three more components. First is the comparison between humans and God, followed by comparisons between humans themselves, and then humans versus nature or the rest of Creation. This theolistic view is very prominent within Christian circles in reference to the clergy and laity, the sacred and the secular and the spiritual and the bodily aspects of the person.

However, when the ontological question is cast in a different way, starting with the emphasis on the composite unity of the person, it establishes the boundaries of personhood. It is then (Cosden 2006:106), within these established boundaries of personhood, that a distinction between spiritual substances and bodily aspects of humankind can be made. It is then that the more concealed elements within the substantive view of the image of God, such as functional and relational, are recognised and developed.

2.2.1.2. THE FUNCTIONAL VIEW.

The common characteristics of functional views are that they argue that the image of God, and the person in that image "are best understood through the conceptual grid of God's call upon humanity to a specific activity" (Cosden 2006:106). This means that the person and the image are best perceived in terms of what humans do, or are supposed to do, according to the call of God in their lives. Human function, rather than

something we are, or have and experience relationally, is what sets us apart as human beings.

The call from God is summed up in the concept of dominion, or the call to humans to work, over Creation. Function becomes the point of reference from which to understand the person and image. Questions of individualism versus social interaction tend to recede into the background. These questions are not irrelevant or unimportant, they simply assume a subordinate place within the overall concept of functionality. So it is then that within the functional view, a call to stewardship or function, defining principle of image, necessitates a corporate call. If so, then neither community, nor individualism is at stake. The functional understanding cuts across both and can be equally at home in either.

2.3. CREATED AS IMAGE.

The concept of humankind being created in the image of God is essential and complementary to a theology of work. It echoes the question at the centre of theological and philosophical deliberation (Berkouwer 1962:9): “*What is man?*” The essence of man and the search for identity (Migliori 2004:144) has prompted various reflections and opened related questions as to who man *is* and *what* he is. No less so, through *what he does*, is a contemplation of the reason for being.

The question is interesting, especially in the light that within contemporary thought, there is nothing so widely and generally ‘known’ in everyday experience, as the subject of man (1962:9). In the flow of everyday relations, where we experience the highs and lows of human happiness, the griefs and various religious experiences available to mankind and also those that have been created by mankind, there is vivid testimony that the question regarding ‘what is man’ is still not resolved. However, Berkouwer (1962:9) tenders an alternative and more realistic question: “*Why is this a problem?*” The answer to this question is generally tainted by the perceived obviousness regarding the nature of man. The nature of humankind is coloured by an astonishing variety of views which do not make clear who, and what *man* really is.

That man occupies a central position in the whole of creational reality is right and not a one-sided anthropocentric view. Man tries to make sense of his nature through his

experiences and own understanding of reality. The searchlight of contemporary interest thus concentrates on mankind in all his striving and acting, his loves and hates, his potentialities and limitations, his struggles and tensions. This interest goes beyond a merely ontological interest (Berkouwer 1962:12) in the nature of man who is composed of body, soul and spirit. There is also an interest in the concrete man with his power and capacity, his motives and passions, his race and nationalities. Man in the present and past, has unfortunately also revealed himself in many ways as a danger to his fellow man and the rest of Creation.

Whenever we reflect on the nature of mankind, we instinctively go to Creation to find the original context within which God created mankind and His intentions. However, we also cannot escape the evil that man does and live out, as well as experiences in everyday life. We cannot distance ourselves from the problem of the simple relativism of human evil or escape only into our original creational intent.

These questions prompt a search that inevitably goes back to the Biblical narrative of Creation, the most original and authentic information available to mankind. Genesis describes the creation of all reality which unmistakably culminates (not focussed on) in the Creation of man. It is therefore natural to direct our attention first to man, and bring in non-human reality in connection with man (Berkouwer 1962:10). The book of Genesis is rather explicit in contrasting the differences between humans, nature and then Creation as a whole. It also gives an outline of mankind specifically in relation to God.

Although Genesis conveys important complementary concepts, assisting mankind in his relational understanding and position in relation to God and Creation, Moltmann (1977:185) rightly presents an important and necessary angle. God's first intention was with the non-human world (1977:185). His intention was to create from chaos an orderly and interrelated world that would eventually stand as witness to His work. The human-less re-creation of this earth, in time and space, is thus also a reflection of His image.

Mankind, being constructed from the elements of nature, and being given life for the purpose of managing the rest of Creation, can thus only find its own image as conveyed

as *imago mundi* and *imago Dei*. Moltmann (1977:186) concludes that the understanding of the essence of being human does not begin with human beings as a study of mankind in the image of God, but rather with the understanding that we are first created in the image of the world.

By placing the *imago mundi* as a primal image to that of *imago Dei*, Moltmann argues that the reality and logic of Creation itself is a better beginning to establish what link humans and non-humans have; that is, what they have in common. His suggestion is that the human is first a creature in the fellowship of Creation. He or she is firstly *imago mundi* and then, only subsequent to this, is he or she the *imago Dei*. Moltmann introduces a double functionality of the human being (1977:189). On one hand the human itself is the embodiment of all creatures.

This means that humankind contains all of the simpler systems found in Creation. “These systems are present in him and he depends upon them, he is *imago mundi*” (Moltmann 1977:190). Mankind thus stands before God, representing all the creatures. In this act as *imago mundi*, humankind is a priestly creature. To some extent it nullifies the need to deliberate on mankind (at least for this study) as also being the bodily image of God. Bavinck (1960:521) gives a clear affirmation that the body is “an amazing work of the Almighty God’s art” and does not exclude the body as being part of what was created in the image of God. Calvin (Institutes I XV 3) takes a more cautionary route saying that the body shows vestiges of God’s power, but in no way could reflect, or represent the glory of God.

Note that Calvin was more concerned here with the radical views of Osiander and that of anthropomorphism^{xix} (Berkouwer 1962:76), than presenting man as being a spiritual creature only. Indeed, Scripture’s emphases on the whole man as the image of God has triumphed time and time again (1962:77) over all objections and opposing principles.

Moltmann (1977:191) presents a more inclusive view, broadening this more singular approach of man being created foremost in the image of God. He incorporates the eventual commissioning of mankind as being in relation with the rest of Creation (Hall

^{xix} The attribution of a human form or personality to a god, animal or thing – Oxford Dictionary 1996:52.

1986:19) as well as identifying what has failed in our understanding of the relationship between humanity and extra-human nature. Placed within the context of Hebraic-Christian ontology of being-in-relationship and being liberated from its own dogmatic past (1986:21), the *imago mundi* and *imago Dei* concepts can fashion an alternative way of imagining mankind as human beings within the larger order of nature. Mankind belongs to this and is called to cultivate righteousness.

Imago Dei is not the only historic doctrinal expression to be explored, but the sheer weight of the dogmatic emphasis associated with this symbol, makes it a central one. *Imago Dei* is significant, and intrinsically evocative. Since “imaging” plays a vital role in life, a symbol like *imago Dei* holds immediate existential interest. The concept of *Imago Dei*, as an originally Hebraic metaphor, has been under pressure from meanings and interpretations from non-biblical sources (Hall 1986:20). Initially these influences were mainly from the Greek and Roman civilisations.

Imago Dei was, however, also influenced later by various philosophical and moral developments in European history. The result was that non-Hebraic influences helped *imago Dei* become the principal doctrinal device for distinguishing mankind from other creatures. The focus is now more on what differentiates mankind from the rest of Creation, and less on a common heritage and being representative of God’s intent for all of Creation (Berkouwer 1962:68).

Humans are God’s representatives of His Will and Glory here on Earth. Humans can intercede before God because they are also from the community of Creation, being *imago mundi*. However, it is in being God’s counterpart and reflection (Moltmann 1975:191) that humans are distinct from the rest of Creation. It is as working human beings, bringing the nations into obedience to God and fulfilling their creational ordination, that our work will also be a witness of Him.

2.3.1. IMAGO DEI as IMAGE and LIKENESS.

The origins of the *imago Dei* symbol are located in Genesis. It has already been established that in the Christian religion, the doctrinal symbol of *Imago Dei* is very important. Although the term was borrowed from Hebraic literature (Hall 1986:21), it plays a much more explicit and official role in Christian doctrine than it did in Hebraic

faith. Through this dogmatic device Christianity has consistently attempted to explain the essence of being human and humankind's calling: that of being in, and a reflection of (Migliore 2004:141), His image.

Man is the only recorded being to be created 'in the image' and 'after the likeness' of God. Three explicit references in the book of Genesis refer to image '*tzlem*' and likeness '*denuh*' (Hall 1986:68). In Genesis 1:26-27 we find what is referred to as God's original decision (Berkouwer 1962:67) to make man in His image and likeness (italics mine): "Then God said: Let us make man in our *image*, in our *likeness*, and let them rule over fish of the sea and over the birds of the air, over livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground."

This passage is followed by Genesis 5:1-2: "This is the written account of Adam's line. When God created man He made him in the *likeness* of God. He created them male and female and blessed them. And when they were created He called them 'man'." The following verse (5:3) typifies Adam as having lived for 150 years and "he had a son in his own *likeness*, in his own *image* and he named him Seth."

Another reference following the saga of the Great Flood brings to the fore the value of human life in relation to *imago Dei*: (Genesis 9:5-6) God said to Noah: "And for your lifeblood I will surely demand an accounting. I will demand an accounting of every animal. And from each man, too, I will demand an accounting for the life of his fellow man. Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed; for in the *image* of God has God made man."

Approaching the issue of mankind created in the image of God, it is notable for this study in that the likeness and or differentiation between image and likeness is understood within the broader Protestant understanding, ie, that there is no real distinction between the two terms (Hall 1986:70). It is more a Hebrew parallelism, a poetic device often used in the Psalms (Berkouwer 1962:83) where, for example, the second phrase matches the first, but in different words.

It is also quite a common trait for the substantive view, when reflecting on *imago Dei*, to be comparative (Gunton 1989:103). This facilitates the human need to understand

and define the differences between non-human beings as well as non-human entities. This involves a comparison between what humans are (as in the image of God) and what other non-humans are not. In the comparative substantive view, humans are placed between God and non-humans. The comparative view thus helps us understand who people are by defining mostly who they *are not*. Man is believed to have been endowed with capacities such as free will and reason, as well as rationality. These are capacities that the rest of Creation is supposed not to possess. So by virtue of possessing these attributes, we are human.

Mankind is thus the sum of what others are not. This view produces a further distinction when people become Christian: between what they now possess (in Christ) and others supposedly do not yet possess. In the comparative mode, the substantive view of the image of God in humans, includes both questions of kind and of contrast. This has developed into the dominant approach in Western Christian anthropology (Cairns 1973:120).

Luther and Calvin similarly framed their discussions of the image of God, according to the grammar and structure of the substantive view. Humankind is therefore realised as the image of God in terms of being ‘in’ an individual person and then also in reference to his or her constituted parts (Berkouwer 1962:74). Douglas Hall (1986:107) states that Luther and Calvin thereby introduced to the Western tradition the beginnings of a rational ontology. Although still very much based on a substantive thinking, the concept of *imago dei*, in rational ontology, has set the stage for a new direction of deliberation.

Steven Evans (1988:69) also argues that rational anthropology is really a fulfilment of a trend begun by Protestant Reformers who later “rejected this scholastic equation of the *imago* with rationality and instead viewed the *imago* as the original righteousness people possess by virtue of their relation to God.” Reformers viewed the image of God in humankind substantively, with respect to His specific characteristics. Functional and relational elements were present but were not primary categories used to describe the concept of the image of God in the person. In the approach of the general biblical understanding and use of this concept, it is important to keep as close as possible to the simple sense of the ‘God-likeness’ in this passage. “It consists as man himself consists

as the creature of God. He would not be man if he were not the image of God” (Barth 1958:72). It is not a quality of man - there is no point in asking in which of man’s peculiar attributes and attitudes it consists. It does not comprise anything that man is or does, but what God is and does.

It is thus incontestable that Scripture makes no reference at all to any particular intellectual or moral talents of man, or such qualities being the basis of the *imago Dei* deliberation (Migliore 2004:140). It is not something which distinguishes him from the beasts, but rather that which formally he has in common with them: “God has created him male and female, that he is this being in differentiation and relationship, and therefore in natural fellowship with God” (Barth 1958:73).

3. IMAGO DEI as OPUS DEI.

What then does it mean for mankind to be in the image of God? The answer may lie in applying a chronological approach to a study from a protological perspective. This would mean that the information given to mankind from the book of Genesis should be viewed sequentially, with the understanding that this was how God intended to reveal Himself. This is not anthropologically centred, since the focus is on God and the praxis of God. The focus on God at Creation eventually throw a light on the question; *what is man?* This approach attempts to find an ontological understanding of what God did, His actions, and finding meaning by interpreting and translating His activities.

Genesis unveils the order in which God, on a daily basis, created every day as a building stone to eventually complete His vision of a world according to His will. This orderly creation process eventually ended with the moulding and commissioning of mankind, not as a climax, but as a conclusion thereof. The creational process was rounded off by a day of rest, which is part of the creational account. Any one day was not more important than another. Every day God created different components of the world. They were all necessary interrelated elements and components to complete and serve the bigger picture: the habitat intended by God.

God revealed Himself in a similar sequential fashion, not as in an order of importance, but rather as building blocks to disclose an understanding of Him. The very first (and thereafter prevailing) ontological image of God revealed in Genesis is that of God as

Creator, or God at work. God then introduces Himself in the Bible (Genesis 1:1) as a working entity: He created. The Bible describes: “His involvement in creation, as His work. God is a worker, and work is something He chooses to do - part of His plan, consistent with His holy nature” (Green 2005:27). It is then, within this framework, that man finds his primary creational purpose. It is by discovering the fundamental dimension of work, as an expression of his own person, as and in the image and likeness of God^{xx}.

Man, as *imago Dei*, is a worker, not an evolved misfortune of nature, but because God first is a worker and people have been created to mirror His image in the execution of their creational purpose and in relation to self and the rest of Creation. Work, then, in its ontological context is both functional^{xxi} and relational in its expression. Work in its essence is built into the fabric of Creation by God. Mankind, as image bearers, expresses its ontological functions and relations at work in relation to Creation’s purposes. Humanity’s work is not identical to God’s, but is specific to what the original commission entails.

The correlation between God working and the commission bestowed on man cannot be ignored. It was a functional creative intent, making man as a specific working entity. The primal image was related to the being and occupation of man and then his relationship with God; man as a plural (male and female) being and in relation to the rest of Creation. If Genesis establishes the foundation of work as a “fundamental dimension of human existence on earth” (John Paul II 2008:12), it goes beyond the mere description of human beings. The study of work revolves around the person of the Creator God. From there the question can be answered of what of His work has been delegated to mankind, what was lost during the Fall and what was redeemed at the Cross - and subsequently, what will be carried forward into the Kingdom to come.

Reading the Bible from Genesis “is really reading the story backward.” (Anderson 1994:4). Through the eyes of the Psalmists (107): “We can know God through the work of His fingers.” The work of God witnesses greatness, character, goodness,

^{xx} See Chapter 2.4.

^{xxi} Cosden (2006:17) prefers to use the term instrumental rather than functional. I have opted for the latter as it describes the ontological use of work as a function rather than the tool of execution.

faithfulness. In the beginning God not only acted through His work, but provided the role model for the crown of His Creation that was to follow. God created physical elements as well as time and space, all with their predetermined parameters. There were two distinct actions: one to create the core elements needed and the other to creatively form life from the now exciting substance.

He created the necessary substance with which He could work to create the Earth and “...all that is within.”- Acts 17:24. In Paradise God also created a wonderful network of related disciplines devoted to the coming humanity, such as anthropology, palaeontology, history, sociology, psychology and theology. Work is the link between God and mankind. It is what He created humans for; man was partly empowered by inheriting imagery from God, enabling the execution of his ordained mission as an earthling. Consequently, as it is so grounded in human existence, the “activity that we call work becomes central to the life and mission” (Cosden 2006:i), especially for the ecclesia.

The first six days of Creation depicts God working and simultaneously revealing the orderly, non-arbitrary (Wiersbe 1998:11), systematic and creative substantive characteristics which accompany the working process. Alongside the ontological essence of work, Genesis complements the substantive effect of work, in the consistent comment of God each day^{xxii}: ‘*it was good*’. Work thus releases satisfaction and a sense of (daily) completion, thus giving the substance as well as the function to the meaning of work as an attribute of God. It also implies that God has the power to create and in the process, to transform. Ontologically speaking God worked and as a result transformed the substance on which He was working; substantively, work results in transformation.

On the fourth day (Genesis 1:22) God blessed the creation of the day. God worked by performing the very act of a priest, speaking in terms of abundance, multiplication and praise (Pedersen in Douglas 1962:160). He not only transformed the habitat, but also empowered it to live out its creational purpose. The substantive characteristics here are those of transformation and priesthood.

^{xxii} See Genesis 1:3, 1:9, 1:12, 1:18, 1:21, 1:25 and 1:31.

The next ontological disclosure comes by way of the comment “let us make man.” The work done at Creation was thus done in relationship, as in a Trinitarian^{xxiii} understanding of God. Within Western theology, the creation of man *in* the image of God, as interpreted from a relational view, is relatively recent (Hall 1986:99) and plays a significant role in emphasising Trinitarianism, a relational reflection (Thompson (1997:11). Within Protestantism, Luther and Calvin pioneered the beginnings of what today can be identified as a relational understanding of the image of God. Today it is more prevalent in the theologies of Brunner and Barth (Erickson 1983:5). Generally, relational concepts of image and mankind are critical for a metaphysic of substance. This has evoked quite strong anti-substantiality reactions (Berkouwer 1962:78). However, this need not imply, like many holding the functional view, that it eschews metaphysical discussions in developing its formulations. On the contrary, establishing a relational framework with a specifically relational ontology of personhood - rather than a substantive ontological framework - is in line with the objective of this study.

Questions about the ontological use of substance mostly centre on the methodology of relational formulations. They do not accept that questions surrounding the constituent metaphysical parts of the individual person are proper to the definition of personhood. This is mainly due to personhood, as perceived within the relational view, as not being primarily dependent upon the person as an individual. Questions of the constitution of persons may arise, but generally these views understand personhood (Berkouwer 1962:88) to be a social category. When questions of individual constitution do arise, answers tend toward the holistic and away from individualistic explanations.

The key characteristic of a relational ontological view is that it ultimately suggests a corporate understanding of being - by definition *being-with-others*. According to its proponents (Berkouwer 1979:89), this ontology is superior to that of substance, for although an ontology of substance establishes individuality, it does so at the expense of alienating human from human, and humans from the rest of Creation. A theology of substance inevitably and ironically leads to individualism. A relational ontology is

^{xxiii} See Barth, *Kirchliche Dogmatik*, III, 1, 207-220. Note p. 214, where Barth, in connection with the text’s “let us make”. He rejects the idea that this refers to a plurality of majesty, or to a heavenly court (cf. G. Von Rad), and upholds the older orthodox view that the reference is to the Trinity.

preferred, as it broadens the spectrum of our understanding of personhood to include particular individuality or otherness and also for inclusion and connectedness – thus giving a better understanding of the first commission as a holistic and interactive mandate.

3.1. THE COMING OF MAN.

In Genesis God moulded Man from the substance of the Earth and subsequently breathed life into him, connecting to a specific purpose. This purposefulness of the creation of man cannot be overlooked, and it is debatable whether man would have existed, were it not for the very specific purpose of his creation. This purpose is essentially imaged from God, as a working God. Man was called into being to be in His working likeness, as well as to execute the commission handed him by God, to work with Creation and have dominion (Migliore 2004:140) over it.

Protology provides the primary likeness as being that of work, even before any notions of love, compassion or righteousness. That God was motivated by His own intrinsic characteristics of the above does not need to be defended. However, the act of realising this was established through the *work* that God performed. God intended realising His substantive characteristics, such as love and righteousness, through the formation of man and by walking with people as they worked their creational purpose. This creational intent, a continuation of His will, has been the development and management of Creation to ensure God's desires come to fruition. Man thus primarily carries the *laim*-image (Peters 1972:166) as executor of that which was willed by God. Man, in the likeness of God, works towards a continued transformation of Creation to the extent that it will stand as a witness of the greatness of God.

3.1.1. COMMISSIONED.

In the opening chapter of the Bible man receives his mandate to work (Genesis 1:26 & 27) - man's mission and meaning on Earth. God instructed Adam to fill the earth, subdue it and rule over the rest of Creation (Wright 2006:65). The work commission^{xxiv} is moderated by parallel commands in the complementary account in

^{xxiv} Peters (1972:166) refers to this commission as the first mandate - a cultural one. It was given by God to Adam - a socio-religio-cultural creature - and includes natural and social aspects such as habitat,

Genesis 2:15: “To work...and to take care of.” Care and keeping is the work assigned to mankind in Paradise as *imago opus Dei*. The purpose of the human race is mirrored by the creative purposes of God himself. Out of this understanding of our ‘imaged’ humanity flows our commission of work as our: “ecological responsibility, our economic activity, productivity, exchange and trade and the whole cultural mandate” (2006:65).

The commission in Genesis, is the Proto-commission from which all others are derived. The parallels between this commission and that given by Jesus, the so-called Great Commission^{xxv}, cannot be ignored. The Bible expresses it (Peters 1972:166) in the following sequence: it is the work to be executed by man from Genesis 1:28 & 2:15, namely “be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature.” In the same fashion Jesus encourages/urges His people to make disciples (Matthew 28:19) by bringing the nations into obedience to God (Matthew 28:20 and Romans 1:5) all over the Earth and giving them authority (Mark 17:18 and Acts 1:8) over all living creatures.

Although the focus of Jesus was certainly to see a spiritual liberation of mankind (Peters 1972:167), it is not the overriding reason behind the ministry and commission modelled by Jesus. For the whole of society to be redeemed, people need to be restored in their nature before God. Only then, in Christ, can we have a restored humanity, and man can begin his work on the proto-commission. We are recreated in Christ, the second Adam, to fulfil our creational purpose in serving our habitat/environment.

God and work, in the commission given to man are not contrasting concepts, and neither is being human at work. God at work, as a dimension of Him, is an inseparable concept. Humans likewise are created for work, imaged by the work of the Creator God. Creating humans to work the Earth did also not relieve God (van Rad 1951:63)

agriculture, industrialisation, commerce, politics, social and moral order, academic and scientific advancement, health, education and physical care.

^{xxv} Bosch (1993:437) traces the proponent of the use of Matthew 28:18-20 to infuse the need for missionary enterprises, to William Carey. However, building a missional movement of God’s ecclesia on a single text leaves the biblical case vulnerably thin (Wright 2006:34). Missional propagators also place an undue emphasis, in the text concerned, on the word *Go*, as if this was the crux of the commandment given by Jesus. His primary command was, however, to make disciples and Wright (2006:35) correctly states that the word *Go* is ‘mission rhetoric’ – it is undermined by the fact that it is not an imperative, but a participle of attendant circumstances, an assumption.

from being a working God. Jesus (John 5:17) said to them: “My Father is always at his work to this very day, and I too, am working.”

Work, as a commissioned anointing, was not revoked with the Fall of Man and subsequent expulsion from Paradise. The commandment to work remained; its character has however changed (Green 2005:15) and is in need of redemption - even at the Cross. After the Fall, the character of work changed - work developed a new dimension that was foreign to the world-view of mankind: “By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food.” - Genesis 3:19.

Although the character of work has undergone change, the commandment to rule over and subdue the earth, was not revoked or altered. Man was banished, but with a directive to keep on working. God advised (Genesis 3:23) man to “work the ground from which he had been taken.” The consequences of the Fall did not change the essential value or primal commission of work. Work would become labour, but not without satisfaction and fulfilment. The same principle applied to woman and childbirth, it would now become painful - but not without reward. The commission to fill the Earth was still relevant, albeit painful. Likewise work, as a primary facet of mankind, was not revoked. The inclination to resign from work (Weber 1958:80) in order to be spiritual and available for God, is thus not biblical.

3.1.2. COMPLETION.

On the seventh day He stood back from His work and rested (Genesis 2:1-3). God rested from working the Creation (Calvin 1948:104) and then did so as the Creational intent was completed. God is not driven by His work, nor is work equal to God, but work is the functional expression of His will. Likewise mankind finds their position in relation to their commission to work as imaged by God. The main difference being that mankind spent the first day of existence separated and sanctified in a day of no new creational activity.

Mankind thus worked from a position of rest and joyful fulfilment (Moltmann 1975:43). Mankind was not ordered to rest, but perhaps more notable is that this was the way God intended it to be (von Rad 1981:63). The overall impression is that Man was not created for the Sabbath, but the Sabbath for man (Mark: 2:27), to gain

perspective on his position and relation to the working commission bestowed on him. It was given as a blessing, a benefit for mankind (Green 2005:32), enabling man to distinguish between working as *imago Dei* and notto allow work to become man's master.

The Sabbath stands as a crucial witness to the fidelity of God (Green 2005:31) both as a principle of being human and as a requirement asked of God. God promises (Isaiah 56) His blessing on those who maintain justice, do what is right and keep the Sabbath without desecrating it – including foreigners and eunuchs. The Sabbath was from the days of Paradise a tangible witness of the sustainable commitment, provision and involvement of God with all of Creation. Likewise the principle of commitment is also eschatologically referred to (von Rad 1951:63) in Hebrews, for all of mankind now in Christ.

3.2. WITNESS.

The completed work of Creation stands as the primary witness of the existence, presence and sustainable involvement of God with all inhabitants of this world. Genesis 1:31 outlines this in its concluding statement: “God saw what He had made, and it was very good.” This statement can also be translated (von Rad 1951:61) as being “completely perfect” and this rightly refers to the wonderful purposefulness and harmony of Creation, as well as the beauty of the entire cosmos. The language of the creational report generally expresses the perfection of the fabric of the created work of God (Calvin 1948:104). Creation is a witness, because of the greatness of His work and also because the Bible consistently warns against the idolising of Creation – its purpose (Creation) is not to be the object of worship (Laymon 1971:772), but to relay worship to Him that is the originator of the created world.

The mission of Creation is then also to be a witness to the work done by God. In the book of Acts the word ‘witness’ becomes the explicit appropriate term for ‘mission’ (Gaventa 1982:416) and then it is apostolic in nature (Bosch 1991:116). This renders the purpose of Creation beyond being a static, lifeless entity towards being a visible, constant and consistent witness of the “works of Thy fingers” (Psalm 8:3). A similar view is taken by Paul, arguing that the work of God (Romans 1:20), in reference to the Creation, stands as witness to all of mankind and also throughout the ages. Jesus

presents an analogy with Creation (John 15:27) by stating that His disciples are witnesses (Bosch 1991:117) of the work that He has done: “You... are witnesses because you have been with me from the beginning.”

3.2.1. SABBATH as WITNESS.

Without the witness of His work, the world has little, if any concept of Him. It is the primary witness of God’s existence of and the expression of His inner character and attributes. This witness was complemented by His involvement with the people of Israel and finally the work of Jesus on the Cross, as the essence of the witness of the ecclesia. During the leadership of Moses, Israel observed the Sabbath and circumcision as the most significant signs of the covenant that compactly expressed and distinguished them from the heathen world (von Rad 1951:62). So too is the ‘circumcision of the heart’ an inward witness, while the keeping of the Sabbath is the outer witness. In other words Christians live ‘circumcised’ lifestyles by trusting God for provision.

The witness of the Sabbath is not in the keeping thereof, but in the sustained provision for mankind not working. The witness is that God is the provider and the One sustaining the universe; work does not ‘lord it over’ people, work is rather an ontological reality - part of man, but not master of man. Here is the importance of understanding Creation in terms of its redemption, and not vice versa (Cosden 2006:160).

Moltmann (1977:264) introduces the idea of the Sabbath as a promise of future consummation built into the initial creation. He brings a parallelism into play by equating the concept of the Sabbath and corresponding Shekinah (a presence). By doing this he allows the Sabbath to be understood in terms of time, and Shekinah in terms of space. God (1975:265) finished the work he intended, rested from creating and moved into His space allowing mankind to look forward to his commission from within the presence of God. Though this presence was lost with the Fall of man, it was restored at the Cross. Man can again work with the anticipation of the Shekinah being engraved in his commission and also being perfected in the age to come.

4. SUMMARY.

Interrelated ontological components formulating the *imago Dei* will be carried forward into a theology of work. The first component is one of transformation related to mankind's commission, while the second is one of priesthood, and the third is relational. Here the emphasis is on relationship, first referring to the Trinity^{xxvi} and secondly towards man in his commission to serve his habitat concurrently, in relation to his helper, Eve. The next component is the work God did in Creation and that His completed work now stands as witness.

Characteristics like love or even righteousness is neither mentioned, nor implied and can in no way be deduced from the Protological creational narrative. However with the Fall definite substantive characteristics were revealed in the act of God's expulsion of mankind from Eden after they had sinned. It is the first recorded act of righteousness and justness, followed by an act of caring and love in God making clothes for them.

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^{xxvi} Trinity refers to the distinctively Christian understanding of God as three eternal persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit in relation to each other as "Begetter, Begotten, Breathed Forth, or as Lover, Beloved and Love (Migliori 2004:427).

SECTION II

THEOLOGY OF WORK AT WORK

INTRODUCTION

DEFINITION AND APPLICATION

WORK 'AT WORK' IN THREE DIMENSIONS

REDEMPTION and the CROSS

PAUL and TENTMAKING

SUMMARY

1. INTRODUCTION.

In the previous section work as *Opus Dei*, was defined as an ontological reality. Work has its own intrinsic value in distinguishing itself from, while related, to other functions of being. Cosden (2006:17) defines work as “derived ontologically from its having been built into the fabric of creation by God.” It is not only built into the fabric of earthly existence, it is first and foremost part of the revelational essence of God.

A theology of work is a recent theological methodology, exploring the phenomenon of work itself (Cosden 2006:5) as part of created reality. Therefore a theology of work finds its place in *Opus Dei*. This is not only based on a more Protestant (Volf 2001: ix) vocational understanding of work, developed within the framework of the doctrine of Creation, but also a pneumatological approach, developed within an eschatological expectation.

The essence of *opus Dei* is that God is the author of Creation and the concluder of time and therefore does not delineate the importance or truth of protology as its concept of vocation and calling. It also understands work as charisma which starts with the Creator. Just so, God is the ‘I am’ - the same yesterday, today and tomorrow. It follows to develop a theology of work starting with God – wherever He is. Work can be understood in its ontological form, when reflected as protology simultaneously and

in conjunction with Christology and eschatology. This underscores the scope of mankind as the bearers of the *Opus Dei* image, then, now and in the age to come.

Work then also becomes a normative study, meaning that the prescriptions involved in a theology of work are universal in scope: “Growing out of God’s ultimate purposes with the universe” (Cosden 2006:8) - the ‘then, now and to be’. There are normative ethical implications that lead the present understanding and realisation of work towards the redeemed reality of transformation in this age, using the coming new creation as a mirror of what is to be. It now becomes inclusive for all cultures “pan human” (Volf 2001:86) and not limited to a particular timeframe of history. This universality of work develops a more explicit ontology of work, a better understanding of work’s nature and meaning as well as its position within nature. In achieving this ideal, this broader view and the importance of human work will also see a continued interaction with other disciplines such as anthropology.

Human work also involves the ecological concerns of our day. It is not possible to speak of humanity without making comment about nature; a person is a material and natural being, therefore part of nature. Both humanity and nature are created. Mankind cannot be expressed without reflection on its relation with God and Creation. Ecological concerns are to some extent the result of opportunistic and almost narcissistic approaches (Volf 2001:87) to work, yet one cannot argue that a revised, kinder, gentler and protological understanding of work will resolve more of the issues of the day. A fundamental ontology of work is consistent with other disciplines, such as a broader theology of nature.

The human race cannot be liberated by a gospel of social consciences, nor political structures or financial prowess. It is our understanding of why we have been created and our relationship with our purpose that will stimulate change. It is also our insight into God as a worker and the work of God on the Cross that will lead to the total liberation of the people in the first Adam, redeemed by the Second Adam. Work “as a contribution to the good of all and not merely as a means to one’s advancement” (Bellah (1985:271) and work that is intrinsically interesting and valuable is the central requirement for revitalising social ecology. Such a change to the meaning of work and

our relation to it will not be achieved by expert fine-tuning of economic institutions, but requires “a deep cultural, social, and even psychological transformation” (1985:289).

The natural tendency for humanity is to understand itself in opposition to nature^{xxvii}. However this is only acceptable when requiring means to define what mankind is not (Berkouwer 1962:88), in order to understand what it is. The conclusion should not be an opposition to nature, because mankind shows many similarities and common properties with the natural world. Therefore anthropology and theology of nature are essentially and irreducibly linked to and part of one another: “Too often in recent ecological studies, humanity is collapsed into nature in such a way that we lose our place in nature and thus our unique identity and transcended particularity” (Cosden 2006:82). Mankind is part of, yet also distinguishable from, the rest of creation. Theologically it is also defensible as mankind has been formed uniquely in the image of God and then to have dominion over the earth (Migliori 2004:140).

2. DEFINING WORK.

Work (Cosden 2006:17) is more than the sum total of its instrumental parts. Work is fundamental to our creational existence, expression and execution. It is an ontological reality built by God into the very structures of Creation and thus human nature. Work as such is fundamental to humanness, being an end in itself. Work is then ontological, a functional relational mechanism employing different instruments to express itself, and then to the glory of God.

A missiology of work translates into three interrelated ontological non-hierarchal modes of expression: being witness, relational and transformational. These expressions employ various instruments of functionality and substantive characteristics to anthropomorphize its intrinsic values into the metaphysical world. A definition of work is ‘to be’. It is to be what God has created us to be. It is to be in relation with God and the rest of Creation. It realises into symbiotic relationships that transform Creation and stand as a witness. Within this formulation, checks and balances are built into the defined interrelationship components of being relational, transformational and witness.

^{xxvii} Likened with the comparative view contrasting what humans are not (Gunton 1991:103).

These three components form the criteria for evaluating what we understand work to be. If any component is missing it is not work in the light of Creation or the Cross. It might be labour or work, that acts against the creational image imparted to man. It can also provide an important criteria for evaluating work within an ontological context, and within the image of God. Taking slavery and human trafficking, as crude examples of misaligned expressions of work. These are neither a witness, nor transformational or relational and therefore not work as intended by God, nor work as redeemed by the work on the Cross and neither a fitting description of work within the Kingdom to come.

To a greater and or lesser extent these criteria can also apply to the animate world as animals also work e.g. ants^{xxviii}. There is however a fourth complementary element which is reserved for mankind only, as being created in His image. This enables mankind to be set apart from the rest of Creation, that of being priestly – speaking and being a blessing. Work as a priestly expression in the position and function of the role that mankind is to fulfil, has been devoid of any centripetal motives of pride, position, value, esteem or personal concerns. The undertone of priestly work reveals the contrary: “Hebrew uses the same word for worship as for work, *avodah*, a word best translated into English is *service*” (Green 2005:37). For that matter, we participate in our congregational meetings and can say that the service (worship) was good. In the same context we may refer to the service (work) at the coffee shop.

This describes the heart of the creational intention of work commissioned to mankind. When work is service, it correlates with the word that is used in the New Testament to describe the offices of the church. “The word that was chosen was an unbiblical one, current neither in the Jewish nor Hellenistic environment in this sense – indeed a fundamentally unreligious word. The particular place and function of the individual in the community was comprehensively described with a word which carried no overtones of authority, officialdom, rule, dignity or power: the word, service” (Küng 1976:389).

^{xxviii} Ants Ant-otology...witness of relational transformation. Each ant is individually empowered to serve the greater structured non-hierarchical community via its individual gifting producing and presenting a unified and common goal. There are differentiations, but as instruments of functionality, each serves an individual need and corporate purpose.

Work can be a means to an end when holistically interpreted within the interrelationship of the ontological expressions. In fact, the creation of mankind is prototypical in that humankind was brought into being for a specific purpose, but then *always* within the interrelationships of witness, relation and transformation. If, tentmakers perceive work as a means merely to enter into a specific situation (1992:36) so that the Gospel can be presented, then it represents a misconstrued expression of work; it is then neither transformational, nor relational and definitely not a witness.

On the contrary, it is counterproductive in not representing the essence of being a transforming, relational witness of His Kingdom (see Paul^{xxix}). Furthermore, such an approach is flawed in perceiving work as secular in relation to their calling being sacred. It strips work from being ontological to being a human dispensable tool and depriving it from the greater value of the witness of work and work as a witness. Volf also criticises this definition: “It is not very persuasive since it arbitrarily excludes a host from the concept of work” (Volf 2006:11). Volf is correct in his assumption however, that the problem should not be presented as the exclusion or limitations of defining work. Rather, it is the lack of understanding what work is, and what the work-environment was intended to be that needs to be used as a yardstick of evaluation.

2.1. A THEOLOGY OF WORK ‘AT WORK’.

Flowing from the above, a reflection on a missional theology of work sees three main doctrinal positions as fundamental to the process of achieving just that. The first, the embracing of the doctrine associated with the initial creation (protology) was dealt with in the previous section. Creation is more or less the launch-pad for a wider and more comprehensive understanding of work; most evangelical proposals on work stem from a particular understanding of the creational mandate (Marshall 1979:57). This focus on protology confirms a probing into developing an ontological dimension of work (Cosden 2006:42) and is also the focus of this section, yet here it is in relation to Christological and eschatological doctrines.

