

The equipping of leaders for effective and sustainable sports ministry in the South African context

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THE EQUIPPING OF LEADERS FOR EFFECTIVE AND SUSTAINABLE SPORTS MINISTRY
IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN CONTEXT.

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ABSTRACT

Sports ministry can be defined as: *seeking to glorify God in sport, thereby extending His Kingdom through sport*. As sports ministry is a relatively new phenomenon in South Africa, it has received very little academic attention from theologians. In particular, there has been limited empirical research into the effectiveness of sports ministry leadership. The premise of this research is that the future strengthening and growth of sustainable sports ministry in South Africa is dependent upon equipping leaders with a foundation that will provide them with a strong scriptural and theological basis for ministry. The primary question that this research is therefore seeking to address is, *how can leaders be equipped to implement effective and sustainable sports ministry in South African churches and communities?*

This study answers this question through following Osmer's (2008) four tasks of theological interpretation. Through empirical research, the study describes how sports ministry leaders have been trained and equipped theologically and practically to implement sports ministry in the South African context. By way of a literature survey, interpretation is given to the situation facing sports ministry leaders through considering how the historical, socio-cultural, and leadership context in South Africa has shaped and influenced the current practice of sports ministry. The study presents an exegesis of five passages of Scripture resulting in the formulation of a Scriptural Manifesto, which, in turn, is then applied to evaluate six theological paradigms that influence sports ministry leaders.

Finally, the culmination of the research proposes the PROXIMITY model, which makes a valuable contribution to the field of research by providing a robust scriptural, theological and practical foundation for the equipping of leaders for effective and sustainable sports ministry in the South African context. The PROXIMITY model is an acrostic, which aptly describes the nine contributions that sport ministry leaders should make in this regard, namely, their role should be **P**rophetic, **R**econciliatory, **O**pen-Hearted, and **eX**emplary; their approach should be **I**ncarnational, **M**issional, and **I**ntegrational; and their focus should be **T**ransformational and **Y**outh-focused. The PROXIMITY model can typically be used to strengthen sports ministry leaders in their engagement with the church, communities, and the culture of sport in South Africa.

OPSOMMING

Sportbediening kan soos volg gedefinieer word: *die soeke om God te eer in sport, deur die uitbreiding van sy Koninkryk deur middel van sport*. Aangesien sportbediening 'n relatief nuwe verskynsel is Suid-Afrika is, het dit tot dusver min akademiese belangstelling ontlok by teoloë. Daar is in besonder min empiriese navorsing gedoen rakende die effektiwiteit van sportbedieningsleierskap. Die vertrekpunt van die studie is dat die toekomstige versterking en groei van volhoubare sportbediening in Suid-Afrika sal afhang van die toerusting van leiers met 'n basis wat hulle in staat sal stel om 'n stewige Skriftuurlike en teologiese grondslag te hê vir hierdie bediening. Die primêre navorsingsvraag wat in die studie gevra word, is: *hoe kan leiers toegerus word om 'n effektiewe en volhoubare sportbediening in Suid-Afrikaanse kerke en gemeenskappe te implementeer?*

Die studie beantwoord die vraag deur gebruikmaking van Osmer (2008) se vier take van teologiese interpretasie. Deur die empiriese navorsing beskryf die studie hoe sportbedieningsleiers teologies en prakties opgelei en toegerus word om sportbediening te implementeer in die Suid-Afrikaanse konteks. Deur middel van 'n literatuurondersoek, is die interpretatiewe deel nagevors deurdat die situasie waarin die sportbedieningsleiers hulle bevind het, ondersoek is en hoe die historiese, sosio-kulturele en leierskapskonteks in Suid Afrika hulle gevorm en beïnvloed het tot by die huidige praktyk van sportbediening. In die studie word eksegeese van vyf Skrifgedeeltes hanteer waaruit 'n Skriftuurlike Manifest ontwikkel is, waarna dit toegepas is in die evaluering van ses teologiese paradigmas wat sportbediening beïnvloed het.

Tenslotte is die PROXIMITY model ontwikkel wat 'n waardevolle bydrae lewer op die navorsingsterrein deur die voorsiening van 'n sterk gefundeerde Skriftuurlike, teologiese en praktiese basis vir die toerusting van leiers vir 'n volhoubare sportbediening in die Suid-Afrikaanse konteks. PROXIMITY is die akrostigon van die nege bydrae wat sportbedieningsleiers behoort te maak, naamlik **P**rophetic, **R**econciliatory, **O**pen-Hearted, **eX**emplary; **I**ncarnational, **M**issional, **I**ntegrational; **T**ransformational en **Y**outh-focused. Die PROXIMITY model kan tipies gebruik word

om sportbedieningsleiers te versterk in hulle betrokkenheid by kerke, gemeenskappe en op die gebied van sport self in Suid-Afrika.

In loving memory of Laura Tucker.

1977 – 2016

Words cannot describe my gratitude for our 16 years of marriage.

‘Where, O death, is your victory?

Where, O death is your sting?’

The sting of death is sin and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Therefore, my dear brothers, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labour in the Lord is not in vain.

1 Corinthians 15:55-58

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CONTENTS

1. CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1. Title and Keywords.....	1
1.2. Introduction.....	1
1.3. Problem Statement and Substantiation.....	1
1.3.1. Background.....	1
1.3.2. Defining Sports Ministry.....	3
1.3.3. Sports Ministry in South Africa.....	4
1.3.4. Scriptural and Theological Framework.....	5
1.3.5. The Church.....	6
1.3.6. Leadership.....	7
1.4. Research Question.....	8
1.5. Research Objectives.....	9
1.6. Central Theoretical Statement.....	9
1.7. Research Methodology.....	10
1.8. Division of Research Project.....	11
1.9. Other Considerations.....	14
2. CHAPTER 2: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY OF THE THEOLOGICAL AND OTHER FACTORS THAT CURRENTLY MOTIVATE SPORTS MINISTRY LEADERS IN SOUTH AFRICA.....	15
2.1. The Descriptive-empirical Task.....	15
2.2. Overview.....	17
2.3. Research Design.....	18
2.3.1. Purpose of the Project.....	19
2.3.2. Strategy of Inquiry.....	21
2.3.2.1. Quantitative, Qualitative or Mixed Methods Research.....	21
2.3.2.2. Qualitative inquiry.....	25
2.3.2.3. Semi-structured interviews.....	27
2.3.3. Research Plan.....	29
2.3.3.1. The people, programme or setting that will be Investigated.....	29
2.3.3.2. The specific methods that will be used to gather data.....	30

Contents (continued)

2.3.3.2.1. Gathering the Data.....	31
2.3.3.2.2. Analysing and interpreting the data.....	33
2.3.3.2.3. Ensuring reliability.....	34
2.3.3.3. The individuals or research team that will conduct the research.....	36
2.3.4. Reflexivity.....	36
2.4. Preliminary Conclusions.....	38
2.5. Research Results.....	39
2.5.1. Introduction.....	39
2.5.2. Results of the Pilot Study.....	39
2.5.3. Research Sample.....	41
2.5.4. Analysis of Interviews.....	45
2.5.5. Description of Results.....	47
2.5.5.1. Theme 1: Sports ministry origins.....	48
2.5.5.1.1. Passion for sport.....	48
2.5.5.1.2. Passion for God and sport.....	48
2.5.5.1.3. Passion for others.....	49
2.5.5.2. Theme 2: The experience of the Global Sports Ministry School.....	49
2.5.5.2.1. Being part of a cross-cultural community.....	50
2.5.5.2.2. Having access to a global network.....	50
2.5.5.2.3. Developing leadership skills.....	50
2.5.5.2.4. Developing practical sports ministry skills.....	51
2.5.5.3. Theme 3: Theological factors.....	51
2.5.5.3.1. The role of sport.....	52
2.5.5.3.2. Evangelism: proclamation and incarnational.....	53
2.5.5.3.3. Long-term discipleship.....	54
2.5.5.3.4. Having a holistic approach to ministry.....	54
2.5.5.4. Theme 4: Contextual Challenges.....	55
2.5.5.4.1. Lack of understanding of sports ministry.....	55
2.5.5.4.2. Church engagement with sports ministry.....	56
2.5.5.4.3. Lack of access to resources.....	57
2.5.5.5. Theme 5: Leadership priorities.....	57
2.5.5.5.1. Prioritising families and parenting.....	57
2.5.5.5.2. Sport as a medium of community development.....	58

Contents (continued)

2.5.5.5.3. The need for long-term engagement.....	59
2.5.5.5.4. The multiplication of leadership.....	60
2.5.6. Summary.....	60
2.6. Conclusion.....	62
3. CHAPTER 3: LITERATURE REVIEW: A HISTORICAL AND CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS OF INFLUENCES UPON SPORTS MINISTRY LEADERS IN SOUTH AFRICA.....	64
3.1. The Interpretative Task.....	64
3.2. The Structure of the Literature Survey.....	66
3.3. The Historical Context.....	67
3.3.1. Apartheid.....	67
3.3.2. Development of Sport in South Africa in the 20 th Century.....	69
3.3.3. The Church in South Africa.....	77
3.4. The Socio-Cultural Context.....	84
3.4.1. Cultural/Sociological perspective.....	85
3.4.2. The Sport Context.....	88
3.4.2.1. Sport as healer.....	91
3.4.2.2. Major sports events.....	93
3.4.2.3. Sport for development.....	95
3.5. The Leadership Context.....	98
3.5.1. Leadership and sport in South Africa.....	100
3.5.2. The Global Sports Leadership School (GSLs).....	102
3.6. Conclusion.....	104
4. CHAPTER 4: TOWARDS A SCRIPTURAL PERSPECTIVE TO PROVIDE A NORMATIVE THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATION FOR SPORTS MINISTRY LEADERS IN SOUTH AFRICA: OLD TESTAMENT FOCUS.....	106
4.1. The normative task.....	106
4.1.1. Introduction.....	106
4.1.2. The Scriptural/Theological context.....	108
4.1.3. Scripture in the Normative Task.....	110
4.2. Exegesis of key Scriptural Passages.....	112

Contents (continued)

4.2.1. Introduction.....	112
4.2.2. Genesis 1:26-28.....	114
4.2.2.1. General background.....	114
4.2.2.2. Socio-historical context and the required response of faith by the first readers.....	116
4.2.2.3. Major theological concepts/themes in the pericope.....	117
4.2.2.4. Meaning of pericope: Lexical analysis (key words) and comparison with other Scriptures.....	119
4.2.2.5. Theological significance of the pericope: Its revelation about God and its appeal.....	124
4.2.2.6. Present socio-historical context and the required response of faith by today's readers.....	125
4.2.2.7. Basic theological principles that can be derived from the pericope.....	126
4.2.3. Isaiah 61:1-3.....	127
4.2.3.1. General background.....	128
4.2.3.2. Socio-historical context and the required response of faith by the first readers.....	130
4.2.3.3. Major theological concepts/themes in the pericope.....	131
4.2.3.4. Meaning of pericope: Lexical analysis (key words) and comparison with other Scriptures.....	132
4.2.3.5. Theological significance of the pericope: Its revelation about God and its appeal.....	135
4.2.3.6. Present socio-historical context and the required response of faith by today's readers.....	136
4.2.3.7. Basic theological principles that can be derived from the pericope.....	137
4.3. Conclusion.....	138
5. CHAPTER 5: TOWARDS A SCRIPTURAL PERSPECTIVE TO PROVIDE A NORMATIVE THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATION FOR SPORTS MINISTRY LEADERS IN SOUTH AFRICA: NEW TESTAMENT FOCUS.....	139
5.1. Introduction.....	139
5.2. Exegesis of key Scriptural passages.....	139

Contents (continued)

5.2.1. Matthew 28:18-20.....	139
5.2.1.1. General background.....	140
5.2.1.2. Socio-historical context and the required response of faith by the first readers.....	142
5.2.1.3. Major theological concepts/themes in the pericope.....	143
5.2.1.4. Meaning of pericope: Lexical analysis (key words) and comparison with other Scriptures.....	145
5.2.1.5. Theological significance of the pericope: Its revelation about God and its appeal.....	149
5.2.1.6. Present socio-historical context and the required response of faith by today's readers.....	150
5.2.1.7. Basic theological principles that can be derived from the pericope.....	152
5.2.2. Romans 12:1-2.....	152
5.2.2.1. General background: Text, place of pericope in the book and the genre.	153
5.2.2.2. Socio-historical context and the required response of faith by the first readers.....	153
5.2.2.3. Major theological concepts/themes in the pericope.....	155
5.2.2.4. Meaning of pericope: Lexical analysis (key words) and comparison with other Scriptures.....	156
5.2.2.5. Theological significance of the pericope: Its revelation about God and its appeal.....	160
5.2.2.6. Present socio-historical context and the required response of faith by today's readers.....	162
5.2.2.7. Basic theological principles that can be derived from the pericope.....	163
5.2.3. 1 Corinthians 9:19-27.....	163
5.2.3.1. General background.....	164
5.2.3.2. Socio-historical context and the required response of faith by the first readers.....	165
5.2.3.3. Major theological concepts/themes in the pericope.....	167
5.2.3.4. Meaning of pericope: Lexical analysis (key words) and comparison with other Scriptures.....	168
5.2.3.5. Theological significance of the pericope: Its revelation about God and its appeal.....	170

Contents (continued)

5.2.3.6. Present socio-historical context and the required response of faith by today's readers.....	171
5.2.3.7. Basic theological principles that can be derived from the pericope.....	173
5.3. Conclusion.....	174
6. CHAPTER 6: TOWARDS A SCRIPTURAL PERSPECTIVE TO PROVIDE A NORMATIVE THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATION FOR SPORTS MINISTRY LEADERS IN SOUTH AFRICA: AN EVALUATION OF SIX THEOLOGICAL PARADIGMS.....	175
6.1. Introduction.....	175
6.2. Towards a Scriptural Perspective for the Theme of Sports Ministry.....	175
6.2.1. A Scriptural Manifesto for Sports Ministry Leaders.....	176
6.3. An Evaluation of Six Theological Paradigms Influencing Sports Ministry Leaders.....	178
6.3.1. Polarised Paradigm.....	179
6.3.1.1. Introduction to the polarised paradigm.....	179
6.3.1.2. Scriptural evaluation of the polarised paradigm.....	182
6.3.2. Pragmatic Paradigm.....	183
6.3.2.1. Introduction to the pragmatic paradigm.....	183
6.3.2.2. Scriptural evaluation of the pragmatic paradigm.....	187
6.3.3. Proclamation Paradigm.....	188
6.3.3.1. Introduction to the proclamation paradigm.....	188
6.3.3.2. Scriptural evaluation of the proclamation paradigm.....	193
6.3.4. Pedagogical Paradigm.....	195
6.3.4.1. Introduction to the pedagogical paradigm.....	195
6.3.4.2. Scriptural evaluation of the pedagogical paradigm.....	199
6.3.5. Participation Paradigm.....	200
6.3.5.1. Introduction to the participation paradigm.....	200
6.3.5.2. Scriptural evaluation of the participation paradigm.....	205
6.3.6. Purposeful Paradigm.....	206
6.3.6.1. Introduction to the purposeful paradigm.....	206
6.3.6.2. Scriptural evaluation of the purposeful paradigm.....	211
6.4. Conclusion.....	212

Contents (continued)

7. CHAPTER 7: DESIGNING THE PROXIMITY MODEL FOR EQUIPPING LEADERS FOR EFFECTIVE AND SUSTAINABLE SPORTS MINISTRY IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN CONTEXT	214
7.1. The Pragmatic Task.....	214
7.1.1. Introduction.....	214
7.2. The PROXIMITY Model for Equipping Sports Ministry Leaders in the South African Context.....	216
7.2.1. Introducing the PROXIMITY Model.....	216
7.2.1.1. The proximity principle.....	217
7.2.1.2. Overview of the components.....	219
7.2.2. The PROXIMITY Model Described.....	220
7.2.2.1. The role of the sports ministry leader as a Christian sportsperson.....	220
7.2.2.1.1. Prophetic.....	221
7.2.2.1.1.1. Contributing factors from the normative task.....	221
7.2.2.1.1.2. Contributing factors from the interpretative task.....	222
7.2.2.1.1.3. Contributing factors from the descriptive task.....	222
7.2.2.1.1.4. Summary: Key factors relating to the equipping of leaders for sports ministry in South Africa.....	223
7.2.2.1.2. Redemptive.....	223
7.2.2.1.2.1. Contributing factors from the normative task.....	224
7.2.2.1.2.2. Contributing factors from the interpretative task.....	224
7.2.2.1.2.3. Contributing factors from the descriptive task.....	225
7.2.2.1.2.4. Summary: Key factors relating to the equipping of leaders for sports ministry in South Africa.....	225
7.2.2.1.3. Open-handed.....	226
7.2.2.1.3.1. Contributing factors from the normative task.....	226
7.2.2.1.3.2. Contributing factors from the interpretative task.....	227
7.2.2.1.3.3. Contributing factors from the descriptive task.....	227
7.2.2.1.3.4. Summary: Key factors relating to the equipping of leaders for sports ministry in South Africa.....	227
7.2.2.1.4. eXemplary.....	228
7.2.2.1.4.1. Contributing factors from the normative task.....	228

Contents (continued)

7.2.2.1.4.2.	Contributing factors from the interpretative task.....	229
7.2.2.1.4.3.	Contributing factors from the descriptive task.....	230
7.2.2.1.4.4.	Summary: Key factors relating to the equipping of leaders for sports ministry in South Africa.....	230
7.2.2.2.	The approach of the sports ministry leader.....	231
7.2.2.2.1.	Incarnational.....	232
7.2.2.2.1.1.	Contributing factors from the normative task.....	232
7.2.2.2.1.2.	Contributing factors from the interpretative task.....	232
7.2.2.2.1.3.	Contributing factors from the descriptive task.....	233
7.2.2.2.1.4.	Summary: Key factors relating to the equipping of leaders for sports ministry in South Africa.....	233
7.2.2.2.2.	Missional.....	234
7.2.2.2.2.1.	Contributing factors from the normative task.....	234
7.2.2.2.2.2.	Contributing factors from the interpretative task.....	235
7.2.2.2.2.3.	Contributing factors from the descriptive task.....	236
7.2.2.2.2.4.	Summary: Key factors relating to the equipping of leaders for sports ministry in South Africa.....	237
7.2.2.2.3.	Integrational.....	237
7.2.2.2.3.1.	Contributing factors from the normative task.....	238
7.2.2.2.3.2.	Contributing factors from the interpretative task.....	238
7.2.2.2.3.3.	Contributing factors from the descriptive task.....	239
7.2.2.2.3.4.	Summary: Key factors relating to the equipping of leaders for sports ministry in South Africa.....	239
7.2.2.3.	The focus of the sports ministry leader.....	240
7.2.2.3.1.	Transformational.....	241
7.2.2.3.1.1.	Contributing factors from the normative task.....	241
7.2.2.3.1.2.	Contributing factors from the interpretative task.....	242
7.2.2.3.1.3.	Contributing factors from the descriptive task.....	243
7.2.2.3.1.4.	Summary: Key factors relating to the equipping of leaders for sports ministry in South Africa.....	243
7.2.2.3.2.	Youth-focused.....	244
7.2.2.3.2.1.	Contributing factors from the normative task.....	244
7.2.2.3.2.2.	Contributing factors from the interpretative task.....	245

Contents (continued)

7.2.2.3.2.3. Contributing factors from the descriptive task.....	246
7.2.2.3.2.4. Summary: Key factors relating to the equipping of leaders for sports ministry in South Africa.....	246
7.3. Summary.....	247
7.4. Conclusion.....	248

8. CHAPTER 8: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND AREAS FOR FURTHER

RESEARCH.....	249
8.1. Introduction.....	249
8.2. Research Methodology.....	250
8.3. Summary of Chapters 2 – 7.....	251
8.3.1. Chapter 2.....	251
8.3.2. Chapter 3.....	254
8.3.3. Chapters 4, 5 and 6.....	255
8.3.4. Chapter 7.....	257
8.4. Conclusion.....	260
8.4.1. Reflexivity.....	260
8.4.2. Recommendations.....	261
8.4.3. Areas for Further Research.....	264
ANNEXURES.....	266
Annexure A: Form for Informed Consent.....	266
Annexure B: Ethics Approval Certificate.....	269
Annexure C: Interview Guide and Protocol.....	270
Annexure D: Letters of Introduction Requesting Participation in the Research.....	278
Annexure E: Researcher Memo.....	280
Annexure F: Case Studies – Transformational Stories.....	281
Annexure G: Evaluation of Six Theological Paradigms.....	289
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	301

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Title and Keywords

The equipping of leaders for effective and sustainable sports ministry in the South African context

Key words: Sports ministry, sport, leadership, South Africa, equip, sustainable

Kernwoorde: Sportbediening, sport, leierskap, Suid-Afrika, toerus, volhoubare

1.2. Introduction

This chapter will introduce the study by providing the necessary background information and definitions that substantiate the problem statement to be addressed in this research. This leads to the presentation of the main research question, subsidiary research questions, research objectives and the central theoretical argument that will be investigated. Finally, the research methodology will be discussed, followed by a presentation of the structure and division of the research project.

1.3. Problem Statement and Substantiation

1.3.1. Background

In 2010, South Africa hosted the FIFA World Cup™. The event was considered a success on a number of levels, although there are questions in terms of the long-term benefits to South Africa (Grundlingh & Nauright 2013:197). Nobel Prize laureate, Tutu, was reported as saying, “anyone who wasn’t thrilled by the World Cup needs to see their psychiatrist” (Jacobs 2013). The country became alive with enthusiasm as the world’s greatest sporting event captured the imagination of people from all sectors of society (Guest 2013:151). The 2010 FIFA World Cup™ gave insight into the powerful

role that sport plays in South Africa, against a context of racial division caused by 200 years of colonial rule and Apartheid (Nauright 2004:1328).

South Africa is world-renowned as a country that institutionalised racism in the form of Apartheid (Welsh 2000:xxvi). The system of enforced segregation was only dismantled in the early 1990s and the first open elections took place in 1994. Since then, former President Mandela has become a global symbol of reconciliation. However, the road to integration and equality has been strewn with challenges given the totally pervasive nature of division that impacted every sector of society (Sanders 2010:17). This division significantly impacted two of the primary focus areas of this research: those of sport and the church. As has been shown by Anderson, Bielert and Jones (2004:48), sport in South Africa developed along cultural lines with the different cultural groupings being associated with different sports. Similarly, churches in South Africa were largely segregated along lines of colour, reflecting the communities in which their congregants lived.

Yet, through the 2010 FIFA World Cup™, there was evidence of unity in the nation at large brought about through the sport of football, which had previously been the domain of black sportspeople in South Africa (Fletcher 2013:32). The 2010 FIFA World Cup™ also brought together churches from multiple backgrounds to work on a united outreach project called “The Ultimate Goal (TUG)” (TUG Report 2010:5).

2010 was therefore a significant year in the development of sports-ministry in South Africa. The overseeing committee of TUG was a collection of church leaders who formed the South African Sports Coalition (SASCOL). Their stated goal was “*To mobilise and empower the Body of Christ to bring the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the world through the platform of the soccer event in 2010*” (TUG Report 2010:5).

The statistics of what was accomplished is quite impressive. Over 1200 churches in 536 towns across South Africa participated in some form of outreach during the event (TUG Report 2010:5). The influence of TUG also extended into 33 other African countries. One local pastor remarked that the World Cup provided the energy needed to both reach out to needy communities, and also take hands with other churches who

previously had not worked well together or were suspicious of each other” (Meadows 2011).

The chairman of SASCOL, Rev Lodewyk, stated the post-event challenge in saying (TUG Report 2010:3):

It is our prayers that the programmes and projects founded and established by TUG, will contribute to a healthy growth of involvement in sport by the South African churches and to achieving greater pursuit of excellence in life and service by our country’s youth.

This enthusiasm and commitment to connecting sports and the church seemed to provide a great platform for the future of sports ministry in South Africa.

1.3.2. Defining Sports Ministry

The researcher has previously defined sports ministry in the following way: “sports ministry seeks to glorify God in sports, thereby extending His Kingdom through sports” (Tucker 2011:8). The dual function of sports ministry is, therefore, described as: (a) to impact the world of sport through proclaiming the Gospel and, (b) to serve the church through extending her influence within the sports world. Wiegand (2011:155) underlines that any definition of sports ministry must include intentionally introducing people to faith in Jesus Christ, thereby fulfilling the Great Commission of Matthew 28:18-20.

This makes sports ministry distinct from the burgeoning movement called Sport for Development (Coalter 2010:299). The secular world has recognised the potential that sport has to influence positive change in society (e.g. see United Nations 2003). This has also spurred on research into the effectiveness of sport as a vehicle for social change (Sanders 2010:16). There is much that can be learned from this research and applied to Christian groups that are engaging in sport. For example, Preti and Tobisch (2010) have conducted research on the role of football in the prevention of HIV AIDS in Africa. However, as sports ministry ultimately seeks to have a spiritual outcome, it is important that research is conducted from a scriptural and theological perspective

for the purpose of examining the effectiveness of sports ministry as a vehicle for Kingdom advancement.

1.3.3. Sports Ministry in South Africa

Ladd and Mathisen (1999) have written a history of Muscular Christianity with a primary focus on its influence in the United States. Muscular Christianity, with its 19th century emphasis on manliness and sport, provided a bridge between Christianity and sport (Tyndall 2004:29). Muscular Christianity was, in many ways, a forerunner to the modern Sports Ministry Movement (Tucker & Woodbridge 2012a:16). In their book, Ladd and Mathisen (1999:20) demonstrate that Christianity has had periods of what they term “engagement” and “disengagement” with sport. Periods of disengagement are characterised by a withdrawal from participation and support of sport as something desirable for Christian involvement. Periods of engagement provide a platform for Christian participation, and utilisation of sport, particularly as a medium for evangelism (Ladd & Mathisen 1999:20).

The history of sports ministry in South Africa displays similar patterns of engagement and disengagement between sport and Christianity over the past 150 years (Tucker 2011:3). However, the current engagement of Christianity with sport as an opportunity for outreach or evangelism, as witnessed during the 2010 FIFA World Cup™, has relatively young roots (Meadows 2011). This process of engagement has been largely spearheaded, over the past 30 years, by a number of Christian missionary organisations, registered as Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) in South Africa, who are involved in full-time outreach through the medium of sport (Tucker & Woodbridge 2012b:160).

Some of the questions facing those beginning to research the effectiveness of sports ministry are: what motivational factors are there for those conducting sports ministry, how effective are these sports ministry programmes, and could there be a future disengagement by the Christian community from sports?

The researcher believes that there are three essential elements that need investigating in order to discover the health of the current Sports Ministry Movement in South Africa.

These relate to the scriptural and theological foundation, the role of the church, and the strength of leadership.

1.3.4. Scriptural and Theological Foundation

As has been seen, sports ministry, particularly in South Africa, is a relatively recent phenomenon. Ladd and Mathisen (1999:170), in reference to the growth of sports ministry in the United States, state that the discovery of the *appeal of sports*, rather than a specific theological foundation, was chiefly the reason that it was embraced by the evangelical church. Ladd and Mathisen (1999:214) go on to state: “The overriding characteristic of the myth of modern evangelical muscular Christianity is that it appears to have little to do with a theological foundation in specific beliefs.” Linville (2007:42), as a sports ministry practitioner and theologian, has written:

While it is realised most denominational bodies have never specifically addressed sport and competition through their theological grid-work and since there are no specific, didactic teachings concerning sport and competition, and furthermore, since the only references to sport or competition are in the form of metaphor and analogy, it becomes obvious it is imperative to create a theological foundation from which the corporate church and the individual Christian can know what to believe, what to think, and how to act in relationship to sport and competition.

Very recently, Treat (2015:392) has written that it is almost impossible to find a Christian who has “thought deeply and critically about sports from a distinctly Christian perspective”. However, Tucker and Woodbridge (2012b:161-165) have shown that, in the past 20 years, a number of sports ministry leaders *have* presented theological foundations to address this challenge. In recent years, Linville (2012) has added to his own body of work to write a *Theology of Competition and Sport*, White wrote his PhD thesis on *Sport and Christian Ethics: towards a theological ethic for sport and competition* (2012), South African practical theologian Heinrich Wiegand (2011) wrote his Master’s thesis: *A model for promoting evangelism through sports and recreation ministry: specifically the South African Dutch Reformed church*. Watson and Parker

(2014) conducted a systematic review of literature pertaining to sport and the Christian religion, demonstrating that what was previously neglected, is now beginning to be addressed.

This is positive progress in the development of a robust theological foundation for sports ministry. However, research should now be conducted to empirically test these theological foundations and see whether sports ministry practitioners are operating from the basis of these foundations, or if there are other factors driving their engagement in sport. Additionally, the prevalent theological paradigms that have underpinned the churches' response to sport throughout Christian history, need to be evaluated against scriptural norms.

1.3.5. The Church

Ladd and Mathisen (1999:215), together with Linville (2007:36) argue that the churches' engagement with sports ministry is driven by a pragmatic motivation to reach people with the Gospel. Within the South African context, this may explain the explosion of interest the FIFA World Cup generated. The researcher (Tucker 2011) has previously surveyed church leaders in the city of Tshwane in South Africa and this demonstrated that church leaders recognise the potential of sports ministry as a valuable component of their on-going outreach initiatives. In particular, this research demonstrated (Tucker 2011:146-147):

- A re-engagement between church and sport is occurring;
- Church leaders do have concerns – centred on training and resourcing, plus the issue of Sunday sport;
- Church leaders are motivated by evangelism.

However, Wiegand (2011:5), in his study of the Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa, concluded that sports and recreation ministry was still underrated and underutilised by the denomination at large, and he went on to state that this is his observation of the church in general in South Africa (2011:264).

There appears to be a danger in the development and strengthening of sports ministry in South Africa. It is that the church, as a whole, can be motivated to engage with an event such as the 2010 FIFA World Cup™, but it is not yet positioned to develop and support a sustained sports ministry. The researcher believes that the observations of Romanuk and Roxburgh (2006:63), even though related to the church in the United States, are pertinent in this regard:

Experience has taught us that programmatic and organisational change, though it has some short-term effect, does not result in the innovation of long-term missional change. We have learned that unless the culture of a congregation is changed, all the sound programs and organisational changes that have been implemented, evaporate. As a result, the congregation eventually reverts back to previous habits.

1.3.6. Leadership

Maxwell (2008:vii) has a mantra on leadership that states: “*everything rises and falls on leadership.*” Ladd and Mathisen (1999:6) express the concern that, in America, many leaders in the Sports Ministry Movement are strong practitioners, but weak in biblical or theological preparation. The Global Sports Coalition (GSC), a network of sports ministry from around the world, has sought to address this through the establishment of the Global Sports Leadership School (GSLs) which is based in South Africa. However, Wiegand (2011:256) highlights a general lack of opportunity for those wanting to be trained in sports ministry and states that this must be a priority for the future strengthening of the movement. This is endorsed by the research conducted amongst church leaders in Tshwane who have expressed the lack of training opportunities and resources as a major obstacle to the development of sports ministry in South Africa (Tucker 2011:206).

The researcher believes that all of the challenges facing sports ministry centre on this one main issue: *the strength of those leading the movement in South Africa*. These leaders require to not only be good practitioners, but to also have a strong scriptural and theological foundation, and to be engaged and connected to the broader church context.

The Sports Ministry Movement requires leaders that have a missional orientation, but are also rooted in the local church and able to mobilise God's people for service in and through sports (Romanuk & Roxburgh 2006:17). The challenge is: *are sports ministry leaders in South Africa properly equipped to ensure the long-term sustainability of sports ministry as a movement that brings glory to God and extends his Kingdom?*

Linville (2011) gives the example of the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) as a global movement that shifted from its roots in evangelism and mission, and became a social organisation based on Christian values. In this process they lost their emphasis on evangelism through sport and focused more on the philosophy of promoting healthy minds and bodies. This shift took place over a period of time and demonstrates a danger when leaders do not have a strong scriptural and theological foundation and become detached from being accountable to the church. This may be an over-simplistic analysis, but it does highlight the importance of leadership within the emerging Sports Ministry Movement in South Africa, and the vital role they will play in the future strengthening, or otherwise, of sports ministry.

1.4. Research Question

Given the background situation explained above, this research will seek to address the following primary question:

How can leaders be equipped to implement effective and sustainable sports ministry in South African churches and communities?

From the research question the other questions will emanate:

- In which ways have sports ministry leaders been equipped through theological and practical training to implement an effective and sustainable sports ministry in the South African context?
- What is the historical, socio-cultural and practical context in which the Sports Ministry Movement has emerged in South Africa?

- Upon what biblical and theological principles has the Sports Ministry Movement been developed and is it possible to identify a scriptural/theological foundation for sports ministry leaders within the South African context?
- What model can be developed to provide a framework to give leaders a strong foundation for the implementation of effective and sustainable sports ministry in South Africa?

1.5. Research Objectives

The purpose of this research is to develop a model to show how leaders can be equipped with a structured and robust theological foundation, based upon scriptural principles, in order to implement effective and sustainable sports ministry in South African churches and communities. To this end, the research objectives are stated as follows:

- To research by way of an empirical study how sports ministry leaders have been trained and equipped theologically and practically in order to implement an effective and sustainable sports ministry in the South African context.
- To research by way of a literature study how the historical, socio-cultural, and practical context in South Africa has shaped and influenced the current practice of sports ministry.
- To demonstrate upon what biblical and theological principles the Sports Ministry Movement has been developed and to provide a scriptural/theological normative foundation for sports ministry leaders in the South African context.
- To propose a model in order to show how leaders may be provided with a strong scriptural/theological and practical foundation for the implementation of effective and sustainable sports ministry in South Africa.

1.6. Central Theoretical Statement

The central theoretical statement of this study is that *the future strengthening and growth of sustainable sports ministry in South Africa is dependent upon equipping*

leaders with a foundation that will enable them to have a strong scriptural and theological basis for ministry.

1.7. Research Methodology

The most suitable and recognised design for this research is Osmer's model (2008), which is a Practical Theology model with four distinct steps, each requiring an answer to a specific question:

- A. *What is going on?* (Descriptive-empirical task). This requires a careful look at situations and contexts and an attempt to describe and understand them (Chapter 2 of this thesis).
- B. *Why is this going on?* (Interpretative task). This requires seeking out reasons for what is going on, i.e. interpreting why the present situation exists (Chapter 3 of this thesis).
- C. *What ought to be going on?* (Normative task). This research project will utilise the Bible as the normative standard and basis for assessing what is going on and providing appropriate responses. The Bible will form the basis for theological interpretation, ethical reflection and establishing models of good practice (Chapter 4, 5 and 6 of this thesis).
- D. *How might we respond?* (Pragmatic task). This task requires an interpretation of the situational and normative data in order to propose a model for the equipping of sports ministry leaders in South Africa (Chapter 7 of this thesis).

The four tasks of Osmer's methodological model of practical theological interpretation are represented in Figure 2.1 on the following page (Osmer 2008:187).

In his review of Practical Theology by Osmer, Smith (2010:1) describes the primary purpose of the proposed model of Practical Theology as equipping the congregational leader, in this case, interpreted as the sports ministry leader, to engage in practical theological interpretations of episodes, situations, and contexts that he/she is confronted with on a daily basis in his/her practice. Gansevoort & Roeland (2014:94) support the importance of practical theology engaging with leisure activities, such as sport, thereby taking the field of practical theology beyond the "praxis of ordained

ministry” (Gansevoort & Roeland 2014:94). Therefore, although Osmer’s model of theological interpretation was developed within the context of the tasks of the ordained minister in his local congregation, it does provide an appropriate framework for the theological interpretation of sport ministry, and will be used as such in this research.

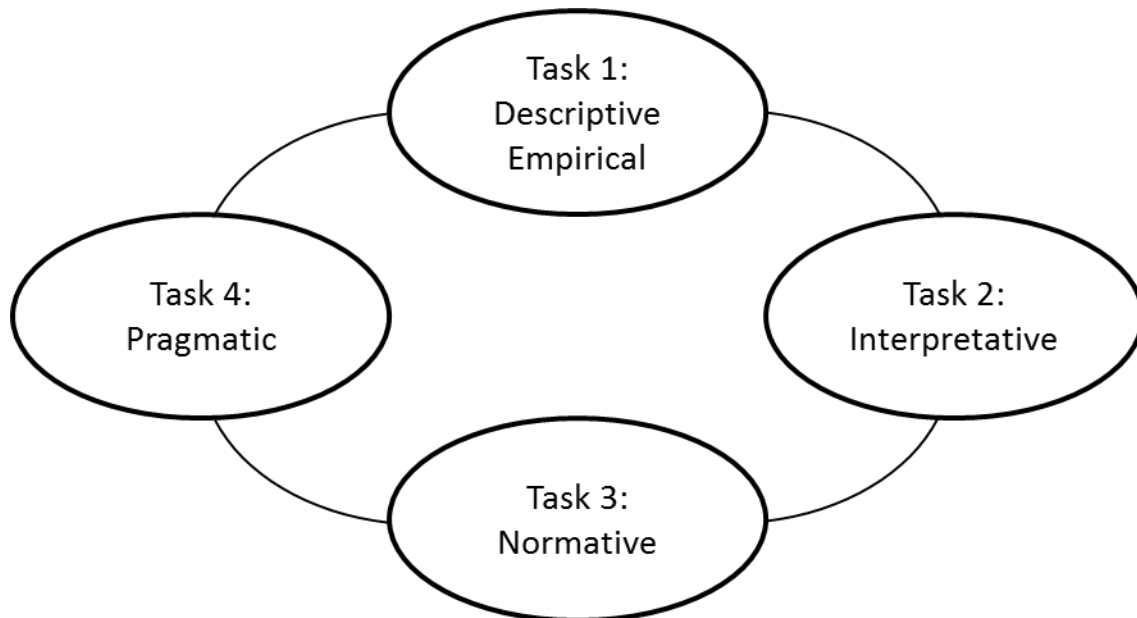


Figure 1.1: Osmer’s (2008:187) Four Tasks of Theological Interpretation

1.8. Division of Research Project

The thesis is presented in eight chapters. The following is the title and the research question/objective of each of the chapters:

- **Chapter 1: Introduction.** The current chapter presents the background, research questions, central theoretical statement and research methodology.
- **Chapter 2: An empirical survey of theological and other factors that currently motivate sports ministry leaders in South Africa.**

This chapter presents the descriptive-empirical task.

The chapter will seek to research, by way of an empirical study, how sports ministry leaders have been trained and equipped theologically and practically to implement an effective and sustainable sports ministry in the South African context.

This chapter has two main divisions. The first half of the chapter will give a detailed explanation of the process of the descriptive-empirical task and will describe the elements of the research design that will be utilised. The second part of this chapter will present the results of the research and interpret the data.

- **Chapter 3: Literature Review: A historical and contextual analysis of influences upon sports ministry leaders in South Africa.**

This chapter presents the interpretative task.

This chapter will seek to research by way of a literature study how the historical, socio-cultural, and leadership context in South Africa has shaped and influenced the current practice of sports ministry.

Through a literature survey that draws from a range of disciplines including historical, socio-cultural, and sports/leadership studies, the researcher will seek to analyse and interpret the influences that impact the current practice of sports ministry leaders in South Africa.

- **Chapter 4: Towards a Scriptural perspective to provide a normative theological foundation for sports ministry leaders in South Africa: Old Testament focus**

This chapter is the first of three chapters presenting the normative task.

This chapter will present an exegesis of two Old Testament passages and draw principles from the pericopes that contribute towards a scriptural/theological foundation for sports ministry.

- **Chapter 5: Towards a Scriptural perspective to provide a normative theological foundation for sports ministry leaders: New Testament focus**

This chapter is the second of three chapters presenting the normative task.

This chapter will present an exegesis of three New Testament passages and draw principles from the pericopes that contribute towards a scriptural/theological foundation for sports ministry.

- **Chapter 6: Towards a Scriptural Perspective to Provide a Normative Theological Foundation for Sports Ministry Leaders: An Evaluation of Six Theological Paradigms**

This chapter is the third of three chapters presenting the normative task.

The principles drawn from the Old and New Testament pericopes studied in chapters 4 and 5, will be presented as the Scriptural Manifesto for sports ministry leaders. The Scriptural Manifesto is then applied to evaluate six theological paradigms that influence sports ministry leaders in order to demonstrate upon what biblical and theological principles the Sports Ministry Movement has been developed and to provide a scriptural/theological normative foundation for sports ministry leaders in the South African context.

- **Chapter 7: Designing the PROXIMITY model for equipping leaders for effective and sustainable sports ministry in the South African context**

This chapter presents the pragmatic task.

As the culmination of the research, this chapter will propose the PROXIMITY model in order to show how leaders may be provided with a strong scriptural/theological and practical foundation for the implementation of effective and sustainable sports ministry in South Africa.

- **Chapter 8: Conclusion and areas for further research**

This chapter will conclude the research by presenting a final synopsis of the study and provide recommendations for further research.

1.9. Other Considerations

- The New International Version (NIV) UK Bible is used for references, unless otherwise indicated.
- The words “Scripture” and “Bible” are used interchangeably with no difference in emphasis or meaning.
- This study is done in accordance with the guidelines required by the Research Ethics Committee of the North-West University. All pertinent documentation will be kept by the author and is available upon request of the examiner. See Annexure B for the Ethics Approval Certificate granted by the ethics committee.
- When reference is made to the male gender, the female gender will also be included and vice versa.

CHAPTER 2

AN EMPIRICAL SURVEY OF THE THEOLOGICAL AND OTHER FACTORS THAT CURRENTLY MOTIVATE SPORTS MINISTRY LEADERS IN SOUTH AFRICA

2.1. The Descriptive-Empirical Task

Through empirical research, this chapter will seek to discern and describe the theological and other factors that currently motivate sports ministry leaders in South Africa. This process will be fundamental for the entire research and will follow Osmer's methodological model (Osmer 2008:84), which is a practical theology model with four distinct steps, each answering a specific question:

- A. *What is going on?* (Descriptive-empirical task). This requires a careful look at situations and contexts and also demands an attempt to describe and understand them (The current chapter of this thesis).
- B. *Why is this going on?* (Interpretative task). This requires seeking out of reasons for what is going on, i.e. interpreting why the present situation exists (Chapter 3 of this thesis).
- C. *What ought to be going on?* (Normative task). This research project will utilise the Bible as the normative standard and a basis for assessing what is going on and providing appropriate responses. The Bible will form the basis for theological interpretation, ethical reflection and establishing models of good practice (Chapter 4, 5 and 6 of this thesis).
- D. *How might we respond?* (Pragmatic task). This task requires an interpretation of the situational and normative data in order to propose a model for the equipping of sports ministry leaders in South Africa (Chapter 7 of this thesis).

The four tasks of Osmer's methodological model of practical theological interpretation are represented in Figure 2.1 on the following page (Osmer 2008:187). This chapter focuses on the first of these four tasks, namely the descriptive-empirical task. The first undertaking of this research will therefore be an empirical research enquiry into the

context, training and approach of sports ministry leaders in South Africa. The goal is to be able to describe the context, the challenges and the underlying theological emphases that influence sports ministry leaders in South Africa. Osmer (2008:41) highlights the fact that empirical research provides better understanding of both the people involved and the social contexts shaping their lives.

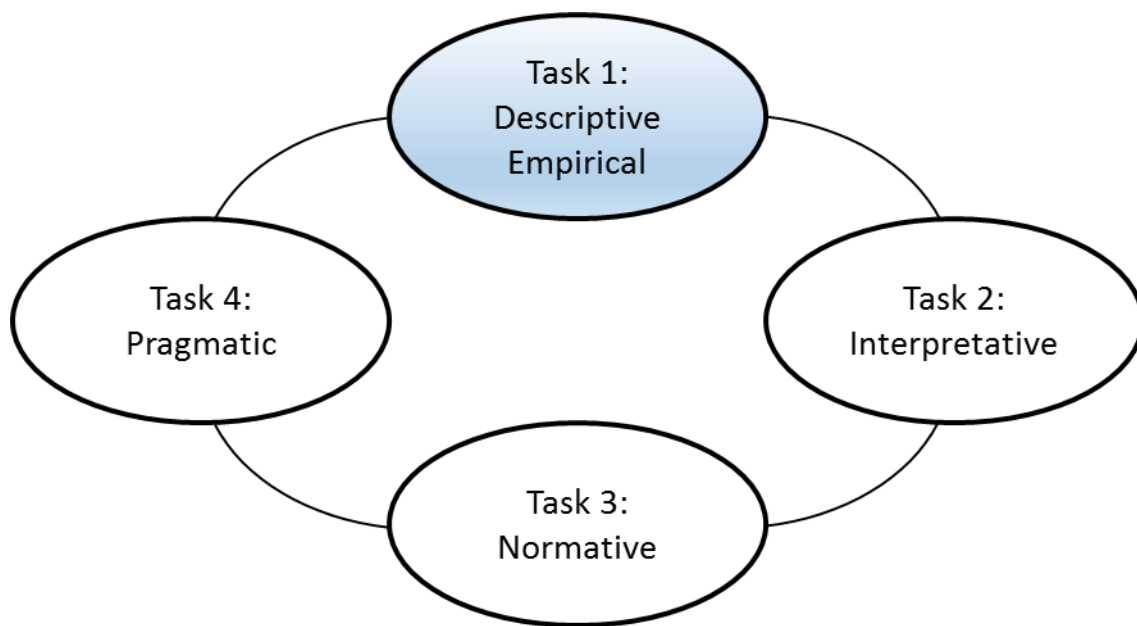


Figure 2.1: Osmer's (2008:187) Four Tasks of Theological Interpretation

There are two approaches to collecting data in empirical research: **quantitative** or **qualitative**, and both seek to “emphasise truth, consistency, applicability, and neutrality while taking different approaches to assure quality” (Harwell 2011:150). In recent times, many researchers engage in what is termed the *mixed method research*, which uses both qualitative and quantitative tools for data collection (Tashakkori & Teddlie 2010:9). However, for the purposes of this study and for reasons given in detail below, a qualitative approach has been chosen as the most suitable medium for empirical research amongst sports ministry leaders in South Africa (Guba & Lincoln 1994:105). Specifically, through the conducting of semi-structured interviews (Creswell 2007:61), the researcher sought to discern in which ways sports ministry leaders had been equipped through theological and practical training to implement effective and sustainable sports ministry. Through engaging in “priestly listening” (Osmer 2008:448), the researcher aimed to discover the key areas of concern, as well as the current strengths, of sports ministry leadership in South Africa. These semi-

structured interviews were conducted amongst leaders who had already received sports ministry leadership training through graduating from the three-month training programme at the Global Sports Leadership School (GSLs) in South Africa.

This chapter is divided into two main sections.

- Firstly, a detailed explanation of the process of the descriptive-empirical task will describe the elements of the research design that will be utilised.
- The second part of this chapter will detail the results of the research and interpret the data.

2.2. Overview

Although there has been an increase in academic interest in sports ministry by theologians over the past 30-40 years (Collins & Parker 2012:1), there is a great need for a more “thorough empirical and theological examination” (Johnson & Smith 2005:15) of the church’s current engagement with sports. This researcher has previously conducted empirical research into the attitudes of church leaders towards sports ministry (Tucker 2011). However, many authors have cited the benefits that the utilisation and involvement of Christians in sports can bring to the church (e.g. Linville 2014:1063; Shafer 2012:12; Wolfinger 2003:66, Garner 2003:3), without grounding their theories in empirical research. In particular, “there has been a distinct lack of cross-disciplinary and cross-denominational dialogue between those examining the relationship between sport and Christianity” (Watson & Parker 2014:4). Therefore, more focused empirical research is required to examine and understand what is currently taking place in and through sports ministry (Smith 2008:152), before considering practical responses and recommendations. The descriptive-empirical task seeks to analyse and “apprehend the subject of study within its original context” (Oldewage 2014:102) in order to gain knowledge that is “exact, causally explanatory, predictive and teachable” (van der Ven 2005:102). The descriptive-empirical task, therefore, initiates a process of inquiry for the practical theologian that will lead the research through the subsequent normative, interpretative and pragmatic steps (Oldewage 2014:102). As Höschele (2009:144) argues, theology grows out of

observations made within a particular context; therefore empirical research is required as an “intrinsic dimension of theology” (Höschele 2009:148).

Osmer (2008:408) advocates that descriptive-empirical research must be “grounded in a spirituality of presence”, which requires an entering into the situation of others through “personal contact, listening, and empathetic imagination”, while also bringing the subject’s “needs and concerns before God in prayer on their behalf” (Osmer 2008:456). This is an essential component of practical theology as the current practice is observed and interpreted (Ganzevoort 2004:64). In short, theology “has to learn from empirical data” (Höschele 2009:148). Indeed, one can apply this statement directly to sports ministry leaders by stating that any recommendations for the strengthening of this movement should be derived from empirical data.

Having ascertained the essential nature of empirical research, the following task is to decide on the appropriate methodological approach to data collection. Following a thorough examination of material written on research methodology, both in relation to practical theology and the social sciences (Creswell 2007, Denzin & Lincoln 2005, Guba & Lincoln 1994), the researcher chose to follow a qualitative approach for the collection of empirical data and to utilise semi-structured questionnaires as the medium of data collection. This approach follows the example of other recent empirical studies in practical theology, such as those conducted by MacMaster (2010) Oldewage (2014) and Adu (2014). The following section explains in greater detail the process which was undertaken in preparing for, and conducting, the research.

2.3. Research Design

The research design enables the researcher to make appropriate choices on how to conduct his study (Chenail 2011:1718). The conception of the research design must align with the overall goals of the research questions and provide a structure to achieve these goals (Chenail 2011:1718). Creswell (2007:45) advises the utilisation of a recognised approach for the research design that has been successfully used by other researchers. The research design provides “the fundamental building blocks of a successful empirical study” (Oldewage 2014:101).

The research design of this study follows the guidance of Osmer (2008:613) who outlines four steps in research design:

- Purpose of the Project – The specific reasons for carrying out research and a clear statement of what questions are intended to be answered.
- Strategy of Inquiry – The particular methodology guiding a research project, connecting the methods used towards the outcomes desired.
- Research Plan – How the project will be carried out in a specific time-frame, including decisions about what or who will be investigated, who will conduct the research, and the methods to be used to gather and analyse data.
- Reflexivity – Reflection on the metatheoretical assumptions forming the project, including assumptions about the nature of reality, knowledge, human beings, and the moral ends of life.