^{xxix} Work from a Pauline perspective translates into credibility earned through identification which leaves a model for others to follow – see: 3.1. RELEVANCE OF PAULS’ MODEL OF WORK.

2.2. CHRISTOLOGY.

The second position is thus found within Christ. Christology unveils what Christ did in relation to His work on the Cross. Christology here deals with the issue of Jesus becoming a true man, or the new Adam in God's image (Anderson 1984:67) and what it means to be human again. Contextual Protestantism (Cosden 2001:45) correctly illustrates that any contemporary theological construal of work needs to be comprehensive and must broaden the range of theological reflections on simple doctrinal explorations, such as Christology, to guarantee that the concrete concerns regarding the understanding of work, are adequately addressed. This means that the instrumental and relational aspects of work must be reckoned with in concrete terms.

John Paul II (in Cosden 2006:28) suggests that our work "is somehow gathered up into Christ's suffering in toil in His work on the cross. This idea provides stimulating fruitful thought, it is appealing to think in a real way, that our work is taking into Christ and that the human work becomes about anticipation in/and reflection of Christ's work (not a contribution to it) which could be called a co-working and co-suffering with Christ for our ultimate sanctification." True as it might be, the understanding of redeemed work needs to move beyond an anticipation and reflection, to a full realisation that work was redeemed and restored to its original creative intent (Wright 2006:313). Just as mankind can now live with its sin forgiven (as a result of the work on the Cross), just so ought we now to work with the same anticipation that our *opus imago Dei* has been restored.

The soteriological unveils the redemption that flows from this work and answers questions relating to human salvation and restoration – the latter gleaned from Genesis depicting *that*^{xxx}, that was lost and now redeemed: "I have come to seek and save that... - Jesus" – Luke 19:10. Mankind and Creation (Migliore 2004:151) lost their divine relationship, history and mission to work the land (Paradise) and their destiny to take control of all the Earth. This raises the important question of why God wanted to save this world instead of creating a new world totally detached from any history of the present. Christ being adorned with a crown of thorns, implied that the crown of His creation, mankind, was carried on His head to redeem its work; the symbol of cursed

^{xxx} Italics mine.

work is carried into redemption and forgiveness. Whether or not we find the connections between Christ and His work on the cross and our own work theologically convincing, we are still left with large questions: “Is it our work itself that has value in, and for eternity, or is our eternal value found only in what our working does to our souls?” (Cosden 2006:29).

The answer according to John Paul II seems to be the latter. This understanding of work suggests that work has value in relation to eternity because it mirrors, and thus points to, eternal spiritual things to come. If, according to this account, Christ overcomes in His Resurrection, the Resurrection then becomes the basis of his exultation to authority over creation. He is a new creation. Martin Luther presents an understanding of the Gospel that we, including our work, are acceptable to God. This is by His grace alone and then through faith because of Christ’s finished work on the cross. A central strand of Luther’s thinking is that the quintessential Christ (Peters 1972:38) replaces us, or takes our place before the Father. There Jesus paid the penalty for the sin and resulting collapse of our position before God. We, our works and Creation are thus justified in Him, appropriated by faith.

Within the medieval system the activities (work) of contemplated life were seen as spiritually more valuable than works of a mundane nature that only yielded earthly blessings that came from keeping the social order on track (Cosden 2006:40). Therefore, people doing religious works, like monks and the clergy, were thought of as more spiritual in their calling than those focused on material existence. Luther’s view undermined the whole understanding of piety by leading a rediscovery of Christian life justified by faith, and the subsequent application of the priesthood of all believers (see Chapter III).

Given the understanding of justification by faith, no calling or work should ever be seen as spiritually higher than another. This is because no work(s) can be of spiritual or heavenly good, as no works can contribute anything to us spiritually in our ultimate journey towards eternal salvation. This counters the medieval hierarchy of callings and helps to better understand the value of work(s). Luther saw all people, including those called to an earthly vocation, as part of the calling to salvation (Wingren 1980:89).

This does not suggest that any work is holy in itself or that it has any spiritual or eschatological value.

Precisely the opposite is true. Ordinary work is only sacred in a secondary or instrumental sense, in that it is now the appropriate, obedient, earthly response to God's saving grace and general providence. Work in no way secures, nor co-operates with this grace to a heavenly end. Only in this way, as Luther saw it, can human life and work be freed from compulsiveness and set aside to be itself before God, and therefore sacred. This reasoning appears to be the main emphasis of Luther's 1520 Treatise on Good Works (Cosden 2006:42).

It is however in this bi-vocational model (Volf 2001:105) of *vocatio spiritualis* and *vocatio externa*, that there is an inherent bias towards a hierarchy of callings, making spiritual vocation, the 'better' vocation due to its correlation with eternity. To some extent it has eternal value with the possibility of being carried through into heaven. It is this temporal and somewhat secular view of work, which lies at the heart of our understanding "of work, that simply does not work" (Cosden 2006:48). It becomes an eschatological question of what in the end God will save from this universe .

2.3. ESCHATOLOGICAL.

The third is then our eschatological understanding of mankind and his habitat/environment. It addresses aspects of humanity's future final state, destiny and significance: "The significance of work depends upon the value of creation, and the value of creation depends on its final destiny" (Volf 1991:37). Once more, we need to turn to Jesus as the first and the One in whom all that were lost will be carried forward into the new dispensation. The new or quintessential Adam, risen in bodily form, now carries the perfection of the image of created mankind, as well as man's restored work, into Heaven – thus taking Earth to Heaven (Cosden 2006:58). In Colossians 1:15 Paul states that Jesus is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all Creation. While Adam was created in order to image God, Christ is said to be the image, the model or archetype for what it now and will always mean to be human.

2.4. BODILY RESURRECTION.

“So our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Saviour from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under His control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like His glorious body.”

- Philippians 3:20-21

Any contemplation of the issue of the eternal value of work necessarily requires a study of the worker, in this case the human being, as a corporal being. It simultaneously augments the question of what on this Earth God will take into eternity and with that the status of the whole of Creation, spiritual and physical. This study holds that salvation is the future, not only of souls, but also for our bodies (Kümmel 1976:142), our bodily expression of work and non-human creation as well. The assertion that the salvation of Creation is inextricably linked to the salvation of mankind is here in need of validation.

From the heart of this deliberation flows the principle that for something to be valuable and meaningful, it will have to be ‘saved’ in order to be included in eternity. This automatically raises the question of what “from this universe, from what exists when Jesus returns and from what existed before that time, will God save?” (Cosden 2006:52). From the study in this chapter of the Biblical context for work, work is understood as a primary characteristic of mankind and linked to his physical being. The credibility of mankind’s work being carried forward into Heaven depends on the saving and restoration work of Jesus. So also are our physical attributes and non-human creation in line to be resurrected with Jesus to reach our own world and to minister in the world to come.

The context for understanding the Resurrection is in Jesus as the quintessential Adam (Cosden 2006:62) being resurrected and in Him lies mankind’s hope for salvation and ultimate resurrection to the new creation. Jesus himself is projected in the Bible as the “resurrection and the life” (John 11:25) and being the prototype or ‘firstborn’, not only of Creation (Colossians 1:15), but also from the dead (Colossians 1:18), and of those conforming with His likeness (Romans 8:29). The salvation and transformation of Jesus’ body is the model for our salvation and that of non-human creation. We must not confuse Christian hope for the future with contempt for the world; we need to see it

based on Jesus' covenantal^{xxx} work on the Cross and subsequent Resurrection. Then Christian hope becomes "loyal to the earth" (Kasper 1966:155).

The Resurrection of the Crucified One and His subsequent assertion of divine position, power and authority is not an isolated event, but the beginning and eschatological anticipation of the general, and then corporal, resurrection of the dead. With this expectation of the rising of the dead the question of our corporeal nature arises. Because Jesus was an actual historical man, it is inconceivable to imagine Him without His body (Kasper 1966:154). The body (*soma*) in Scripture is vital to being man and it is unthinkable to be without a body after death (Kee 1996:182).^{xxxii} The Resurrection of Jesus was not a "symbolical resurrection, but a genuine and physical (*naturalem*) one, for eyes cannot be witness of a 'spiritual' resurrection" (Calvin 1960:315).

Contrary to Greek thinking,^{xxxiii} the body is not the tomb of the soul and also not the principle of evil from which man's true self needs to be freed, as for Gnosticism. The body as God's creation describes the whole of man; not as a fleshy substance as in materialism, nor as a person and personality as in idealism (Kasper 1966:150). The body is the whole man whether communicating, in relationships or at work. The body is the place where mankind stands either at the mercy of sin - selfishness, envy and ambition - or he stands in obedience to Christ, in service and fulfilling his creational calling.

Matthew not only confirms the Resurrection of Jesus, but also the power given to Jesus over death by reporting the resurrection of saints as a witness (Henry 1957:432). "The tombs broke open and the bodies of many holy people who had died were raised to life. They came out of the tombs and after Jesus' resurrection they went to the holy city and appeared to many people." – Matthew 27:52-53. Theologically, it makes little sense to

^{xxx} Covenant is the promissory relationship established by God with the world and particularly with the people of Israel. It is relationally based on God's grace and faithfulness and calling for obedience and service (Migliore 2004:407). Scripture mentions various covenants with Noah, Abraham, Moses and David. The prophet Jeremiah (31:31) speaks of a new covenant that will be written not on tablets of stone but on human hearts. Scripture proclaims the realisation of this covenant in Christ Jesus in whom all these promises are fulfilled.

^{xxxii} See also 1Corinthians 15:35ff and 2Corinthians 5:1ff).

^{xxxiii} Jewish thinking rarely, if ever, portrays a separate, immaterial part of man, such as we usually mean when we speak of soul or spirit, as the enduring part of man in contrast to his mortal body. Except among the Essens, Jewish thinking did not conceive of man as existing apart from his body (Kee 1996:181).

hypothesise a non-earthly eschatological existence while believing in the resurrection of the body (Cosden 2006:95).

Paul sees the salvation of the whole man and Creation grounded in the death and Resurrection of Jesus (Kümmel 1976:249). The Resurrection for Paul is the foundation stone of the whole Christian faith; the authentication of the *kerygma* depends upon Jesus as risen from the dead (Kee 1996:260). There is no possibility that Paul did not understand, or wanted to convey the essence of the Resurrection to be a bodily Resurrection (Barth 1933:122). Also that the theme of the first book of Corinthians is not so much focussed on the death of Jesus in relation to the forgiveness of sin, than it is on the bodily resurrection of Him.

Paul furthermore urges us to serve and glorify God with our bodies (Romans 12:1 and 1 Corinthians 6:20) as the body belongs to the Lord and the Lord to the body (1 Corinthians 6:13). The (now) pneumatic body (Barth 1933:115) which Paul refers to in 1 Corinthians 15, is the *soma pneumatikon* in which the *pneuma* refers to the divine dimension in which the body is, rather than to the substance it is constructed of.

Corporeality means the total involvement of man in the world. It concludes that man is part of the world and vice versa. Consequently it is through man's body that he stands in relationship with the real world in its entirety – and the work of the commission bestowed upon mankind. It is within this context that Creation cries out (Cosden 2006:70) for the children of God to be revealed (Romans 8:19 & 22-25) and is 'groaning' for redemption of man's body, for in man's redemption and eventual resurrection lies the hope that we do not yet have. It is then within the redemption of *imago dei* as a bodily being of mankind (Brunner 1952:157)^{xxxiv} that the redemptive hope of Creation lies. The resurrected body demands a correspondingly glorified, but nonetheless material, environment.

However, the world to come will be the Kingdom of God (Barth 1933:111) and His absolute transcendence as Creator, Redeemer and King. An eschatological view of Jesus, as the exalted One, clearly mirrors man's working involvement in the world to

^{xxxiv} Brunner in Jenkins D E; The Image of God.

come (Cosden 2006:64) and also for those that are in Christ, in the present world. From His post-Resurrection position of power He now intercedes (Peters 1972:46) in a priestly mode, with the Father, for us (Romans 1:3); He is our advocate (Hebrews 7:25) and also Judge (Revelation 20:12-13) whilst simultaneously being King (Revelation 17:14 & 19:16).

2.5. THE KINGDOM NOW.

Christian theologians have held two main positions on the eschatological future of the world (Volf 2001:89). Some have stressed radical discontinuity between the future and present orders, while others postulated continuity between the two. These two radically different eschatological models emulate two opposing theologies of work. If the world is to be annihilated and a new one created *ex nihilo*^{xxxv}, then work only has earthly and temporary significance, because the cumulative work of mankind will become devoid of ultimate value. Work then does not need to be related to transformation, relation or being a witness. Work then is not something that will be carried forward. Work then is reduced to labour, a means to survival, character-building and keeping the body and soul together (Barth 2009:147).

The approach changes radically with the assumption that the world will not end in apocalyptic destruction, but rather in eschatological transformation. The individual and cumulative work of mankind gains significance when it is related to the world to come (Volf 2001:89). Here the significance of secular work depends on the value of Creation, and the value of Creation depends on its final destiny.

When Earth is perceived as being transformed, it enhances the perception of the earthly locale of the kingdom of God. Gundry (1987: 258) argues that in the book of Revelation, the saints' dwelling place is the new (transformed) earth. It is "quite clear that the book of Revelation promises eternal life to the new earth..., not ethereal life in the new heaven" (1987:254). The same emphasis relating to the new earth is in the book of Matthew where we find Jesus' prayer (6:10) for the Kingdom to come here on earth, and his advising His people to seek the rule of the Kingdom on earth (6:33).

^{xxxv} A Latin phrase meaning "creation out of nothing (Migliore 2004:407). The world is not part of God's being, nor does anything co-exist eternally with God out of which the world was created.

Jesus also promises the meek that they will inherit the earth (5:5) or “the earthly locale of God’s kingdom” (Volf 2001:94).

The focus on the earthly locale of the Kingdom in the New Testament corresponds with the earthly expectations of Old Testament prophets like Isaiah (11:6-10 and 65:17-25). This focus also fits with the resurrection of the body and contemporary involvement bringing the Kingdom ‘close’ as a witness of the world to come, whilst giving meaning to the present. The resurrection body demands a corresponding glorified, but nevertheless material, environment that not only anticipates future material existence (Moltmann 1967:58 & 133), but also gives impetus to the present.

It is to be the environment that mankind can now live in and model a redeemed *opus imago Dei*. It is also to be the platform from where work, as an ontological creative reality of mankind, will be carried forward in the world to come. Yet the eschatological world is only part of the Gospel. Paul (Bruce 1982:23) sees the present material universe being transformed, rather than annihilated, to fulfil the protological purposes for which God created it. The message of the Cross is also relevant, if not more so, for mankind’s existence and execution.

2.6. EARTHLY HEAVEN.

The eschatological new creation is thus a continuity of the protological framework established in Genesis and therefore also within a relationship of continuity with the present. Work, as an ontological reality, partly defines the structure of human beings’ personality and identity. Since the Resurrection was not a negation, but rather a restoration and affirmation of the human earthly identity, the restored earthly work will likewise have an influence on the resurrected personality of mankind (Volf 1991:97).

The purpose of post-Resurrection work is found in its transformation and preservation, and then specifically as a witness of the Kingdom to come. Jesus frequently responded to transformation in the lives of people by alerting His audience to the fact that the ‘Kingdom has come close’, thereby implying that the restored work that He had done had become visible and recognisable in the present.

3. CONCLUDING.

Marketplace Missiology reflects positively upon mankind's contemporary realities and exhibits the ability to give meaning to the present. Marketplace, as a missiological concept, expresses the ideal that mankind in the image of the new Adam with restored and transformed creational purpose has been re-commissioned by Jesus to make disciples of people. Marketplace is also about the restoration, by means of work, of that habitat where God has placed us. Moreover, it reflects the three working offices of Christ (Migliore 2004:186) as prophet, priest and king.

Work then is fundamental to our creational existence, expression and execution. It is an ontological reality built by God into the very structures of Creation and thus human nature. Work as such is fundamental to humanness, 'is' and is an end in itself. Work is then ontological, a functional transformational mechanism and a relational entity employing different instruments to express itself but ultimately a witness to the glory of God.

A missiology of work translates into three interrelated ontological non-hierarchal modes of expressions: *witness*, *relational* and *transformational*. These expressions employ various instruments of functionality and substantive characteristics to anthropomorphize its intrinsic values into the metaphysical world. A definition of work is 'to be'. It is to be what God created us to be. It is to be in relation with God and the rest of Creation. It is revealed in symbiotic relationships that transform Creation and stand as a witness. Within this formulation, checks and balances are built into the three defined interrelationship components.

These three components, witness, relational and transformational, form the criteria for evaluating what we understand as work. From the protological approach discussed in this Chapter, there is always a fourth element present and imprinted onto the three others, namely the charisma or priestly. It is the latter that empowers work as positive and God in representing abundant reality.

3.1. THE PRAXIS AT WORK.

Careful consideration has also been given to traditional thinking about work and how history helped shape the related theologies today. This brings traditional views in line

with the importance of the ecclesia's mission into the world. "In order to be able to carry on with this important task, responsibly, Christian organisations will need to rely on careful theological reflection on the complex issues related to human work" (Volf 1991:6). Much of the present missiological understanding of working missionaries comes from the principle that Paul made tents whilst he was involved in missionary activities.

3.2. RELEVANCE OF PAUL'S MODEL OF WORK.

Paul applied certain principles (Allen 1962:9) as a working minister of the Gospel and in the process left a missional legacy for others to follow. These included a strategic approach towards ministering in the marketplace of commercial centres, solid teaching, and the establishment of self-governing, self-supporting and propagating fellowships of believers.

Of particular interest to this study is that Paul invested primarily in relationships, built on solid teaching and understanding of the Gospel and approached work as a means of witness and self sustainability. With regards to finance there seemed to be three rules that guided his practice (1962:49):

- a. As a general rule, Paul did not seek financial help for himself – he worked daily with people building relationships, and at night he worked as a teacher (1Corinthians 4:12) transforming the minds and hearts of (the same) people. Paul did not see his daily work as a functional tool to enter and stay among people. Work was part of his witness, whether it was that of making tents or that of teaching. He challenged the Greek thinking, implying that ministering should not be remunerated and that there is a dichotomy between work of the inner man and that of the outer.
- b. He did not take finances to those to whom he preached – he expected people to follow his example.
- c. He was not involved in administering funds of believing communities – this work was left in the hands of the community of believers.

Paul demonstrated his creational intent by allowing his work to be a primary witness, and in so doing, allowing his work to be a catalyst for cultivating relationships, credibility, and leaving us a model of witness to the Kingdom. His understanding of

work today challenges the ‘tentmaking’ philosophy, especially upheld, supported and applied by primarily mission agencies. Paul did not perceive his work only as a means of gaining access into the mind and geographical world of people and from there moving unto ministry of the ‘spiritual’.

If we were to interpret work just as a means to an end it would produce a dichotomised understanding of being a disciple, separating once again the bodily from the spiritual, and compromising the redemption of our primary creational mandate. An alternative, supporting understanding of work is a bi-vocational approach, buttressed by a functional interpretation of work. Work, as understood in this way, models the classic missional understanding that it (work) is something that stands between us and our fulltime calling.

Instead, Paul left a legacy of a more holistic understanding and approach to the ministry as living working corporal beings, integral with being disciples, and he encouraged others to follow his example. Paul’s approach of incorporating work as witness leaves us with a mission model and gives three vital keys of lifestyle ministry to unlock people and communities:

a. CREDIBILITY.

In 1 Corinthians 9:12 and 2 Corinthians 6:3 Paul writes that he worked in order not to be an obstacle in the way of the Gospel among the Gentiles. Paul took care that his message and motivation were not suspect. He was not preaching for gain or profit and did not want to be identified with other orators who roamed the empire exploiting their audiences (Siemens 1992:D252). He was never in anyone’s debt.

b. IDENTIFICATION.

By working, Paul identified himself with the people he preached to. While working with them, Paul learned about their lives, desires, expectations and also fears. These were issues that he could then address when preaching to them on the Lord’s Day.

c. MODELLING.

Paul showed how to live out the Gospel in an idolatrous culture. He also modeled a Christian work ethic. In 2 Thessalonians 3:8, he says “with toil and labour, we work day and night that we might not be a burden to any of you, and to give you an example to follow.” Work was thus not an option for converts or a form of escapism from the real challenges and opportunities of the marketplace.

3.3. MISSION MODELLED BY JESUS.

The first missional model presented by Jesus is taken from the Gospels (Mathew 10:1-18, Mark 6:7-12 and Luke 9:1-6) with the sending of the twelve disciples. Similar to the protological, Jesus empowers His people before instructing and sending them on the assigned missional journey. There are different layers Jesus uses in the sending of His people.

The first related to the cultural group they were to reach and what they should take with them. Jesus instructed His disciples not to take anything for the road. This instruction paved the way for a dependence on God their provisions, but also a dependence on relationships with the people they would be ministering to: “those who go out on mission without resources are dependent on the goodwill of the community to which they go” (Marshall 1979:353). Jesus also instructed them to go to the house of Israel and here Jesus’ primary consideration was one of building relationships by living with people.

Jesus utilised a cultural-religious key to enter and unlock the barriers of inter-relational communication and trust. This key is based on the Middle Eastern cultural conscientiousness (Douglas 1974:541) of caring for a traveller in need^{xxxvi}. The indictment and condemnation in failing to do so is graphically portrayed in

^{xxxvi} The Old Testament provides sustainable examples relating to hospitality. Abraham showed a readiness to receive strangers (Genesis 18 & 19). Reuel is surprised that his daughters could meet a stranger and not invite him to a meal (Exodus 2:20). Gibeah (Judges 19:15) not only receives strangers but also refuses to take money for his generosity. He also exhibits another trait of hospitality, that once the guest is under his care, he was responsible for them - an attitude also displayed by Lot in Sodom. Isaiah (48:7) gives as one of the marks of true religion, a willingness to care for the hungry and the naked.

Deuteronomy 23:4-6 with the Ammonites and Moabites, who failed to meet the children of Israel with bread and water.

Jesus thus sent them to their own people, for a Gospel message with no or little value for their own people, would probably have less value for people of other or different cultures. The Messiah then utilises three more layers to reiterate His concern for relationships; namely, 'to go, stay and work'. The emphasis here is not on the word 'go' but rather on 'stay'. The key, however, is in 'work'. Relation is by demand, albeit cultural, but work unlocks potential relationships that go beyond the hospitality laws of the day.

The last layer is again that of the priestly. Almost as two pieces of bread make a sandwich the priestly were given to the disciples by Jesus to enable them to give to people with whom they stayed. The priestly underlies and enriches the relationships that developed through work performed; the charismatic element, when the need or opportunity presented itself for the breaking of the Word, helped the healing and deliverance of people.

4. CONCLUSION.

Marketplace missiology is about a working people. It is people working in Christ and for Christ - working people reaching other people working, with the Gospel of the only Christ. Work is their primary witness, or it is at least equal in relation with other expressions. Work is part of being human and a common denominator in which all of humanity shares. The first activity recorded of mankind (Genesis 2:15) executing its primal commission is Adam working (Stevens 1999:113) by naming the animals. Work is spiritual and gifted of God, complementing the corporeality of being human and created in the image of the Triune God. Specifically, work is part of the commission of Christ (Matthew 10:10) as well as an element of the Gospel that needs to be taken, worked and lived as a witness to the nations in the 'naked spaces' (Neuhaus 1997:157) of the market square.

In this regard work provides important principles in believers' missional quest to reach the un-reached in the market square. These principles include relationships, trust and acceptance (Mayers 1987:49). Work is not a barrier or hurdle, but a creational

instrument to release the goodness of the Triune God. Work is more than a legalistic functional commission, but part of a relational reality reflecting the character, relationships and work of the Triune. All of God's work has a relational functionality about it. God creates (Genesis 1:1) not only the Earth, but also the relationships between humanity and nature that are all in relation to Him. God created a highly differentiated habitat (Migliore 2004:115) that was from its inception interrelated and interdependent. The habitat was a community and work the means to bring the elements of the community into relationship with God and the release of God's intended and fundamental goodness. Therefore work not only gains entry into other communities within the marketplace, but more so into the hearts and minds of the people they minister to. Work is adding value to the people, environment and communities with whom they share their habitat.

At this point, marketplace missiology distinguishes itself in certain principles from tentmaking, as it does from a theology of prosperity. Although, as with tentmaking, there is common ground, the main approach to work and its resulting goodness is different. The basis of the teaching of prosperity (Venter 1990:60) is that God wills prosperity and that His people will prosper if they obey the spiritual laws that He has set in place. It links spirituality with health and prosperity as opposed to the curse of sickness and poverty: "God gives the power to get wealth" (Copeland 1974:42). The teaching of prosperity is fundamentally centred on humanity (Venter 1990:63), simultaneously individualistic in its nature (Neuhaus 1997:21) and bordering on secular humanism. This is because in a theology of prosperity the deistic and secular world-view hinges on the application of certain spiritual and physical laws to produce success and prosperity, irrespective of a person being a believer or not (Savelle 1980:8-11). Work is thus, as with tentmaking, a means or tool to a (prosperous) end.

Within marketplace missiology the focus is not on humanity or the application of specific natural, physical or spiritual laws, but rather on being obedient to the will of God in executing the commissions given to mankind to work (serve) humanity and nature in such a way that it reflects the image of God. It is to the work in obedience, with humanity, for the good of the habitat that God has called the ecclesia. God is a personal and sovereign God who governs Creation according to His will and not certain 'clockwork' laws (McConnell 1988:45). The Earth and its fullness belongs to God and

humanity, the stewards, were originally appointed and their position reinstated by the death of Jesus (Barron 1987:91). The message of the Gospel centres on the work of Christ manifested in His ministry, Crucifixion and Resurrection making it Christocentric and Trinitarian (Migliore 2004:132).

Work is ontological, it is what it means to be human. Marketplace missiology is working people ordained as an apostolic priesthood of all believers, to be servants in the empty spaces of the market square.

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CHAPTER III

MARKETPLACE - A MISSIOLOGY OF PEOPLE

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MARKETPLACE - A MISSIOLOGY OF PEOPLE

SECTION I

INTRODUCTION

UNDERSTANDING

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

TOWARDS A MISSIOLOGY

CONCLUSION

1. INTRODUCTION.

At the heart of Marketplace Missiology lies a movement of people, God's people as working people. Yet a movement of people as a missional model, being an alternative to the current mission-donor-support-model, is not simply a case of comparing light with darkness. The landscape of the world, and the way Church is being perceived, has changed. Historical socio-political boundaries have moved and are more fluid and ambivalent. Globalisation has, as a process, caused increasing interconnectedness, so that events and developments in one part of the world are affected by, have to take account of, and therefore also influence in turn, other parts of the world and all levels of society – including religion (Tiplady 2003:2).

As we are moving out of the shadow of The Enlightenment and the era of Christendom, a theology of movement of people is not only one of perceived need, but also one that is now becoming possible again (Bosch 1991:472). It presupposes a fundamental break with the notion, so elementary to The Enlightenment understanding, that the private sphere of life is separated from the public (Newbigin 1986:142). Christianity is today (Kraemer 1958:21) once again questioned, repudiated and even ignored. The aftermath of the relativistic influence of The Enlightenment is now challenging previously held Christian certainties, as the West is losing its hegemony.

Today Christianity has to compete for alliances in the open market of religions and ideologies. There are no longer oceans separating Christians from other religions (Bosch 1991:475) and Christians are now discovering that other religions are incongruously both more different from, and more similar to, Christianity than they had thought. A world enabling people to live in religious apartheid has come to an end.

Much of the contemporary focus carries with it the perception of an organisation being driven by external considerations. “Given the publicity accorded to the failings of the ordained clergy, there is the feeling that in falling back upon the laity the church, to some extent, is returning to the concept of the general priesthood as a last resort when traditional patterns of ministry have been found wanting (Lovegrove 2002:2).” Yet the current revival of interest is in part not clergy driven, but also as a result of (lay) people rethinking what Christianity and God’s creational intention entails translated in terms of mission and purpose on earth. This is compounded by the reality that the focus of theological deliberation of giving expression to a movement of people has tended to be on *being Church*, and towards most activities conducted mainly *outside of Church*. This has left a void for those who work from Monday to Saturday (Foley 1986:6) and then in an ever-increasingly culturally diverse environment.

This chapter will focus on the latter: a movement of active Christians referred to as the laity ‘who together give tangible expression to the concept of the church as being the body of Christ’ (Lovegrove 2002:i). It is a growing phenomenon. The proliferation of theses written, and theological deliberations on the subject of the laity and clergy show the need for a theology that validates the position and function of a movement of people amicably referred to in the First Epistle of Peter as a ‘royal priesthood’. This Petrine description of the general body of believers constitutes part of the formal basis of this chapter. The current awareness of a movement of working people, generally called the laity, is not a new phenomenon. It is, however, one that has re-emerged since the historic fundamental concerns regarding the clergy-laity divide were not and still have not been addressed: “As evidenced in these articles and countless other statements the church says one thing, and does quite another. So ingrained are the old ways of thinking and acting that they are revealed time and again, often at the moment something else is trying to be said. The problem is not a new one” (Ayres 1982:17).

1.1. APPROACHING THE ISSUE.

It will be argued throughout this chapter that the entire life and existence of the ecclesia is missional, and therefore it can rightfully be termed a movement of people (Bosch 1991:475). A movement of people with an allegiance to Jesus, immediately brings to fore the class of people today referred to as the laity. The laity as a classification of people under this, and similar banners, is problematic because:

- a. It is nearly impossible to contemplate a movement of God's people without referring to them as the laity.
- b. The challenge is enhanced by the fact that most of the definitions, prescriptions relating to position and service, are written by the clergy.
- c. The clergy and laity are then also intimately related to the current understanding of Church.
- d. They are seen as servants of the Church more so than servants of the Kingdom.

A solution needs to go beyond any one-dimensional approach of merely abolishing terms like the laity and clergy, or being overly critical towards what is currently known as the Church. Such overly simplistic actions, with little or no theological and historical roots, are in danger of failing. Worse, they can leave behind dysfunctional people, critical of all that they are not, and charting their own existence and destiny within a similar fashion.

The challenge here is to define a people belonging to God, cognisant of their historical context who are specifically participants in the communal marketplaces of the world and who are on a mission to realise God's intent. In the process certain matters of time and space pertaining to the relation between the clergy and laity, as well as the conceptual understanding of church, will automatically present themselves and inevitably stretch the proverbial wineskin.

This chapter, then, endeavours to discern a practicable theological angle to a whole movement of people as a missional model. It also seeks a more flexible and even modular understanding of the ecclesia than what is currently perceived as the Church. It is also, more specifically, a missiology of the marketplace - a study of God's people, living and working (ministering) in and being part of this world. It is about being an

apostolic people called the ecclesia, being individually ‘church’ wherever they are and congregating whenever and wherever they meet, whether in a building, at work or at home. It is about being a witnessing ecclesia in their natural habitat, whether this is at home or in diaspora, living and working in cross-religious environment of foreign cultures. By way of achieving this ideal the chapter is divided into two sections:

1.2. PROPOSED OUTLINE.

a. A People Created.

Understanding the concepts *clergy* and *laity*^{xxxvii} will be the focus of the first half of this chapter. The deliberation will take a historical view, specifically of a Christian phenomenon that is expressed in post-Resurrection terms. This phenomenon is to some extent understood as the Church as a legacy created and cultured by the early ecclesia. This route is also complemented by an Christological overview of people re-created in Jesus.

Yet the historical route requires God’s dealings with the nation of Israel, taking the discussion outside the parameters of Christianity. The substance for arguing a holistic and more unified conceptualisation of God’s people inevitably invites a Protological overview of His creational intent for humankind, the implications of the fallen nature of mankind and the wonderful recreation of the position of mankind in Jesus the Christ.

b. A People Gathered.

The second half of this chapter will be devoted to a movement of God’s people debated within the parameters of defined concepts of church: expressed in terms of the body of Christ today. An Christological approach is intended to give light to a more modular conceptualisation of the ecclesia.

The approach is missional at heart, perceiving the body of Christ as a movement being the letters of Christ delivered to a lost world. As the ecclesia comprises

^{xxxvii} Clergy is generally referred to (Neill 1963:15) as those ministering in the Church and the Laity as those ministering in the world outside the realm of the Church. The latter is also referred to as the “apostolate of the laity, or priesthood of all believers (Bosch 1991:470).”

people, the understanding of a movement of people is closely related and interwoven with that of church.

2. TOWARDS UNDERSTANDING THE PHENOMENON.

Marketplace missiology is a theology comparable to what Stevens (2006a:5) describes: “of the people, for the people and by the people.” It is a missiology that incorporates and involves all of God’s people, similar to the perception of the early ecclesia, as a people movement. Early Christianity gleaned its lifestyle and commission from Jesus, who did not set up a structured church (Foley 1986:27), but rather gathered a community of believers who were to continue and multiply His work on earth, even today.

To revive this understanding of being His people, and move from intent to practise, necessitates an awareness of a major theologically-based division within Christianity that has developed through the centuries. This division relates to the concept of the clergy and laity, and then also as an evolution of a partitioning among Christians, something which has become very real (Stevens 1999:5). It is a distinction in general terms between those whose sphere of service is primarily the Church, and those whose service is primarily (in) the world (Neill 1963:15). This distinction has emerged because of specific circumstances and has been maintained through apparently valid practical considerations.^{xxxviii}

However, it can still generally be taken as axiomatic that this inherited essential historical distinction has now become an almost indisputable norm of Christianity, namely that of being an institution which is composed of the ‘ordained’ and ‘lay’. Most of these historic developments probably seemed right at the time and they were ably aided by common cultural perceptions of what ‘church’ should be and the concurrent progression of a supportive theology to give it substance. But what might

^{xxxviii} Theological deliberation within the church has never been conducted in a vacuum. The need for a fresh evaluation of missiology is conducted against the backdrop of an increasingly changing missiological landscape within a vastly changing world and post-modernism. Similarly many of the groundbreaking and pioneering work relating to the empowering and theologising of the laity in the Roman Catholic Church has been against the backdrop of major political and social changes that opened the door for modernism to challenge mankind (and the churches’) way of thinking and being. Great scholars of the laity, from the Roman Catholic Church became prominent in that time; Yves Congar (1904-1995) and Marie-Dominique Chenu (1895-1990).

have been a short-term culturally interpreted solution in the past, has now become something of an impediment into which the followers of Christ seem locked by both perception and practice. Unfortunately these are also perceptions and practices, without which a great deal of what is today known as the Church, would collapse.

In addition, the perception by the laity of what today is understood as the Church is deep-seated. Compounding the challenge of objectively reflecting on the laity, is that its essence, definition and ministry execution are overwhelmingly expounded by the clergy. This in turn furthers the assumption that the laity cannot be studied without a reflection on the clergy who have written church history mainly in terms of: “prelates, councils, movements and heresies” (Neill 1963:11). Lay persons in ministry have unique challenges in being part of an institution with limited recognition and definition; they are also part of the world where the clergy have limited influence. The influence of the laity is no less deserving of study than that of the ordained minister of the Church (1963:16).

The history of the clergy-laity divide is therefore very important as it can display all its complexity within the ecclesia and its realisation and relation to the world outside. The reasons for the birth and evolution of the divide have to be noted as they give greater understanding and building stones to a missiology of people. However, in the true sense of theology, neither a history, nor a missiology of the laity ought to have been written, as the whole ecclesia was and is intended to be the *laos*, the people of God (Neill 1963:15).

Any theological deliberation, then, regarding a movement of God’s people, will question the appropriateness of a merely revised theology of the laity. It will instead reflect on the development of a laity-less theology of His people. A reflection of this nature is once again quite feasible and now “becoming possible again, as we move out of the massive shadow of the Enlightenment” (Bosch 1991:472). In doing so, it will eminently expose our current embedded thinking whereby it has become extremely difficult to define clergy without the laity, and vice versa. In itself this highlights the contemporary difficulty in defining the role of God’s people outside the categories of the clergy and the laity. It also stresses the need for an incorporative definition distinguishing the work of God’s people not in terms of class or status, but rather in

terms of functionality and service. This may lead us to contemplate the need to abolish both terms - or at least reformulate the concept of laity to its original intent, that of 'those not in Christ' (see Fig. Vi.).

The recurring awareness regarding the laity (Lovegrove 2002:1), emphasises the need for a clearer definition its role and position and also its role and purpose in relation to, and within, the Church. If the laity is (only) needed to aid the activities of the Church, then one questions whether the term and or the laity should exist at all. This makes the motivation and use of the term (laity) even more questionable. "The institutional life of the Church does require maintenance and admittedly, the clergy are overburdened; but relief will only come through rethinking the nature and renewal of the ecclesia, rather than by trying to shore up the present framework of congregational life" (Ayres 1982:21). Yet, still further within thinking is embedded the divide between the world and the church. As long as this divide is present, we will unconsciously be guided back to an applicational approach to people, defining their role and function on the basis of their being active in the world (laity) or the church (clergy).

Finally, the clergy-laity divide needs to be placed within the context of its theological and historical development and, accordingly, its practices. The study of the creative tension between the historical and theological can only prove valuable for a validation of the phenomenon and its continued existence. Searching for a contemporary missional model of a priesthood of all believers might suggest the termination of the distinction of the clergy and laity. If so, it will have fundamental consequences for the institutionalised Church. The latter might not be easy as the theology supporting the existence of the laity has to a large extent been developed from within the institutionalised Church-paradigm. Also, ministry of the Church has to the greatest extent been composed of two categories of people, those who are ministers (albeit also missionaries and teachers) and those who are not.

The aim of this study is thus also to address the ironic development that all people can minister, but are not ministers. The latter group is then mostly defined by vocation – working in and for the Church, or working as a Church member in the world. This again has given birth to another unfortunate common perception: that being involved in '*full-time ministry*' inevitably implies resigning from work to become a pastor or

missionary. “What bedevils our pastoral theology and existing practise is a mindset that automatically expects a lay person who is deeply committed to Jesus Christ to become a paracleric in the church’s civil service as mini-priest or mini-sister ” (Marciniak 1980:35). It is no longer about being co-workers with God, taking the church to the marketplace to represent and reflect His consummating work in recreating, sustaining and redeeming the world.

3. HISTORICAL CONCEPTUALISATION.

The present theology of the laity has unfortunately been defined by clergy and then within the context of position and space of the clerical world. However, Moltmann (1975:11) argues that the theology of the future will no longer simply be a theology for priests and pastors, but also for the laity. It needs also to be a theology written by the laity and consequently it may present a laity-less theology. The consequence is that the ministerium of Jesus can then be considered as one that does not *have* a ministry or *have* mission. It is then a reflection of His life. God’s people are anointed to *be* ministry and *are* missional (Moltmann, 1975:9).

The Christian community normally looks upon the early ecclesia as the norm and model (Dolan 2007:23) of the legacy Jesus gave to His disciples. It is perceived to have been a movement birthed by the Holy Spirit, allowing us to reflect on the early ecclesia as an apostolic movement of disciples. However, the history of the development of the laity within this movement is not always rounded and authentic. Rather, it is complex in the sense that the Church has generally given priority to the development of concepts like *hierarchy*, *clergy* and *religion* (Marciniak 1980:27). Most Christians today do not have an in-depth knowledge, or much care for, the history of the separation of the sacred and secular, nor of the struggles of Church and State and other influences which brought Christianity to where it is at present in its division of the clergy and laity (Foley 1986:27).

An historical biblical overview also indicates that the word ‘laity’ is not found in the New Testament (Dolan 2007:24). The apostolic movement was seen as the new people (*laos*) of God (1Peter 2:9) as well as elect (*eklektai*), the holy ones (*hagioi*), disciples (*mathetai*) and brothers (*adelphoi*). No reference is made of ordained or non-ordained, nor clergy and laity, though within this community of people there were special

ministries, charismas and duties. It does then beg the question relating to the inception and development of the laity within the history of His people.

3.1. EARLY ECCLESIA.

The word 'layperson' - *laikoi* - was first used (Stevens 2006b:5) by Clement of Rome at the end of the first century. It needs to be noted that the term was never used by any of the apostles to describe a second-class, untrained and unequipped - or for that matter even an equipped - follower of Jesus. In short, the word laity can be deemed unscriptural when used in the context of the above and was avoided when referring to the people of God. When Clement used the word '*laikoi*' in a letter to the congregation in Corinth, he made brief reference to the participants in the liturgical order, with the assertion that: "The lay man (*ho laikos anthrōpos*) is bound by the lay (*laikos*) ordinances" (Neill 1963:30). In doing so Clement either penned the beginning of a distinctive role of lay people serving next to clergy, or he simply verbalised an existing trend within the ecclesia at that time. In his letter, and use of the particular word, there is also a hint of class distinction, hierarchical order and possible division.

The word used by Clement was the common Greek word '*laikos*', also an adjective to distinguish ordinary people from their leaders. In translations from the Old Testament Hebrew into Greek it was commonly used to distinguish the profane from the cultic (1963:30). Clement used the term both for persons and things, indicating his insistence on the (inclusive) liturgical competence of the lay persons. Some fifty years later, when Clement's letter was translated into Latin, the translator preserved some of the older Greek feeling by using the word as a socially tinted phrase '*plebeius homo*'. In this way the writer already indicated that the role of the laity was becoming more commonly perceived as that of the humble, and subordinate compared with that of the clergy (Ignase de la Potterie 1958:849).

Flowing from Clement's particular use of the word and its translated Latin form, the word laity, when then used amongst the early ecclesia, was better understood with an opposite against which it could be defined. Until the second century there was no such opposite (Faivre 1990:23), after that the specific meaning of the word clergy slowly became the very concept that would be used interactively with laity.

3.2. THE ANTONYM CLERGY.

In the first century the word clergy (*klēros*) used in the New Testament referred to the whole people of God (*laos Theou*), and then decidedly in terms of an assigned portion of incorporation, participation and in the Old Testament the inheritance of the land promised (Stevens 2006b:30). In the New Testament writings Peter and John used the word when they told Simon Magus that he had no part, inheritance or participation and share (*klēros*) in the ministry, because his heart was not right with God (Acts 8:21). Likewise, it was recorded that Jesus sent Paul to the Gentiles in order that they could also receive forgiveness and a place (*klēron*) among those who were sanctified (Acts 26:17).^{xxxix}

The Apostles never used the term to describe any appointment to an ecclesiastical office (Flemming 1994:232-50). In the case of Judas, as recorded in Acts 1:17, it referred to his allotted (and wasted) share in the apostolic ministry (*klēros*). The emphasis here was on Judas's defection from the faith community and his replacement, fulfilling a prophecy foretold in Scripture and not in any way connected to his position.

With the exception of Ignatius of Antioch, who used the word to describe a martyr, the term clergy as a position of office, was not commonly used in conjunction with that of the laity until the third century (Stevens 2006b:32). The development of the word clergy, as describing ordination^{xl}, education and intonation (Faivre 1990:23), has since then given rise to the use of the word laity. This development was simultaneous with the growing need of the ecclesia to have people who could spend more time expounding their belief criteria and the management of the movement. Subsequently their roles needed to be defined in terms of their services rendered. The definition of division cemented the developing paradigm of laity as an antonym of clergy.

The interpretation of the terminology here is important. In the first century the ecclesia was experienced as a movement (*laos*) of people sharing in the *klēros*. It was at this pivotal point that a paradigm shift developed relating to the understanding of what was meant by ecclesia, and a movement interpreted as *laos Theou*. There was a transition

^{xxxix} Also see Ephesians 1:11, Galatians 3:29 and Colossians 1:12.

^{xl} Also see Chapter IV pg. 197.

(albeit slow) from the general understanding in the first century that those without the knowledge of God (non-Christians) were referred to as ‘plebeius homo’ - as the translated Latin word for the Greek *laikos*.

In the centuries to follow, specifically with the advent of the Christendom, however, the terms evolved into two division of the *laos Theou*, within the Kingdom. The laity was now referred to as those in need of teaching and shepherding; and those that were ordained and equipped to teach and conduct the sacraments, the clergy. The people now residing (spiritually) outside the realm of the *laos Theou* (see Figure 1) are referred to as the mission field^{xli}.

David Bosch (1991:201) portrays the situation graphically in saying that by the end of the first century a major shift in the understanding of the church and its mission had started to set in. Some of the New Testament text already reflects a situation where the mobile ministry of the apostles, prophets and evangelists was beginning to give way to the settled ministry of bishops (elders) and deacons.

In the century to follow, the developing dichotomy between the two groups collapsed in favour of the second. Whereas the writings of Luke introduced the Holy Spirit as the Spirit of mission who equipped Jesus and the apostles, guiding them into and through missionary situations, the Holy Spirit was now seen as seen almost exclusively as that of building up ‘the church’ in sanctity. It cemented a shift away from the quintessential purpose of God’s people reaching and proclaiming the Kingdom into a world, to the Church now filling the entire horizon. Ecclesiology became so primary (Bosch 1991:201) that both eschatology^{xlii} and pneumatology (and in effect mission) were submitted to the Church.

Proportionally some of this thinking can be attributed to the advance of the Kingdom and its infiltration of almost all institutions within the known world. This was a paradigm contrasting that of first century thinking of an almost class-less movement of witnessing people advanced into the known world. They looked upon themselves as

^{xli} See Fig.vi Chapter III.

^{xlii} Eschatology is the doctrine of the ‘last things’ and the completion of God’s work of creation and redemption. It concerns not only the completion of the life of humanity but also the consummation of God’s purposes for the whole creation (Migliore 2004:409).

the clergy. They were the ones that knew the Creator God and could witness of His Kingdom.

Although it is conclusive to say that the wording and language of clergy/laity was not current in the early church, it would be naïve to assume that the “emergence of such language in the third century simply came out of nowhere.” (Lakeland 2003:13). The haze of theological confusion that enshrouded Christianity by the end of the second century asked for solutions and direction.^{xliii} Some of these elements became so embedded in Christian thinking that traces of it are still “alive and well today (Bosch 1991:200)”. The church came through this challenge and had it not done so by withstanding the Hellenisation of Christianity and extreme Semitisation, it would have ended in a “totally other-worldly and irrelevant esoteric movement, or retrogressed to an insipid Ebionitism” (Van der Aalst 1974:187).

It came, but at the cost of the spiritual birthright of all people of God. The laity was now the people identified and associated with the *plebs* and a people from whom the heavenly *episcopos* or clergy could be chosen. They also became distinguished from and dependant on the clergy for theological and biblical interpretation and spiritual guidance. “From this time onward, the layman’s function was to release the priest and Levite from all his material concerns, thus enabling him to devote himself exclusively to the service of the altar, a task that was necessary for everyone’s salvation (Faivre 1991:69).”

The first century, produced a movement whereby people made up the community of God without today’s reliance on the descriptive terminology of clergy and laity. The next two centuries saw the familiarising and cementing of the distinct dual compartmentalisation of God’s people being the clergy and the laity. It was, however, with the acceptance of Christianity as an official religion under the rule of Constance,

^{xliii} The early church movement faced two (at least) very serious challenges to its faith. The one came from the Jewish tradition and the other in the philosophy of Gnosticism (Bosch 1991:199-200). The manifestation of excessive Jewish linear apocalyptic eschatology resulted in a doctrine that teaches that the present is ‘empty’ and people are waiting on God to intervene in their ‘not yet’ history. Yet this opened the door for establishing the roots for the understanding that was to follow where the ‘already’ can be experienced in the now through Gods’ reign in the Church.

The other challenge was far more serious as it is presented in a much more encompassing form of philosophy known as Gnosticism. The term is derived from the Greek word *gnōsis*, meaning knowledge (Douglas 1974:473).

that the division became institutionalised. Henceforth the Church was defined in terms of the clergy and laity.

Stevens (Stevens 2006b:39) outlines five influences as the stimuli for this development:

- a. Incorporation and transference of the Old Testament priesthood model of leadership in the Church.
- b. The unsuccessful Jewish revolt against the Empire and the subsequent destruction of the Temple resulted in the scattering of Christians and exclusivist reaction in Judaism (Stevens 2006b:39). This, coupled with confusion over doctrine, added to the birth of the need for a special kind of people to guide and to give direction to the challenges of the day (Norris 1984:22).
- c. An imitation of the Greek-Roman government and management structures that ruled every aspect of the then known world.
- d. The church became an address, not unlike the temple, where people went to fulfil their religious activities. This centripetal approach had two important aspects: that God was (once again) localised, and that spirituality was best performed in the church (now fixed real estate) and not in the marketplace.
- e. The sacraments and the ministering of the Word were now in the hands of (theologically) qualified and ordained people.

The choice here seems similar to the circumstances and leadership during the time of Samuel (1 Samuel 8). The people asked for direction and, in a sense, security. They opted for a model known to them and one that had the pretence of being successful and fulfilling for people non-aligned with God. Being Christian and representing a people walking a road of faith, were now replaced by a religious system. Being Christian had now become a religion and under the leadership of Constantine an acceptable societal entity. The need to understand what Christians believed and the blurring of borders between the sacred and the secular gave rise to the clergy as those that had greater knowledge of the Kingdom, and the laity represented the rest of the Christianised society. Those outside this realm became the mission field.

From the fourth to the 16th century the clergy-laity distinctions deepened and became more defined and enunciated. The main contributor^{xliv} to the reformation of the ‘Western’ Church was Constantine (converted AD 312) who; “appointed bishops as civil magistrates throughout the empire, organised the church into dioceses along the pattern of Roman regional districts, and consistently used ‘clerical’ and ‘clerics’ as a privileged class” (Rademacher 1991:60).

3.3. POST-CONSTANTINE ERA

During the Dark Ages yet another dimension of the clergy-laity phenomenon evolved. Beker (1980:303) puts it into the following perspective: “A mystical doctrine of the church catholic displaces the idea of the church as proleptic reality.” It was now regarded as the company of the spiritual elite, who with their endowment of the Spirit already actualize the Kingdom of God in their souls. In this setting, the pre-existent status of the church, its ontological character, and its status as imperishable body became the focal concerns. It was therefore not unexpected that within this paradigm change, the missionary fervour of early Christianity would subside. Mission had now become equated with church planting and where the Church was, there was the Kingdom.

Within the Church-Kingdom paradigm the clergy-laity divide encountered yet another differentiation. Whereas the first was indicating a function, the other was based on a state of life (Lakeland 2003:12). Up to now the laity was compared to the clergy within the distinctions of function and office (acquired through study and ordination) within the church. However, monks brought a new dimension by contrasting clergy from laity in terms of their different states (ways) or stations of life. Although the distinctions were at times blurred, by the twelfth century monks insisted on being called clergy and so the distinction was cemented and made official (2003:13).

This added another important junction on the road the people of God were, dividedly, travelling on. The laity was now part of a double division into men of religion and men of the world (Congar 1957:13) and the laity were also differentiated on the basis, not

^{xliv} In Stevens (2006:44), James Houston “warns against the biases we bring to ‘reading history’ on this matter, including reading back into the patristic period of the *fait accompli* of the Constantinian church, but ignoring the great movements of the Spirit (such as the Beguines) bringing renewal; and interpreting history from the perspective of top-down leadership rather than from that of grass-roots people.”

only of function, but also that of their lifestyle. In the period prior to the Reformation, ministry in the Western Church was heavily shaped through the Gregorian reform in the period 1057-1123 and by Roman Law (Stevens 2006b:44):

- a. The Bishop of Rome was regarded as the Head of the Church on earth.
- b. The language of worship was no more the language of the people.
- c. Clergy started to dress differently and were prepared for ministry in an enculturation seminary.
- d. Ordination became an absolute act.
- e. Clergy became celibate and thus distant from the normal experiences of the laity.
- f. The cup was removed from the laity in the Eucharist.

The clergy-laity distinction was thus now institutionalised in religious orders, priestly ordination and the seminary system. The latter also mirrored the growing accompanying sacred-versus-secular phenomenon: “It increased the grades of ministries and established seminars to train young men destined for the priesthood to be kept free from the pleasures of the world” (Rademacher 1991:79). The laity now became confined to the secular arena and defined by place (read secular), rather than by discipleship.

3.4. THE REFORMATION.

The Reformation was the first widespread reaction, after the first century Christianity, against a historically developed narrow understanding of the ecclesia, as well as a concurrent movement towards the proliferation of the priesthood of all believers. It started to undo the neglect of centuries in this regard and to some extent it also restored Christian thinking (Lovegrove 2006:1) relating to a common priesthood of all believers. The Reformation also challenged the socio-political world; the sheer weight of Reformational thinking also drew reaction from particular Catholic scholars^{xlv} who made valiant attempts to re-introduce the concept of a priesthood of all believers within the Catholic Church.

^{xlv} Catholic scholars “show that the Council of Trent defined ministry against the backdrop of Luther’s radical message (AD 1517), that all believers are equal priests. Following Peter Lombard and Thomas Aquinas, the Council reaffirmed the existence of an indelible mark imprinted on the soul of a priest at his ordination, thus emphasising the being of ministry instead of the doing of ministry (Rademacher 1991:73)”.

However, it is now known that The Reformation, guided by Martin Luther, did not see the priesthood of all believers come to full fruition. It was left to movements like the Anabaptists to take it to a more logical conclusion (Bosch 1991:247). There were certain given historical circumstances that clouded The Reformation's course. Certain initiatives carried forward by Luther should be noted (Stevens 2006b:45-47), namely Luther's pivotal theology of salvation by grace, the replacement of the priest with a preacher and the adoption of the concept of the Catholic seminary system. These are very important and relevant issues, yet they are equally symptomatic and manifestations of deeper-seated theological traits, so atypical of The Reformation.

These initiatives need to be seen in the context of three important matters particular to The Reformation, as well as some historical concerns that colour, positively and negatively, the process of endeavouring to be *laos Thou*. The *laos Thou* in this study is interpreted as a movement of His people in and outside the conscriptions of a hierarchal concept of the ecclesia and caste-like system, with specific reference to the classification of those who are disciples of Jesus.

The first matter is the provision of a contemporary credo encapsulating the essence of Christian beliefs within the socio-political and economic realities of the day. The need for teaching was a reality from the time of the early ecclesia and a recurring thread throughout the history of Christianity. The second important matter was Luther's Two Kingdom concept regarding the role and position within the habitat where we live and work. This is then directly influenced by the perception of the ecclesia as an institutional entity and therefore in a sense also a cultural expression of the status quo of the day. The third matter is intrinsically related to the second: the ecclesia was now an institution called 'church' sharing in the common goals and responsibilities of the cultural society it represents. This matter is covered more extensively in the second half of this chapter.

3.4.1. CREDO, CULTURE AND POLITICS.

Given the historical backdrop of the Middle Ages, The Reformation was at its inception much more focussed on soteriology than ecclesiology. For The Reformation the article of 'justification by faith' was the starting point of theology and one on which all other

doctrines hinged – also, for the missiology to be developed later. What had been one truth among others now became *the* truth (Niebuhr 1951:18). Salvation was now perceived more as a subjective and personal experience, correlating with Luther's personal history and his existential question (Bosch 1991:242): "Where do I find a merciful God?" This also corresponded with developments in the latter half of the Middle Ages, where the individual was beginning to emerge from the collective understanding (Beinert 1983:207) of being a people of God.

This emphasis on the privilege, for all who seek and believe, to have a personal relationship with God and finding individual grace (*sola gratia*) before God would become the hallmark of The Reformation (Du Toit 1963:72). This emphasis would never again disappear, nor would the interpreted responsibility of the individual over that of the group. The priesthood of believers was seen in terms of its effect on individual salvation, but then also (in that order) as a collective experience - Christian living and the new-found interpretation of salvation was still a centripetal exercise. This affirmation of the personal role and responsibility of the individual initially supported the rediscovery, advance and promotion of the priesthood of all believers (Holl 1958:238).

On the other hand, it was also Luther's rhetoric concerning universal priesthood, Christian freedom from the law and the spiritual equality of all earthly callings, both spiritual and non-spiritual, that had very specific socio-political implications. In context this rhetoric was simply a particularly pointed way of expressing the theological underpinnings of his Reformation programme. To the untrained ear, however, in the context of early 16th-century Saxony and beyond, it had a socially revolutionary sound which made it attractive to various nascent nationalist and radical groupings (Trueman 2002:23). To the oppressed peasants, labouring under intolerable conditions, and to the German knights, resentful of German taxes paying for Italian excess, the message and mission of Luther was interpreted as a rallying call for revolution and rebellion.

Luther's liberating language was seized upon by various groups. It provided them with a vocabulary for articulating and justifying their various protests, and a means of turning their social grievances into a religious crusade (Oberman 1992:155). In so

doing, they divorced the language from the intended soteriological theology of Luther's Reformation into a socio-political revolution. This is important, since it helps to explain both the dramatic success of the initial Lutheran Reform programme in Germany, and more significantly, the disappearance of the rhetorical emphasis on universal priesthood that had struck such a clear chord and culminated in nationalism, anticlericalism and peasant unrest afflicting the German territories in the early 16th century.

The disasters of the so-called Peasants' War and of Munster demonstrated both to Luther and others the dangerous ways in which the rhetoric of freedom and priesthood could be used. Accordingly, once the polemical heat of 1520 had passed, such language became less common. The language of freedom and priesthood was partly a polemical issue, intimately related to the political and theological climate (Manschreck 1974:200) of 1520. The loss of the specific language of freedom and priesthood did not necessarily indicate a shift in theological belief. Instead, it pointed to a change in the polemical context, where it was as important not to concede ground to libertines and radicals through ambiguous terminology, as to criticize the practice of prelacy within Roman hierarchy.

Given Luther's emphasis on calling and upon the Two Kingdoms, it would be wrong to categorize his theology as either providing an ideological basis for a complete emancipation of the laity, or as representing a radical individualism. It was neither. The emphasis upon calling in the social and political sphere had its corollary in the theological realm. Luther's emphasis upon individual conversion, assurance and faith was not an attempt to set the individual in general opposition to all forms of corporate authority, but rather a specific response to the particular problem of how men and women could stand as righteous before a holy God.

This highlights the need for defining the essence of The Reformation through mainly two channels, that of training and preaching. These would eventually curb the development of a broader application of the priesthood of all believers, leaving it to movements like the Anabaptists to explore, apply and develop.

3.4.2. THE PREACHER REPLACED THE PRIEST.

Within The Reformation the preacher began to replace the priest and, in effect, carried the notion of a special class of clergy forward. The preacher-expositor in time gained the same clerical standing as the priest officiating at mass (Stevens 2006b:46). Within the early Reformational writings and sermons of Luther, the role of the church, the institutional priesthood and of the mass was radically transformed. The church was now the servant of Christ proclaiming His Word to the world. The institutional priesthood became the body: “which, as much for convenience sake as anything else, was there to preach the Word and point to God’s promises (Trueman 2002:19).” The whole notion of an elite priesthood, which in some way constitutes an intermediate spiritual group between the laity and God, was abandoned.

However, the migrational pendulum swinging away from the priest and later again back to the preacher, plays out against the backdrop of Luther’s empowering of all believers to gain salvation. What Luther did not intend was an open agenda for all to understand the Bible without the assistance of a trained expositor. This placed preaching, as the main component of being congregated, back into the heart of the movement and subsequently restrained the evolutionary development of a class-less priesthood. Luther still also adhered to the concept of territorially circumscribed parishes and of the ecclesiastical office restricted to such a geographically delineated area (Bosch 1991:246).

The Reformation could thus not provide (in time) an ecclesiology comparable to its rediscovered soteriology (Stevens 2006b:47). Luther’s focus was on a universal priesthood rediscovering salvation as grace to all believers - and not an anti-hierarchical view of church government (Trueman 2002:20). It also shunned those that started to take seriously the ministry of all believers such as the Quakers with no clergy, or Moravians who saw themselves as ‘lay’ missionaries and Anabaptists.

3.4.3. SEMINARY SYSTEM.

Luther thus acknowledged the principle of the need for training. He subsequently adopted the equivalent of a Catholic Seminary system and thus the enculturation into a clerical culture (Stevens 2006b:46). But this was not done with one eye on the Catholic Church and to create an alternative and competitive institution. Rather, the institution

of training by Luther arose from the need to define The Reformation as to what it was, and also what it was not. The first was to distinguish itself from the Catholic Church in terms of the reformational theology of personal grace and faith in a living God.

Secondly, it needed to secure a socio-political environment that was conducive to the development of a habitat where the world and ecclesiastical life could live together in harmony (Trueman 2002:24). Luther had no intention of putting the Bible into the hands of the laity simply for each believer to do with it as they would. His emphasis upon the fundamental perspicuity of scripture did not deny a role in the church for theological professionals, nor did it insist that each person was as competent to discern the meaning of scripture as everyone else (Oberman 1981:51).

Luther and his followers emphasised the need for proper theological education, as well as the respect for church tradition, particularly patristic theology (Trueman 2002:24). It remained within The Reformation programme despite the adherence to the notion of scripture alone (Fraenkel 1961:87). Both these factors reflected the Reformer's acknowledgement that scriptural authority could not exist in a vacuum but needed to be set in a critical relationship to the doctrinal and exegetical traditions of the church. It thus needed to be conducted in a symbiotic relationship between responsible biblical exegesis and the corporate setting of academy and church. Luther could not, nor did he simply wish to, dispose of the teaching magisterium of the church. Once this basic reality was acknowledged, theology became one of the corporate activities and image of an educated church leadership and not something in which just anyone could indulge (Trueman 2002:24).

3.4.4. TWO KINGDOMS.

The net effect on the movement of all believers was one of liberation and captivation. Universal priesthood and freedom was delimited by the theological constraints imposed upon by Luther's understanding of the Word given within the Bible. As in the social sphere, Luther's understanding of the Two Kingdoms where a God-given hierarchy existed, so in practice in the religious sphere a similar hierarchy continued to exist, albeit within a different soteriological framework.

As with the notions of universal priesthood and freedom, this is yet another application and expression of the theology of grace epitomized in Luther's conversion. What it does is to abolish the hierarchy between the sacred and the secular, and to accord parity to all things in the spiritual realm. What is significant about Luther's teaching on calling, however, is that it also reflects the limits of the democratising tendencies of his theology. The idea ties in with his teaching on the Two Kingdoms and highlights the fact that, while he may have democratised salvation by taking it out of the hands of an institutional church, (in the spiritual kingdom a mediator between God and humanity) he was nevertheless not democratizing society or the institutions which formed its constituents (Trueman 2002:21).

The concept of calling cuts both ways: on the one hand, no one can claim spiritual superiority on the grounds of a sacred calling or position, since all callings are now sacred; on the other hand, everyone's calling is God-given and thus no individual has grounds for attempting to overthrow the given secular order on the basis of the democratisation of the spiritual order. One concludes that since the social hierarchy as it now exists is God-given, rejection or rebellion against that hierarchy is effectively rejection and rebellion against God (Dillenberger 1958:363-402).

Though very subtly disguised, it is and remains an extremely important point. Luther's thought is more subtle than many have given it credit for. The Two Kingdoms idea, with its strict demarcation between the world of social discourse, public righteousness, and daily life - and the world of individual salvation, righteousness before God, and spiritual life - effectively marks the bounds and the application of the teachings embodied in the notions of universal priesthood and Christian freedom. These are ultimately categories which refer to the spiritual and not the material world. Thus their strict democratising tendencies, in Luther's mind at least, are restricted to that sphere (Trueman 2002:21).

Luther thus allowed for a universal, egalitarian attitude towards grace and conversion, while simultaneously creating barriers which were to prevent the Lutheran Reformation programme being carried across into the secular field. Failure to spot this subtlety, or fear that others might fail to spot it, lay behind much of the early Catholic opposition to Luther. Indeed, in the context of a discussion of the priesthood of all believers, David

Bagchi (1991:137) makes the following observation concerning Luther's early Catholic opponents: "The controversialists in general were much less antagonistic to Luther's doctrine of the priesthood of all believers than might have been supposed. Their objection, as with some of Luther's other teachings, was prompted largely by the possibility that the rabble might understand it out of ignorance or malice." All accepted the universal priesthood, provided that it did not detract from the special priesthood.

3.5. POST REFORMATION.

The greatest post-Reformation development, and also one that markedly influenced the concept of the priesthood of all believers, was that of Protestant scholasticism. This cemented, albeit unintentionally, an intellectual elite (Trueman 2002:25). It was rather a natural and inevitable development in Protestant theological pedagogy, as it became a national phenomenon and moved from pulpit to the university. From here scholastic Protestantism developed in the late 16th and 17th centuries. The Protestant emphasis on philology was largely due to the fact that it had always been a religion of the Book. With this came concerns for the unique authority of Scripture, as revelation and for the articulacy of the same, and so it inevitably had a profound concern for textual and linguistic issues.

These developments were not antithetical in theological emphasis towards the laity, but arose directly from them. The need for sound biblical text and for a better understanding of the Bible derived directly from a desire to make the Scriptures comprehensible and accessible to all (Trueman 2002:26). The 17th century onwards combined the preceding theological developments with the need to educate the flock concerning their own theological identity. This happened at a time when subtle variations within denominational factions carried social and political consequences.

The focus within different denominational factions was now on defining what each group uniquely believed and being true to themselves, versus that of fellow Christianity. The inherent subjectivity of the Protestants and two authorities of Scripture added to more fragmentation and underscored the need for credo clarity (Manschreck 1974:205). This was largely to the detriment of the world they still needed to understand and reach. This need is still valid today as we move into a globalised world of pastiche cultures and alternative religious overtones (see Chapter I). The call

for clarity and formulations of Christian beliefs today, in relation to this new world, is similar to what the early ecclesia experienced when they moved from a Hebraic birth-bed into a non-Jewish Greek world and accompanying new world-view. The need for a definitive articulation of present-day Christianity again presents the danger of cementing another dualism - of interpreting a movement of His people in terms of the laity and clergy.

3.6. THE CHARISMATIC MOVEMENT.

The Charismatic movement introduced another dimension on the road of rediscovering the essence of the priesthood of all believers. It is described^{xlvi} as one of the main and prominent lay movements of the previous century. The resultant lay initiative was then also seen as one of the distinctive praxis of renewal (Wright 2006:253). It initiated a more general participatory character of worship for the body of Christ, including the practice of various spiritual gifting, spontaneous reading of Scripture and personal witnessing. There also seems to be a direct link between lay initiatives in charismatic gatherings and evangelism flowing forth outside these meetings (Hocken 1981:124).

Both the Pentecostal and the Charismatic movements have, as in the day of Pentecost, a central focus on the gift of the Holy Spirit. Peter interpreted this as the fulfilment of the prophecy in Joel 2:28-29. Pentecost is here construed as the turning point of human history with the democratisation of the endowment by His Spirit in accordance with Acts 2:17-18. This introduces a transcending of class, race, culture, generations and gender; Peters' interpretation also has implications for social equality and universality (Welker 1994:148). For the Charismatic movement the last article of the Creed, with specific reference to the Holy Spirit, is in the New Testament the "first fact of experience" (Newbigin 1954:89). It is this bestowal and accompanying exercise of charismata^{xlvi} (spiritual gifts), without formal appointment or ordination, on ordinary people, that was seen as a major contributor to the growth of the Charismatic renewal (Wright 2006:254).

^{xlvi} The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church (1997:321).

^{xlvi} The Greek word meaning gifts used by Paul in 1 Corinthians 12:8-11 to speak of the unique endowments given by the Holy Spirit to Christians to equip them for their particular ministries in the communities of faith (Migliore 2004:406).

The spiritual immediacy and directness here stands independent of any priestly, ministerial or human arbitration. It stretches the Reformational heartbeat, of all people standing independently before a gracious God, also to all Christian people as receptors and carriers of divine communication (Hocken 1994:61). This interpretation also translates into a new understanding of being a community of God, as all share in His grace and are united as one in His Spirit. More than in previous Protestant revivals, the Charismatic movement has developed an awareness that the outpouring of the Holy Spirit was (and is) for the sake of the body of Christ, facilitating a new understanding of what it is and means to be the ecclesia of Jesus, both locally and universally (Bittllinger 1981:128).

The confession of the authority of the Holy Spirit as an inner power or dynamic, has subsequently evolved into an understanding of liberation regarding religious rights; in other words, recognition and status including those for women (Wright 2006: 255). Self acquisition of status and acknowledgement has also gone hand-in-hand with apathy towards, and even the rejection of, traditional church organisations, denominationalism and mission agencies. Preference is given to the Kingdom over church (Walker 1985:211).

While the Charismatic movement has nurtured the empowerment of the laity, this development has unfortunately also displayed an important lack of theological deliberation. It has manifested doctrinal indifferentism and “its do-it-yourself ecclesiology should be regarded as reaping the bitter harvest of the woefully weak doctrine of the church in much evangelicalism” (Wright 2006:256). The Charismatic movement has aided the rediscovery of the priesthood of all believers, but has not produced a thoroughgoing laicising of Christianity. The focus of the movement has not been on the development of the laity but has aided the wider evangelicalism to rediscover Spirit-filled and the Spirit-gift-grace character of the whole ecclesia.

4. TOWARDS A MISSIOLOGY OF A SPECIFIC PEOPLE.

The road the priesthood of believers has travelled has almost made a complete circle taking the body of Christ towards its very beginning, albeit with still unanswered questions. The role, place, position and function of the priesthood of believers has been frequently debated, and then mainly by the clergy and academics. However, as the

circle of history is closing and the democratisation of the laity is becoming a reality, the laity has become more conscious of their priestly position and function as well as the execution thereof. The laity now acts in the same way as the clergy, ministering as working people, whether at work or in smaller groups.

Lay people have become the missing link for churches trying to find new ways to the problems of the secular community. Lay persons are in a unique position because they can relate to the secular environment in ways rarely achieved by the professional clergy (Harrison 1960:47). It is the laity, living and working in the world, which daily experiences the deep gulf between what the Church stands for, and what the world drives at. They are moulded, mangled, confused or suffocated by the dominant trends of thought. But more importantly, they also represent the ecclesia's missional encounters with the world, a fundamental theme of the new lay movement.

Although valiant efforts are being made to discover ways for lay persons to carry the Kingdom into the world, without compromising Christian theological and ethical ideals, few are theologically trained for the task. Ever since the second century there has been an expressed need to understand the Gospel^{xlvi} in contemporary terms in order to enhance greater obedience to God. Although this has repeatedly led to the creation of an elitist class of people, the need cannot be ignored for people to equip themselves to empower fellow Christians.

The awakening with regards to the role, position and entitlement of the laity, has also blurred the definition. Consequently the role of the professional clergyman has been placed under pressure (Harrison 1960:38). If working people can become priestly, then where does it leave the contemporary understanding of the clergy, and equally importantly, the Church? "It is no longer the layman who needs to be defined, but the priest, and the priest is defined (or defines himself) by contrasting himself with the layman" (Greshake 1988:18). Reflecting on a missiology of a whole movement of the people of God, brings to the fore certain challenges. Most of the material written was by people called and practising from within the existing understanding of being clergy. Though this was, and still is done with outstanding intentions, the underlying

^{xlvi} The 'good news' of salvation through the free and unmerited grace of God, in Jesus Christ (Migliore 2004:411).

paternalism accompanying their deliberations cannot be ignored. This also has consequences for objectively considering a laity-less missiology of all of God's people.

There is also the tendency among some theologians, specifically the priestly hierarchy, that the dogma of the Church places them in a position which is ontologically prior and superior to the layman (Kraemer 1958:78-79). In theory the Protestants' position is different, as The Reformation was grounded in the doctrine of the absolute sovereignty of God, and all things subject to this, including priest and church. However, whenever the question of authority of the layperson is raised "the finger of an exclusively priestly voice and authority is immediately raised also" (1958:81). This uncovers a paradoxical dilemma within contemporary Protestantism. The doctrine of the finitude of all things under God explicitly includes the finitude of the ecclesia in whatever form it represents itself. Therefore, the church in history can never legitimately become an end in itself.

In the next section of this chapter an effort will be made:

- a. to define the priesthood of all believers ontologically. This will be done against with the understanding that the ecclesia is the people of God (*laos tou Theou*). This interpretation has generally been defined from the position of the Church and normatively as an antonym of what clergy represents. An effort will be made to define *laos tou Theou* as an ecclesiastic movement of class-less people.
- b. to restore the priesthood of all believers to the early church's understanding of *laos*, meaning the whole people of God, and *kleros*, signifying the whole body of Christ and one that was not confined to the ordained priesthood (Harrison 1960:38). Laity is defined as those without knowledge of Christ. It thus entails a 'laity-less' description of His people.
- c. to reflect on the ecclesia as congregating people, specifically as people assembling and having a point of reference or place of gathering. This entails a break from norm in defining people belonging to the Church, to an understanding of assembled people as the ecclesia which congregates for the purposes of the Kingdom. The ecclesia will be seen as a contemporary entity studied in the light of its biblical and historic foundations, as well as from the perspective of its teleological orientation and eschatological goal (Hoebel 2006:21).

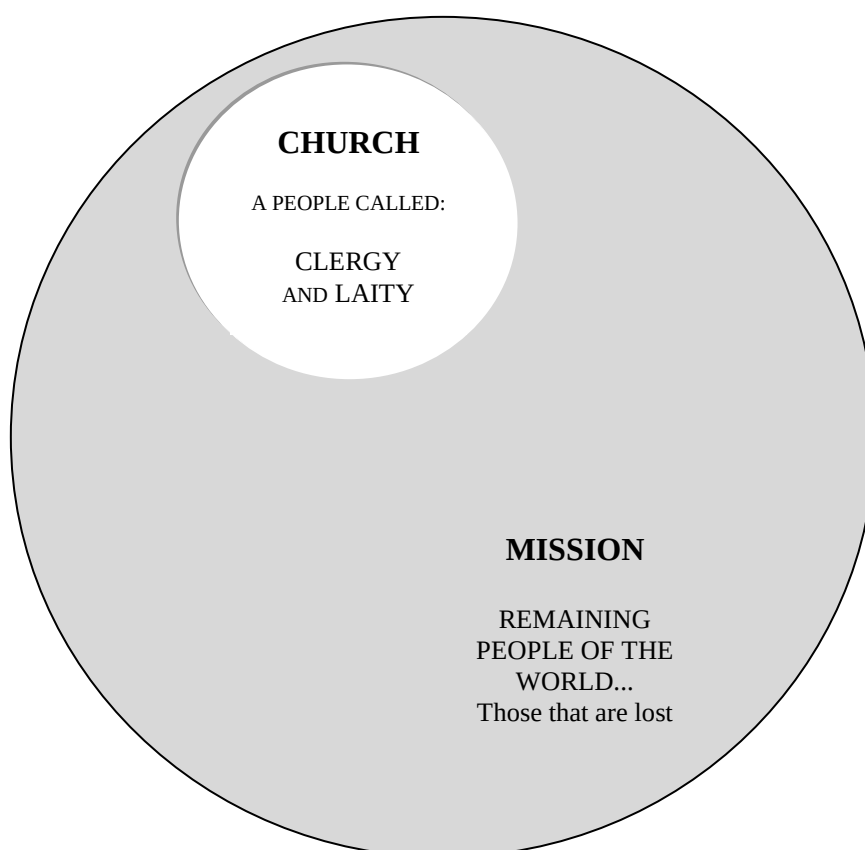
- d. to refresh the missional character of the *laos thou* being witnesses into the world. If the life of the “churches is examined from this point of view, a great deal of the activity of the Church and its missions will be exposed as wasted effort and church-narcism” (Harrison 1960:47).