Each of these four steps was followed in the design of the research plan for this study. The following sections outline the process the researcher pursued in greater detail.

2.3.1. Purpose of the Project

Osmer (2008:613) describes the purpose of the project as being, “the specific reasons for carrying out research and a clear statement of what the questions are designed to answer”. He goes on to state that the purpose should be stated “in a short paragraph and then develop two or three research questions that you hope to answer when it is completed” (Osmer 2008:621). Maxwell (2009:219) argues that all empirical research needs to have clearly defined goals to ensure that there is a sense of unity and focus throughout the research process. Mouton (2001:53) also underlines that, in empirical research, the purpose of the project must ask a question that “addresses a real life problem”.

As was stated in chapter 1 (see 1.5), the primary purpose of this chapter is: *to research how sports ministry leaders have been trained and equipped theologically and practically in order to implement an effective and sustainable sports ministry in the South African context.*

The research questions have been derived from this primary purpose. These questions outline how this research is seeking to discover what is not yet known (Maxwell 2009:216). Agee (2009:431) underlines the importance of having well thought-through research questions, “Good questions do not necessarily produce good research, but poorly conceived or constructed questions will likely create problems that affect all subsequent stages of a study”.

The following overall questions were designed to address the primary purpose of this study:

- What theological and other factors currently motivate sports ministry leaders in South Africa?
- To what extent has the GSLS training programme equipped leaders theologically and practically to implement an effective and sustainable sports ministry in the South African context?
- What factors have helped sports ministry leaders to develop their ministry in South Africa?
- What obstacles have hindered sports ministry leaders from developing their ministry in South Africa?

This purpose statement and consequent research questions have guided the strategy and approach of this descriptive-empirical task within the scope of this overall study (Maxwell 2009:229), which is seeking to equip leaders to develop an effective and sustainable sports ministry in South Africa. The questions are designed to allow for an ongoing process of “exploration and discovery” throughout this research (Agee 2009:434). Therefore, these primary questions will also shape the framework for the semi-structured interviews as outlined below; these will be the medium through which the data is generated, for the purpose of attending to the primary purpose and for answering the research questions (Maxwell 2009:230).

2.3.2. Strategy of Inquiry

Osmer (2008:613) describes the strategy of inquiry as, “the particular methodology guiding a research project, connecting the methods used to the outcomes desired”. The strategy of inquiry seeks to determine the most appropriate method to obtain the required data that will be analysed (Harwell 2011:148). To facilitate this process, Chenail (2011:1714) counsels that researchers “should embrace a sense of ‘pragmatic curiosity’ to explore an array of methodologies and procedures”, in order that the researcher has good reasons to explain and defend the choices made. This section will therefore explain the process that the researcher used which led to the decision to conduct qualitative research utilising semi-structured interviews.

2.3.2.1. Quantitative, Qualitative or Mixed Methods research

Empirical research always involves gathering data (Mouton 2001:53), and there are three primary methods through which researchers gather data for analysis, namely, quantitative, qualitative and mixed-methods research (MMR).

The difference between quantitative and qualitative research is primarily in the way that the data is collected. Smith (2008:225) states that quantitative research is concerned with “numbers and percentages,” while qualitative is concerned with the “why and how of human interaction” (Agee 2009:432). Babbie (2013:24) similarly contrasts quantitative and qualitative research as “essentially the distinction between numerical and non-numerical data”.

Osmer (2008:268) gives the following helpful explanation of the difference between qualitative and quantitative research:

Quantitative research gathers and analyses numerical data to explore relationships between variables. Qualitative research seeks to understand the actions and practices in which individuals and groups engage in everyday life and the meanings they ascribe to their experience (Osmer 2008:268).

The approach to research methodology has changed significantly in recent times. Towards the end of the 20th Century, Guba and Lincoln (1994:105) called quantitative research the “received view” which was considered as both an objective and scientific method of research (Guba & Lincoln 1994:106), whereas qualitative research, because of its so-called “subjectivity”, was considered less “factual” and objective (Smith 2008:226). However, Guba and Lincoln go on to give a critique of the received view which gives great credibility to qualitative research, particularly within the fields of the social sciences, which are usually concerned with describing the experiences of people (Guba & Lincoln 1994). Three specific areas of their critique of the received view that are pertinent to this research are that quantitative research does not provide contextual information, excludes meaning and purpose ascribed by the participants, and does not uncover “emic views”, which require a qualitative approach (Guba & Lincoln 1994:106).

van Rensburg (2009:8) summarises the “shift from quantitative to qualitative” methodology as being discernible in the following contrasts;

from deductive to inductive; from facts to contexts; from statistics to emotions; from a rational focus to a focus on experience; from explanation to understanding, from objective to subjective and inter-subjective (van Rensburg 2009:8).

Osmer (2008:628) states that quantitative research helps “in discovering broad statistical patterns and relationships”, whereas qualitative research, “is better suited to studying a small number of individuals, groups, or communities in depth”. Both qualitative and quantitative approaches are clearly valid research methods with their respective strengths and weaknesses, yet the key is finding which method is most appropriate to answer the research question within the specific context that the research is taking place (Guba & Lincoln 1994:105).

In recent times, many studies combine qualitative and quantitative research in a mixed method research (MMR) strategy (Harwell 2011:151). Advocates of MMR see qualitative and quantitative research not in competition with each other, but rather that they are compatible approaches that can be utilised in the same study (Tashakkori & Teddlie 2010:9).

Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004:17) define MMR as, “the class of research where the researcher mixes or combines quantitative and qualitative research techniques, methods, approaches, concepts or language into a single study”. Tashakkori and Teddlie (2010:9) argue that MMR “provides the opportunity for an assortment of divergent conclusions and inferences due to the complexity of the data sources and analysis in the research”. However, it seems there is not universal agreement on “what constitutes a mixed methods study” (Harwell 2011:151), and there are those who believe that the mixed method approach demotes qualitative research to a secondary function (Harwell 2011:152). Often the MMR approach combines questionnaire (quantitative) with interviews (qualitative) in their design. Brown and Harris (2010:1) conducted a study of 19 such studies and found that “consensus and consistency statistics were generally weak between methods”. Due to the different approaches between quantitative and qualitative research, they argue that “conditions for agreement between survey and interview methods of data collection are complex” (Brown & Harris 2010:4) and require separate methods of analysis (Brown & Harris 2010:11). Kendall (2008) takes the objection to utilising MMR further, particularly arguing against utilising surveys (qualitative) and interviews (quantitative) in the same research strategy. After giving “five significant problems”¹ of the combination of surveys and interviews, he concludes, “I believe that the use of in-depth interviews as follow-up to survey research is a flawed research strategy and needs to be abandoned or at least significantly rethought” (Kendall 2008:148).

¹ A summary of Kendall’s five significant problems with MMR: (Kendall 2008:138-139):

1. It treats interviewees much like survey respondents: as homogenous research subjects with whom the achievement of understanding is unproblematic.
2. It violates the research logic of qualitative interviews by deriving categories of analysis from the survey and eliciting further ‘illustration’ of analytical points from interviewees, rather than approaching the interviews inductively and allowing categories of analysis to emerge from interview data.
3. The constraints imposed by the necessity of reporting two different kinds of data with the report..., results in interview data that are inadequately discussed, contextualised, and analysed.
4. This results in the use of interview excerpts merely to add anecdotal colour, treating them as window dressing for the quantitative analysis.
5. Because of these factors, far from strengthening research results through triangulation, the use of qualitative interview data tends to hide and exacerbate weaknesses of the primary survey method.

The researcher believes Kendall's conclusion states the matter too strongly. However, Tashakkori and Teddlie (2010:18) themselves concede that MMR should be utilised when there is clearly a research question that "requires [both] a structured quantitative approach and an emergent and holistic qualitative type of approach", and that the decision of which method to use (quantitative, qualitative, or MMR) is entirely determined by the nature of the research question/problem statement (Tashakkori & Teddlie 2010:17).

Having considered the three research approaches, the researcher decided that a qualitative research design was most suited to gathering the data required to address the research question stated above. In doing so, this research is following the methodological example of qualitative research that has been successfully utilised by other recent practical theological researchers e.g. MacMaster (2010), Oldewage (2014) & Adu (2014). The implications of this approach are laid out in the following section.

The specific reasons why the qualitative method has been chosen are as follows:

- The research is being conducted within a specific context, namely that of those engaged in sports ministry leadership in the country of South Africa. Qualitative research places a great emphasis upon context (Creswell 2007:37), seeking to understand phenomenon in their "natural setting" (Denzin & Lincoln 2005:3). This aligns with the approach of practical theology, which emerges out of the observations of life within a particular-context (Höschele 2009:144). The following chapter will more fully explore the unique South African context within which the sports ministry leaders functioning. The impact of the context upon the data collected needs to be considered in the research findings (Maxwell 2009:221 & Smith 2008:226).
- This research has a high emphasis upon describing and interpreting the experience of the participants. Indeed, Osmer himself emphasises the "descriptive-empirical" nature of practical theology (Osmer 2008:84) and Smith (2008:226) states that "the main goal of descriptive research is to describe the data and characteristics about the problem or issue being studied". van

Rensburg (2009:9) has highlighted that “qualitative research is predominantly descriptive” and a qualitative methodology is therefore best suited towards the purpose of this study.

- van Rensburg (2009:9) also highlights that a major difference between quantitative and qualitative research is the number of participants. Quantitative research requires larger number of participants from which to draw objective data (Maxwell 2009:221). In this study, the data was collected from amongst a relatively small pool of sports ministry leaders in South Africa and, therefore, clearly lends itself to a qualitative study which will utilise interviews as the primary vehicle through which data will be captured.
- The emphasis of the qualitative research is therefore on, “discovering and understanding the *experiences, perspectives and thoughts* of participants” (Harwell 2011:148), which required spending time with the participants to fully understand their perspective and gain as reliable data as possible.
- Qualitative research is focused on “rich” (Guba & Lincoln 1994:106), extensive (Creswell 2007:126) data and “thick descriptions” (Agee 2009:434). Due to there being little empirical research into sports ministry leadership, it seems essential that this research will contribute most greatly to the field by the “extensive collection of data” (Creswell 2007:43) that empowers the individuals who participated and “enables their voices to be heard” (Creswell 2007:40).

2.3.2.2. Qualitative inquiry

Having decided that a qualitative study is the best method for data collection, the specific approach of the qualitative inquiry needs to be determined.

A qualitative study “emphasises the quality of human actions” and “an assessment of the value and function of existing entities or phenomena” (MacMaster 2010:10). A qualitative inquiry therefore enables people to share their stories (Creswell 2007:40) and involves extensive time in the field (Creswell 2007:41). Osmer (2008:504) speaks of qualitative research as being “a disciplined way of attending to others in their particularity”, which requires the researcher to become a guide that helps people navigate their experience (Osmer 2008:523), and brings to the fore “social trends that

are impacting lives and shaping the context of ministry” (Osmer 2008:534). It is worth once more highlighting that, in a relatively new field of ministry like sports ministry that has not undergone a great deal of empirical research, qualitative inquiry seems essential, particularly in providing an environment to listen to the experiences and phenomena that are shaping the approach of those in leadership. The researcher’s role was, therefore, to listen intently in order to be able to describe the other’s experience and perception (Smith 2008:226), thereby providing a platform from which “to describe the data and characteristics about the problem or issue being studied” (Smith 2008:226).

Creswell (2007:54-71) has written extensively on the characteristics of five different approaches to qualitative research as utilised in the social sciences. He has identified the following five potential mediums of inquiry which differ in terms of what they are seeking to accomplish (Creswell 2007:77).

- a. Narrative research: which is a study that expresses the experiences and stories of the lives of individuals (Creswell 2007:54).
- b. Phenomenological research: which focuses on “what all participants have in common as they experience a phenomenon” (Creswell 2007:58).
- c. Grounded theory research: which moves “beyond description and to generate or discover a theory” (Creswell 2007:63).
- d. Ethnography: which has a particular ethnic/cultural group as the object of study (Creswell 2007:71).
- e. Case study research: which “involves the study of an issue explored through one or more cases within a bounded system” (Creswell 2007:73).

The consideration of each of these approaches has been helpful in forming the strategy of qualitative inquiry for this research. Creswell (2007:11) counsels that one primary approach be utilised when conducting qualitative research. In many ways, the task of practical theology has similarities with grounded theory research, as one seeks to learn from the current experience of the individuals involved, and to make recommendations regarding praxis (Höschele 2009:144)². What is critical is that the

² Contained in the fifth chapter of this study as the Pragmatic Task.

data collected through qualitative inquiry is “rich data” (Chenail 2011:1715), which means the medium of inquiry must allow for the voices of the participants to be clearly heard. Creswell (2007:37) critically states,

Qualitative researchers use an emerging qualitative approach to inquiry, the collection of data in a natural setting sensitive to the people and places under study, and data analysis that is inductive and establishes patterns or themes.

Therefore, the medium through which this research sought to collect rich data and facilitate a greater understanding of the participant’s experience, was through semi-structured interviews.

2.3.2.3. Semi-Structured interviews

Creswell (2007:125) states that qualitative research utilises the concept of “purposeful sampling”; collecting data from individuals who can “purposefully inform an understanding of the research problem”. For qualitative research, there are four basic ways that data is collected in this process of purposeful sampling, namely, observations, interviews, documents and audio-visual materials (Creswell 2007:129). In particular, Creswell states that interviews “play a central role in the data collection in a grounded theory study” (Creswell 2007:131). As noted above, this study has parallels with a grounded research study, and therefore, agrees with Oldewage (2014:117) who proposes that a basic qualitative study should rely on interviews as the primary medium to gather data.

Osmer (2007:785) writes of differing structures when interviewing, which range on a continuum from unstructured to structured. Unstructured interviews are akin to natural conversations, whereas structured interviews are, in effect, verbal questionnaires. The mid-way point on this continuum is semi-structured interviews, in which open-ended questions are prepared that allow for both “open-ended and close-ended questions” (Oldewage 2014:119). Brown & Harris (2010:1) define semi-structured interviews as follows:

In a semi-structured interview, interviewers begin with a small set of open-ended questions, but spend considerable time probing participant responses, encouraging them to provide detail and clarification; these data are generally analysed qualitatively.

Turner (2010:756) believes that semi-structure, open-ended interviews are the most popular in qualitative research because they allow the participants “to fully express their viewpoints and experiences”. Utilising semi-structured interviews, therefore, allows for the “exploration of meaning” (Kendall 2008:133) because of the flexibility to probe and explore responses through the medium of follow-up questions (Kendall 2008:134). Due to all these reasons and because the pool of sports ministry leaders in South Africa is relatively small, this study utilised semi-structured interviews and followed the principles and guidelines outlined by the Ethics Committee of North-West University regarding qualitative research (NWU 2010:48).

Due to the nature of the qualitative research through direct semi-structured interviews, it was deemed by the NWU Ethics Committee that there was a medium risk of harm to participants. In order to mitigate this risk and protect the participants, the research protocol was developed and submitted to the Ethics Committee (see Annexure A-E) together with the necessary application forms. This ensured the protection of all participants and guaranteed their anonymity. The consent form was developed and signed by all participants (Annexure A). The Ethics Approval Certificate was granted by the Ethics Committee (Annexure B) which enabled the researcher to proceed with the interviews.

The semi-structured interviews utilised some pre-prepared standardised questions to open up conversation with the interviewee, from which the researcher continued with follow-up questions in order to more fully explore the responses (Turner 2010:756). The goal will be to follow Osmer’s (2008:772) advice that, “a good interviewer is an active listener who attends carefully to the verbal and non-verbal responses of the interviewee and guides the conversation without controlling it”.

Authors also recognise that there are weaknesses with qualitative research through interviews, which include, subjective and “negotiated and contextually based results”

(Brown & Harris 2010:2), the leading or manipulating of interviewee responses (Brown & Harris 2010:2) and the difficulty of coding the data that is collected (Turner 2010:756). The research plan must, therefore, seek to alleviate these challenges in order that the data collected will be as reliable and meaningful as possible.

2.3.3. Research Plan

Having determined the strategy of inquiry, the next phase in Osmer's process is to determine a research plan that will be most suited to fulfil the strategy. This includes planning how to carry out the project in a specific time-frame, determining by whom and how the research will be conducted, and what methods will be used to gather and analyse the data (Osmer 2008:613). This process entails answering the question as to what the researcher will actually do in order to obtain and analyse the data (Maxwell 2009:216).

2.3.3.1. The people, programme or setting that will be investigated

The first essential component of the research plan is to be clear on, "who will participate in the study, how will I gain access and recruit them, and what precautions will I need to take, so that they can be protected from harm throughout the study?" (Chenail 2011:1718). As stated above, this study in Practical Theology can learn from the "Grounded Theory" approach in the social sciences, which, according to Creswell (2007:122), requires participants who have "participated in the process or action" that is being researched. In other words, the people are required to have had practical engagement in the field of sports ministry leadership, to enable them to contribute towards the primary research question. The participants must be able to "purposefully inform" and contribute to the practical outcomes of the study (Creswell 2007:125,128). Therefore, it is essential that the participants bring greater understanding of what theological factors currently motivate sports ministry leaders in South Africa, as well as the role of the GSLS training programme in equipping leaders theologically and practically to implement an effective and sustainable sports ministry.

To this end, the researcher chose to conduct semi-structured interviews with South African residents who had completed the three-month Global Sports Leadership

School (GSLs) in South Africa. In total, 42 South Africans have completed this three-month program since its inception in 1998 (Lombard 2015). This strategy is well-suited to a qualitative study because of the homogenous nature of the sample (i.e. the shared experience and nationality) (Maxwell 2009:235), and having a small sample group suits in-depth interviews which will ensure that “thick descriptions” are obtained (Agee 2009:434).

Once a list of all the graduates of the programme (Lombard 2015), was obtained, the researcher communicated with all the graduates and invited them to be part of the study. The goal was to conduct ten semi-structured interviews, where possible, conducted face-to-face, or alternatively through video-conferencing or telephone (see below). Although the participants are in some ways homogenous due to their shared experience of GSLs, they also come from diverse cultural backgrounds and it was anticipated that this would add to further the credibility of the study. To facilitate this, it was realised that capturing the biographical detail was going to be essential (van Rensburg 2009:13). This included understanding the differing contexts that each participant had experienced that might bear impact upon his or her responses (Maxwell 2009:221).

In preparing to engage the potential participants, it is important that due attention is given to ethical considerations (Maxwell 2009:216). As Agee (2009:440) correctly points out, “inquiries into other people’s lives are always an exercise in ethics”. As counselled by Chenail (2011:1721), the researcher followed the guidelines outlined by the Ethics Committee of North-West University regarding qualitative research (NWU 2010:48) to ensure that the highest ethical standards were maintained throughout the research process.

2.3.3.2. The specific methods to be used to gather data

Having identified the research participants, it was then necessary to determine how data would be gathered; a process which needs to flow naturally within the overall research design in order to ensure that there are checks and balances in place to maintain the quality and integrity of the research (Chenail 2011:1719). Having determined that the primary method of data collection would be through semi-

structured interviews (see above), the following section outlines the procedures that were followed to conduct the interviews, which Creswell calls the “protocols” (Creswell 2007:119). The three key elements in this process are gathering, analysing and interpreting the data (Mouton 2001:53).

2.3.3.2.1. Gathering the data

The primary method for gathering the qualitative data in this research was through semi-structured interviews. Although semi-structured, the interviews needed to be effectively planned, so that the most accurate and useful data was obtained (van Rensburg 2009:11).

van Rensburg (2009:9) contends that good qualitative data is best obtained through personal contact and, together with Creswell (2007:118), highlights the importance of “rapport” with the participants. Building rapport helps to not only ensure good participation of the interviewees, but it is also essential to have questions that allow for strong descriptive responses (Maxwell 2009:236). The interview questions are naturally drawn from the overarching research questions (see above), and seek to “narrow the broader focus” (Agee 2009:436) and, as qualitative research questions, are geared towards discovering “meanings and influences” (Maxwell 2009:232) which the participants ascribe to their experiences. The semi-structured nature of the interviews means certain standard questions will be prepared and asked at each interview, but the researcher will be anticipating to follow up some of the responses with further questions that facilitate a deeper response (Creswell 2007:133).

To help prepare for the interviews, a pilot study was conducted which tested the questions and structure of the interview (Maxwell 2009:236) and allowed for changes to be made to the structure/questions before continuing with the rest of the participants (Creswell 2007:133).

One challenge with the selected participants for this study is that they are spread across the nation of South Africa, making it impossible to conduct face-to-face interviews with everyone. However, wherever possible, face-to-face interviews were conducted as the preferred method, but some interviews were conducted through the

Internet. As Creswell notes, telephonic interviews are more challenging because one cannot see the visible/informal responses of the participants (Creswell 2007:133). Therefore, a video conferencing tool (such as Skype) was preferred to the telephone. Even so, Kendall (2008:144) warns that the researcher must be cognisant that data gathered could potentially be affected.

Creswell (2007) gives very helpful advice for conducting interviews which have been incorporated by this researcher into the planning and preparation for engaging the participants and gathering the data. Annexure C outlines the process that the researcher followed in order to engage the participants and to gather the data, which includes:

- Initial contact with the potential participants requesting that they agree to be part of the interview. A letter was sent (via email) outlining the nature of the research and the reasons for requesting their participation. It also confirmed the confidentiality of the process (see Annexure D).
- The nature and venue of the interview which will be agreed upon. If face-to-face, a quiet environment, free from distractions, is essential (Creswell 2007:133).
- The consent form which will be signed by the interviewee before commencement of the interview as it is essential to have the written permission of all participants (Creswell 2007:125) (see Annexure A).
- The interview guide, which gives the structure of the interview, and the interview protocol which will be utilised by the researcher at each interview (Creswell 2007:133).

All the interviews were digitally recorded in full (Creswell 2007:130). Additionally, the researcher made notes throughout the interview on the interview protocol form, as well as recording a memo of initial impressions and observations immediately after each interview (Creswell 2007:131). All this information is securely stored and all digital information was copied and backed up for protection, in a protected cloud-based environment such as Dropbox (Chenail 2011:1721). Finally, Creswell (2007:134) offers the following practical advice for the conducting of interviews:

During the interview, stay to the questions, complete the interview within the time specified (if possible), be respectful and courteous, and offer few questions and advice.

2.3.3.2.2. Analysing and interpreting the data

Having conducted the semi-structured interviews, the next task is to analyse and interpret the data, which, as Maxwell (2009:236) states, involves categorising and coding the data.

The first step in the process will be the time-consuming but necessary function of fully transcribing the interview-recordings to produce a verbatim record (Babbie 2011:283 and Maxwell 2009:244). In some studies, this process is outsourced to a professional transcriber (Kendall 2008:145); however, this researcher, being cognisant of Maxwell's (2009:236) advice that data analysis is best done simultaneously with data collection, transcribed each interview himself. Through this process, the researcher will become extremely familiar with the data and become aware of emerging trends (Oldewage 2014:130). Additionally, the process of making memos, subsequent to each interview, enabled the researcher to have a deep engagement with the data being collected and analysed (Chenail 2011:1721).

Once transcribed, the next task is to "fracture the data and rearrange it into categories that facilitate comparison between things in the same category and between categories" (Maxwell 2009:237). This process of coding in qualitative research is how raw data is organised into categories suitable for analysis (Babbie 2011:504). Again to quote Maxwell's (2009:237) very helpful approach,

Organisational categories are generally broad subjects or issues that you establish prior to your interviews or observations, or that could usually have been anticipated... "Organisational categories function primarily as 'bins' for sorting the data for further analysis".

As Oldewage (2014:131) has demonstrated in his qualitative study, “these categories can then be organised and compared”. This will form the foundation of the interpretative process, following the historical trend of qualitative research established by Guba (1981:78) who stated that “adherents of the naturalistic paradigm prefer to have the theory emerge from the data themselves” (Guba 1981:78).

The other major benefit of fully transcribing the data is that it helps fulfil the requirement of the qualitative approach to ensure that context-rich and detailed data is obtained. Kendall (2008:142) gives a strong case for the inclusion of interviewee quotes in the final research report, including descriptions that “provide insight into the interviewees’ personal histories and lifestyles”, even allowing their personalities to be revealed. He goes on to state that, “in a good qualitative research report, we are given enough information to evaluate whether the analysis makes sense and to get a sense of the context of the interview-quotes within the lives of the respondents” (Kendall 2008:143).

2.3.3.2.3 Ensuring reliability

An additional important factor in this data analysis process is to ensure the reliability of the data and the interpretation thereof. A critical step has already been stated above, that of “respondent validation” which includes “systematically soliciting feedback” about the data from those participating in the study (Maxwell 2009:244). To that end, the verbatim transcripts will be sent to each participant to allow them to give feedback as to its accuracy and to ensure that any misunderstandings are resolved. Additionally, the researcher has drawn upon the bench-marking work of Guba with regards to the four criteria of trustworthiness that he proposed in 1981, and which have remained a foundation of qualitative research reliability ever since (Oldewage 2014:132, Maxwell 2013:125; Creswell 2012:246). Guba (1981:77) states that the goal in the naturalistic paradigm (the study of phenomena and behaviour) is not to establish generalisations, but what can be considered the best “working hypotheses” (Guba 1981:77). These working hypotheses can be tested for trustworthiness and Guba gives four ways to increase “the probability of the study’s trustworthiness” (1981:88), namely credibility,

transferability, dependability, confirmability (1981:83). The researcher has sought to apply these to this study in the following ways:

- **Credibility:** credibility requires “prolonged engagement” in the field of research (Guba 1981:83). The credibility of this research is related to a) the prolonged engagement of the researcher in conducting semi-structured interviews, and b) ensuring that sufficient interviews are conducted, so that information gathered and hypotheses gleaned can be corroborated from multiple sources.
- **Transferability:** there is recognition that all data collected through the research is “context-bound” (Guba 1981:86). In this case, the information is from South African residents who have the shared experience of graduating from the Global Sports Leadership School. The researcher needs to be careful therefore of how hypotheses and conclusions can be transferred to other contexts. However, in collecting “thick descriptions” (Guba 1981:86), it will “permit comparison of this context to other possible contexts to which transfer might be contemplated” (Guba 1981:86).
- **Dependability:** the dependability of the outcomes will be founded on a thorough “audit trail” (Guba 1981:87) which will document the processes the researcher took throughout the research. This will include the interview notes, full transcription of interviews, and researcher memos.
- **Confirmability:** Guba (1981:87) advises that triangulation occurs in two steps. The first is to collect data from a variety of perspectives. Although there is homogeneity in the experience of the participants, there will also be diversity in a variety of ways including cultural grouping, church background, socio-economic status, etc. This will facilitate the first step in triangulation. The second step is to “practise reflexivity” (Guba 1981:87) which is also the fourth element of this research design and covered in greater detail below.

These four elements will be the foundation of the data collection and analysis process to establish *trustworthiness*.

2.3.3.3. The individuals or research team that will conduct the research

All the research, including data collection, transcribing, coding and interpreting was carried out by the author of this research project. The section below on reflexivity considers the challenges that one's metatheoretical assumptions may cast on the research process. However, Guba (1981:78) maintains that:

Naturalistic inquirers are inclined to use themselves as the instruments, willingly trading off some objectivity and reliability in the rationalistic sense in order to gain greater flexibility and the opportunity to build upon tacit knowledge (Guba 1981:78).

The researcher acknowledged that his tacit knowledge “such as intuitions, apprehensions... feelings” (Guba 1981:78) were important indicators that guided the research process, particularly during the interviews. Although there are obvious dangers of a lack of neutrality (Kendall 2008:135), Maxwell (2009:225) maintains that the incorporation of the researcher's identity and experience into the research process “has recently gained much wider theoretical and philosophical support”.

However, what is clear is that conducting interviews can be a taxing process (Creswell 2007:140) and the researcher needs to “develop a special set of interpersonal skills” (Kendall 2008:134) to effectively conduct the research. Additionally, as has been indicated above, the researcher needs to be alert to any ethical issues that may occur during the process of conducting or analysing the interviews (Creswell 2007:141). Kendall (2008:134) counsels that interviewers “proceed carefully when inquiring about particular concepts in order to not assume the knowledge or opinions of the interviewee”, and that the best way to overcome barriers between the interviewer and the participant is that the researcher must seek to immerse him or herself in his or her world (Kendall 2008:136).

2.3.4. Reflexivity

The final element in the process of research design is reflexivity (Osmer 2008:613). Osmer (2008:613) describes reflexivity as, “reflection on the metatheoretical

assumptions informing the project, including assumptions about the nature of reality, knowledge, human beings, and the moral ends of life". Specifically, in relation to qualitative research, Maxwell (2009:234) states, "the term reflexivity is often used for this unavoidable mutual influence of the research participants and the researcher on each other". Rather than seeing this as a threat to the research, reflection needs to be built into the whole process of data collection and analysis, because qualitative research is defined as a "circular, recursive, and reflective process" (Chenail 2011:1722).

Harwell (2011:149) argues against the notion that qualitative researchers can be objective bystanders who can set aside their "experiences, perceptions, and biases". Rather, as Guba and Lincoln (1994:107) persuasively argue, it is in the interaction of the researcher and the participants that "findings are discovered". However, it is critical that researchers reflect on their bias and influence on the subjects, and recognise that the way in which questions are asked, and how interviews are conducted, will impact the responses from the participants (Agee 2009:439). Kendall (2008:135) advises that self-disclosure is an important part of the interview process and encourages open and more transparent responses from the interview subjects. Guba (1981:87) advises that the researcher should,

...intentionally reveal to his [or her] audience the underlying epistemological assumptions which cause him [or her] to formulate a set of questions in a particular way, and finally to present his [or her] findings in a particular way.

Almost thirty years on from Guba, Creswell (2007:140) concurs that it is critical to reflect upon the relationship between the interviewer and participant. This may be particularly important in this research because of the background and experience that the researcher has in sports ministry leadership. It is clear that having over 15 years of experience in sports ministry leadership, including completing a Masters study in Practical Theology on the subject, will mean that the researcher has certain biases and opinions that may make him lead interviews in a certain manner. Therefore, consistent reflection, as well as transparent engagement with the interview subjects, is a critical component in seeking to gain credible data. For this reason, the researcher

memo (contained in Annexure E), was completed within 24 hours of the completion of each interview, to facilitate the process of reflexivity.

2.4. Preliminary Conclusions

The preceding section has set out the elements of the research design according to Osmer's model (Osmer 2008:613) which examined the purpose of the project, the strategy of inquiry, the research plan and the important function of reflexivity. The process that has been followed determined that the empirical inquiry was conducted through a qualitative study which utilised semi-structured interviews. The primary reason for this approach is due to the context of conducting the research within the relatively new field of sports ministry leadership. The anticipation was that rich data would emerge that would provide insight into the primary research question of this chapter: *what theological and other factors currently motivate sports ministry leaders in South Africa?* This in turn will contribute to the process of this entire research which is seeking to show how to better equip leaders for effective and sustainable sports ministry in the South African context.

What follows in the second half of this chapter is the results of the interviews, including the analysis thereof, which forms the basis of the descriptive-empirical task of this research.

2.5. Research Results

The second half of this chapter will examine the results and interpretation of the empirical research that has been conducted by the researcher. The major themes that emerged from the semi-structured interviews will be presented and discussed.

2.5.1. Introduction

As has been demonstrated in the first half of this chapter, a comprehensive preparation for the rationale and approach to the empirical research was undertaken. The primary outcome of this process was to determine not only the approach to be conducted (qualitative through semi-structured questionnaires), but also to ensure that the data collected was the most relevant and applicable to the research question. The researcher was also cognisant of breaking new ground with regards to empirical research in the field of sports ministry leadership in South Africa, and therefore immersed himself into the process of conducting, transcribing and analysing the data over a 10-month period. The goal of this section is, therefore, to present rich data that contributes to a greater understanding of the motivating theological factors that currently underpin sports ministry leadership in South Africa.

2.5.2. Results of Pilot Study

As stated in the research plan (2.3.3), a pilot study was conducted. The participant, a South African permanent resident, was a 2003 graduate of the Global Sports Leadership School (GSLs). He now serves as a director at the school and was therefore able to give invaluable insight.

The purpose of the pilot study was twofold. Firstly, to test the interview questions and ensure they were comprehensible to the participant, enabling the successful collection of data; and secondly, for the researcher to become comfortable conducting the interviews, to be able to facilitate effective discussion, and to ensure that the recording technology worked successfully.

The pilot study was hugely successful as a learning mechanism for the empirical research process. Two practical lessons that emerged were the importance of choosing a suitable venue which would be free from interruptions and background noise, and also the need to test the recording equipment and ensure that the recording would be sufficiently audible for transcription. Additionally, some digital transcription tools were tested. Most were found to be inadequate and the decision was made that the slow process of listening and transcribing, sentence by sentence, was the most effective way to ensure accuracy.

With regards to the interview protocol, the process worked very effectively. The researcher conducted the interview as planned, took notes, and completed the researcher memo within the desired 24-hour period. The transcription and coding could then follow at a later stage. The transcribing was done verbatim, producing an eleven-page document of over 11000 words. The final transcript was sent to the participant who gave his consent that it was an accurate record of the interview.

There were two main adjustments made to the actual questions on the interview protocol resulting from the pilot study.

The first change was the realisation that two of the questions were very similar in nature. The two questions were: *What obstacles have hindered you from developing a sports ministry?* And, *describe what has been your biggest leadership challenge in sports ministry?* Therefore, the latter question was moved to become an ancillary question, required only if greater clarification was needed.

The second change came about as the participant spoke of his definition of success in sports ministry leadership. It was appreciated that this could be a very useful insight from all the interview participants and, therefore, the following question was added: *How would you define success in relation to your leadership in sports ministry?*

These changes were made to the interview protocol - the final version of which is contained in Annexure C.

2.5.3. Research Sample

Following the pilot study, a further ten interviews were conducted. As mentioned above, the Global Sports Leadership School (GSLs) furnished the researcher with the alumni database of 42 South Africans who had graduated since the school's inception in 1999.

Table 2.1 shows how the final ten participants were chosen after a process of seeking to engage with the alumni was followed:

Nature of Response	Number of Respondents	Explanation
No longer in sports ministry	2	Responded but excluded themselves from the study.
Not contactable	9	GSLs did not keep up-to-date records on all their graduates
No response	14	Did not reply to email or phone messages.
Potential Conflict of interests	4	The researcher had a prior connection with the graduate that could have influenced data analysis.
Withdrawals	3	Those who initially responded but then did not continue with process.
Willing participants	10	Those who fulfilled criteria and consented to complete the process

Table 2.1: GSLs Participant Engagement

The final participants comprised of almost 25% of the total South African graduates of GSLs between 1999 and 2013. Given the lack of response to the initial email to the

graduates, it is fair to conclude that almost 50% of those who attended GSLS did not continue in sports ministry leadership. Therefore, the research sample may account for as many as 50% of South Africans, who attended GSLS and continued in some form of sports ministry leadership. Although this appears to be a fairly small research sample, the nature of the interview process means that rich data could be gleaned, with the participants providing effective case studies for the growth and development of sports ministry leadership in South Africa and invaluable new data in this field.

Seven of the interviews were conducted face-to-face, and three via video conferencing. Although the video conferencing was not the preferred method, it did not provide a barrier to effective data collection and, in the opinion of the researcher, gave as much rich data as the face-to-face interviews.

The following charts give some of the biographical details on the ten interview subjects who completed the process.

A. Year Graduated

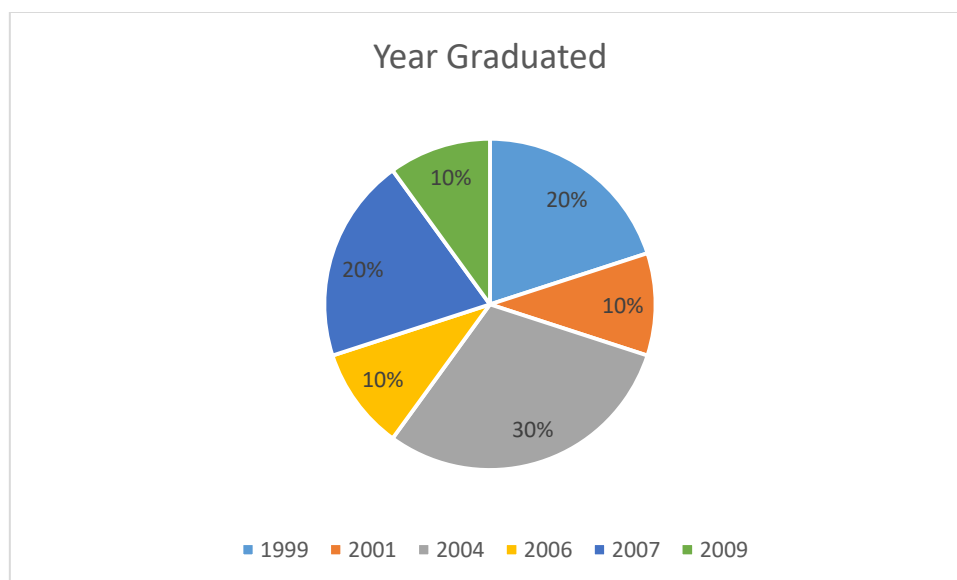


Figure 2.2

Figure 2.2 shows the years that the participants graduated from GSLS. As can be seen, the participants were spread over a ten-year period (1999-2009). Although 30% graduated in 2004, there is a reasonable spread over the ten years. The researcher is

encouraged by the fact that it provides insight over a reasonably long-period-of-time that gave a good opportunity to compare and contrast the experiences of the participants.

B. Gender

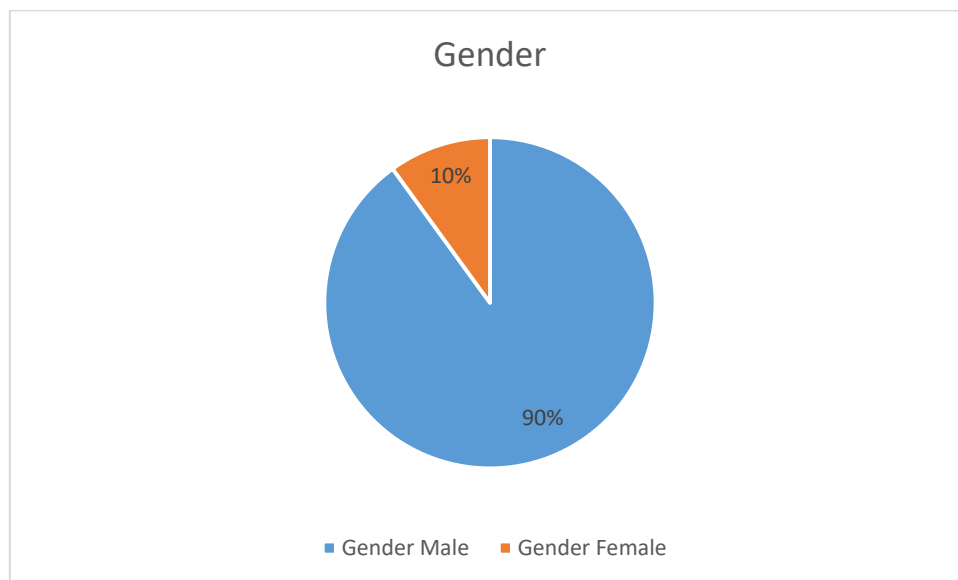


Figure 2.3

Figure 2.3 shows the distribution of participants by gender. On the surface, the lack of female representation is rather unfortunate. However, the statistic indicates a greater challenge because of the lack of gender representation within sports ministry leadership in South Africa. Of the 42 graduates of GSLS since 1999, just over 10% were female, meaning that the research sample matches the ratio of male/female graduates at GSLS. Besides, of the female graduates, two replied to the initial email stating that they were no longer in sports ministry and withdrew themselves from the research. Therefore, although the researcher desired to interview more women, there is clearly a gender equality challenge in sports ministry that will need to be addressed within the movement in South Africa.

C. Ethnicity

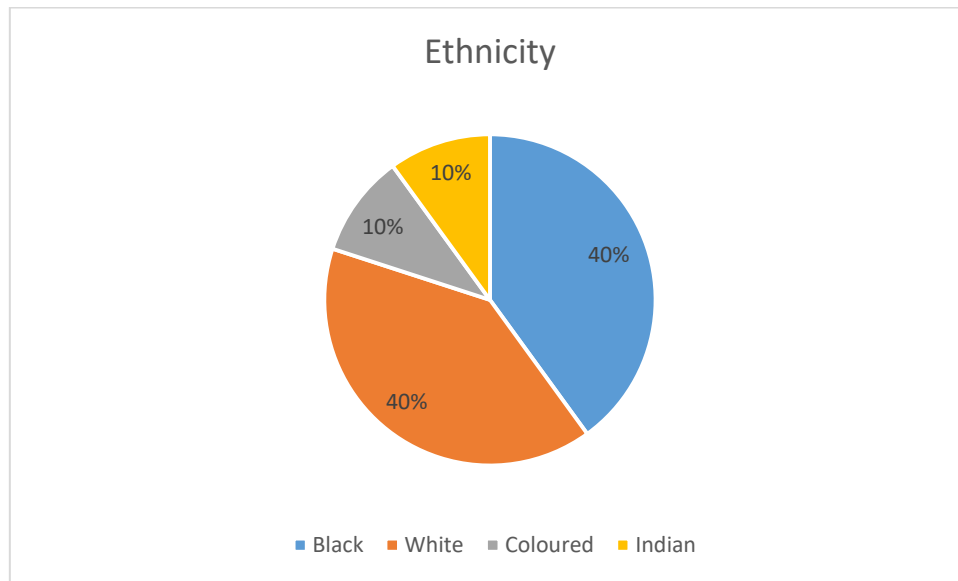


Figure 2.4

Figure 2.4 shows the distribution of participants via ethnicity using the standard South African classifications. The context in South Africa requires a diverse ethnicity sample, which is critical for the validity of this research. In relation to overall statistics in South Africa, there is clearly an over-representation of white people in our sample. There are two possible reasons for this: the first is socio-economical, in that many of the students who did not respond to the email may not have ready access to technology and so were unable to respond. Also, even though not quite 50%, the student base at GSLS over the years of study has had an over-representation of white students when compared to national statistics.³ However, the fact that the sample did include participants from the four major ethnic groupings, does give credence to the reliability of the research.

³ According to https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Demographics_of_South_Africa#Age_and_race_distribution the 2011 census revealed the black population of South Africa was 79.2%; the white population 8.86%, the coloured population 8.92%, and the Indian/Asian population was 2.49%.

D. Vocation

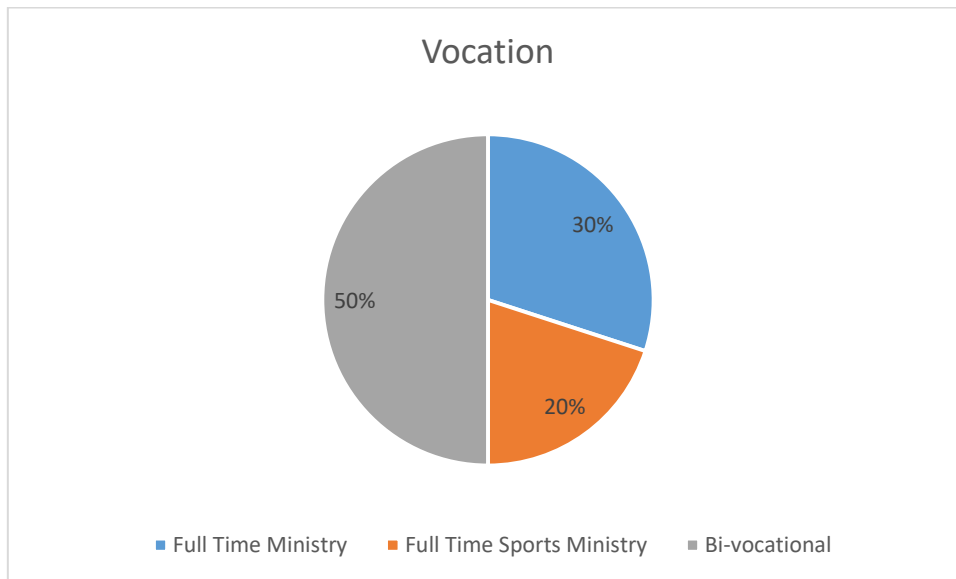


Figure 2.5

Figure 2.5 shows the vocation of the participants. The question of current vocation reveals something extremely interesting with regards to sports ministry leadership in South Africa. Of those sampled, only twenty percent make their living directly from sports ministry leadership. A further thirty percent were in full-time Christian work, either in a church or non-profit setting. The remaining fifty percent were bi-vocational; earning their living from an activity other than direct Christian ministry and engaging in sports ministry in a voluntary capacity. Of those, one person was involved in a full-time sporting capacity but the others were all involved in mainstream employment or in education. This again demonstrates that sports ministry, as a full-time endeavour, is in its infancy in South Africa. The researcher does not necessarily think this is a bad thing as bi-vocational ministry may be an advantage for the sustainability of sports ministry in the South African context.

2.5.4. Analysis of Interviews

The process of data analysis followed the discussion on the coding above [2.3.3.2.2]. As each interview was transcribed, the researcher highlighted keywords that determined a code that could be utilised to determine major themes that emerged. These themes were then further analysed to identify sub-themes that provide relevant

data corresponding to the research questions (2.3.1). Given that the interviews were semi-structured, it was noted that careful attention was required to the answers which the participants gave as they would sometimes provide tangential answers that were relevant to other questions in the interview. In some cases, these tangents provided some very meaningful insight.

As indicated above (2.3.3) there is a certain element of subjectivity in this approach. However, the researcher sought to apply the standards of trustworthiness as prescribed by Guba (1981:87 and highlighted in 2.3.3.2.3) to ensure the reliability of the data collected and to enable effective descriptions for the purposes of this research.

Table 2.2 provides an overview of the five themes and 18 sub-themes that were determined from the coding process. These themes and sub-themes will be elucidated in the following section.

Themes	Sub-Themes
Sports ministry origins	Passion for sport
	Passion for God and sport
	Passion for others
The experience of the Global Sports Leadership School	Being part of a cross-cultural community
	Having access to a global network
	Developing leadership skills
	Developing practical sports ministry skills
Theological Factors	The role of sport
	Evangelism: proclamation and incarnational.
	Long-term Discipleship
	Having a holistic approach to ministry
Contextual challenges	Lack of understanding of sports ministry
	Church engagement with sports ministry
	Lack of access to resources
Leadership priorities	Prioritising families and parenting
	Sport as a medium of community development
	The need for long-term engagement
	The multiplication of leaders

Table 2.2: Themes and sub-themes determined from the interviews

2.5.5. Description of results

What follows is a summary description of the key themes and sub-themes (as presented in Table 2.2) that emerged during the interviews with the sample group. The goal is not to provide an exhaustive explanation, but to provide a description of the primary data that emerged. These descriptions will include direct quotes⁴ (presented in italics) from the participants, while conforming to the confidentiality requirements of

⁴ Note that all quotes are verbatim and therefore not always grammatically correct. Although all the candidates were highly proficient in English, most were not first language English speakers.

the research, as this aids in presenting rich data. The purpose of this section is to provide an overview of the theological, and other factors, which currently motivate sports ministry leaders in the South African context.

2.5.5.1. Theme 1: Sports ministry origins

The interviews revealed that each of the participant's pathway into sports ministry was founded upon a passion for sport. A full 100% of the sample stated that they had a passion for sport that preceded their engagement in sports ministry. The typical pattern that emerged is that current sports ministry leaders enter a journey that connects their passion for sport with their faith, which in turn leads them to a passion to serve God and others through their sport.

2.5.5.1.1. Passion for sport

The participants all shared a passion for sport, although competing and participating at very different levels. This was summarised by one participant as, "*you must have a passion for the sport*", and another stated, "*I grew up in PE [Port Elizabeth] and every community, [as] a black child, we're playing football, we like soccer*". Some of the participants played community-level sports, while others played at an elite level. Passion for sport was often linked with talent, "*I kind of had a passion and a talent with that – mountain-biking specifically.*" The implication is that passion and talent in sport are normally a pre-requisite for those who enter sports ministry leadership.

2.5.5.1.2. Passion for God and sport

Most of those interviewed, identified a time when their passion for sport combined with their Christian faith. One candidate stated that this initially caused a conflict; "*I never realised in life that church and sports can be one thing. Where I come from, sport itself, in other churches, it was like an evil thing. So for us we had to choose as kids, I had to choose between sports and church.*" However, most of the candidates expressed a time when they combined their faith and their sporting passion. One of them stated, "*God gave me this talent of soccer, so if I play soccer... I'm playing for God*", and another succinctly said, "*I love sport. And I love the Jesus in sport.*" Some articulated

this in terms of a calling, *“I would just like to say leadership in sports ministry - it’s a calling. Yeah it’s a calling. Not everybody can do it.”*

For the sample group, it was clear that despite some opposition and challenges to engaging in sports ministry (which will be highlighted below), it was their passion for sport, and their love for God, that caused them to pursue ministry through sport.

2.5.5.1.3. Passion for others

Although in different ways and with differing emphases, the participants all expressed the goal of their calling to sports ministry in relation to impacting other people. For example, one participant spoke of a *“burning passion and desire to reach the lost, the underprivileged,”* and that sports ministry is *“...about getting the Gospel out there.”* Another participant expressed a focus on the sports world, and that he *“had a big passion also to redeem the sporting world.”* Similarly, another expressed his focus as being on his co-competitors in professional sport, *“my calling is having discipleship time with the pros and the people that I’m training with on a daily basis”*. Other candidates focused on young people and children, *“If you [are] passionate about sports, if you love kids, then you have faith in the Lord, then that’s the key.”*

In summary, the theme that emerged is that sports ministry leaders are passionate about sport, feel a strong calling to use their talent in Christian ministry, but have different focus areas in terms of who they are seeking to impact. From the sample group, there was a broad-spectrum of target groups that included professional sportspeople, children, youth, communities, the underprivileged and unbelievers generally. One can conclude that there is an array of ministry opportunity through sport in the South African context.