A theology of the whole people of God will also expound the unity of the people of God, exploring the meaning of the dispersed life as well as the gathered life. This next Section is essentially concerned with a theology of the whole people of God – a people without distinction of laity and clergy, summoned and equipped by God for the life and witness in this world (Stevens 1999:9). It is a theology with the continuous and dynamic task of translating the Word of God into the situations where people live and work and is at its core practical (Browning 1991:3).



*The understanding
of the clergy and
laity in 0-200 A.C.*

Fig. vi.



*The understanding
of the clergy and
laity from 400 A.C.*

Fig. vii.

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CHAPTER III

SECTION II

PRIESTHOOD OF ALL BELIEVERS

Protological Approach

Image of God

Priesthood of all Believers

Apostolate of all Believers

Serving as a People

Laos tou Theou

1. THE WAY FORWARD.

This section, as a continuation of the first, will initially concentrate on the essence and position of the disciple of Christ as a created entity, commissioned by God, for specific purposes. After the creational intent of mankind has been established, the study will flow towards the redeemed commission and habitat of His people as well as the corporate gathering of the ecclesia. The inextricably associated present-day understanding of the ecclesia as the people of God or *laos tou Theou*^{xlix} gathered for a purpose related to their habitat, will be covered in Chapter IV.

First, then is a more ontological understanding of God's intent, relating to mankind's creation, that requires a Protological approach to the subject. The purpose is to provide better insights concerning God's creational intent regarding man's position and function in relation to Him and the rest of Creation. The first chapters of Genesis are thus among the most important of Scripture (Brueggemann 1982:11); in general the passages within the opening Chapters of Genesis are anthropocentric, as there seems to be a focus on the human being (1982:12). This is so in three ways: as humans being part of an undifferentiated creation; human and non-human creation in a differentiated relation, and human creatures alone in relation to one another.

^{xlix} The people of God is referred to as *laos tou Theou* (Stevens 1999:53) and is only one of the terms used in the New Testament to describe God's own family on earth.

In this Chapter the focus is on the people of God, as *laos tou Theou* and the primary model laid down by Christ Jesus as the obedient sent One, who encapsulates the concept of the apostolic priesthood of every believer. This redeemed ecclesia, living and proclaiming His works, brings to the fore the broad outline of the Section, namely, the position, role and status of clergy and laity. The ontological question here is twofold:

- (a) does the perception of the Church define the clergy and laity?
- (b) does our understanding of being God's people dictate what it is to be a gathered community?

This study affirms the latter.

As a movement of His people, the ministering offices are defined in term of giftedness (charismata), relation and function. They are not defined or expressed in terms of position. As will be illustrated in the course of this chapter, the *laos tou Theou* is a movement of clergy, gifted (Küng 1976:388) with a variety of ministries which are given to the ecclesia to serve humanity in such a way that it will witness to the nations and edify and equip (Ephesians 4: 11-13) those who are disciplined.

2. MANKIND, THE 'HUMAN' HUMANITY.

In the beginning God also created people. He created humankind in the image (Genesis 1:26) and likeness of God (Berkouwer 1962:67). This is complemented by Genesis 5: 1-2 in the following account: "This is the written account of Adam's line. When God created man, he made them in the likeness of God. He created them male and female and blessed them. And when they were created, he called them 'man'." Genesis thus introduces our humanness, creational identity and intent, as well as providing various spheres of the creational understanding (Böhl 1887:154), the substance of our commission (calling) and the beginning of humankind as a collective community.

The passages¹ in Genesis I and II give specific reference to mankind and elucidate significant pointers connected with the image and likeness such as (but not in this

¹ Genesis 1

order) *community*, *priestly*, *endowment* (commissioned) and *covenant*. These important issues broaden the basis of deliberation on a movement of His people.

2.1. TRINITARIAN IMAGE.

The Trinitarian image of God is central and critical to the understanding by God's people (Peters 1972:57). Yet deliberating on the composition of this image falls outside the parameters of this study. For our purposes it is therefore important to reflect on the concept of likeness in terms of unity and oneness. It speaks clearly that God the Father and patriarch of all people, God the Word and God the Spirit (Küng 1985:120) is not in competition with self or in class-status differentiation within the Trinity, but the latter is rather distinguished in terms of functionality. *Laos tou Theou*, as the ecclesia, is thus likewise called to act in the same unity as the Trinity (Van Engen 2001:68). Within this unity there are diverse functions to reconcile people with God for sanctification, as a result of apostolic witness. There is, however, no basis for any class distinction or position, except a differentiation based on function. What is discernable is the unity within the Trinity and then the aspect of Gods' relation to mankind in terms of obedience, as expressed through the *shema*.

The declaration or *shema* (Brueggemann 2008:121) in Deuteronomy 6:4-5: "*Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one*" gives more than essence of the Trinity. It not only implies unity and equality within the concept of God, but also the implication that those proclaiming God as one and united, are equally called upon to mirror that same image. This can only be done by listening and being obedient to the will of God. The *shema* points to the example to be followed and that mankind's' obedience flows singularly to and from God. Brueggemann (1982:122) confirms the sentiment and sees the *shema* as part of a bigger picture, as illustrated in Deuteronomy 5:6-7 and categorically reiterated by Exodus 20:2-3: "you shall worship only YHWH."

There can thus not be obedience to any other God or focus of worship. God alone is the focus of the *laos Theou* and serving any other, including people, systems and position, is prohibited. The *shema* provides at least three directives in relation to the *laos Theou*. Being that created likeness of Him is only the first directive for being an image of Him in unity. The second is that of hearing and obeying (Peters 1972:58); thirdly, directly associated with this, is serving only Him and His purposes.

Against this backdrop of the *shema* is Israel's request to have a King like the other nations (1 Samuel 8:5). It is first seen as an act of disobedience (Brueggemann 2008:122) - and the corresponding disapproving reaction of God (1 Samuel 8:6-7). The *shema* asks for alliance to God alone, which was an aspect Israel jealously guarded under the mentorship of Moses. The request and action for an alternative lordship was interpreted as moving away from God, towards other lords. Secondly, it was interpreted as a move away from dependence on Him alone and also towards an institutionalised lifestyle that did not correspond to Israel's being a nation of priests (Exodus 19:6), but rather moving into a political appreciation of status, rank and class-structures with certain consequences (1 Samuel 8:13-17). It introduced a class system and an antithesis of the image and likeness of the Trinity.

It is at this point that laity needs to be careful about who and what they serve; the clergy needs to examine why and how they are served. Christians are first in His service and not in service of systems, institutions or people. The central fact of Christian life: "is the primacy of one's allegiance to Jesus Christ" (Kraemer 1958:182). Understanding the *shema* reveals the nature of *laos tou Theou* as an eschatological people of God, referred to by Joel (2:28) as a people living and working in obedience to God on whom the Holy Spirit was to be poured, irrespective of class.

The central theme of the *shema* also resonates through 1 Peter 2:9-10, which indicates that redeemed mankind is once again priests of the risen King. Mankind is called anew to a whole-hearted, singular allegiance to YHWH (Brueggemann 2008:122). There is no room for indulgence in self, position and control, or dependence on others or systems. It is also not a call for flagrantly independent behaviour or naked individualism. The passage in context with the *shema* asks for unadulterated allegiance to Him and Him alone – as a gathered ecclesia and as individuals obedient to God. Yet the passage also calls for a two-fold differentiation that needs to be noted. Mankind is not king - there is only one king, namely Jesus Christ. Secondly, mankind is not divided into those who execute their ministry^{li} as kings on the one hand, and those who

^{li} Ministry is the service (Latin *ministerium* and Greek *diakonia*) of God and the ecclesia among another and into the world. It is based on the model and ministry of Christ who came to serve and give His life as ransom for many (Migliore (2004:417).

are priests, on the other. The passage clearly clarifies the position of mankind in the Kingdom as *priests* (see 2.3.)

The much-quoted passage in Joel 2:28-29 (Stevens 1999:35) is written in the same manner with similar intentions, reflecting a movement of people aligned to Christ as their King. It therefore also paves the way for a wider understanding of the democratisation (Trueman 2002:29) of the work of the Holy Spirit through all people. It is, however, not the only theme conveyed through this passage; the focus is once again on the work of God in, and through mankind, depositing charismata (Peters 1972:170) enabling mankind's obedience in being *witnesses* (see 2.5.) of Him and the Kingdom.

To be created in the image and likeness of God has, then, a threefold implication. First, the *laos tou Theou* is to be like God - a unity of one in character, purpose and representation. Secondly, the people of God should have a singular allegiance to YHWH and to no other god, self or system. Thirdly, *laos tou Theou*, like Adam (and Eve), is called to represent the image of God on Earth and to fulfil the primal commission (Peters' 1972:166 twofold mandate) of serving the Creation and the latter commission of proclaiming the redemptive message to all: "that the God whose world this is has revealed Himself in Jesus Christ; that all men have a right to know this and those who do know it are committed to making it known" (Van Engen 2001:111).^{lii}

2.1.1. IMAGE, LIKENESS AND SINGLENES.

God is imaged by His people on Earth: "There is one way in which God is imaged in this world and only one: humanness" (Brueggemann 1982:32). Mankind is the only living part of Creation which discloses something of the reality of God - something molten images cannot do. When Psalm 8 and Romans 1 refer to the work of God as a testimony of His greatness, they include and specifically refer to humans as part of His mastery at Creation.

Mankind is commissioned to represent God by being (living and working) in His image characterised by gracious self-giving, love and respect (Barth 1962:98), the way God is

^{lii} In Van Engen 2001:111 as originally quoted in Charles W. Ranson, MEXICO CITY, 1963, International Review of Missions, 53(1964:140).

towards mankind. This is not a political understanding or representation of governing by *fiat*, remoteness or in a coercive way, or by tyrannical might. Bearing the likeness of God's image is not limited to the rest of Creation, but also and specifically includes inter-human relationships. The first relationship is that between man and woman (Binfield 2002:194), agents of God to whom much revelation is given and by the mouth of Jesus (Luke 12:48), much is expected.

The human being is ordained by God to be united in their created diversity as male and female (Genesis 1:27). While sexuality and diversity is good and ordained as part of Creation, they are, however, not part of the Creator (Brueggemann 1982:32). Masculinity and femininity *per se*, cannot be construed as in the likeness of God, but are expressions of being human. They are not characteristics, attributes or functions belonging to God's person, but are the distinctive of God's will for creation. The verse makes an important affirmation that mankind is singular (created him) and also plural (created them). Mankind is a single entity and within the creational context there is unity within humankind and no ground for diversification in terms of class, gender, status or position when in relation to the Kingdom.

Likewise, the Protological commission bestowed on mankind is one of equality in reference to its original mandate and in its execution. There is equality with a functional distinction, just as Eve was created to assist Adam in the realisation of their common creational commission. But it is in this commonality that mankind is also a community in being male and female, and as such they are a reflection of the image of God as Triune Oneness (Migliore 2004:141). God is, according to this affirmation, not "mirrored as an individual, but as a community" (Brueggemann 1982:34). Therefore humans are not in themselves the full image of God, but become more so when they are a community. Within this community there is once again no mention of any ground for ruling, domination, class etc to imply that people are authorised to exercise such over other human beings. Within the Christian faith every person is under the Lordship of Jesus. Christians are new crowned 'creatures' (II Corinthians 5:17), empowered to practice gracious freedom towards others, just as the Creator does towards humankind.

The Trinity gives mankind the basis and model of community, *koinonia* and *ecclesia* (Stevens 1999:54). Irenaeus describes God creating with two hands, that of the Word

and the Spirit: “Humanity, having been moulded at the beginning by the hands of God, that is the Son and the Spirit, is made after the image and likeness of God” (Edwards 2004:40). God holds Word and Spirit together in the Creation (and later Redemption) and also differentiates between the work of the Three in Creation, saying that the Father “plans and commands” while the Son “performs and creates” and the Spirit “nourishes and increases.” There is thus unity within the Trinitarian (can one say ‘community’) understanding of God, as well as diversity in the functional execution of His united Will. There is no mention of any rank or class distinction within the concept of the Trinity and this models the way for mankind to perceive and conduct inter-human relationships.

The central reference to man as created in His likeness is (as already mentioned above) one of being His representative (Childs 1985:99). It is a theme carried forward with Israel becoming the collective representation of God and His covenantal history, as well as through the person, life and redemptive work of Jesus. It is a theme endowed to His disciples and the evolving ecclesia. Mankind is God’s chosen vehicle representing His Will on Earth, an essential in the movement of all of God’s people. God and His Creation are bound together by the Will of God reflected in the act of, and God’s continued involvement in, Creation. It is how God decided it - and all of Creation are invited to obey and celebrate the reality of this binding, irreversible connection (Brueggemann 1982:24). Mankind was created to represent the explicit will of God on the earth, as a community – in the His image.

2.1.2. COVENANTAL IMAGE.

The relationship between God and all of Creation is ‘covenantal’. This word implies that both entities have to do with each other decisively (Brueggemann 2002:13) and neither can be understood apart from the other. The Creator had a specific purpose for which He created, and all of Creation exists only for and because of the Creator’s purposes and intent. These are the two parameters within which humankind finds its role, purpose and relation towards one another, the rest of Creation and God.

Note that after the creational account given in Genesis 2:4-7, there is a reversal in the creational order from heaven and earth, to earth and heaven. Earth has become the focus of the account and also in particular reference to mankind (Kessler 2004:30).

This statement is preceded by the words (Genesis 2:4): “These are the generations of...” It is the first of ten appearances in Genesis^{liii} where this particular statement (*ēlleh tōl ʿdōt*) differs from the others, in that it describes the generations of heavens and earth while the others introduce either the descendants of some person or then a narrative about some person.^{liv} While something like “offspring and descendants” would befit many of the last nine, it may seem strange to refer to the ‘offspring’ or ‘children’ of the universe, “but that is expressly what Genesis 2:4 intends” (Brueggemann 1982:151).

There is also a noticeable shift in the name of God from simply ‘God’ to ‘Yahweh God’. This descriptive designation is used consistently 19 times throughout the remainder of the second and third chapters of Genesis. In Genesis 1 and preceding verses of Chapter 2 the emphasis is on Creation depicting God who speaks and it is done with the more generic name of God - *ʾlōhîm* – which fits this description admirably (Brueggemann 1982:153). However, the contrast presented in 2:4ff is more personal and the context there is not the universe, but rather a small portion of Earth called the Garden.

The covenantal role of mankind, earth and heaven is here illustrated in the exceptional expression of God (Genesis 2:7) as the Lord God, and then when the latter formed man from the dust of the earth: “The day when YHWH God made Earth and Heaven initiated the day of man. YHWH, the covenant name and the common divine *God (Elohim)* are now heard together” (Kessler 2004:41). It presents mankind in a unique relationship with God as His representative, not as one having authority, but of one “under authority, a vassal in a covenant relationship” (Brueggemann 1982:153).

Covenant sets mankind, as Adam and Eve, apart from rest of Creation (Kessler 2004:36). Covenant means that all seed will share in blessing. The covenantal expression is linked to the purpose of creating mankind to act in His likeness as representative of God on earth. The creational mandate was given to Adam and, by implication, to Eve, as she was seen as being one with Adam and without any

^{liii} Also see Genesis 6:9, 10:1, 11:10 & 27, 25:12 & 19, 36:1 & 9, 37:2 as well as a variant of the formula in Genesis 5:1 with the generations of Adam.

^{liv} In reference here e.g. to Noah, sons of Noah/Terah/Ishmael/Isaac/Esau/Jacob.

hierarchical structures being embedded between them. God took woman from man, and ‘they were originally one flesh’ (Von Rad 1951:85). Therefore they must come together again in an act of covenant for they belong together in equality and share the same covenant, position, commission and responsibility for executing it.

The Genesis garden was for this covenanted community a place of solidarity, trust and wellbeing. “They are one! That is in covenant. The garden exists as a context for the human community” (Brueggemann 1982:47). The covenantal likeness implies a unity and also equality in the mandated calling of mankind and the execution of this calling. Mankind stands in solidarity before God in a personal relationship with, and accountable to, Him. However, it is only when humankind is a community that they reflect His image (Kessler 2004:42). “God is, according to this bold affirmation, not mirrored as an individual but as community” (Brueggemann 1982:34). The creational likeness reflecting the Trinitarian image of the creator God implies a similar unity and lack of hierarchical structures. The role and function of the Trinitarian concept of God is also here one of functional diversity, yet acting in unity.

Likeness and image; to be one in the execution of a great commission bestowed on mankind in Genesis to represent God and be mediator between God and Creation. Mankind is to act in unity, serving one another in order to bring Creation to its fullness. Ultimately, the blessing to the nations (Genesis 12:3) “was a covenant obligation laid in the people as a whole” (Stevens 2006b:36). They were called to be people different from the surrounding nations despite the tension of the human tendency to be like the (surrounding) world, its leadership and ministerial practices. Being in the image of God and representing Him has come with His anointing and empowering. The empowering is by means of God breathing His Spirit into and unto mankind (Kessler 2004:43) with the exclusive intent for man to fulfil his communal commission, serving in obedience. The covenantal commission is twofold in nature. It is apostolic and generally referred to as the apostolate of all believers. It is also priestly, being then the priesthood of all believers and its execution is in Spirit and through service. (see 2.4.1.)

2.2. PRIEST and PRIESTHOOD.

The *laos tou Theou* is the priesthood of all believers, or the priesthood of the whole church (Bosch 1991:474). The terms priest and priesthood, invite a historical

overview. *Priest*, as understood today, no longer has the meaning of the word as it was originally used (Küng 1976:364). The word in Greek is ἱερεύς and *sacerdos* in Latin, indicating one whose principle function is to perform the act of offering a sacrifice. Küng (1976:364) also highlights the importance that in the New Testament the word *priest* is not once used for someone holding an office in the Church^{lv}. Jesus' image was more in line of the prophetic and nowhere did He describe Himself, or his disciples, as priests in the mould of the traditional Old Testament priests or priesthood.

Jesus models His understanding of the priesthood primarily in terms of a sacrificial way and not as a static priestly cult within a sanctuary, thus fundamentally breaking with any notion that the New Testament is in any way a continuation of the Old Testament priesthood (Kee 1996:36). The writer of Hebrews “makes it unmistakably clear to any who might hanker after the ritual of the past, that Christ has fulfilled and done away with the priesthood of the Old Testament” (Küng 1976:365). Jesus is thus fulfilling, superseding and abandoning the traditional priesthood understanding of the Old Testament (Peters 1972:85). The writer of Hebrews highlights the role of Jesus as the appropriate model of priesthood:

a. It is not a position of honour, but rather gained as grace and executed through obedience, being available as God's appointed vehicle. Jesus breaks with the established concept of priesthood as He is a priest after the order of Melchizedek (Kee 1996:422) and not after the order of Aaron (Hebrews 7:1-28). His position or appointment is not inherited, as He is descended from Judah and not from the tribe of Levi.

b. Similar to the priest of the Old Testament, Christ also represented (and still does) a people oppressed by sin and unable to make their own sacrifice. But He is also more, by sharing, feeling and having compassion with and for them (Hebrews 2:17 and 5:1-3) and being able to stand in the gap for them. The decisive difference, however, is that the priests of that Old Testament were themselves burdened by sin which they themselves could not remove (Hebrews 7:11 & 19, 9:9 and 10:2). Jesus overcame sin (Peters 1972:62), not by static

^{lv} Priest and High Priest are titles given to Old Testament and Judaic dignitaries – Mark 1:44, 2:26, 14:53, Luke 1:5, 19:31, John 1:19 and Acts 4:1-6.

attributes, but by proving Himself sinless needing no sacrifice (Hebrews 7:26, 4:15 and 5:7-9).

c. Like the priests of the Old Testament Jesus also presented a sacrifice. However His sacrifice was unique, fulfilling and complete by offering Himself to be sacrificed through the giving of His own blood and life (Kee 1996:427)^{lvi}: “And by that will, we have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once and for all. Day after day every priest stands and performs his religious duties; again and again he offers the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. But when this Priest had offered for all time one sacrifice for sins, He sat down at the right hand of God” (Hebrews 10:10-14).

The priests of the Old Testament cannot be replaced by any other than Christ, as His work was whole, complete and perfect. Not even the angels or the community was given an office (spatial or spiritual) by the writer of Hebrews. Within the priesthood of Christ, He is the high priest of the new covenant in the eschatological age, the vicarious before God and mediator (Küng 1976:367) - the priesthood from which the *laos Theou* is gleaned.

2.2.1. MEDIATOR.

The Greek word for mediator is derived from *medius* and refers to one standing in the middle or in between such, as a neutral person of trust, an arbiter or guarantor who deposits a pledge or a person negotiating a previously non-existing relationship (Küng 1976:367). The rabbis used the word ‘*sarsor*’ implying a middleman that is not only a mediator, but also an agent: an ambassador who stands outside two relationships, but also one who is personally involved and has the authority to initiate and make decisions.

The synoptic writers make no direct use of the word mediator, but did record Him fulfilling mediating functions. However, the late New Testament writings did use this expression for Jesus, conveying the message that it is only in the glorified Christ that

^{lvi} “As the former covenants were ratified by the sprinkling of blood (Hebrews 9:15-22), so Christ, through His death, has ratified the new covenant; those who are consecrated by Christ’s offering of Himself in perfect obedience to God’s will are heirs of the better promises (Kee 1996:427).”

Jesus becomes in a full sense a mediator (Kee 1996:427). Paul refers to the word mediator in the book of Galatians (3:19) in reference to Moses, and then only to implicate the inferior and insignificant role with regards to the Mosaic Law. In the first letter to Timothy the term is used to refer to Jesus' universal salvific intention: "For there is only one God, and there is only one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all" (1 Timothy 2:5).

Here two aspects are emphasised, if only by implication. First, this reference is not to a mediator between God and Israel, but between God and all people. Secondly, there is only one mediator, namely Christ Jesus (Peters 1972:220). Jesus stands above (complete and replaces) the Levitical priests, as He is the mediator and guarantor of a better covenant (Hebrews 7:22). Here the ecclesia is in danger of making itself into mediators. The New Testament speaks of various means by which the knowledge and Will of God is revealed, such as prophets, apostles and angels: "but they are never called mediators" (Küng 1976:368). There is only one mediator, the man Christ Jesus (1 Timothy 2:5). The priesthood is thus in another dimension because the sacrifice of atonement^{lvii} has once and for all being presented by Jesus and nothing can be added or repeated. The sacrifice mankind can offer is now of oneself to God and that in thanksgiving and praise (Hebrews 13:5).

The priesthood of believers can only point the way to the completed sacrifice, Christ Jesus. In this sense it is apostolic. It also reflects on the original position of mankind in paradise acting as mediator and therefore priestly in relation to the rest of Creation. It is also eschatological, pointing towards a dimension when Christ will rule with His elect and will bring to conclusion the restoration of His Kingdom on Earth. It thus makes sense that the priestly imagery is never used by Paul of ministry within the church (Wright 2006:525), but in a missional sense, to the nations. He sees himself as mediating Jesus (as High Priest) to the nations, and the nations to God. In this way Paul embodies the priestly ministry itself, which God called to be a "kingdom of priests" (Exodus 19: 3-6) in the midst of all nations.

^{lvii} Atonement refers to the reconciling act of God in Jesus Christ (Migliore 2004:405) through His passion and death that mends the broken relationship between God and humanity caused by sin.

2.3. APOSTLES and APOSTOLATE.

The overriding missiological understanding of the word apostle is that of someone being sent by another. It involves a sender, which in a biblical context is God; the sent ones, are the disciples of Jesus and collectively known as the ecclesia. The ecclesia is sent into the world with the purpose of proclaiming His Kingdom of redemption offered through those He has sent (Van Engen 2001:108). The announcement and realisation of the coming Kingdom of God is the hub round which all apostolic work revolves (Verkuyl 1978:203). It is God sending His people.

The Trinity is thus the classic image on which the doctrine of apostolicity is understood (Aagaard 1974:420). It is *missio Dei*. It is God that sends, as it is His mission (Bosch 1991:390). Within the Trinity we understand that it is the Father who sent the Son, and the Father and Son who sent the Spirit. But it is the Father, Son and Spirit who send the ecclesia into the world (Stevens 1999:194). Both Bosch (1991:391) and Verkuyl (1978:3) positively refer to the term *missiones Dei*, as the Triune God is involved in innumerable particular *missiones*. More so, for the understanding of the concept of an apostolic priesthood of all believers, the word *missiones* underscores that God involves not only a special group of people or individuals in His mission – *missiones Dei* involves all of His people. With the concept of *Missiones Dei* comes greater clarity in relation to the term ‘apostolate’ because it not only emphasises the content of *martyria*, *didache* and *kerygma*, but also stresses the important specific activity of sending, *apostellein* (Verkuyl 1978:2).

The word apostle (Peters 1972:250) is derived from the Latin word *mitto* (I send) and the Greek words *apostello* and *pempo*, all having the same meaning: ‘to send’. Both Greek words are used of Christ as well as the apostles - with some difference in emphasis and depth. The word *pempo* emphasises the act of sending and expresses the relation between the sender and the sent. The same applies to the word *apostello*, but this also carries the concept of an authoritative mission of an envoy with a special commission; hence it is used to describe the mission of the Son of God and of His apostles. Since the beginning of church history many derivations appeared from the Latin translation of the verb *apostellein*. The derivation *missio* only surfaced in the sixteenth century (Verkuyl 1978:3) when both the Jesuit and Carmelite order of monks sent out missionaries.

The common factor in both these words is that they indicate an authority beyond that of the sent one, a sender beyond the messenger. The messenger himself is not an authority but represents the authority, thus *apostello* implies a person, or persons who are authoritatively sent forth on a mission (Bosch 1991:391). This authoritative sending as the apostolate of all believers finds its roots in the first Adam – though its restored and full eschatological meaning is only to be found in the second Adam, Christ Jesus and He who also became the principal model of an apostle (Kee1996:420).

Genesis 1:28-31 refers to the first apostolic calling of mankind. Adam and Eve were commissioned and sent from a position of Sabbath rest into the history of the human race and specifically into Paradise to expedite their creational calling (sometimes referred to as the cultural mandate - Peters 1972:170). They were thus the first *sent* ones and therefore by implication, the first apostles executing the first commission delivered to mankind.

Their creational commission embodied all the characteristics that also defined the early ecclesia's understanding of apostle or being apostolic. The apostles were sent in the same way that Adam and Eve were sent. They were sent by God on a mission with a definite assignment (Peters 1972:249) to represent, mediate and to cultivate (work) with the accompanying authority to fulfil their mission. The prime function of Adam and Eve was that of obedience in executing the message (commission) they received from God, by serving and being a blessing to the Creation (Stevens 1999:1950). The original apostolic commission was, however, different from the commission given by Jesus: the mandate given to Adam was devout and also being a message bearer – though the proclamation and teaching of God's will would have been a natural outflow of his commission, were it not for the Fall.

The need for an apostolic proclamation of the Good News was realised only after the Fall, when God elected Israel as a people for Himself to send them to be a blessing to all the nations, as He had promised Abraham (Genesis 12:1ff). Israel represented God to proclaim a message of hope, looking towards the day that it would be realised in Christ Jesus, who was to be sent by the Father to seek and save that which had been lost (Luke 19:10). It reflected the anticipation of restoring the lost state of mankind and Creation. It was only when Jesus mediated this restoration that He subsequently sent

His people into the world with a message of completion (Stevens 1999:194). Apostolicity is the sending of the ecclesia (Bosch 1991:390) to proclaim redemption and applying its truth by working and living as disciples, with an eschatological expectation of this hope realised, even in our time.

2.3.1. PRINCIPAL MODEL.

Jesus is the principal model of an apostle (Kee 1996:420) in that He was sent by God in turn sent the disciples into the world to proclaim and to disciple. Jesus restored the original commission and modelled the understanding of what it means to be a 'sent one.' The ultimate and earliest Christian mission lies in the messianic sending of Jesus (Hengel 1983:63). Understanding the essence of being an apostle and apostolic is primarily found in Christ Jesus. It is in His obedience, His serving nature and Spirit-filled ministry that the understanding of 'apostolic' finds its full meaning. Reflection on the terms apostle and apostolic clarify for the ecclesia their mission in this world, their relation between the One who sends and the sent ones, as well as the common denominators and distinguishing factors.

2.3.1.1. APOSTLE AND APOSTOLIC.

The terms 'apostle' and 'apostolic' also have their challenges. The latter is an adjective and although it is very much used in a Christian context, it does not occur in the Bible. The word was first used by Ignatius of Antioch and in the Martyrdom of Polycarp (Küng 1976:345). It referred to those who had a direct link with the early apostles of Christ. From the second and third centuries onward it evolved into an ascetic meaning of 'being like the apostles', especially within the early monastic literature. It was only much later that it developed into the more recent meaning of being pastoral and missiological, and not only purely contemplative.

The association of this meaning of 'apostolic' with the early apostles is in itself problematic when the early apostles, or Twelve, are modelled in a missiological context (Kee 1996:397). The heart of the problem is that most of the early apostles stayed in Jerusalem and only reluctantly undertook missions to the gentiles (Acts 10:1-11 & 18). According to accounts (Dodd 1953:67) handed down from the third and fourth century, most of the apostles stayed in Jerusalem between seven and 15 years. The only one of the Twelve recorded in some missionary activity is Peter (Küng 1976:347). Limiting

the association of the word 'apostle' only to those who are sent, or those involved in missional activities, seems misplaced, especially so when applied to the Twelve as the first apostles.

It does, however, broaden the scope of understanding and application of the word beyond its previous association of mission in a strict cross-religious and cultural context (Bosch 1991:474-89). 'Apostolic' then also includes those who are sent to their own people. The implication is that ministering within a same-cultural context can be apostolic and does not limit the concept to cross-religious or cultural ministry only. The mission to the Jews reached its climax under the protection of the *pax romana* and also under the Jewish Hellenistic diaspora (Hengel 1983:53) in Jerusalem. Yet, in a broader sense, it simultaneously allows the word apostle to be broadened away from the Twelve. People like Paul ministered almost exclusively across cultures; in this sense Luke refers to the apostolic foundation laid by the Twelve (1983:55) as bridging for the ministry of someone like Paul to take it beyond the Jewish realm.

It is important to note that it was in Jerusalem that the mobile Jewish diaspora came in contact with the teachings of Jesus, and later those of the apostles. When Paul later preached in the synagogues in neighbouring countries, the Gospel was ready to be received within the Hellenistic world-view. From there it was easy for other people in the Hellenistic world to understand and receive the Gospel of Jesus. This foundation was laid by the apostolic sending of Jesus as a travelling preacher, the call and subsequent sending of the Twelve as well as Jesus' openness in helping all those who were outcast and despised - even non-Jews. This, therefore, was the foundation for God's people reaching into a world in need (Bethge 1971:300).

Referring to the followers of Jesus as apostles or the apostolate, is not the central theme to the Gospels of Matthew, Mark or John - discipleship is (Bosch 1991:73). Matthew, Mark and John each use the word 'apostle' once only, while Luke makes much wider use of the word both in the Gospel of Luke (six times) and in Acts (34 times). Apart from the 29 times Paul uses the word the rest of the Bible is silent in direct references to it (Küng 1976:347). 'Apostle' is emphasised by Luke (Hengel 1983:54) to highlight the mobility of the bearers of the Gospel.

Yet the importance of the context of sending is not so much the sending itself, as what is done in the process. It refers to the principal verb in the ‘great commission’ and the only instance that the Greek word for ‘disciple’, *mathetes*, and the verb ‘to make disciples’ *matheteuein*, is used in the imperative sense, *matheteusate*. This is the heart of the commissioning by Jesus; the two participles of baptising and teaching are clearly subordinate to that of making disciples (Hahn 1965:35). It serves as a timely reminder that it is about making disciples, not apostolic priests – the latter being incorporated within the term of ‘being a disciple’. The first is the primary commission given by Jesus to mankind - the latter is His prerogative and our function fulfilled in the process of being sent.

These terms show apparent differentiations in function and position and should not be seen as contradictory, but rather complementary. The use of ‘apostle’ is generally applied to those on a mission, whether sent, being representatives or acting as mediating ambassadors in the process of making disciples and subsequent teaching and baptising. When Luke (6:13) reports that Jesus referred to the Twelve as apostles, there was a correlation between being disciples and being on a mission, as their apostleship was also defined in terms of function or a ministry (Peters 1972:218). It was disciples who were sent, and they were sent in a way that the Twelve were considered apostolic by being ambassadors or authorised messengers, missionaries and messengers of the ecclesia (Küng 1976:348).

2.3.1.2. TEACHING and DISCIPLESHIP.

To call upon a movement of all God’s people to be an apostolic priesthood by way of being the *laos tou Theou*, without considering adequate teaching, training (read discipleship) and empowering (Kritzinger 1979:93) would be grossly irresponsible. This is in view of similar historical renewals that faded into oblivion^{lviii} exactly because these movements were not supported and backed by sufficient teaching in the process of making disciples. This lack has more than once hampered the ecclesia reaching their eschatological end.

^{lviii} See Section I of Chapter III.

Discipleship should always be seen in the context of service and participation in obedience to God, to fulfil the ministry God has called each to, individually and collectively. This approach leads to ownership and common citizenship, which is the inherited birthright Lobinger mentions (1975:350) of the *laos tou Theou*. However, if discipleship and training is seen as the process leading towards the goal of ordination, it will once again open the door for a class-like differentiation (Kritzinger 1979:92) which in turn shifts the focus from service to position.

It is through well-defined teaching in the context of bilateral ownership and servant hood that the foundation can be procured for a paradigm shift cementing the definition, ontological being and praxis of an apostolic priesthood of all believers. It is only then that a united movement, of all of God's people, towards a common goal of presenting and being a witness of Christ to all people, can be realised. It is not an effort to keep knowledge in the hands of church leaders (Trueman 2002:27), but to enable those gifted with a ministry of teaching to serve and equip the ecclesia. It is not through authoritative hierarchical methods and positions as Stanley Jones (1993:47) so aptly states, but a united common movement in which "...the laity must come out of the stands as spectators and take the field as players; and the clergymen must come off the field as players and take the sidelines as coaches..."

2.3.1.3. APOSTLES AND SUCCESSION.

The question remains, however, how to relate to the first disciples who were called the apostles and the Twelve as they clearly laid a foundation on which the early ecclesia could build (Hengel 1983:62) and expand the Kingdom. The main distinguishing qualification for being the twelve apostles was that they were four-way witnesses. They walked with Jesus, could witness to the fact that He was human, and that His works testified that He was the Son of God. They were also witnesses of His crucifixion and death. They were consequently "eyewitnesses of His resurrection" (Wright 2006:66).

The twelve disciples were the unique and original apostles chosen by Jesus. That era was concluded with the death of the twelve (Küng 1976:345). Since then and today, the foundation that they laid and spirit that the apostles represented and resembled, lies with every believer. The apostles, who became the basis and foundation of the

ecclesia, retain this significance well beyond the first generation. Since apostleship is a ministry of a particular commission, we may speak of an apostolic *office*, and then only so if it is understood as a ministry of service and not mistakenly seen as a hierarchic position of power.

The apostolic *office*, as a reference to the Twelve, is unique and unrepeatable. They were those members of the primal and initial ecclesia to whom the risen Lord directly revealed Himself and who Jesus personally commissioned as His messengers. They cannot be replaced or represented by any successors (Küng 1976:347). The decisive combination of elements that makes them the original apostles, is not only their personal walk and tuition before the crucifixion of Jesus, but equally important is their personal meeting with the Lord, whom they all, in one form or another, knew as someone who was dead and is alive again. The risen Lord's testimony to Himself of His Resurrection was an unique event and the ecclesia of subsequent generations would not receive new assurances through Christ's repeated appearances, but would witness anew the risen Christ (Bosch 1991:116), in line with the original apostolic proclamation.

The preaching of the apostles, as it has come down to us in the writings of the New Testament, is the original, fundamental testimony of Jesus Christ, valid for all time; being unique, it cannot be replaced, or made void by any later testimony. The apostleship as an office of authority and position was "clearly defined to the twelve and Paul with perhaps James" (Peters 1972:219). Later generations of the ecclesia stayed dependent on the words, witness and ministry of the first apostolic era. The apostles were, and remain, the original witnesses whose testimony is the original testimony and whose mission the original mission.

Where does it leave the apostolate of all believers when being an apostle means a direct witness and messenger of the risen Lord? Does it imply that the apostles can have no successors and no further apostles were called and died? The answer lies in understanding that apostleship as witness and mission is central to the commission given by Christ. The apostolic commission is not finished, but will remain to the end of time, proclaiming a message with "universal claims: one universal God, one universal saviour" (2006:249) for entire Creation. The apostolic task is therefore not yet

completed, as it eschatologically looks to and embraces all peoples to the ends of the Earth. There is a “continuity of responsibility” (Peters 1972:219) in references to the apostolic calling.

Therefore, although the apostles are dead and there are no new apostles, the *apostolic mission* remains. The mission of the apostles was more and of greater importance than the members of the apostles together (Küng 1976:248). The apostolic mission therefore remains and comes to fruition in the apostolic ministry. In this continuation of the latter, the apostolic ministry as an apostolic succession can be found. Who then are the torch bearers of this apostolic succession?

2.4. SERVING APOSTOLIC PRIESTHOOD.

The answer is very clear: it is the *laos Theou*, the apostolic priesthood of all believers and the individually and collectively known ecclesia of Jesus. It involves the whole body of Christ, not just a few individuals as the followers and executors of the apostles’ witness. The new people of God are the ecclesia with an authorized mission of the apostles handed onto them as the successors of the apostles, deriving their authority in obedience to their calling. Understanding apostolicity in this sense opens the door to determining the true oneness, holiness (as being set apart) and universality of the ecclesia.

The ecclesiastic movement, interpreted as *laos tou Theou* must stay grounded in the foundations laid by the apostles. This succession must then also be understood in terms of substance, not just of history, but of real inner Spirit-birthed continuity. This continuity therefore is not simply created for, or by the ecclesia, but granted to them by the Spirit of God and Christ. The Spirit which filled the apostles and their apostolic witness, moves and encourages His people to move in the same Spirit-led fashion. Apostolicity, then, is a gift of the Holy Spirit, as well as a requirement for a follower of Jesus. Apostolic succession entails being continually confronted with the original and fundamental testimony of Scripture. Apostolic succession is achieved only if this biblical witness is faithfully followed in preaching, faith and action (Bavinck 1960:90). It is achieved when the Bible does not remain a closed book, or for that matter just a book (a handbook, a book of laws or a history book), but is “a living voice of witness,

to be heard and believed here and now as a message of joy, of liberation, of good news” (Küng 1976:354).

2.4.1. COMMISSIONED TO SERVE.

The movement of His people remains true to their apostolic calling and witness, through service. The characteristic trait of service is not a new concept. The first Adam was created to serve (Wright 2006:284) the rest of Creation, and Israel called out to serve the nations (2006: 522); it is therefore clear that the concept of service and servant-hood is a creational attribute, and a golden thread running through the history of God’s people. It was, however, Christ Jesus who laid the foundation of a restored servant-hood as a critical dimension of the kingdom. It is in this restoration and reintroduction of being a serving movement and community that the priestly apostolate can make sense of their apostolic mission and understand the authority in their ministry.

The overriding word expressing the character and essence of all ministries is that of service (Kritzinger 1979:163). With an abundance of words describing the variety of contemporary ecclesiastical offices such as priest, clergyman, laity and the church related compartments like officials, government, administration, dignitaries, authorities and hierarchy, terminology is important in establishing the nature of ecclesiastical office. Both secular and New Testament Greek offer various words for expressing the mankind’s ministries, making it important to discern which words the New Testament uses, and for whom (Küng 1976:388).

The word ‘hierarchy’ is probably one of the most extensively used today in the context of structures and position. Yet it does not once occur either in secular or in New Testament Greek (Küng 1976:388). The word was first introduced in the latter half of the first century by Dionysius the Areopagite; but he used the word *ιεραρχία* as meaning ‘holy origin and reign’. It was not used to refer to the holders of office, or their superior or subordinate rank in a total structure, but for the ecclesia as a whole - against the backdrop of the fact that all other words in secular Greek for civil and religious authorities were consistently avoided in connection with ministries within the ecclesia. This rang true for the basic word for ‘hierarchy’ *ἀρχή* (*ἀρχων* and also for *τιμή* and *τέλος* (1976:388).

The New Testament obviously avoids using these current and seemingly obvious terms, because, despite the variety they cover, they have one common factor - they all express a relationship of rulers and ruled, making them unusable. The word used was *diakonia* or service (Kraemer 1958:144) in a sense an unbiblical and somewhat irreligious word that was current in neither the Jewish nor the Hellenistic environment. The word 'service' amicably describes the place and function of the individual in the ecclesiastic community of all believers, as well as comprehensively indicates that it is a word carrying no overtones of authority, officialdom, rule, dignity or power. Thus 'service' which is meant by the Greek *diakonia* is in no danger, unlike words which suggest political or priestly services, of being misinterpreted as an honour or a new kind of rule. It is a word that indicates an activity which every Greek would recognize at once as one of self-abasement: waiting at table, serving food and pouring wine (Küng 1976:390).

In the same way that Adam was created to serve, Jesus came to serve Creation. The way Jesus restored mankind's position was set to refresh the primary mandate as one of service, and to pioneer the way the ecclesia was to understand their position and execution of service in the new commission. In contrast to general Greek thinking and growing Jewish perceptions about religion (Küng 1976:392), Jesus proclaimed in Luke 22:26: "But you are not to be like that. Instead, the greatest among you should be like the youngest, and the one who rules like the one who serves. For who is greater, the one who is at table, or one who serves? Is it not the one who is at table? But I am among you as one who serves." The theme of *diakonia* as washing another's feet (Kraemer 1958: 146) or waiting at the table to serve is carried through in the Gospels with the servant waiting on his master (Luke 17:8) and for Martha who serves Jesus (John 12:2). The word also occurs in its extended meaning of preparing meals and caring for the bodily needs of others (Luke 10:40, Acts 6:1, Mark 1:31 and Matthew 4:11).

Jesus thus presented service as an essential characteristic of discipleship for the emerging ecclesia. It is not law or power, knowledge or dignity, but service which is the basis of discipleship. The model for the disciples in their following of Christ is therefore not the secular ruler nor the learned scribe, nor even the priest who stands above his people (Küng 1976:392). Jesus sets a remarkable example as quoted in Luke 22:27: "But I am among you as one who serves." But it is clear that Jesus is not merely

concerned about service at table, or care for the bodily needs of others and Himself as suggested by wider use of the word (Bavinck 1960:58) in Luke 8:3, Mark 15:41 and Matthew 24:45). Jesus is also most concerned about certain special acts of obedience through love (Wright 2006:524), which can also be captured in the word *diakonia*. No, His fundamental concern was with living for others, as indicated in Mark 9:35 & 10:43-45 and Matthew 20:26-28. The origins of the word *diakonia*, in contrast to similar verbs, indicate that a completely personal service is implied (Küng 1976:391). This is an essential element in being a disciple: a man is a disciple of Jesus through service of his fellow men (Wright 2006:284).

In contrast to all the concepts of office existing at the time, Jesus chose and emphasised this new notion of His people with the word 'service' (Kraemer 1958:146). Six times in the synoptic gospels we find references to service (Küng 1976:392) with only very slight variations. It therefore becomes evident what a strong impression the above saying from Luke must have made on the disciples in particular. This is a pivotal concept for the ecclesia as *laos tou Theou*; the consequences are enormous when one refers to the former conceptualisation of centralised religious power epitomised by the temple hierarchy in Jerusalem. The missiological mandated authority is vested in Christ Jesus alone (Verkuyl 1978:106) and is executed by His example through service.

It leads to two fundamental questions and in view of the Scriptures quote below, the answers are quite clear:

- a. Is it possible for there to be among the followers of Jesus any kind of office which is based on law and power and which corresponds to the office of secular rulers?

"They came to Capernaum. When he was in the house, he asked them, 'What were you arguing about on the road?' But they kept quiet because on the way they had argued about who was the greatest. Sitting down Jesus called the Twelve and said, 'If anyone wants to be first, he must be the very last, and servant of all.'" - Mark 9:33-35.

Jesus called them together and said: *"You know that those who are regarded as rulers over the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to be great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first among you must*

be slave of all. For even the Son of man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.” - Mark 10:42-45.

- b. Can there be among the followers of Jesus any kind of office based on knowledge and dignity, and corresponding to the office of the scribes?

“The teachers of the law and the Pharisees sit in Moses’ seat. So you must obey them and do everything they tell you. But do not do what they do, for they do not practice what they preach. They tie up heavy loads and put them on men’s shoulders, but they themselves are not willing to lift a finger to move them. Everything they do is done for men to see. They make their phylacteries wide and their tassels on their garments long; they love the place of honour at banquets and the most important seats in the synagogues; they love to be greeted in the market places, and to have men call them ‘Rabbi’. But you are not to be called ‘Rabbi’, for you have only one Master and you are all brothers. And do not call anyone on earth ‘father’, for you have one Father and he is in heaven. Nor are you to be called teacher, for you have one Teacher, the Christ. For whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted.” - Mathew 23:2-12.

The foundation of a movement of His people is entrenched in the biblical understanding of service. The principle for the ecclesia in their following of Christ, and execution of their individual and collective mandate, is therefore not mirrored by the secular ruler or their systems constituting power, knowledge or dignity. Nor is it the priest, pastor or spiritual dignitary that stands above, aloof and wanting to stand in a special class and caste system created and protected by them. The model Christ left His people is one, like Himself, standing at the table, serving (Luke 22:27). This is an attitude founded in (His) love now reflecting a new lifestyle practised every day by all of God’s people. It is a sacrificial “total existence in a life and death of service for others, as prefigured by the service of Jesus Himself” (Küng 1976:392).

2.5. SUMMARY

Expressing the missiological deal of the ecclesia as a movement of God’s people can best be defined without the contemporary divisive expression in terms of the laity and clergy. *Laos tou Theou* was instituted as a movement of all God’s people, working and

living individually and collectively to fulfil the now restored creational mandate given to mankind. It is an apostolic and priestly movement serving the world in sacrificial obedience, reconciliation (Bavinck 1960:58) and love: “The man that loves his life will lose it, while the man who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life” - John 12:25. It is a Spirit-empowered movement breaking through gender inequalities, generation gaps and cultural economic diversity (Joel 2:28) that has no room for class distinction or political control with supporting institutionalised structures.

It is a movement where all His people are clergy. This implies the restoration and re-definition of the word ‘laity’ to its first century understanding: being those people, without the knowledge of the apostolic witness of a risen Christ.^{lix} Abolishing (Stevens 2006b:21) the term ‘laity’ is a linguistic impossibility as the word is not a Christian invention, heritage nor do Christians have ownership of it. However, restoring the word to mean those that still need to hear the Gospel, will simultaneously restore the meaning of ‘clergy’ to all those who have saving knowledge in Christ. and ‘laity’ as a reference to those who still need to be exposed to the Gospel. ‘Laity’ in this context is not a derogatory or positional term, but rather one of compassion and love. It refers to a people underprivileged in the sense that they have temporarily been denied the most basic of all human rights, to know the Messiah, Jesus Christ. It refers to those people today known as the mission field.

2.5.1. THE WAY FORWARD.

There are three important issues for the apostolic priesthood of all believers that still need to be dealt with; namely, the commission to serve in the world, the corporate congregating of the people of God and the charismatic ministries of His people. Related to the former is teaching and training - an issue that has needed attention throughout the history of the ecclesia. The handling of this, as part of the charismatic ministries, will to a large extent determine the success of the biblical reality and praxis of an ecclesiastic movement of all of His people.

This should be seen against the backdrop of a changed world. There is a need for alternative applications of being *laos tou Theou* as the felt needs of the present have

^{lix} See figure 1 of this Chapter, Section I.

changed (Tickle 2008:17) and are constantly ambivalent and in flux. The need is for training and equipping a different and alternative ecclesia in a multi definitional way also expressed in place and milieu. The ecclesia, as represented within global Christianity, is not the only spiritual movement of this age, and even more relevant is that Western Christianity is no longer practised in isolation (see Chapter I); other mainstream religions are now fairly comfortably established in all Western cultures. The milieu within which Christianity lives and work, is progressively more syncretistic, accommodating and inclusive towards other cultures, philosophies and religions.

The required teaching, training and coaching lend themselves to dealing with cross-cultural, trans-religious and contemporary ideologies of the day. The need from the proverbial ‘players’ within the ecclesia is not one of being inducted to denominational credos; there is much less focus on ecclesiastical structures, positioning and hierarchical orders. The training and coaching is essentially missional in its nature, apostolic in its application and priestly in the preparation of laity-less clergy with an eye on the Kingdom. In context with the above, Ralph Winter (1992b:242) is correct in saying: “The greatest encouragement in mission today is that the Christian movement is outrunning traditional methods of ministerial training.” The quote encapsulates the essence for training and coaching for, from and by missiologically qualified people. The need to be empowered for the new milieu opens the door for missional expertise to equip the *laos tou Theou* in the apostolic witness of who Jesus is, and to be a witness in a new found world.

The ‘what’ of training is different and so is the place of being Christian. As the overall milieu of the world is changing, the place of meeting has also changed demographically and in the sense of environment and structure. People live in multicultural, mainly urbanised societies and meet mainly (and then almost daily) in the marketplace. It is here that the *laos tou Theou* rubs shoulders and is exposed to the ethical and moral issues of the day. It relates to more than people dressed in religious uniforms but as a group of human beings working together for a common goal of enhancing their particular habitat. It is here that the people of God are apostolically called to be a nation of priests witnessing in work and life in a holistic manner.

Laos tou Theou is not a welfare state where members are taxed (tithed) in exchange for service delivery, and for people to stand proxy for their entitled callings. It is rather a community of equal responsibility with the execution of their calling not in a building or responsible to an institution, but in the marketplace and habitat where people meet. It matters not where participants of the *laos* might find themselves, or where the people they meet come from. It is the frontier where the ecclesia meets the nations in the world, individually and collectively, empowered by the Holy Spirit with *charismata* each with “his own; with all for all and obedience of all to one Lord” (Küng 1976:395).

3. CONCLUSION.

The *laos tou Theou* is a movement of the Holy Spirit, because it is missional in its calling and constitution. The Spirit endows people individually and collectively, according to His Will (1Corinthians 12:7) with the gifting needed to fulfil the ecclesiastic commission. The Holy Spirit empowers all His people^{lx} who in turn execute their ordained ministerial functions within (1Corinthians 12 and Ephesians 4) a multiplicity of institutional formats. The gifting of the Holy Spirit to ministries and offices is latent in all believers and will manifest according to His Will (Volf 1998:232). The *laos tou Theou* is first a movement (or presence) of His people, under guidance and instruction of the Holy Spirit, before it can be anything else. Thus all Christians are only of one order: “the first order” (Snider 1975:9). However, it is when the work of the Holy Spirit is marginalised or suppressed that the power and will of God may be understood as distant, hierarchical and coercive. The authority of the Scripture then becomes “heteronomous; the church is seen as a rigid power structure in which some members rule over others; and the sacraments degenerate into almost magical rites under the control of a clerical elite” (Migliore 2004:224).

Yet it is only when all His people are perceived, developed and recognised as clergy, that the ecclesia can become truly catholic, being a proliferating presence in the institutional spaces of the marketplace, as people representing God. The ecclesia is now truly catholic^{lxi} in the sense that it is everywhere witnessing and adding God’s goodness

^{lx} Kritzinger J. J. (1979:151) reflects on the ecclesia and warns that there might develop two strains: The one are those who feel inadequate and not needed with resulting passivity (1Corinthians 12:15) and the other who think they alone are ordained and equipped for God’s service.

^{lxi} The word ‘catholic’ in Latin means catholicus or universalis which is directed towards the *whole* and as an adverb, *thoroughly*, *completely* and *totally* (Küng 1976:297). In this sense one can refer to the

through their work, lifestyle and *kerygma* (Bavinck 1960:121). The effect permeates a presence of God among all the nations, with the hope and faith that the nations will turn to God and be disciplined according to His purposes. Disciples of Christ are not only part of the metaphorical body or ecclesia of Christ, they *are* the ecclesia. They are, according to 1 Peter 2:9 'a nation of priests' with only one special priest, Christ. Their purpose is to bring glory to His name and serve the world (Kritzinger 1979:150).

The offices are relevant and present where and when the ecclesia meet, whether as two or as a communal assembly. Within an understanding of pluriform and multiple forms of offices, *some* offices (Ephesians 4:11) have specific gifts (Romans 12:6 and 1Corinthians 7-11) for a specific setting and function - these can either be in the marketplace, community, household or the congregating ecclesia. These gifts and offices can be similar or different, as well as mutually complementary in every scenario. A person might, for instance, be blessed with a specific gift of bringing an ecclesia into fruition; this person might be empowered with the gift of teaching for making disciples whilst simultaneously receiving teaching when interacting with the local congregation of the wider ecclesia.

The offices^{lxii} are not linked to an institution, but rather to the function of serving where the need is, for whom it is needed and then with blurred boundaries. The importance of distinguishing the offices is by service and not position (Küng 1976:389). The various gifts and ministries (Volf 1998:231) outlined by Paul^{lxiii} are always given for the empowerment of the ecclesia (Ephesians 4:11-14) and for the proliferation of the goodness and blessing of God in the market spaces as, when and where His people serve.

The apostolic priesthood of all believers is a people filled with the Holy Spirit and therefore, according to Paul (Küng 1976:402), possessing all that is necessary to fulfil the commission entrusted to them. In whatever format the ecclesia might meet and

apostolic priesthood of all believers in their missional quest to be completely, thoroughly and totally everywhere in the open spaces of the market square. They are also catholic in their unity or united (Volf 1988:261) mission to be interdependent witnesses for Christ in their work and lifestyle.

^{lxii} The permanent ministries in the ecclesiastic community have the same characteristics as charisms, inasmuch as in each case God calls a particular individual to a special ministry and the gifting to fulfil it (Küng 1976:395).

^{lxiii} See 1 Corinthians 12:4-10, Romans 6:23, 5:16-17, 12:6-8 and Ephesians 1:8, 2:8, 4:11, 6:13-17.

whoever they might be, they are complete and fully equipped as “...in every way you were enriched in Him... so that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift” (1Corinthians 1:5 and 7).

The *laos tou Theou* is also a gathered community.

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CHAPTER IV

AN ECCLESIASTICAL MOVEMENT

CHAPTER IV

SECTION I

AN ECCLESIASTICAL MOVEMENT

HIS PEOPLE EMPOWERED CONGREGATED HALLMARK

1. A PEOPLE SET ASIDE.

In a fairly late juncture of this study the issue of the ecclesia as a congregating people (Van Engen 2001:48) gathering as individuals for a corporate mission, needs to be reflected upon. It was purposely delayed, as the ontological commission, character and purpose of the ecclesia, first needed to be established. The Church, as an institution, has become such an overwhelming influence (Bosch 1991:201) that it is difficult to reflect on a movement and ministries of people without first considering the role of the church, its offices and clergy. This study will also acknowledge a pluriform expression of the ecclesia as a missional model that gives meaning and wholeness to people meeting - whether in a congregated format of time and space, or in the workplace. The latter could mean in the corporate world, the 'gathering of grain' or on the outskirts of a restricted-access cultural environment. The quest for a multiform expression of being the ecclesia is not based on Western individualism (Migliore 2004:249), but on a Trinitarian model of being a witnessing ecclesia in line with the instructions of Christ.

Therefore, the missional work of God through His commissioned people cannot "be limited to the actions of the church in its institutional form." (Bavinck 1960:67) Humans are essentially a people with a commission, whether in our (now lost) creational status, or re-created status in Christ. We have been created with a purpose: that of serving the purposes of God. The principal commission of Genesis is thus still

valid, though its character has changed temporally. The restoration work of Christ once again brings to fore the need to reflect on the commission of mankind, with the empowerment of the Holy Spirit. It is to allow the ecclesia to be the ecclesia and to be the new human life in relationships, solidarity and friendships (Migliore 2004:251). These provide the necessary pillars for understanding the nature, character and purpose of a gathered ecclesia. The commission of mankind predates the formal realisation of what is today commonly known today as Church – that is, if the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in Jerusalem (Acts 8:1) is accepted as its beginning. It was there and then that His disciples became a commissioned apostolic and priestly movement.

There is, however, the danger of over-simplifying the interrelatedness of the Holy Spirit empowering the ‘church’ and as the community of God. Therefore, this section will consider the community of God particularly from a historical perspective, acknowledging that the New Testament ecclesia of God was not His first created community. That honour befell Adam and Eve who constituted the first community or *kahal* (Hebrew), representing God on Earth. So also was Israel selected (Clowney 1995:33) to be a witnessing community representing Him to all nations. However, the essence of being an ecclesiastic community must find its fundamental relevance in the Triune God.

The challenge is to find the essence, or *sine qua non* as Volf (1998:127) puts it, for the ecclesia to call themselves the ecclesia, in the first place. The search for ecclesiality involves finding that which is indispensable, and that which supports and shapes the mission thereof. The understanding, then, of the ecclesia of Jesus as a Spirit-filled commissioned movement, will necessitate a “broader understanding and interpretation of what it is to be a missional ecclesia (Bavinck 1960:67).” Questions about what constitutes an ecclesiastic community, unit or gathering are very much a matter of two things: how the ecclesia should be according to the will of God; and how the ecclesia ought to be empowered by His Spirit.

To add to a new paradigm of missiological thinking, the remainder of this study will use the word *ecclesia* for the people of Jesus, as an assembled or congregated entity enhancing an understanding of a missional people (Bosch 1991:166), rather than *church*, which has developed a more institutionalised centripetal character. Martin

Luther loathed using the German word *kirche* (church) to describe the assembly of believers because of its cultural and hierarchical baggage (Van Engen 2001:48) and preferred to use the word *congregation*. Karl Barth (1949:143) also preferred to use *congregation*, as it adds to the concept of the *ecclesia* being a gathered assembly of people, more so than an institutionalised structure of systems.

In this section the *ecclesia* will be discussed:

- a. What the *ecclesia* is.
- b. The *ecclesia* as a gathered community.
- c. The *ecclesia* as a witnessing community.
- d. The *ecclesia* as a Spirit-created, serving community.
- e. The *ecclesia* as a commissioned community.

2. THE ECCLESIA

The *ecclesia* is primarily understood as the gathered people of God, though Migliore (2004:252-254) rightfully identifies four images of the *ecclesia* to enhance the understanding thereof:

- a. The people of God – a people elected for Gods’ purposes where *He* is their God and *they* His people (Leviticus 26:12 & 1Peter 2:9). The *ecclesia* is thus not an organisation or building but a cluster of people, a community with a specific calling and purpose – an image this study identifies with.
- b. It is a servant people, free to serve Him and their respective communities. It is a very prominent motif in the old and New Testament and a common theme within marketplace missiology.
- c. The third set of images focuses on the metaphor as the *ecclesia* as the body of Christ (1Corinthians 12:12-31) where the community participates in one Lord, one Spirit, one baptism and one body. It experiences more organic images and mutual dependence enriched by the variety of gifts of the Spirit.
- d. It is also a community of the Spirit. It is an alternative community modelling the new beginning people have in Christ and His Spirit. They enjoy, serve, suffer and hope in the *koinonia* as the fellowship of the Holy Spirit (see 2.4.1. of this study).

The term *ekklésia* is the Greek Old Testament translation of the Hebrew word *qāhāl* (Bosch1991:165) and it describes an assembly (Clowney 1995:30). Both words denote an actual assembly rather than a congregation, which may or may not be congregated. In early Christianity both Ignatius with “where Christ is, there is the ecclesia” and Tertullian “where two or three are, the ecclesia is” found their respective ecclesiological principles on the basis of Matthew 18:20 (Volf 1998:137). The definition of the ecclesia, based on Matthew’s use of the word in Matthew 18:20: “For where two or three come together in my name, there I am among them” forms a key role in ecclesiology (Jenkins 1973:44) and acquired pre-eminent importance quite early in Christianity. The ecclesia is constituted through a consistently communal occurrence in which the objective and subjective conditions of ecclesiality appear as two dimensions of a single purpose (Volf 1998:135). It reflects a relationship between God and His people for the execution in obedience of His purposes.

Therefore, being assembled or congregated does not make an ecclesiastical meeting, and such meetings will have no significance (Clowney 1995:30). The *laos tou theou* assemble for a purpose which can best be described as missional (Van Engen 2001:30) and then as *missio Dei*, ensuring the nature, character and constitution of the congregated assembly. The missional understanding of the ecclesia as a called-out community is essential for the understanding of ecclesiastical mission (Newbigin 1954:169). The ecclesia is not only a separation (many institutions, organisations and individuals are also separated for a reason), but also an *ecclesia sancta*, meaning it is sanctioned and separated for a purpose and therefore “distinguished from all such societies because of its commission, its foundation and its goal” (Barth 1949:144).

The understanding of the ecclesia as a function of mission and not mission as a function of the ecclesia (Bassham 1978:333) underlines the missional intent of the ecclesia expressed as the *laos tou theou* in *mission Dei*. This complements the rationale for a broadened view of being an assembled congregating movement of His people, for which Van Engen (2001:27) cites three reasons:

- a. Since the 1930s missiologists have called for a closer relationship between the concept of mission and the idea of church, focusing rather on the missionary nature and calling of the congregation.
- b. Sociologists have begun to stress the strategic importance of the congregation.

- c. Ecclesiologists like Barth and Dietrich Bonhoeffer have called for a new way of envisioning the church, suggesting a new paradigm that will have far-reaching missiological implications for the local congregation.

The ecclesia finds its roots in the Trinitarian understanding of God. From there flows a better insight into the first ecclesia in Paradise, Israel as a assembled chosen people of God (Clowney 1995:33) and the *laos to thou* as the new people of God. It is people with mutual, multiple and functional relationships, pursuing a common eschatological goal of His Kingdom to come.

2.1. TRINITARIAN IMAGE.

An understanding of the ecclesia needs to be closely developed in relation to the Trinitarian expression of self (Migliore 2004:262). The concept shared by Jesus of His ecclesia in Matthew is deeply rooted in Old Testament meaning (Clowney 1995:30). It is a primal reflection on the Trinitarian unity of God: “Those assembled in the name of Christ, even if they number only three, can be an image (εἰκὼν) of the Trinity (Volf 1998:197).” When believers congregate in His name, they also represent the image of the Trinitarian God they worship. This image is based on a communal relationship of persons and corresponding identity (Migliori 2004:144). One can conclude that personhood and relationships are intertwined and simultaneously and mutually presuppose one another. Jürgen Moltmann (1967:172) gives insight into this relational view of the ecclesiastical reflection on the Trinity: “Here there are no persons without relations; but there are no relations without persons either. Person and relation are complementary.”

Within relations between the divine the Father is not superior to the other, nor the ‘first,’ but rather “one among the other (Moltman 1991:323).” The structure of Trinitarian relations is neither characterised by pyramidal dominance of the one, nor by a hierarchical bipolarity between the one and the many, but rather by a “polycentric and symmetrical reciprocity of the many (Volf 1998:217).” From this Trinitarian deduction ecclesiastical unity speaks of a simplistic multiple, mutual relationship of equality and that any ecclesiastical unity is held together by collegiality. In no way can it be by a monarchy or single representation, be it a pastor, elder, pope or bishop, as this can then be construed as being monistic and un-Trinitarian (1998:217).

It is from this symmetrical reciprocity of the Trinitarian relations, that the ecclesia as a people can find their corresponding image in serving one another with the gifts of the Spirit. In this way they fulfil the commission of reaching into the world in obedience to Jesus and in the power of the Father. The gifts of the Holy Spirit are given for the benefit of all^{lxiv} in the ecclesia, and correspond to the divine unity of the same Spirit, the same Lord and the same God as Father, who are active in all this gifting and then so in every believer. Like the Trinity, the ecclesia all stand in the same mutual, multiple, functional relation with one another, giving what they have received and receiving what the others are giving (Gelpi 1971:87).

The Trinitarian image of the ecclesia is also present in the first human community of Adam and Eve and their communal relationship with creation^{lxv}. Both humankind and non-human creation stand before God as equals, they stand before the Creator in the single reality of being created (Brueggemann 1982:11). The functionality of the created beings differs not in status but in their creational purposes and both stand before God and as image of God. Creation is always treated as a unity whose parts stand in differentiated relation with each other within His Kingdom here on Earth. It is within this relational reality - the mystery of life upon which all social wellbeing depends (1973:12) - that the basis of the ecclesiastic model is also mirrored.

God created humankind as Adam and Eve. The same principles of the polycentric and symmetrical reciprocity of the many (Volf 1998:217) are echoed in the relation between God and humankind^{lxvi}: humans among themselves and humankind in relation to the rest of Creation. The Creator calls Creation to obedience and unity (Brueggemann 1982:18). The relationships within humankind are defined in the creational intention of making Eve a 'helper' separate from, but for, Adam. They were jointly a gathered community, had a corporate mission which could only be fulfilled in relational unity with an understanding of what the commission entailed and the obedient execution thereof. Mankind in relation with the rest of Creation does not

^{lxiv} "Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good." – 1 Corinthians 12:7

^{lxv} Being created in the image of God means that humanity finds their true identity in coexistence with each other and with other creatures (Migliore 2004:144).

^{lxvi} A relationship between Creator and Creation can best be described as a dialectical affirmation (Brueggemann 1982:13) and summed up by Barth (1958:41) with the concept of covenant.

constitute a biblical ecclesia. It is only when such a gathering is constituted in His Name, that the essence of being an ecclesia is established.

An ecclesiastic meeting is when only two human beings gather in His presence. The ecclesiastic model, as gleaned from Genesis 1:27, presents a model of unity that is one of diverse singularity: “But it is worth noting that humankind is spoken of as singular ‘God created *him*’ and plural ‘God created *them*’ (Brueggemann 1982:34).” The importance of this portrait is that mankind stands as a unity before God and it is only as community that God is reflected. It forms the basis of an ecclesiastic unit and assembly.

2.2. GATHERED ECCLESIA.

The ecclesia is a gathered community. It is first of all an assembly, but being assembled does not exhaust this definition (Volf 1998:137). It is a gathering in His name, for a purpose and at a specific place,^{lxvii} be it at home^{lxviii}, within buildings or the workplace (Clowney 1995:30). Even if the ecclesia is not an assembled entity the *laos theou* as individuals lives on in the service fellow believers render to one another (Bosch 1991:166) and their corporate and common mission to the world. The corporate unity does not replace or delegate the individual calling and responsibility of the obedient fulfilling the renewed commission of Christ. The ecclesia comprises people, people gathering in Christ’s name and if there are no people, there is no ecclesia and if the gathering is not in His name, the gathering does not constitute an ecclesia either. The local assembling of people meeting people, is the body of Christ in the particular place and time they gather in His name (Volf 1998:139).

2.2.1. GATHERED in HIS NAME.

The ecclesia is an assembled body of Christ, indispensably so when they gather in the name of Christ. Congregating in His name is the precondition for the presence of Christ, which is the ontological constitution of an ecclesiastic meeting: “where two or three gather in my name, I am among them” – Matthew 18:20. First, the name of Christ represents the name of the deity around whom those in the ecclesia are

^{lxvii} See also 1 Corinthians 14:23.

^{lxviii} Marlis Gielen (in Volf 1998:138) believes house assemblies are not to be viewed as one form of assembly, like a partial assembly among others, but are whole assemblies.

gathering. Expressed in Pauline terminology (Volf 1998:147) the ecclesia is the ecclesia of Jesus Christ (Romans 16:16, Galatians 1:22 and 1Thessalonians 2:14) - or it is not an ecclesia at all.

Gathering in His name is also a confession of the belief structures (*credo*), content and character of the ecclesia as a faith community grounded in Christ (Heyns 1977:151) and confessing Him. The ecclesiastic gathering is distinctive through the confession of Jesus as the Christ. This stands in contrast to any other Jesus or proclaimed messianic figure and also the confession of the presence and reality of the Holy Spirit in whom, among the myriad other spirits of this world, they believe. The ecclesia further cements the character of a congregated entity of Jesus built on the apostolic writings (Volf 1998:146), by attesting as Luke did (Acts 2:42), that the ecclesia of Jerusalem “held fast to the apostles’ teaching.”

The authority of the latter confession does not lie in the confession itself, nor is it deduced from there, but rather lies in the authority of these writings known to the ecclesia as the written Word. The Scriptures are the *norma normans* of the ecclesiastical confessions (Heyns 1977:161). The legality of the ecclesia is therefore not determined by a specific position of space, place or time, but predominantly in its qualitative confessional nature of being in Christ and being obedient to His Word. The ecclesia is thus a faith community gathering by believing and confessing their assembly as based on the name and Lordship of Christ Jesus. The ecclesia is therefore essentially *communio fidelum*, foremost and whatever they may be beyond this (Volf 1998:147).

The *laos theou* as a gathered community further expresses their individual and corporate commitment (Heyns 1977:165) to allow their lives to be moulded by Jesus Christ, to reflect His image. Confession is more than expressing a *credo*, it is also identifying with and committing to making the confession and subordinating oneself to the Lord of the confession (Volf 1998:149). The correlation between faith and the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23), also expressed in terms of commitment, application and endurance, takes the ecclesia on the road to becoming the expression of their faith and confession of being representative images of the One they believe in – during the assembly, at home and work. The self-committing dimension of confession can be contrasted with the antonym ‘denying,’ making it possible to deny Jesus Christ through

false doctrine as well as a unreflective life and work-style (Titus 1:16), consequently renouncing the image of confession and creation.

Being Christian is first an exercise in faith by accepting Christ with a related confession, whilst being an ecclesia is first a confession by those who have in faith accepted the Lordship of Christ (Volf 1998:151). It is the confession of Christ as Lord and the disciples' personal proclamation of that same confession of faith in Him^{lxix}. It is the faith of the heart and the confession of the mouth as outlined in Romans 10:11: "For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and with your mouth that you confess and are saved." This multi-dimensional confession of the congregated people of God constitutes the basis of the ecclesia.

The similarity between the ecclesia and the Old Testament *qāhāl* lies in that both have requirements of belonging; they differ in the qualification of belonging. Whereas belonging to the ecclesia is by confession, the Old Testament entry is by religious rites, such as circumcision and obedience to the Law (Heyns 1977:38). This does not imply that there is no symbolic conduct and expression of the believers' confessional faith; it comes by way of sacraments. Being an ecclesia includes the practice and obedient observance of the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper.

Within the initial period of Christianity these sacraments were an important part of being both Christian and part of the ecclesia, where believers participated in the common breaking of bread as baptised followers (Volf 1998:152). The sacraments were both a form of confession and an expression of faith, and constituted the witness of being Christian. The participation in the sacraments was, and still is, one of public confessions and witnesses. Baptism is a both a communal and public confession in Christ, in whose name the baptism occurs. So also is the breaking of bread a communal participatory action and one that Jesus encouraged His people to partake of as often as needed, and without any reference that such participation should be ministered by a special class of people (1Corinthians 11:23ff).

^{lxix} "Wherever you hear such words and see preaching, believing, confessing and commensurate behaviour, you can be sure that a proper *ecclesia sancta catholica* must be there (Luther, Werke, 50.629.28-30)" in Volf 1998:50.

2.2.2. CONCLUSION.

The ecclesia, whether in its nuclear or multiple assembled format, is not a single institutional entity but rather a communion of interdependent believers (Volf 1998:224), where the mediation of God's restoration grace is ministered through all those confessing Christ. The ecclesia is constituted by the Holy Spirit and through the common confession of all believers gathering for the purpose of giving glory to Him. They are strengthened and equipped by one another (1Corinthians 14:26) for the purpose of living (1Peter 2:5) and working the commission among a lost world. The ecclesia of Christ can thus best be described a poly-centrifugal^{lxx} community of believers. The ecclesia is, furthermore, a participative gathering of the apostolic priesthood of all believers expressed in terms of soteriology, ecclesiology and missional eschatological understanding.

There is also another dimension, a social dimension underscoring the principle that the Gospel is made available by people to people. Being the ecclesia is not a private affair, but takes place when other believers are present (Mathew 10:32-33), as well as those who are not yet believers. The numeric qualification for being an ecclesia is two, yet there seems to be room for more than two believers and beyond the attested legal requirement of being witnesses, as two believers. Those who are still seeking the truth are welcome to congregate with those who have already come into saving knowledge of God (1Corinthians 14:22). The ecclesiastic meeting therefore also reflects spiritual, public and social components.

The ecclesiastic meeting constitutes a further three spiritual dimensions (Jonker 1985:5). We gather to meet one another. We also gather to meet with God, and thirdly, we meet one another in the face of God. The three angles of confession are thus public, personal and holy. It implies communication between persons, between the individual and God as well as a collective interaction via confession and conversation with Christ. The ecclesia then as a gathered community in its quantitative form of being two or more is a complete, whole and fully representative entity representing Christ. The localised ecclesia (ambivalent, mobile or formatted) is not

^{lxx} The universality of God's grace is actualised through a two-fold methodology i.e. centrifugally or centripetally. The Old Testament is "wholly built around the latter method, whereas the New Testament enjoins the former (Peters 1972:21)."

part, nor a *section* or *belonging* to the ecclesia of Christ – it is wholly an ecclesia. The whole body of Christ can only be understood in terms of the local assembly and its concrete actions. The local assembly is not merely a small cell of the whole. It is the ecclesia of Christ in the full sense of the word to which, in its own local situation, everything is given and promised which is needed for the salvation of man.