2.5.5.2. Theme 2: The experience of the Global Sports Ministry School

The sample group had the shared experience of graduating from the three-month residential Global Sports Leadership School (GSLs) in South Africa. There were 80% of the participants who gave the impression that the experience was extremely positive, using phrases such as *“it was my launching pad”*, *“the GSLs played a pivotal*

role", "[it] set a platform", and "*it was the best months of my life*". The negative aspects related mostly to cultural issues. One participant felt that she was too young to benefit from the course when she attended and did not have sufficient language or technical skills. Another candidate expressed the challenge of cross-cultural conflict that negatively impacted her experience. However, the cross-cultural nature, the global emphasis, and the practical skills were the sub-themes that most of the participants focused on as the core benefits of the programme.

2.5.5.2.1. Being part of a cross-cultural community

Of the participants, 50% stated that they benefited greatly from being part of a training course that exposed them to students from around the world. One participant said, "*you are in a team with different cultures from all around the world*", with another highlighting, "*you learn to be community, that's a key thing.*"

2.5.5.2.2. Having access to a global network

Besides the cross-cultural, multi-nationality dynamic of the students, 60% of the participants also appreciated receiving a global perspective on sports ministry. This came not only from the fellow students, but also from the teachers and trainers who came from different contexts around the world. One participant shared that a primary benefit of GSLS was, "*the global network exposure, so I can do my local ministry but now I'm connected to 20 other countries*". Others concurred:

- "*I was very much impacted by the global thinking of sports ministry.*"
- "*I think introducing the network was also amazing and finding out what's going on globally.*"

2.5.5.2.3. Developing leadership skills

Given the primary focus of leadership development at GSLS, it is not surprising that a leadership theme emerged in the interviews. In total, 40% of the participants particularly highlighted this as a key outcome of their experience of GSLS. The

leadership focus was more generic than just applying to sports ministry, as one participant stated, *“I think the biggest thing for me then was that leadership was a big focus. So it’s not necessarily specific to sport ministry but the leadership, the way you approach what you do and how you do it was massive.”* Another participant shared that the leadership training was a new approach to him that has shaped his ongoing ministry, *“...the leadership content that I’ve had at GSLS, it differs from the other leadership content that I had. Most of the leadership content that I’ve learned at GSLS, you learn it, then you put it in practical.”*

2.5.5.2.4. Developing practical sports ministry skills

80% of the participants shared the same opinion that they had benefited from the practical training received at GSLS. The participants stated, *“...they gave me totally good tools to use”, “a lot of practical things”, “those guys motivate me... give me skills something – so now I’m doing that sports ministry”*. One of the participants specifically stated that he appreciated how the sports training was integrated with Bible teaching; *“The practical side of GSLS was now to put together the biblical values onto the sporting coaching. Where you have to deal with topics on your coaching that are related biblically and can be visible on the practical side of doing things.”*

One interesting outcome of the interviews is that there was a discernible difference in emphasis on the practical skills between those who graduated earlier from GSLS, to those who graduated more recently. It appears that GSLS had a greater training element on programmes in the earlier days. One of the earliest graduates said, *“at that point there was still a lot of practical things – it was more the focus on programmes... how do we train and teach programmes”*, whereas a more recent graduate said that the training was *“not about programmes”*.

2.5.5.3. Theme 3: Theological factors

This is a critical theme in relation to this study as it identified primary theological factors that currently motivate sports ministry leaders in the South African context. Clearly these factors relate to the previous two themes as they are shaped by the context and training that the participants have received.

The sub-themes highlighted below were gleaned both explicitly and implicitly from the interviews. Explicit answers were given to the questions relating to the participants' theological frameworks, but these answers were implicitly confirmed by the practical examples and case studies that the participants provided [see Annexure F].

The participants also shared various Scriptures to support their views⁵. These were captured and analysed, contributing to the choice of passages for exegesis in chapters 4 and 5.

2.5.5.3.1. The role of sport

The participants expressed an integrated approach towards sport and ministry. With regards to the role sport plays in ministry, terms such as “tool”, “vehicle” and “platform” were frequently utilised, particularly in relation to connecting with others with the purpose of sharing one's faith. For example, one participant said, “*I just saw it [sport] as a tool to build relationships*”, while another expressed a similar sentiment, “*so for me, football or sport ministry has given me a platform now to reach those guys.*” Therefore, sport is primarily valued, inasmuch as it can facilitate building effective relationships with others as a point of “*common interest*”.

However, seen within the context of the emphases below, some of the participants expressed that they were not merely utilising sport as a pragmatic opportunity to reach others, but also saw the role of sport as having integral value to their ministry. One person expressed it in this way, “*I think sometimes where we're missing it is to single out the whole sport and the ministry side all the time. This thing mixes when we are actively doing what we do and you're actually looking out for the opportunities*”.

⁵ The following are the Scripture references given by the participants in support of their theological views: Gen. 1-3; Gen. 12, Psalm 90 Isaiah 58; Isaiah 61; Mt. 6:23-24; Mt. 10; Mt. 18:14; Mt. 25; Mt. 28:18-20; Jn. 3:16; Jn. 10:11; Jn. 21:17; Rom. 12:1-2; 1 Cor. 9:27; 1 Cor. 10:31; Eph. 2:1-11; Col. 4:2-6; 2 Tim. 1:6; 2 Tim. 2:2; 1 Jn. 3; 1 Jn. 4

2.5.5.3.2. Evangelism: proclamation and incarnational

There was a tacit emphasis on evangelism in all the interviews, and 70% of the participants made clear assertions of the goal to reach people with the Gospel. For example, one participant said, *“...because I’m this Christian and if I’m sitting here and I don’t tell others about this Good News, then how are they going to know? So I have to go, even the Scripture is telling us, go and make disciples.”*

However, as highlighted above, the form of evangelism which the participants emphasised, focused on utilising sport to build relationships. None of the participants spoke of employing sport for mass evangelism or to run crusade-style evangelistic events. One participant spoke of how sport, in his experience, creates opportunities for conversations, *“...sport just creates a very comfortable conversation because that is where we understand this.”* One of the participants spoke of how the example of being a Christian in a sporting context can open up opportunities for faith-based conversations, *“...so yes, sometimes you need to be bold and sometimes need to be radical if God shows you to say something in a spinning class, but if your heart is full of Christ you will use that naturally, you know. People will see him in you. So that whole integrational factor for me.”*

An incarnational approach to ministry underpinned the theological framework for proclaiming the Gospel. Someone put it this way, *“...so I allow myself to become the hands and the feet, as we would say, for Christ. To reach the unreached and the unchurched...”* showing the important role of the physical body in sports ministry.

One participant pointed to the incarnation of Christ as the ultimate example for those involved in sports ministry, *“...look at Jesus Christ, how he walked on earth and how he always used the context of time, the context of the situation in front of him, the people he was literally on earth – and his stories was simple but it was effective.”* In this example, he connects the roles of presence and proclamation in incarnational evangelism.

2.5.5.3.3. Long-term discipleship

The theological factor of discipleship came through in the interviews: 100% of the participants either directly mentioned discipleship as a core motivational factor, or used a similar word such as “mentoring”. Many of them also highlighted discipleship within their examples of the positive impact of sports ministry (see appendix 2). The following quotes give clear insight into the priority that the participants placed on discipleship:

- *“The real success are people who’ve thought about discipleship through what they do – so they see sport in the ministry as a way of discipling people.”*
- *“If you do it at the university it’s only a programme, but if you do it at the track it’s more of a discipleship ministry because you train with the guys and you speak with the guys in their sphere of influence.”*
- *“Through that it’s also been an avenue again into discipleship and mentoring which we’ve felt is long term a great effect. It’s not programme once off – but it’s started long-term mentoring culture and process in a space of two to three years.”*

One of the participants found that the emphasis on discipleship enabled him to gain traction and support in local churches. He would explain to the churches he works with in poor communities, *“...I’m not here to run your church, I’m here to make disciples in your church. I can only mentor them – two or three people – then I will leave your church.”*

2.5.5.3.4. Having a holistic approach to ministry

A further theological factor that emerged was that 60% of the participants believed that their sports ministry needed to be integrated with meeting people’s practical needs. One of the candidates in Cape Town explained, *“So I’m saying yes, I appreciate I’m a pole preacher – I’m a lamp pole preacher... I stand under the poles in Manenberg street corners and Hanover Park and I preach this gospel. I stand five days a week*

and my brother Simon⁶ helps me. Five days a week we give bread sandwiches at this one school – that is what God has called us to do. But in the afternoon that same child – Simon take two teams from Groenvlei High and he goes and does soccer coaching. That’s holistic. And within that we share Christ with them”.

This emphasis on holistic ministry was clearly articulated by others who focused on how they sought to serve the broader needs of the community:

- *“I think also the necessity of community work within church – serving the physical needs of people much more than just the spiritual needs and emotional needs of which is often what happens in the church.”*
- *“[I am] more than an evangelist but seeing myself as a sports evangelist and building in the community as well.”*

2.5.5.4. Theme 4: Contextual challenges

A further main theme that emerged was the challenges that these leaders were facing as they sought to develop sports ministry in the South African context. Perhaps surprisingly, only 30% of the participants specifically highlighted cross-cultural and ethnic challenges, with only one interviewee naming racism as a challenge that they face. More specifically, the sub-themes highlighted below, relate to common challenges that the participants have faced when they have sought to develop effective sports ministry in the South African context.

2.5.5.4.1. Lack of understanding of sports ministry

Some of the participants felt that many South African Christians do not have an integrated approach between sport and ministry. Simply put, one participant stated, *“...one of the greatest obstacles was exactly the separation mind-set of sport and ministry.”* Another said that, *“...I think the most important thing is the barrier of the mind-set of people”.*

⁶ Name changed to protect the person’s identity.

Similarly, Christian participants in sport, lack an understanding of how to integrate their faith and their sports. *“People separating how they play on the field with life. You can train on sport ministry and everybody can read the bible together, but the next moment you can cuss and swear on the sports field... That dichotomy is always a big challenge in sports ministry.”*

Another factor was that some people get distracted by pursuing sporting accomplishment rather than ministry goals, *“...people’s perception is often a challenge... even with the sport itself, can possibly become a distraction with what you in a sense want to achieve for the Kingdom.”*

2.5.5.4.2. Church engagement with sports ministry

Another common theme was the challenge of getting churches engaged in sports ministry. One participant articulated, *“...many of our challenges come from churches. Church has a mind-set of the saying, yah – it’s throwing the baby, and the water and the soap out by the door. That’s the old mind-set. The old mind-set is that we want to come and bring change that is not scriptural. They have the old mind-set that says ‘what is this new thing? – it’s an outside of South Africa thing’.”* He is highlighting here the perception that sports ministry is a foreign concept and therefore churches are slow to adopt it in South Africa. Likewise, another participant highlighted that she thought it was specifically a cultural/ethnic challenge in the churches, *“...more especially, our black churches, sports ministry is not a big thing. Sport ministry is not a big thing in our churches.”* However, another participant felt that the challenge for churches to adopt sports ministry crossed socio-economical and ethnic boundaries, *“...and then in the richer, more affluent areas, church is just very traditional so they don’t see it or they don’t make the connection at all between sport and church. There’s not a lot of sports ministries that are birthed from the church – I think that’s something that maybe specific to South Africa.”*

Another participant noted that churches tend to utilise programme-based evangelism rather than the kind of longer-term holistic and discipleship approach highlighted above. *“I think the church culture is also quite a challenge which is programme driven. And so you are competing with the performance culture and mind-set. If you do sports*

ministry it needs to be “wow” and something amazing and once off... for the crowds – but not necessarily sustaining. So you don’t get a lot of support from the church or people or non-profits when it’s based on a smaller [number] of people over a longer term.”

Finally, on this important topic, one of the participants stated that the ball is in the court of the sports ministries to, *“seek how we can really move closer to existing churches within South Africa.”*

2.5.5.4.3. Lack of access to resources

60% of the participants raised the issue of lack of funds and resources to develop sports ministry in South Africa. The following statements summarise the challenge in this area:

- *“Funding is obviously always a challenge.”*
- *“It was money. It is a problem – where are you going to get funding, who’s going to support you? We need someone to support.”*
- *“One for me is resources- number one. You work with zero budget in everything.”*

2.5.5.5. Theme 5: Leadership priorities

This final theme emphasises the leadership priorities that the sample of sports ministry leaders highlighted as key areas for attention and development within the South African context. This theme builds upon the theological factors indicated above, moving from the theological framework for sports ministry and towards the practical implementation of sports ministry in the South African context.

2.5.5.5.1. Prioritising families and parenting

Many of the participants had a general emphasis upon working with young people and children through their sports ministry. However, within this broad category, a specific

focus upon family breakdown, and the challenge of the absence of fathers, emerged as a theme. One participant stated the challenge as, “...so many find that the father is staying that side. The mother is staying that side. So the family is broken.”

One former professional soccer player, who participated in the research, stated that a motivation for him to engage in sports ministry leadership was to be able to “give back” to the next generation. He went on to state, “...giving back was also based more on the absenteeism of fathers in their lives since they were children. So the lack of role models. And how do I help these young boys and girls to become responsible citizens in their lives.”

One participant utilised sport to gain access to young men in prison. “And I recognised that their children [are] becoming fatherless and I needed to get them out of the prison and back into the system, back home.”

The response of the sports ministry leaders was to recognise that their role extended beyond being a sports ministry leader and coach, and they described their role as becoming a parent to the children.

- “Some of the children are neglected by their parents. So you become a parent and you must be a good parent.”
- “Not only spiritual... you must be a father to those guys. That’s the picture right now – not just a leader. You must find [someone] to befriend, or a leader, a pastor, a father... not just one, I’m pushing everything now.”

2.5.5.5.2. Sport as a medium of community development

Given the emphasis on holistic ministry stated above, it is not surprising that 60% of the participants underlined that their sports-ministry was focused on community development.

One participant described his ministry as, “...community development... the necessity of community work within church – serving the physical needs of people much more

than just the spiritual needs and emotional needs of which is often what happens in the church.”

With a focus on the community, sport then becomes an avenue to engage, and gain access to, the community. *“I think also maybe a good example is the cycling project which basically was an entry point into the community with sports ministry and how that opened the doors for other projects – the after-school centre, netball and other mentoring and community projects.”*

This emphasis on community development means that success is not just viewed in terms of the number of responses to a Gospel appeal, but has a far broader goal. *“I would say success to me it’s when I see a movement in the community that I’m running- then I see the changes, when I see the development in people... the upliftment [of] people, the feedback I get from churches, the positive feedback... then I will say, to me, that’s a success.”*

2.5.5.5.3. The need for long-term engagement

The participants emphasised that sports-ministry is more than just the delivery of a programme or an event. The theological emphasis on discipleship necessitates a long-term approach to building relationships through sports ministry. As one participant noted, *“it’s also been an avenue again into discipleship and mentoring which we’ve felt is long-term a great effect. It’s not programme once off – but [it] started [as a] long-term mentoring culture and process in a space of two to three years.”*

This was coupled with a realistic outlook of how challenging disciple-making can be. *“It’s really difficult to have long-term success. You might have some success short-term.”* Another participant related this to the difficulty of working in socio-economically-deprived communities, *“I think sometimes especially in the type of communities we work, one obviously has to look at the long journey towards success because often there’s a lot of failure in that success story.”*

The leadership implication that emerged is that long-term success requires perseverance through some difficult circumstances. *“I don’t think that one should*

underestimate the support that is needed in those instances. It's not an easy or quick fix – it really does require support and dedication from various angles....”

2.5.5.5.4. The multiplication of leadership

The final theme that was raised by several participants related to the need to multiply leaders for ensuring the sustainability of sports ministry. Some explicitly viewed this as a primary success factor in their own leadership:

- *“So to measure my success I will need to look at – again it comes back to discipleship, it comes back to multiplication within leadership, it comes back to people who have been involved with [sports ministry] who are still serving God, actively serving God and actively making disciples.”*
- *“Success for me is to, in my leadership, to develop leadership around me... [so that they] start to walk in their sphere of influence of what God has called them into.”*

Coupled with this, the participants raised the challenge of training the next generation of sports ministry leaders. Perhaps a fitting final question in this section was raised by one of the interviewees who asked, *“...how can we get the younger generation at a younger age to learn about sports ministry, know about the options of sports ministry?”*

2.5.6. Summary

The second half of this chapter has presented a description of the five main themes and eighteen sub-themes (theological and other factors) that emerged through the qualitative research by semi-structured interviews with ten South African sports ministry leaders.

The primary purpose of the empirical research undertaken was: *To determine by way of an empirical study what theological and factors currently motivate sports ministry leaders in South Africa.*

The key questions that the research sought to answer, were, therefore, as follows:

- What theological and other factors currently motivate sports ministry leaders in South Africa?
- To what extent has the GSLS training programme equipped leaders theologically and practically to implement an effective and sustainable sports ministry in the South African context?
- What factors have helped sports ministry leaders to develop their ministry in South Africa?
- What obstacles have hindered sports ministry leaders from developing their ministry in South Africa?

Having described the themes and sub-themes, it is possible to draw the following conclusions with regards to the primary theological and practical factors that motivate sports ministry leaders in the South African context:

- Sports ministry leaders have a background in, and passion for, participation in sport. This is often driven by a talent in sport that is perceived as a gift from God and a critical part of their calling to ministry.
- In South Africa, sports ministry leaders have diverse sports talents which are used in different ways to impact different groups of people. Sports ministry, therefore, has a broad appeal to impact people from diverse backgrounds engaging in different sporting codes at differing levels.
- Sports ministry leaders have a theological framework that focuses on the evangelism and discipleship of others through sports activity. This framework is incarnational (focused on building relationship), integrated (sport *and* ministry), and holistic – recognising that sport provides an opportunity to minister to people's spiritual *and* physical needs.
- The training received at the Global Sports Leadership School provided opportunities for both personal growth and practical skills development. Additionally, GSLS gave exposure to an international perspective on sports ministry development. The GSLS has therefore provided an invaluable

opportunity for the growth and development of sports ministry leaders in South Africa.

- Sports ministry leaders are placing significant emphasis on long-term discipleship and community transformation through their ministry. They do not look for short-term results, but desire to see fruitful ministry over the long-haul.
- The sports ministry leaders in this research saw the greatest challenges as overcoming the mind-set of Christians who hold a dichotomous view of sport and ministry, seeing them as not compatible with each other. This is further exacerbated by the slowness of the church in South Africa to adopt sports ministry as a viable long-term avenue for discipleship. The problem is exacerbated by the lack of resources available to sports ministry leaders, particularly in socio-economically-deprived areas.
- Sustainable sports ministry in the South African context will need to address certain core areas. Those interviewed prioritise impacting young people, particularly those from broken homes, through a community-focused model. This requires long-term engagement with the purpose of providing effective discipleship which moves into all areas of life and personal development. For this to happen, more community-based sports ministry leaders will need to take the baton from the early forerunners in South African sports ministry. Effective and sustainable sports ministry in the South African context will therefore require a multiplication of the existing pool of sports ministry leaders.

2.6. Conclusion

This chapter has presented the descriptive-empirical task which has sought to describe the current situation and context of sports ministry leaders in South Africa. The first half of the chapter was focused on the research design and the process which the researcher followed in seeking to address the primary purpose of the research. A clear explanation was presented as to how the decision to conduct qualitative research through semi-structured interviews, was reached.

The second half of the chapter presented the results of the research and interpretation, providing rich descriptions of the themes that emerged from the interviews. This

enabled summary conclusions to be drawn on the current theological and other factors that currently motivate sports ministry leaders in the South African context.

The following chapter moves to the interpretative task and will seek to provide, through a literature review, reasons why the present situation exists.

CHAPTER 3

LITERATURE REVIEW: A HISTORICAL AND CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS OF INFLUENCES UPON SPORTS MINISTRY LEADERS IN SOUTH AFRICA

3.1. The Interpretative Task

The previous chapter presented the process and the results of the descriptive-empirical task which sought to describe the current theological and other factors that motivate sports ministry leaders in South Africa. Through a survey of relevant literature, this chapter will seek to answer the question, “*why is this going on?*” and provide interpretation as to why the current situation exists.

The methodological approach for this research follows Osmer’s model (Osmer 2008: 184), which is a practical theology model with four distinct steps, each answering a specific question:

- A. *What is going on?* (Descriptive-empirical task). This requires a careful look at situations and contexts and an attempt to describe and understand them (Chapter 2 of this thesis).
- B. *Why is this going on?* (Interpretative task). This requires seeking out reasons for what is going on, i.e. interpreting why the present situation exists (The current chapter of this thesis).
- C. *What ought to be going on?* (Normative task). This research project will utilise the Bible as the normative standard and basis for assessing what is going on and providing appropriate responses. The Bible will form the basis for theological interpretation, ethical reflection and establishing models of good practice (Chapter 4, 5 and 6 of this thesis).
- D. *How might we respond?* (Pragmatic task). This task requires an interpretation of the situational and normative data in order to propose a model for the equipping of sports ministry leaders in South Africa (Chapter 7 of this thesis).

The four tasks of Osmer's methodological model of practical theological interpretation are represented in Figure 3.1 on the following page (Osmer 2008:187). This chapter will focus on the second of the four steps in Osmer's model, namely, the interpretative task (Osmer 2008:184), which seeks to answer the question: "*Why is this going on?*" Through a literature survey that draws from a range of disciplines including those of the historical, socio-cultural, sports/leadership studies, and theological, the researcher is seeking to analyse and interpret the influences that impact the current practice of sports ministry leaders in South Africa.

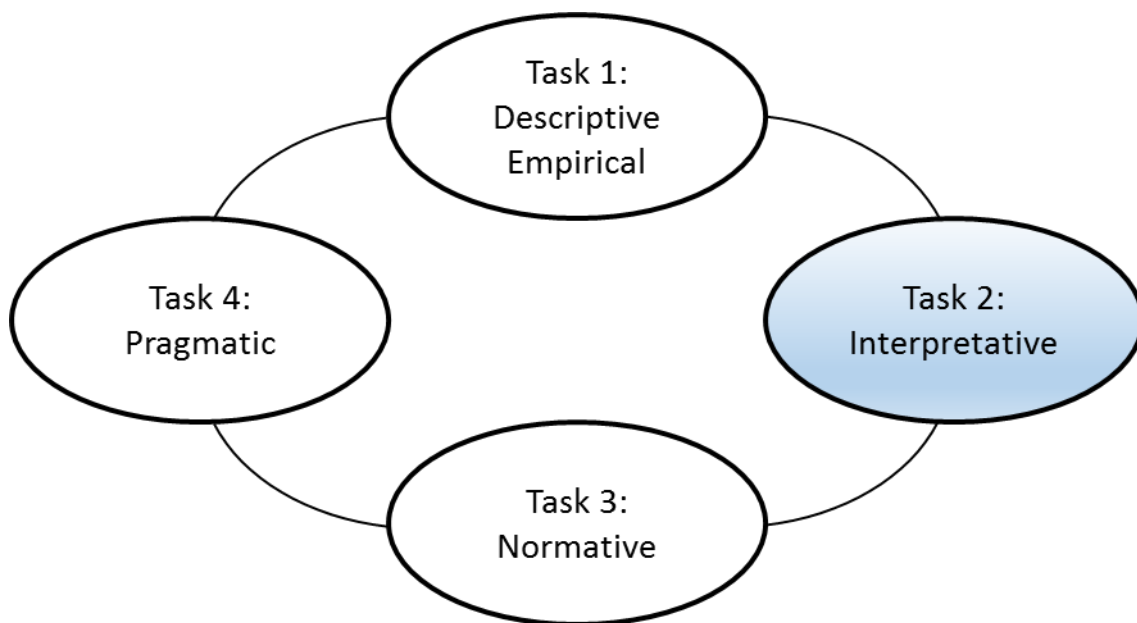


Diagram 3.1: Osmer's (2008:187) Four Tasks of Theological Interpretation

The goal of this chapter is to understand the context within which sports ministry leaders are operating; this context has shaped the landscape into which they are ministering and therefore influences them in their individual ministry. The interpretative task is strengthened by the contextual analysis when a multi-disciplinary approach is undertaken (Osmer 2008:198). The multi-disciplinary approach acknowledges that influences upon sports ministry leaders are not just from the realm of the church and Christian literature (Kessler 2013:6), but indeed, theology itself "is a forum where various scientific discourses meet" (Ganzevoort 2004:54). Therefore, this interpretative task is strengthened by drawing upon research from a number of fields

and related disciplines that study human praxis (Ganzevoort 2004:58) and which enable a broad contextual perspective (Elkington 2010:51).

3.2. The Structure of the Literature Survey

Osmer (2008:262) emphasises that practical theological interpretation is “deeply contextual”. This literature survey is undertaken upon the premise that “all theology is contextual” (Höschele 2009:142) and will examine the diverse and complex context which has shaped sports ministry leadership in South Africa. Therefore, to truly interpret the theological and other factors that have influenced sports ministry leaders in South Africa, it is necessary to give due consideration to the specifically South African context, in order to help bring understanding to their shared experiences, heritage and “social origin” (Höschele 2009:143).

The structure of this literature survey is designed to provide an analysis and interpretation of the *historical, socio-cultural, sporting, and leadership*, influences upon sports ministry leaders in South Africa. As such, the literature survey seeks to interact primarily with literature that has been written within the previous and current generation, which gives insight into interpreting the praxis of sports ministry leaders by focusing on four main fields of study:

The Historical Context: an analysis of literature that seeks to understand the historical context in South Africa that has influenced both the individual sports ministry leaders, as well as the environment into which they are ministering. This section will focus on Apartheid as providing the dominant historical context which, a generation after its dismantling, is still impacting the worlds of sport, leadership and the church.

The Socio-cultural Context: an analysis of literature that seeks to understand the current socio-cultural context in South Africa in which sports ministry leaders are operating. As will be seen, the socio-cultural context relates intrinsically to the historical context and provides an important framework for understanding the practical realities facing sports ministry leaders.

The Sports Context: an analysis of literature that seeks to understand the practical sporting environment which influences sports ministry leaders in South Africa. The study of sport and its impact on society is globally a growing field. This interpretation analyses literature that seeks to understand the sporting environment in South Africa. Particular attention will be given to the hosting of major sports events as a medium of nation-building.

The Leadership Context: an analysis of literature that seeks to understand the role and function of leadership, particularly as it relates to sports and sports ministry leadership development in South Africa. Although a broad field, the survey will focus on leadership philosophy and development that pertains specifically to the South African context.

3.3. The Historical Context

In reviewing the historical context, it is important to realise that historical events can be viewed differently depending upon one's cultural perspective (Boon 1998:30). This is perhaps particularly true in South Africa, a nation which has been "forged in conflict" (Boon 1998:31). Therefore, this historical literature review has drawn from a range of predominantly South African sources, seeking to identify how the historical context has impacted the landscape and leadership challenges that those in sports ministry currently face.

3.3.1. Apartheid

South Africa is world-renowned as a country that institutionalised racism in the form of Apartheid (Welsh 2000:xxvi). The system of enforced segregation was only dismantled in the early 1990s and the first open elections took place in 1994. Since then, Mandela, who died in 2013, served as a global symbol of reconciliation (Herwitz 2013:24). However, the road to integration and equality has been strewn with challenges given the totally pervasive nature of division that impacted every sector of society (Sanders 2010:17). As will be seen, this division significantly impacted two of the primary focus areas of the proposed research: those of sport and the church.

Apartheid, meaning 'separate development', had its roots in the colonial era and beliefs regarding racial supremacy (MacMaster 2010:30). Over a 150 year period, "Dutch, English and Afrikaner rule had the net effect that the indigenous peoples of this country were robbed of the wealth, of the land, and of their human dignity" (MacMaster 2010:32). In 1910, the "Act of the Union" handed rule of the newly-formed united state of South Africa to the minority white population, leaving members of all other races under white leadership (Luthuli 1982:80). From 1948 until 1994, the National Party's political policy of Apartheid institutionalised racist policies and left the vast majority of South Africans without rights, at the mercy of white leadership, and in abject poverty (Plaatjies van Huffel 2013:1).

According to Boesak (1981:3), Apartheid was more than a political policy, but was a "pseudo-religious ideology". The consequence of this ideology led to a multitude of unjust laws such as the 1955 Group Areas Act, the 1953 Bantu Education Act, and the 1957 Sexual Offences Act 195). In effect, these laws ensured that interaction between the races was kept to a minimum, excluding whites from contact with the other races except in situations which re-enforced dominance and control (Booth & Nauright 2014:49). The scale of social engineering also sought to ensure that black South Africans did not have access to educational and economic opportunities that would lift them out of dependency on their white masters (MacMaster 2010:30). As one author, who was forcibly removed from District 6 in Cape Town, stated, "The Government's only concern was to 'move them out and get rid of them'" (Gool-Ebrahim 2011:111). The outworking of these policies had a massive impact on traditional cultural life and family well-being. As MacMaster (2010:35) has highlighted, the net effect of Apartheid is that family life was eroded, with children and young people being the ultimate victims.

As Apartheid was dismantled in the late 1980s and early 1990s, the country teetered on the brink of civil war. Given the level of injustice entrenched throughout South Africa, many global observers and South Africans themselves, believed that the 1994 elections would fail to bring transition to a peaceful democracy (Herwitz 2013:23). However, the emergence of Nelson Mandela as a symbol of hope and reconciliation, played a major role in ensuring a relatively peaceful transition, that many deemed a miracle (Herwitz 2013:24). As will be seen, Mandela realised that sport could play a

vital role in the process of building a new nation out of the ashes of Apartheid (Friedman 2001:100).

Apartheid was without doubt a crime against humanity with the majority of South Africans being the victims of unjust and inhumane laws (Akindes 2013:120). The legacy of Apartheid is therefore a country of people groups who are still seeking to overcome the challenges of geography and economy that are a constant reminder of the injustices in the country's recent history. As such, the indelible mark that colonialism and Apartheid has left on South Africa is a significant factor when considering the context that sports ministry leaders seek to minister in.

3.3.2. Development of Sport in South Africa in the 20th Century.

Understanding the all-pervasive impact of Apartheid is critical in understanding the development and role of sport in South Africa. However, it is important to once again acknowledge that Apartheid magnified cultural trends and stereotypes that were already evident in the colonial era. As this section considers how sport developed in South Africa in the 20th Century, it is helpful to remember that "sport is inextricably embedded in a wider network of beliefs and values that originate from its sociocultural and institutional context" (White 2011:30).

Sports historian, Alegi, has extensively studied the development of sport in Africa, with a particular emphasis on soccer⁷ in South Africa and across the continent. Alegi (2004) highlights the fact that indigenous games were an important part of African society in the pre-colonial era (Alegi 2004:14) and that the pre-colonial sports and games of the African people had much in common with Western sport, making it fertile soil for the transplantation of these new and formalised codes (Alegi 2010:2). Therefore, as the all-pervasive and expansionist goals of the western colonising powers advanced in Africa, so did organised sports, particularly rugby, cricket and soccer (Armstrong & Giulianotti 2004:8). These sports were pragmatically seen as a tool in the coloniser's armoury to aid in the civilisation of indigenous people (Alegi 2010:1). In particular, the

⁷ For the purposes of this research, soccer is being used as the word for football to avoid confusion with other sports that also use the word football (e.g. American football, Australian rules football, Rugby football).

colonising powers introduced team sport to “inculcate hierarchy, discipline and respect for authority within the minds and spirits of the colonised” (Fair 2003:125). Wiegand (2011:208) underlines the British influence in this regard, stating that Britain is largely seen to have been the primary influencing factor in contributing to the burgeoning culture of team sports in South Africa. However, (as in many other African countries), it was soccer that became adopted as the sport of the masses and became “the leviathan of black sport” while rugby and cricket predominantly grew as the sports of the white minority (although with some exceptions⁸) (Alegi 2010:50).

Particularly pertinent to the understanding of the development of sports ministry in South Africa, is to recognise the role that missionaries played in the advancement of organised sport (Alegi 2004:15). The movement known as Muscular Christianity⁹, which many consider to be the forerunner to the modern Sports Ministry Movement (Watson, Weir & Friend 2005:1), gave birth to ‘muscular missionaries’ who were dispatched to Africa embodying the ideals of Tom Brown¹⁰, the fictitious embodiment of Muscular Christianity (Hughes 1993). Dube (2015:1) identifies a resurgence of a Muscular Christianity ideology in the recent South African “Mighty Men” movement, which seeks to affirm the “masculinity” of Evangelical Christian men. Dube identifies some problems with this resurgence in South Africa, “in the context of a post-Apartheid and postcolonial South Africa where both women’s rights and human rights (especially encompassing racial equality) now form the core of the country’s identity” (Dube

⁸ In the Western and Eastern Capes, rugby and cricket both received large support particularly in the Coloured communities. The researcher still finds many Coloured people who will state “I’m a rugby player – I don’t like football”. Additionally, Booth & Nauright (2013:5) show how, in the pre-Apartheid era, the black middle classes adopted cricket as a medium to be positioned for social advancement.

⁹ “Muscular Christianity can be defined simply as a Christian commitment to health and manliness” (Putney 2001:11). “Muscular Christianity as a movement grew and flourished in the United Kingdom and United States between 1860 and 1920” (Tucker 2011:8).

¹⁰ Tom Brown was the schoolboy hero of Thomas Hughes’ books who embodied much of the character and ideals that personified the Muscular Christianity movement in the United Kingdom. (Hughes 1857). It is worth noting that Greg Linville asserts that Muscular Christianity had different guises and emphases in the United Kingdom compared to those from the United States (Linville 2014:1953). As we have seen already, team sports in Africa were largely exported from Britain, therefore it is true to say that it was initially the British Muscular Christianity movement that exerted the greatest influence on the development of sport in sub-Saharan Africa. At a later stage US missionaries sought to develop and utilise basketball in their missionary endeavours (Price 2001:28), but it never gained mass appeal in the way that soccer did. However, Alegi (2004:23) shows that American missionaries introduced soccer in the South African Province of Natal as a “safer alternative to more violent forms of the game” ... namely American ‘gridiron’ football.

2015:1)¹¹. He goes on to raise the question as to what the connection is between the Victorian movement and evidence of contemporary Muscular Christianity (Dube 2015:3), before giving rhetorical indications that the link does exist (particularly quoting Buchan, Dube 2015:4). However, other than a short allusion to the “introduction of rugby in [South African] schools” (Dube 2015:3), Dube, therefore, largely misses the critical connection between 19th Century Muscular Christianity and 21st Century men’s ministry in the 21st Century - which is, that it was European and American missionaries, infused with Muscular Christian zeal, who introduced organised sport to South Africa, as a means to reach people, particularly boys and men. Organised team sport in South Africa can trace its roots back to Christian missionaries.

British missionaries recruited from the public school system, were, “imbued with the values of ‘missionary muscularity’ (Mangan 2001:41). Many missionaries believed that organised sport complemented the Christian message and saw competitive sport as re-enforcing moral lessons, Christian values, and concepts related to ‘manliness’ (Mangan 2001:41). Hawkey alludes to this as being an almost sinister tactic of the missionaries as they “lured young men to the Christian faith by offering facilities for recreation” (Hawkey 2009:33). There is perhaps truth in Alegi’s assertion that many young African men adopted the sport of the missionaries, but “overlooked” their message. (Alegi 2004:49).

In South Africa, missionaries and early church leaders were instrumental in introducing sport in mission schools and developing organised club sport (Alegi 2004:23). As will be seen, these mission schools and clubs ultimately served as a fertile training ground for young African leaders to exert influence and flex their leadership muscles.

Wiegand (2011) points to a further important factor in the development of South African sport in the pre-Union and pre-Apartheid era. In the Anglo-Boer war (1899-1902) the British formed concentration camps and rounded up the Afrikaans people, holding them in terrible conditions where more than twenty thousand Boer women and children died (Welsh 2000:334). As Wiegand states (2011:233), the impact of these

¹¹ It is beyond the scope of this study to explore the veracity of this comment other than to identify that Muscular Christian philosophy is still influencing Christians in South Africa today, particularly men.

camps contributed to fostering an Afrikaner identity that was centred on their religion, their sport, and their hatred of the British;

It is thus clear that in both the mentioned camp types, which were caught up by sorrow and the angel of death, the prisoners only had their faith in God, and sports and games, as well as their hate for the British, through which they were positively united.

Welsh (2000:336) shows how the non-white population sided mostly with the British during the war. He alludes to the role sport played to foster relations between these allies, including polo, cricket and football matches (Welsh 2000:336). All this seems to have contributed to a post-war era of sport being divided along racial grounds. Wiegand (2011:233) cites van der Merwe as stating that the sporting lines were drawn, “the Afrikaner favoured rugby, the English cricket and the Blacks soccer”.

In spite of the role that missionaries and mission schools had in popularising Western sports in South Africa, the church did not continue as an influential body within sports at large (Tucker 2011:58). Although some exceptions can be cited, Wiegand (2011:222) concludes that the church, “refused to embrace the opportunity these activities presented in approaching non-believers with the Gospel”.

The pre-Apartheid alliances of sport and faith stand in quite stark contrast to how sport developed during the Apartheid era. Even if the motives of the missionaries are questioned by some authors (e.g. Hawkey 2009 above), it is clear that they perceived the value of sport as an opportunity to build bridges across cultural divides and as a medium to promote both faith and education. This may be perceived to have served the ends of imperial goals to suppress the indigenous peoples (as implied by Fair 2003:127), but, as Alegi (2004:23) states, “sport provided an important meeting ground for Western and indigenous cultures.” However, under Apartheid the opposite became true as sport not only reflected institutionalised segregation, but served as a vehicle to both define white supremacy, while, at the same time, providing blacks with opportunities for defiance and resistance (Anderson, Beilert & Jones 2004:47). It is certainly true that “racial formulas” were applied to sport during the pre-Apartheid era

that provided the foundation for the separate development of sport along racial grounds that occurred during Apartheid (Booth & Nauright 2014:43).

Booth & Nauright (2014), in their excellent article on the relationship between sport and race in South Africa, demonstrate how the racialized view of the body was a central component in defining difference in South Africa, which translated into the separate development of sport in South Africa. Indeed, Booth and Nauright (2014:42) quote Archer and Bouillon's striking conclusion that Apartheid sport was, "the object of civic struggle involving not just the players, but also the whole population [and] the full weight of state institutions".

During the Apartheid years sport served as a powerful medium for the white government to reinforce racial segregation. However, at the same time, sport increasingly became a means for developing black identity and resistance.

Booth and Nauright (2014:50) state that, under Apartheid, the "state increasingly applied brute force and physical repression to control black bodies, and it also made black bodies increasingly invisible to white eyes". The goal of the Apartheid government was to disempower the majority of the black population, and sport was one vehicle through which they exerted control. All sporting spaces were subjected to segregation; from the playing field, to the stands, to administrative bodies (Booth & Nauright 2014:51). The Apartheid ideal of separate development encompassed all areas of South African sport (Anderson *et al.* 2004:49). Indeed, in 1965, a proclamation under the Group Areas Act, prohibited any "mixed sports" in terms of participation or as spectators. A permit was required if a mixed event was to be organised, and these were rarely granted (Reddy 2007:para.8). Although developed separately, the different sports were by no means developed equally. Proper facilities were not developed for blacks to play sport (Booth & Nauright 2014:51), and participation in sport was deemed a 'privilege' which both government and employers (such as the mining industry) sought to control (Booth & Nauright 2014:52). Additionally, international competition was not available to black people¹².

¹² This ultimately led to South African being banned from all sporting participation as international sporting bodies banned South Africa to enter single-race teams in their competitions. The banning from international sporting competition did have a major impact on the psyche of South African whites. During this era, some

The Afrikaner philosophy of white supremacy was applied to one sport in particular; the sport of rugby. “An Afrikaner follows the fortunes of local and especially national rugby sides with the kind of passion usually aroused by charismatic religious movements” (Anderson *et al.* 2004:48)¹³. The identity of the Afrikaner in South Africa was intrinsically connected to the sport of rugby, which, they considered, embodied their spirit, strength and determination as a race (Anderson *et al.* 2004:47). Although there are exceptions,¹⁴ rugby “remained firmly entrenched in the white cultural *laager*” right through Apartheid and into the post-Apartheid era (Booth & Nauright 2014:58).

In his fascinating book on the life and sports careers of Mark Fish and Lucas Radebe, Friedman (2001) juxtaposes each player’s life experience as they grew up in different contexts in the same country. Friedman (2001:65) highlights that, contrary to what many believe, soccer did have a large following amongst whites in South Africa. They played in segregated leagues, and a number of white players became professional footballers overseas (e.g. Gary Bailey and Roy Wegerle). But the popularity of local soccer amongst whites waned as soccer became more racially integrated in the late 1970s and 1980s as there was no “traditional support for black teams” (Friedman 2001:65). Additionally, soccer was not played in the segregated white schools. Mark Fish attended the prestigious English medium white school, Pretoria Boys High (Friedman 2001:63). Soccer was not played at the school, but Fish was a gifted and committed footballer. This brought him into conflict with the school who wanted his prodigious talents to be utilised to bolster their reputation in cricket and rugby. Fish rejected this and chose club soccer. In this, he rejected “white man’s privilege... they

sports coordinators and business people brought “rebel tours” to South Africa. But, as Friedman (2001:61) insightfully points out, “The whites who flocked to the rebel games only underscored their misery in that they were so desperate for international competition that they would settle for second-string opposition”. Only in 1990, upon Nelson Mandela’s release, was this ban lifted. (Anderson *et al.* 2004:49).

¹³ It is worth noting the religious language that the author uses here to describe the Afrikaners’ attitude to sport. The association of sport and religion in South Africa is more than simply a relationship of pragmatic coexistence. Certainly, in some cases, the fanaticism with which sport is followed by members of all cultures, borders on religious adherence. Friedman (2001:111) similarly uses the metaphor of religion and war to describe the passionate engagement of black South African’s with soccer.

¹⁴ Although rugby in South Africa is synonymous with the Afrikaans population, it was also played by the white English population (who participated in all 3 major codes of team sport: soccer, cricket and rugby (Anderson *et al.* 2004:48), and pockets of coloureds (e.g. in the Western Cape) and black people. Friedman (2001:65) points out, “Rugby has been an organised black sport for decades. However, lack of development has kept the standard relatively low, and those black players who might have been of international class were never given any recognition by the white-controlled media”.

saw him rejecting what Pretoria Boys High offered and stood for: rugby and white dominance, a world of *whiteness*" (Friedman 2001:65). Friedman draws the conclusion that for Radebe soccer "mainstreamed" him, whereas for Fish, soccer "marginalised" him (Friedman 2001:66).

One consequence of white fanaticism with rugby meant that the majority of the black population could adopt soccer as *their* sport and utilise soccer as an escape from the challenges of daily life, an opportunity for political resistance, and a vehicle to develop leaders (Rankin-Smith 2013:84). Not only in South Africa, but across Africa, soccer became a vehicle for the strengthening of African identity through the development of a uniquely African brand of soccer (Alegi 2004:58). Many in South Africa may have been influenced by African leaders such as the Ghanaian President, Kwame Nkrumah, who promoted a vision of African identity and unity, with sport playing a vital role that "could mobilise the youth of the nation around a common identity" (quoted in White 2013:105). As a former professional footballer, Moshoeu, said, "[Soccer] was something that would make us happy. Something where black people would be in a position to win, to conquer" (quoted in Bloomfield 2010:268). Even on the starkest of environments, Robben Island, it was soccer that enabled the political prisoners to forge a common sense of purpose, identity and leadership (Rankin-Smith 2013:84).¹⁵

As soccer continued to grow in popularity¹⁶, it became the logical epicentre for political engagement. As early as 1944 a soccer match was held to raise funds for the African National Congress (ANC) (Alegi 2004:95). This support for the ANC continued after they were banned. According to Hawkey (2009:180), some professional clubs, such as the Sowetan team, Kaizer Chiefs, raised funds to support the underground resistance organisation. He additionally states that political activists utilised soccer as a medium to "move, incognito, from city to city disguised as members of teams" (Hawkey 2009:180).

¹⁵ A number of authors highlight how soccer developed an African flavour. The strict and disciplined style of European soccer was rejected in favour of a more flamboyant and expressive approach. Individual skill was valued more highly than team efficiency. This was greatly influenced by Brazilian soccer (Kuper 1998:136).

¹⁶ Peter Alegi (2004:95) says that the growth in soccer among the black population in the early years of Apartheid was an "extraordinary phenomenon".

Alegi (2010:24) gives the very interesting insight that, “involvement in football and formal resistance to politics went hand in hand for many urban, Western-educated, *Christian Africans*” (emphasis added). This theme will be returned to later when the connection between leadership development and sport is considered. However, it is worth highlighting the historical connection there has been between the development of faith-based leaders and sport in South Africa.

Not only was soccer a vehicle for political engagement within South Africa, but international sports boycotts against South Africa were a powerful medium that exerted tremendous pressure on the Apartheid government. In his tribute to activist and sports administrator Ramsay, Reddy writes that, “in South Africa, as nowhere else, sports boycott made a great contribution to liberation” (Reddy 2007:para.1). The mantra of the anti-Apartheid movement in South Africa and around the world became, ‘no normal sport in an abnormal society’ (Hawkey 2009:180). By the 1980s, South Africa had been expelled from most international sports bodies and were feeling the full force of isolation from international competition (Reddy 2007:para.8).

The reality of ‘un-normal’ sport in South Africa is highlighted through one poignant reality of the Apartheid era. In the minds of most black South Africans, the white national rugby team, their Springbok emblem, and their green and gold shirts, became hated symbols of oppression. In the Apartheid era, black South Africans would support whomever was playing *against* the Springboks. Former President Mandela admitted this on numerous occasions (Booth & Nauright 2014:60). In the aftermath of the fall of Apartheid, this was still a reality (Cassidy 1995:71) and a poignant indicator of the division that existed even once the “Rainbow Nation”¹⁷ had been formed.

Although this brief history of sports development in South Africa is in one sense fascinating and another sense horrifying, it needs to be noted that it is also recent history. “Sport was one of the most important venues for the construction of difference and inequality in Apartheid South Africa” (Anderson *et al.* 2004:47). Sports ministry leaders in South Africa are dealing with the complexities and challenges of being

¹⁷ Archbishop Desmond Tutu is credited with coining the term “Rainbow Nation” in 1991 to describe the diverse peoples of South Africa. <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-10734471>

involved in a ministry environment which is still greatly impacted by the legacy of colonialism and Apartheid. Indeed, South African sports ministry leaders, who grew up in this context, must also wrestle with their own personal sporting identity, which will have been impacted by their historical context and the traditionally assigned sporting experience they may have had, whether that of white-privilege or black resistance. Additionally, as has been seen, organised sport in South Africa has its roots in Muscular Christianity, and sports ministry leaders need to consider where there is a positive continuity from the 19th century movement, and where there needs to be a revision of the theological underpinnings of that movement. This will be considered further in chapter 6.

3.3.3. The Church in South Africa

It is impossible, within the confines of this study, to give an exhaustive historical survey on such a large topic as the church in South Africa. This literature survey will therefore seek to highlight some primary historical factors that impact the environment in which sports ministry leaders operate.¹⁸ As Cochrane, Grucy and Martin (1999:15) have highlighted:

Religion has played an important public role in the past with which South Africans are struggling to come to terms. Particularly (though not only) 'Christian doctrine, language and sentiment are... interwoven in the social and cultural history of South Africa'.

Roman Catholicism first came to South Africa's shores with Portuguese explorers at the end of the 15th Century, but institutionalised Christianity was established by the

¹⁸ Much of the material contained in this section is drawn from the Research Institute on Christianity in South Africa's (1998) report prepared for the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC). At the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), the faith community in South Africa was asked to respond to four questions relating to their role in Apartheid (see Research Institute on Christianity in South Africa chapter 2 1998:§2¶1). Forty one faith communities made written or verbal submissions (Meiring 2005:147) and it was deemed "one of the highlights of the TRC's programme" (Meiring 2005:147). These reports, and subsequent books and articles that have been written, give a unique insight into the role of Christianity during the Apartheid era. However, as the report acknowledges, "we are dealing with perceptions and perspectives that are highly^particularistic and relative to a number of "hidden" factors, including the ongoing construction of identities within and between faith communities" (Research Institute on Christianity in South Africa chapter 3 1998:§1¶2).

Dutch settlers after the arrival of Jan van Riebeeck in 1652 (Meiring 2005:149). The Dutch Reformed Church (DRC), with the exception of Moravian missionaries, was the bastion of Protestantism in the colony until the British occupation of the Cape in the early 19th Century (Meiring 2005:149).

In their report for the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, the Research Institute on Christianity in South Africa (RICSA) suggested that Christianity in South Africa grew through two main strands (RICSA 1998:7). Firstly, the settler church was formed by the European settlers who established their own denominations and traditions. In this way, Protestant denominations such as Anglicans, Presbyterians, Methodists and Lutherans were formed (Meiring 2005:149). Secondly, the mission churches were established by missionaries, some from overseas and some from the settler churches, seeking to bring the Gospel to the indigenous people. By the middle of the twentieth century, mission and settler Christianity had consolidated into many different denominations (RICSA 1998:7).

In this dichotomy between “settler” and “mission” church, one can already observe the seed-bed for the lack of integration that existed in the South African church throughout the Apartheid era, and which is still a concern today. As already seen, Apartheid was not so much a construction that divided an integrated people, but rather an institutionalisation of what already existed. This was also true of the church. “South African churches, whether implicitly or as matters of policy, allowed themselves to be structured along racial lines” (RICSA 1998:18). Although some denominations did, at macro level, remain united across lines of colour and race, the truth is that they were not usually integrated at local levels (RICSA 1998:7). The strain of maintaining a unified structure in the face of segregation at grass roots did take its toll on the denominations. The Baptists, for example, eventually split as late as 1987 with the (mostly black) Baptist Convention breaking away from the (mostly white) Baptist Union (RICSA 1998:8)¹⁹.

Some denominations, such as the DRC, specifically segregated their mission churches into separate entities, ensuring that the mother church remained the domain

¹⁹ In the post-Apartheid era, many of the denominations worked through a process of reconciliation and re-uniting their structures.

of the white settlers (RICSA 1998:9). As early as 1857, the synod of the DRC in South Africa, approved separate services for “coloured” members. “This decision led to the division of Christians on the basis of colour at the table of the Lord as a matter of practice and policy” (Plaatjies Van Huffel 2013:2). As Apartheid became policy in the late 1940s, the DRC was complicit in legitimising many Apartheid policies through giving theological support (Cochrane *et al.* 1999:15). As such, the DRC has increasingly become synonymous with Afrikaner nationalism and “Apartheid was incontrovertibly church policy” (General Synodal Commission of the Dutch Reformed Church 1997:2.4.5). Indeed, the DRC “‘family’ of churches came to exemplify the expression of the Apartheid ideal in the church” (RICSA 1998:9). Only in 1986 did the DRC confess to having “misled’ its members and clearly stated that support of Apartheid was unbiblical (Kerk en Samelewing 1990).

The sad reality is that, through the lens of the post-Apartheid era, the history of church development in South Africa is closely tied with either racist, colonial exploitation (Jenkins 2007:48), or the “Christian-nationalism” which undergirded Apartheid and was responsible for great evil in this land.

Christian churches gave their blessing to the universally condemned system of Apartheid. The politicians that invented Apartheid came from churches. Some of the Apartheid laws, for instance, the Mixed Marriages Act, were motivated by churches (especially the DRC), and churches actively implemented Apartheid policies (Cochrane *et al.* 1999:15).

Although many missionaries, and indeed individual Christians, would have held the ideals of loyalty to the scriptural teaching on unity in Christ that cuts across racial, cultural, and gender differences, this did not happen in practice (RICSA 1998:6). The “norms and values” of Christianity should have challenged the State and the *status quo* of segregated churches and segregated lives in South Africa (Portal 2013:15). But the sad reality was that Sunday morning and evening service times, “constituted the most segregated hours of the week” (Meiring 2005:154). Rather than having a biblically prophetic voice that stood independently and opposed to Apartheid, the

church largely mirrored Apartheid (Meiring 2005:149) and did very little to rouse the conscience of their white congregants (Portal 2013:13).

Ironically, and perhaps miraculously, the Christian message as a whole took root amongst all people and racial groups in South Africa. As Jenkins (2007:52), in his overview of the growth of Christianity in the “global south” writes, “individuals came to believe the message offered, and found this the best means of explaining the world around them”. In the early 20th Century, Pentecostalism took root in South Africa and experienced rapid growth (Meiring 2005:149). This also helped accelerate the development of African Independent Churches (AIC’s) – a phenomenon that was taking place across Africa (Jenkins 2007:61).

The first AIC's were not so much a synthesis of African traditional religion and Protestant Christianity as an attempt by a rising African middle-class to construct a Christianity that was like its Protestant forebears but under the control of Africans. (RICSA 1998:10).

The leaders of the AIC’s were often western-educated Africans who had attended the mission schools and became frustrated by the lack of opportunity for them within the existing mainline and white-led denominations. For a large portion of the 20th Century, the AICs created a sphere of opportunity for black South Africans to develop and express leadership in an environment, controlled and resourced by black people (Meiring 2005:161). The AICs therefore provided an environment for young black South African leaders to emerge (Jenkins 2007:51), as well as an avenue for religious cultural identification and an opportunity to express resistance against white domination. As Jenkins (2007:61) highlights, the AICs across the Continent developed as, “African churches with African leaders for African people”. In South Africa, AICs continued to flourish under Apartheid, accounting for one third of Christians in South Africa by the end of Apartheid in 1991 (RICSA 1998:9).

It is also necessary to highlight that, during Apartheid, a racially segregated church also meant that local churches in South Africa had largely different experiences of Apartheid, particularly in relation to access to resources. Some of these were as a result of internal racist policies of the denominations. One example being that, even

within the same denomination or family of churches, ministers of white congregations received larger stipends than those of black congregations (RICSA 1998:19). Additionally, as MacMaster (2010:87) underlines, the impact of Apartheid policy caused great trauma for churches. As a result of the forcible relocations of the Group Areas Act, many churches lost properties and resources (MacMaster 2010:87). Meiring (2005:159) also underlines how congregations were forced to sell their properties and relocate to a designated 'group area'. These properties were sold at below market-value and, therefore, re-establishing them in the new area was extremely difficult. Additionally, Meiring highlights the negative impact of the Bantu Education Act which, "forced the closure of numerous mission stations and missions schools, some with long traditions of service to the community" (Meiring 2005:159). The exception to this was the Roman Catholic Church which raised funds, mostly from overseas, in order to keep their schools open (RICSA 1998).

It will be apparent that the churches who suffered most as a result of the Apartheid regime were the churches serving in black and coloured communities. The Research Institute on Christianity in South Africa (RICSA 1998:23) poignantly makes the following comment:

The fact that faith communities--sometimes within the same tradition--both suffered and benefited from the same series of removals highlights the need for reconciliation between communities, and of some kind of reparations.

The sad truth is that Christianity in South Africa developed in contradiction to scriptural principles, and Jesus Christ's example, that has a bias towards the poor (for example see Chan 2008:119). Rather, the church structures and practice reinforced the privilege of the minority white members, and the disadvantages of the majority black members, fostering an environment within which "numerous sins were committed against other people within the framework of what was acceptable in the society and was perfectly legal" (Lotter 1996:7).

From the 1960s onwards, Christian resistance to Apartheid did grow as churches became more responsive to the injustices being perpetrated (RICSA 1998:25).

However, at the Truth and Reconciliation Commission hearings, all denominations that made representations confessed that they should have contributed more to the struggle against Apartheid (RICSA 1998:4). It is clear that certain church groupings became increasingly proactive, for example, the South African Council of Churches (SACC) and the Christian Institute of Southern Africa (CI) (RICSA 1998:25)²⁰. Yet a number of denominations, including many evangelical churches, retained an apolitical policy, even until the latter stages of Apartheid (RICSA 1998:16). It took some denominations until the late 1980s and early 1990s to revoke anti-biblical and racist policies. For example, the DRC withdrew its objection to mixed marriage only in 1986 (Plaatjies Van Huffel 2013:5), and the constitution of the Apostolic Faith Mission (AFM) accepted white members only until as late as 1991 (RICSA 1998:11).

Against the backdrop of general disengagement from the resistance movement, there were some shining examples of Christian leaders who provided proactive resistance to Apartheid. The Research Institute on Christianity in South Africa (RICSA 1998:25) highlights Chikane (AFM) and Naudé (DRC) as particular examples. Archbishop Tutu developed a global platform in the 1970s and 1980s and had a major influence on raising awareness around the world on behalf of South Africa's oppressed people (du Boulay 1988:197). Additionally, Meiring (2005:162) lists a number of statements that Christian bodies made in resistance to Apartheid including:

The Cottesloe Statement (1960), the SACC's Message to the People (1968), the Resolution on Conscientious Objection and the Resolution on Non-Cooperation that urged Christians to withdraw from state structures (1974), the Kairos Document (1985), the "Ope Brief" (Open Letter) by 123 Dutch Reformed Church theologians, as well as the Belhar Confession, the first Christian confession to be produced on South African soil.

Many of these statements contained truths that were self-evident to the Christian community around the world, but caused an "unprecedented storm" in South Africa

²⁰ The Christian Institute of Southern Africa was an ecumenical progressive organisation founded by English and Afrikaans clergy in December 1963. It was subsequently banned by the state in 1977 (Villa-Vicencio 1995:27).

(Villa-Vicencio 1995:24). On the whole, however, the church in South Africa was reactionary, rather than proactive, in their resistance to Apartheid, and lagged behind other movements.

Despite their claim to loyalties that transcend the state, South African churches, whether implicitly or as a matter of policy, allowed themselves to be structured along racial lines, 'reinforcing the separate symbolic universes in which South Africans lived' (Meiring 2005:153).

It is one of the tragedies of the South African story that the growth and development of the church over the past 150 years, reflected the social engineering of Apartheid, rather than the biblical basis of unity in diversity²¹. The context that sports ministry leaders operate in is of a church that grew and developed as an entity that was divided by race and socio-economic groupings which reflected Apartheid geography. Twenty-five years since the dismantling of Apartheid, this legacy remains a huge challenge for all those ministering in the South African context, including those seeking to utilise sport as a vehicle for evangelism. The challenges of forgiveness, reconciliation, integration and unity in diversity, are rooted in the history of South Africa (Lotter 1996:3) and continue to present theological and practical challenges for Christian leaders (Lotter 1996:8).

This section has highlighted the historical realities that will have a major impact upon the environment in which sports ministry leaders serve. South Africa is a country born in conflict (Boon 1998:31) which is recovering from years of institutionalised racism. We have seen how this racial conflict has impacted both primary spheres in which sports ministry leaders will operate: those of sport and church. Given the history, there is continued need for restitution and reconciliation and for the church to seize the initiative (Lotter 2000:224). Sports ministry leaders require a practical theological foundation that addresses the realities of the historical context. Additionally, as will now be discovered, the current social-cultural context has been entirely shaped by the historical context.

²¹ For example passages such as John 17:20-23, Acts 4:32, and Galatians 3:26-28. This theme of the church expressing unity in diversity will be considered further in the following chapter.

3.4. The Socio-Cultural Context

This literature survey will now consider the current socio-cultural environment in South Africa which has been shaped by the historical events that have been described above. This socio-cultural literature review focuses upon two areas which are relevant to our field of study, i.e. a) the cultural/sociological impact of Apartheid, and b) the role of sport in reconciliation and nation-building. Just as sport ethicists recognise the importance to analyse sport from a socio-cultural perspective (Steenbergen & Tamboer 1998:38) and that the “sporting world has to indulge in a dialogue with other sectors of society (Steenbergen & Tamboer 1998:43), so ,too, a theological review of sports ministry must give due consideration to the socio-cultural context.

As has been seen, sports ministry leaders in South Africa are serving within a context that has been shaped and defined by the historical events that have greatly impacted the environment in which they serve. It must also be recognised that individual sports ministry leaders in South Africa will have had their worldview shaped by their own cultural upbringing and experience. Lingenfelter and Mayers (1999:18) call this the “conceptual designs” and “definitions” through which experiences and behaviour of others are interpreted. Newbigin (1989:35) views culture like the lenses of spectacles; something that we don’t look at but subconsciously look through.

Newbigin also helpfully cautions against having a static view of culture (1989:144). Human culture is how communities corporately shape their life together and, “is embodied in language, story, and all the forms of social life which are made possible through a shared language and a shared story” (Newbigin 1989:35).

However, what is pertinent to note as one considers the current socio-cultural environment in South Africa, is that sports ministry leaders, even in the same country, or living in the same Province, may have had completely different experiences and stories depending upon their sub-cultural grouping. Therefore, their interpretation of the socio-cultural situation presented here will be viewed through their own cultural lenses, shaped by their specific context and factors such as upbringing, race, education and opportunity. As one considers the cultural/sociological challenges in

South Africa within the context of practical theology, one must acknowledge that these varying perspectives will have influenced the theological and biblical interpretation of sports ministry leaders (cf. Newbigin 1989:149).

3.4.1. Cultural/Sociological Perspective

Over fifty years ago, Luthuli (1982:70) wrote that “white South Africa is well insulated against the statistics of African poverty”. Although perhaps not quite as clearly defined by race as it once was, the socio-economic gap that exists, and the insulation of the wealthy from the realities of poverty, continue to define the cultural/sociological perspective in South Africa (Portal 2013:19).

In 1999, Cochrane *et al.* (1999:6) stated, “South Africa remains a deeply divided society” and in his January 2012 speech, President Jacob Zuma, in addressing his party, listed “unemployment, poverty and inequality as the top issues facing South Africans” (quoted in Lefko-Everett 2012:41). It is clear that there are significant challenges facing South African society in the post-Apartheid era (Sanders 2010:17). It is perhaps unsurprising that fifty years of Apartheid has left a legacy of inequality to which there is no quick-fix solution. Sparks (2003:332), cites the challenges of the “double-decker” economy in South Africa, with a widening gap between the First World upper-deck, and the Third World lower-deck. This gap is fuelled by the legacy of Apartheid and the realities faced in underdeveloped townships across the country which include poor housing, lack of resources, over-crowding and limited recreational facilities (MacMaster 2010:48).

The challenges of inequality and poverty are borne out in numerous reports and through various statistics. Sanders (2010:17) cites that half the population are below the poverty line, unemployment rates are at 22.9% and an HIV/AIDS infection rate at 22.9%²². South Africa is considered to have one of the largest gaps between rich and

²² Herwitz (2013) states that about 1000 people a day are dying of HIV/AIDS.

poor (Lefko-Everett 2012:14), which is reflected in the World Bank's Gini coefficient index²³ (Sanders 2010:17).

There is clearly concern about the future for children, youth and young adults in South Africa. The recent census indicates that South Africa is experiencing "youth bulge" with one-third of South Africans under the age of 14 (Lefko-Everett 2012:16). Yet there is great inequality experienced in education with many schools being under-resourced (Lefko-Everett 2012:11) and, therefore;

Education in South Africa today functions as a great engine of social division...In South Africa today, education is perpetuating inequality – not ending it (Lefko-Everett 2012:34).

Coupled with this challenge is the lack of opportunities for young people and young adults to enter the job market. Unemployment levels are generally high in South Africa (Herwitz 2013:25), with youth unemployment rates continuing to rise (SABC News 2014:para.1). MacMaster (2010:70) concludes that "unemployment is currently the major force behind widening inequality in South Africa". Lupton (2011:120), in writing about the global challenges concerning charitable giving and unemployment, suggests that one critical way to address unemployment is to equip young people as entrepreneurs. Quite clearly, if young people cannot find work, they are going to remain in the grips of poverty and remain vulnerable to gangsterism and criminal activity (Mayer *et al.* 2011:7).

Lack of education, high unemployment and growing inequality create fertile soil for other social challenges. Mayer (2011:7) writes of the reality of "disenchanted youth" and that the current challenges of lack of education and skills development may lead to higher levels of unemployment, instability and great strain on the social welfare systems. The disenchantment of young people, particularly from disadvantaged and impoverished backgrounds, is undoubtedly fuelling criminal activity and gangsterism. MacMaster (2010:1) quotes Altbeker as follows: "every single piece of reliable data

²³ The Gini coefficient is a mechanism developed by the World Bank to examine the degrees of inequality within a country. In terms of the criteria used, and the number of countries assessed, South Africa was the most unequal country in 2009. <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SI.POV.GINI/countries?display=default>

we have tells us that South Africa ranks at the very top of the world's league tables for violent crime.”

South Africa is mirroring global trends which show that criminal activity is flourishing where there is instability and economic uncertainty (Kinnes 2000:2). In particular, gangsterism has become increasingly prevalent, particularly in the Western Cape, often stylised on American street gangs, and forming very strong sub-cultural, criminal, structures (Portal 2013:40)²⁴. Interestingly, and particularly relevant to this research, Schärf (1990:237) identifies the decline in participation in sport during Apartheid, as a major reason for the increase in gang involvement amongst young people during that era. The Western Cape Youth Development Strategy (WCYDS) document highlights the huge challenges of gang involvement in the Province, and the critical need for positive alternatives to be found for young people (WCYDS 2013:51). Kemp (2007:278), in his book studying gang activity around the world, draws the conclusion that gangs flourish when the gap between rich and poor is the widest. MacMaster (2010:3) poignantly underscores the destructive cycle of gangsterism and how it preys on the young;

[gangsterism] robs and has robbed many young people of an opportunity to develop their God-given potential... Many learners drop out of school every year... Many of these learners do so because they feel that it is the only way to survive in a 'gangsters paradise', or because they have been coerced into gangsterism. Drug abuse may also serve as a pathway to gangsterism.

A final and more recent challenge that has emerged in South Africa has been an emerging xenophobia against African immigrants. This over-spilled into violent attacks in recent years (Vandermerwe 2013:206) with South Africa's immigrant workforce seemingly being a scapegoat for the frustrations many have experienced due to unemployment and poor service delivery (Vandermerwe 2013:206).

²⁴ Within the context of this research, it's worth noting that, during the Apartheid era, gangs often forged close affiliations with sports teams (Booth and Nauright 2013:16).

As one looks at the cultural and sociological perspective through this broad lens, it is possible to despair about the future of South Africa. Indeed, Herwitz (2013:26) claims that by the end of the first decade of South Africa's transition from Apartheid, the "narrative of the miraculous had collapsed". However, against the backdrop of cultural diversity, socio-economic inequality, education challenges, unemployment, and burgeoning gang-activity and crime, many have championed sport as an opportunity for effective nation-building and unification. Those in sports ministry leadership will not only need to be critically aware of the challenges facing South Africa, but also realistically appraise the role that sport can play in effectively addressing the challenges.

3.4.2. The Sport Context

It has been shown previously how sport re-enforced racial and economic divisions in South Africa during Apartheid (Anderson *et al.* 2004:49). Booth and Nauright (2014:52) highlight that the black population not only suffered from poor sporting infrastructure and lack of opportunity, but also from the resultant health challenges due to Apartheid social engineering and the lack of opportunity black children had for sport (Booth & Nauright 2014:52). This is worth highlighting again because it is the context out of which the post-Apartheid society emerged. Given that some believe South Africa to be "the most sports-mad country in the world" (Anderson *et al.* 2004:47), it was a huge challenge to address inequality in sport. However, in the task of nation-building in post-Apartheid South Africa, sport took on an important and powerful function as the government, and other bodies, sought to engender a sporting culture that would generate healing and reconciliation (Sanders 2010:2).

Many authors cite the role, influence and power of sport in the world today. Since the 2nd World War, sport itself has undergone a huge transformation in the role it plays in society, largely coinciding with the advent of television (Nauright 2004:1325). Sport is viewed as an activity that transcends cultural, political and religious divisions (Shafer 2012:118). Sport is championed as a global universal language (Garner & Newman 2004:2), and serves as an equaliser of people from different countries, backgrounds and cultures (Cash 2002:76). Cuadros (2006: 6) poetically captures what many people around the globe feel about sport:

Sport has the ability to encapsulate and compress life and its passion, struggle, victory, and defeat in a finite moment of time, and can be felt by more than just athletes. It allows us to witness life and to examine and re-examine ourselves in the process, to strive for excellence. Sport lives in the throat of the players and its fans – from there it has easy access to the heart and mind. It is theatre of the moment.

Weir (2000:13), observes that “the largest people group in the world is the one that watches, reads about and participates in sport and recreation”. Mazza (2005:70) concurs and calls sport “a common denominator that is capable of uniting the entire human community”.

As a sport that seems to attract the biggest audience, soccer is often regarded as a global game. Kuper (1998:1) says, “More people in the world go to prayer than to football matches, but otherwise there is no public pursuit to match the game”. The parallels between faith and soccer are commonly made by authors. Foer (2004:4) says that soccer, “is often more deeply felt than religion, and just as much a part of the community’s fabric, a repository of traditions”. Alegi (2010:xi) speaks of football as the most popular cultural activity on the planet, and an activity that has particularly captured the imagination and attention of the masses in Africa. Hawkey (2009:5) speaks of the power of soccer, above almost anything else, to forge a Pan-African identity. Football, it is eulogised, can redefine divisions and “socio-historical happenstance” that have drawn the geographical boundaries in Africa (Guest 2013:150). Again, in an example written about Nigeria, religious language is utilised: “The only religion that unites Nigerians is football” (Bloomfield 2010:172). Roberts and Bass (2013:45) conclude, “It is difficult to think of anything other than football generating shared experience on such a massive scale”.

Anderson *et al.* (2004:51) have highlighted the importance of soccer culture in South Africa as an avenue for the expression of African identity and beliefs. They state that soccer in South Africa is still a space where “resistance to local white cultural domination continues”, (Anderson *et al.* 2004:51), including the ridiculing and insulting “the European administration of Christianity” through fans adopting and Africanising

traditional Christian symbols (Anderson *et al.* 2004:51). Soccer in South Africa has held a long-standing relationship with African traditional religion (Alegi 2010:24) and this influence still persists as a bastion of African cultural expression (Armstrong & Giulianotti 2004:15). Anderson *et al.* conclude, with regards to the important role soccer can play in nation-building in South Africa, is extremely interesting. Firstly, they believe that soccer is an avenue for whites in South Africa to demonstrate their “acceptance of Africans and repentance for Apartheid” (Anderson *et al.* 2004:51). They also make a statement which should challenge churches both in their approach to reconciliation, and in their approach to sport, as a vehicle for reconciliation and cross-cultural interaction:

The discourse of national unity and reconciliation through sport exceeds the exhortations of church and political leaders. Soccer thus provides Whites with a unique entrée into Black urban life (Anderson *et al.* 2004:52).

It is vitally important to understand how, in the past twenty years, there has been so much hope placed in the socio-cultural activity of sport, particularly in fostering national and international unity. Global leaders have identified sport as a powerful medium to impact people. Pope John Paul II saw sport as a “paradigm of mass psychology” that permeates all levels of society (cf. Watson, Weir & Friend 2005:para.17). And, as we shall see, post-Apartheid South African leaders placed a great emphasis upon the opportunity that sport gave to unite a divided nation (Anderson *et al.* 2004:53). Indeed, it is common to hear of sport in South Africa being referred to as the “national religion” (SAInfo Reporter 2012:para.1).

Yet it is worth noting that, on a global scale, research has shown that sport is “as likely to divide as to unify a country” (Anderson *et al.* 2004:50). There is also a very dark side to sport that incubates violent behaviour amongst fans, as well as absorbing extortionate amount of resource (Shafer 2012:169)²⁵. It is important that Christian leaders in sports do not simply accept all the rhetoric about the good of sport without

²⁵ Shafer (2012:169) states that, in the United States, it is estimated that over \$400 billion is spent on sport and sport-related activity, “that is roughly fourteen times the amount of federal aid given to developing countries around the world”.

recognising that, as with all cultural activities, it is subject to human sinfulness and is a vehicle for both good and evil²⁶. For example, Shafer (2012:5) has highlighted how the ‘win at all costs’ ethic in sport has led to the rise in drug-taking, in order “to gain an edge whenever they can and however they can”. However, in the South African context, there is a strong case that sport has played a positive role in reconciliation and nation-building, and served as a vehicle to overcome entrenched division (Anderson *et al.* 2004:52). This is particularly remarkable given the historical context of racially divided sport (Anderson *et al.* 2004:48), although questions still remain as to how pervasive reconciliation extends beyond the blowing of the final whistle.

3.4.2.1. Sport as healer

Upon his release from prison and in the run-up to the first open election in South Africa, Mandela became a strong advocate for the role that sport could play to bring healing to South Africa (Friedman 2001:100). He astutely realised that South Africa, being a “sports-mad” country, should seek to find a way to utilise sport as a vehicle of reconciliation (Korr & Close 2009:xii). It may seem logical that Mandela, being a black South African, recognised soccer as a powerful force for unification (Kuper 1998:138). However, what was remarkable about Mandela, is that he also saw the important role rugby would play in a peaceful transition to democracy. According to Booth and Nauright (2014:59), rugby was the “last white outpost”. During Apartheid, Mandela had previously supported other international rugby teams, rather than that of the Springboks²⁷ (Booth & Nauright 2014:60). Yet, when he became President in 1994, Mandela utilised the sport of rugby to build bridges to the Afrikaner people, and argued strongly that the Springbok identity, a longstanding symbol of Apartheid, be retained in the cause of nation-building (Carlin 2008:170). Rugby became an opportunity to demonstrate his commitment to the concept of building a rainbow nation²⁸ (Booth & Nauright 2014:60). In reflecting on the early years of democracy, Mandela wrote;

²⁶ For example, there is great discrepancy in Christian thinking about the role of competition. This theme will be given greater attention within the theological context.

²⁷ “The Springboks” is the nickname for the South African national rugby team.

²⁸ “Rainbow Nation” was the term coined by Archbishop Desmond Tutu to describe a united, multiracial society in South Africa.

“sport is one sector of our social life that has stood out in performing a unifying role in these years of transition” (cf. Friedman 2001:5).

There is certainly evidence that sport has provided an avenue to unite South Africa. This is particularly true when the country’s national sports teams compete on the world stage. The shared desire to win overcomes other differences and can even trump racism (Friedman 2001:101). Additionally, the Reconciliation Barometer of 2012 acknowledged that sport was one avenue where young people from different backgrounds were regularly mixing across racial divides (Lefko-Everett 2012:14). Along with taverns and clubs, sport-stadiums and sport events are becoming the place where children are learning that “race doesn’t matter’ (Lefko-Everett 2012:15).

It is, therefore, perhaps true to say that sport has played, and continues to play, a role in bringing healing to South Africa. However, authors and researchers also note the limited scope of sport in bringing lasting and meaningful reconciliation. In spite of all the progress that has been made in post-Apartheid South Africa, race distinctions still persist in sport and it is “grossly misleading to suggest that South Africa is now an embodied multiracial nation (Booth and Nauright 2014:61). Friedman (2001:316) makes the striking statement that the “cure” of sport is too weak to heal the sickness caused by multiple generations of inequality. He goes on to poignantly comment;

Working through the pain of the past is not something that can be done only in a state of excitement or euphoria. It must, by definition, be accompanied by tears, anger and public debate (Friedman 2001:316).

Since the end of Apartheid, there are perhaps two main avenues through which sport has been used for nation-building and reconciliation in South Africa that require further consideration. The first is through the hosting of major sporting events. The second is through the recent burgeoning ‘sport for development’ or ‘sport for good’ movement. Each will be examined in turn.

3.4.2.2. Major sports events

One of the most famous images in recent South African history, is of former President Mandela wearing the previously derided Springbok jersey at the final of the Rugby World Cup at Ellis Park in 1995. According to Booth and Nauright (2014:60), this image, “helped recast race relations in South Africa, albeit temporarily”. They go on to say:

By wrapping his body in the most potent symbols of the old white South Africa, Mandela became, for a moment, an ‘honorary’ white and hero among those who had long dismissed him as a ‘terrorist’ and a ‘communist’ (Booth & Nauright 2014:60).

Grundlingh and Nauright (2013:194) call Mandela’s strategy a “marketing masterstroke”. Who can argue with this statement given the fact that this simple act has resulted in books and films being produced about the 1995 Rugby World Cup?²⁹

Since the dawning of democracy South Africa has hosted numerous major sporting events³⁰ (Nauright 2004:1326). There has apparently been a dual motivation to both unite South Africa as a country and also to reshape the image of South Africa around the world (Nauright 2004:1327). The achievement of hosting these events and of South African teams’ performances in these events, has resulted in some of the greatest celebrations of South Africa’s nationhood (Rankin-Smith 2013:77).

The most recent global sporting event that South Africa hosted was the 2010 FIFA World Cup. The event was considered a success on a number of levels, although there are questions with regards to the long-term benefits to South Africa (Sanders 2010:60). Nobel Prize laureate, Tutu, is reported as saying, “anyone who wasn’t thrilled by the World Cup needs to see their psychiatrist” (cf. Jacobs 2013).

²⁹ For example the 2009 film *Invictus* based upon John Carlin’s book, *Playing the Enemy*.

³⁰ The following are some of major sports events hosted in South Africa since 1994: Rugby World Cup, 1995. African Nations Cup, 1996. Cricket World Cup, 2003. FIFA Confederations Cup, 2009. FIFA World Cup, 2010. Africa Cup of Nations, 2012. Additionally, South Africa has hosted major events in athletics, golf, swimming and other sports.

In their compilation of essays following the World Cup, Alegi and Bolsmann (2013) give consideration to the legacy of the World Cup. The various authors cite both tangible and intangible outcomes, including; a greater sense of national unity and “pan-African solidarity” (Alegi & Bolsmann 2013:2); a united support for the South African national team across racial divides (Guest 2013:151); an “international suspension of human division” (Herwitz 2013:21); encouragement of foreign investment and tourism into South Africa (Herwitz 2013:27); the development of facilities in underprivileged communities (Doherty 2013:53); and even the suspension of criminal activity during the event itself (Roberts & Bass 2013:49).

However, this series of essays also questions the long-term benefits of the FIFA World Cup and whether the event simply created a veneer of solidarity that pasted over the deep divisions that still exist in the country (Grundlingh & Nauright 2013:197). Akindes (2013:129) expresses concerns that mega-sporting events are “becoming the drugs that South Africa... needs to satisfy itself and to unite around a proud post-Apartheid identity”. Grundlingh and Nauright (2013:196) question whether these major events deal with the root causes of the challenges in South Africa:

The euphoria created in 1996 and again in 2010 certainly created moments of joy throughout much of South African society, but neither Cup did much in a measurable sense to address issues of poverty and unemployment.

Perhaps equally concerning are observations that the FIFA World Cup actually ended up re-enforcing division, rather than creating unity. Roberts and Bass (2013:42) recognise the challenge of bringing about long-term change in social geography during an event of such a short duration³¹. Doherty (2013:53) goes further and claims that developments in urban spaces “inadvertently reproduced patterns of injustice and exclusion in Cape Town”, particularly due to the choice of venue for the matches themselves. Fletcher (2013) gives a realistic assessment indicating the huge historical and socio-cultural barriers that the FIFA World Cup would have to overcome to truly

³¹ The preparation for the FIFA World Cup was over a six year period. The event itself lasted for four weeks

bring an “inclusive national identity” (Fletcher 2013:32). His reflection upon the event led him to the conclusion that the rhetoric of nation-building was not matched in reality for people across the country (Fletcher 2013:41). When attending a soccer match after the FIFA World Cup he discovered that the audience was no longer diverse, the rainbow nation was now “conspicuously absent” (Fletcher 2013:41), and that “little had fundamentally changed” (Fletcher 2013:41)³².

Christians, churches and, in particular, sports ministries, have also realised the opportunity that hosting major sports events has provided for evangelism, outreach, and social engagement. This has been a global trend that can be traced back to the 1960s (McCown & Gin 2003:119). In South Africa, the growth of sports ministry can be directly linked to the hosting of major sports events (Tucker 2009b:83) The FIFA 2010 World Cup was no exception, with over 1200 churches engaging in community outreach through the facilitation of The Ultimate Goal (TUG - TUG Report 2010:5). On the surface, the FIFA World Cup appears to have afforded a unique opportunity for the church to engage with the socio-cultural phenomenon of sport. However, the long-term benefits and legacy of this engagement are difficult to quantify. What is clear is that Christian leaders in sport will have a critical role to play in the ongoing relationship between the church and sport and in ensuring that sports ministry has a lasting legacy in South Africa. The TUG report (2010:3) expressed the hope that the “programmes and projects founded and established by TUG, would contribute to a healthy growth of involvement in sport by the South African churches”. For this goal to be realised, it is essential that sports ministry leaders are equipped for effective and sustainable ministry in the South African context.

3.4.2.3. Sport for development

The opportunity of sport as a medium for societal change has become a movement now referred to as “Sport for Development”³³. This movement has burgeoned in the last twenty years through the work of Non-Governmental and Non-Profit Organisations

³² This was also the researcher’s own experience when at a Premier League Game in 2011. The tight security and good stewarding that was experienced during the World Cup was no longer in existence. It was also clear that the demographics of spectators was the same as pre-World Cup.

³³ The Sport for Development movement is often also referred to as “Sport for Good”.

(NGOs and NPOs), as well as socially responsible professional sports clubs (Coalter 2010:299). Many Christian sports ministries would also fall within the Sport for Development movement because of the social outcomes that result from their work. Interestingly enough, it is possible to argue that Christian sports ministries were actually the forerunner to the sport for development movement as organisations like Athletes in Action, Fellowship of Christian Athletes, Sportler Ruft Sportler (Germany) and others, and predate the recent upsurge of Sport for Development NGOs (McCown & Gin 2003:121). The global movement of Christian sports ministries, the Global Sports Coalition (GSC), was formed in the 1980s (Tucker 2009b:53) and continues to facilitate the growth and development of sports ministry around the world. Many of the GSC's network partners are engaged in Sport for Development activities. However, the Sport for Development movement is often suspicious or antagonistic towards Christian sports ministries due to their engagement in evangelism and the "proselytization" associated with sharing of faith. For example, Street Football World, a network of Sport for Development non-profit organisations, specifically state in their membership criteria that they will not accept any organisation to "evangelise or proselytise" into their network (Schilling 2015:2).

Just as major sports events served to catalyse the growth of the Sports Ministry Movement from the 1960s onwards (McCown & Gin 2003:119), so Coalter (2010:300) demonstrates that the Olympics and the FIFA World Cup events aided in the growth of sports-for-development initiatives³⁴. Yet real impetus for the sport-for-development movement came as a result of sport being acknowledged by the United Nations (UN) as a vehicle through which their Millennium Development Goals could be accomplished (United Nations 2003). In their report, the UN acknowledged the role that sport could play in the areas of youth engagement, community development, health awareness, skills development, overcoming social barriers and fostering peace (United Nations 2003:1). Also in 2003, the first international conference on sport and development was held in Magglingen. This resulted in the Magglingen Declaration, a commitment by the delegates to sport and development (Magglingen Declaration 2003:1). As a result, sport received a higher profile on "donor agendas" and "assumed

³⁴ The Winter Olympics of 1994 birthed Olympic Aid which re-branded itself as 'Right to Play' in 2003 (Coalter 2010:300). In 2005 FIFA launched 'Football for Hope' which utilised their major events as a springboard for seeking to accomplish social and human development targets (Coalter 2010:303).

a higher profile in development circles” (Sanders 2010:16). Subsequent to this, the UN declared 2005 the ‘Year of Sport and Education’ (Coalter 2010:303)³⁵.

The heightened attention upon sport as an opportunity for development clearly resonated within the South African context. The Charter for Physical Activity, Sport, Play and Well-Being for All Children and Youth in South Africa (Sharwood 2005) was drafted at this time. Both existing NGOs, such as SCORE³⁶, and new NGOs, such as Grassroots Soccer³⁷, grew in their sport for development initiatives. Hosting the 2010 FIFA World Cup added further impetus to the sport for development movement with many new NGOs emerging (Sanders 2010:60). FIFA’s Football for Hope Centre in Khayelitsha was one of the higher profile legacy projects associated with the World Cup (McHugh 2009:1). Additionally, addressing the challenge of the HIV/AIDS pandemic was a high priority for the sport for development movement. A report compiled by the Belgian-based KBF Foundation concluded that, after a number of years of investment in soccer programmes seeking to raise awareness about HIV, “football programmes are generally considered to be very effective in the domain of prevention” (Preti & Tobisch 2010:9). A sign of the significant role South Africa has been playing in the sport for development movement is that the country has twice hosted the Beyond Sport³⁸ Summit, in 2011 and 2014 (Beyond Sport 2015).

It is clear that the sport for development movement has been growing significantly and has received great impetus, matched by significant funding, over the past 15 years. Sports ministry leaders need to be aware of these trends. However, they also need to be aware of some of the dissent and questions being raised about the sport for development movement. Certain projects in South Africa have received criticism, including the Football for Hope Centre in Khayelitsha, about which Doherty (2013:57) says; “Its long-term sustainability remains in doubt”. There is also concern that there is not sufficient research being conducted to empirically test whether the presumed

³⁵ The website www.sportanddev.org has a helpful timeline of major developments in sport & development which shows the growing number of conferences that have spurred on the sport for development movement.

³⁶ SCORE was founded in 1991 and is probably the oldest secular sport for development organisation in South Africa. See www.score.org.za.

³⁷ Grassroots Soccer was founded in 2002 and specifically focuses on HIV awareness and prevention. See www.grassrootssoccer.org.

³⁸ Beyond Sport is a movement that seeks to profile and network more than 1600 sport for good projects across 145 countries. See www.beyondsport.org.

socio-cultural benefits of sports really do result in improved lives (Sanders 2010:17). Coalter, 2010:309, gives a realistic appraisal of the situation:

It is clear that participation in certain types of sport may have an impact on some participants' self-efficacy, self-esteem or broader social skills. Nevertheless, even at the level of the individual, the extent to which this will lead to changed behaviour (e.g. safer sex; improved educational performance) and improved real life chances is very difficult to assess, and the limited evidence that exists, is not wholly optimistic

A similar concern could be expressed about the sports ministry world that has developed around the rhetoric of the benefits of sport as a vehicle for overcoming socio-cultural divides and providing a platform for both evangelism and other activities (e.g. education). If sports ministry is to be sustained and strengthened, then the assumptions need to be empirically tested in order to find which models of sports ministry are most effective, while also recognising that there may be no one-size-fits-all approach, particularly in South Africa, with the diverse socio-cultural context that exists in this country.

3.5. The Leadership Context

In Wiegand's (2011:254) study of the South African Dutch Reformed Churches approach to sports ministry, he concludes that there is an:

...absence of leadership and/or management from and within the church – from top to bottom. This holds not only an implication for this particular [sport] Ministry, but also for executing of the church's main responsibility of spreading the Word of God to all nations.

This is quite a far-reaching statement and one must be careful not to draw conclusions that the author did not intend: however, it does indicate the leadership challenge that exists when considering the challenge to develop effective and sustainable sports ministry. In his research, Wiegand (2011:256) specifically cited the need to train those in sports ministry as both spiritual and sporting leaders. As sports ministry has

experienced exponential growth, it has been presented with a number of challenges. These include training of sports ministry practitioners and leaders (Garner 2011:7), ensuring that those in sports ministry leadership have biblical and theological preparation (Ladd & Mathisen 1999:6), and raising up a diversity of leadership that represents different cultural and socio-economic backgrounds (Ladd & Mathisen 1999:243).

Alongside these challenges are additional general leadership challenges that need to be addressed if sports ministry leaders are to develop effective and sustainable ministry. Sports ministry is still a relatively new concept in many parts of the world, including South Africa, and is often developed in isolation from the broader congregation. The challenge that sports ministry leaders face is to facilitate long-lasting changes in approach to missional strategy that will enable sports ministry to grow, develop and be sustained. Newbigin (1989:238) lays down the gauntlet which sports ministry leaders need to consider; “The task of ministry is to lead the congregation as a whole in a mission to the community as a whole.” This includes “cultivating an environment within which God’s people discern God’s directions and activities in them and for the communities in which they find themselves” (Romanuk & Roxburgh 2006:17). However, the warning to missional leaders by Romanuk and Roxburgh (2007:81) needs to be heeded; “Most new ideas, plans, and strategies fail to change a congregation.”

Sport itself is viewed as an opportunity for leadership development (United Nations 2003:1) and this has historically been true in South Africa. Specifically, the role of leaders in sport, for example coaches and managers, has been acknowledged for the unique opportunities it provides for adults to display a model for good character development to young people (Duke 2014:109). Duke 2014:81 argues that, “coaches are the most influential people in the lives of young people today”. If this is true, then coaches need to be trained to be leaders of godly character who have their approach to coaching built upon a scriptural foundation. Additionally, the Global Sports Coalition (GSC) has comprehended the need to invest in sports ministry leadership and chose South Africa as the host country for the International Leadership School (GSLs) which

has trained 432 sports ministry leaders from 113 countries over the past 16 years³⁹. This chapter will conclude by looking at both the historical connection between sports and leadership development in South Africa, and an overview of the goals and objectives of the GSLS.

3.5.1. Leadership and Sport in South Africa

Sport played an important role in developing black South African leaders during the Apartheid era. Boon (1998:52) makes a general comment that a generation of leaders were “educated in exile and jail”, and there is no doubt that many great leaders were forged through the struggle against Apartheid. One of the great black South African leaders of the early Apartheid era, Albert Luthuli, was, by his own admission, a “compulsive football fan” (Luthuli 1982:35), who cut his leadership teeth in the arena of sports administration (Alegi 2006:75). Indeed, sport provided one arena where emerging leaders could hone leadership skills. Alegi (2004:22) demonstrates that the mission-educated Zulus of Natal identified the organisation of sports events, most notably that of soccer, as; “an opportunity to build African unity and, at the same, to advance the individual ambitions and class interests of the kholwa⁴⁰ elite”. South Africa’s most famous leader, Mandela, was himself a keen sportsman; a boxer and long-distance runner. Mandela stated that it was not simply for fun or fitness that he engaged in boxing, but that he was “intrigued by the strategy of it” (Mandela 1994:193) and declared that sport was a great equaliser, where “rank, age, colour and wealth are irrelevant” (Mandela 1994:193). This dual function of strategy development and equal opportunity perhaps explains why the sporting arena was such a crucial vehicle of leadership development.

This recognition of sport as a critical incubator for personal and leadership development, also extended to perhaps the most challenging environment and symbol of Apartheid oppression, Robben Island. In their wonderful book, *More Than Just a Game*, Korr and Clos (2009) track how the development of football for the prisoners provided not just an avenue for prisoner entertainment, or even leadership

³⁹ Figures from personal correspondence with the GSLS administrator, 13th March 2015.

⁴⁰ “Kholwa” was the name given to the Zulu class educated at Christian mission schools.

development, but an avenue to promote unity amongst the prisoners against the injustices of Apartheid and oppression (Korr & Close 2009:xi).

Of course there was the sheer physical enjoyment of the sport, the thrill of pulling together as a team, the adrenalin of competition... but on Robben Island there was even more to be gained. The men's fight to play league football was all about proving to themselves and to the prison regime that they were capable of organising themselves, of acting with discipline, and of working in harmony together. It was about self-respect and developing a sense of community, despite everything. (Korr & Close 2009:52).

Not only did the prisoners on Robben Island see organising sports as a medium for leadership development, but they saw intrinsic value of play as a form of character development. As one former political prisoner on Robben Island explained, "playing football made you realise your weaknesses and respect other people" (Korr & Close 2009:235).

Former FIFA President, Blatter, in the preface to *More than Just a Game*, acknowledges that the leaders who developed in this prison-incubator were a veritable who's who of South African political and business leadership since the demolishing of Apartheid (Korr & Close 2009:ix)

In the era of complete separation of sports bodies along racial lines and when political bodies were being banned by the government, sports administrative structures served as important incubators of leaders. However, these leaders would not just let sport remain in apolitical isolation. One example is the South African Council on Sport (SACOS) which was established in 1973 as a non-racial federation which was strongly anti-Apartheid, and committed to the mantra of "no normal sport in an abnormal society" (Reddy 2007:para.17).

Evidence that strong leadership remained within the sports federations is given by Alegi and Bolsmann (2013:11) in that a unified sports federation pre-dated the first

democratic elections by two years, providing “evidence of black-led institutional democratisation at a time of political turmoil”.

This short overview merely seeks to underline that the connection between sport and leadership development in South Africa is not a new phenomenon. In fact, during Apartheid, sport provided an avenue for emerging leaders to strengthen their leadership credentials as well as providing an avenue of political resistance. It is therefore not surprising that there is a continued emphasis upon the field of sport as a vehicle for leadership development in South Africa, and particularly within sports ministry.

3.5.2. The Global Sports Leadership School (GSLs)

Following his conducting of interviews with many leading citizens in America, Kilmeade (2007:2) states a firm belief in the role sport can play in developing life and leadership skills: “I have come to the conclusion that sports is the best classroom for life”. Upon a similar premise, the GSC developed the Global Sports Leadership School (GSLs) in South Africa in 1998. The GSLs attracts sports ministry leaders from around the world to partake in an intensive three-month training programme.

The GSC’s strategy is to have a leadership development process that strengthens leaders throughout the Sports Ministry Movement (GSC 2014:40). Their stated objective is, “to grow servant leaders with biblical understanding, godly character and practical skills to be able to go and make disciples” (GSC 2014:40). This emphasis upon servant leadership is consistent with what Mamiru (2012) deems a priority for African leadership in the 21st Century. He describes servant leadership as follows:

Servant leaders don’t diminish or deplete other people but develop and empower others. Servant leaders find greater joy and fulfilment by serving another person’s highest priority needs first. They create better, healthier, and stronger companies that are governed by principles of compassion, service, and generosity. Servant leaders have inner quality of honesty, integrity, and consistency; they are followers,

listeners, and learners; and they act on what they believe. (Mamiru 2012:31)

The intended outcome of the GSLS training process is to empower leaders to impact their communities and make disciples (GSC 2014:41). The vision of the GSLS itself is, “We want to see the sports world impacted for the Kingdom of God by equipping leaders” (GSLS 2014:1). The 3 month leadership school is offered to those who have completed two other levels of training, and have the potential for national or regional leadership in sports ministry (GSLS 2014:1). The following are the curriculum items that are covered by the GSLS training (GSLS 2014:1):

1. Biblical Studies - e.g. OT and NT hermeneutics and expository studies; Mission Principles; Sports Ministry Principles;
2. Sports Ministry Studies - e.g. Sports Ministry’s Philosophy, Principles, Ethics, History and Development; Theory and Practice including Coaching, Chaplaincy, Clinics, Major Events, Resources, Local Church;
3. Leadership Studies - e.g. Profile, Principles, Situational Leadership; Development of Leadership Qualities in oneself and others; Mentorship;
4. Management Studies - e.g. Relationships and Task-orientation; Administration including Information Technology, Marketing, Accounting, Event Planning, Project planning application;
5. Cultural studies - e.g. Anthropology (including Worldview), understanding Cultural Values, Incarnation, Modernism, Post-Modernism, Cross-Cultural work, Sporting Cultures;
6. Communication Studies - e.g. Personal Skills including Testimony, Teaching, Bible Studies, Discipling, etc.;
7. Personality Development - e.g. Personal, Spiritual, Social, Intellectual, Physical and Psychological growth;
8. Sports Specific Training - e.g. Coaching (Practical and Theory); Physiology; Event planning; Global community games;

9. Building and Leading Effective Teams – understanding group dynamics; facilitating team role interaction; finding synergy within a team.

Due to the fact that the GSLS is hosted annually in South Africa, it has meant that a disproportionate number of South Africans have received training⁴¹. As seen in the previous chapter, this has been advantageous to this research project through providing access to community leaders from across South Africa who have experienced sports ministry specific leadership training.

However, as we have shown in this chapter, there are many factors that need to be considered when developing leaders in the South African context. Due to the GSLS equipping leaders from across the globe it is not realistic or possible for them to specifically consider the particular national context within which sports ministry leaders are operating. Therefore, although providing a very important service and impetus towards sports ministry development, there are undoubtedly further areas of consideration required when considering how to equip South African leaders to implement effective and sustainable sports ministry, in South African churches and communities. Chapter seven of this thesis will therefore present a model for the training of leaders for effective and sustainable sports ministry, specifically in the South African context. The approach will be cognisant that effective sports ministry also requires the multiplication of leaders who can develop more leaders. Mamiru (2012:32), states that leadership development “does not happen by itself; rather, it takes vision, intentional effort, right processes, and honest implementation. One of the most important responsibilities of leaders is to develop new leaders.”

3.6. Conclusion

This chapter has considered the interpretative task and sought to analyse and interpret the influences that impact the current practice of sports ministry leaders in South Africa. The literature survey has used a multi-disciplinary approach and drawn from

⁴¹ 42 South Africans have graduated from the GSLS out of the total of 432 sports ministry leaders who have been trained from 113 countries. Figures from personal correspondence with the GSLS administrator, 13th March 2015 and see 2.5.3.

research in a number of fields and related disciplines. The historical survey considered the impact of Apartheid in South Africa, and also looked at the historical development of sport and the church in the country. The current socio-cultural context was then considered with emphasis on the cultural/sociological impact of Apartheid upon South Africa today, the role sport has played since the dismantling of Apartheid. Finally, a perspective on leadership development was given which demonstrated the historical link between sports and leadership development in South Africa, as well as the current approach to leadership development within the field of sports ministry.

The following chapter will turn to the normative task, and seek to answer the question “what ought to be going on” through providing a detailed scriptural and theological perspective for the theme of sports ministry leadership in the South African context.

CHAPTER 4

TOWARDS A SCRIPTURAL PERSPECTIVE TO PROVIDE A NORMATIVE THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATION FOR SPORTS MINISTRY LEADERS IN SOUTH AFRICA: OLD TESTAMENT FOCUS

4.1. The normative task

4.1.1. Introduction

The previous chapter presented a literature survey in order to interpret the current situation and experience of sports ministry leaders in South Africa. The literature survey focused on the cultural context in which South African sports ministry has emerged. This chapter (and the next two chapters) turn to the normative task, seeking to answer the question “what ought to be going on?”

The methodological approach for this research follows Osmer’s model (Osmer 2008: 184), which is a Practical Theology model with four distinct steps, each answering a specific question:

- A. *What is going on?* (Descriptive-empirical task). This requires a careful look at situations and contexts and an attempt to describe and understand them (Chapter 2 of this thesis).
- B. *Why is this going on?* (Interpretative task). This requires seeking out reasons for what is going on, i.e. interpreting why the present situation exists (Chapter 3 of this thesis).
- C. *What ought to be going on?* (Normative task). This research project will utilise the Bible as the normative standard and basis for assessing what is going on and providing appropriate responses. The Bible will form the basis for theological interpretation, ethical reflection and establishing models of good practice (The current chapter and chapters 5 and 6 of this thesis).
- E. *How might we respond?* (Pragmatic task). This task requires an interpretation of the situational and normative data in order to propose a model for the equipping of sports ministry leaders in South Africa (Chapter 7 of this thesis).

The four tasks of Osmer's methodological model of practical theological interpretation are represented in Figure 4.1 below (Osmer 2008:187). The previous chapter presented the interpretative task considered as the practical context in which sports ministry leaders serve in South Africa. The information was drawn from various fields of study to better understand the environment that has both shaped the leaders themselves, as well as the situation into which they are serving. This chapter begins the third step in Osmer's model, namely the normative task (Osmer 2008:184), which seeks to answer the question, "What ought to be going on?" This is a critical phase in the task of seeking to equip leaders for effective and sustainable sports ministry in South Africa, and therefore the normative task will cover three chapters. The current chapter will consider the scriptural perspective for the theme of sports ministry by conducting an exegesis of two Old Testament passages. The next chapter will consider the scriptural perspective for the theme of sports ministry by conducting an exegesis of three New Testament passages. Chapter 6, the third chapter of this normative task, will evaluate six theological paradigms against the scriptural norms and seek to draw conclusions that will then lead us to the concluding chapter of this research.