Yet in being so they are not in isolation from the rest of the body of Christ. The ecclesia also may not be isolated from the rest of the world, because it is called to witness (*martyria*), live in fellowship (*koinonia*) and render the gifting from God in service (*diakonia*) to one another (including non-believers) and creation (Yoder 1994:77).

2.3. ECCLESIA AS A WITNESSING COMMUNITY.

The Bible invokes all of God's people to be witnesses. This was something the early ecclesia understood profoundly as their astounding growth was directly related to the spontaneous witness of every believer. For them to be *laos tou theou* was to engage with people in the everyday walk (Bavinck 1960:67) of life and to work and live as apostolic priest in the workplace. Modern missions differ in two important aspects from the early ecclesia, in that the latter was missional as part of their way of life and mission was thus not conducted as a separate and specialised ministry next to the congregation. Secondly, the emphasis also shifted towards '*church planting*' as the focus of mission and measure instrument for success, with an overshadowing emphasis on ecclesiology (Bosch 1991:201). This neglected the ontological proportions of His command to the ecclesia to be a charismatic witnessing movement of people (Van Engen 1981:178), more than a gathered community.

Many modern-day missional activities emphasise the outward geographical and cultural spreading of the Gospel to the ends of the world. This results in the neglect and acceptance of modern pastiche cosmopolitan societies as missional realities. From this flows a resistance to interpreting the commission of Christ as a holistic approach and not specifically a geographically (Bosch 1979:13) and culturally driven missional commission. The result is that the full weight of Christ's words of being *witnesses* may be missed (Van Engen 2001:97). The early disciples were called by Christ to be ecclesiastic witnesses, after receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:8): "But you

shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be my witnesses (my emphasis).”

The Greek word for witness is *martus/martyr* and within a biblical context it has two meanings (Bosch 1976:116). Its transliteration into English as *witness* renders ‘the one who tells or confesses’ (Volf 1998:151) what he/she has seen and believes. The second way of translating witness is *martyr* that indicates that one dies (or is willing to die) for his/her conviction. The New Testament writers did not use the term in the technical sense of one who was called before a court to give objective evidence, but rather used the term to refer to someone who testifies to what he or she has seen (Kee 1996:195). In this case the testimony of the life, death and Resurrection of Jesus (Bavinck 1960:66) is also recorded in Luke 24:48: “You are witnesses^{lxxi} to these things.”

The disciples and other believers stayed together after the Crucifixion in the upper room to wait^{lxxii} and pray. They expected empowerment by the Holy Spirit to become witnesses of what they had seen and to act out in obedience the empowerment of His Spirit. It was during those turbulent phases of the Crucifixion, Resurrection and Ascension^{lxxiii} that they were changed from perplexed observers at Calvary to become Easter believers and uncomprehending eyewitnesses of the Easter events and then also witnesses of the risen Christ. They paved the way for a movement of believers to be witnesses of His messianic destiny and spokespersons of forgiveness in His Name to all the nations (Dillon 1979:242). Christ empowered those that believed in Him through His Spirit to reflect the nature of His ecclesia as an ever widening, mushrooming group of witnesses (Van Engen 2001:42).

It was in being witnesses that the ontological character emerged of what He made them and called them to do. Luke chose to use the term ‘witness’ as crucial terminology for

^{lxxi} The noun witness or witnesses (*martys/martyres*) occurs thirteen times in Acts, but though only once in Luke’s gospel, it is in the pivotal final periscope (Bosch 1976:116).

^{lxxii} Christ commanded His disciples in Acts 1:4 not to “leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised.”

^{lxxiii} Scripture (Luke 24:51 and Acts 1:9-11) and the Nicene and Apostles’ Creeds declare that after His Resurrection Jesus ‘ascended into heaven.’ The doctrine of the Ascension of the risen Jesus affirms that He rules from heaven as head of the ecclesia and Lord of the world and that He continues to be present and active in the world, in the power of the Holy Spirit (Migliore 2004:404). An important aspect of this doctrine is that Christ cannot be directly identified with the structures and practices of the church or the events and movements of history, thereby casting doubt on any ecclesiastic and secular triumphalism.

the understanding of his paradigm for mission. Within the Lucan writings ‘witness’ also becomes the appropriate term for “mission” (Gaventa 1982:416). To some extent the terms “apostle” and “witness” are synonyms, as already indicated in the previous chapter. It is evident from Acts that this task is entrusted to every human being who understand that the expansion of the Kingdom is not through personal initiatives, but through continuous dependence upon the empowerment of the Holy Spirit (Pomerville 1985:109).

The Apostles were informed by Jesus in Acts 1:2-8, that they would be His witnesses (Bosch 1976:116). Cornelius was told by Peter that Jesus was seen by “us who were chosen by God as witnesses, who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead” (Acts 10:41). Again, in Antioch Paul says, “For many days Jesus appeared to those who came up with him from Galilee to Jerusalem, who are now his witnesses to the people” (Acts 13:31). This understanding of “witness” is similar to what we find in the fourth Gospel (1976:1116), where Jesus says to the disciples, “You...are witnesses because you have been with me from the beginning” (John 15:27).

At the same time, the term “witness” is expanded and applied to others, such as Paul (Acts 22:15; 26:16) and Stephen (22:20). Thus there is already in the Lucan writings an extension of the concept of witness to people other than the Apostles. In Acts the content of the witness (the *martyria*) refers, on the whole, to the church’s proclamation of the Gospel (Kremer 1982:147). Primarily, “gospel” alludes to the Resurrection of Jesus and its significance. In Acts 1:22 Luke quotes Peter as saying that the task of the new apostle to be elected would be to “become with us a witness to his resurrection” (Acts 10:41). Elsewhere, again, Luke seems to suggest that the *martyria* pertains not only to Jesus’ Resurrection, but to his entire life and ministry (cf Luke 24:48 and Acts 13:31). Jesus himself proclaimed the “(good news of) the kingdom of God” (Luke 4:43; 8:1; 9:11; 16:16). This is essentially what the witnesses in Acts also do (cf 8:12; 19:8; 20:25; 28:23, 31): the good news of the reign of God is Jesus Christ, incarnated, crucified, risen and what He has accomplished.

The word witness gained a complementary meaning when the testimony of the early Christians to their faith in the God of Jesus Christ was met with hostility. The term witness then began to take on a connotation of testifying to one’s faith in the face of

persecution (Kee 1996:195). In Acts 22:20 there is already an allusion to the witness being regarded as a martyr. Christ indicated such when He stated in Matthew 16:18 that His ecclesia would be built on the confession of Him being the Christ and that “the gates of Hades will not overcome it.” When the proclamation of Christ is read in the context of the whole verse persecution and resistance to the spread of the Gospel seem normative, as much as that there will be those who will overcome.

2.3.1. REFLECTING A LEGAL DUALITY.

It has been argued throughout the study that the number of two confessing believers in Christ represents the smallest modular structure of an ecclesia or congregation. It can also be argued that the ecclesia is ontologically much more than the mere quantification of numbers or organisational structures, but more a ‘called out’ and commissioned people for the purpose of being witnesses. However, the minimum numerical constitution laid down by Christ in Matthew 18:20 is two, and in so doing He secures witnessing as a protologically legal and historical part of being His ecclesia.

Beyond the numerical qualification of being two believers in Christ, the essence of being a congregation is not represented further numerically. Greater numbers therefore do not imply a greater presence of Him or the *charismata* and neither does it suggest a greater responsibility to execute the commission of all believers. Greater numbers may have some sociological and psychological factors enhancing the perception of greater spirituality, but it is no more than a perception. Conversely, a lesser number also does not imply a lesser ability, presence, gifting or calling or being closer to a biblical ideal. It is the same Spirit that gives to all (individually and collectively) according to His Will. Beyond the ecclesiastic qualification of being two, obedience to His Will becomes the defining factor for a true ecclesiastic movement.

Mankind’s restored relationship with God is first and foremost an individual one and therefore individuality does matter, but does not complete the ecclesiastic essence. People are individually re-birthed, but are collectively commissioned for His purposes. The ecclesia is both witness, and witness of people to people. The corporeality of the ecclesiastic gathering does not replace the witness of the singular disciple. The ecclesia comprises people - people with a witness of knowing the risen Christ (Volf

1998:232). Disciples gathering do not relinquish or impart their individual or corporate witness to structure or office. The ecclesia is people, people witnessing to people – wherever and whenever they assembled, principally and legally so.

The principle of two as being theologically and ontologically the ecclesia of Christ is gleaned from the Trinity (Migliore 2004:262) and mirrored in Paradise by Adam and Eve who daily met with God (Genesis 3). They constituted the first complete unit of image-witnessing ecclesia who were called out. Adam and Eve were called to witness the work of God's hands, His existence and Deity and the first collective bodily representative witness of God on earth. They were the first ecclesia. The principle of being an ecclesia consequently finds its roots in the created mankind and as a continuation of the Trinitarian image. The commission of Christ to His disciples (Mathew 28:19) is a witness of the restoration of the protological ecclesiastic dimension lost in Paradise with the fall of mankind.

There is also a legal element connected to the ecclesia being a witness of two, and it provides the procedures for a reliable testimony (Brueggemann 2002:180). Jesus derived the legal position (Van Engen 2001:97) from adhering to the Law, as stipulated in Deuteronomy 17:6, in that a testimony is rendered valid when presented by two or three people. The formulation of Christ's ecclesia integrates the historical legality of truth being represented by two witnesses (Mathew 18:16 and John 8:17 as well as Paul in 2 Corinthians 13:1) into His movement of witnessing people. The primary case law of giving false witness is also organised around two words 'if' and 'then' found in Deuteronomy 13:1-9 (Brueggemann 2002:181). *If* a person is found guilty *then* execution of the judgement is to take place and initiated by those testifying or being the witnesses: "...let him be the first to throw a stone" (John 8:7).

The principle flowing from the above is found in the execution of the verdict of truth by those witnessing the truth. In the instance of Christ, it is His disciples. They, the ecclesia, are the ones to initiate the deliverance from, and destruction of, darkness into light. Believing in Christ and being a witness of His Resurrection is for the ecclesia not complete without fulfilling its missional commission (James 2:18 and 2:20). Christ is the model of the ecclesia as the one who is the author, fulfiller and finisher (Hebrew 12:2) of that which His people in faith confess and bear witness of. Paul professes the

same legality of the ecclesiastic witness by comparing it (1Corinthians 10:16, Romans 12:5) to a body corporate that has legal representation in its constitution.

The lineage of the witness legality runs throughout Scripture. It is reflected by God instructing Noah to take two animals (Genesis 7:9). Abraham took two of his servants with him to sacrifice his son Isaac (Genesis 22:3). The two servants would eventually stand as witnesses to Abraham's obedience and God's provision. Moses carried two tablets of the "Testimony, inscribed by the finger of God" (Exodus 31:18). The tablets of Testimony (Bromiley 1979:291) were eventually placed in the Ark of the Covenant with two other witnessing milestones; a portion of manna^{lxxiv} and the staff of Aaron. Joshua and Caleb met the legal requirement for being trustworthy witnesses (Numbers 14:6-9) on their return from the Promised Land.

When John the Baptist needed reassurance that Jesus was indeed the Christ, he sent two (Luke 7:18) of his followers to enquire. Jesus responded by telling the disciples of John to go back and inform him of what they had witnessed. It was a witness (Luke 7:22-23) that the blind could see, the lame could walk, the dead were resurrected and the poor became the recipients and witnesses of this marvellous reality. Jesus draws on Old Testament prophecies^{lxxv} to give accreditation to His mission (Morris 1987: 142). It is apparent that the two words *witness* and *ecclesia* are complementary and interrelated, giving meaning to the announcement that He would build His *ecclesia* upon the *witness* that He was the Messiah.

By sending His disciples in witnessing pairs (Luke 9:1-6) Jesus began to restore the creational imagery of the proto-ecclesia and in doing so acknowledged the Law. Christ also released the eschatological restored ecclesiastic model, sending His disciples to live and work simultaneously as witnesses amongst those to whom they were sent. They were to be assimilated, as salt^{lxxvi}, and become part of the hosts' world, sharing in their challenges and victories, whilst witnessing and making the Kingdom known. The ecclesiastic witness is not conducted in isolation or in the private world of Christianity. Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1976:13) wrote: "I shall have no right to participate in the

^{lxxiv} The additional objects placed in the Ark were a pot of manna (Exodus 16:33) as a witness throughout the generations (Bromiley 1979:293) and Aaron's rod (Numbers 17).

^{lxxv} See Isaiah 35:5&6 and 61:1.

^{lxxvi} See Matthew 5:13.

reconstruction of Christian life in Germany after the war if I do not share the trials of this time with my people. Christians in Germany will face the terrible alternative of either willing the defeat of their nation in order that Christian civilization may survive, or willing the victory of their nation and thereby destroying our civilization. I know which of these alternatives I must choose; but I cannot make this choice in security.”

Both Herod and Pilate witnessed Christ’s innocence; “having established that Jesus is innocent” (Marshall 1979: 859). Luke also refers to the other two crucified with Jesus as criminals (1979:866), thereby drawing on witnesses from both the ruling and lowest classes of society as testimonies to His innocence, crucifixion and the fact that He died in the same way as those alongside Him. In the final moments of Jesus on the cross, these two witnessed that as they would die (Morris 1987:329), so would He, leaving an undisputed legality of the fact that He died - for the sins of this world.

The Lucan gospel also awakens the readers to the two angels (24:4) witnessing that Christ has risen. Luke differs from the gospel of Mark in stressing that the tomb was empty; whereas Mark recorded one angel compared to Luke’s two (Marshall 1979:882), emphasising the legality of the witnesses. Luke and Jesus appeared to two disciples (one called Cleopas) returning from Jerusalem on the road to Emmaus (Luke 24:13), who would testify that He was alive. Luke also emphasises in Acts 1:8 that the Holy Spirit is the One who empowers the ecclesia to be witnesses: “But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be my *witnesses*^{lxxvii}.” The Holy Spirit, in Triune unity with Christ instructed the young congregation in Antioch (Acts 13:1-3) to set apart two believers, Barnabas and Paul, for a specific service they would have to fulfil. When Barnabas and Paul later parted, each partnered with another disciple to constitute a basic ecclesiastic witnessing community. Paul took Silas (Acts 15:40) with him, while Barnabas joined Mark (Acts 15:39).

Here an important principle of God’s people as a movement culminated, albeit through the discontent between Paul and Barnabas. It provides for a wider and more flexible modular understanding of what the ecclesia is. The ecclesiastic gathering is like the offices they might occupy (Volf 1991:223), neither permanent nor principle. The

^{lxxvii} Italics - my emphasis.

principles discipleship and multiplication through being witnesses are permanent, though the needed format of execution is flexible. These are three interrelated concepts with the sending of the twelve where Matthew (10:10) changes, only once, from using the word *disciples*, to *apostles*. It indicates that the believers undergo a metamorphosis from when they meet as disciples, to when they cross their own cultural, religious and geographical confinements to enact their commission of reaching to a lost world.

2.3.1.1. CONCLUSION.

A witness is a reminder, or beacon, of something that actually happened, or that is happening (Ellison LE. in Douglas 1974:1335). Abraham gave seven lambs as a witness (Genesis 21:30) that he owned the particular well. The twelve stones picked up from the bed of the Jordan River (Joshua 4:3) were to act as a witness of what God had done. In Revelation 11:3 two prophets witness of Him in the last days, as do the two olive branches (Revelation 11:4), also referred to in Zechariah 4:11-14: “who are standing by the Lord of the whole Earth.” The final witness was, however, with the crucifixion of Jesus. It bore the conclusive witness of two men (witnesses) hanging with Him (John 19:18).

The ecclesia as a gathering of people dedicated to the Creator is a golden thread running since the inception of mankind through all of Scripture. It is a concept that was foremost in Christ’s mind when calling and releasing His disciples. It was primarily about people becoming a community and meeting to be disciplined for the purpose of being effective witnesses. The essence of the ecclesiastic meeting is centrifugal. Israel undeniably presented a much stronger model of a centripetal community of God with little or no evidence of God instructing them to become witnesses beyond their own borders. Wright (2006:502) concludes that “that there is no clear mandate in God’s revelation to Israel over the centuries for them to undertake ‘missions,’ in our sense of the word, to the nations.” The mission of Israel was to occupy the land from where the Messiah would come and to ensure the world would know. For them it was to ‘be’ more so than to be ‘going’ (Wright 2006:504). For the ecclesia it is much the same. The emphasis of Christ was not on the *going* but on *being witnesses*.

A major difference is that whereas God had lived among His people in Israel, He now was to be found ‘in’ His people. The Temple of God was representative of God

residing among His people; in Christ He now lives in His (Heyns 1977:60) living temples (1Corinthians 3:16) neither bound to space nor time. The ecclesia of Jesus thus executes its mission from a different position: it is neither earth-bound nor is it per definition a system or organisation. It constitutes people who are the living representative temples of God, wherever the ecclesia finds itself; people as *laos tou theou*.

2.4. COMMUNITY, STRUCTURE AND MEANING.

Being the ecclesia of Jesus brings a healthy creative tension between the ecclesia as a movement of people, and the ecclesia as a structured institutionalised assembly. As early as the late first century, a shift in the understanding of the ecclesia emerged. “In fact, some of the New Testament texts already reflected a situation where the mobile ministry of apostles, prophets, and evangelists was beginning to give way to the settled ministry of bishops (elders) and deacons” (Bosch 1991:201). It was a transition which Küng (1976:393) describes as a shift from a charismatic movement of people to a more structured, although still no less defined concept, as a pneumatic (Van Engen 2001:179) understanding of being Church.

In that period of change, the creative tension between these two dynamics of the church’s ministry gradually collapsed in favour of the second. This resulted in a migration from a primarily missional movement of people, towards an institutionalised format expressed in terms of Church and (its) mission. The missional dimension was increasingly conducted by individuals next to the Church, while the latter became more focussed on office and structure. Within this transition the work of the Holy Spirit evolved into an almost exclusive build-up to what was to become the assembly of God’s people in sanctity (Bosch 1991:201). The work of the Spirit was now experienced as purifying and illuminating every soul within the ecclesia. The missional focus of a charismatic movement of people, proclaiming the Kingdom by bringing good tidings to a wider world, was subordinate to the existence of Church.

Later, the concept of the ecclesia as *Church* started to dominate and ecclesiology became so important that both eschatology and pneumatology were subsumed under it. A mystical doctrine of the church catholic displaced the idea of the ecclesia as proleptic reality (Beker 1980:303). It was now regarded as the company of the spiritual elite,

who with their endowment of the Spirit already actualized the Kingdom of God. In this setting, the pre-existent status of the church, its ontological character, and its status as an imperishable body became the focal concerns (Bosch 1979:201).

However, the presence of Christ does not enter the congregation “through the narrow portals of the ordained office, but through the dynamic life” of the entire assembly (Volf 1998:152). Therefore the ontological essence of being the ecclesia must be understood in whatever way the ‘offices’ are beneficial to the local assembly. Moreover, it recognised that the institution’s offices were not the essence of, nor necessary for being, an ecclesiastic movement. This does not denounce or belittle the importance and value of the ecclesiastical offices, but rather puts them into perspective. The necessary element for being an ecclesia involves two or more human beings gathering to confess, in obedience to His Spirit, Christ Jesus as *their* and *The* Saviour and Lord. The missional commission of the ecclesia is too comprehensive and inclusive to limit the actions of the ecclesia simply to its institutional forms (Bavinck 1960:68).

The ecclesia and ecclesiastic offices, then, are not contradictory or opposing terms. When they are evaluated in the light of the ecclesiastic community they ought to be complementary, as the ecclesia is a movement of witnessing people first, and then (before) it is anything else. The first ecclesia understood and experienced this profoundly as “its growth was due to the spontaneous witness of ordinary men, and it becomes more and more evident that this is the only missionary method which can endure in the long run (Bavinck 1960:67).” With that also comes the acknowledgement for the need for discipleship, sound teaching and mature spiritual guidance paving the way for offices and supportive charismatic ministries.

2.4.1. THE ECCLESIASTIC COMMUNITY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

The ecclesia is the creation of the Holy Spirit (Küng 1976:150-204) and in the writings of Luke the Holy Spirit is especially introduced as the Spirit of mission. The Holy Spirit is the One (Bavinck 1960:36) who equipped the Apostles and guided them into missional situations. Without the Holy Spirit there can be no confession that Christ is Lord (Heyns 1977:79). Therefore there can be no ecclesia without the Spirit and no mission without His empowering it. The coming of the Holy Spirit is signified in three dimensions; first, the Holy Spirit is an eschatological gift to all of His people.

Secondly, the Pentecostal event is a personal and individual reality. Finally, the empowerment by the Holy Spirit is the realisation of the ecclesiastic community.

In the messianic time of salvation, according to the prophetic expectation,^{lxxviii} not only “individual prophets and wise men, warriors, singers and kings, were to be fulfilled by the spirit of God, by God’s creating power and strength of life; it was to be given to the whole people (Küng 1976:163).” The Spirit of Christ, although given to all of His people individually, is given through the ecclesiastic community where the individual serves, to fulfil his/her commission in this world. The ecclesia is the eschatological people of God of the last days, empowered by the Spirit who gives gifts as He wills and pleases (Van Engen 2001:155).

The outpouring of the Spirit is the signal for the beginning of an eschatological event, the coming of age (Pomerville 1985:134), a fulfilment in reality – the pouring out of the Spirit upon all mankind: on sons and on daughters, on old men and young men, on menservants and maidservants, as well as on their masters, as recorded in Joel 2:28ff. Spirit in this context is not in the sense of breath, or an angel or demon (or ghost or spirit of the departed), nor in the sense of soul or source of life, nor in the sense of the seat of knowledge and volition, the living ego of a man (Küng 1976:163). Rather, in this context the Spirit of God is the Holy Spirit and it is His holiness that separates Himself distinctly from any other spirit of man and of the world.

John the Baptist (Mark 1:8) speaks of a more general eschatological outpouring of the Spirit: “I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.” It was only after the Resurrection of Jesus that the ecclesiastic community experienced the sending and empowerment of the Spirit. Whereas in Mark and Matthew the coming of the Spirit is generally regarded, as in the Old Testament, as something exceptional (Grassi 1978:8); the Hellenistic Luke, concerned less with the *parousia* of Christ but

^{lxxviii} “For I will pour water on thirsty land, and streams on the dry ground; I will pour my Spirit upon your descendants and my blessing on your offspring: (Is. 44:3; cf. 63:14). “And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to observe my ordinances” (Ez. 36:27; cf. Zech. 4:6).

more with the missiological dimension of the ecclesia, sees the Spirit as given permanently to all members^{lxxix} of the community (Küng 1976:165).

The basis for Luke's account of Pentecost in Acts (Küng 1976:166) is that the outpouring of the Spirit was upon the whole ecclesiastic community. It projects the community of the disciples as the eschatological community of salvation, in whom the prophecy of Joel about the outpouring of the Spirit is fulfilled, with reference to Acts 2:14-21 and Joel 3:1-5. Luke sees Pentecost not as the moment of the Church's birth, but rather Easter as determining the early community's identity (Bosch 1991:40). For him the ecclesiastic community of Christ existed before Pentecost (Acts 1:15) and the Spirit was already given at the time of Easter (John 20:22). What did transpire was that the ecclesia started to recognise itself as an ecclesiastic community. Its members testified to the fact that they were the promised eschatological community, and through the empowerment of the Spirit, its time as a missional entity (Bosch 1991:41) had arrived.

Therefore for Paul (Küng 1976:166), there can be no new eschatological expectation at all without the Spirit. If there is no Spirit, it does not mean that the community lacks its missionary commission - but that there is no community at all. Through the Resurrection of Jesus, He became the glorified *Kyrios*, representing the dynamic reign of God (Pomerville 1985:134) with power in the Spirit and the freedom to impart the Spirit and thus the earthly presence of the glorified Lord. In the Spirit Christ becomes Lord of the ecclesia and in the Spirit the resurrected Lord acts simultaneously in both the community and in the individual.

God is present where two or three of His people gather. He has not called and gathered His ecclesia simply as an alien being, an outsider. He has not made a new covenant with His people as a distant party to an agreement and completely uncommitted in His personal existence. No, God has revealed Himself in His entire living power, and it is through His self-giving power that He makes His claim to reign over His people (Küng

^{lxxix} The gift of the Spirit (Küng 1976:165) is often seen as a natural consequence of believing, or of baptism (Acts 2:28; 9:17; 10:44 and 19:6).

1976:167). There are no limits to His self-giving power, which has been revealed to His people and has transformed its whole existence, indeed recreated anew. The Holy Spirit in His power sustains it and leads it towards its goal. *Missio Dei* is thus God's mission (Bavinck 1960:57) and in a Trinitarian sense God is the protagonist of mission. It is He who sends His people, and also His Son (Pomerville 1985:138). The minimum quantitative requirement in the meeting or congregation of two people is then also an image of the Trinity and constitutes an ecclesia (Volf 1998:197).

Within the ecclesiastic movement there is the culmination of offices, office bearers and organisational structures. This emphasises the intimate connection between the nature and institutionalised character of the ecclesia. In this sense, the understanding of the ontological essence of an ecclesia is best realised by reflecting on the relation and structured functionality of the Triune God, the commission and empowerment of the ecclesia. The latter is an undeniable ingredient of the ecclesia; it does not define its nature, but does reflect its character.

2.4.2. ECCLESIASTIC INSTITUTIONS.

Generally speaking, an institution provides and communicates the stable structures of social (including religious) interaction and extends beyond its own origin, including when two people do the same habitually (Berger 1979:52). Institutionalism is not determined by quantification of a numerical presence, but by identity and relatively fixed relational patterns. Thus the identity of a social or religious entity presupposes institutionalism as formal and informal habitual communicational and behavioural patterns flow from a bi-lateral communal acceptance and legitimisation through explanation and legitimisation (Anderson 1984:119).

Social units, including ecclesiastical components, which define themselves over and against another, are in effect an institution (Volf 1998:234). It can evolve (and has) evolved into a situation where the focus sways towards the institutional relevance *per se* of being *church*, and not towards ecclesiality as being a charismatic movement of His people towards a common goal of advancing His kingdom in an institutional way. Institutionalism is not numerically limited. Where two or three meet, they are, due to their interactive relationships and behavioural patterns, an institution. Adam and Eve presented the first human institutional model as they lived and worked in a unified

structural pattern in relation with themselves and with God and were the proto human (Peters 1972:64) ecclesiastic community. In the same way God gave them a commission for a purpose to be executed in unity and structured behavioural patterns. God in Christ constituted His ecclesia similarly for a commissioned specific purpose. In both scenarios the execution of the commission was to be done, and only possibly so, within relationships and a unity of purpose.

On the matter of unity it seems no mere coincidence that the preservation of unity has for the first time become a specific task of the bishop in the letters of Ignatius (Volf 1998:219). This happened when the transition from a charismatic movement started to evolve into a more systematic institution (Küng 1976:393). The unity among believers individually or as congregated entity within itself, and with others, comes from the originator and guardian of the ecclesia, the Trinity through the Holy Spirit who now lives in every believer^{lxxx}. There is always the danger of exclusiveness which is contra to the teachings of Jesus and Trinitarian conceptual image of God, as well as the eschatological perception of the Kingdom to come. Ecclesiastic units, whether called an assembly, congregation or church, do not exist as the ecclesia of Christ in isolation (Volf 1998:192), but rather in relation with one another, as a mirrored image of God.

The ecclesia is an expression of the Trinitarian image of God, not as a complete analogy, but in the distinct relational functional diversity of roles within the Trinity. It is likewise so when the concept of ecclesiality is taken from the proto human institution of Adam and Eve. The limits of such an analogy are that corresponding ecclesiastic imaging cannot only be derived and determined from the Trinity and historical Adam. Hence a double access to the institutionalism of the ecclesia is necessary: It must be viewed both as a communion, living from its fellowship with the Triune God, and as a human social phenomenon (Volf 1998:235). The latter is always in danger of the ecclesia becoming mainly an expression of contemporary political, cultural and economic realities. Without the *charismata*, given for the enrichment of the ecclesiastic communities (Migliore 2004:406) and directing their continual relevance in relation to the Kingdom and the commission imparted by Jesus, the danger is real.

^{lxxx} It is probably not without reason that both in 1 Corinthians 12:4-6 and in Ephesians 4:3-6 the texts encourages the readers to unity; and, interestingly, the sequence in the triadic formulae is not “God (Father)-Lord-Spirit, but rather Spirit-Lord-God (Volf 1988:219).

2.4.3. PNEUMATIC INSTITUTION.

The ecclesia as a movement of people is also an institution, albeit in nuclear format, because of their corporate mission and unity in Christ and behavioural relationships. The question is (not so much if it is a form of institution, but rather) what kind of institution it is. Within the missiological context of this study it is primarily one of *charismata* (Ward 2002:35) focussed on the commissioned advance of the Kingdom and functional relationships gathering in a modular multi locality and a ‘liquid’^{lxxxi} manner, but not excluding a fixed time, space and linear relationships with the rest of the body. The character of the ecclesia in this context represents and reflects, if only in a broken and fragmented way, the eschatological community of Christ in communion with the Triune God in the new creation.

Charismata do not stand in opposition to institutions, nor do they merely occur within institutions; charismatic ecclesiastic meetings *are* flexible institutions; though this does not imply that all institutions are charismatic. All members of the ecclesia are endowed with charisma and therefore no member of the ecclesia should stand over against others or the institution, but they, rather in “their own actions and relations *are* the institution (Volf 1988:241).” It does not imply that members of the ecclesia have ownership over the assembly; on the contrary, the ecclesia is the creation and product of the Holy Spirit. It is when people, and not the Holy Spirit, have dominion over the assembly that it becomes institutionalised and simply an event. Although it is also true that without institutions, the assembly cannot become an event (Marsch 1970:123), it is also so that the ecclesiastic congregating is not only an event. It is an apostolic meeting of royal priests assembling for a purpose under the charismatic guidance of the Spirit.

As the *charismata* are a sovereign act and gift of the Holy Spirit (Küng 1976:164), the bestowal thereof is provisional and the same principle applies to any ecclesiastical activity. The way of implementing the inspiration of the Spirit can be one of legal regulations, or lived as the fellowship of siblings and friends. The more it is lived as the latter, the more the ecclesia will in unity respond in relationship to their future and the ownership thereof, which is a truer reflection of the triune God (Volf 1998:238).

^{lxxxi} Pete Ward (2002) in his book ‘The Liquid Church’ sees the ecclesia much like water-flexible, fluid and changeable with a specific vision the needs of the isolated consumer-Christian.

As the ecclesia lives and works in diverse cultural spheres, a plurality of expressions of being the ecclesia is not only permissibly but advisable.

The pneumatic ecclesia is essentially an open culture. Exercising *charismata* and the biblical purpose of legal regulations is not given as a restriction or control, but instead to protect the communal openness and to create the space in which the ecclesiastic meetings can come to their commissioned and eschatological ideal. All ministries and offices are gifts of the Holy Spirit *in service* (Küng 1976:389) of all participators and the collective assembly. They are to be conducted in order (1 Corinthians 14:29 & 33) and to establish peace rather than formal order which can have a repressive effect (Moltmann 1977:291). The general understanding of being a pneumatic gathered people of God is that God's revelation is complete and trustworthy; there is "no such thing as an infallible interpretation of this revelation, no ecclesiastical truth of obligatory character for one's conscience, no ecclesiastical truth concerning who belongs to the ecclesia and who does not. 'For we only know in part' and thus it will remain" (Volf 1998:244).

It has been proposed earlier in this section that the ecclesia is constituted by the confession of faith in Christ and the assembly of the confessors. In this context the office does not in reality belong to the *esse* of the ecclesia and even an assembly that has no office bearers can be an ecclesia in the full sense (Volf 1998:248). The need for a more modular understanding of the ecclesia in an age of transition and ambivalence is thus fully realised. Yet, it is also with the acknowledgement that ecclesiastic meetings founded in the missiological expansion can only grow and endure over time with the explicit recognising of the need for offices and the need for acknowledged or ordained diaconal ministries and teachers.

As the offices of the ecclesia are gifts of the Spirit, the *charismata* of the office cannot be obtained through delegation by the ecclesia or through sacramental acts performed by a select (clergy) group within the ecclesia. It would be tantamount to reducing the work of the Holy Spirit to human commission and authorisation, but rather could be understood as a "public reception of a *charisma* given by God and focused on the local church as a whole (Volf 1998:249)." It is thus the Spirit that appoints the office bearers

as the Spirit in His sovereignty chooses.^{lxxxii} However, this does not negate the openness to welcome the bestowal of the *charismata* on the ecclesia and the related offices. Ordination is a public and solemn conclusion to a prolonged ecclesial process of openness and receptiveness to the Holy Spirit, making the ordained offices a divine as well as a human action. Thus ordination is an act in, and of the entire local ecclesia (Brachlow 1988:162) led by the Spirit of God, in mutual receptiveness of the wider ecclesiastic community.

2.5. SUMMARY.

“Today there is rather too much than too little said about the Church. There is something better: let us be the Church (Barth 1949:141).” Anyone, Christian or other, reflecting on the word Church or congregation is struck by the sheer magnitude of what it entails and what it has become. Defining the ecclesiastic assembly will still remain a challenge, and positively so when the concept is reflected on first as a verb and then as a noun (Ward 2002:36). This renders the ecclesia as a ‘wineskin’ of secondary importance to that of the ontological meaning expressed in terms of being and calling. The expression of the ecclesia is never static and can therefore not make permanent the “form that proves effective in any particular time and place (Hefner 1984:191).”

The ecclesia in its essence, structure or function, is never perfect or perfected, nor is it complete. It is called to stay in the present continuous tense – ever on the way, until its eschatological end. The Reformers used a term, “*Ecclesia semper reformanda est*” implicating that the ecclesia is continuously in need of renewal (Hefner 1984:191). Reformation in this sense does not only analyse what is currently right or even wrong with the gathering of God’s people, or what it has evolved into. It continually compares itself (ecclesia) with its original intention. Evolution, as a process, builds on what it is, to become what might be possible. Reformation on the other hand pleads for the development (also retro), mirroring the original meaning and soul of its creational intent.

During the last half century mission theorists, sociologists of religion, ecclesiologists, and mission practitioners have become increasingly aware of the urgent need for an

^{lxxxii} See 1Corinthians 12:28 and Acts 20:28.

expression of a new vision for the ecclesia. It is an expression of God's missionary people, imagining an ecclesia that reflects the fullness of Christ (Ward 2002:36) and less on the fullness of human achievement. In realising the ideal of a mass movement of people, building apostolic modular clusters, or ecclesiastic communities anywhere in the world, the principle of allowing changing structures to serve the purposes of witnessing a risen Christ to all people in the world, stays important.

The structures needed to fulfil the eschatological ideal are service modules (Küng 1976:393) supporting the ecclesia. The form of the ecclesia and the variety of offices supporting the ecclesiastic journey will inevitably be presented (as it has in the past) in multiple structures and ministries. This underscores that the answer to the problem, or challenge of reaching the world, is perhaps situated within a rigid historical form of the ecclesia: "It is hard to get the solution right if we have misunderstood the problem (Ward 2002:14)." The ecclesia is God's representative here on earth called and sent to announce the good news of Christ. The ecclesia is apostolic in their nature and exists to bring glory to God by being obedient in the execution of the commission of making disciples and permeating their respective habitat with the presence of God. This brings heaven to earth by seeking that which was lost, announcing and modelling the restored Kingdom of God on Earth.

3. CONCLUSION.

Ecumenical discussions about the church have in recent years concentrated largely on the problem of ecclesiastic structures (Volf 1998:221), namely that of office. The reason is obvious: most ecclesiastical life^{lxxxiii} is, in the First World at least, realised and performed by clergy. The question related to office is therefore relevant for the local congregating ecclesia and any movement (missional) as *laos tou thou*. The understanding of office, officeholders and the qualifications for them are directly related to the understanding of church, as an expression of the ecclesia. Therefore, it the structures and office *of* the ecclesia, and not structures *over* the ecclesia, are directly

^{lxxxiii} This includes proclamation, teaching, baptism and communion. This modelled ecclesiastical life is to some extent also transferred into classic missional scenarios leading to paternalism and a legacy of what the functional life of the ecclesia is interpreted to be. This can also act as a barrier to the proliferation of a Trinitarian model of ecclesia in families and the marketplace, because office is traditionally interpreted in terms of clergy (Volf 1988:222).

related to the ecclesiastic expression, then the Trinitarian form of ecclesia articulated in terms of people should take precedence over its structures and office (1988:222).