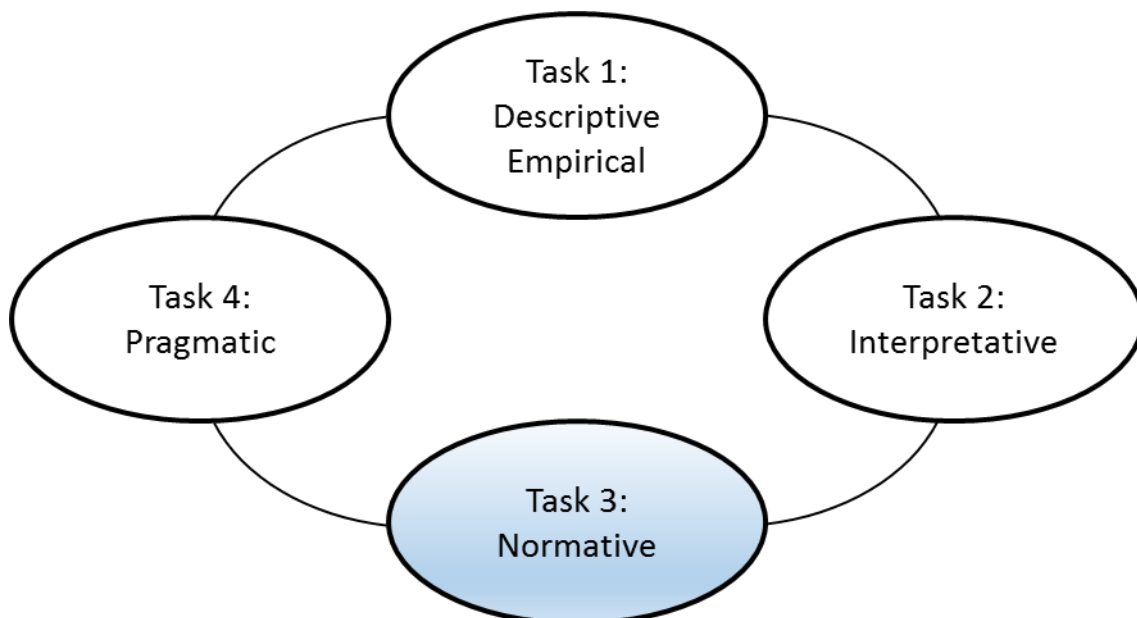


Figure 4.1: Osmer's (2008:187) Four Tasks of Theological Interpretation

4.1.2 The Scriptural/Theological Context

Seeking a normative theological foundation for sports ministry is a relatively new field. Most authors on the subject acknowledge that the Sports Ministry Movement has developed without a “clearly articulated theology of sport” (Mathisen 2008:34). Given the lack of historical writing and of reflection on the subject of sport and leisure, one must agree with Shafer (2012:105) that Christian leaders and theologians have simply not deemed it a subject worthy of serious theological reflection and discourse (Treat 2015:392). This has resulted in, “a uniformed, folk-style amalgamation of... biblical metaphors, athletic anecdotes or quotes, and pop psychology” (White 2011:7) disguising itself as a theology of sport. However, as Christianity has begun to focus more attention on sport over the past two centuries (Shafer 2012:96), it is surprising that greater attention has not been given to the development of a theological foundation (Ladd & Mathisen 1999:214). In the 1990s, Higgs (1995:288) gave the stinging criticism that the trademark of the Sports Ministry Movement is “anti-intellectualism”⁴². Weir (2011:1) expresses concern that sports ministry continues to grow “without an underlying theology or redemptive critique of it”. It is generally true that historically the church and theologians have been largely silent regarding sporting competition (Weir 2008:2). Yet, given the role of sport in the world today, it is clearly a subject that “merits serious theological reflection” (Shafer 2012:2) and the church needs to move from a “negligent attitude” (Shafer 2012:96) towards meaningful engagement. Wiegand (2011:172) expresses concern that this process has not taken place in South Africa and is the reason behind the slow adoption of sports ministry by the church in this country.

Linville (2014:371) argues that although sports ministry itself can no longer be considered a new phenomenon, it needs to be “re-envisioned through solid theological truths and biblically based philosophical principles.” He goes on to importantly underline that the methodological models of sports ministry need to be based on a solid biblical and theological foundation (Linville 2014:373). Rather than seeing this as

⁴² Higgs saw continuity between the 19th century Muscular Christianity movement and the 20th century Sports Ministry Movement, terming the latter “modern muscular Christianity” (Higgs 1995:288).

a threat to sports ministry, it is imperative that this challenge is addressed and it is encouraging that an increasing number of authors are contributing to the field of study.

An additional challenge is that there is certainly disparity between the “normative values of evangelical Christianity” and the “normative values and expectations of the dominant sports culture” (Weir 2008:2). Therefore, the normative theological task serves a dual function of not only seeking to develop a theological foundation for the development of sports ministry (Linville 2007:42), but should also lead to an examination and critique of contemporary sports culture. This approach should give consideration to sports ethics and seek to provide models of best practice for sports ministry leaders. Therefore, the normative task is required to address the challenge laid out by Linville (2014:695),

Rarely has there been a theologian who has truly experienced or understood competition and sport. Even less frequent was a theologically trained sportsperson.

Given that the sports ministry leaders who participated in the interviews in chapter 2 were also all participants in sport (see 2.5.5.1), one can see the importance that sports ministry leaders in South Africa need to become “theologically trained sportspersons”. Therefore, in answering the question “what ought to be going on”, the normative task seeks to address the challenge of the dearth of theological engagement with sport, and provide a scriptural foundation that can be applied theologically to the various paradigms and methods that sports ministry leaders utilise. The current and following chapter provides a scriptural-normative foundation for this task, presented as a *Scriptural Manifesto* for sports ministry leaders in chapter 6. Chapter 6 then reviews six theological paradigms that can be identified throughout history as having shaped Christian attitude towards sports ministry, and evaluates these against the scriptural norms identified in chapters 4 and 5.

Providing such an exhaustive study of the normative task is critical for the sustainability of sports ministry. Linville (2014:371) argues that the Sports Ministry Movement is showing signs of fatigue which can be correlated to the lack of a solid practical theological foundation. This thorough normative study will seek to address these

challenges and move towards providing theological and scriptural interpretation, which in turn will provide a foundation for equipping leaders for effective and sustainable sports ministry leaders in the South African context.

4.1.3. Scripture in the Normative Task

Osmer (2008:1619) defines the normative task of Practical Theology as involving “prophetic discernment”. He goes on to write:

Prophetic discernment is the task of listening to this Word and interpreting it in ways that address particular social conditions, events, and decisions before congregations today. Such discernment is a matter of divine disclosure and theological interpretations in the face of popular or official theologies that may be leading the world toward disaster” (Osmer 2008:1619).

The key purpose of this chapter, therefore, is to approach and “listen” to Scripture in such a way that it enables prophetic discernment in the application to equip leaders for effective and sustainable sports ministry in the South African context.

One of the potential challenges when addressing Scripture as normative for sports ministry is that the Bible itself does not provide clear teaching on whether sport or competition, “are ordained or not ordained, approved or commanded or not commanded by God” (Linville 2007:25).⁴³ This has meant that the church has historically held varying views on the biblical and theological merits of sport (Shafer 2012:96). Wiegand (2011:162) underlines that the Bible has no didactic commands or teaching with regards to sport or sports ministry. However, this does not in itself mean the Bible cannot provide a normative foundation for sports ministry leadership as, quite

⁴³ Oswald calls this the “silence of Scripture” but maintains that the silence of Scripture is an argument for Christian engagement in sport because it is not specifically condemned (Oswald 2003:34). Following a discussion on the silence of Scripture, Tucker (2011:99) concludes: “The danger with focusing on the silence of Scripture as an argument for sports ministry is that it is open to abuse. In particular, verses must not be taken out of context and twisted to condone actions and attitudes within sport that are ungodly. The role sport plays in society, and the Christian attitude towards sport, need to constantly be tested against the whole testimony of Scripture”.

clearly, there are many cultural activities and missional strategies in the 21st Century that are not mentioned in Scripture (e.g. showing evangelical films). The key approach of this chapter is, therefore, to apply theological reflection on what God has revealed in Scripture, and apply it to sport ministry praxis (White 2011:13).

This research is founded on the belief of the sufficiency of Scripture as containing “all the words of God we need for salvation, for trusting him perfectly, and for obeying Him perfectly” (Grudem 1994:127). Scripture contains “all we need for faith and life” (Peppler 2000:43) and provides the normative foundation for Jesus Christ’s life and ministry (Milne 1982:29). However, it is recognised that applying Scripture as normative into the context of sports ministry leadership in South Africa is an interpretative task. Bennett (2016:3) argues that practical theology requires “thoughtful, persuasive and hermeneutically sophisticated use of the Bible”. This necessitates engagement with what Bennett (2016:5) terms “both poles of the interpretative task – modern context and ancient text”. This study will move between both poles through a detailed exegesis of key scriptural texts and theological application to the context of sports ministry leadership, therefore entering “the hermeneutical circle of text and life” (Bennett 2016:10).

van der Walt (2007) and Newbigin (1989) have provided helpful guidance into the approach that this study has taken. van der Walt (2007:27) begins with the premise that God has revealed himself in history through the facts that have been recorded in the Bible. However, these are not just historical documents, but God “still has a message for our times”. van der Walt (2007:28) proposes a process of interpretation that he calls “history of revelation” to ensure that the interpreter does not take shortcuts in the hermeneutical task:

Firstly, go back in history to the situation as it was at the time of the passage that you are studying, and ask yourself: What was God’s message with what happened, to the people of those days? Secondly, then – and only then! – return to today, and ask yourself: What does God want to say to us, here and now, in our present times and circumstances? (van der Walt 2007:29).

Likewise, Newbigin challenges interpreters of Scripture to acknowledge their presuppositions (1989:8) and admit that interpretation cannot be done in isolation from church tradition; indeed, the “study of Scripture takes place within the continuing tradition of interpretation” (Newbigin 1989:53). Therefore, it is critical that the normative task seeks to appropriate Scripture in a way that facilitates application into the context that sports ministry leaders operate. Newbigin (1989:98) summarises it thus:

The important thing in the use of the Bible is not to understand the text but to understand the world through the text... What is required...is that one lives in the text and from that position tries to understand what is happening in the world now.

4.2. Exegesis of Key Scriptural Passages

4.2.1. Introduction

In seeking to apply the principles of interpretation outlined above, this exegesis will study five passages of Scripture, two from the Old Testament in this chapter and three from the New Testament in chapter 5, utilising seven standard steps (as, for example, Ferreira 2015).

- General background: Text, place of pericope in the book and the genre
- Socio-historical context and the required response of faith by the first readers
- Major theological concepts/themes in the pericope
- Meaning of pericope: Lexical analysis (key words) and comparison with other Scriptures
- Theological significance of the pericope: Its revelation about God and its appeal
- Present socio-historical context and the required response of faith by today’s readers
- Basic theological principles that can be derived from the pericope

Each of these steps will not only consider the chosen pericope within its scriptural context, but also seek to apply it to sports ministry leaders today. The goal of the study

of each pericope is to identify scriptural/theological principles that will contribute towards the normative foundation which will (a) enable analysis of the theological paradigms presented in the previous chapter, and (b) move this study towards the pragmatic task of providing a foundation for the equipping of leaders for effective and sustainable sports ministry in South Africa.

The passages of Scripture chosen for this study were selected because of one or more of the following reasons:

- They were identified by one or more of the research subjects in chapter 2 as key motivational Scriptures for their engagement in sports ministry (see 2.5.5.3)
- They have been highlighted by contemporary sports ministry authors as providing a biblical foundation or mandate for sports ministry.
- They make a significant contribution towards a theological foundation for sports ministry in the 21st Century.
- They provide complementary insights to the other passages that have been chosen.
- They fall within a different genre of Scripture (i.e. Pentateuch, Prophets, Gospels, Epistles) thus giving a sweep through the whole of Bible history.

The five passages of Scripture that have been chosen because they fit the one or more of the above criteria are:

- Genesis 1:26-28
- Isaiah 61:1-3
- Matthew 28:18-20
- Romans 12:1-2
- 1 Corinthians 9:19-27

This chapter will conduct an exegesis of the Old Testament passages and draw principles from the pericope that contribute towards a scriptural/theological foundation for sports ministry. The following chapter will continue with an exegesis of the New

Testament passages, before presenting a summary of all the principles in the form of a Scriptural Manifesto for sports ministry leaders.

4.2.2. Genesis 1:26-28

Weir (2000:24) states that “The starting point for any theology of sport is ‘Who is God and what does he do?’” Genesis, as the book of origins, is therefore the correct place to start when seeking to provide a biblical/theological foundation for sports ministry (Weir 2008:5). Together with Weir (2000), McCown and Gin (2003), Daniels and Weir (2004), White (2011), Treat (2015), the normative foundation proposed in this chapter begins with key principles drawn from examining the Creation account. This study will specifically focus on the pericope of Genesis 1:26-28, which presents the account of God creating humanity, and highlights God’s initial intent with regard to the nature of His relationship with humankind, and the responsibility given to humanity as stewards of creation (McCown & Gin 2003:36). In particular, the exegesis will focus on interpreting how man, being made in God’s image, and being given the task to “rule over” the earth is thus provided with a mandate for the equipping of leaders for effective and sustainable sports ministry.

4.2.2.1. General background

Genesis 1:26-28 (NIV)

Then God said, ‘Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, [a] and over all the creatures that move along the ground.’

*So God created mankind in his own image,
in the image of God he created them;
male and female he created them.*

God blessed them and said to them, ‘Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground.’

Genesis 1:26-28 (NIV) is the climax of the opening chapter of the book of Genesis, the first book of the Bible. This is the story of beginnings (Fretheim 1994:336).⁴⁴ Brueggemann (1982:11) states that the first eleven chapters of Genesis “are among the most important in Scripture”. As we shall see below, hugely important theological themes emerge about God, humanity, and the relationship between Creator and created which forms a critical foundation for a biblical approach to sports ministry.

Genesis 1:1 is a key verse that sets the tone for what is to follow. Wenham (1987:15) translates the verse as follows: “*In the beginning God created everything*”. The beginning was not a point before Genesis 1:1, but encapsulates everything God did during this seven-day period-of-time (Walton 2009:11). Creation was initiated and carried out by God as a “once for all moment that stands at the beginning of time” (Fretheim 1994:336). In this moment in time, God brought order out of chaos (Wenham 1987:21), demonstrating that by His Word He not only creates but sustains His creation (Atkinson 1990:22).

Genesis itself does not identify its human author, nor does it seek to answer all our questions concerning the origin of the universe, thereby reinforcing the biblical principle that believers need to respond in faith (Tucker 2009a:68).⁴⁵ As with Choong (2008:10 who quotes Sailhamer 1992:2) and Simango (2006:3), this study acknowledges that it is plausible to retain the traditional view of Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch (e.g. Mark 12:26), under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit (2 Timothy 3:16).

Together with Drane (1987:244) and Fretheim (1994:335), the researcher prefers not to use the confusing terms “myth” to describe the genre of literature found in Genesis. Rather, these accounts are stories to be appropriated by faith. As the term “myth” has no clear definition (Drane 1987:244), it can be a misleading word when applied to

⁴⁴ Genesis itself means “beginnings” or “origin” indicating that this is a record of historical events (Choong 2008:10).

⁴⁵ Over the past 150 years, there has been a tremendous amount of research and debate into Genesis 1 which has considered authorship, comparative studies with other near-Eastern creation accounts, scientific developments, and the influence of various theological movements (Fretheim 1994:335). It is beyond the scope of this exegesis to explore these in any detail.

Genesis and it is insufficient to say, as Walton (2009:9) does, that Genesis is an “alternative encapsulation of how the world worked and how it came to work that way”. Rather, a distinction is to be made between the mythologies of other ancient creation accounts and the Genesis account, not just in form and content, but also in their ultimate goal (Wenham 1987:10).⁴⁶ Genesis itself is a story that unfolds in order to transmit a message to those seeking to discover more about God, humanity, and the community of faith (see Drane 1987:242-243).

Many authors highlight the unique literary style of Genesis 1. It is termed “elevated prose”, an “overture” (Wenham 1987:10), “a hymn to the creator” (Wenham 1987:18), a song of praise to “the majestic Creator of all” (Atkinson 1990:16). Drane (1987:245) argues that the hymn of praise may have been a confession of faith utilised in the context of Israel’s worship.⁴⁷

4.2.2.2. Socio-historical context and the required response of faith by the first readers

The first readers would have been the people of Israel. For the Israelites, it was a faith-inspiring passage that spoke of God’s divine freedom as Creator, not bound to either the creation or human whims, and providing security in the character and power of God (Brueggemann 1982:10).⁴⁸

⁴⁶ As Walton argues (2009:10), understanding ancient mythologies helps us grasp their worldview and can provide helpful comparative insight into the Israelite worldview, which was founded upon the Genesis account. However, this researcher does not find sufficient evidence in the comparative studies to state categorically that the Genesis account was either influenced by these as sources, or written to deliberately refute other mythologies (as Walton 1987:9). Rather, the existence of other mythologies can re-enforce faith that there was a shared narrative passed through the centuries which influenced many societies. Yet, in Genesis, God has given the only eye-witness account – that of the Creator himself.

⁴⁷ Simango (2006:23) proposes a structure based upon two sets of three days. The first three days of forming, and days four to six are of filling. Or, as Walton (2009:11) says: God separates and then names. The entire sequence leads to the climax, which are our verses of study in Genesis 1:26-28, the creation of man (Simango 2006:24).

⁴⁸ Some commentators discuss the possibility that one of the Genesis “sources” wrote during the exile and that the first readers would have been exilic Israelites in Babylon (e.g. see Brueggemann 1982:20). However, given the traditional belief that Moses authored the Pentateuch, this researcher is content to believe that the post-Exodus Israelite community would have had access to the Genesis account. What is certain is that Genesis was clearly viewed as part of the Israelite Canon of Scripture (Brueggemann 1982:3) with divine authorship and therefore had significant theological implications.

Fretheim (1994) provides very helpful insight when considering the context and response of the first Israelite readers. He accurately describes the opening chapters of Genesis as a “confession of faith” and “an indispensable theological resource” integrating both theology and science “in a common search for the truth about the world” (Fretheim 1994:338). This again re-enforces the critical role that Genesis 1 plays in formulating a scriptural perspective for the theme of sports ministry.

Brueggemann (1982:2) also identifies the word *promise* as the theological focus for Israel. All the promises contained within the writing and Law of Moses were founded upon the revelation of God as Creator and sustainer of the world. Here is insight into God's divine activity and the assurance of continued ordering and blessing for His people (Fretheim 1994:357).⁴⁹ Genesis 1, therefore, demonstrated to the Israelites that God had purpose in creation (Brueggemann 1982:13), and provides the context for the cycle of creation-judgement-grace that would be part of the ongoing narrative of Hebrew Scriptures (Fretheim 1994:336), against which covenantal theology would emerge to demonstrate God's continued grace towards humanity and His chosen people.

4.2.2.3. Major theological concepts/themes in the pericope

Genesis 1 is not simply a record of a historical event but is essentially theological in nature, revealing the intimate connection and distinct nature of Creator and creation (Brueggemann 1982:26) which are “bound together in a distinctive and delicate way” (Brueggemann 1982:10). Genesis 1 gives the theological foundation to understanding the creative nature of God who, as we discover throughout the Bible, is also Redeemer, Sustainer and Re-creator of all things. As Atkinson (1990:22) states, “God's creative activity in history is not only the preservation of what he has made; it is a continuous, creative engagement with his world, leading it forward to its future glory”. We learn from Genesis 1 that God not only creates but interacts through what

⁴⁹ Not only so, but Kärkkäinen (2004:16) gives deeper insight into how this shaped the Hebraic understanding of God; “God is known by what God does... and God is remembered as having a definable, discernible character by those whom God has met.”

Fretheim (1994:344) calls “word-deed events”, demonstrating the reality of a unique relationship between God and his creation.⁵⁰

These foundational truths are critical in understanding the theological significance of Genesis 1:26-28. The opening sequence of Scripture sweeps the reader towards the crowning moment of creation (Gregory 2003:19), clearly demonstrating that the emergence of human life was the pinnacle of God’s creative work (Tucker 2009a:71).⁵¹

Three major theological concepts that emerge from Genesis 1:26-28 speak of the uniqueness of human life, the nature of the relationship between created humanity and God, their Creator (Brueggemann (1982:32) and the nature of the relationship between humanity and the rest of creation. Unlike the rest of creation, mankind was made in God’s image (Choong 2008:11). This phrase will be explored in greater depth below, but the key elements of uniqueness and relationship are the fundamental theological principles of this passage; there is indeed a “profound significance to human life” (Atkinson 1990:16).

The author of Genesis 1 has deliberately brought the creation account to its climax (Wenham 1987:27) and given the first man and woman a mandate to rule over the rest of his creation as his divinely appointed stewards, with a mandate of authority and responsibility as God’s “viceroys and co-workers” (Wolters 2005:16). Through this first couple, God painted a picture of what He “intended normalcy to be” (McCown & Gin 2003:37). This role of stewardship was a mandate to serve for mutual benefit, not to subjugate in an abusive manner. “The role of the human person is to see to it that the creation becomes fully the creation willed by God” (Brueggemann 1982:33). The responsibility of stewardship is therefore critical in any theological foundation for Christian leadership, including leaders within sports ministry. The unique function of

⁵⁰ As Brueggemann (1982:17) summarises: “Creator creates creation. Subject, verb, object: This governing sentence affirms that the creator is not disinterested and the creation is not autonomous. This is the peculiar “grammar of creation” in Israel. The text, then, is a proclamation of covenanting as the shape of reality. The claim of this tradition is opposed both to a materialism which regards the world (nature, cosmos) as autonomous and to a transcendentalism which regards the world as of the same stuff as God. The term “create” asserts distance and belonging to. It is affirmed that the world has distance from God and a life of its own. At the same time, it is confessed that the world belongs to God and has no life without reference to God”.

⁵¹ The clustering of the word “create” in verses 26-28 demonstrate that special attention is to be given at this point (Brueggemann 1982:32).

stewardship could only be maintained if humanity would maintain an intimate relationship with God (Choong 2008:18). The pericope reveals that God created humanity with a responsibility that could only be carried out inasmuch as they remained dependent upon their Creator, who desired fellowship with mankind based upon trust and faith (Choong 2008:18).

4.2.2.4. Meaning of the pericope: Lexical analysis (key words) and comparison with other Scriptures

This discussion of the meaning of the pericope will focus upon three of the key words/phrases, seeking to answer the following questions:

- Who is referred to when the passage quotes God as saying “Let us make man” (Gen. 1:26)?
- What does it mean that God created mankind “in our image, in our likeness” (Gen. 1:26, 27)?
- What is the scope of the authority given to humanity to “rule” over the rest of creation (Gen. 1:26, 28)?

a. Let *us* make man.

Elohim, the most commonly used word for God in the Old Testament and mentioned thirty-five times in the creation narrative, is the central character of Genesis 1. Yet, at this pinnacle point of creation, the divinely inspired author reveals that there is a plurality at work in the creative act. God is not alone in the heavenly realms, but is here consulting others in divine communication (Fretheim 1994:345).⁵² Other

⁵² Simango (2006:33) presents four options as to who the “us” is that God is referring: 1. That He is addressing the ground as he creates from the dust, 2. That He is addressing himself and the plurality of majesty/self-deliberation, 3. That He addresses the God-head, or 4. That He is addressing the heavenly court. The first two options seem highly unlikely. To claim that the “us” includes something that God has created is to elevate an element of creation to some level of personhood which is not consistent with the rest of Scripture. God is clearly represented as entirely distinct from creation (Atkinson 1990:15) and for him to speak to the dust in this way would appear demeaning. Likewise, to see him addressing his own majesty as some sort of “royal we” would appear to diminish the obvious intention of the author, which is to give some deeper revelation of what was happening at this key moment of creation. The third option, that God is addressing the Trinity, may be speculative but does also sit comfortably with the rest of Scripture. In Genesis 1 it can be noted that the Spirit of God is said to be “hovering over the waters”. And Jesus, the Son of God, is revealed to be the “Word” who

examples in Scripture also show God speaking to the heavenly court, as he addresses the heavenly hosts in other parts of Scripture (see Job 38:7; 1 Kgs 22:19; Jer. 23:18-23). Simango, (together with Wenham 1987:28 and Fretheim 1994:345) believes that God is addressing the heavenly court of angels, calling them to attention as he prepares for “the master stroke of creation” (Wenham 1987:28). However, the problem with this argument is that God says “let *us* make man in *our* image”. As we shall see below, the uniqueness of humanity is that mankind reflects God’s image – and not the image of angels of the heavenly courts.

Therefore, one can conclude that God’s proclamation to *us* is primarily a revelation that God was not alone. He pronounced his creative purposes with the heavenly courts, demonstrating His existence in relationship before creation of the world. And, through the revelation of the testimony of the rest of Scripture (e.g. John 1:1, Col. 1:16-17), God has given insight that the creative act was the work of the Divine Trinity, all active in perfect harmony in the godhead – the divine *us*.

b. In our image, in our likeness

The phrase *imago Dei* is unique to Genesis and has been the basis for much discussion and dialogue over the centuries (Fretheim 1994:345). The interpretation of the phrase *Imago Dei* is problematic because of the scarcity of its usage within the rest of Scripture (Wenham 1987:29) and many authors have sought to identify the characteristics of humanity that most clearly reflect the image of God.

Walton (2009:20) helpfully explains in the ancient Near East; “an image was believed to contain the essence of that which it represented”. He goes on to say that the image of a god was meant to conduct the god’s work on earth and the biblical emphasis is similar, that those made in the image of God share His qualities and do His work (Walton 2009:21).⁵³ Additionally, Walton (2009:21) does not draw a distinction

was with God in the beginning (John 1:1) who was the “firstborn over all creation” through whom all was created (Colossians 1:16-17). Therefore, the opening chapter of the Bible has Trinitarian evidence in God, Spirit, and Word which is further enlightened by the rest of Scripture. “Let us” could therefore be a revelation into the communion of the godhead, and insight into the nature of the “image” in which man was created.

⁵³ Drane (1987:250) highlights the distinction between God’s prohibition of making idols in his image and him creating human beings in His image. He states that “God is described by what he does, not by reference to

between the words *image* and *likeness*, but rather sees them as complementary words that differ in nuance. For the purpose of this exegesis, we are considering the *likeness of God* as being one element within the *Imago Dei* (and see Choong 2008:29).

Simango (2006:22) believes there is actually, insufficient context in Genesis 1 to determine the full meaning of this phrase.⁵⁴ Tyler (2003:64) has proposed a harmony of eight aspects as depicted in *figure 4.2* (below) which all contribute to our understanding of what it means to be created in the image of God. It may be that this is not an exhaustive list, but it provides a holistic understanding which seems appropriate given that the Bible itself does not give an exhaustive definition. As Fretheim (1994:345) states, “the ‘image’ refers to the entire human being, not to some part.”

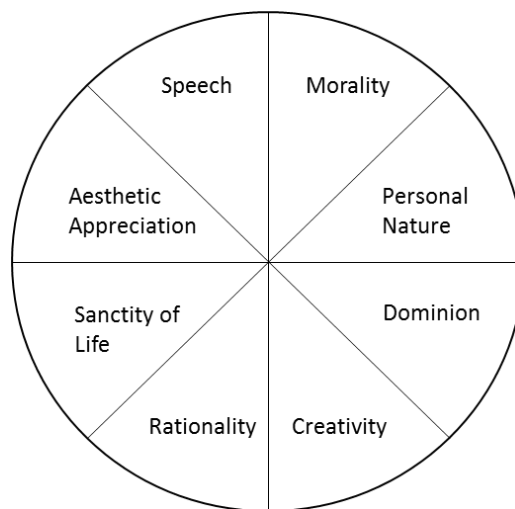


Figure 4.2: Tyler's eight aspects of the Image of God (Tyler 2003:64)

what he is made of... When God made men and women ‘to be like himself’, he does not mean them to look like him, or to be made of the same stuff. Rather he intends them to be a kind of extension of his own personality and a fundamental part of his own activity in the world”.

⁵⁴ Erickson (1983:498) summarises the three main views that have been proposed to explain what it means to be made in the image of God. These are the Substantive, Relational and Functional views. The Substantive view suggests that man, as made in God's image, has certain characteristics that reflect God (Choon 2008:28). This includes “mental endowment, power of thought, freedom of will, capacity for the eternal, the true, and the good” (Simango 2006:14). This would include Augustine, Aquinas' and Calvin's emphases on the power of reason, rationality and the soul respectively (Simango 2006:10). The relational view, espoused by Karl Barth, focuses on both the vertical and horizontal aspects of relationship between God and man, and man to man/woman, as being the critical element of being made in God's image (Simango 2006:16). In contrast, the functional view holds that the essential element in being made in God's image is that human being function in the world “like that of God, the ruler of creation” (Choong 2008:31). It is the researcher's view that none of these suggestions adequately define the *imago Dei*, and agrees with Wenham (1987:31) who states; “there may be elements of truth in many of them”. Recent authors have recognised that the image of God is more than likely a harmony of the three views and that, in fact, to be created in the image of God is a matter of substance, relationship and function.

Although Scripture doesn't clearly define the Image of God, it does expound upon the theme in two ways. Firstly, Psalm 8:1-5 gives a clear reflection of the account of the creation of man and provides a smooth transition to Psalm 8:6-8 which speaks of the dominion/authority of humankind. Psalm 8:4-5 (NIV) states, "what is man that you are mindful of him, the son of man that you care for him? You made him [man] a little lower than the heavenly beings and crowned him with glory and honour", giving credence to the relational and substantive views respectively. Then verse six implies the practical outworking of this relational status: "You made him ruler over the works of your hands; you put everything under his feet". Psalm 8 seems a clear indicator that the three views (see footnote 13) should harmonise as we seek a fuller understanding of the *imago Dei*.

Secondly, in Colossians 1:15 (NIV), Paul applies the language of image to Christ; "He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation", and in verse 19-20 he goes on to state, "For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross." It is therefore clear that the ultimate picture of the *imago Dei* is found in Jesus Christ (Simango 2006:22) who perfectly held in balance the substantive, relational and functional aspects described above.

The fact that God became man to reflect the perfect *imago Dei* again demonstrates the value of His creation within God's heart. One can conclude that being created in the image of God is therefore essentially about the value and worth ascribed to man by God, which, in turn, brings glory back to God (see Psalm 8:9 and Isaiah 43:7) (Choong 2008:20). These are critical elements when related to human activity, such as sport, which in some way can reflect the worth God has ascribed to human beings and which, therefore, bring glory to Him (Daniels & Weir 2004:9).

c. To rule over

In verses 26 God gives man a mandate to "rule over" the animals, fish "and over all the creatures". This is then repeated in verse 28 together with the instruction to "be

fruitful and increase in number. Fretheim (1994:345) views this as a “power-sharing relationship” and God as “the supreme delegator of responsibility”. However, this is not dominion in terms of a tyrannical dominion (Drane 1987:252), but the Hebrew verb (*rada*) denotes taking care of, being nurturing, and not being exploitative (Fretheim 1994:346). It is also not dominion in isolation, but as a reflection of a vibrant and personal relationship, as “collaborators” with God who has personally charged His creation with a great responsibility (Breed 2013:167).

The purpose of this being linked to the creation account is that it further highlights the importance of God making man in his image. Walton (2009:21) states that this is “a royal role for people” since in the ancient Near East these are consistent with the roles and responsibility given to kings. Quite clearly, the mandate to have dominion is intrinsically related to being made in God’s image; “being made in the image of God is a prerequisite for being given dominion” (Simango 2006:33). The scope of the authority to “rule” is therefore directly linked to ruling in the manner which reflects being created in the image of God (Wolters 2005:41). Given how the Creation story unfolds and the disastrous consequences of the Fall in Genesis 3, this instruction to “rule” must therefore be considered in the light of the broken relationship between God, people and creation that occurred as a result of the Fall, and the need for redemption to which the whole Genesis narrative alludes (Wolters 2005:83).⁵⁵ However, the Genesis account makes it clear that God’s intent was for human beings to have the role of maintaining the world as God intended it to be, within the order, care and structure with which He created it (Wolters 2005:41). McCown and Gin (2003:36, 44) apply this principle of stewardship to sport both in terms of God’s original intent, and in the process of redemption:

Sport has grown out of the exercise of humankind’s abilities and responsibilities as stewards and developers of God’s created order... redeemed people of sport have the ability and opportunity to restore sport the way God intended by restoring sport back to its proper relationship with God, self, others and Creation.

⁵⁵ Redemption is a critical concept that will be given further attention below in the exegesis of Isaiah 61:1-3.

4.2.2.5. Theological significance of the pericope: Its revelation about God and its appeal

Brueggemann (1982:33) rightly states that the Creation text is “revolutionary”. We learn that God is not only the all-powerful God who created the universe, but also the relational and personal God who blesses and commissions humanity.

The key ingredient of this passage, even if not fully understandable or definable, is the theological significance of humankind being created in God’s image. Choong (2008:22) is correct to highlight two key implications of this truth: (a) that human beings, therefore, owe their allegiance to God which is to be reflected in “adoration and worship”, and (b) the dignity and worth of human beings is founded upon the doctrine of the image of God. This is further reinforced in Genesis 1:31 where God, with seeming great satisfaction, declares his creation to be “very good” (Drane 1987:246).

The revolutionary nature of this pericope can be further defined through the word “fellowship” which the Creator freely offers, and the creature can apprehend by trust and faith (Choong 2008:18). The foundation of the entire biblical story is laid bare as we see Creator God bringing into reality the first man with whom he desires to have fellowship (Drane 1987:253). This provides the backdrop for a drama that is going to unfold over millennia as God reveals his grace against ever-increasing rebellion (Fretheim 1994:357), ultimately finding its conclusion in the recreating work of Jesus Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17).

Additionally, the significance of the pericope is seen in the nature of human relationships. Drane (1987:253-254) identifies the three levels of relationship that are here identified and the implications thereof. Firstly, in social relationships, the *imago Dei* confirms the equality of all people. Secondly, in sexual relationships, the foundation is laid for committed relationships between man and woman in the covenant of marriage (further expounded in Genesis 2:24). And thirdly, a foundation is laid for the institution of family, as God’s plan for procreation relates to his having created male and female in order that the earth be populated (Drane 1987:254).

The implication is that human relationships, including those developed through sports ministry, are dependent upon God and will flourish in direct proportion to the continuing relationship between God and man.

4.2.2.6. Present socio-historical context and the required response of faith by today's readers

Although God did not create sport, Genesis 1:26-28 affirms that God did create human beings with a capacity to invent games and for play, and gives a foundation and framework for the role of sport in human society (Weir 2008:5).

It is ultimately through the lens of the work of Christ on the cross that all Christians can truly understand Genesis 1:26-28 and apply what has been highlighted above to the function and role of leadership in sports ministry. Creator God has re-created through Jesus Christ, restoring the broken relationship which is still apprehended through faith and trust. Therefore, the Gospel message finds its foundation and origin in Genesis 1 (Brueggemann 1982:26), and the mandate to be God's co-workers is fulfilled through Christians being co-heirs with Christ and God's ambassadors to the world (2 Corinthians 5:20).

Understanding humanity's origins has implication for both moral conduct and ethical concerns. The apostle Paul demonstrates that our call to holiness is directly linked to being created in God's image (see Eph. 4:24; Col.3:10). Therefore, as contemporary Christians uphold the doctrine of *imago Dei*, they will not only be able to affirm mankind's place in the created order (Simango 2006:1), but also find the necessary motivation and spiritual authority to grow in righteousness and holiness. This in turn will have an ethical outworking. Choong (2008:30) identifies that, "Humanity in the *Imago Dei* is not to be dehumanised or brutalised for the sake of economic expedience, self-preservation and self-glorification... or by following the philosophy of survival of the fittest". Rather, those who have experienced the re-creating power of Christ, should seek to be good stewards of the worlds' resources, recognising that all humanity is equal, and seeking justice for all (Gregory 2003:19). Any human activity that degrades the dignity of the *imago Dei* should be regarded as contrary to God's

will and wholeheartedly condemned by Christians (Drane 1987:252). White (2011:121) makes this application directly to the ethical basis for sports ministry when he states,

Sport as a human performance derives its meaning from the fact that this embodied and physical activity is upheld by God through his creational laws. Athletes as human beings are created by God, who gives them a reality of their own with powers specific to human reality. Since these delegated powers are from God himself, it is reasonable to infer that they are ordered and structured for good ends.

Genesis 1:26-28 also gives Christians engaged in sport a sense of purpose, as stewards within the created order of sport. Paul states in Ephesians 2:10 that “we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do”. Therefore, as Christians discover and fulfil their purpose, they experience the joy of living a life worthy of the Lord, bearing fruit, and growing in the knowledge of God (see Colossians 1:10; Choong 2008:39). When applied to sport, this provides a fresh perspective focused on seeking to please God in and through the activity of sport (Daniels & Weir 2004:8).

Tyler (2003:64) gives the following summary of the importance of this pericope for Christians today:

To know that we bear the image of God is revolutionary! It is transforming truth. We could never know it for sure without revelation, although we might suspect that the profound differences between ourselves and animals must have an explanation! This truth should affect every aspect of our lives and every area of thought.

4.2.2.7. Basic theological principles that can be derived from the pericope

In summary, one can state the following theological principles that emerge from Genesis 1:26-28 (NIV) in relation to providing a biblical/theological foundation for leaders in sports ministry:

- God intentionally created human beings as the pinnacle of His creation. The origin of humanity is with God who invites us to live in relationship with Him which requires a response of faith and trust, demonstrated in worship and obedience. Ultimately, engagement in sport should be a medium through which one's relationship with God is demonstrated and developed.
- Being made in the image of God is a revolutionary theology that gives sports ministry leaders dignity and worth, but also moral and ethical responsibility. Sports ministry leaders acknowledge that the gift and talent of sport comes with a responsibility to discern and exercise God's purpose in the world.
- God has entrusted mankind with the task of stewarding the world. Sports ministry leaders, in dependence upon God, must provide proactive stewardship within the created order of sport, seeking to redeem it to God's original intent. The mandate to "rule" provides human beings with a purpose that enables them to find fulfilment and joy through serving the Lord in His world.

4.2.3. Isaiah 61:1-3

Isaiah 61:1-3 has been chosen as a representative pericope to provide a contribution from the Old Testament prophets that was written in the expectation of the redemptive work of God's chosen Messiah. The prophetic literature of the Old Testament is rarely referred to in sports ministry writing, and therefore this exegesis contributes fresh material to a biblical/theological foundation. Additionally, Isaiah 61:1-3 contributes as an important passage of Scripture because, (a) Jesus Christ quoted this passage at the commencement of his public ministry (Luke 4:18-19); (b) it provides an eschatological perspective to underscore the important theme of the redemptive work of sport⁵⁶; c) it provides a framework for the social transformative work of sports ministry – an emphasis that came through in several of the interviews contained in chapter 2.⁵⁷

⁵⁶ As McCown and Gin (2003:49) who write, "Sport... is redeemed and restored through the hearts of the people of sport who demonstrate restoration through the activity of sport".

⁵⁷ One of the interviewees specifically references Isaiah 61/Luke 4. Others used different passages, but the researcher has chosen Isaiah 61 because it provides a composite of theological themes in a concise passage.

4.2.3.1. General background

Isaiah 61:1-3 (NIV)

The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is on me, because the Lord has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all who mourn, and provide for those who grieve in Zion – to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of joy instead of mourning, and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair. They will be called oaks of righteousness, a planting of the Lord for the display of his splendour.

Isaiah 61:1-3 (NIV) is in the concluding section of the majestic prophetic book of Isaiah, which spans history from creation (42:5) to eternity (9:7) (Baker 2009:3). Baker (2009:3) highlights that the key theme of Isaiah is “God himself, who is referred to hundreds of times”. The author declares himself as “Isaiah son of Amoz” (Is. 1:1) who gave his message during the reigns of four Judean kings, Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah, during the latter half of the eighth century B.C.

Despite the self-identification of the author, many scholars believe that the book of Isaiah was actually written by two, three, or indeed a collection of authors (Hanson 1995:186). However, scholars cannot agree on how the composition came about or indeed on the natural breakdown of the parts of the book (Kruger 2002:1557). Most see a division between Isaiah 1-39 and 40-66, with many seeing the latter part of the book again divided into 40-55 and 56-66, with many “rival and contradictory accounts” emerging for the origin, arrangement and editing of this material (Seitz 2001:311).⁵⁸ What does seem clear is that Isaiah 40-66 was written to an audience living in a

⁵⁸ It is beyond the scope of this exegesis to go into detail on the various views espoused. Yet it is worth noting that chapter 61, as part of Isaiah in the canon of Scripture, has never existed in any other form or collection than what we have now received, and as Seitz (2001:321) persuasively states, “we are reading this material on something of the terms those who preserved it meant for us... as an extension of the vision of Isaiah.” Additionally, Webb (1996:26) is surely right to highlight the unity of the entire prophecy. There is certainly “varied content”, but it all contributes to a single theme as “an integrated whole” (Webb 1996:26), which brings a vision of God (e.g. 6:1) and expounds on His interaction with His people and the world over the course of history.

different context than Isaiah 1-39 (Wiersbe 1992:20). As such, Isaiah 61 must be interpreted within that broader section.

Much of Isaiah is made up of verse/prose, and Isaiah 61 is no exception (Webb 1996:30). This is Old Testament prophetic literature par excellence, bringing God's message out of the lives and experience of God's prophets (Petersen 2001:3).⁵⁹ It is also particularly important to note, given the content of this pericope, that the prophets not only spoke on behalf of God, but also "spoke on behalf of those without power and on behalf of those oppressed by the powerful" (Petersen 2001:8). Isaiah 61:1-3, with its message of hope to the poor, follows closely upon Isaiah 58 and the scathing condemnation of those who practised religion without compassion for the poor.

Given the debate around the structure of Isaiah 40-66, there is also uncertainty as to whether or not Isaiah 61 forms one of the so-called Servant Songs (Kruger 2002:1557).⁶⁰ Kruger (2002) has conducted a fuller study of whether Isaiah 61 warrants the title of a Servant Song and gives the following persuasive conclusion (Kruger 2002:1572).

The passage of Isaiah 61 whether in full or in part merits the status of a servant song. The main argument used to promote this view is based on the mediatorial role taken up by the figure of Isaiah 61 in relation to the preceding four servant songs. This means *inter alia* that the personality referred to in Isaiah 61 cannot simply be some figurehead, but an active role player, the servant of the Lord himself. He acts as transferor of privileges/benefits granted by the Lord to the advantage of his people.

⁵⁹ Prophetic literature was not simply about predicting the future, but rather about speaking God's word into Israel's current situation, and even addressing the past (Petersen 2001:4). The primary concern of the prophets was to call God's covenant people to obedience (Hanson 1995:187). The nature of Isaiah's prophecy is correctly deemed "visionary literature" or "visionary proclamation" (Webb 1996:39).

⁶⁰ The Servant Songs (42:1-7; 49:1-9; 50:4-9; 52:13-53), written about the "servant of the Lord", are a striking feature of the preceding chapters (Payne 1993:463). God enters into a covenant with the servant, sometimes referring to Israel, other times a collection of people, and sometimes to an individual (Payne 1993:463), who is to be a light for the Gentiles (42:6), secure forgiveness through great personal sacrifice (52:14), and be a source of provision for all (55:1-7) (Webb 1996:33). Webb (1996:39) sees Isaiah 61:3 as "the final appearance of the Servant as a Spirit-anointed preacher".

This exegesis will, therefore, interpret the passage in light of the redemptive work of God's chosen servant, with the resultant applications for leaders engaged in sports ministry in the South African context today.

4.2.3.2. Socio-historical context and the required response of faith by the first readers

Despite a very low degree of "historical referentiality" (Seitz 2001:315), scholars agree that the passage of study is speaking into the lives and experience of post-exilic Jews (Seitz 2001:315). If, as stated by Webb (1996:36), the original Isaiah is the author, then chapters 40-66 are speaking into a future situation which God revealed to him.⁶¹

Isaiah 61 was written to provide comfort and hope to Judeans who had returned to Jerusalem from Babylon and were finding life extremely difficult (Baker 2009:7). Following the crumbling of the Babylonian empire, Persia implemented a new policy to repatriate the Jews that had been exiled to Babylon, allowing them to return to their own land in 539 B.C. (Baker 2009:7). Despite the completion of rebuilding the temple in 515 B.C. (Hanson 1995:186), the late 6th century was a time of severe hardship and unfulfilled expectation, leaving the Jews in a vulnerable position (Drane 1987:178). It was to these returned exiles that the selected pericope was initially addressed and in it they would have found much to encourage them in their situation (Webb 1996:235). As per this study of the South African context in chapter three, there are clearly parallels between the Judean post-exilic experience and the experience of South Africans in the post-Apartheid reality, giving further credence to the importance of this pericope.

Isaiah 61 contains themes that are consistent with the entire section of Isaiah 40-66 (Hanson 1995:192). The original readers were being called to respond in faith that, although their current outlook looked very bleak, the Lord had not forgotten them.⁶²

⁶¹ However, Seitz (2001:317) describes the speech as a "self-consciously later speech" compared to that of the earlier chapters which may indicate a second author or editor of this section. In chapters 1-39, Assyria and Egypt are "centre stage", now it is the turn of Babylon and Persia (Wiersbe 1992:21).

⁶² Wiersbe (1992:20) notes that the Jewish rabbis called Isaiah 40-66 the "Book of Consolation", and that God wanted to bring comfort to repentant people. Isaiah 61 forms part of the prophetic hope that culminates in the chapter which depicts a "lively hope" in Zion-Jerusalem, with the inclusion of the nations in the worship of the Lord (Seitz 2001:318).

4.2.3.3. Major theological concepts/themes in the pericope

The main theological concepts that come into focus in this pericope are redemption, justice, and righteousness which reveal God's glory.

Seitz (2001:513) importantly connects Isaiah 61:1 with Isaiah 59:21. The one speaking in Isaiah 61 is speaking under the anointing of the Spirit of the Lord. In 59:21, the anointing of the Spirit is viewed as confirmation of the covenantal promise that God has made to his people, namely that His Word would remain with them forever. The anointed Servant in 61:1-3 is therefore confirmed both in terms of his calling and the content of his message, with the task of reiterating God's covenantal promise. His audience are "those who grieve in Zion" (61:3), and these words are designed to remind them of God's covenantal love; to once more place their hopes and expectations in God's word. The purpose is not to give a new call, but "it offers a clarification of a call already under way" (Peterson 2001:514). The message is one of "good news" (61:1) and illustrates the nature of God's redeeming power. In the passage the broken-hearted are healed, the captives set free, the prisoners are released from darkness, and the mourners are comforted. God's redemption plan is that they will be able to trade their ashes for a crown of beauty, their mourning for the oil of gladness, and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of heaviness. After years of struggle and toil, the servant of God was proclaiming that God's redemption was at hand, and it would be manifest through the restoration of "justice and peace" (Hanson 1995:224). The theological implication is clear, "Israel's future does not depend on divine caprice but is guided by God's faithful adherence to the covenant relationship" (Hanson 1995:225).

Justice is therefore not administered because of any intrinsic worth of the recipients, but purely because of God's faithfulness to the covenant He made with His people. As Hanson (1995:24) rightly points out, the time of justice and peace pictured here is the evidence that God is on the throne, and that "neither whimsy nor blind fate guides the destiny of Israel, but the principle of justice" (Hanson 1995:225).

The work of God does not simply change the circumstances of the Jews, but also intrinsically impacts their status before God. The pericope inexorably leads to the concluding statement that “They will be called oaks of righteousness, a planting of the Lord for the display of his splendour” (61:3). God’s redemptive work leads to Him declaring His people as righteous; they will “meet the divine approval” (Kruger 2002:1561).⁶³

4.2.3.4. Meaning of the pericope: Lexical analysis (key words) and comparison with other Scriptures

The meaning is further derived through considering three of the key phrases within the pericope, namely, (a) “anointed me to preach good news” (vs. 1); (b) “to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favour” (vs. 2); and (c) “they will be called oaks of righteousness” (vs. 3). Each phrase will be considered in turn as each is critically important to the practical application for sports ministry leaders below.

a. Anointed me to preach good news.

As has been considered above, this passage is quite likely the fifth servant song contained in Isaiah 40-66. There is perhaps a dual identification here as the prophet is quite likely speaking of his own prophetic calling (Watts 2000:871), but he may also be representing a group or a “type” of the ideal servant (Hanson 1995:223 and Kruger 2002:1579). Webb (1996: 233) correctly underlines the importance of this introduction and his announcement; “no-one introduces him; he speaks for himself, demanding our attention quite unselfconsciously and without arrogance, but with tremendous authority.” Hanson (1995:224) goes on to describe the role of the servant as “inextricably tied up with commitment to God’s will... as an agent of God’s mercy to the broken and the oppressed...”. The endowment of the Spirit therefore gives the Servant authority to fulfil God’s mandate of proclamation.

⁶³ Seitz (2001:514) connects this back to Isaiah 60:21 which also highlights righteousness as the end goal of God’s work, through which He will receive glory; “for the display of my splendour”.

The endowment of the Spirit has previously been associated with God's chosen servant (Seitz 2001:513). Isaiah 42:1, the first of the servant songs, introduces the servant as one upon whom God says, "I will put my Spirit on him and he will bring justice to the nations". Usage of the word "anointing" pictures the anointing oil that was associated with the Priesthood (see Exodus 30:22-23; 40:10-11) and denoted the setting apart for "divine service" (Van Engen 1993:24) and the "consecration for a task" (Baker 2009:182). Old Testament references to the anointing of people other than kings or prophets are scarce (see 1 Chron. 19:16 for one example) and therefore one can conclude that there is special significance in this passage as the Servant claims to have not only received the Spirit, but has been anointed for a divine task. Isaiah 60:1 therefore indicates the fulfilment and outworking of this task, as the anointing of the Spirit gives the servant authority to pronounce radical transformation in the situation of the Jews. The message itself "bringing good news to the poor" also reflects other incidences in Isaiah (40:9; 41:27; 52:7) where a herald is appointed to bring good tidings to those living in Jerusalem (Seitz 2001:513).

It is little wonder that this verse was adopted by Jesus Christ at the onset of his Messianic mission, a theme which will be expounded below (Webb 1996:38).

b. To proclaim the year of the LORD's favour

The Good News that the herald proclaims, the special message that he has been anointed to preach, is the arrival of the "year of the Lord's favour". The year of the Lord's favour was specifically referring to the year of Jubilee as described in Leviticus 25:8-17, 23-55; 27:16-25; and Numbers 36:4. It was the fiftieth year, completing a cycle of seven sabbatical years, where the "land was left fallow and returned to its ancestral owners and all Israelite slaves were freed" (Powell 2009:210). Although there is no evidence that the Israelites practised the year of Jubilee, the purpose and intent was to retain balance and equality throughout Israel (Wiersbe 1992:183). There was, therefore, no greater symbol that Isaiah could have given of God's intent to provide redemption and justice for His people.