The principle of the ecclesia existing as members of the same Deity and gifted by the Holy Spirit (Migliore 2004:294) is not here questioned. What is debatable is *who* and *how* the ecclesia expresses its functionality in the execution of their missional commission. This study thus far indicated that the ecclesia is not a single subject, but more a community of individual, interrelated people. Salvation is ideally mediated through all of His people, irrespective of any interpretation of office. The latter then is also to be articulated in a multiple-form manner, paving the way for a diverse-participatory model of serving office (Küng 1976:401) within a pluriform expression of being the ecclesia (Volf 1998:198) in space, rather than in place and time. It enables the ecclesia to prosper in Christ through having office represented wherever and whenever they gather, be it within the institutions of the market square, at home, the classic mission field, under a tree or other gathered congregational meetings.

Does this make the current interpretation of office intrinsically linked to *church* and *clergy*? No, as long as office is not understood as ontological but rather missional (Migliore 2004:297). The missional understanding of office advocates a wider and also more fundamental interpretation of office, allowing the head of a household to have the office of elder, pastor and leader of his/her home (see Fig.viii) as mentioned in Titus 1:5. This indicates that the office of serving the congregated ecclesia has already functioned and been recognised at home. It empowers those (Ephesians 4:11-13) who meet in the corporate institutionalised world of the marketplace to be office bearers as guided by the Holy Spirit and as circumstances demand – be it as elder, pastor, leader or whatever the situation might demand.

The key to understanding a multiple missional interpretation of office is found in the commission (Mathew 28:19) and practice of Christ. His call and method is one of making disciples, which implies the multiplication of converts *and also* that of the charisma (office) in every believer. The ministries, gifting and office are not given to be exercised in a centripetal fashion, but centrifugally, thus implying that the gifting of the Spirit is missional in its nature and therefore its multiplication is the fruit thereof.

Office as ministry follows people, serving and enabling them to execute their God-given missional commission of which the apostolic is first (1Corinthians 12:28).

This gives an important emphasis to the assembled ecclesia when it is not acting as a storehouse and guardian of office with respect to soteriology and ecclesiology. It emphasises an empowerment, a replicating entity multiplying both the soteriological and ecclesiastical as being part of the discipleship commission. This can become a reality when all those confessing Christ are seen as co-labourers employed in the missional commission of Him, rather than being metaphorical members of an exclusive club. All members have been ordained with a task in His Kingdom fundamental to their calling, and it is the Spirit (Volf 2001:226) that determines which gifts are given, when and where, in executing their respective commissioned life. In the process of this, the advancing ecclesia creates (replicates) the plausible structures (Berger and Luckman 1979:157) needed for the mediation of their faith and to bring it into fruition.

When the missional character of the ecclesia is treated as an optional activity of the gathered ecclesia, the perception and execution of office will tend to become elitist, cementing the clergy-laity division. The person is not divorced from the task or function (Migliore 2004:297), but the Spiritual empowerment which is executed in relations and then mainly in the void spaces of the market square where work does not *disqualify* the disciple but, serves as one of the mechanisms unlocking the hearts and minds of people and releasing the goodness of God.^{lxxxiv}

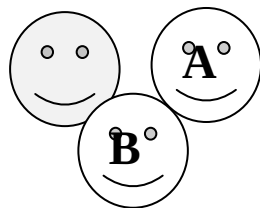
Finally, theology regarding the ecclesia must neither be a sacralisation, nor a demeaning, of ministry (Migliore 2004:298). The first will marginalise the most of Christianity and the latter will trivialise the importance of the work of the Holy Spirit, which is the giver of office. Also, as already indicated repeatedly in this study, all charisma, including office, is characterised by service (Küng 1976:394) rather than by dominion. While service is not authoritarian, it does involve the exercise of authority not based on human position but solely on the gospel of Jesus Christ (Migliore 2004:299) - an authority that is always exercised in partnership with the whole *laos tou*

^{lxxxiv} See next section and concluding chapter.

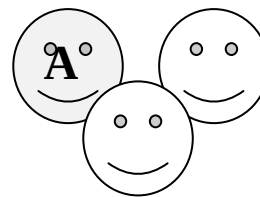
theou. The recognition (ordaining) of office follows the gift from God, obedience of the disciple and recognition of the ecclesia.

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SCENARIO I



SCENARIO II



SCENARIO III

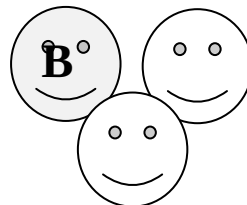


Fig.viii.

SCENARIO I: Persons A & B receive ministry from person holding office in local congregating ecclesiastic meeting.

SCENARIO II: Person A ministers (office) in the void spaces of the marketplace, mission-field etc.

SCENARIO III: Person B ministers as elder/leader (office) in household.

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CHAPTER IV

SECTION II

TOWARDS A MISSIOLOGY OF PLACE

INTRODUCTION

CREATION

HABITAT

PARADISE LOST

IN SEARCH OF PARADISE

THY KINGDOM COME

1. INTRODUCTION.

“Man is a semi-divine creature striving towards some ideal by which to fulfil a destiny” (Childs 1985:199). Human beings, though distinctively created and specifically commissioned, cannot be divorced from the reality that they are corporeal beings. That is the way humanity was created, recreated in Christ and to be resurrected. Their corporeality makes them part *of* creation and never and nowhere was their commission to minister *to* Creation revoked. The ecclesia therefore are called to continue the commission and are also empowered as human beings to bring, teach, live and model the reality of the restoration work of Christ. The mission of the ecclesia therefore culminates as an apostolic (Bavinck 1960:xvii) movement of His people, ministering as priest, unto all of Creation. By implication it stands that the missional commission is consequently not based on “a narrow strip of some missionary text” (Blauw 1962:16) somewhere, but on the whole witness of both the Old and New Testament. It has always been so and still is the mission of the whole ecclesia, and every ecclesia.

In essence there is only one ecclesia (Van Engen 2001:49): made up of those reflecting and executing the will of God now and ever since the first ecclesiastic gathering in Genesis which also provided the ontology of creation and mankind. The first chapters of Genesis comprise the pre-history (Blauw 1962:18), the beginning of man’s walk

with God and the interrelationship with his (human) habitat. Creation as land and habitat of mankind provides the Protological essence and cradle of the commission of mankind, as well as the eschatological climax for the redeemed work of Christ. Biblical faith is accordingly about God, land, nature and man. Brueggemann (2002:197) refers to land as a prism through which biblical faith can be understood and lived, giving meaning and bearing witness to their individual and collective purposes and faith.

Land cradles humanity's habitat and hosts the marketplace - the centre of the human and animate world's interaction. The marketplace is the fibre, or network, that makes possible human interaction with the rest of creation and is expressed as work. This interaction between mankind and habitat is in the marketplace. It is a network of formal (defined) and informal relations (Volf 1998:235) that interface with one another and enable people to some extent to find their identity, worth, position and place. Although land as habitat in its pristine state, is lost, the marketplace still fulfils a temporary, ambivalent, floating, interactive environment in a dislodged world. This is the platform for the ecclesiastical mission, until His Return.

The marketplace is a complex of disciplines e.g. science, governance, religion, trade, leisure and education. All of these enable humans to find a grid or world-view to which they can relate. The complex of disciplines enables them to work and execute their commissioned calling in their respective habitat. Land as the habitat of humanity transforms modes of communications and with it the modes of all relations (Brueggemann 2002:76).

Understanding Creation in terms of land, as the habitat which embodies the interrelatedness of human and creation in the marketplace, provides the paradigm to review Scripture and the historical timeline of this world and its inhabitants. It is now not built on antitheses, but rather a continuum of events lived in the present, with the consequences of the past and towards the hope of the future. The habitat, as marketplace, becomes a reflection of the space of our world, as well as our hope and opportunity to enhance the inheritance of mankind in relationship with God.

Furthermore, if land is experienced as the *habitat*^{lxxxv} of the intrinsic interaction of man, nature and Earth, then it follows that “we shall find that the Bible in its entirety is about another agenda that calls into question our conventional presuppositions and our settled conclusions” (Brueggemann 2002:197). An understanding of Creation in this way provides a different set of glasses through which the Bible can be read and mankind’s faith be understood.

The Earth (land) and the animate world now collectively form the habitat where man resides, feeds from and executes his creational status. The Christ commission is now carried out against the backdrop of a multifaceted world where land or habitat can be interpreted both in a literal and simultaneously symbolic sense. Earth is now valuable to mankind because it is part of the whole creation (Wright 2006:399) which God already valued and declared to be good. Land as habitat is literally a place where people need to be safe, to belong and where mutual “meaning and wellbeing are enjoyed” (Brueggemann 2002:2). Symbolically, it expresses the wholeness of joy and wellbeing characterised by social coherence resulting in wealth creation, security and freedom. The habitat of mankind is thus more than the constitution of physical elements. It is also a network of social meanings and expressions going beyond the mere literal.

The interrelatedness of the proto-ecclesial relationship between mankind and creation, meeting in the presence of God, is already mirrored in Genesis. The Creator made human life possible by providing a habitat of time and space (Kessler 2004:18). Humankind thus takes its place in history within time and in a given place of interaction with its co-created habitat. Humanity’s place is within Creation, and its commission is to minister to Creation (Brueggemann 1982:32) doing so as caretakers who do not own this planet: “No, God is the earth’s landlord and we are God’s tenants. God has given the Earth unto mankind as in resident possession (Ps 115:16), but mankind does not hold the title deed of ultimate ownership” (Wright 2006:397).

^{lxxxv} A habitat (which is Latin for “it inhabits”) is an ecological or environmental area that is inhabited by a particular animal or plant species. It is the natural environment (Fowler 1996:609) in which an organism lives, or the physical environment that surrounds (influences and is utilised by) a species population. Human habitat is the environment in which human beings live, work, play and move about. It is not just a dwelling place, but the sum of all factors that constitute the total environment, such as cities, countries and schools.

Ever since the collapse of Paradise mankind has searched for a sense of belonging and a place. Sin has altered the character and humanity's understanding of self and environment. Human beings are still trying to make sense of place and their journey is not exasperated by the process of urbanisation and global migration.^{lxxxvi} It is inherently a spiritual quest in search of being and meaning. The quest is to be satisfied in finding the roots of meaning, as there are “no meanings apart from roots” (Brueggemann 2002:4). This search will only come to an eschatological end when God resides among His people and finally brings to an end the dispensation of lost landless people.

2. EARTH: HABITAT OF MANKIND.

Reflecting on the world as God's Creation also affirms that God is the Creator and that everything constitutes the world and His “radical otherness, transcendence and lordship (Migliore 2004:100).” God created Heaven and Earth, each with specific characteristics and purposes. The heavens were created for God and His heavenly beings. The Earth was created as the habitat of mankind. The heavens have a unique set of parameters placed by God to govern it. The Hebrew word for Heaven, as used in Genesis, is *shāmayim* and it is plural, indicating different levels or places (Kessler 2004:20).

The latter is also relevant to this study in that the heavens are the abode of God and those associated with Him in that domain. The Bible unequivocally teaches that God created the heavens (Nehemiah 9:6) and that He rules from there (Jonah 1:9). It is not the domain of mankind. God also resides in Heaven, and according to Deuteronomy 26:15 it is from where He is requested to look down from “Thy holy habitation, from heaven.” God is also not alone in the heavens, but with His angelic beings. The heavens have a unique set of parameters placed by God to govern it and so have the Earth and mankind.

Conversely, humanity was created for Earth and destined for Earth. They are to live there within the parameters set for the rest of the earthly Creation. From the outset the message from the Hebraic Scripture emphasises the abode of mankind as the Earth.

^{lxxxvi} See Chapter I.

Mankind cannot divorce himself from his habitat as he is from earth (land) and will return to earth. The Earth as land was, is and will always be the habitat of mankind in whatever recreated form. Man was not created to reside, or even have access to Heaven, except in and through Christ. During Paradise (Genesis 3:8) God came down daily from the heavens to walk and be in fellowship with humans in their designated dwelling, the Earth. Kessler (2004:21) recognises this clear distinction and states that: “A limit was created to the hidden things around us, so that the human may live within that boundary.” It is because the name *Heaven* has been called out, that the name *Earth* may be sounded.

In tandem with this line of thought, the Psalmist declares (115:16) that the heavens are God’s and the Earth He has created for mankind: “The heavens are the heavens of the Lord; But the earth He has given to the sons of men.” Genesis 2:4 reflects on the “account of *heavens and the earth* when they were created...” and follows with an uncommon reverse sequence in the same verse: “...that the Lord God made *earth and heaven*.” The attention of God is thus now directed to Earth, a word used twenty times in Genesis 2:4-3:24. Earth was now prepared for its caretaker and humans can only live (and rule) there in the *adamah* (arable land). *Adamah* was now ready for the introduction of *adam*. But more so, the day when the sequence of “Earth and Heaven” is introduced in the Bible, the combination of YHWH *Elohim* “covenant name and the common divine name *God (Elohim)* are now also heard together (Kessler 2004:41).”

This is exceptional and has implications for the Adam-race, namely that the Covenant God is the One associated with the future walk of the human race. Mankind belongs to the cultivated field as the dust of the field (Genesis 6:7) in an unbreakable relationship (Kessler 2004:42) with Creation. However, though created from dust, man became a living creature through a pneumatic experience whereby God gave the breath of life (blown in his nostrils, Genesis 7:22) and man found himself in an alive and obedient relationship with God. Though the fall of mankind (Wright 2006:432) influenced the character of mankind’s relationship with the rest of Creation, it did not nullify the ontological intent thereof. Christ’s redeeming work introduced a restored position which will be completed at its eschatological end. It is to be the straddling of the

present earthly and future heavenly worlds (Cosden 2006:55) when the new Creation fully comes from both Heaven and Earth brought together.^{lxxxvii}

The place where this will happen is the human land called Earth, the natural, present and future habitat of humankind. “The goal of God’s revelation of Himself points to the fulfilling of a hope which was adumbrated in the first Creation, but which yearns for the final reconciliation, for the New Jerusalem, and for a transformed world (Childs 1985:49).”

However, land on its own is lifeless. It is dead and it is according to Genesis 1:1 “empty and void”. When God added life in the form of vegetation and animals it became the prepared habitat for mankind. This animate world cannot be alive without the land. In turn land has nothing to give without the animate world. Together land and the animate world form an interdependence to provide the human with a place to live, work and fellowship – a place called habitat. In this habitat mankind interacts with the animate world and will not survive without it. Man is intrinsically dependant on the habitat for survival and his identity. The Hebrew term *’eres* refers both to Earth and land of promise. “The term *’eres* functions in both uses and one cannot know in any particular usage exactly which reference it serves” (Brueggemann 1982:xiii).

2.2. HABITAT AS LAND.

Land is referred to as “actual earthly turf (Brueggemann 2002:2).” Understanding land as the created and eschatological habitat of mankind has a threefold meaning. First, it buffers over-spiritualisation and heavenly mindedness. Land serves humanity a timely and constant reminder of humankind’s corporeality in a corporal world (Cosden 2006:55). It is a world gifted to mankind and one that will serve the purposes of God and people in the eschatological age to come. Secondly, in a literal sense, it clarifies mankind’s yearning for and dependence on land, as a being and embedded creational character and historical reality. Thirdly, mankind’s historical interaction with self and Creation is freighted with social and religious experiences derived from history, and void of the creational intent of the Creator.

^{lxxxvii} Also see Revelation 21 and 22.

2.2.1. The habitat known as Paradise was the place gifted and prepared for Adam and Eve and habitat where they lived (Kessler 2004:41). Land is a gift (Brueggemann 2002:3), but also the habitat to which Adam was appointed and empowered (charismata). Mankind was created for the purpose of caring for and occupying an environment which was secure and without the fear of tomorrow. After the fall and subsequent loss of the original habitat, God again assigned a portion of land with a promise to dwell among humanity (Wright 2006:333). This time the habitat was given to Israel with a basic and similar Protological instruction to occupy, care and to be witness. The sheer proportions of the covenantal giftedness of God concerning land and mankind, is colourfully captured in Deuteronomy 6:10-11:

“And when Yahweh your God brings you into the land he swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give you, with great and goodly cities, which you did not build, and houses full of good things, which you did not fill, and cisterns hewn out, which you did not hew, and vineyards and olive trees which you did not plant.”

Land as mankind’s habitat always responds to mankind’s commission carried out in obedience by way of being a witness and gifting goodness. For the people of Israel the experience of the gift of land and God’s goodness were to become a stone of remembrance and witness of what the goodness of God can entail. The gift of land was no longer one just anticipated, but it became a gift given - and then a gift to be taken (Brueggemann 2002:3), occupied and to be proliferated with the statutes of God. It is the hope and message of the ecclesia that all, as a people of God, will experience the same ‘landedness’ given to Israel (yet which they lost). The yearning of *laos tou thou* is in part an eschatological one, knowing that the final and irreversible ownership of land will only be with the return of Christ. Yet as pilgrims the ecclesia will experience moments of ‘landedness; on their mission to bring the nations to the discipleship of Christ, whilst working for the goodness of the place or habitat, wherever that might be.

The cultivation of habitat is through the commission of discipleship – making people obedient to the statutes of God and working for good in obedience to His will and statutes. It is not to possess, but to infiltrate all domains of society as salt (Matthew 5:13), emphasising the qualities of their seasoning (Senior 1983:72). The ultimate purpose is that those who witness in ‘good works’ will give glory to the Father in

Heaven (Matthew 5:16). The proto-ecclesiastic commission is repeated in Jesus' commission to proclaim and occupy (Matthew 28:20), but not yet to possess. As His representatives the ecclesia is to announce, witness, enter into and die, to give life knowing that the land belongs to Him.

Land as it was in Paradise and mirrored with Israel, serves as a reminder to the ecclesia of all the covenantal realities, wherever and whenever they might be. The only time that the people of God will again experience the gift of landedness as in Paradise, is however, when Jesus returns. Although the goodness of landedness is a gift, its continued occupation and enjoyment is related to obedience (Senior 1983:346), as it was for Adam and the people of Israel. Brueggemann (2002:82) formulates it as follows: "The land still requires obedience, and without that, no other guarantee (temple or garrison, wives or wisdom) can keep the land." The ecclesia announces the eschatological landedness anticipated by living and working in obedience to realise the ideals and covenantal promises^{lxxxviii} in the space God has gifted His people, irrespective of the habitat they might experience a pluriform expression thereof. The significance of working for the goodness of Creation depends on the value the ecclesia grants Creation, and the value of Creation depends on its final destination (Cosden 2006:31).

Land is place and space. Brueggemann (2002:4) makes a valuable distinction between them. Place has history and is building history, whereas space is shrouded in a temporal, non-committed aura. The latter is a flight from history-in-the-making while the other is yearning for a place to enter, make and be part of history. The aim of the ecclesia is not to secure place, but to go into (utilise) space, in order to transform place and minister to the goodness of the land, as witness of His creational goodness.

The ecclesia is called to restore the lost character and subsequent fruit by occupying space for the goodness of place. It entails presenting Christ to people and to have encounters with God as Israel also did. Their encounters with God forever changed the world-view of the people of Israel so that they and the world today would know who is

^{lxxxviii} The inseparability of humanity and nature extends to their final destiny. The Bible includes the natural world in the promise and hope of redemption as evident in the divine covenant with Noah, symbolic in the rainbow after the flood, which explicitly includes all creatures (Migliore 2004:99).

truly God “in Egypt and everywhere else” (Wright 2006:76). For Israel land is a place with Yahweh. For the ecclesia land is a position in Yahweh witnessing of Him in the spaces of their habitat to transform the latter as a place reflecting the glory of God.

2.2.2. LAND AS HABITAT AND GOODNESS.

Land, therefore as a re-creational entity, satisfies. That Creation is good, is one of the stronger messages projected by Genesis 1-2. In this narrative God six times declares His work to be ‘good’ and it is therefore a repeated verdict pronounced over Creation to be and as being ‘good’ (Brueggemann 1982:31). It is good because of the creative work of a good God (Wright 2006:398). Creation now witnesses His work as fundamentally, in its origin and as the work of a Triune God, to be good. Creation is thus intrinsically good because of its origin, making its goodness the essence of Creation itself. It is the reflection of the image of the God who created it, and the earthly habitat, as part of creation, bears the mark of God’s own goodness (Migliore 2004:92-3). More so, it was filled with goodness even before the arrival of humans, thus emphasising that the goodness of Creation is theologically and chronologically established prior to human observation and not dependent thereon.

The declaration that Creation is good can also be seen as a seal of divine approval upon the whole Earth and the universe. All of these created orders were present and all their divine goodness existed before humanity arrived on the scene. The fact that humans do not cause Creation to be great or good serves as a note of caution not to maltreat that which was intended to be good. “Our treatment of the earth reflects our attitude to its maker and the seriousness (or otherwise) with which we take to what He has said about it (Wright 2006:398).” The reality that human beings have value begins with the fact that they themselves are part of the whole Creation that God already values and declares to be good. The Earth thus does not derive its value from humans, but from its Creator. Humans therefore do not add to or enhance the value of Creation, but are merely appointed as its caretakers. It can however act as a catalyst for Creation to withhold its goodness, as the goodness is also a response to the obedient relation mankind has been ordained with to care for Creation.

In Scripture good is what makes human life possible (Kessler 2004:18). The goodness of Creation thus theologically and chronologically predates the creation of humankind.

The affirmation of the goodness of Creation is the seal of divine approval, covenant and testimony on the whole universe (Wright 2006:399), which includes the Earth. In Paradise, and again in Israel, land has become a good land, and a blessing (Brueggemann 1982:36). It is according to the word of God captured in Deuteronomy 8:7-10:

“For the Lord your God is bringing you into a good land - a land with streams and pools of water, with springs flowing in the valleys and hills; a land with wheat and barley, vines and fig trees, pomegranates, a land of olive trees and honey; a land where bread will not be scarce and you will lack nothing; a land where the rocks are iron, and you can dig copper out of the hills. When you have eaten and are satisfied, praise the Lord your God for the good land he has given you.”

2.2.3. ORIGINAL GOODNESS.

God planted the first habitat in the Garden of Eden, in the East. The name Eden (Isaiah 51:3, Ezekiel 28:13, 31:9 & 36:35 and Joel 2:3) recalls sensuality, prosperity and beauty (Kessler 2004:43) and so do the life-giving waters of the rivers of Paradise, an image God’s goodness. Again, the Scriptures are careful to avoid any arrogant human-centred assumption that the Earth is solely for use and enjoyment. There are, however, missiological challenges emerging from this affirmation that the Earth belongs to God and that the created order is good because of the value it has from and to God. The habitat of humanity can therefore not be regarded as a neutral entity or commodity to be commercially used and abused (Wright 2006:403) for humankind’s own end. On the contrary, the commission given to His people is to bring glory to God and this is also to be mirrored through the relation the ecclesia has with its habitat.

Scripture^{lxxxix} observes that earth not only provides for humanity, “but all that God provided within it for all other creatures who also owe their existence, survival and enjoyment of life to God’s bountiful Spirit” (Wright 2006:399). It opens a new understanding that the God of deliverance is also the God that introduced (created) blessing and abundance (Claus Westermann 1969: 11-38) for all of Creation. Land is meant to yield in abundance, and the animate world to multiply. Creation is to be a

^{lxxxix} See Psalm 104.

blessing or Shalom.^{xc} Israel experienced something of the goodness of the creational habitat: land would satisfy, whether in the desert or blessed with an abundance of natural resources. Land as habitat gives security and removes anxiety. Land in this sense provides and transforms beyond the mere physical needs, as it “is to be understood not simply in terms of geographic placement, but in terms of an alternative consciousness in which sociological and cultural possibilities were transformed” (Brueggemann 2002:47).

Israel was to have its first experience of God’s grace and a place in Egypt (Brueggemann 2002:8). Under the auspices of Joseph they were given the best of the land (Genesis 47:6), experiencing that where God’s people live and work in obedience, the habitat responds. The ecclesia is likewise called to inhabit land and live in obedience as disciplined witnesses, wherever that habitat might be. This understanding is echoed and embedded in the commission of Christ in sending His people into the world to work, proclaim, live and teach of the redeemed work of Jesus on the Cross.

To use an analogy: land, as mankind’s habitat, is like a frying pan. The flames of the Spirit provide the heat and the pan acts as the cradle or habitat in which the food can be prepared. Without the flame there is no heat and no transformation can take place. Without the frying pan the heat will destroy the food and without the food the whole process is in vain.

2.4. DIVINE CREATION.

The whole Earth and its fullness is the field of God’s mission. The ecclesia is commissioned as His human instruments to participate in this *missio Dei*. God owns the universe and there is nothing that does not belong to Him. There is nowhere to step off or outside His property, nor into the realm of another deity or into “some autonomous sphere of private ownership” (Wright 2006:403). Israel could readily testify to the fact that “the earth, the heavens and the heaven of heavens belong to Him. By contrast, the gods of the nations are impotent nonentities, who cannot protect and deliver their own peoples” (Bauckham 1987:196). This brings into question the

^{xc} šālôm is an Old Testament word meaning peace, completeness, soundness and wellbeing. It is used when one asks of or prays for the welfare of others (Genesis xliii. 27), when one is in harmony or accord with one another (Joshua ix. 15) and when one seeks the good of a city or country (Jeremiah xxix. 7). It also means material prosperity and physical health (Douglas 1974:956).

position of Earth in relation to God and the rest of Creation, and a distinction between the secular, sacred, divine and redeemed.

Lakeland (2003:149) sees secular from a religious viewpoint as “considering the world, dependent on God for its existence and suffused with divine presence through Christ and the Spirit, but not in such a way that the presence of God changes or suspends the natural laws of the universe.” Secularism is the divorce of culture and religion from God (Peters 1972:12); something not spiritual or sacred (Fowler & Fowler 1996:1250). Secular interpreted in this fashion does not (willingly or otherwise) exclude God from any form of Creation. It does, however, define the position, character and purpose of what may be called secular creation, and here with specific reference to Creation. So, being secular simply means God gave the world to itself, with its own autonomy in a place where people live out their destiny to be human beings. Mankind can only fulfil his creational intent in a secular reality. Like the rest of the human race, we all “believers and unbelievers alike, fail by the same standards, those of true humanity” (Lakeland 2003:150).

The secularity of mankind and Creation is often contrasted with ‘sacred’, meaning that God is in the latter realm, but not in the former. This reasoning follows that secular beings do not need God, that is, at least not for their secular activities. It is an understanding voiced especially by those who proclaim not to believe in God, or who are of no particular religious allegiance. This is the worldview of many believers for whom ‘God’ and the ‘world’ are separated into the different realms of sacred and secular. When this happens, the tendency is to see the religious and the world as two distinct, incompatible and often competing entities. The now common idea of the church ‘being *in* the world, but not *of* the world’, sounds familiar with the former being spiritual and the latter being (or at least bordering) on the carnal.

Contrasting secular with sacredness, though, is theologically incorrect. All of the world must again become sacred, without losing its secularity - a distinction that needs to be noted. Creation can be secular as well as sacred. Being secular or sacred does not imply opposing or contradicting positions. It merely defines the position both have in space and time with the Creator. As Heaven and Earth are distinct realities (Cosden 2006:55) and domains of God, so Earth has been gifted as the corporeal domain of

mankind without contradicting or opposing demarcation. This sets the missiological parameters within which the ecclesia is to obey their commission.

Furthermore, distinguishing between personalising and personifying nature brings greater understanding. Scripture sometimes personifies nature, using it as rhetorical device, a figure of speech in which nature is referred to as if it were a person^{xc} bearing witness, declaring His glory or picturing judgement (Wright 2006:400). This literary usage is not ascribing divinity, personhood or personal capacities to nature, because this would depersonalise God and demoralise humankind in their relation with God. Furthermore, such a view could be construed as idolatry, reminiscent of The Fall (Romans 1:21-25). It is also not intended to de-sacralise nature, as that would reduce the Earth merely be looked upon as an object to be used and harnessed for human benefit.

There is also a fundamental difference in viewing Creation as either sacred or divine. The sacredness or sanctity of Creation speaks of its special relation to God (Wright 2006:402), not of being divine in and of itself. The created order obeys and submits to God and serves as witnesses of His glory. This never implies any form of worshipping creation in any of its manifestations; worshipping the Creation and not the Creator would be tantamount to idolatry. The ecclesia on its missional journey will inevitably encounter religious and cultural traditions that divinise and personify nature.

There is another way to view Creation other than by contrasting secular versus sacred. It can also be understood by a creationist and incarnational worldview: that is, the world is God's work and the enfleshment of God in earthly reality (Lakeland 2003:150). The Creation is not primarily an instrument of God's will, but an expression thereof, and then in a very secular sense by being dependant on God to exist and giving glory to Him. The Cross is a consequence of a free and loving embrace of the world by God. The Resurrection is not a ticket out of the world, but rather the beginning for ecclesiastic involvement and the transformation of life and habitat itself.

^{xc} See also Deuteronomy 30:19 & 32:1, Isaiah 1:2, Psalm 50:1-6, 96:11-13, 98:7-9 and Leviticus 18:25-28.

After the collapse of Paradise, Creation as land has become lost (also see 3.2.). Land did not become sacred or secular, but lost - in anticipation of being redeemed. It was lost in the sense that it has moved outside its creational parameters, or has been placed outside these because of external factors such as the collapse of mankind. Land, like humans as part of Creation, can again be taken out of its lost-ness by being redeemed. Israel, post-Egypt, became a prototype of the eschatological restored Creation and has once again become secular and sacred: secular in the sense that its original creational status was reinforced by its sacred calling to contain, respond and provide for the ecclesia of God.

The commission of the ecclesia is to re-make the world into a truly human corporeal reality. Creation is lost because of mankind and will again be found through the rediscovery of their position in Christ (Migliore 2004:106) as the second Adam. Being lost does not equate to secularity. Mankind (and Creation) is secular, whether lost or found. Creation as land is a material creation with a purpose. When the one is lost or misconstrued, the other is also. Earth as physical dirt can be lost and saved, like humans, and our identification with Creation will “protect us from excessive spiritualisation” (Brueggemann 2002:3).

2.5. HABITAT AND COMMUNITY.

Much of the preceding has been a reflection on the landedness, or lack thereof, of people. The need to distinguish between place and space is important as the latter can be interpreted (Brueggemann (2002:4) as an arena of freedom without coercion or accountability. Place on the other hand is space with historical meanings. The implication for the ecclesia is the same as it was for Israel, who had to conquer (unclaimed) space to become a place in history with Yahweh. The commission of Christ is by implication the same as it was for Israel, only now the space of the whole world is to be occupied for the inevitable eschatological reality of God having a place with mankind. The ecclesia will be, like Israel was, sojourners or pilgrims on their way to the fulfilled hope of living, working and ruling with Christ.

The present pilgrimage is into space to be converted into place towards a final eschatological end. But it is more than a geographical exercise. It is for the ecclesia a multidisciplinary mission into the void left after the collapse of Eden, seeking to restore

lost relationships of a vertical nature between mankind and God, and horizontally between humans as well as their lost habitat. It is a pilgrimage into the realm of the marketplace permeating the lost sociological, psychological and physiological space with place, as the presence of God, to bring healing, security and goodness. The ecclesia is in the words of Brueggemann (2002:15), thrusting towards a world not yet possessed, but empowered by the anticipation of it. The ecclesia is both on a pilgrimage and exiled from the present world of religion, expressing its faith and hope. When in the context of landlessness, the eschatological promises of God loom large (Brueggemann 2002:8).

The ecclesia is to occupy this space not as owners but as caretakers (Wright 2006:397). The ecclesia is to occupy and serve the habitat as a witness, conditionally and eschatologically, in order to convert land as Creation to be a visible and tangible witness of the work of God (Migliore 2004:99). Habitat is intended to be the visible, tangible, creative expression of humanity's interaction with self and the rest of Creation. In the execution of this commission humanity interacts with his fellow man, land and nature to find their way through a complicated array of networking and disciplines. These collectively constitute the habitat and residence of the ecclesia. Their work, or service rendered in the habitat, stands as witness of their relationship with God.

Habitat then is the cradle of humanity's community and the commissioned sphere of the ecclesia. Just as humankind was created from earth and not to be understood separately from the matter from which they were created (Childs 1985:226), just so is the ecclesia connected with their habitat as human beings and commissioned agents of the redeemed work of Christ. It is about seeking the welfare of the habitat (Migliore 2004:98) wherever that might be: family, workplace or community as commended in Jeremiah 29:7: "Seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to Yahweh on its behalf, for in its welfare will you find your welfare." It is the space where the ecclesia is to seek the welfare, righteousness and justice in order to get the Kingdom Come: "Seek the *shalom*, and you'll get the land" (Brueggemann 2002:118).

2.6. CREATIONAL HABITAT AS LOST.

The position of mankind in relation to his habitat, and therefore the marketplace, is however conditional. It is a gift and the office of mankind (Volf 1998:239), given by God in relation to man's habitat, is not permanent but related to the obedience of God's people. The proto-commission, as a functional command of God to Adam, is part of the ontological constitution of mankind and is thus enduring. The goodness and blessing flowing from Creation is received through obedience. It is thus in covenantal relationship and formative partnership that residence now and in the future is given. However, when covenant is violated, habitat as land is lost (Brueggemann 2002:108), as has been demonstrated through the violated covenantal relationships of both Adam and Israel.

The implication of the loss of habitat goes beyond the mere effect it has, or could have, on mankind and nature. Mankind, as created in the image of God, was appointed as '*dominus terrae*,' and therefore bears a responsibility that also goes further than the functional execution of a commission. The glory of God is at stake. In the same way that Creation reflects the glory of God, so that all can know of Him "through the work of His hands" (Psalm 8), so it is with mankind as His image-bearers. Mankind's relationship with Creation is part of the witness and image of a covenantal walk with Him.

The disobedience of Adam and Eve was not only against God, but also against Creation. The 'fall' of mankind has contributed to the fact that mankind can now only know and imagine God by looking into a mirror (1 Corinthians 13:12). This image is further tainted by man exploiting Creation (Kessler 2004:30). The result is a delineated approach to the ecclesia's understanding of the commission. Consequently, when covenant is violated by disobedience, the loss of land as habitat becomes the inevitable consequence - as was first evident in Paradise. Since this original loss of habitat in Paradise, mankind has been in exile. People have become sojourners, a word which technically describes them "as resident aliens" (Brueggemann 2002:4).

The history of mankind has thus become one of transition. Taking occupation of land, being expelled from it, and then moving forward not yet possessing, but empowered by the anticipation thereof, is a narrative that is not remote from the contemporary

experience of Western culture or the Church. “Our lives are set between expulsion and anticipation, of losing and expecting, of being uprooted and re-rooted, of being dislocated because of impertinence and being relocated in trust” (Brueggemann 2002:15). Since Adam, God has given only one people, namely Israel, a land for the specific purpose to occupy and reflect His statutes – a place where the Cross would be planted when and where the eschatological return takes place and all Creation is restored. It is also a place Israel has lost.

Land as habitat, then, is domain prepared by God with and for the animate world as well as mankind. If land collapses, the rest of Creation becomes lifeless. If the rest collapses, land becomes lifeless. The interdependency of the whole of Creation is apparent, undeniable and reflected in both the original as well as the ecclesiastic commission with obedience being the key. The restoration of Creation therefore begins with the restoration of humanity.

3. THE ECCLESIASTIC COMMISSION.

The ecclesiastic commission is grounded in the proto-commission (Peters 1972:83) given to Adam and Eve. Humanity was placed on Earth with a mission viz to rule by implementing an infrastructure of systems and procedures to keep and care for the rest of Creation. It was, and still is, an interrelated commission involving all parts of Creation working together for, and as a witness of His glory and Kingdom. The commission, as well as the ability and empowerment to execute the commission, was given to Adam as an individual and collectively to humanity. The ontological being of mankind is thus very specifically the mission (Wright 2006:425) to bring the proto-commission into fruition.

This does not belie the theo-centricity of humanity’s mission, but it is rather reinforced both in the character, as well as in the creative working activity, of the Trinitarian God (Migliore 2004:108). God created from chaos, establishing order by subjecting Creation to, and making the universe an expression of, His character. This first mission of God, creating the universe, stands as the model or proto-type that humanity was to follow. More so, the work of God stands as a reflection and witness of His character; humanity is commissioned to be the extension of that mission. Mission is thus primarily theo-centric (Peters 1972:55) and only then cultural or ecclesia-centric. The

commission of humanity was thus initiated by God as *missio Dei* (Bosch 1991:10). His involvement in and with the Creation is a continuum, supplemented by the creation of humanity to partake in that mission. The redemptive work of Christ is then the restoration of the commissioned position of the proto-ecclesia and continuum of the original commission.

The commission given to humanity to serve its habitat was, and still is, the expressed will of God in line with His creational intent. The words used in Genesis 28 *kābaš* and *rādā* are strong words (Wright 2006:425) implying both exertion, effort as well as the imposing of will upon the other. Both Israel and Jesus met with resistance, whether in facing opposition in the natural or the spiritual realm. Adam, Israel and Christ were called to overcome resistance and employ it to the enhancement of the Kingdom - and the ecclesia.

The term *kābaš* authorises humanity to engage with and to subdue (Wright 2006:245) their habitat, and to bring forth the substance needed for sustaining life and producing goodness. For Israel it was to take possession of the land and occupy it (Joshua 1:2-3) to be a witness both in Israel's relationship with God and the land (Brueggemann 2002:8). For the ecclesia it entails bringing the nations through discipleship under the Lordship of Christ with a corresponding relationship to Creation (Cosden 2006:134), remembering that the "earth does not belong to humans, but to God" (Migliore 2004:97).

The word *rādā* (Wright 2006:426) describes a role and function of responsibility only ascribed to humanity. It involves ruling and exercising dominion in line with the Trinitarian character bestowed on humanity as His image-bearers. Whenever humanity is to exercise this dominion, it will always have to be as a reflection of the character and values of God's own Kingship. What it did not, and still does not, imply is permission to exercise violence, abuse and exploitation (Migliore 2004:140). It is a rule governed by justice, mercy and the true concern for the welfare of all (Murray 1992:98).

The bearers of the Gospel are to display the same characteristics in being called to be the salt in all the domains of the marketplace, interacting with Creation. They are to

facilitate change towards the image of God, making the lost disciplines of society reflective of His image and the eschatologically restored habitat of humanity. The ecclesia is to reflect the same Godly entrusted characteristics of respect, protection and care (Migliore 2004:141) in their commissional execution. The expression of this might vary as it becomes an ecclesiastical enculturation (Volf 1998:239) of the habitat in which His people might work and live.

The commission of Christ as recorded in the New Testament^{xcii} is therefore not the first commission to humanity, nor the replacement of the proto-commission. It is rather the reinstatement and incorporation of the now-restored first commission, coupled with the proclamation of the Good News of His redemptive work. The principle ordination of the ecclesia as the bearers of the image of God, implies that the ecclesia will imitate the characteristics and principles of Christ in the execution of His will:

- a. Mark introduces Christ as the prophet and servant of God (Peters 1972:36) and this is strikingly portrayed through the words of Jesus: “For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as ransom for many (Mark 10:45).” Mark refers to the whole of creation as the whole of men (Blauw 1962:110).
- b. Matthew builds on the portrait of Mark (Blauw 1962:110), referring to the dimension of ‘heaven and earth’ by adding the royalty, kingship and comprehensive authority of Christ and thereby announcing the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies (Peters 1972:37). It brings another dimension of the Matthew 28 commission to light. Christ, as having universal authority (Bavinck 1960:157), commands all nations to be discipled and united into a single body under the lordship of the Triune God. Matthew 10 & 12^{xciii} gives a similar perspective of the role of Christ in this world and also places the missional character of the ecclesia in context. His disciples are sent on a mission, and the questions of John the Baptist (Van Engen 2001:120) connect Him with being the Messiah.

^{xcii} The final commission of Christ is recorded in Matthew 28:19-20, Mark, Luke, and Acts - surmising the essence of the commission.

^{xciii} See also Luke 7:18-35.

- c. Luke adds the priesthood and saviour-hood of Christ (Peters 1972:38). Although these traits have been implicitly present in the previous Gospels, they are now amplified. The universal validity of the priesthood and saviour-hood of Christ is evident from the genealogy. This begins with Adam and culminates in the universal significance of the death and Resurrection of Christ and the offer of repentance as well as the remission of sin, in the name of Christ (Bosch 1991:66), among all nations as expressed in the commission of Christ (Luke 24:46-49).
- d. John does not contradict, erase or modify the other three writers. He does, however, also present Christ as the eternal Son of God, co-equal and co-eternal with the Father in his metaphysical and cosmic relationships. John also emphasises the sending of Christ by the Father (Van Engen 2001:120) and the sending of the ecclesia by Jesus (Blauw 1962:110). Christ is here known as the Logos, through which God relates to the kosmos^{xciv} or world. The relationship of God with the habitat of humanity is expressed in verses such as John 3:16: “For God so loved the world.” Also, God did not send His Son into the world to condemn it, but that “the world through Him” might be saved (John 3:17). John establishes the fact that God is in benevolent contact with the world; and in Christ, as Lord of the kosmos, there is a redemptive relationship (Cosden 2006:105) between Heaven and Earth.
- e. Acts adds the important dimension of the ecclesia as a pneumatic community (Küng 1976:163). Before any missional endeavours were contemplated, the ecclesia were instructed to wait for the anointing of the Holy Spirit, who then is introduced as the Spirit of His mission (Bosch 1991:66). It was to be a charismatic community doing the same kind of works Jesus had done (Van Engen 2001:120). Acts 1:8^{xcv} also refers to the “ends of the earth” giving impetus to the universality of salvation through Christ (Blauw 1962:111). Paul considered the language used by Christ to them as entirely appropriate: “For this is what the Lord has commanded us:

^{xciv} John uses the concept of the *kosmos* in various relationships with God 79 times (Peters 1972:38).

^{xcv} The term is only used elsewhere in Matthew 12:42 with a parallel in Luke 11:31.

‘I have made you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring salvation to the earth.’^{xcvi}

The emphasis in The New Testament is on the word *mobility*, but not so much as in crossing geographical borders, as in also crossing the boundaries between Israel and the rest of the world (Blauw 1962:111). Then by implication, it is about crossing borders into the lost space of the interactive domains of the habitat of humanity.

The parallels and dissimilarities between the proto-commission, the commission given to Israel and that of Christ are important. These three commissions complement one another and also differ on the basis of content, constitution and the bearers thereof:

- a. The proto-commission was given by God to all humanity. It was a commission to *humanity* who would equally share in its responsibility, joy and success as well as its failure (Wright 2006:423). It was also given to the descendants of Adam and Eve as the original instruction (Genesis 1:28-29) to fill the earth. Though the instruction to fill the earth was also given to the other creatures (Wright 2006:425), mankind’s commission was related to the care, subjugation and management of their habitat. The collapse of Paradise did not nullify the commission. It did, however, change its execution and the direct, spontaneous and accessible relationship with the Creator.
- b. The intermediate commission was given by God to the specific *nation* of Israel, which started with Abraham and His promise of salvation through Abraham’s seed^{xcvii}, which implies the commission of procreating. God commissioned the people of Israel, under the leadership of Joshua, to occupy and subject the land to His purposes. The Israelites were also called to be a witness and light to the nations (Wright 2006:426) in their relationship with God.
- c. The final commission was given by Christ to a specific *people*. Christ likewise instructed His people to fill, or to go into the world, populating it with disciples. The main difference is that His ecclesia was also called to proclaim the restoration of the creational intent of God. The disciples of Christ are also commissioned to model the eschatological Kingdom to come. The final

^{xcvi} See Acts 13:47, Isaiah 49:6, Luke 2:32 and Acts 26:23.

^{xcvii} See Genesis 12:1-3, 13:14-17, 22:15-18, Exodus 2:24, Nehemiah 9:8 Psalm 105, Hebrews 6:13-15.

commission encompasses the proto and intermediate commissions, giving new meaning and enhancement to both, because of the redemptive work of Christ.

The common denominator in all commissions is humanity (Peters 1972:163). Mankind is the commissioned instrument of God on Earth and also the primary missional agents sent by God (Wright 2006:27). The status of being redeemed or lost does not obliterate the proto commission and humanity's responsibility to work for the good and welfare of Creation. The creational intent of God for mankind did not cease with the original transgression. The commission to care and manage the creational habitat is still the reason for being human and will never escape humanity, now or eschatologically when those redeemed will work with Christ as Heaven comes to Earth (Cosden 2006:67).

The ability to execute the commission has however been crippled by sin which changed the character of work, humanity and the latter's relation to God, self and Creation. Sinfulness is now rooted in the human heart (Bosch 1991:104) and it is only through repentance and the acceptance in faith, of the gift of redemption, that humanity individually and corporately as the ecclesia is empowered by His Spirit to fulfil the latter commission given by Christ.

Christ's commission then goes beyond the former ones, fulfilling and incorporating them into the final commission. Critically, however, Christ focuses on the redemption of humanity, not out of neglect or lack of interest towards the rest of Creation, but rather because humanity was the cause for the downfall of Creation and the redemption is in the new Adam, Christ (Peters 1972:167). The redemptive work of Christ is therefore directed towards the restoration of His primary agent, mankind, so that all of Creation may be restored (Cosden 2006:33).

Christ's commission is not a humanistic endeavour, centred on humanity. Rather, it restores the position of humanity as the agent sent by God (*mission Dei*), to their original status of serving the purposes of God for the advance of Creation. The purpose of the new humanity in Christ is to bring the good news of this restoration to all of Creation – first, to their fellow citizens and through their individual and collective response, to the creational habitat. This partly will evoke the response from Creation to bring forth the original goodness God had installed at creation (Wright 2006:405). It is

a response, first from humanity, to turn back in obedience to God (Peters 1972:71) and become discipled according to His statutes. It is to announce, live and work the restoration, infiltrating all levels of society through the interrelated disciplines provided by the marketplace in the contemporary habitat of mankind. The agent of restoration is redeemed mankind (universally) and therefore the focal point of God's involvement in this world (Bosch 1979:232).

3.1. THE NATIONS and the COMMISSION.

The correlation between the commissions of Christ, in Matthew 28:19-20, and what Israel understood as *nations*, is worth noting. According to Blauw (1962:25) Israel understood *nations* to be the "people whom Yahweh does not know." The designation of *nations* is thus identical with *heathen* and therefore *nations* do not only have a political, national or cultural meaning, but also a religious one (Bertram 1938:362). The interpretation of the commission of the Christ, Himself being Jewish, can thus be much more expansive than merely having geographical and cultural/ethnic meaning.

Understanding nations as 'space not yet infiltrated with the redemptive witness of Christ,' increases the scope of the commission as merely mission crossing borders (Bosch 1979:15). It is crossing borders into the domains of space void of a living and working knowledge of Yahweh. The ecclesia is called to bring light and to be the salt (Matthew 5:13) within the multiple disciplines of the marketplace spaces and to bring into fruition a habitat dedicated to the Lord. Understanding the final commission from this perspective gives new insight into the words of Christ, to make disciples of all the *nations* and to teach them (Matthew 28:19-20) to be obedient to His Commandments.

The above interpretation stands in contrast with former missiological evangelical leaders like John Stott (1975:13) who advocated a more delineated interpretation of Christ's commission, resulting in apathy towards societal structures and the habitat in general: "... there is no point in tampering with the structures of society, for society is doomed and about to be destroyed." Involvement and service in community is seen as the tools and instruments aiding the process of evangelism, and the latter's success is measured in conversions (Bosch 1979:35) of souls. It follows then that any work^{xcviii}

^{xcviii} Also see Chapter II.

done is only a tool or instrument towards an end, that of the conversion of souls. Service, work and Christian involvement is thus not ontological, but functional, serving a purpose that will carry (saved) souls forward when a new world is realised. However, when reflecting on the three commissions given by God, it becomes clear that a more inclusive understanding of the final commission is both scripturally and historically correct.

3.2. UNIVERSALITY and the COMMISSION.

The word *universalism* needs to be distinguished from that of *universality*. The etymological and historical development of *universalism* has led to the theological doctrine that all souls will eventually find salvation in the grace of God (Peters 1972:19). Though the former definition is not necessarily normative, the use of *universalism* is clouded and comes with historical and theological bias and connotations. The word *universality* is preferable for this study as a biblical principle expressing the purpose and provision of God. It speaks of God's gracious provision of salvation in Christ^{xcix} for all humanity and that it is the Will of God that the Gospel be proclaimed to all humanity and that every individual should have the opportunity to hear the good news of redemption.

Matthew (24:9 &14, 25:32 and 28:19) opens the universality of the grace of God by adding the word 'all' to *ta ethne*, now speaking of all the nations. Matthew also uses parallel phrases (Bosch 1991:64) such as *hole he oikoumene* (the whole inhabited world), *holos ho kosmos* (the world world) and *pas he ktisis* (the entire creation). In this way Mathew implicates the wholeness and universality of the Gospel reaching into spaces of all spheres of creation through redeemed mankind. The Scriptures present the universality of God's missional involvement through people. The universality of God relates to the whole human race, in the same way as God dealt with and revealed Himself to humanity in Genesis.

God was and still is the God of humanity and the nations (Peters 1972:22) and the universality of the original commission is likewise still applicable to all of humanity.

^{xcix} Universality refers to God's gracious provision of salvation in Christ to all men as "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself" (2 Corinthians 5:19) and that Christ is the propitiation "for the sins of the whole world" (1John 2:2), nor that the world would be condemned, but that "the world through him might be saved" (John 1:29) – as in Peters (1972:19).

God can still be universally known as Paul proposes in Romans 1:20^c, but His redemptive grace is only through Christ. The universality of God's mediation is specific. For a while God's mediation was through Israel as land and as people, and now finally it is through the apostolic priesthood of His people. The universality refers to God's involvement with all nations through the people of Abraham, and finally the people of Christ - His elected instruments to bring the *kerygma*, or message, to the heathen – those without knowledge of God. The whole history of Israel, and now also the ecclesia, is nothing but the continuation of God's dealings with the nations (Blauw 1962:19) and therefore the history of Israel and the ecclesia is only to be understood in terms of the unresolved relation of God to the nations.

4. CONCLUSION.

The actualisation of the specific apostolic calling is expressed in methodology, time and space. As regards methodology, the Scriptures indicate two missional ways, namely the centrifugal and the centripetal. God draws and sends people, the reached and the un-reached. This is a poly-symmetric process of varying momentum, that expresses itself in different or concurrent time schedules. The process exists in a symbiotic relation, the one not excluding the other and it is neither linear nor cyclic. The tendency is to see the Old Testament and particularly the nation of Israel upholding the centripetal process, which acts as a sacred magnetism that draws people to a particular place (Peters 1972:21) - particularly Israel. This flows from a narrow missional approach, defining mission as movement, rather than being. Israel had to move into (were sent into) the Land Promised in order to *be* His people being obedient in the habitat God ordained. Yet the people of Israel were also (still) His witnesses during the time of forced migration (Volf 1998:236), where they learned to be in the space and place wherever they would find themselves, belonging to God.

Old Testament passages like Isaiah 40-50 and Jonah cannot strictly be considered centrifugal missionary texts, because they refer to people being sent. Rather they are part of the universal position of Israel being missional because they belonged to God (Blauw 1962:30) wherever they found themselves. This broadens the understanding of

^c “For since creation of the world God's invisible qualities – his eternal power and divine nature – have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse” – Romans 1:20.

the missional commission of humanity that is not based on a narrow strip of some missionary text, but on the whole witness of both the Old and New Testament (Rowley 1953:24). The commissions of Christ are likewise not only centrifugal in methodology. His people are to cross borders into spaces like the proverbial salt and light that would draw people to God whilst enhancing their habitat – wherever that might be. Mission is not a political or commercial undertaking, but a movement as a result of the fruit and life of people founded in Christ (Blauw 1962:42). Being missional is therefore not a matter only of words and activities, but the presence of the people of God in the midst of humanity.

The call of Abraham (and therefore implicitly that of Israel) adds weight in the light of God's revelation to the nations^{ci}. Israel became an elected people because of God's covenant with Abraham and then for a purpose that is directly related to the nations. It was an election for service and when service is withheld the election loses its meaning and therefore fails (Rowley 1953:25). It coincides with the promise or prospect of blessing for the nations, adding a universal dimension to God's relationship with Israel. Since the resurrection of Christ and the subsequent outpouring of the Holy Spirit the ecclesia is now the elected in Christ. They are so in the same way as Adam and Israel were both called to witness God's restored relationship with the nations and thereby become a blessing to the domains lost and ignorant of the redemptive work of Christ.

The ecclesia is like Israel and Adam: the chosen or elected vehicle through which God is served by revealing His glory and lordship on earth, bringing the whole world to God. Election has no goal in itself, but only to the Kingdom of God (Blauw 1962:23). There is therefore no service because of election, but rather election because of service, making the emphasis not on Israel or the ecclesia as a people, but upon them as a people of God. Election is thus not primarily a privilege, but a responsibility. It is an election as an office (Volf 1998:254) with the responsibility of making the glory of God known to the nations. The ecclesia is now individually and collectively the elected people on whom the serving reign of God has been entrusted (Bosch 1991:65).

^{ci} This is especially so when gleaned from Genesis 12:3. Paul names Abraham in Romans 4:13 the heir of the world and the meeting Melchizedek (Genesis 14:18-24) is connected in Hebrews 7 with the universal priesthood of Christ (Blauw 1962:22) and so is the declaration of Genesis 12:3, placed in a Christological light, interpreted in the New Testament as a promise of salvation for all (Galatians 3:8,16&29).

CHAPTER V
IN CONCLUSION

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1. BASIC HYPOTHESIS

Marketplace Missiology is a complementary missiological model
for a whole Christian movement
witnessing in and through a common habitat called the marketplace,
through and by their work.

The basic hypothesis of this thesis finds its place within the ambivalent globalised world – a world that has become a pastiche and a multi-faceted habitat. It is one in which the interactive marketplace has the potential to provide the platform and relational network for a whole ‘people of God’ movement. The habitat of mankind is the platform upon which the marketplace operates, providing the relational infrastructure to work and witness. The marketplace is a network of relationships on which the authentic proclamation of the Gospel can be realised. It provides the infrastructure for work in the workplace and the space where mankind, representing a world of culture and religions, can meet as human beings. The ‘market square’ allows for trust to develop in the process of bilateral engagement. This in turn enables people to see and experience the image of God by finding authenticity in relationships as the precursor to hearing what needs to be said (Wells 2005:315).

The marketplace presents the opportunity for the world to see the faith of His people in action, their believing and being, their talking and doing joined together as a seamless whole. It affords the Commission of Christ to be legitimate and in line with biblical precepts, challenging the ecclesia to *be* His image *in* the spaces of the world (Brueggemann 2002:32), rather than being so in isolation in a ‘monastery mentality’, place or centripetal gathering. The marketplace challenges the ecclesia to realise its calling through service and to provide a different world-view, unlike the powers of the world. They are not called to adapt the contemporary religious commercial culture, nor challenge it. Rather, the ecclesia is intent on bringing change by being authentic amidst

diversity in their approach to their work, habitat, sense of unity^{cii} and ecclesiastic expression. The marketplace is an environment where the ecclesia congregates in a Trinitarian pluriform movement, in all the various domains represented.

The ecclesiastic mission as *laos tou thou*, is identified by three characteristics:

- a. It is a movement of His people manifesting as an apostolic priesthood of all believers. It is a classless (Küng 1985:120) movement within which disciples share equally in the charisma and Commission of Christ, wherever they work and live. Their individual and collective roles are functionally defined by what they do, and not by role or status.
- b. The ecclesia is a pneumatic entity instituted by God (Migliore 2004:223) which comes together in various forms and expressions while being His witnesses. The ecclesia is expressed as a charismatic witnessing movement defined in terms of functions (Küng 1985:363) and anointing, rather than office and structure.
- c. Work is spiritual and an ontological expression of being human (Cosden 2006:10) and is therefore a witnessing reflection of the Triune God. It is the primary commission given to humanity by God. Mankind's position in relation to work is one that has been restored by Christ on the Cross.

The ecclesiastic Commission also operates in four different, yet interrelated, modes^{ciii} with these missional articulations and conduct being analogously interactive:

- a. The international *migration* into previously Christianised cultures presents a contemporary missiological phenomenon that synchronises the two worlds: of the lost and the reached. They all now share the same habitat and meet within the disciplines of the market square. It is centripetal in the sense that God is gathering the lost to meet the saved in a generally neutral and multicultural environment in the local workplace.
- b. The magnetism of the workplace also results in the unforced *diasporal* movement of His people from Christianised communities to places where the marketplace opportunities are more attractive than at home, albeit in alternative religious cultural settings. The scattering of His people is centrifugal in the sense that disciples of Christ are dispersed to be witnesses on foreign soil

^{cii} Romans 5:5, Ephesians 4:13 and Colossians 3:14.

^{ciii} See Fig. viii.

without being called missionaries or doing so through missional agencies. It is a natural process, induced by marketplace forces, creating an authentic working environment for witness to take place.

- c. The marketplace, furthermore, is the place of gathering of working people from the same local indigenous environment. Here working people share common contextual geographical and demographic characteristics. Some will be familiar with the Gospel but not yet discipled, while others will have different religious alliances.
- d. Marketplace missiology acknowledges the fact that God also calls people (like Paul in Acts 13:1-3) to pioneer specific dimensions for the Kingdom in particular religious cultural settings. Although those called in this manner might require specific training with regards to language and culture, they are commissioned very much in the manner of those in the diasporal movement, that is, to witness as working people^{civ} in foreign cultures. Their specific calling does not equate to the withdrawal from the workplace. On the contrary, the workplace is the entry level into a community and first line of witness.

2. THE MARKETPLACE AS MISSION FIELD.

The global economic interdependency of people is on the increase. Devoted advocates of different religions come to inhabit and share a common habitat within the market square. The increasingly globalised world contributes to the shrinking of autonomy, hegemony and religious exclusiveness, but also heightens the sensitive nature of inter-religious relations. This evokes fear of imposition and radicalism among people of all religious backgrounds, which in turn often elicits demands for the suppression of religious voices and ideologies from the public arena (Volf 2011:X).

The fear of imposition of religious views often demands the suppression of religious ideologies within the different spheres of the marketplace; it is argued that these spheres should “remain un-illuminated by the light of religion (Lilla 2007:309).” These calls may vary from legislative procedures to more informal unspoken resistance. Although these stipulations and sentiments may seem more apparent in contemporary Western societies, the underlying currents and tensions within more fundamental

^{civ} See this Chapter under heading: 3. Mission in the Marketplace.

religious societies do not suggest non-conformity among those societies. The same fear of religious extremism is there - as is the need for it to be de-bunked.

However, it is important to understand that the focus in the marketplace is not on religion per se. The focus is rather on the successful implementation of various interactive and interdependent disciplines that function within the marketplace. It is not that religion is considered to be unimportant or judged as neutral. Rather, religion has become relegated as only one of many disciplines within the marketplace - as one of many institutionalised expressions of society. Religion is thus accepted as a reality, part of humanity. However, it is consigned to backstage by unspoken mutual consent, or by more apparent philosophies of segregating and defining the public domain as secular, and the religious as sacred - each having its role and function within their pre-defined spheres of activities. Religion is viewed as secular in the sense of being dictated by a set of rules not generated from a religious core, but rather values and truths derived and inherited selectively from tradition, partly generated by the marketplace and also drawn from the hard sciences (Volf 2011:125).

When religion enhances the relative functionality of the different domains in the public square the proponents thereof are tolerated, not so much for what they believe, but more so because their belief systems add value to the marketplace interactions. This is of primary importance for the ecclesia, as they are called to work in the market square and to be the agents of the release of the goodness of God in the habitat that they serve.^{cv} The relationship between religion and the marketplace can be divided into at least four categories:

- a. A clear ideological division of religion as being sacred and the other institutions of society as secular, each having its own identity and functions, while existing next to one another. Each institution of society represents a particular approach to a world-view (Nash 1992:33) with the marketplace representing a more cohesive, comprehensive and inclusive view.
- b. The incorporation of religion as an institution and acknowledged part of society, with well-defined parameters keeping all of the institutions in a reasonably symbiotic relationship (Volf 2011:51).

^{cv} See Migliore (1991:103).

- c. The use of religion by market and political forces as a masking agent to protect cultural society against industrial and global imperialism.
- d. To control and regulate the marketplace with the ideological principles of religious beliefs and to employ the marketplace for the enhancement of the religious system.

The first two exhibit a tolerance towards religions in general, though they might give preference to a religion from the dominant cultural background it represents. The focal point is the public square, and what would be beneficial for its enhancement. The third is also focussed on the marketplace, but with an allegiance towards a particular culture's religion. It would however tolerate persons of other religions if their work and their ideas benefit the greater society. The fourth is driven by religious ideologies controlling the public square and is indifferent, if not hostile, towards any opposing or alternative world-views or people who are agents of such. At best, they will incorporate mechanisms of modernising for the benefit of the system and be temporarily accommodating of people with the skills to achieve this.

3. MISSION AND THE MARKETPLACE.

The focus in marketplace missiology is not on being a missionary, but on being a working believer of the Messiah in the image of God, making the ecclesiastic community primarily a theo-centric movement (Peters 1972:55). In fact, the term and position of missionary is a misnomer within the marketplace context. The word missionary^{cvi} is not used in Scripture and is a contentious concept in many un-reached cultural settings, provoking unwanted perceptions that add unnecessary burdens for disciples to carry, hurdles to cross and barriers to break down. Within the understanding of the priesthood of all believers, all Christians are missional full-time and called to obey the commissions of Christ.

The focus in the marketplace is also not primarily on any religious being or philosophy, but on the general enhancement and wellbeing of the common habitat through the workplace. In fact, the workplace provides natural authentic keys for entering into the spaces of the community as well as the needed ministry platform for the marketplace

^{cvi} See Chapter III on apostolic.

worker. It does so by presenting a common environment and mechanisms for the interaction, building of relationships, trust and advancement of the local society.

At the heart of marketplace missiology is the philosophy of the apostolic priesthood of all believers as working people, reaching other workers, with the Gospel of the only Christ. The missional principles here are the same and applicable^{cvii} across the board, involving all followers of Christ, whether by reaching the migrants drawn (centripetally) into the local habitat, or whether it is the disciples of Christ leaving their habitat, sharing in a modern day (centrifugal) diaspora. These principles apply equally to those being called by God to minister within a cross-cultural and religious context by crossing geographical borders, as well as those ministering in the market square of their own habitat. In all four scenarios, the principle of ‘working people reaching people working’ stays relevant. Work is not a barrier to cross or baggage in need of discarding. On the contrary, it is an experience of the workplace unlocking relationships and the blessing of the community in the process of discovering the spiritual extension of the work being done. The apostolic worker is in fact prepared in and by the marketplace, for the marketplace.

This is in line with the missional model Jesus presented in Scripture.^{cviii} Jesus commissioned his disciples on a missional journey instructing them to enter into the marketplace and to look for a place to stay. The marketplace in the days of Jesus was to a great extent more integrated with family life than would be in a contemporary context.^{cix} The family of Jesus was a family business - and so for Peter. Aquila and Priscilla presented a similar integrated business setting for Paul by providing a common legal and interactive workplace from where Paul could work and meet people. So did Lydia (Acts 16:40). Paul stayed within the home-business environment provided by Lydia, and her business network was the infrastructure through which the Gospel spread.

It was important for Jesus that His disciples would not live off the goodwill of the people they stayed with, but that they would be involved in the family business and that

^{cvii} See Fig. viii.

^{cviii} See Matthew 10:1-20 and Mark 6:7-13.

^{cix} The contemporary setting calls for a multi-focal approach making of the home a field of ministry as well.

their work would make their stay worthy (Matthew) and that they would represent the goodness of the Trinitarian God they represented. For Paul, work was also much more than making ends meet (Allen 1962:49-55) or using it as a means to an end. Doing work God's way presented Paul with three important missional principles:

- a. Credibility. In 1 Corinthians 9:12 and 2 Corinthians 6:3 Paul indicated that he worked in order not to be an obstacle to the Gospel of Christ in reaching the Gentiles. Paul took care that his message and motivation were not suspect. He was not preaching for gain or profit and did not want to be identified with other orators who roamed the empire exploiting their audiences (Siemens 1992:D252). He owed no one any favours and his motives were trusted – thus, work is normative (Volf 1991:11).
- b. Identification (Allen 1962:53). By working, Paul identified himself with the people he was preaching to. While working with the people, Paul learned about their lives, desires, expectations and also their fears - subjects that he could address when ministering in the marketplace and synagogues.
- c. Modelling. Paul showed how to live out the Gospel in an idolatrous culture. He also modelled a Christian work ethic. In 2 Thessalonians 3:8, he says *“with toil and labour, we work day and night that we might not be a burden to any of you, and to give you an example to follow.”* Work was thus not optional for converts nor the Gospel an alternative means of making a living. Work as modelled by Paul (Allen 1962:53) was part of the Trinitarian image which converts were called upon to follow and proliferate.

Work provides important principles in the believers' missional quest to reach the unreached, such as relationships, trust and acceptance. Work is not a barrier or hurdle, but a creative instrument to release the goodness of God. The Matthew 10:10 commission brings to fore the question of 'why' and the purpose of work. Humans are spiritual, corporeal and community-oriented beings. Work, whether to fill a spiritual or community need is first directed to self to provide for self and family. Second is the flourishing of communities (Volf 2011:33), as the ecclesia does not work for the community, but rather in and with the community. Third is corporation with God as a primary commission given in Genesis, and now restored by Christ after the Fall. Therefore Jesus candidly commanded His people not to have any reliance on provision (Tasker 1971:107) or support systems. Their provision was to come from the

community where they stayed and with whom they worked, creating interdependence conducive to the forging of relations and trust and goodness. The people of God were (are) urged to seek the goodness and prosperity of the habitat they share, for “if it prospers, you too will prosper.” - Jeremiah 28:7.

3.1. TRUST-ACCEPTANCE.

The marketplace is an interactive entity where interpersonal relationships are forged and through which trust develops. It leads to the acceptance of persons in a relatively neutral religious environment, where acceptance of a person is not directly related to the acceptance of the person’s beliefs (Mayers 1987:49). Acceptance is linked to trust and respect which are earned through working and living. Acceptance-respect allows people to know one another as, and for what, they are. This is a main interactive step in the change-acceptance process. Acceptance does not guarantee belief, but is an essential part of the process. An equally important element in the change-acceptance process is that, as a reflection of who they are, people expect honesty and transparency from one another in their everyday and working lives. People do not expect another to do, believe and think the same way.

Rather, people expect others to be what they are but will respect alternative views. More so, people lose both respect for and trust in people who (abandon who and what they are) compromise their own integrity, with a resultant loss of trust-acceptance (Mayers 1987:49). This is a marketplace principle which separates itself from ‘tentmaking’. Classic tentmaking perceives work as a facade and tool of entry into a specific habitat with the primary and exclusive motive to win converts. Adding the goodness of God and subsequent value to the community is merely incidental. Marketplace missiology, however, dictates that work is ontological to any ministry conducted. Work expresses what and who a person is and it cannot be divorced from their being human nor their particular commission.

Work, the first witness of His greatness, is reflected through the labour and life of the disciple and adds value and the proliferation of the goodness of God (Wright 2006:398) throughout the marketplace. It is a prerequisite for trust and acceptance. Accepting what a person is and believes, is at any time the starting point of change and acceptance. The acceptance of a person “precedes any involvement with that person

within a change relationship (Mayers 1987:55).” Complete honesty and openness in acceptance will provide the fertile soil for change (Bellah 1985:36) – and also of belief.

*“So I saw that there is nothing better for a man than
to enjoy his work, because that is his lot.”*

- Ecclesiastes 3:22.

3.2. GOODNESS.

The blessing of God’s power as sustainer of the universe is also the power and passion by which God continuously upholds human life (Westermann 1969:59). The whole human race was blessed at the dawn of Creation (Volf 2001:25) and once again at the Crucifixion and Resurrection of Christ. The goodness of God (Brueggemann 1982:31) is a grace gift and a costly one at that (Philippians 2:1-11). Christ died in order that others may live. It was an act of “divine knosis” (Migliori 1991:101) that reached its climax at the cross of Christ, and began with the creation of this world (Brunner 1952:20). God is fundamentally a giver and not a demander. This is the message of the tradition of blessing, as revealed in Hebrew Scripture (Volf 2001:26).

Blessing is also a specific human undertaking in which God crowns humanity’s effort with success (Genesis 26:12-13). God’s generosity holds true in the realm of grace, as well as in the realm of the execution of our (creational intent of) work. God is the source of our being and our work is instituted by God (Cosden 2006:42). Work, then, is done in the power, success and goodness that come from God. The working goodness and grace of God is represented in the ecclesiastic commission, and released and implemented through willing, capable and effective instruments in His hands. The ecclesia is in this regard called to represent the Triune God in its composition, constitution and execution. Releasing the goodness of God is the commission of the ecclesia inspired by Christ as priest, prophet and King in serving humanity and creation (Migliori 1991:266) for the sake of His Kingdom.

3.3. CHARISMATA.

The ecclesia is called to service, the service of God to a lost world. The service is a grace gift (Küng 1985:388) of the Holy Spirit, and then with the understanding that the ecclesia is given to the Spirit and not the Spirit given to the ecclesia (Taylor 1989:133).

The ecclesiastic offices, where needed, are *charismata* even though they are servants for the servants of Christ. The pneumatic gifts were primary given for the advance of the Kingdom, as modelled by Christ in sending His disciples to be witnesses and also proclaim the coming Kingdom through the endowed power of the Holy Spirit (Mark 6:7) and to bring healing to the communities they were to reach. The charismatic ministry is not divorced from work as witness or lifestyle as witness. Christ instructed (Matthew 10) the disciples to stay with the local people and work for their good, thereby indentifying with them, building trust, relationships and credibility on which the *kerugma* could be presented and healing and forgiveness ministered.

The charismatic element of the Commission is confirmed through the ministry of Jesus. When the disciples of John the Baptist enquired whether He was the Messiah, Jesus answered in Matthew 11:4-5: “Go back and report to John what you hear and see: The blind receive sight, the lame walk. Those who have leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised and the good news are preached to the poor.” The variety of gifts and ministries (Volf 1998:231) outlined by Paul^{cx} are given for the empowerment of the ecclesia (Ephesians 4:11-14) and for the proliferation of the goodness and blessing of God in the market spaces as, when and where His people serve.

3.4. TEACHING.

The final part of the Matthew 28:20 commission makes reference to “teaching them to observe all I have commanded you.” This two-fold commission of baptising and teaching seems for Matthew the crux of disciple-making and therefore of mission (Bosch 1991:65). It emphasises teaching and obedience as being the heart of the commission, summarising it as an act of making disciples, baptising new found believers and teaching observance of the commandments given by Christ. Matthew distinguishes between preaching and teaching (Hahn 1965:121), whereas Mark uses *kerysso* (proclaim) and *didasko* (teach) as synonyms. Christ did not preach to His disciples or in the synagogues. The teaching of Jesus was not so much an intellectual appeal but rather an appeal to the will of the people (Bosch 1991:66) to submit to the will of God.

^{cx} See 1Corinthians 12:4-10, Romans 6:23, 5:16-17, 12:6-8 and Ephesians 1:8, 2:8, 4:11, 6:13-17.

Teaching is the heart of discipleship and not to be confused with preaching. The method and commission of Christ hinges on the making of disciples, baptism and teaching. Those who are made disciples and baptised are to follow Jesus just as the Twelve did with Christ now being the content (Lohmeyer 1951:418) of the teaching and embodiment of God's reign. The context in which the teaching is presented, is not the classroom or congregation (Bosch 1991:67), but the world. It is there where the ecclesia meets the lost in the myriad of workplaces and family homes. Those specifically gifted with teaching were initially part of an itinerant ministry as were the apostles and prophets, serving the emerging ecclesia at large.

Jesus again accentuates the importance of teaching by including baptism and the making of disciples in the Matthew 28:18-20 commission. The rationale is that by crossing the borders of religion the ecclesia will encounter people who have little or no concept of the God of the Bible. Whereas the Jews were equipped with the Torah and literate in the ways of God, 'the nations' were not. The people of Israel knew God intellectually, though they needed to understand that Jesus was also the Christ, the Messiah (Bavinck 1960:91) they were expecting. However, in Matthew 28:29 the world - all nations - are now included. The nations are those who do not know YAHWEH or His expressed will and therefore teaching would be broadened to who the Father is as well as submitting to His will (Bosch 1991:67).

4. IN CONCLUSION.

The ecclesia manifests itself in a pluriform Trinitarian expression not limited to place and time, and is the catholic representation of the coming Kingdom of Christ in whatever domain or space the ecclesia might be working. The ecclesia, as the commissioned people of Christ, gathers at work, at home and as a congregating expression of being the ecclesia. It is through these multiform expressions in the marketplace that the ecclesia is catholic. It is everywhere, being the salt and light which permeates all disciplines of society. It is not institutional but pneumatically organic, not competing with the institutional expressions of the marketplace, but transforming them for the sake of the Kingdom, from the inside out. It is modular and multifunctional, enabling disciples to simultaneously disciple and be disciplined in a multiplicity of space and time.

The ecclesia is a reality instituted by Christ and empowered by the Holy Spirit making all ecclesiastic expressions and functions (Volf 1998:246) representative of His Kingdom in whatever format they are gathered. The function of the ecclesiastic gathering is to equip and bring all of the ecclesia to maturity, enabling them to be witnesses at work, in lifestyle and relationships. By doing so the ecclesia transforms its habitat by permeating it with the presence and goodness of God. The commission of Christ is expressed through working apostolic priestly believers who through ecclesiastic meetings, impact their respective environments (Bavinck 1960:67) in such a way that the nations turn to Christ and become disciples in the ways of the Kingdom.. Being missional today involves the ecclesia thinking in terms of a new generation (Kritzinger 2011:55) and being involved everywhere daily in the nine-to-five marketplace.

*“Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel,
to all who were carried away captive,
whom I have caused to be carried away from Jerusalem to Babylon:
Build houses and settle down; plant gardens and eat what they produce.
Marry and have sons and daughters;
find wives for your sons and give your daughters in marriage,
so that you too may have sons and daughters - that you may
be increased there, and do not decrease.
Also seek the peace and prosperity of the city
to which I have carried you into exile.
Pray to the Lord for it;
because if it prospers, you too will prosper.*

- Jeremiah 29: 4-14

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Fig. ix.

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LIST OF REFERENCES

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