Watts (2000:873) translates the phrase "to proclaim the year of *YHWH's* favour" and sees, besides the link to the Year of Jubilee, a picture closely resembling Isaiah 40:1-

11; 51-52 and 60. “The events predicted and seen dimly in those chapters are now announced as coming to pass” (Watts 2000:873).

As Watts (2000:875) indicates, the effect of this speaker is to therefore turn all negatives into positives; he brings a new spirit as “God’s direct line of communication to the outsiders, the needy and the distressed”. Webb (1996:234) further states, “The preaching of the Servant-Messiah is like the blast of the ram’s horn which ushered in the Year of Jubilee; it proclaims the arrival of a time of grace, a time of release”. Once again, we see here a foreshadowing of Jesus Christ who identified with the role of the servant through whom the year of Jubilee would be announced and inaugurated (Watts 2000:875).

The picture given here is consistent with the scriptural message of redemption. This critical theme ties the Isaiah pericope to our previous study of Genesis 1:26-28. Redemption literally means to set free through “buying back” that which had been lost (Wolters 2005:69). The preacher of Isaiah 61 proclaims that God is ready to redeem, buy back, His people. God is prepared to pay the redemption price that will restore His people. This picture foreshadows the ultimate redemption price that God would pay through sending His Son, Jesus Christ, to redeem the whole world and “reconcile all things to himself” (Col. 1:20). As Wolters (2005:72) states, the “scope is truly cosmic...”

Redemption, then, is the recovery of creational goodness through the annulment of sin and the effort toward the progressive removal of its effects everywhere (Wolters 2005:83).

c. They will be called oaks of righteousness

As a result of God’s gracious redemption, as announced by the anointed servant, the recipients of the message are promised to undergo a total transformation. From being considered poor, broken-hearted captives, they are now pictured as oaks of righteousness, exhibiting God’s splendour (Is. 61:3); literally the “oaks of the legitimate” or “oaks of the right” (see Watts 2000:874). This is the fulfilment and confirmation of what Isaiah had written a few verses previously: “*Then will all your*

people be righteous and they will possess the land for ever. They are the shoot I have planted, the work of my hands, for the display of my splendour” (60:21). The shoot has now become full-grown, and the people’s righteousness has received “governmental authorisation” (Watts 2000:874).

Isaiah has previously utilised the image of the oak tree to exhibit Israel in her fallen and rebellious state (Wiersbe 1992:183). In Isaiah 1:30, God depicts Israel as an unfruitful oak tree with fading leaves, an indication that her glory has passed. In Isaiah 61:3 the glory of the oak tree is restored, experiencing God’s full restoration (Watts 2000:874). That God is the divine gardener ensuring that this happens, is indicated in Petersen’s (2001:54) translation, as the people are to be “God’s own planting” of righteous oaks.

The imagery of God as a gardener is consistent throughout Scripture. In chapter 5, Isaiah has written “the Song of the Vineyard” which depicts God having planted the vine of Israel, only for it to yield only “bad fruit” (5:2). Jesus Christ used a similar metaphor in John 15 where he calls the Father the gardener, stating that His follower’s fruitfulness is directly proportional to their “remaining” in Him, drawing their source of nourishment directly from God (John 15:4). As Milne (1993) reminds us, “fruit-bearing for God is *not* a human possibility” and often comes through painful pruning at the Lord’s loving hand. Indeed, Israel has experienced the pain of pruning and, according to Hanson (1995:225), they “were established in the strictest of all pedagogies, namely, suffering.”

Likewise, this image in 61:3, and the culmination of the relevant pericope, highlights that fruitful and productive living, that is righteousness, is only possible inasmuch as God’s people are planted and prepared by *YHWH*, which in turn ensures that they are displaying His splendour (Seitz 2001:514).

4.2.3.5. Theological significance of the pericope: Its revelation about God and its appeal

Isaiah 61:1-3 was a significant passage for the original Judean readers; it was critical in Jesus Christ’s ministry, and remains a rallying call for believers today. This exegesis

has so far highlighted the meaning within the context of its original readership and only alluded to the fuller meaning ascribed to Isaiah 61:1-3 which becomes apparent when it is viewed through a Messianic lens. All that has been stated regarding redemption, justice, righteousness and the glory of God find their fulfilment in Luke 4:14-21 when Jesus Christ quoted this passage and applied it to his own divinely appointed role (Watts 2000:875). Webb (1996:38) is correct to state that the greatest importance of the book of Isaiah is that it bears witness to Jesus Christ. And God's seal on the prophetic utterance of the Servant in Isaiah 61 is given when Jesus Christ took those words upon his lips, and took the mandate of the Servant upon his shoulders, in "willing submission to the Father's will" (Webb 1996:38).

Wilcock (1979:61) doubts that the original hearers of Jesus Christ's claim fully understood the implications of what he was saying. Given that they quickly turned from saying nice things about Jesus Christ, to wanting to kill him, it perhaps didn't take them long to recognise the gravitas of this moment (see Luke 4:22, 29). Jesus Christ was clearly announcing a new era in the story of God's grace (Webb 1996:236) and it is therefore deeply significant that He chose this passage of Scripture as his "mission" statement. As Mahloko (2015:21) highlights, he is bringing the poor and the marginalised to the centre of his gospel mandate, and he declared that "his mission was to accomplish God's redemptive plan for mankind as it was written in the scroll" (Mahloko 2015:21). Jesus Christ's example provides the model for how this passage is to be interpreted by sports ministry leaders today. He provided the physical fulfilment of the redemption that the pericope promises, but the task of sports ministry leaders is to continue the task of proclaiming the Good News of Jesus Christ to all who are in need.

4.2.3.6. Present socio-historical context and the required response of faith by today's readers

The redemptive history outlined in this pericope has deep implications for the equipping of leaders for effective sports ministry. Christians can correctly identify this passage of Scripture as foundational in understanding and applying the work of Christ and in defining the redemptive power of the Gospel. Webb (1996:33) has correctly identified a gospel movement in the book of Isaiah which requires a "great missionary

movement of gospel proclamation and invitation". Isaiah 61:1-3 is a clear mandate for gospel proclamation, to expound the call of redemption, justice and righteousness to all peoples and to make God's glory known among the nations (see also Isaiah 66:19-21). This pericope presents a holistic presentation of the Gospel that challenges sports ministry leaders to recognise their task as moving beyond merely presenting a message, but seeking to partake in the "cosmic" scope of Christ's redemption, "bringing reconciliation to both individuals and systems" (Corbett & Fikkert 2012:79). The task of redemption is therefore to join God in His mission of seeking the "annulment of sin and the effort toward the progressive removal of its effects everywhere" (Wolters 2005:83), which includes the world of sport.

The Israelite readers were assured that the building work would be completed as a result of God's redemptive work; that they would no longer live in shame, but would bring glory to God in Zion (see 61:7). In the same way, Isaiah 61:1-3 is a call for leaders who engage in sports ministry to become oaks of righteousness and to embark on faith-filled, "Spirit-empowered preaching of the gospel" (Webb 1996:235), a work that has eternal consequences within God's plan of salvation for the whole world (Wolters 2005:131). This proclamation should be integrated with justice for the oppressed and reflect God's priority for the poor, the true inauguration of the year of Jubilee. The implication is that there may be much in the contemporary world of sport that oppresses the poor, keeps people in bondage, and needs redemption (Weir 2008:2). Rather than moving away from these challenges, Christian sports ministry leaders need to recognise a Christ-centred mandate to engage in ways that "bring redemption to the sportsperson and sports culture" (Linville 2014:2198).

4.2.3.7. Basic theological principles that can be derived from the pericope

In summary, one can state the following theological principles that emerge from Isaiah 61:1-3:

- Sports ministry leaders are called to become part of God's redemptive mission through Spirit-anointed proclamation of the good news of God's redemptive plans.

- Sports ministry leaders have a mandate to proclaim the Gospel which includes a priority to seek justice for the poor, the marginalised and those in both physical and spiritual captivity.
- Sports ministry leaders should be seeking a two-fold fruitfulness from their Spirit-empowered redemptive proclamation: the moving of God's people towards righteousness which in turn results in the glorification of God.

4.3. Conclusion

This chapter has presented the first step of the normative task towards a scriptural perspective for the theme of sports ministry. An exegesis of two Old Testament passages of Scriptures was conducted which provided some basic theological principles that were applied as a normative foundation for sports ministry leaders in South Africa.

The next chapter will conduct an exegesis of three New Testament passages that can be applied to the theme of sports ministry. Chapter 6 will then combine all the principles and present a Scriptural Manifesto for sports ministry leaders which will be utilised to evaluate six theological paradigms.

CHAPTER 5

TOWARDS A SCRIPTURAL PERSPECTIVE TO PROVIDE A NORMATIVE THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATION FOR SPORTS MINISTRY LEADERS: NEW TESTAMENT FOCUS

5.1. Introduction

The previous chapter began the normative task by conducting an exegesis of two Old Testament passages and highlighting theological principles that can be applied as part of a normative foundation for sports ministry leaders in the South African context (see 4.2.2.7 and 4.2.3.7). The normative task is the third of Osmer's (2008) four tasks of theological interpretation and seeks to answer the question "what ought to be going on?" (Osmer 2008:184). This chapter will continue this task by conducting an exegesis of three New Testament passages which have been chosen according to the criteria given in 4.2.1. Further theological principles will be derived from these passages which will contribute towards the Scriptural Manifesto for sports ministry leaders, presented in chapter 6. The Scriptural Manifesto will then be utilised to evaluate theological paradigms which have historically influenced the church's approach to sport and sports ministry.

5.2. Exegesis of Key Scriptural Passages

5.2.1. Matthew 28:18-20

Matthew 28:18-20, known as the Great Commission (Mahloko 2015:24), has been defined by Garner (2003:18) as the "driving force" that "defines God's mission" for those involved in sports ministry. By this phrase, Garner is correctly ascribing a foundational status to this passage of Scripture in any biblical basis for sports ministry. Indeed, Wiegand (2011:155) includes the Great Commission within his definition of sports ministry, highlighting the goal of sports ministry which includes the "specific intention to ultimately win them [people within a sport context] over for Christ".

This study of Matthew 28:18-20 will demonstrate how this pericope of Scripture provides integral direction and motivation for sports ministry leaders in the South African context today. In particular, this passage provides a *missional* approach that focuses those, partaking in sports ministry, upon following Jesus Christ's instruction to raise disciples in and through sport.

5.2.1.1. General background

Matthew 28:18-20 is the climax and closing passage of the first Gospel in the New Testament. The early church identified Matthew, one of the twelve disciples and formally a tax-collector (Matt. 10:3), as the author (Hale 2007), although, like the other New Testament Gospel writers, the author does not name himself (Boring 1995:106).⁶⁴

What can be discussed and discerned is the purpose of Matthew's writing the *euaggelion*.⁶⁵ It is clear that this book held an important place in the early church and was quoted more extensively than any of the other Gospels (Guthrie 1990:28). This may be because it contained clear instruction in the words of Jesus Christ that made it so popular (Drane 1986:191), and which makes it still relevant for Christians today.⁶⁶ As with the other Gospels, Matthew serves primarily as a message, interpreting the theological significance of the historical events surrounding the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ (Boring 1995:89). However, it seems too simplistic to view Matthew in terms of purely a kind of catechism or instruction manual in "moral earnestness" (to use Hare's phrase 1993:1). The teaching elements contained within

⁶⁴ It is not the purpose of this exegesis to explore all the theories around authorship, location of writing, and date, nor to consider how the book was composed and what sources were used. One must recognise with Boring (1995:105) that the Gospel doesn't disclose chronological data that help pinpoint when it was composed. However, a number of scholars believe the final composition, drawing on sources that may include the Gospel of Mark and other accounts of Jesus' teaching, was written in Antioch between A.D. 70 and 80 (Hale 2007:137 and Boring 1995:105).

⁶⁵ The Greek word *euaggelion* meaning Good News was used by the early church for the message of Christ contained in the Gospels according to Matthew, Mark, Luke, John (Boring 1995:89).

⁶⁶ Elkington (2010:122) believes that popularity of Matthew in the early church was because of the important role it played as a "hinge" between the Old and New Testament. Indeed, part of Matthew's purpose is clearly to demonstrate how Jesus fulfilled Old Testament prophecy as the promised Messiah (Guthrie 1990:32). As such, there is a seemingly Jewish focus within Matthew's Gospel and indeed a "Semitic" touch is discernible in the Greek he uses (France 1985:17). Guthrie (1990:29) states "His gospel often reflects the more restricted outlook of Jewish Christianity". The following passages demonstrate a seeming focus on Jewish life, customs, outlook: 5:17ff; 5:23f; 6:16ff; 14:6ff; 15:24; 23:2ff; 23:23; 27:24ff; 24:20.

the book need to be considered within the broader missional message of the Gospel, which moves inexorably towards the powerful conclusion that is provided by the Great Commission (Hedlund 1991:153). Matthew can therefore be viewed as a missional book and the Great Commission provides a fitting finale which presents itself as a lens through which the whole book can be interpreted (Lee 2010:23). Following an initial restriction that Jesus Christ seemed to impose on preaching the Gospel purely to Israelites (e.g. see 15:24),⁶⁷ the Great Commission throws open Jesus Christ's mission to be conducted amongst all peoples (France 1985:18). This will be considered in greater detail below. Thus, understanding the Great Commission, as the climax of the book, is critically important for all believers, including those engaged in ministry through sport.

The account of the Great Commission is the climax of Matthew's account of the resurrection in chapter 28.⁶⁸ The Great Commission provides reassurance (Jesus Christ has authority), commission (go and make disciples), and promise (I am with you always). Hagner (1995:883) views the Great Commission as a type of "enthronement hymn", having parallels with passages such as Daniel 7:13f and Philippians 2:9-11.

The instruction Jesus Christ gives in this passage is consistent with the other Commissioning statements in the Gospels (cf. Mark 16:1-18; Luke 24:46-49; John 20:21-23; Acts 1:8) and, although each author may have certain theological emphases which he highlights (Hare 1993:331), the varied wording can be explained either by there being different events, or edits of a longer speech that Jesus Christ gave at one of the commissioning events.⁶⁹ The richness of each commissioning statement

⁶⁷ It is wrong to consider the Gospel as a message purely for Jewish Christians. Elkington (2010:123) discerns a movement within Matthew "from a very particular focus on Israel" as the descendants of the Abrahamic covenant (Genesis 12:1-3) to a New Testament missional community "constituted by the blood of the covenant" (Elkington 2010:124).

⁶⁸ Harmonising the resurrection accounts in the four Gospels is a difficult task (Hagner 1995:868). Tannehill (1995:65) helpfully sees a common pattern within all the accounts that includes an introduction, confrontation, reaction, reassurance, commission and promise. Tannehill (1995:65) sees this cycle play out in the resurrection encounter as the women arrive at the empty tomb and are greeted by the angelic figure (28:1-10), and then repeated as Jesus meets the eleven disciples on the mountain. There is a brief introduction (16), and then a confrontation and a reaction as "some doubted" (17).

⁶⁹ Boring (1995:503) casts doubt as to whether this is a report of a genuine historical event, or a "theological interpretation" by Matthew in order to mobilise the church in the Gentile mission. He finds the struggle that the church had in Acts 1-15 to carry out the Gentile mission as evidence that these words were not a literal command of Christ, because otherwise they would have been disobeying his command. However, this argument is not persuasive. As Hagner (1995:887) points out, the delay or apparent slowness of the disciples

provides motivation for leaders engaging in ministry through sport. The Great Commission in Matthew 28:18-20 has been chosen for this study because it encompasses many of the elements contained in each commissioning statement (e.g., witnessing, expansion, the promise of Jesus Christ's ongoing presence, etc.). However, the other commissioning passages provide additional missional nuances that can complement this study in equipping leaders for effective and sustainable sports ministry.

5.2.1.2. Socio-historical context and the required response of faith by the first readers

As already indicated above, the Gospel of Matthew served the mutually dependent purposes of demonstrating how the Jewish Scriptures found their fulfilment in Jesus Christ (Boring 1995:97); at the same time it also gave clear instruction on what it means to be a follower of Jesus Christ (Hedlund 1991:153), while always maintaining a "striking emphasis on the missionary work of the church" (Drane 1986). Understanding Matthew's purpose in writing also helps to elucidate the context and response required by the original readers.

Some have framed Matthew's original readers as being Jewish Christians because of the emphasis, as noted above, on Jewish customs and language. Yet, as Boring (1995:97) has persuasively written, it is too simplistic to view Matthew as "the Jewish Gospel" as, in fact, it has elements that "reflect an alienation from Judaism" *and* "has some (strong!) pro-Gentile tendencies", including the Great Commission. However, it is quite probable that the early readers were having to grapple with the relationship between Christianity and Judaism (Boring 1995:97), which was clearly an issue in the early church (e.g. Acts 15) (Nickelsburg 1995:42). Boring (1995:102) places the original readers of the book as both Jewish and Gentile Christians, understanding their identity now as an *ekklesia* (church)⁷⁰ who were facing rejection and persecution from religious Judaism, while the Jewish Christians also wanted to "affirm their Jewish past" and Old Testament heritage, and adapt to a rapidly changing world (Boring 1995:102).

to obey should not be a barrier to the "historicity of these words and commission" (and also Hale 2007:212). It is completely plausible to believe that this is a verbatim account of one of the resurrection appearances of Jesus (see 1 Cor. 15:6).

⁷⁰ Matthew is the only Gospel author to use the word *ekklesia*. In 16:18 and 18:17.

Given the way Christianity developed and grew in the first-century, it is very likely that the early readers existed in a church context that had a diversity of converted Jews and Gentiles alike (Nickelsburg 1995:27). As shown in chapter 2, leaders in South Africa operate in a very diverse context and the activity of sport is one medium through which cultural integration and reconciliation can happen. The clear similarities between the context of the early readers and today's context can help sports ministry leaders in South Africa to apply this pericope.

Matthew does provide the early church with some clear moral instruction, most notably in the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5-7). Yet, as Hedlund (1991:153) helpfully states, "catechetical instruction is to serve the church's missionary expansion". Therefore, Matthew's Gospel was written to prepare the early church to partake in the "new order of life that would be the portion of all his [Jesus'] followers in the consummation of the eschatological age" (Hagner 1995:875). Matthew points the first readers, the True Israel, to their Old Testament heritage and demonstrates that the Christian community is the true continuation of the people of God, and thus draws a dividing line "between believers and non-believers in Christ" (Boring 1995:98). In the Great Commission, Jesus Christ addresses this dividing line and gives the early church a mandate to seek to draw all people into the community of faith. *The Great Commission is therefore a rallying call to the early believers to unite in the purpose of mission and disciple-making. As we shall see, the rallying call was not just to the early church, but is a rallying call for all believers through all of history, including contemporary Christians who must seek ways to be obedient to Jesus Christ's command in the context of the 21st Century.*

5.2.1.3. Major theological concepts/themes in the pericope

The three major theological concepts/themes in the pericope can be summarised as, (a) the resurrected Jesus Christ, (b) the call to mission, and (c) the assurance of Jesus Christ's presence through the eschatological age. This section will summarise these themes before a more specific analysis of the meaning will be given in the next section. This will provide the foundation for application to the context of sports ministry leadership in today's South African context.

a. The resurrected Jesus Christ

In the Great Commission, Matthew emphatically and dramatically presents Jesus Christ as the conquering hero, confirming that He is the Son of God. There are three main elements that specify Matthew's belief. Firstly, when the disciples see Jesus Christ, they worship him (17). Secondly, Jesus Christ declares that "all authority" had been given to him. And thirdly, He gives the Trinitarian formula for baptism, referencing himself in the Trinity as the Son.

France (1985:47) shows how the language of the Son of God, although not as prominent as in John's Gospel, is evident throughout Matthew's writing (e.g. 3:17; 14:33; 16:16f; 21:37ff; 27:54). However, it is in the climax of the narrative, in this "majestic pericope" (Hagner 1995:881), where the veil is removed and "the Son stands alongside the Father and the Holy Spirit as the object of a disciple's allegiance" (France 1985:47).

Matthew's theology is centred on Jesus Christ who appears in almost every scene of the Gospel (Boring 1995:118). It is therefore fitting that Matthew concludes his Gospel with a striking image of Jesus Christ, whose earthly limitations are now removed (Hagner 1995:883), and whose authority, on account of the resurrection, is now fully confirmed and asserted (Hagner 1995:882).

b. The call to mission

From the mouth of Jesus Christ, with the authority as God's son, comes the call to "go and make disciples of all nations" (28:19). Matthew gives his readers no doubt that he believes that, based on Jesus Christ's resurrection from the dead, a new era has emerged. As Hagner (1985:883) argues, these words of Jesus Christ give vindication to the call to missions, specifically focusing on mission to Gentiles.

The Great Commission provides a mission mandate, specifically a mandate to make disciples (Turner 2008:687). For Matthew, this call to mission was a continuance of the missionary call to Abraham in Genesis 12:1-2. In that sense, it is a broadening of

the scope and horizons, but not a new mission, for “God’s mission has always been redemption” (Mahloko 2015:24). Throughout his book, Matthew’s universalistic theology has developed (Guthrie 1990:30), with the Great Commission bringing absolute clarity to what, at times, may have appeared a “contradictory attitude” towards the Gentile mission (Lee 2010:14).

c. The assurance of Jesus Christ’s presence

The final core theological emphasis that Matthew makes in this pericope, is the revelation of Jesus Christ when He said, “And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age” (v. 20). The Great Commission indicates that the mission of God is moving towards an end-point, the consummation of the age. This eschatological perspective is critical in the sense that it demonstrates a sense of urgency to the mission; there *is* an end-point. But it also provides Jesus Christ’s disciples with assurance and peace because of His promise that His presence will be with them (Guthrie 1990:31).

Turner (2008:668) provides a poignant summary of the impact of these closing words of Matthew; “Jesus’ universal power and perpetual presence provide the dynamic for Jesus’ universal discipleship mandate”.

5.2.1.4. Meaning of pericope: Lexical analysis (key words) and comparison with other Scriptures

Having highlighted the major theological emphases, this section will provide further illumination on these themes by examining the meaning of the pericope, verse by verse.

It is firstly important to note that the preceding two verses, Matthew 28:16-18, provide the setting and context for what is to unfold. Matthew identifies for us who was invited to be with Jesus Christ. It is the “eleven disciples”, for the first time grouped in this way without Judas. Jesus Christ called them to meet him on the mountain in Galilee, bringing the concluding moment of Matthew’s book from the point where Jesus Christ’s public ministry had begun (Matt. 4:15f) (Hagner 1995:883). Hale (2007:211) believes

that other followers of Jesus Christ would have been present (as part of the 500 which Paul claims were witnesses of Jesus Christ's resurrection, see 1 Cor. 15:6), and conveniently casts them in the role of doubters (28:17). We are uncertain if others were there or not, yet Matthew's intention is to focus on the eleven, and it is clearly they who both "worship" and "doubt" (Boring 1995:502). Turner (2008:688) helpfully points out that the Greek word for "doubt" is the same used to describe Peter's wavering faith in 14:31 as he walked on the water. "It connotes uncertainty or hesitation" (Turner 2008:688). Matthew's purpose in including this fact may have been to indicate that the apostles were still far from perfect (Hagner 1995:886), or needing to decide to believe through extending their faith (Boring 1995:502). The element of doubt which the disciples faced enables the readers, and inheritors of the Great Commission, to identify with them. As often in the Gospels, the disciples here "represent the whole body of Jesus' brethren" (France 1985:412) throughout the ages.

Jesus Christ begins the Great Commission with the words, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me" (28:18). Hare (1993:333) calls this "one of the most important Christological statements in the first Gospel". Several authors see the words of Daniel 7:14 reflected here (e.g. France 1985:413; Hagner 1995:886; Hare 1993:333) where the son of man in Daniel's prophecy is ascribed "authority, glory, and sovereign power", and to which Jesus Christ alluded in 26:64. France (1985:413) highlights the importance of the word "all" in the Great Commission. It is because Jesus Christ has "all authority" that disciples can be made in *all* nations, being taught *all* things, with Jesus Christ's promise that He will be with the disciples *always*.

The resurrection of Jesus Christ both vindicated his words and actions during his earthly ministry, and demonstrated his "comprehensive sovereignty" over the whole earth (Hagner 1995:886). The authority and sovereignty of Jesus Christ is affirmed by other New Testament authors (e.g. Acts 2:34ff; Rom. 8:34; Eph. 1:20ff; Php. 2:5-11; Col. 3:1; Heb. 1:3f). And as the Sovereign ruler, Jesus Christ is exercising his authority in giving the disciples this commission, "founded on Jesus' present Lordship" (Hare 1993:333).

In verses 19-20a, Jesus Christ gives the specific nature and instructions of the commission since "Jesus' universal Lordship now demands a universal mission"

(France 1985:413). Some authors see echoes of Psalm 2 in the Commission; the fulfilment of the Father's promise to the Son that the nations shall be His inheritance (Psalm 2:8 and see Lee 2010:26). Indeed, the key verb in the Commission in the original Greek text is the verb "make", emphasising that "making disciples" is the core element of the Great Commission (Hale 2007:211).

The specific task is to make "disciples". This is the uncommon imperative verb *matheteuo* in the New Testament and only used in 13:51, 27:57 and Acts 14:21 (Hare 1993:334 and Boring 1995:503). Hare (1993:1) sees it as "remarkable" that there is no reference to preaching within the Great Commission, whereas Mahloko (2015:25) sees the verb as a replacement of the command to "proclaim or preach" given in 10:17. However, it is more likely that Jesus Christ intended the term "make disciples" to include the act of proclamation, and to also extend the responsibility of His followers beyond simply proclaiming the message, to taking the responsibility to reproduce themselves in other Christ-following disciples (Turner 2008:689).

Disciples are to be made of "*panta te ethne*" translated "all nations" in the N.I.V. The literal Greek translation is "all Gentiles", meaning there could be some debate as to whether Jesus Christ is literally just referring to the Gentiles, or using the word in an inclusive sense with regards to Israel. France (1985:414) highlights, however, that "*panta te ethne*" is utilised by Matthew in 24:9, 14 and 25:32 in contexts which must include Israel and, therefore, the mission to the Gentiles "need not imply a cessation of the mission to Israel" (France 1985:413). Indeed, Boring (1995:503) points to the initial prohibition of Jesus Christ in 10:5b-6 and views the initial commission to the Jews as now being encompassed by the Great Commission, meaning that all nations or peoples are to be discipled, including Israel. However, as Hagner (1995:887) points out, Jesus Christ is also drawing a line in history as Israel's salvific role has been completed in the finished work of Jesus Christ; therefore, Jesus Christ has removed the earlier restriction in 10:5b, and the focus shifts to the Gentile world (Hare 1993:333)⁷¹. Indeed, this Commission is the fulfilment of God's call to Abraham (Gen. 12:1-3), and the medium through which all nations will be blessed (Mahloko 2015:25).

⁷¹ France (1985:414) traces the theme of God's calling a people "far wider than that of the Old Testament, in which membership is based not on race but on a relationship with God through his Messiah" in the following

The process of making disciples is further described by Jesus Christ as including baptising and teaching. These Greek participles are dependent upon the main verb, to make disciples, and indicate what is required of those who genuinely accept the message of Jesus Christ's followers (France 1985:414). New disciples are to be baptised into the Trinitarian Name and signifies the transition a believer makes from being outside Jesus Christ's new community, to being within it (Boring 1995:504). As highlighted above, the Trinitarian formula demonstrates Jesus Christ's divinity together with the Father and Holy Spirit.⁷² Although not the recipe to become a Christian, baptism is given to enable disciples to publicly express their acceptance of the Gospel and their commitment and trust in Jesus Christ (Mahloko 2015:27).

The second part of the process that Jesus Christ gives is "teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you" (20a). Disciples are, therefore, required to learn from and follow the ethical, moral and spiritual teaching of Jesus Christ, following the example he himself set as a discipler of others (Hagner 1995:888).⁷³ Being a disciple is a transformative process as someone grows into, and adopts, the lifestyle prescribed by Jesus Christ (France 1985:415). Clearly, one reason Matthew wrote his Gospel was to help guide new believers in the righteous teaching of Jesus Christ (Hagner 1985:888). Mahloko (2015:28) helpfully states that teaching someone to obey is concerned with encouraging disciples towards practical obedience.

As Turner 2008:690 underlines, the command to make disciples, baptise them and teach them obedience, necessitates that Christians "go" to the nations. This may induce a response of fear in the disciples, who only recently experienced devastating failure (see 26:56). Within this context, and the knowledge that some of the disciples

Matthean passages: 3:9; 8:11-12; 12:21; 21:28-32, 41-43; 22:8-10; 24:14, 31; 26:13". The Great Commission is therefore a culmination of the theme – and not a surprising addition.

⁷² Matthew "attempts no speculative discursive explanation of how or whether the "Son" and the "Spirit" are "co-eternal with the Father." Yet Matthew, like other NT authors, has found that God-talk in the light of the Christ-event does modulate into a threefold pattern without denying the fundamental Jewish monotheistic affirmation (12:28; 22:43; cf., e.g., Rom 1:3-4; 8:3-4; 14:17-18; 15:30; 1 Cor 12:3-6; 2 Cor 13: 13; Eph 3: 14-19; 4:4-6; 1 Thess 1 :2; Titus 3:4; Heb 2:3; 6:4; Luke 1 :35; 2:25-28; John 3:34; 1 Pet 1: 1-2; 1 John 4:2; 5:6-9" (Boring 1995:504).

⁷³ See 4:23; 5:2; 7:29; 9:35; 11:1; 13:34; 21:23; 26:55

were still doubting, the loving and gracious closing promise of Jesus Christ must have been incredibly assuring: “And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age”.

Something of the eschatological significance of Jesus Christ’s promise is seen here. That Jesus Christ’s presence will be with His disciples till the “very end of the age” is a reminder of the expression he used before (see 13:39f, 49; 24:3), clearly indicating that the current age will be concluded with judgement and renewal (Turner 2008:690). For His disciples, though, this should not be a matter of alarm because of the promise that Jesus Christ will remain invisibly, but tangibly, with them (Hagner 1995:889). His presence will continue with them, fulfilling the promise of the angel to Joseph, that Jesus Christ shall be “Immanuel”, God with us (1:23 see Hare 1993:335). This promise remains until this very day.

5.2.1.5. Theological significance of the pericope: Its revelation about God and its appeal

The Great Commission has a huge theological significance. These three sentences sit at the boundary point between eschatological ages and usher in a transformative shift in God’s redemption plan. In an attempt to highlight the gravitas of Jesus Christ’s words, Lee (2010:3) has coined the term “Ultimate Commission” and Hare (1993:331) states that the importance of the passage in understanding Matthew’s Gospel, cannot be exaggerated. The theological significance of this passage can be summarised in relation to the purpose, the scope and medium of God’s mission, which equally apply to the purpose, scope and medium of ministry through sport.

a. The purpose of God’s mission.

In the Great Commission, we see that God’s mission is to bring glory to Jesus Christ, and to redeem the world to Himself through Jesus Christ. Turner (2008:692) correctly views this as the fulfilment of God’s purpose from the dawn of creation - one in which Adam failed, but Jesus Christ succeeded. Romans 5:12-21 expounds this theme and concludes that, “just as sin ended in death, so also grace might reign through righteousness to bring eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord” (v.21, NIV). The resurrection of Jesus Christ is essential to this doctrine because, as Hagner

recognises (1995:889), it is only because Jesus Christ conquered death that he has all authority in heaven and earth and therefore “the risen Jesus is central to the existence and proclamation of the church”. All mission activity, including mission in and through the activity of sport, must have the central goal of glorifying Jesus Christ.

b. The scope of God’s mission

The Great Commission shows us the scope of God’s mission – to encapsulate all people across the whole world. This is what God had always intended; it is a universal mission without any restrictions by social or ethnic group (France 1985:55). The scope of God’s mission must therefore include the “people group” who engage in sport around the world. Together with the other commissioning passages (Mark 16:115-18; Luke 24:46-49; John 20:21-23; Acts 1:8), God has made his intent clear - his message of grace and love must be proclaimed to all people.

c. The medium of God’s mission

Jesus Christ’s followers are to be the medium through whom God’s redemptive message is to be taken to the ends of the earth. As will be seen below, this was not exclusively the task of the eleven disciples, nor of the early church, but all believers throughout all time, until the end of the age, are given the mandate to make disciples (Turner 2008:687). Jesus Christ promised to build the church on the foundation of the apostles (16:18), and now the mandate of the church is carried out by each subsequent generation of believers. The outcome God requires is disciples who reproduce disciples who obey his teaching (Turner 2008:692).

5.2.1.6. Present socio-historical context and the required response of faith by today’s readers

Although the Great Commission was delivered by Jesus Christ to just eleven people, it is clear that they were serving as representatives of all who would become followers of Christ, “in perpetuity until Jesus returns” (Turner 2008:691). Additionally, the apostles are viewed not just as representatives of believers, but of the entire church called to baptise and teach new disciples that were entering into Christian fellowship

expressed through local churches (Turner 2008:690). Contemporary sports ministry leaders, as members of Jesus Christ's church, therefore continue the legacy of the Great Commission. Mahloko (2015:22) is surely correct in stating that The Great Commission calls the contemporary church to a "missionary vision" and "provides the paradigm for the ministry of the local church."

The central application for sports ministry leaders today is to recognise their role and function as being shaped by the Great Commission and defined by the call to be disciple-makers. Therefore, leaders in the 21st century church need to recognise that one of their primary functions is to train and mobilise believers to be reproducing disciples for Jesus Christ, not just in their own neighbourhood, but by going to all nations (Adu 2014:88). The call to "make disciples of all nations" should also shape the nature of contemporary mission through sports. Mahloko (2015:26) again makes a very important point that a disciple is not just someone who attends church, but someone who follows Jesus Christ's commands "without compromise". And one of Jesus Christ's commands is to "go and make disciples of all nations"!

Mamiru (2012:76), specifically applies the Great Commission to the African context and to the development of leaders:

The mandate of the Great Commission is to "Go and make disciples of all nations" (Mt. 28:19-20). In order to make disciples of all nations, the church needs to multiply biblical disciples who are willing to be and to make other disciples. In addition, it has been claimed that, "The church in Africa is a mile wide and an inch deep." In order to change this condition... the African church must assume responsibility to develop and multiply godly leaders who can develop and multiply other leaders for the church and the society.

Finally, as the Commission to the eleven is the same Commission to the church today, so contemporary sports ministry leaders can take great encouragement that Jesus Christ's promise still stands, that He is with them just as He was with the eleven, and will be with each subsequent generation until the end of the age (Hagner 1995:889).

5.2.1.7. Basic theological principles that can be derived from the pericope

In summary, one can state the following theological principles that emerge from Matthew 28:18-20.

- Sports ministry leaders must focus on Jesus Christ. The Great Commission is central to developing a Christocentric theology. Jesus Christ is presented as victorious over death, having been given all authority “in heaven and on earth”, and commissions His followers to mission. He is also the focus of mission as followers baptise disciples into His name and teach them to obey His commands. Jesus Christ also sustains the church throughout history and will return at the end of the age. Therefore, any theological system that is not centred on the Deity, Lordship and Sovereignty of Jesus Christ, is to be rejected.
- Sports ministry leadership should develop cross-cultural mission. The Great Commission provides clarity and definition to God’s eternal redemptive plan. The church is called to reach all Nations with the Gospel. God’s desire is equal for all people, and the message of salvation is to reach to the ends of the earth.
- Sports ministry leaders should develop disciples. The goal of mission is that people will learn to live in obedience to Jesus Christ. Through understanding His teachings, they will be able to love God (expressed through faith, worship and obedience), and love their neighbour as themselves (Matt. 22:37ff).

5.2.2. Romans 12:1-2

Romans 12:1-2 is the first of two texts that will be studied from the epistles of Paul. Daniels and Weir (2004:34) cite Romans 12:1-2 as critical for a Christian understanding of how a sportsperson is to utilise his or her talent in God’s service. Tucker (2009a:98) terms this the “sacrifice principle” for sports ministry. Weir (2000:31) argues that this passage demonstrates that sporting participation can provide an avenue of worship to God. This exegesis will explore these themes and determine theological principles that can be applied to leaders engaging in sports ministry.

5.2.2.1. General background: Text, place of pericope in the book and the genre

Paul's⁷⁴ letter to the churches in Rome is considered by many to be a masterpiece within Scripture (Wright 2002:397).⁷⁵ In chapters 1-11 Paul lays a theological foundation for the Gospel (Hale 2007:572). Moo (1996:23) believes that Paul has essentially been answering the question, "How can Gentiles be incorporated with Jews into God's people without jeopardising the continuity of salvation history?" Dunn (1988:705) concurs that Paul has effectively "redrawn the boundaries of the people of God". In chapters 12-15, Paul shifts the focus "from instruction to exhortation; from indicative to imperative" (Moo 1996:744). These exhortations are not divorced from the first 12 chapters, but provide practical application that, for Paul, is the natural consequence of his theology (Dunn 1988:705)⁷⁶.

The small, yet vitally important, pericope of 12:1-2 serves as a "bridge" between the two main sections of the letter (Hale 2007:572). As we shall see, these verses intrinsically draw from Paul's theological presentation in chapters 1-11, and augments the process of transformation in the life of a believer. Therefore, this pericope, based upon Paul's theological foundation, gives significant practical application for the leader of sports ministry.⁷⁷

5.2.2.2. Socio-historical context and the required response of faith by the first readers

Paul states in Romans 1:11-15 how he longed to visit Rome and preach the gospel directly to them. We can be grateful that circumstances prevented him from doing so

⁷⁴ The author identifies himself as Paul in Romans 1:1 and "there has been no serious challenge to this claim" (Moo 1996:1). Romans is the first and longest of Paul's letters in the New Testament (Wall 2002:370).

⁷⁵ It is not the intention to give a detailed examination of Paul's purpose in writing the letter. Yet it is important to note that Rom. 1:15-17 seems to highlight his main purpose and overriding theme, which is to expound his belief that the Gospel is the power of God for salvation, for both Jew and Gentile (Moo 1996:29).

⁷⁶ Recent scholars view Romans holistically. As Wright (2002:396) poetically puts it, "Romans is, indeed, a symphonic composition".

⁷⁷ According to Wall (2002:380), the New Testament letters "resist formal classification, they exhibit no real literary innovation." However, in his letter to Rome Paul adopted a method of utilising the diatribe, particularly in the passages such as 2:1-3:9; 3:27-31; 6:1-7; 9:14-23 (Moo 2002:8). This was a form of dialogue where the author debates with fictional characters and utilises rhetorical questions to advance his arguments. This was a popular method in Greco-Roman literature and provides a virtual classroom environment (Wall 2002:381). But in Romans 12:1-2 this method has ceased as Paul has, in effect, concluded his key arguments and is now presenting his teaching in a manner and expectation that the readers will choose to apply it to their own lives.

at that time and that the Holy Spirit led him to write a letter instead! Yet it is important to remember that Romans was a letter written to the church (or multiple churches) in Rome, intended to be read publicly (Wall 2002:379) and reflecting both Paul's, and the churches', contexts.

As Wall (2002:371) notes, all the epistles were written into a specific context, and theology was adapted and applied in each case. This letter was specifically sent to the churches in Rome which, containing new and diverse converts, sought to address the challenges they were facing as the emerging Christian community.

As Moo (2002:7) explains, there is no concrete evidence of how the church in Rome was formed, but the original converts may have been Jews who heard the Gospel preached on the day of the Pentecost (Acts 2:10).⁷⁸ Moo (1996:5) summarises the possible context as follows:

The decentralized nature of the Jewish community from which the Christian community sprang would also make it likely that the Christians in Rome were grouped into several house-churches. Confirmation that this was the case comes from Rom. 16, where Paul seems to greet several different house-churches. It is also possible, though more speculative, that these different house-churches were divided theologically.

Although there is no clear concrete evidence for these suggestions (Achte-meier 1985:19), we can surmise that the original readers were Gentile and Jewish Christians⁷⁹ (Moo 1996:12) who were grappling with underlying theological issues which included: fully understanding the scope of salvation in Jesus Christ, the

⁷⁸ One might assume that they returned to Rome and led others to faith in Christ, both Jews and Gentiles. However, by the time Paul wrote (circa A.D. 57), the Christians in Rome had experienced major upheavals. Emperor Claudius had expelled all Jews from Rome in circa A.D. 49 (including Jewish Christians – see Acts 18:2-3). But then, following Claudius' death in A.D. 54, Jews were able to return (Moo 2002:7). In the interim period the Gentile Christians may have become more prominent, possibly leading the Roman churches away from the Jewish origins.

⁷⁹ Moo (1996:12) argues for a mixed audience with different sections of the letter being directed to different groups.

integration of Jewish cultic religion in their spiritual practices, and the challenges of developing a united church.

The readers of the letter were, therefore, practising Christians (Achte-meier 1985:2) from diverse backgrounds and experiences. Wright (2002:404) helpfully summarises that Paul's seems "to explain to the Roman church what God has been up to and where they might belong on the map of these purposes."

5.2.2.3. Major theological concepts/themes in the pericope

The critical theological concept contained in these verses is that Paul, "succinctly and with vivid imagery summarises what the Christian response to God's grace in Christ should be" (Moo 1996:746).

As stated above, Romans 12:1-2 flows directly from the preceding 11 chapters and applies theological truth to the daily lifestyle of the Christian readers, sketching a "way of living" (Dunn 1988:705) that is consistent with the Gospel. The critical theological emphasis is to recognise that a "fundamental response" (Achte-meier 1985:194) is required for the mercy that God has shown in Jesus Christ by those who submit to his Lordship. On account of the saving work of a righteous God, who saves by faith in Jesus Christ and not the Law (see Rom. 3:21ff; 4:24; 5:20f), "Christians are to shape themselves, their thinking and their doing, conformably to faith" (Achte-meier 1985:195). Christians are to live "as those being transformed", recognising that they are works in progress, living in the "eschatological tension" of belonging to the age to come, but living for Jesus Christ in the current world (Dunn 1988:709).

Dunn (1988:705) helpfully points out that this section of Romans is bracketed by references to the mercies of God (Rom. 12:1 and 15:9) "that link the whole back into the central and concluding emphasis" of the preceding sections. Likewise, Stott (1994:320) states that "mercy" is the key word, and it is due to God's mercy that "Paul issues his ethical appeal" (Stott 1994:321). Therefore, the ethical standards and practical advice given, are not removed from the theological underpinning of God's mercy and grace which now "reigns" over us (5:21 and Moo 1996:750), but is rather the natural response and consequence of a life submitted to Jesus Christ (Stott

1994:321). The potential for Christians, who are free from the law, to now live as they please (Rom. 6:4, 15; 7:1-6), is decisively quashed, on the basis that Christians, in response to God's mercy, gladly fulfil what the law demanded⁸⁰ (Moo 1996:746). Clearly, related to this, living in a way that pleases God, is identified as part of the Christian's life of worship.⁸¹

Stott (1994:320) identifies another key theological emphasis of the pericope which relates to the equality of Christians within the church. Having demonstrated that the distinction between Jew and Gentile is now removed, Paul explains that all believers "irrespective of their ethnic origin... have precisely the same vocation to be the holy, committed, humble, loving and conscientious people" (Stott 1994:320). The unity of believers is identified in the brotherhood of believers (12:1) and further expounded in the following chapters (most notably 12:9-21 and 14:1-15:13). This emphasis on equality is particularly relevant for leaders of sports ministry in the South African context, which is still dealing with the injustices of Apartheid which, as seen in chapter 3, impacted all sectors of South African society, including the church.

5.2.2.4. Meaning of the pericope: Lexical analysis (key words) and comparison with other Scriptures

This portion of Scripture is packed with incredible truth that can serve as a micro-manifesto for Christians who desire to serve God in the world (Wright 2002:703). Paul holds together the two strands of non-conformity to the world, while simultaneously pursuing holiness, as the critical response of all Christians responding to God's mercy (Stott 1993:322). This lexical analysis will, therefore, examine the meaning of the key phrases that contribute towards this goal, viz. (a) offer your bodies as sacrifices; (b) do not conform... but be transformed; and (c) be able to test and approve God's will.

⁸⁰ As Paul goes on to explain in Rom. 13:10-12.

⁸¹ Dunn (1988:717) recognises that the Roman church may have been left with some questions as Paul, in chapters 1-11, effectively dismantled the role of the Law and the co-existent aspects of the Jewish cultic practices which centred on the Temple sacrifices. But here in this pericope he then takes up the terms of sacrifice and worship and redefines them. As we shall see, "The boundary of cultic ritual is transposed from actual) cultic practices to the life of every day and transformed into non-ritual expression, into the much more demanding work of human relationships in an everyday world".

a. Offer your bodies as sacrifices

Paul instructs the Romans to respond to God's mercy by presenting their bodies as sacrifices. These sacrifices are to be living, holy and pleasing to God, which is a reasonable act of worship.

The verb translated 'present' is *parastesai* and is a sacrificial term (Schreiner 1998:643; Moo 2002:73 and Dunn 1988:709), immediately casting the original readers' minds to the sacrificial language of the Old Testament. Certainly, Paul and the New Testament taught that Jesus Christ's death was once for all (e.g. Hebrews 10:1-18) and put an end to the Old Testament sacrificial system (Moo 2002:73). However, the metaphor of sacrifice provided powerful images for Paul to describe the kind of worship that is pleasing to God (Moo 1996:750)⁸². The believers in Rome should not offer animals, or parts of animals, but their bodies. Therefore, Christian worship is not just a function of the spirit or the mind, but the body in its wholeness (Hale 2007:572), and indicates that worship is to be offered in all spheres of life (Schreiner 1998:644). "It is as part of the world and within the world that Christian worship is to be offered" (Dunn 1988:709). Christian worship, therefore, involves the whole person, at all times and in all situations.

Paul goes on to utilise three adjectives to describe the nature of the offering (Moo 1996:751). Scholars note that the NIV translation as "living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God", is not correct and the term "living sacrifices" is not justifiable in the original Greek (Schreiner 1998:644)⁸³. Rather we are to "offer our bodies as sacrifices, living, holy and pleasing to God". The adjective, *living*, brings to mind the new life in Jesus Christ as Paul has explained in 6:11, 13 and 8:13. This is the "spiritual state of believers" (Schreiner 1998:644). The term *holy* would also cast the reader's mind back to the Old Testament system where the sacrifice was set apart as an offering to God (Wright 2002:704). Dunn (1988:711) helpfully contrasts the *pleasing* sacrifice the Lord

⁸² Peter (1 Pet 2:5) and the writer of Hebrews (13:15) likewise drew from sacrificial language so that they could explain and draw parallels for Christian worship.

⁸³ This provides a corrective to sports ministry apologists who have emphasised the phrase "living sacrifices" in relation to sports ministry, e.g. Daniels and Weir (2004) and the current researcher (Tucker 2009a) and also in devotionals such as Lipe (2015 <http://fcaresources.com/devotional/living-sacrifices>, and Weir (2016) http://www.veritesport.org/?page=sd_romans_alivingsacrifice

requires here with the unacceptable sacrifices of the Old Testament (see Hos. 8:13; Amos 5:22; Mic 6:7; Mal 1:8, 10, 13). The offering Paul describes here gives God pleasure (Wright 2002:704) in the way that the fragrance of the Old Testament sacrifices was a “pleasing aroma to the Lord” (e.g. Lev. 1:13).

Paul says that offering one’s body to God in this way is our “spiritual” act of worship. The word here is *logikos* and many scholars note that it can be translated in different ways: rational, logical, reasonable (see Schreiner 1998:645; Stott 1994:321; Moo 2002:73; Wright 2002:705). Paul seems to be underscoring the point that, in response to God’s mercy, presenting our bodies as pleasing sacrifices, is a reasonable and rational response. In fact, it is more than just a response, it is an act of worship!⁸⁴

b. Do not be conformed... but be transformed

John Stott (1994:323) gives the following helpful explanation of the two verbs translated ‘*conformed*’ and ‘*transformed*’.

Both verbs are present passive imperatives and denote the continuing attitudes which we are to retain. We must go on refusing to conform to the world’s ways and go on letting ourselves be transformed according to God’s will” (Stott 1994:323).

Dunn (1988:712) concurs that the verbs are “more or less synonymous”. The verb *metamorphoo* (transformed), is only elsewhere used in 2 Corinthians 3:18, and likewise denotes the ongoing transformation that should take place in the life of a believer. The transformation is away from conformity to “the world” and into conformity with the mind and image of Jesus Christ (Stott 1994:323).

To better understand the meaning, it is important to understand the eschatological perspective from which Paul is teaching.⁸⁵ Paul states that believers have the choice

⁸⁴ Moo 1996:754 points out that the word *worship* also has a “cultic connotation”. See Old Testament examples: Exod. 12:25, 26; 13:5; Josh. 22:27; 1 Chron. 28:13.

⁸⁵ Schreiner (1998:647) indicates that the reference to *aion* translated *age* is in line with the Jewish eschatological belief of two ages... the current evil age and the age to come. This belief is consistently upheld in Scripture, with Jesus being the person through whom God has initiated the age to come. Matt. 12:32; 13:22,

between conforming to the powers of this world (Dunn 1988:712) under the control of Satan (Hale 2007:572), or being conformed to Jesus Christ through the “renewing of the mind”. This means having one’s way of thinking, attitudes, and worldview completely shaped by obedience to Him, while simultaneously resisting the patterns and pressures of the world (Moo 1996:755). As Dunn argues (1989:713), this involves living in the “overlap of the ages”; having one’s mind⁸⁶ transformed by Jesus Christ who has secured the age to come (Php 3:10-11), while still living and serving God in the current age, even though it is passing away (see 1 Cor. 7:31). As Moo (1996:757) correctly observes, this transformation does not happen “overnight but is a lifelong process”, of Christ-likeness being formed within His followers. It is a process of continual transformation by which believers can become more like Jesus Christ, indeed, having the “mind of Christ” (see 1 Cor. 2:16). Indeed, Paul is demonstrating how God has reversed the “downward spiral” of thinking and morality which he presented in 1:18-32, and brought renewal of the mind which would lead to revived moral living (Schreiner 1998:647).

c. Be able to test and approve God’s will

Paul concludes this pericope by demonstrating the incredible resources available to Christians who have offered themselves to God and are having their minds renewed. Christians can be confident of discerning God’s will and living in a way that pleases Him (Moo 1996:757). A renewed mind is able to discern and obey the will of God; moral transformation is the result of a renewed mind (Stott 1994:324). Paul is confirming that Christian conduct is the ultimate evidence of the inner transformative work of God (Dunn 1988:714).

In the preceding chapters, Paul has demonstrated that the Law is not able to produce moral conduct but rather contains a standard that sinful human beings cannot achieve (see Rom. 5:20; 6:14, 15; 7:4). The question the Roman Christians may have been left with is how then can we determine and live in obedience to God’s will? Moo

39, 40, 49; 24:3; Luke 16:8; 18:30; 20:35; 1 Cor. 1:20; 2:6, 8; 3:18; 10:11; 2 Cor. 4:4; Gal. 1:4; Eph. 1:21; 2:2; 1 Tim. 6:17; 2 Tim. 4:10; Titus 2: 12.

⁸⁶ “By the word ‘mind’ Paul means here our inner mind, or heart, from which all our thoughts, and desires, and goals arise” (Hale 2007:573). As Schreiner (1998:646) points out, the “body” of verse 1 should not be separated from the “mind” of verse two. Paul is presenting a holistic view, not a dualistic one.

(1996:757) indicates that Paul has begun to answer this through the Christian understanding of the work of the Spirit that he presented in 8:4-9). It is therefore through the power of the Holy Spirit, transforming the Christian's mind into the mind of Jesus Christ, that it is possible to both discern and obey God's will; *His good, pleasing and perfect will*.

5.2.2.5. Theological significance of the pericope: Its revelation about God and its appeal

The theological significance of this passage will be summarised under the headings: (a) Reasonable act of worship, and (b) From eschatology to ethics. These headings prepare for the practical application that leaders of sports ministries may follow.

a. Reasonable act of worship.

This pericope reveals the centrality that the worship of God should play in the life of the believer. God has created human beings to find their satisfaction in Him, and all Christian activity should be considered as a form of worship (Piper 2010:254). Paul is arguing that the only reasonable response to God's mercy is to offer one's life in complete worship to God. But he provides a contrast with the common worship practices of the day (be those Jewish or other sacrificial cultic systems) and helpfully outlines, for believers, the type of worship that is pleasing to God. He does this through his use of the familiar language of the Old Testament sacrificial system, but radically transforms its application (Dunn 1988:717).

The Christian theology of worship is shaped by the pericope, whereby Paul expounds on what it means to worship God in spirit and in truth (John 4:23). Worship that is pleasing to God is not purely spiritual but also physical. It is not just inward, but can also be expressed outwardly. It is not merely about denying oneself, but is also transformative (Stott 1994:322). It is not meant only for certain times and dates or to be conducted in special buildings, but is to encompass all of life (Schreiner 1998:646). Worship is to be offered by all Christians at all times and in all situations (Wright 2002:704). Worship is not a "task, programme or function" but is the goal of all ministry" (Rinehart (1998:118). The body plays a critical function in worship, which Paul has

shown elsewhere, is the temple of the Holy Spirit (see 1 Cor. 6:19f) (Wright 2002:704). As an activity of the body, Christian sportspeople can therefore justifiably recognise that their engagement in sport can be an expression of worship to God.

b. From eschatology to ethics

Wright (2002:705) states that this pericope provides the interface between “eschatology and ethics”. The process of renewal and transformation that Paul describes enables the Christian to “break all conformity with worldly life in this age and transforms us into conformity with the age to come” (Willard 2002:170).

Bonhoeffer (1990:274), when reflecting on this passage, indicates that there is a metamorphosis presented here as the believer is restored into the image of God. The ages are then morphed as God restores what was broken through the Fall, strengthens his people to live in the current age, and prepares his people for the age to come. The outcome of this is evidenced in the ethical conduct of Jesus Christ’s followers, who are now “destined to be like him” (Bonhoeffer 1990:274). This results in a transformation of conduct and character, denouncing the pattern of the world, and imitating the nature of Jesus Christ (Choong 2008:26), through the power of the Spirit (Wright 2002:706). This transformative conduct should be portrayed by sportspeople as they seek to offer worship through their bodies to God. There should be a clear distinction in attitude and approach if sport is truly to be seen as ministry unto the Lord.⁸⁷

Paul has, therefore, revealed how God the Father has broken into the current age through the finished work of Jesus Christ, and provided a way for the image of God to be restored in human beings through the transformative work of the Holy Spirit. This Trinitarian intervention provides Christians with the power to discern and obey God’s will in all spheres of life (Daniels & Weir 2004:31).

⁸⁷ Augustine (quoted in Simango 2006:10) identifies that God’s purpose is for the renewed mind to now be able to comprehend His truth. Therefore “when the mind of the believer is renewed he does what is good, acceptable and perfect in the eyes of God” (Simango 2006:10).

5.2.2.6. Present socio-historical context and the required response of faith by today's readers

This passage is extremely relevant for sports ministry leaders in South Africa who need to heed the teaching and apply it, as God's Word, within their context (Moo 1996:22).

The first application that one must make is that this passage debunks any forms of contemporary dualism that exist within the church's attitudes towards sport. Although Paul wrote in a context of prevailing Greek dualism that viewed the spirit/mind as of greater value than the physical/body (Stott 1994:322)⁸⁸, he clearly teaches an integrated body/mind theology in which the whole person is engaged in worshipping God (Dunn 1988:714). This, therefore, means that the notion of a mind/body, or sacred/secular, divide is an unbiblical separation. God's intention for Christians throughout history has been for them to present themselves completely as an offering to God; in the home, in the market-place (Stott 1994:321); on the sports field and in the gym. In fact, one can conclude with Wright (2002:705), that the presentation of the body in worship is exactly the thing that thinking/rational Christians should do.

The second application of this pericope is that Christians must learn to live in the tension of being both citizens of this age *and* of the age to come.⁸⁹ Willard (2002:170) argues that there must be a "total yielding" that "breaks all conformity with worldly life... and transforms us into conformity with the age to come". God's ongoing transformative work renews the mind of the Christian so that they can live in a way that pleases Him, while still remaining in the world. Yet they influence the world for the good, rather than the other way around.

Christians need to recognise and acknowledge that there is a prevalent worldly system which is under the control of Satan (Hale 2007:572), and which is contrary to the will of God. This also applies to the world of sport. Christian sports ministry leaders need to examine their own hearts and minds to ensure that they are not being conformed to

⁸⁸ Stott (1993:322) writes that the slogan of Platonic dualism was *the body is a tomb*. Paul therefore makes a huge contrast between dualism and the integrated approach he had that valued the body so highly.

⁸⁹ This is sometimes called the tension of living in the "now" and "not yet" of God's kingdom.

the patterns of this world. Rather, through the transformation of the mind, they will increasingly be able to test and approve God's pleasing will, learning to apply God's ethical standards in the world of sport.

Thirdly, just as the early church was distinctive from the prevailing religions in their different approaches to worship (as Dunn 1988:710), those engaged in sports ministry should not conform to patterns of conduct that are contrary to the Gospel (and akin to idolatry), but must apply renewed minds, recognising that they are ultimately seeking to worship God in all their activity, including sport (Moo 1996:754). Indeed, given that Paul highlights the important role of the body in worship, Christians engaged in sport may have a distinct advantage because, as Wright (2002:704) states, Christian worship is "to have an emphatically bodily character".

5.2.2.7. Basic theological principles that can be derived from the pericope

In equipping sports ministry leaders for effective and sustainable sports ministry, the following theological principles can be derived from the pericope:

- Sports ministry leaders respond to God's mercy through offering their bodies in worship. This act should not be compartmentalised as a religious/spiritual function of life. Rather, it includes all a Christian is and does in his or her service to God.
- Sports ministry leaders must resist conformity to the world and allow God to continue a process of transformation which restores the *imago Dei* in them.
- God desires to reveal his will to Christian leaders of sports ministry. The ability to discern God's will, is proportional to not conforming to the pattern of the world, but having one's mind renewed through God's transforming power.

5.2.3. 1 Corinthians 9:19-27

The final exegesis examines another text within an epistle of the Apostle Paul. The same exegetical approach will be followed, but special note is given that this passage

contains a sporting metaphor, one of a number the Apostle used in his writings.⁹⁰ It is, therefore, not surprising that these passages receive a lot of attention by authors developing a theological foundation for sports ministry. Opinion is mixed on whether Paul's utilisation of these metaphors meant he approved of sports⁹¹ (e.g. see Linville 2007:31; Garland 2003:439; Shafer 2012:99). What can be confirmed is that Paul found sport a valuable metaphor for the Christian faith, and the exegete needs to look at the deeper principles that can be gleaned from these passages. This exegesis therefore follows the example of Oswald (2003:32) who looks beyond the metaphor itself, and recognises the "principle of liberty" which Paul expounds and is applicable to Christians engaging in contemporary sports ministry.

5.2.3.1. General background

1 Corinthians 9:19-27 (NIV)

Though I am free and belong to no one, I have made myself a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible. To the Jews I became like a Jew, to win the Jews. To those under the law I became like one under the law (though I myself am not under the law), so as to win those under the law. To those not having the law I became like one not having the law (though I am not free from God's law but am under Christ's law), so as to win those not having the law. To the weak I became weak, to win the weak. I have become all things to all people so that by all possible means I might save some. I do all this for the sake of the gospel, that I may share in its blessings. Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize. Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last; but we do it to get a crown that will last for ever. Therefore, I do not run like someone running aimlessly; I do not fight like a boxer beating the air. No, I strike a blow to my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize.

⁹⁰ For example Galatians 2:2, 5:7; Philippians 3:12-15; 1 Timothy 4:8; 2 Timothy 4:7-8.

⁹¹ Corinth hosted the Isthmian Games – the second most important athletic festival on the Greek calendar. Paul's utilisation of the sporting metaphor may therefore have been because it was a commonplace activity to which his readers could easily relate (Hays 1997:3).

This pericope comes within a broader section of the letter to Corinth in which Paul is dealing with the issue of Christian freedom in regards to the matter of eating food sacrificed to idols (1 Corinthians 8:1–11:1) (Tucker 2009a:112).⁹² As shall be seen below, Paul leverages this issue to present a broader teaching on what true freedom in Jesus Christ means, and to set forward his personal ministry philosophy; that he will never use his “freedom” in Jesus Christ in a manner that may be a barrier for someone else to receive the Gospel message. In the first part of chapter 9 (1-14) he applies his ministry philosophy to the area of finances (Garland 2003:421), and in this pericope he then applies the principle more broadly to his approach to all people.

Most commentaries split this passage by focusing on verses 19-23 and 24-27 separately. Although there is good reason for this, this exegesis will consider the section as a unit as the principle themes contained in it have great relevance for sports ministry leaders in today’s context.

5.2.3.2. Socio-historical context and the required response of faith by the first readers

Paul’s letter to the church in Corinth was written specifically for the context and issues being faced by the church that Paul had planted in Corinth (Morris 1976:26). In 1 Corinthians 4:14-16 Paul clearly indicates his reason and motivation for writing, and the response he hoped his readers would make; he was writing as a concerned parent giving both instructions for them to follow, and an example for them to imitate (cf. 11:1) (Sampley 2002:785).

Scholars place the writing of this letter in the mid-fifties (Morris 1976:16) during Paul’s three year stay at Ephesus (Drane 1986:314). Paul had received word from members of the church that there were growing divisions and other challenges in the church (1:11; 16:115-18), and the church had sent him a letter with some specific questions

⁹² It can be discerned from 8:1 that the Corinthians had sent Paul a specific question on this matter. As Sampley (2008:783) shows, Paul uses a “rhetorical” style throughout the letter, a familiar genre of letter-writing in the day. “Everything... in 1 Corinthians is rhetorical, and we as interpreters of it must regularly inquire of its rhetorical force” (Sampley 2002:784).

(7:1). In response to their letter, Paul wrote the letter which has been preserved in Scripture as 1 Corinthians (Morris 1976:24).⁹³

The recipients of the letter lived in a very cosmopolitan city, where different cultures interacted and traded together on a daily basis (Morris 1976:16). It was a prosperous city and a seat of the Roman proconsul, but had a reputation for unsavouriness and licentiousness (Guthrie 1990:432).⁹⁴

With regards the church members themselves, Paul's letter indicates that they were largely made up of Gentiles (1 Cor. 12:2 and Sampley 2002:777) from the poorer classes of society (Hays 1997:7). However, there was a privileged elite in the church that were abusing their position of wealth and privilege, which was evidenced in the manner in which the Lord's Supper was being partaken (1 Cor. 11:17-33). Rather than confirming unity in Jesus Christ, the sacrament was re-enforcing divisions. Understanding these tensions are critical when it comes to more fully understanding and applying the pericope as "wealth and its associated status played a part in some of the struggles between Corinthian believers" (Sampley 2002:777).

Although the exact cause of the conflict in Corinth is not known, Morris (1976:22) believes that it clearly included a "denial of Paul's authority". Clearly there were factions that were aligning themselves with either Paul, Cephas, Apollos or Christ, as 1:12-13 shows (Drane 1986:315). Therefore, Paul's authority as an apostle may have been under threat (Morris 1976:22)⁹⁵. Paul's opponents were not accepting the full Gospel that he proclaimed (Guthrie 1990:435). Paul was therefore having to balance the emphasis of the letter between careful rebuke, and setting forth strong

⁹³ In 5:9 Paul mentions a previous letter which he'd written to the church of which we have no further knowledge.

⁹⁴ As with any city that has a diverse population, there were differing philosophical influences and ideas being touted, with Stoicism having a primary influence (Garland 2002:783). From Paul's letter, it is possible to see various theological emphases at play including libertines (emphasising freedom), legalists (emphasising the law), philosophers and mystics (with a dualistic worldview) (Drane 1986:315). Guthrie (1990:433) calls the Corinthian church members "undisciplined extremists" who were setting a bad example to their non-Christian neighbours in Corinth.

⁹⁵ Sampley (2002:780) holds a different view and doesn't believe that Paul is on the defensive but is censuring the Corinthians for their divisiveness among themselves. In chapter 9 he therefore provides his example to demonstrate how Christians should be willing to forego their freedoms/rights for the sake of other believers, which is the antidote to divisiveness.

propositional truth. A key way in which he seeks to manage this balance is to present his example to them, as he does in this pericope (Sampley 2002:781).

5.2.3.3. Major theological concepts/themes in the pericope

Within the greater context of the question of whether Christians should eat meat that has been sacrificed to idols, Paul takes the opportunity to present his ministry philosophy. The theological underpinnings of this theology can be summarised in the following key points:

- Christian freedom is always subject to the law of love⁹⁶. For Paul, freedom does not mean that he casts off restraints, but rather channels his freedom into acts of self-sacrificial love (Sampley 2002:910).
- Self-sacrificial love means that Paul will do whatever it takes to win other people. Paul's attitudes and actions are governed by his purpose of presenting the Gospel to others (Garland 2003:427). Paul will not allow his personal freedom, comfort, or culture to be a barrier preventing him from fulfilling his mandate to evangelise.
- In order to fulfil this mandate incredible self-discipline is required (Drane 1987:318). The athletic metaphor Paul provides demonstrates the self-restraint that is required to win the prize (Garland 2003:438). Paul's freedom may result in him suppressing appetites, rather than indulging in any whim and fancy, because of the eternal perspective that he has.

Sampley (2002:781) sees the major theme of 1 Corinthians 9 as "Paul's exemplification of Christian freedom tempered by love". Additionally, Hays (1997:157) helpfully points out the "downward mobility" of Paul. He laid aside contemporary ambitions of prestige and honour in exchange for serving others, including (and especially) the weak. This was the ultimate act of freedom that Paul's theology gives him; an exemption from the demands of secular society, replaced by a contentment to serve those whom the world derides.

⁹⁶ Paul further expounds the nature of love in 1 Corinthians 13.

5.2.3.4. Meaning of the pericope: Lexical analysis (key words) and comparison with other Scriptures

This section will follow most commentaries which divide the pericope into two parts: verses 19-23 and 24-27. This study will highlight the key elements which are critical for a deeper understanding of the passage and contribute to its application in sports ministry leadership.

a. Verses 19-23

The language of slavery in 9:19 is deliberate and striking. Sampley (2002:907) is correct to state that Paul sees himself as a “voluntary slave” which may appear a contradiction in terms. As Martin (1990:125) states, “He exchanges his position as a free man with high status for that of a slave”. This is an exchange akin to the exchange Jesus Christ made (John 1:1; Mark 10:45 and Php. 2:6f). Paul has previously stated that believers, even though free in the world’s eyes, have become “slaves to Christ” (1 Cor. 7:22). Here he extends the boundaries of Christian slavery to state that he is also a “slave to everyone”, (Hale 2007:627), following the instruction of Jesus Christ who said in Mark 10:44, “whoever wants to be first must be slave to all”.

Sampley (2002:907) and Garland (2003:429) both indicate that the verb *kerdaino* appears five times in this short section. It means to “win” or “gain” people and indicates the key emphasis of this section. 1 Peter 3:1 gives the same emphasis of winning people to salvation.⁹⁷ Paul shows that he is seeking to “win” people from all cultural and socio-economic backgrounds (Hays 1997:153). However, more than just preaching to them he becomes like them in order to win them. This is demonstrated most clearly in his language usage when he talks of the “weak”. As Hays (1997:154) explains, “he does not say, ‘I became as the weak,’ but rather, ‘I became weak’. This is not a matter of pretending or mere analogy. Paul actually took on the lifestyle and condition of the weak.” The term “weak” could be applied in terms of social status or the theological condition common to those outside Jesus Christ (cf. Rom. 5:6) (Garland 2003:434). Paul does not qualify this definitively. The point he is underlining

⁹⁷ Garland (2003:429) shows from its usage in Matt 18:15 that it can also apply to a “faltering believer”.

is the necessary lengths one must go to present Jesus Christ to unbelievers (Hays 1997:155). This is an act of love that is embodied in the statement that he goes on to make in 10:24 when he brings a conclusion to his whole argument concerning the eating of food sacrificed to idols; “Nobody should seek his own good, but the good of others”.⁹⁸

In verse 23 Paul concludes this section by underlining his ultimate motivation: he is a voluntary slave of all people “for the sake of the gospel” (*euangelion*).⁹⁹ As in Romans 1:16-17, Paul’s ultimate allegiance is to the Gospel, which in turn governs his conduct and his approach to his task as a minister of the Gospel (Morris 1976:139).

b. Verse 24-26

Paul further expounds on the requirements of being a minister of the Gospel through utilising athletic metaphors to both describe the level of discipline required, and contrast the ultimate motivation between an athlete and a believer.¹⁰⁰

In verse 24 Paul is exhorting Christians to follow the example of the athlete and run the spiritual race with the aim of winning the prize. However, whereas the Greek Games were just for Greek citizens, the Christian race is open to all and there can be a “multitude of victors” (Garland 2003:440). Hale (2007:627) sees the prize as becoming mature and like Jesus Christ (Eph. 4:13; Rom. 8:29). In the context, it is more likely that Paul is speaking of fulfilling one’s calling and giving one’s best in Jesus Christ’s service (Morris 1976). Certainly, Paul contrasts the “prize” of the athlete with that of the Christian. The crown that the athletes were competing for was a corruptible

⁹⁸ This is a consistent theme in Paul’s writing. See Romans 15:3-4; 2 Corinthians 4:10-12; Galatians 2:19-20; Philippians 3:10-11.

⁹⁹ Garland (2003:437) helpfully points out that the noun *euangelion* without a verb “denotes the preaching of the gospel”, (see also Rom. 1:1; 1 Cor. 9:14; 2 Cor. 2:12; 10:14; Gal. 2:7; Phil. 2:22; 4: 15;).

¹⁰⁰ The significance of the athletic metaphors to the Corinthians is debated. Garland (2003:439) quotes “Conzelmann (1975: 162 n. 31; see also Pfitzner 1967: 23-37) who didn’t think Paul was necessarily thinking of the local Isthmian Games because of the general widespread knowledge of the Greek games (and indeed, the fact that Paul often used athletic metaphors (Gal. 2:2; 5:7; Php. 3:12ff; 1 Tim. 4:8; 2 Tim.4:7f). However, it seems very likely that Paul is utilising a metaphor that would have been particularly relevant to the Corinthians because, as Sampley (2002:909) states, the Isthmian Games were staged so close to them and would have taken place possibly no less than a year prior to Paul’s letter. And one can conclude, given Paul’s consistent usage of sporting metaphors, that there was something admirable in the athletic endeavour that resonated with him as a strong example for Christian discipleship (Tucker 2011:120).

crown [*phtharton stephanon*], literally a wreath made of celery (Hays 1997:156). If an athlete does all this just to receive temporary acclaim, how much more should Christians seek to discipline themselves for the spiritual race, to receive an eternal reward? (MacArthur 1984:214).¹⁰¹

Just as an athlete who competes in the Games¹⁰² must train in a disciplined and arduous manner to receive a temporary crown, so Christians must be disciplined in their pursuit of an eternal reward (1 Cor. 9:25). Paul again gives his own personal example in 9:26-27. Paul is both a runner in the stadium and a fighter in the arena, applying intense self-discipline with the motivation of being better able to serve others (Garland 2003:443). His discipline in training serves an eternal purpose. He “endures physical privations to win over his bodily cravings so that he can then win others to Christ” (Garland 2003:443). He does this so that he will not be a competitor who is disqualified from the contest but one that will receive his reward for faithful service (Morris 1976:140).

Morris (1976:140) provides a good summary of Paul’s meaning in this pericope: “Paul’s Christianity is purposeful. He puts everything into direct and forceful Christian endeavour” (Morris 1976:140).

5.2.3.5. Theological significance of the pericope: Its revelation about God and its appeal

The pericope reveals and confirms some key-truths regarding God’s call upon His people:

- God’s call is counter-cultural. The pericope is important in that it re-enforces a central theme of Corinthians which Paul presented in 1 Corinthians 1:27; that God chooses the foolish things of this world in order to shame the wise. In this passage Paul again reveals the counter-cultural nature of God’s Kingdom.

¹⁰¹ The granting of a reward (depicted as a crown) is consistent with Paul’s writing in 2 Timothy 2:4-5; 4:7-8; and also with James 1:12.

¹⁰² Verse 25: “*agonomozai* which means ‘to compete in the Games’...gives us the word ‘agony’ from which we see that no half-hearted effort is meant” (Morris 1976:139).

Rather than cavorting in Christian freedom, Paul is willing to become a slave. Rather than seeking status and honour, Paul becomes a servant of all so that he can win people to Jesus Christ. Rather than living a life of ease, Paul is prepared for rigorous discipline to accomplish a goal (Garland 2003:434).

- God calls the whole person to serve him: body, soul, spirit. Paul here again presents a theology of the body which is consistent with Romans 12:1-2 above. The body is not enslaved because it is evil; Paul does not deprecate the body. Rather, the discipline involved in this passage is to devote the body to God's service as an instrument of honour (Hays 1997:156). Paul presents life as an integrated whole, "all of life is to be placed in service to the gospel and others. No compartmentalization" (Sampley 2002:909).
- God's call is to engage people where they are at (Sampley 2002:908). Following the example of Jesus Christ's incarnation, Christians are called to go to people and present the Gospel in ways they can relate to and understand. This does not mean a compromise in the message or giving license for sin (Garland 2003:435), but it does mean that believers are always seeking to find effective ways to win people to Jesus Christ.

5.2.3.6. Present socio-historical context and the required response of faith by today's readers

The relevance of this passage for sports ministry leaders is far beyond the fact that Paul utilises sporting metaphors. It could be argued that Paul is giving some level of endorsement to sport because of the positive aspects he identifies, such as persevering towards a goal, that are "compatible with Christianity" (Reavely 1992:7). But it can equally be argued that Paul is making the comparison between something he considers somewhat foolish in the light of eternal matters (Tucker 2011:114). The reality is that Paul does not make a qualitative judgement on the activity of sport itself, but the ministry philosophy that emerges from this passage is eminently applicable to sports ministry leaders today.

a. Servant leadership

This passage provides a foundation for Christian leaders to be servant leaders (Meekins 2015:99). As has been shown, Paul was following Jesus Christ's example (e.g. Mark 10:45) and sets today's readers an example to follow (1 Cor. 11:1). This approach to leadership is counter-cultural. Sports ministry leaders should not be seeking position, popularity or power. Rather they are to be prioritising the Gospel, and willing to do whatever it takes to win people to Jesus Christ. Paul's leadership was not from above people, but from below (Garland 2003:429). He made the necessary sacrifices to break down cultural barriers that might prevent people from being introduced to Jesus Christ. This approach to servant leadership will mean that sports ministry leaders should prioritise the conditions of the poor and disenfranchised, focusing on the transformation of their situation (Mamiru 2012:30). Hays (1997:157) terms this "downward mobility". This is again counter to the prevalent sporting culture that acclaims fame and fortune. The sports ministry leader, as a servant to all, will be willing to forego privilege in order to identify with the marginalised.

b. Method of evangelism

Paul's ministry philosophy provides sports ministry leaders with a strong mandate to utilise the vehicle of sport to proclaim the Gospel. It is not difficult to imagine that Paul, in the sports-mad culture of the 21st Century, would include sport within his instruction to become "all things to all people". His model of ministry is eminently incarnational (Garland 2003:429) with a strong emphasis on going to people rather than expecting them to come to him (Sampley 2002:911). This again follows the example of Jesus Christ's incarnation who "became flesh and made his dwelling among us" (John 1:14). This also demonstrates that the medium of sport is a vehicle through which relationships can be built which can lead to Christ-centred conversations. However, for Paul, the method is not an end in itself. Therefore, the contemporary Christian leader cannot see the engagement in sport as the final goal. Rather, there is a prize beyond the participation in sport, which is the expansion of God's Kingdom (Reavely 1992:7).

c. Self-discipline

Servant leaders engaging in incarnational evangelism will require exceptional self-discipline. Sports ministry leaders should understand the requirements of discipline not just as observers of sport, but through their own experience. However, Paul is not advocating “discipline for discipline’s sake” (Garland 2003:443). Rather, as seen above, the self-denial which Paul exemplifies, is for the sake of winning others for Jesus Christ. Contemporary leaders need to develop the resolve of Paul who endured through incredible “physical privations... so that he can then win others over to Christ” (Garland 2003:443).

5.2.3.7. Basic theological principles that can be derived from the pericope

In equipping sports ministry leaders for effective and sustainable sports ministry, the following theological principles can be derived from the pericope which reflect Paul’s ministry philosophy, as identified in the pericope:

- Sports ministry leadership is counter-cultural. Christians must be willing to be self-sacrificial and actively downwardly mobile for the sake of sharing the love of Jesus Christ.
- Sports ministry leadership is eminently incarnational. Self-denial does not have the purpose of reaching some higher spiritual plane, but rather the distinct purpose of reaching non-believers wherever they are.
- Sports ministry leadership crosses socio-economic boundaries. Just as Paul identifies with people from different faiths, backgrounds and social standing, so Christians should not allow culture or economics to be a barrier to presenting the Gospel.
- Sports ministry leadership requires perseverance and endurance. If an athlete endures incredible personal and physical privations to obtain a temporary prize, how much more should Christians be self-disciplined and determined to fulfil their calling to make Jesus Christ known to other people.

- Sports ministry leadership is goal-oriented. The Bible reveals that there is a prize awaiting all believers. This provides motivation to persevere through the challenges and sacrifices that come with being a minister of the Gospel.

5.3. Conclusion

This chapter has presented the second step of the normative task towards a scriptural perspective for the theme of sports ministry. An exegesis of three New Testament passages of Scriptures was conducted which provided some basic theological principles that were applied as a normative foundation for sports ministry leaders in South Africa.

The next chapter will combine all the principles gathered from the Old and New Testament exegesis and present them as a scriptural-normative foundation for sports ministry in the form of a manifesto for sports ministry leaders. The chapter will then evaluate six theological paradigms that have influenced the church's approach to sports ministry against the Scriptural Manifesto. The completion of the normative task will then lead to the pragmatic task (chapter 7); that, in reviewing all the material in this entire study, will provide the practical recommendations for equipping leaders for effective and sustainable sports ministry in the South African context.

CHAPTER 6

TOWARDS A SCRIPTURAL PERSPECTIVE TO PROVIDE A NORMATIVE THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATION FOR SPORTS MINISTRY LEADERS IN SOUTH AFRICA: AN EVALUATION OF SIX THEOLOGICAL PARADIGMS

6.1. Introduction

As this research continues with the normative task, it is critical to understand the theological context in which sports ministry has emerged. The normative task is the third of Osmer's (2008) four tasks of theological interpretation and seeks to answer the question "*what ought to be going on?*" (Osmer 2008:184).

This chapter presents six theological paradigms which have influenced the church's approach to sports ministry. These paradigms will be evaluated against the Scriptural Manifesto for sports ministry leaders derived from the exegesis of five portions of Scripture presented in chapters 4 and 5. The evaluation will determine the strengths and weaknesses of the theological paradigms which have been applied to sport and sports ministry throughout church history. The matrix in Annexure G was developed to provide a tool to facilitate the evaluation of each of the paradigms against the Scriptural Manifesto.

The scriptural examination of theological paradigms will contribute towards providing a foundation which may be used in the equipping of leaders for effective and sustainable sports ministry in the South African context, to be presented in the next chapter.

6.2. Towards a Scriptural Perspective for the Theme of Sports Ministry

The previous two chapters have provided a scriptural-normative foundation for sports ministry through conducting an exegesis of five passages which contribute towards a scriptural perspective for the theme of sports ministry. For that purpose, this summary

provides a Scriptural Manifesto that draws from all the principles that have been identified in order to provide a scriptural-normative perspective for the theme of sports ministry.

6.2.1. A Scriptural Manifesto for Sports Ministry Leaders.

What follows is a scriptural-normative manifesto for sports ministry leadership, providing a theological foundation that will enable the evaluation of theological paradigms which influence sports ministry leaders.

A. From Genesis 1:26-28 (see 4.2.2.7)

- Sports ministry leaders engage in sport as a medium through which one's relationship with God is demonstrated and developed. God intentionally created human beings as the pinnacle of His creation. The origin of humanity is the responsibility of God who invites us to live in relationship with Him which requires a response of faith and trust, demonstrated in worship and obedience.
- Sports ministry leaders recognise that the gift and talent of sport comes with a responsibility to discern and exercise God's purpose in the world. Being made in the image of God is a revolutionary theology that gives sports ministry leaders dignity and worth, but also moral and ethical responsibility.
- Sports ministry leaders, in dependence upon God, must provide proactive stewardship within the created order of sport, seeking to redeem it to God's original intent. The mandate to "rule" provides human beings with a purpose that enables them to find fulfilment and joy through serving the Lord in His world.

B. From Isaiah 61:1-3 (see 4.2.3.7)

- Sports ministry leaders are called to become part of God's redemptive mission through Spirit-anointed proclamation of the good news of God's redemptive plans.

- Sports ministry leaders have a mandate to proclaim the Gospel which includes a priority to seek justice for the poor, the marginalised and those in both physical and spiritual captivity.
- Sports ministry leaders should be seeking a two-fold fruitfulness from their Spirit-empowered redemptive proclamation: the moving of God's people towards righteousness which in turn results in the glorification of God.

C. From Matthew 28:18-20 (see 5.1.1.7)

- Sports ministry leaders must focus on Jesus Christ. The Great Commission is central to developing a Christocentric theology. Jesus Christ is presented as victorious over death, having been given all authority "in heaven and on earth", and commissions His followers to the mission of making disciples. He is also the focus of mission as followers baptise disciples into His name and teach them to obey His commands.
- Sports ministry leadership should develop cross-cultural mission. The Great Commission provides clarity and definition to God's eternal redemptive plan. The church is called to reach all Nations with the Gospel. God's desire is equal for all people, and the message of salvation is to reach to the ends of the earth.
- Sports ministry leaders should develop disciples. The goal of mission is that people will learn to live in obedience to Jesus Christ. Through understanding His teachings, they will be able to love God (expressed through faith, worship and obedience), and love their neighbour as themselves (Matt. 22:37ff).

D. From Romans 12:1-2 (see 5.1.2.7)

- Sports ministry leaders respond to God's mercy through offering their bodies in worship. This is not compartmentalised as a religious/spiritual function of life. Rather, it includes all a Christian is and does in his service to God.
- Sports ministry leaders must resist conformity to the world and allow God to continue the process of transformation which restores the *imago Dei* in them.
- Sports ministry leaders should constantly be seeking to discern God's will for their lives and ministry. The ability to discern God's will, is proportional to the

degree of not conforming to the pattern of the world, and having one's mind renewed through God's transforming power.

E. From 1 Corinthians 9:19-27 (see 5.1.3.7)

- Sports ministry leadership is counter-cultural. Christians must be willing to be self-sacrificial and to be actively '*downwardly mobile*' for the sake of sharing the love of Jesus Christ.
- Sports ministry leadership is eminently incarnational. Self-denial does not have the purpose of reaching some higher spiritual plane, but rather the distinct purpose of reaching non-believers wherever they are.
- Sports ministry leadership crosses socio-economic boundaries. Just as Paul identified with people from different faiths, backgrounds and social standing, so Christians should not allow culture or economics to be a barrier to their presenting of the Gospel.
- Sports ministry leadership requires perseverance and endurance. If an athlete endures incredible personal and physical privations to obtain a temporary prize, how much more should Christians be self-disciplined and determined to fulfil their calling to make Jesus Christ known to others?
- Sports ministry leadership is goal-oriented. The Bible reveals that there is a prize awaiting all believers. This provides motivation to persevere through the challenges and sacrifices that accompany being a minister of the Gospel.

The rest of this chapter will utilise the Scriptural Manifesto for sports ministry leaders to evaluate six theological paradigms which influence them.

6.3. An Evaluation of Six Theological Paradigms Influencing Sports Ministry Leaders

Shafer (2012:96) correctly observes that "the Christian tradition itself has seen a variety of positions and continues to develop its views on sport". Many theological reviews take a chronological-historical approach to reviewing the relationship between

Christianity (as represented by the church) and sport¹⁰³. As such, they look for dominant theological trends in different eras and seek to track how this has impacted the relationship between the church and sport. However, it is too simplistic to view theological development in such a linear way. Rather, there have been varying theological factors in all historical eras which have had practical implications with regards to the church's relationship to sport and the development of sports ministry. These theological paradigms are all still influential today and contribute towards the theological context which influence sports ministry leaders' approach in South Africa. This study, therefore, looks at recent works that have sought to provide a theological foundation for sport and sports ministry, and highlights key themes that are presented in these works. These theological emphases have been termed "paradigms", not because any one author or researcher has done so, but as a means of grouping together the recurring theological trends that reflect both historical and contemporary emphases. As such, the works studied, may appear in more than one of the paradigms as the researcher has grouped together the contributions and emphases of the various authors.

6.3.2. Polarised Paradigm

6.3.1.1. Introduction to the polarised paradigm

The polarised paradigm is a view of sport that considers sport as, at worst, immoral (Shafer 2012:109) and therefore a practice to be completely avoided by Christians, or, at best, irrelevant or insignificant in the light of Jesus Christ's imminent return and more pressing matters for believers (Putney 2001:51). A polarised view of sport is the result of an underlying dualistic philosophy that elevates sacred activities as if they are of higher importance and diminishes the value of physical activities such as sport (Hyland 1990:91).

Shafer (2012) provides a historical overview of the polarised view of sport. He shows that 2nd century Christian author, Tertullian, viewed the Roman Games as "instituted for the devil's sake" (Shafer 2012:106). As the church gained influence and eventually

¹⁰³ For example, Weir (2014), Tucker (2011), Wiegand (2011), Tyndall (2004).

Christianised the Empire, the mega-sporting events were dismantled; the Roman Games were banned by Constantine in 325, and the Olympics by Theodosius in 393 (Shafer 2012:111). However, it is perhaps too simplistic to say that the general view of sport was that it was entirely immoral, since what these early believers were reacting to was the very pagan and unbiblical nature of the sports that the Roman Empire engaged in (Aiello 2006:16). Indeed, “Roman barbarism” and idolatry, polarised against “Christian piety”, are highlighted by Higgs and Braswell (2004:7) as the reason for the decline of sport and the banning of the Games. Evangelical Christians today experience the same reaction to sport when the values of the sporting culture are in direct opposition to biblical values (Weir 2008:2).

Yet, what is clear is that a form of Greek dualism increasingly undergirded the church Fathers’ response to sport. Putney (2001:51) argues that the church Fathers were greatly influenced by Plato’s worldview which was expressed in a dichotomy between the sacred and the secular. The practical outcome of Platonism was that “physical education mattered little and academic reflection much”, which resulted in the church continuing to suppress sports and games throughout the Middle-Ages (Putney 2001:51).

The extreme polarisation of sport and the church, was expressed through the ages by those who viewed sport as immoral and as “a quest of individual desires that promote all manners of sinful behaviour” (Shafer 2012:109). However, this was not the view held by all Christians. Shafer (2012:100) believes that Augustine saw sport primarily as irrelevant and a distraction from more “serious meditation” (Shafer 2012:100). However, White (2011) states that Augustine and Tertullian rejected the Roman Games because of their idolatrous association with the worship of Roman gods. Yet whether it was the frivolous nature of sport, or their association with idolatry, these have been “sticking points that prevented large scale Christian ecclesiastical endorsement of sport” (Hoffman 2010:61).

During the Reformation, a foundation was given for the theological integration of the dichotomy between “sacred” and “secular” pursuits. Basing his teaching on the priesthood of all believers, Luther (1970) argued strongly against seeing a hierarchy of callings based on what was deemed more “spiritual”. He concluded that, “there is

no true, basic difference between laymen and priests, princes and bishops, between religious and secular, except for the sake of office and work, but not for the sake of status" (Luther 1970:14). Likewise, "Calvin, following Luther, argued that there was no division between sacred and secular work but rather all honest work was sacred and holy to God" (Smith, Johnson & Hiller 2004:27). However, this theological emphasis was not specifically applied to sporting pursuits.

Following the era of Reformation, a cursory overview of the Puritan beliefs regarding sport could make one believe that they discouraged engagement in sport (Wiegand 2011:129). Clearly there was still a strong dualistic tendency amongst Puritans that considered some forms of leisure as ungodly, and participation in sports on the "Lord's Day" as sinful (Price 2001:15). Their "legalistic ethic... precluded them from valuing sport as a good for its own sake" (White 2011:4). However, as Weir (2011:2) has shown, their polarised position was perhaps not because they believed sport was inherently evil, but rather because they did not view it as the best use of time and had great concerns about the sins associated with sport (e.g. Sabbath-breaking, drinking, gambling, etc.). Again, it is clear that these associated sins can still be stumbling blocks for a Christian's engagement in sport today.

Given the long history of the polarised view and the underlying dualistic philosophy, sports ministry leaders today will no doubt have been influenced by the polarised paradigm as the sacred/secular divide is still an active force in the church today (Anderson 2015:29). Viola and Barna (2008:123) state that dualistic thinking is still a major challenge facing Christian leaders today. Concerning the influence of modernism, Romanuk and Roxburgh (2006:121) speak of the church as being "colonised by modern ideas of the two separate worlds of the practical and the spiritual". Corbett and Fikkert (2012:90) believe that an "evangelical Gnosticism" has emerged which means that the church focuses on so-called sacred activities and has become largely irrelevant in secular society. Likewise, MacMaster (2010:108) argues that an underlying dualism between "this age and the age to come" prevents Christians from "working for peace, justice and reconciliation among people" (MacMaster 2010:108).

With regards to sport, whether it is viewed as a frivolous distraction from serious spiritual pursuits, or inherently evil, the polarised paradigm inevitably results in a diminished view of sport (Hyland 1990:91), which in turn leads to a diminished influence of Christians within the sporting arena. White (2011:23) sees the logical conclusion of a polarised paradigm as devaluing “both the player and the sport experience.” It is noteworthy that, in the empirical research conducted, this dualistic mind-set was still experienced as a major challenge highlighted by the participants (see 2.5.5.4.1).

6.3.1.2. Scriptural evaluation of the polarised paradigm

The polarised paradigm does not stand as an acceptable theological foundation when evaluated against the Scriptural Manifesto for sports ministry leaders. Table 6.1 provides a summary of the evaluation of the polarised paradigm against the Scriptural Manifesto as presented in Annexure G(1).

	Not Supported	Partially Supported	Highly Supported
Genesis 1:26-28	x		
Isaiah 61:1-3	x		
Matthew 28:18-20	x		
Romans 12:1-2	x		
1 Corinthians 9:19-27	x		

Table 6.1: Polarised Paradigm evaluation against Scriptural Manifesto

The following points from the Scriptures studied in chapters 4 and 5 confirm the assessment that the polarised paradigm, is unscriptural:

- Genesis 1:26-28: we learn that God has created humanity in the form of bodily creatures, designed with gifts and talents, including skills in sport. When the focus of sporting activity is to enhance one’s relationship with God through worship and to redeem sport to God’s original intent as a medium of praise, then it must be considered within the “good” of creation. Sport cannot therefore, be seen as inherently evil and automatically counter-productive to spiritual growth.

- Isaiah 61:1-3: one learns that sports ministry leaders are to have a redemptive role on earth. Therefore, rather than rejecting sporting engagement, Christians have the opportunity to bring Jesus Christ's redemption to the people and culture of sport.
- Matthew 28:18-20: Christians are called to intentionally "go" into the culture of sport in order to make disciples. This is the opposite of the polarised paradigm which causes Christians to withdraw from sport.
- Romans 12:1-2: this counteracts dualistic theology and presents an integrated view of life and worship. For the Christian, spiritual life is not a compartment of one's existence, but encompasses everything they are and do – including sport. Therefore, a Christian can see sporting activity as an expression of worship to God.
- 1 Corinthians 9:19-27: the incarnational approach of ministry again affirms that Christians are to engage relationally with people who do not know Jesus Christ, and utilise whatever methods can best facilitate this calling. This passage provides a strong mandate for Christians to engage in sport as a medium to win people to Jesus Christ.

Although the polarised view is to be rejected as a theological paradigm, it is clear that the warnings of eminent theologians through the ages (e.g. Augustine, the Puritans etc.) should be heeded. Sport can become a distraction and can become an idol competing with God's rightful place in the life of a sports ministry leader. The sports ministry leaders need to maintain a scriptural view of sport in order not to become dualistic in their own lives, whereby they elevate the importance of sport beyond their relationship with Jesus Christ.

6.3.2. Pragmatic Paradigm

6.3.2.1 .Introduction to the pragmatic paradigm

The pragmatic paradigm values sport in relation to how effective it serves as a tool for other purposes. For example, it can be argued the Romans were the ultimate pragmatists with regards to sport; their Games served to entertain the blood-thirsty

masses, propagate the Roman cult, and also train soldiers for warfare (White 2011:38). Indeed, throughout history, sport has been utilised pragmatically for political, cultic, commercial and other ends (Loland 2004:112). Loland (2004) calls this general pragmatism the “instrumentalist” view of sport, that views sport as an “instrument toward external goals” (Loland 2004:111). Pragmatism, in relation to sports ministry, focuses on sport as an instrument to achieve evangelistic ends (Treat 2015:397).

Ladd and Mathisen (1999:214) argue that the priority of modern evangelicalism is to “make the bad of society good” and that sports ministry has grown as a pragmatic response to this goal. The pragmatic paradigm views the role of sport as significant inasmuch as it helps the church to fulfil other objectives; “the church only becomes ‘engaged’ with the sport world when there is a pragmatic reason to do so” (Linville 2007:36). Hunter (2015:4) terms this “short-cut Christianity” where programme-delivery trumps long-term discipleship.

Pragmatism has been the position of many Christians since the early church who did not necessarily view sport as immoral or irrelevant, but also did not have a theological foundation that accepted that sport could have God-given intrinsic value (Tucker 2011:10). Following the banning of the Roman and Olympic Games, Shafer (2012:112) shows that the medieval church provided a pragmatic response to individuals who still wanted to participate in sporting activities by providing alternative tournaments and festivals. Medieval philosopher and theologian, Thomas Aquinas, held a pragmatic position that the “pleasures of play became redeemable on the strength of their usefulness” (cf. Hoffman 2010:62). Aquinas held that play was acceptable so long as it was not “indecent” or “injurious” (Shafer 2012:12).

Moving to the post-Reformation period, many Puritans also held a pragmatic approach to sport. As previously mentioned, the general perception is that the Puritans were anti-sport however, this stereo-type cannot be broadly applied to them (Tyndall 2004:12). Ryken (2006:40) demonstrates the pragmatic approach of many Puritans in that they appreciated leisure activity inasmuch as it contributed to a more effective work ethic, or in defence of their theocracy (Higgs 1995:8). The fact that different authors highlight different emphases among the Puritans demonstrates that alternate theological paradigms did exist in the various eras, and therefore it’s too simplistic to

say that all Puritans were either “dualistic” or “pragmatic” in approach, but rather theological nuances can be discerned within their specific context, just as they can be today.

During the era of Muscular Christianity (see 3.3.2), the pragmatic utilitarian use of sport reached a new zenith. Sport became a means to “draw young men and boys inside the church walls” (Shafer 2012:119) through activities that promoted manliness in the face of the perceived “feminisation” of the church (Putney 2001:54). Organisations like the YMCA were birthed in order to promote “a strenuous religion for the strenuous life” (Putney 2003:44), and sport was required to develop a “Christian man’s character and body” (White 2011:6). One outcome of this was that Christians in the Victorian era were intrinsically involved in the development of coded sport and the establishment of sports clubs, which Weir (2011:4) confirms was “...more of a pragmatic development than one based on a well-thought out theology of sport”. Another outcome of this era was the mobilisation of “muscular missionaries” (Putney 2003:127) who travelled to Africa, Asia and the Far East (Tucker 2011:44). Oftentimes the missionaries would utilise sport as a medium to engage with the indigenous peoples whom they were seeking to reach (Watson, Weir & Friend 2005:para.26).

Ladd and Mathisen (1999:215) contend that the pragmatism of the Muscular Christianity era is primarily evident in the modern Sports Ministry Movement, with the underlying myth that “if it works, then, the message must be correct”. Likewise, White (2011:28) argues that “modern muscular Christianity has predominantly chosen to appraise sport’s moral worth according to its pragmatic utility”. Coomes (2002:223) in her history of Africa Enterprise, a mission organisation founded by Michael Cassidy, gives a classic example of how Christians have responded pragmatically when engaging in sports:

Sport was big at Moroka, and several wanted to know if a Christian should play sport. ‘I [Michael Cassidy] felt the best answer in this soccer-crazed school was to acquire for them a large silver cup... to be presented to the winning team in the annual inter-house soccer context,’ remembered Michael. ‘This was considered a highly satisfactory practical answer to a serious theological question!’

Although this is a light-hearted example, it demonstrates how many sports ministries have emerged; pragmatically responding to an opportunity within a specific context. Higgs (1995:14) shows the dangers of pragmatism when theology becomes based upon experience rather than upon Scripture. He sees the relationship between the church and sport as symbiotic; the church uncritically blesses sport, and sport brings “welcomed attention to the church” (Higgs 1995:21). However, Linville (2014:1407) bluntly states that “pragmatic, sport, or athletics-based evangelism should be condemned if it does not have theological support”.

It would clearly be a concern if the motivation for sports ministry development were simply a pragmatic means of evangelism or bringing credibility to the church. The title of this research includes the words “effective” and “sustainable” because pragmatism alone is a shallow foundation that would hinder both the effectiveness and sustainability of ministry. This does not simply apply to sports ministry, but all forms of ministry. Viola and Barna (2008:68) state that pragmatism is dangerous because it teaches that “the end justifies the means. If the end is considered ‘holy,’ then just about any ‘means’ are acceptable”. The temptation that pragmatic leaders face is that they become results-driven at the expense of integrity. Newbigin (1989:126) warns against the temptation and dangers of finding meaning in our ministry because of apparent success – a very real danger for leaders when they are engaged in the competitive world of sport.

Rinehart (1998:118) reminds us that ministry must always be an act of worship and helpfully connects the challenge of pragmatism with the task of leadership:

By saying: ‘we do what works,’ we declare that the Bible has little to say about how we as leaders operate. If measurable results are the focus of ministry, then we adopt anything that heightens the results or appears useful. It’s called the path of least resistance (Rinehart 1998:87).

Effective and sustainable sports ministry will not be the result of leaders who follow “the path of least resistance”. Rather, they require a theological foundation that provides a biblical foundation which involves moving away from “anti-intellectualism

and pragmatism”, and towards engaging God with the mind (Osmer 2008:116). However, pragmatism is at the root of other theological paradigms for sports ministry, namely, the proclamation and pedagogical paradigms. In the former, the priority of sport is in its utilisation as a medium for evangelism, and the latter in its utilisation to teach biblical lessons.

6.3.2.2. Scriptural evaluation of the pragmatic paradigm

When evaluated against the Scriptural Manifesto for sports ministry leaders, we can determine that the pragmatic paradigm is not a sufficient theological foundation for sports ministry leaders. Table 6.2 provides a summary of the evaluation of the pragmatic paradigm against the Scriptural Manifesto as presented in Annexure G(2).

	Not Supported	Partially Supported	Highly Supported
Genesis 1:26-28	x		
Isaiah 61:1-3		x	
Matthew 28:18-20	x		
Romans 12:1-2	x		
1 Corinthians 9:19-27			x

Table 6.2: Pragmatic Paradigm evaluation against Scriptural Manifesto

The strengths of the pragmatic paradigm can be summarised as follows:

- It is partially supported by Isaiah 61:1-3 and Matthew 28:18-20 because of the priority that is placed on utilising sport as a platform for Gospel proclamation.
- Further support can be gleaned from 1 Corinthians 9:19-27 which outlines Paul’s pragmatic approach of being willing to do whatever it takes in order to reach people for Jesus Christ.
- The pragmatic paradigm can certainly lead to ministry that crosses cultural and socio-economic boundaries.

The dangers/weaknesses of the pragmatic paradigm can be summarised as follows:

- When assessed by Genesis 1:26-28, a purely pragmatic theology can lead to sport being denigrated in value as it will not necessarily be recognised as a gift from God to be enjoyed as a means to worship Him.
- Pragmatism can advocate any means to reach certain goals, which can result in compromising ethical standards associated with the fact of being made in God's image.
- It can elevate one primary result, that of people making a commitment to Jesus Christ or being "born again". However, Isaiah 61:1-3 highlights the redemptive task that Christians have. Therefore, sport should not only be seen just as a medium through which to "evangelise", but also as a means by which culture and sport need to be redeemed.
- Romans 12:1-2 strengthens this view by emphasising the work of transformation that occurs in the life of a Christian. As the people of sport are reached with the Gospel, the transforming work of the Holy Spirit should be evident in the sports culture itself.
- A danger of pragmatism is that something is valued only in relation to its usefulness. When operating within the pragmatic paradigm, sports ministry leaders are prone to using a "hit-and-run" type of evangelism, rather than applying a long-term process of "making disciples" to which Jesus Christ called His people in Matthew 28:18-20.

6.3.3 Proclamation Paradigm

6.3.3.1. Introduction to the proclamation paradigm

The core of the proclamation paradigm is that sport provides a suitable and relevant medium through which to share the Gospel with non-Christians, and "to carry out the Great Commission of 'going into all the world'" (Garner & Newman 2004:2). Pragmatic and utilitarian language is used to describe sport as an evangelistic "platform" (White 2011:226), a "vehicle" (Wiegand 2011:177) or a "tool for harvesting" (Cash 2002:79).

The classical proclamation paradigm considers engagement in sport and the development of sports ministry, as a means to an end; the end being, “proclaiming salvation through the death and resurrection of Jesus” (Cash 2002:62). It is noteworthy that the language of “tool”, “vehicle” and “platform” was strongly evident in the interviews conducted in the empirical research (see 2.5.5.3.1).

The proclamation paradigm underpinned the growth of evangelism through sport in the late 19th century (Ladd & Mathisen 1999:13) and helped fuel the mobilisation of missionaries from the West (Tucker & Woodbridge 2012a:1). The pragmatism of Muscular Christianity, therefore, played a catalytic role in the missionary era (Watson *et al.* 2005:para. 26). In the United States, this mobilisation was fuelled by the large-scale proclamation strategies of men such as mass-evangelist DL Moody (Armstrong 2003:2), and former sports stars Billy Sunday and Orville Gardner (Ladd & Mathisen 1999:13). These urban revivalists in turn fuelled the Student Volunteer Movement (Tucker 2011:44) whose vision was to win the world for Jesus Christ in their generation (Putney 2001:128) and commissioned many missionaries to foreign fields (Putney 2001:127). In the United Kingdom, the dramatic conversion and move to the mission field of some high-profile sports stars, including one of the greatest cricketers of his generation, CT Studd (Armstrong 2003), aided the growing symbiosis between sport and evangelism (Oakley 2005:4). Even the sport of basketball was invented by James Naismith in 1891 (Tyndall 2004:82) as a pragmatic response to developing a sport that could both foster Christian principles and be utilised for global missions (Price 2001:28).

Many authors note a slowing in momentum in the engagement between sport and Christianity at the turn of the twentieth century¹⁰⁴ (Tucker & Woodbridge 2012a:16). However, in the post-2nd World War era, the power of sport as a medium of proclamation re-emerged and paved the way for the modern Sports Ministry Movement (Mason 2003:20). This emphasis began in the United States in the 1950s (Tucker & Woodbridge 2012a:16), and reached countries such as Australia (Tyndall

¹⁰⁴ Ladd & Mathisen (1999) coined the term "disengagement" for this period. Many authors follow their lead in viewing the period from the late 19th century to the mid-20th century as a time when the church once more retreated from active engagement and leadership in the world of sport. See for example Linville 2007:36; Polley 2007:23 and Tucker 2011:31.

2004:30) and South Africa (Tucker 2011:56) later in the century as sports ministry became a global movement. White (2011:224) identifies the link between sports ministry and the 19th century Muscular Christianity through the emphasis on proclamation and sport being “co-opted or used as a vehicle to save souls”.

The re-birth of sports ministry in the 20th Century was built upon the proclamation paradigm: Youth for Christ, and the young evangelist, Billy Graham, were at the forefront of this movement (Mason 2003:20). The core element to their proclamation strategy became a foundational pillar of the Sports Ministry Movement in the 20th Century, namely, utilising a famous Christian sports personality to attract crowds to hear their testimony and share the Gospel (Ladd & Mathisen 1999:113). In the early 21st Century, Brazilian soccer star, Kaka, became a symbol for the proclamation paradigm, whose commitment to share the Gospel through his platform as a professional footballer has been acknowledged in both the Christian and secular press (Brown 2009:par.2). In the United States, high-profile athletes utilising their platform to express their faith in Jesus Christ have become commonplace (Krattenmaker 2010:22). This emphasis upon “high-profile” Christian sports stars utilising their broad appeal and influence to share the Gospel, has also fuelled an industry of accompanying proclamation-based resources (Tucker 2009b:149). One example, and perhaps the most comprehensive, is the website TheGoal.com which contains hundreds of testimonies from Christian professional sportsmen and women from around the world.

Two other proclamation methods of sports ministry also emerged in this era. The first was the formation of sports mission teams that would travel on short-term trips across the world, organise sports events (matches or sports camps), and share the Gospel (Mason 2003:20). The second was the recognition that the gathering of huge audiences to major sports events, such as the Olympic Games and soccer World Cup, provided another opportunity for mass evangelism (McCown & Gin 2003:119). The mobilisation of Christians to share the Gospel at major sports events continues as a major emphasis of sports ministry in the 21st Century, as evidenced by the “participation of numerous South African churches in various outreach programmes during the 2010 FIFA World Cup” (Tucker & Woodbridge 2012b:153). Indeed, the

emphasis on major sports events has had a major impact on the development of sports ministry in South Africa and across the continent of Africa (Tucker 2009b:83).

The proclamation paradigm has, therefore, developed a dual focus. Firstly, it focuses on the individual sportsperson who can utilise his or her engagement in sport, or the platform which sport provides, as an opportunity to share the Gospel with fellow athletes and/or spectators (Smith 2010:14). Secondly, sport events, be they major events or locally organised competitions, provide churches with a non-threatening opportunity to attract people who may not normally attend a church event, in order to share the Christian faith (Shafer 2012:167).

The proclamation paradigm for sports ministry is not without its critics, particularly as it relates to high-profile sports stars utilising their platform for evangelism:

The rhetoric and context of sports evangelism does make it appear that Jesus needs high-profile sports and athletic victories for his message to be made known. This is very problematic (Metzger 2010:101).

Higgs highlights the incongruity between the proclamation paradigm, which seems to emphasise the success of high-profile Christian athletes - as if, in some way, they're vindicating their message - and the image of Jesus Christ on the cross, who was "a loser... he appealed to the losers in society" (Higgs 1995:14). He views this incongruity as embracing a "theology of works", the very thing which the Protestant Reformation sought to overcome (Higgs 1995:170), and essentially Higgs accuses the Sports Ministry Movement of false advertising; "the implication is if you accept Christ you can be a winner too" (Higgs 1995:14). Although there is a sense that Christians are winners and share in Jesus Christ's victory (e.g. see 1 Corinthians 15:57), Higgs is correct to point out the danger of parading high-profile athletes as somehow representing the archetypal Christian "winner". Indeed, Paul said that we must "run in such a way as to get the prize" (1 Corinthians 9:24 and also 5.1.3.3), and seemed to admire the discipline of athletes, but he also said that "to the weak I became weak" (1 Corinthians 9:22) and reminded the church in Corinth that they were of no great reputation when they accepted the Gospel (1 Corinthians 1:26). The danger that Higgs identifies is that

the medium of the message (the high profile sportsperson) may be a distraction from the core of the Gospel message.

Krattenmaker (2010) similarly critiques the US sports ministry emphasis on high profile Christian athletes, expressing his opinion that evangelical Christians are simply jumping onto the advertising band-wagon associated with major sport events (Krattenmaker 2010:44). He describes the Sports Ministry Movement that it is like an “iceberg hidden beneath the water” which is intentionally recruiting and mobilising Christian sports stars to serve as “a uniquely advantageous gateway to the hearts and minds of America” (Krattenmaker 2010:96).

Higgs and Krattenmaker are specifically critiquing one aspect of the proclamation paradigm and Krattenmaker himself recognises that many leaders and innovators in sports ministry are “reinventing the Christian presence in sports” (Krattenmaker 2010:111). This “reinvention” is akin to what McCown and Gin term a “sports-valued approach” (McCown & Gin 2003:30), with a focus on the role Christians have in redeeming sports culture. In response to the criticism that Christians are merely utilising sport pragmatically to market the Christian message (Metzger 2010:102), the sports-valued approach is seeking to bring the redeeming influence of the whole Gospel into the world of sport. This redemptive influence will be further discussed as part of the purposeful paradigm below.

Although there may be justifiable criticism in the methodology that some sports ministries have utilised proclamation within their strategies, Linville (2014:2165) emphasises that a “prerequisite of the Sports Outreach Movement is to be evangelical to the point of being evangelistic and biblical”. He expresses the danger that when proclamation of the Gospel is side-lined, then sports ministries are on a slippery slope to secularisation (Linville 2014:2165). Additionally, White (2011:289) underlines his belief that a danger of pragmatism is that the method takes priority (e.g. the sports event), and “the gospel is cheapened and exchanged for relevance and credibility”.

Clearly, the proclamation paradigm should be considered as contributing to a strong foundation within any paradigm of sports ministry, as no Christian is excused from participating in the Great Commission (Cash 2002:63), and no people-group, including

sportspeople, are excluded from hearing the Gospel message (Cash 2002:64). However, the Gospel needs to be consistently proclaimed in word *and* deed; it cannot simply be an afterthought tacked on to a sports event (Smith 2010:143). Additionally, there has recently appeared a greater emphasis on the fact that proclamation needs to be accompanied by discipleship.

Following an in-depth look at the Great Commandment and Great Commission, Wiegand (2011), in his definition of sports ministry, helpfully moves the proclamation paradigm from purely seeking commitments to the Gospel message towards lifelong discipleship:

It [sports ministry] is the evangelistic and discipleship-orientated ministering to people within a sport and recreation context (including all of their facets), with the specific intention to ultimately win them over for Christ, by exposing them to the Gospel through which the Great Commandment (Matthew 22:36-40) and the Great Commission (Matthew 28:16-20) materialised (Wiegand 2011:155).

This emphasis on discipleship provides a helpful bridge to the pedagogical paradigm which recognises the role that sport can play in teaching spiritual truths and equipping participants for life beyond sport.

6.3.3.2. Scriptural evaluation of the proclamation paradigm

When evaluated against the Scriptural Manifesto for sports ministry leaders, we can determine that the proclamation paradigm is not a sufficient theological foundation for sports ministry leaders. Table 6.3 (on the next page) provides a summary of the evaluation of the proclamation paradigm against the Scriptural Manifesto as presented in Annexure G(3).

	Not Supported	Partially Supported	Highly Supported
Genesis 1:26-28	x		
Isaiah 61:1-3			x
Matthew 28:18-20		x	
Romans 12:1-2	x		
1 Corinthians 9:19-27		x	

Table 6.3: Proclamation Paradigm evaluation against Scriptural Manifesto

The strength of the proclamation paradigm can be summarised as follows:

- It strongly follows the proclamation mandate of Isaiah 61:1-3 and Great Commission in Matthew 28:18-20.
- The proclamation paradigm is very goal-oriented, aligning with Paul's emphasis in 1 Corinthians 9:19-27.
- Seeking a response to the Gospel must be central to all scripturally-based sports ministry, and therefore the proclamation paradigm needs to be emphasised within any theological foundation or framework for effective and sustainable sports ministry.

The danger/weaknesses of the proclamation paradigm can be summarised as follows:

- It does not fulfil the mandate of Genesis 1:26-28 towards restoration and stewardship. Proclamation should not be seen as an end in itself, but should also lead towards seeking God's redemption of the people and that of the activity of sport.
- The danger of proclamation is that it can lean towards pragmatism. Sport can be *used* but not valued, which can in turn compromise the integrity of sports ministry leaders. Likewise, high-profile sportspeople can be *used* for their fame with the danger that the proclamation *medium* compromises the proclaimed *message*, particularly if their lifestyle is in contradiction to the Gospel.
- The paradigm does not recognise the opportunity to glorify God through sport as seen in Romans 12:1-2.

- There can be a lack of emphasis on discipleship. The goal-oriented nature of proclamation can tend towards seeing people make commitments to Jesus Christ, but miss out on the call to make disciples which is the focus of Matthew 28:18-20.

6.3.4. Pedagogical Paradigm

6.3.4.1 Introduction to the pedagogical paradigm

The pedagogical paradigm views participation in sport as a medium for teaching scriptural truths and life skills. The pedagogical paradigm provides a framework for the current emphasis in sports ministry on programme-based activities, often promoted to and through local churches (Shafer 2012:12). The researcher is not here referring to the teaching/coaching of the sport itself, but finding the value and experience of sport as an educational aid. It is the pedagogical “art or science of teaching” (Dictionary.com 2015:par.1) that draws parallels, lessons, and instruction from the experience of sport. The pedagogical value of sport has a long history. For example, Roman philosopher, Cicero, believed that sport had a “wholesome effect” and was worthwhile for “acquiring knowledge” (White 2011:40).

A major emphasis of the secular Sport for Development Movement is that participation in sport and competition helps develop positive values in participants. Mieth (2005:24) lists these values as:

Health and fitness, energy, the experience of competition, a feeling of achievement and success, discipline, social contact, educational and cultural opportunities, a model of fair play, solidarity, social advancement and integration.

Consequently, Costantini (2005:49) argues that, “training for sport can therefore become the easiest and most direct way of training for life”. Likewise, Loland believes that sport has an intrinsic value that can aid in “human flourishing” (Loland 2004:117) and argues that this emphasis has become part of a contemporary normative theory of sport (Loland 2004:120).

These pedagogical principles of sport also underpin the way physical education is now taught in many countries (MacDonald & Kirk 1999:140). There has been a “blurring of subject boundaries in the learning area” (MacDonald & Kirk 1999:133) which recognises sport as a vehicle to “foster the advancement of the person who practices it” (Costantini 2005:47). However, as MacDonald and Kirk (1999:140) conclude in their research on Christian physical education students in Australia, there can be vastly different pedagogical paradigms between a liberal education curriculum, and that of a Christian who seeks to teach from a biblical worldview.

Higgs (1995:326) correctly cautions that sport does not, in and of itself, generate values: “sports are mere instruments or tools”. Indeed, as Weir (2008:5) states, “there have been long debates about whether sport develops character or just reveals it”. Therefore, the Christian pedagogical paradigm should go beyond participation in sport for general value development, and move towards intentional programming that seeks to present biblical lessons and values through sport (Stutz 2003:132).

The pedagogical paradigm has a scriptural precedent in how the Apostle Paul, inspired by the Holy Spirit, regularly utilised sporting metaphors (Wesner 2003:39)¹⁰⁵. Paul’s approach was to draw spiritual lessons out of the physical activity of sport (Linville 2014:1354). The use of sporting metaphors would perhaps have been controversial in the early church due to the pagan rituals associated with the Greek Games and the violence of the Roman spectacles (Smith *et al.* 2014:15). The participation paradigm will discuss whether or not Paul was endorsing the practical involvement of Christians in sport. However, what is clear, is that Paul has given us a precedent for sport to serve as a metaphor for spiritual growth and Christian character-development (Linville 2014:1325). Certainly, preachers throughout the ages, have found the example of the athlete, as given by Paul, an inspirational metaphor for the Christian life (Reavely 1992:8).

¹⁰⁵ See 1 Corinthians 9:24-27, 15:32; Galatians 2:2; 5:7 Philippians 3:12-15; 1 Timothy 4:8; 2 Timothy 4:7-8. An additional significant example is given by the author of Hebrews in 12:1-3. The researcher has given a more in-depth exposition of these passages in Tucker 2011:109-120.

The era of Muscular Christianity in the 19th Century added renewed emphasis to the pedagogical paradigm. This moved beyond sport being observed as a metaphor for teaching spiritual truths, and towards the activity of partaking in sport as being an appropriate avenue for the teaching of Christian virtues and values (Watson 2005:para.20). In the United Kingdom, sport became elevated to a medium of instruction through which Christ-like character was developed. The Muscular Christian ideals were epitomised in the writings of Thomas Hughes (1993) whose school-boy fictional character, Tom Brown, purportedly exhibited the well-rounded characteristics produced by a life of academics, sporting vigour and commitment to Jesus Christ (Armstrong 2003:1). The Muscular Christian doctrine of “healthy mind, healthy body” emerged as the antidote to the perception that the church was unmanly (Tucker 2011:29). Hughes (1887:578) himself wrote of the virtue of courage as defining Christian manliness. It was believed that these attributes were developed through active engagement in sport and this pedagogy was reinforced throughout Victorian Britain as the Tom Brown books became compulsory reading for all schoolboys (Tyndall 2004:44). Therefore, in the 19th century, there was clearly a shift from simply utilising the example of sport to teach spiritual lessons, towards competitive activity as being the basis of teaching. This experiential pedagogy continues to be prevalent in the approach of modern sports ministries (for example, Coptic Youth Center 2013:1). The Muscular Christian focus upon sport as a means of education and spiritual development is a belief that underpins the movement (Ladd & Mathisen 1999:16).

The challenge of the pedagogical paradigm, which promotes competitive activity for the goal of spiritual and character development, is whether the type of character that emerges is consistent with the fruits of the spirit¹⁰⁶ (Higgs 1995:199). Sports ministry leaders need to engage in critiquing sporting culture and values that are not aligned to Scripture (Smith *et al.* 2004:27). Christians, engaged in sport need to be cognisant of the negative competitive traits that can occur through competition, namely “seeking to gain a competitive upper hand at the expense of one’s adversary” (Beed 2005:47). Hoffman (2010:212) argues persuasively that evangelical Christians have become part of the sports culture and are not actively involved in transforming the sports culture. If participation in sport “simply instruct[s] [students] to win, praise the winners,

¹⁰⁶ See Galatians 5:22-23.

and pressure the losers to improve their performance, the children could relate self-worth to winning and losing – competition can become very destructive” (Smith *et al.* 2004:33). Christians engaged in sport need to recognise both the widespread absence of biblical values in the prevailing sports culture (Constantini 2005:49), and that the “sin nature can use competition to strengthen many harmful character traits” (Smith *et al.* 2004:14). The danger of the pedagogical paradigm is that Christians buy into the rhetoric that competing in sport will automatically develop godly character (Shafer 2012:174). Rather, the pedagogical paradigm needs to intentionally build upon the experience of sport in order to reinforce the biblical lessons (Shafer 2012:176) in the legacy of Paul’s metaphorical approach.

The 21st Century Sports Ministry Movement has sought to make this a pedagogical shift through the teaching of “life-skills” through sport, based upon the “experiential learning method” (Shin 2010:para. 8). Rather than expecting character formation to occur simply through participation, the Sports Ministry Movement has developed materials and curricula that intentionally apply the lessons, that participants experience through sport (Shin 2010:para. 2).

The outcome of adding intentionality to the pedagogical paradigm is that many sports ministries are developing specific programmes to aid churches in applying the experiential learning method (Garner 2003:8). Sports ministry leaders are being encouraged to promote well-organised sporting programmes in order to put the church “on the cutting edge of touching people’s lives in a culturally relevant non-threatening way” (Garner & Newman 2004:2). A consequence of this emphasis is for the church to provide alternative sporting options for Christian young people (Garner 2003:7) where they can be introduced to the Gospel and receive biblical teaching (Linville 2014:1063). As Stutz (2003:126) elucidates, the end goal for a church-based sporting programme goes beyond simply providing a “satisfying recreation experience” as they have an “eternal” focus. Those committed to church-based sports ministry programmes believe that they are the best-positioned and most suitable avenue to develop people’s spiritual life (Linville 2014:1056). However, there are those who counter this claim and question whether the resources and time that churches commit to sports ministry programmes are actually a distraction “from missions and other spiritual matters traditionally vouchsafed to the church” (Hoffman 2010:173).

As a consequence of the pedagogical paradigm, sports ministry leaders in the 21st Century now have a plethora of resources and programmes at their disposal which utilise sport as an avenue for teaching scriptural truths and values. The efficacy of these programmes still needs to be empirically tested as it is possible to argue that the rhetoric of the benefit of these programmes has yet to be proven. A further concern with the emphasis on church-based sporting programmes is that, if church-based sports programmes are being offered and encouraged to Christian sportspeople, then the influence of Christians within the world of sport itself could be diluted and even dissolved. The next two paradigms (6.3.5 and 6.3.6) provide theological models that seek to provide a bridge between the church and the world of sport.

6.3.4.2. Scriptural evaluation of the pedagogical paradigm

When evaluated against the Scriptural Manifesto for sports ministry leaders, we can determine that the pedagogical paradigm does not provide a sufficient theological foundation for sports ministry leaders. Table 6.4 provides a summary of the evaluation of the pedagogical paradigm against the Scriptural Manifesto as presented in Annexure G(4).

	Not Supported	Partially Supported	Highly Supported
Genesis 1:26-28	x		
Isaiah 61:1-3		x	
Matthew 28:18-20		x	
Romans 12:1-2		x	
1 Corinthians 9:19-27		x	

Table 6.4: Pedagogical Paradigm evaluation against Scriptural Manifesto

The strength of the pedagogical paradigm can be summarised as follows:

- A strong focus on discipleship which seeks to fulfil the Great Commission in Matthew 28:18-20 by providing an avenue to present Jesus Christ's teaching through sports activity.

- The discipleship process also focuses on character formation, thereby aligning with Romans 12:1-2 by seeking the “renewing of the mind”, leading to Christ-like thoughts and behaviour.
- There is an incarnational emphasis as teaching through sport provides the opportunity to present relevant instruction that crosses cultural and socio-economical boundaries. When this is related to the sporting experience itself, powerful metaphors can be utilised, following Paul’s example in 1 Corinthians 9:19-27.

The danger/weaknesses of the pedagogical paradigm can be summarised as follows:

- There can be a tendency towards pragmatism (see the weaknesses of pragmatic paradigm above) which does not value sport or seek to bring Jesus Christ’s redemptive power to the world of sport as per Genesis 1:26-28.
- It is insufficient as a theological paradigm when the emphasis rests purely upon life-skills and character development apart from salvation and the transforming work of the Holy Spirit, thereby not fulfilling the discipleship mandate of Romans 12:1-2.
- Although great resources are being developed, churches and sports ministry leaders can become purely focused on programme-delivery, rather than seeking God to best impact the culture of sport with the Gospel.
- If Christians become increasingly engaged in church-based programmes, they may lose their incarnational impact in the sports-world.

6.3.5. Participation Paradigm

6.3.5.1. Introduction to the participation paradigm

The participation paradigm has a similar foundation to the pedagogical paradigm but moves beyond the utilitarian benefit of sport as a means of teaching biblical truth, and places greater emphasis upon the participation in the sport itself by the individual Christian sportsperson. The participation paradigm places emphasis upon the activity of sport as a means of utilising the body to worship the Creator (Shafer 2012:148) as

an end in itself (White 2011:69). As Treat (2015:398) argues, “Sports can be a platform for evangelism or a classroom for morality, but they are first and foremost a playground for receiving and enjoying the goodness of the Creator.”

As with the pedagogical paradigm, proponents of the participation paradigm also look to Paul’s usage of sporting metaphors. The question often debated is: does Paul’s use of sporting metaphors give grounds for participation in sporting competition? Linville (2014:1325) believes that Paul’s writings “serves as a model for how athletics can be used for spiritual purposes”, and goes beyond a conclusion that this is simply about the metaphorical utilisation of sport to teach spiritual truths, and finds an implicit endorsement of sporting participation itself (Linville 2014:1263).

In 2 Timothy 4:8 (NIV), Paul writes, “For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come.” Linville, reflecting on this passage, states:

He [the Holy Spirit] inspired Paul to specifically use an athletic term within an athletic motif and context to communicate both the implicit lesson – physical activity is beneficial for some things – along with the explicit lesson – godliness is beneficial for all things (Linville 2014:1263).

Not only so, but Linville also surmises that Paul’s intimate knowledge of sport indicates that he was himself a participant (Linville 2014:1900) and was therefore writing from personal experience (Linville 2014:1918).

Linville (2014:1325) believes that Paul’s usage of sporting metaphors may present strong biblical grounds for the endorsement of sporting activity. However, some would question Linville’s conclusion as to the “intrinsic value upon physical activity” (Linville 2014:1285) on the basis of Paul’s pedagogy (Shafer 2012:99). Weir (2008:4) cautions not to overstate Paul’s intention; he believes that Paul was not intending to articulate a theology of sport, or, indeed, give an endorsement of participation in competition (Smith *et al.* 2004:12). It is possible to at least agree with Tyndall (2004:8) that Paul’s numerous and positive references indicate “tacit” approval for the Greek Games and

he perhaps would not have used the metaphor of sport in the way that he did if he believed that sport was inherently evil (Oswald 2003:34).

The debate about the virtues and values of sporting participation has continued throughout the ages, particularly as it relates to the motives of the heart and the potential for sinful actions that accompany competitive participation.

Augustine expressed concern about the danger of the competitive spirit and condemned attitudes that would “usurp the glory or the position of God” (Smith *et al.* 2004:20).

As discussed, during the Middle-Ages, participation in sport was at best tolerated, and at worst condemned and actively discouraged by the church (Wiegand 2011:129). The Reformation paved the way for a new outlook towards leisure and sport through a redressing of the sacred/secular dualism and a renewed emphasis on the value of the body. However, Calvin still warned of the dangers of the evils of self-love and lust for victory (Smith *et al.* 2004:26). By the time of Jonathan Edwards in the 18th Century, there was evidence of an evolving theology that did not condemn engagement in sports competition, but recognised that the state of the participant’s heart “must always align with moral standards of purity, charity, and honesty; the heart must remain focused on what is really important” (Smith *et al.* 2004:26).

As with the pedagogical paradigm, the emphasis upon Christian participation in sport was significantly boosted by the Muscular Christianity movement. In the United States, Muscular Christian doctrine was fuelled by the emergence of the Young Men’s Christian Association (YMCA) in the second half of the 19th Century (Tucker 2011:30). The YMCA promoted “a strenuous religion for the strenuous life” (Putney 2001:44) and prioritised participation in sport as a medium to engage young people with the Gospel (Putney 2001:64). The YMCA developed a holistic mission that sought to improve the spiritual, mental, social and physical condition of young men (McCown & Gin 2003:115). The YMCA believed that participation in sport was an essential component in character formation to such an extent that they have been accused of over-emphasising the role of sport at the expense of the Gospel (Higgs 1995:199).

The Muscular Christianity era increasingly emphasised that “involvement in athletics served the individual muscular Christian in the development of his or her personal piety and discipleship” (Linville 2007:36). Ladd and Mathisen (1999:214) write that the “core element” of muscular Christianity was that “sport builds character”. However, the emergence of participation as the means of pedagogy defined this era and has caused some to question the “type of character that emerges” (Higgs 1995:199). Price (2001:25) gives the following example from Bishop William T Manning who, in the 1920s, commented that:

Clean, wholesome, well-regulated sport is a most powerful agency for true and utmost living... True sport and true religion should be in the closest touch and sympathy. Few things have done more harm than the idea that religion frowns upon sport or is out of sympathy with it. The notion gives men the wrong idea of religion and it puts religion out of touch with the life of the people. A well-played game of polo or of touch football is in its own place and in its own way as pleasing to God as a beautiful service of worship in the Cathedral.

Many modern Christian authors and sports ministry protagonists advocate that participation in sport contributes to the positive development of young people (Hoyle 2008:88). In true Muscular Christian tradition, there is the belief that, “sports participation, at its best, fosters a mastery orientation, characterised by self-motivation and striving for excellence” (Hoyle 2008:89).

In the second half of the 20th Century, a fresh theological emphasis on participation in sport emerged that moved beyond engagement in competitive sport as simply a vehicle for character-development, and towards a recognition that sportspeople could utilise their giftedness as a form of worshipping God (Linville 2014:1193).

In truth, the theological foundation for an integrated view of worship had been articulated by the Reformers, such as Martin Luther who wrote: “the worship of God... should be free at table, in private rooms, downstairs, upstairs, at home, abroad, in all places, by all people, at all times” (Plass 1959:1546). However, it was Moltman *et al.* (1972), in their book ‘Theology of play’, that directly applied this theological principle

to the activity of play (which in its broadest sense can include recreation, games and sport), as an activity that brings freedom and joy that connects the Creator and the creation (Moltman *et al.* 1972:31). This understanding of participation in games as an activity that brings joy that is blessed by God and intrinsic to being made in His image (Smith 2010:175), served as a foundation for recognising that, through the activity of sport, God can be worshipped (Shafer 2012:242). In contrast to the Puritan pragmatic utilisation of sport as a medium to develop good work ethics, or the Muscular Christian view of sport to teach and develop character, or the proclamation paradigm that focuses on the winning of others, the participation paradigm sees bringing glory to God as the motivation for participation in sport. For example, Shafer (2012:15) writes that, “play is an expression of gratitude to God who gives the gift of sport”, and goes on to conclude that, “as Christians we cannot fail to view sport as an expression of worship” (Shafer 2012:162). In line with John Piper’s (2010:253) view that “genuine affections for God (the essence of worship) are an end in themselves”, the participation paradigm therefore holds a high view of sport as an end in itself through which Christians can worship God.

The practical result of seeking to worship God through participation in sport should directly impact upon the manner in which Christians compete. This should impact the quality of their participation (Shafer 2012:251), the nature of their participation as conforming to biblical standards (Smith *et al.* 2004:15), the focus of their participation as not being for temporary, world success (Smith 2010:174), and the ultimate motivation for participation as seeking to bring glory to God (Smith *et al.* 2004:14). Indeed, the very act of competition should not be seen as an avenue for defeating one’s enemy, but for mutual benefit as two “image bearers” contest and bring glory to God (White 2011:311). This in turn brings an ultimate sense of value to the sportsperson because utilising one’s talent to glorify God “provides a basis for the true sense of Christian vocation” (Linville 2014:1201), and in striving for excellence on the sports field, the Christian sportsperson can demonstrate his or her reliance on God (Shafer 2012:210). Finally, the participation paradigm helps to redefine success for Christian participants as no longer being tied up in winning or losing, but being entirely related to whether God has been glorified (Smith 2010:164).

The participation paradigm brings the activity of sport to a higher level as a medium through which people can worship and bring glory to God. However, there are also clearly inherent dangers within the act of sport participation such as *over-absorption*, *self-reliance* (Hoffman 2010:173) and “*body-worship*” (Shafer 2012:152). Yet, as a theological paradigm, the focus on the individual participant provides sports ministry leaders with a good foundation to apply biblical principles as to how a Christian should compete in a manner pleasing to God. The natural question that follows is, what impact should Christians who compete for God’s glory have upon the secularised and often ungodly culture of sport? Do Christian sportspeople have a God-given redemptive mandate to see the world of sport restored to His original intent? These are the questions that will be addressed by the purposeful paradigm.

6.3.5.2. Scriptural evaluation of the participation paradigm

When evaluated against the Scriptural Manifesto for sports ministry leaders, we can determine that the participation paradigm provides a fairly strong theological foundation for sports ministry leaders. Table 6.5 provides a summary of the evaluation of the purposeful paradigm against the Scriptural Manifesto as presented in Annexure G (5).

	Not Supported	Partially Supported	Highly Supported
Genesis 1:26-28			x
Isaiah 61:1-3		x	
Matthew 28:18-20		x	
Romans 12:1-2			x
1 Corinthians 9:19-27			x

Table 6.5: Participation Paradigm evaluation against Scriptural Manifesto

The strength of the participation paradigm can be summarised as follows:

- It holds strongly to the foundation given in Genesis 1:26-28 that views sportspeople as created in the image of God and regards both the people and the activity of sport as being in need of redemption so that sport can bring glory to God.

- A high value is placed upon the Christian participant who offers his or her body as a living, acceptable and pleasing sacrifice to God (Romans 12:1-2).
- There is a strong emphasis on incarnational ministry, through which relationships can be built with unbelieving sportspeople. The participation paradigm therefore follows the example of Paul in 1 Corinthians 9:19-27.
- Sports competition can be redeemed as His image-bearers seek to strive together to reach sporting excellence and bring glory to God.

The danger/weaknesses of the participation paradigm can be summarised as follows:

- If Christian participation does not lead towards proclamation, then there is a danger that the Gospel and discipleship- mandate of Isaiah 61:1-3 and Matthew 28:18-20 will be compromised.
- There is a danger of over-absorption that can elevate sport and compromise the witness of the Christian participants. There is also a danger of accommodating a secular sports-ethic (including self-glorification, pride, selfish ambition etc.) rather than seeking to be a prophetic witness within the world of sport.

6.3.6. Purposeful Paradigm

6.3.6.1. Introduction to the purposeful paradigm

The purposeful paradigm provides a response to the secularisation of sport and seeks to restore sport to its original purpose within God's created order. This paradigm is a more recent development within the Sports Ministry Movement, seeking a strong theological basis for bringing a redemptive influence into the world of sport, rather than disengaging from sport because of the prevalent ungodliness associated with modern sport.

A 21st Century reality is that sport plays a preeminent role in societies and cultures across the world. Towards the end of the last century, Pope John Paul II called sport "a paradigm of mass psychology" (Watson, Weir & Friend 2005:para.17) that permeates all levels of contemporary society. It is clear that sport has taken on a

preeminent and transcendent role in society that can seem disproportionate to its basic function as a form of play, fitness and entertainment. In fact, because sport “has access to the heart and mind” (Cuadros 2006:6), it has proceeded to become such a pervasive force in the world that it is not uncommon for it to be described in religious language, or even defined as a (form of) religion.

In the mid-1970s, Deford (1976:par.10) wrote in a *Sports Illustrated* article that, “sport has become the religion of America” and replaced religion as “the opiate of the people”. This statement has been quoted in a lot of literature reflecting on whether sport has become a religion (e.g. Price 2001:34) although he was not, in fact, making a definitive statement, but an observation about the revolution that had occurred in relation to how Americans were spending their time on Sundays. However, it was an indication, in the USA at least, of a growing awareness of the dominant role sport was taking in society, even usurping other religious activities.

Since that time, other authors have made more definitive statements on the role of sport as a popular religion. With regards to America, theologian Price (2001:216) has argued that sport has been “elevated to a kind of divine status”, and that “sports constitute a form of popular religion” (Price 2001:229). Ladd and Mathisen (1999:145) broaden this and talk of the role that sport plays within the “religion of the American way of life”. However, it is not just in America that sport has been deemed to have taken on a form of religion. Bloomfield (2010:172) writing of the political challenges and religious divisions in Nigeria, quotes a Nigerian as stating, “The only religion that unites Nigerians, is football”.

The link between sport and divinity is not a new phenomenon, and one which Christians have had to grapple with throughout the ages. Mansfield (2003:86) quotes columnist Will, who, reflecting on Greek philosophers, highlights the religious, civic and moral undertaking that sport played in Greek society. Price (2001:216) argues that “the fusion of sports and religion is neither eccentric nor particular to modern America”, and gives a historical overview of various societies that connected sport and religion, including the Greeks, Mayans, Native Americans, and Japanese. In many African cultures, indigenous sport combined physical athleticism with religious rituals in community festivals (Alegi 2010:2).

To once more quote Price (2004:303):

Sport can co-opt the allegiance usually elicited by a religious tradition and can become, in effect, a religion in its own right... Like the early integration of sport and religion, the modern convergence of secularised sport and traditional religious devotion suggests that sport continues to fill a religious need for many of the players and fans who are devoted to the games.

If this statement is taken seriously, it is possible to recognise that an unbiblical obsession and over-absorption with sport can be a serious barrier to the Gospel, competing for the allegiance of the soul (Costantini 2005:47). Additionally, there are powerful forces within the world of sport that are contrary to biblical norms for Christian behaviour and Christian sportspeople need to be cautious not to simply absorb ungodly actions and attitudes (Shafer 2012:252). Christians cannot blindly engage the world of sport, and need to recognise that “the culture of sports is morally and spiritually bankrupt” (Shafer 2012:254). The reality of this situation once more highlights the necessity of a robust theological paradigm for effective and sustainable sports ministry.

As has been shown through the various theological paradigms already examined above, Christians respond differently to this challenge depending upon their paradigm. Rather than merely being reactive to how the world at large views sport, the purposeful paradigm seeks to be proactive by focusing on God’s redemptive intent and applying that to the world of sport. However, the first step towards addressing this challenge is to recognise that an over-obsession with sport that is akin to religious zeal, is problematic (Higgs & Braswell 2004:21). The purposeful paradigm seeks to find a biblical response that doesn’t simply reject all sport as “sinful”, but neither simply accepts that Christians become absorbed into the prevalent sports culture. The purposeful paradigm begins by recognising that “sports... belong to a fallen world” (Higgs & Braswell 2004:39) and, as with all created things, is therefore in need of redemption (Mazza 2006:65). Constantini (2005:47) argues that Christians are called

to “liberate” sport from “economic, political and ideological constraints that have robbed it of meaning”.

Theologians highlight two aspects of redemption in relation to sport. The first relates to redeeming the activity of sport itself; that sport is an activity that needs to be “enlightened by God through Christ” (Rylko 2006:12), by the power of the Holy Spirit resulting in a transformation that both purifies and uplifts sport. The second redeeming activity focuses on the redemption of sportspeople themselves (Linville 2014:1069), who in turn are critically engaged in the redemption of sport. White (2011:190) helpfully frames this within the redemptive work of Jesus Christ whose incarnation demonstrated the redemption of creation, and whose resurrection paved the way for redemption to be extended so that all people can be redeemed according to God’s original intent.

Regarding the redeeming of the activity of sport, the focus is on the “church redeeming the world and culture of sport” (Linville 2014:1072), *inter alia*, through the proclamation of the Gospel. This involves Christians seeking to engage the world of sport and “regain it for [God’s] glory” (Weir 2008:9). Wolters (2005), although not writing specifically about sport, helpfully defines the focus and scope of biblical redemption:

Redemption is not a matter of an addition of a spiritual or supernatural dimension to creaturely life that was lacking before; rather, it is a matter of bringing new life and vitality to what was there all along (Wolters 2005:71).

When applied to the fallen world of sport, it is seen that God’s redeeming sport in Jesus Christ, is not about replacing sport with a “spiritual” or “supernatural” version, but restoring sport to what was originally intended (see 4.2.3.4). McCown and Gin (2003:30) term this the “sports-valued” approach to sports ministry; the restoration of sport to God’s original intent. This includes seeking the transformation of sport structures that are out of line with God’s word (Metzger 2010:101) recognising that the institution of sport is not beyond redemption (White 2011:253). It also aims to turn the ultimate goal of sporting activity away from self-centredness, elitism and competitive consumerism, and towards “mutual striving for excellence in recognition of our need

for grace” (Shafer 2012:257). Proclamation of the Gospel is included within this redemptive activity (White 2011:315). However, it is as participants and people engaged in sport, who aspire “to announce the gospel of salvation from ‘within’ this modern areopagus of sport to achieve a motivated and self-conscious ‘conversion’” that proclamation occurs (Mazza 2006:73).

This recognition of the need for personal conversion then forms the bridge between redeeming the culture and activity of sport, and focusing on redeeming the people of sport. This does not mean saving people out of sport but rather providing a theological foundation in order that they have a redeemed approach and attitude towards their participation in sport (Smith 2010:86). Redeeming the people of sport means that they understand their identity in Jesus Christ, rather than in sport. Redeemed sportspeople, therefore, find their satisfaction, self-worth, and ultimate purpose through their relationship with God (McCown & Gin 2003:42-49). This liberates sportspeople to discover joy through playing sport (Shafer 2012:259).

McCown and Gin (2003:44) helpfully connect the redemption of sportspeople with the activity of redeeming the world of sport.

Redeemed people of sport have the ability and opportunity to restore sport the way God intended... to its proper relationship with God, self, others and Creation.

The practical consequence of this means that Christian sportspeople should serve as salt and light within the world of sport, emphasising the moral and practical benefits of sport and also keeping in check the corruptive power of sport (Shafer 2012:175). Linville (2014:2190) elaborates, “athletes can learn how to redeem both their personal participation in sport as well as the sporting culture in general”.

The purposeful paradigm therefore connects and combines aspects of the pragmatic, proclamation, pedagogical and participation paradigms through the divine activity of redemption. And it is through experiencing the redeeming power of Jesus Christ that sportspeople can truly discover their ultimate purpose of glorifying God in sport and

extending His Kingdom through sport (Tucker 2009b:28). As Smith summarises (2010:105):

Armed with God's truth and the Holy Spirit, Christian athletes no longer are limited by their own understanding and can achieve more than they ever could have alone. They are clear-minded; they understand their purpose and most of all, they know God is behind them. Through revelation they have unlocked their potential as individuals and as athletes.

6.3.6.2. Scriptural evaluation of the purposeful paradigm

When evaluated against the Scriptural Manifesto for sports ministry leaders, it was found that the purposeful paradigm provides a very strong theological foundation for sports ministry leaders. Table 6.6 provides a summary of the evaluation of the purposeful paradigm against the Scriptural Manifesto as presented in Annexure G(6).

	Not Supported	Partially Supported	Highly Supported
Genesis 1:26-28			x
Isaiah 61:1-3			x
Matthew 28:18-20			x
Romans 12:1-2			x
1 Corinthians 9:19-27			x

Table 6.6: Purposeful Paradigm evaluation against Scriptural Manifesto

The purposeful paradigm provides a strong theological foundation for sports ministry leaders for the following reasons:

- It upholds the foundation provided by Genesis 1:26-28 that sportspeople are made in the image of God and that the gift/talent of sport can be a medium through which that image is reflected. Sports ministry leaders therefore engage in sport as a means to develop and demonstrate their relationship with God.

- The focus is on redeeming the world and people of sport to God's original intent, fulfilling the redemptive mandate of Isaiah 61:1-3 (and Luke 4:18-21) through intentionally seeking to "proclaim good news to the poor".
- It seeks to obey the Great Commission of Mathew 28:18-20 through making disciples in the world of sport who are able to exhibit Christ-likeness as they grow in the knowledge of His teaching.
- Although there is engagement with the world of sport, there is not conformity to the world of sport. Rather, as in Romans 12:1-2, sports ministry leaders bring transformation to the world of sport through the power of the Holy Spirit.
- The paradigm is incarnational and follows Paul's example of seeking to become all things to all people in order to win some to Jesus Christ. The purposeful paradigm is intentional and goal-oriented in obedience to Jesus Christ.

6.3 Conclusion

This chapter has conducted both a theological and historical overview of the paradigms that have informed the church's approach to sport over the past two millennia. The following six theological paradigms have been described and evaluated in terms of the Scriptural Manifesto (6.2.1) and the results are as follows:

- The *Polarised Paradigm* is based upon a dualistic worldview that separates the sacred from the secular. It therefore views sport as, at best, a distraction from more spiritual pursuits for a Christian, and at worst, as inherently bad. It was concluded that this is not an acceptable theological paradigm for sports ministry leaders.
- The *Pragmatic Paradigm* views engagement in sport as justified if it is utilised for a beneficial end. It was concluded that this is not a sufficient theological paradigm for sports ministry leaders.
- The *Proclamation Paradigm* focuses on the platform that sport provides for evangelism. Although proclamation must play a key-role in sports ministry, it

was concluded that this was not sufficient as a theological paradigm for sports ministry leaders.

- The *Pedagogical Paradigm* views sport as primarily useful inasmuch as it is a metaphor for Christian teaching and training, and to move from proclamation towards discipleship. However, it was concluded that this was not a sufficient theological paradigm for sports ministry leaders.
- The *Participation Paradigm* values the activity of sport and recognises it as a medium of worshipping God. It was concluded that it is a fairly strong theological paradigm for sports ministry leadership.
- The *Purposeful Paradigm* sees the sports-world as subject to the Fall and seeks to bring Jesus Christ's redemption to the culture and people of sport. It was concluded that it is a very strong theological paradigm for sports ministry leadership in the 21st Century.

The normative study has provided both a scriptural and theological foundation for sports ministry leaders in the South African context. The following chapter will move to the pragmatic task, whereby these norms will be specifically applied to the South African context in order to provide a model for the equipping of leaders for effective and sustainable sports ministry in the South Africa.

CHAPTER 7

DESIGNING THE *PROXIMITY* MODEL FOR EQUIPPING LEADERS FOR EFFECTIVE AND SUSTAINABLE SPORTS MINISTRY IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN CONTEXT

7.1. The Pragmatic Task

7.1.1. Introduction

Chapter 6 concluded the normative task by providing a scriptural and theological foundation for sports ministry leaders in the South African context. This chapter seeks to draw from the situational, interpretative and normative studies presented in chapters 2-6, and answer the question “*how might we respond?*” As the culmination of this study, this chapter will therefore present the *PROXIMITY* model for equipping leaders for effective and sustainable sports ministry in the South African context.

The methodological approach for this research follows Osmer’s model (Osmer 2008: 184), which is a practical theology model with four distinct steps, each answering a specific question:

- A. *What is going on?* (Descriptive-empirical task). This requires a careful look at situations and contexts and also demands an attempt to describe and understand them (Chapter 2 of this thesis).
- B. *Why is this going on?* (Interpretative task). This requires seeking out reasons for what is going on, i.e. interpreting why the present situation exists (Chapter 3 of this thesis).
- C. *What ought to be going on?* (Normative task). This research project will utilise the Bible as the normative standard and a basis for assessing what is going on and providing appropriate responses. The Bible will form the basis for theological interpretation, ethical reflection and establishing models of good practice (Chapter 4, 5 and 6 of this thesis).

D. *How might we respond?* (Pragmatic task). This task requires an interpretation of the situational and normative data in order to propose a model for the equipping of sports ministry leaders in South Africa (the current chapter of this thesis).

The four tasks of Osmer's methodological model of practical theological interpretation are represented in Figure 7.1 below (Osmer 2008:187). This chapter will focus on the final of the four steps in Osmer's model, namely, the pragmatic task (Osmer 2008:184), which seeks to answer the question: "*Why is this going on?*"

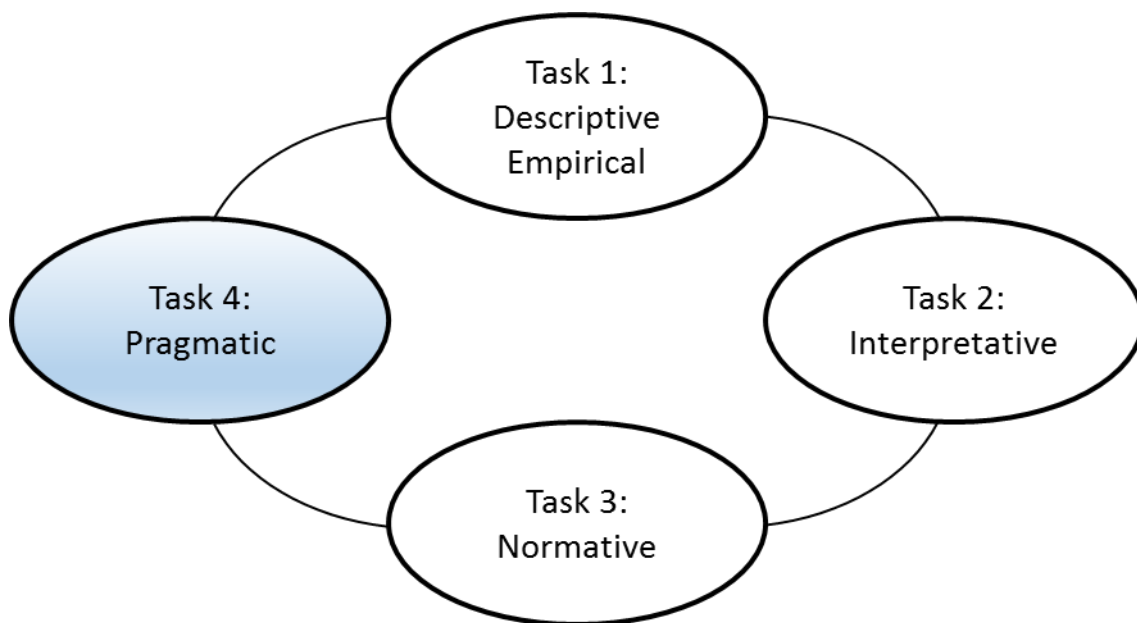


Figure 7.1: Osmer's (2008:187) Four Tasks of Theological Interpretation

Osmer (2008:393) states that the pragmatic task is one of "servant leadership", as the practical theologian embarks on the process of leading change. Osmer (2008:2296) writes: "in humility, leaders consider what the community needs, not just what they do well already or might like to do". Elkington (2010:12) defines the pragmatic task as simply "forming an action plan".

The "action plan" presented in this chapter is a model for the equipping of sports ministry leaders in South Africa that has emerged from all the material presented in chapters 2 to 6 and is now placed in a hermeneutical interaction. As such, it seeks to answer the primary research question (see 1.3): *How can leaders be equipped to*

implement effective and sustainable sports ministry in South African churches and communities?

The pragmatic task will analyse and interpret the situational, interpretative and normative data in order to provide a coherent model to equip sports ministry leaders in their growth and development. It is presented in humility, recognising that sports ministry leaders in South Africa are making significant strides in this relatively new field of ministry. However, there are clearly areas that can be strengthened in order to facilitate the long-term effectiveness and sustainability of this important field of ministry. It is envisaged that the PROXIMITY model (as will be proposed here) for the equipping of sports ministry leaders will assist in the task of contributing to a strong foundation for the future growth and development of sports ministry in South Africa.

7.2. The PROXIMITY Model for Equipping Sports Ministry Leaders in the South African Context

The PROXIMITY model is presented to provide a theological and practical foundation for the equipping of sports ministry leaders in South Africa. It has been brought together out of the data that has emerged from the descriptive, interpretative and normative tasks presented in chapters 2-6. The presentation of the model will refer to the relevant sections of this research that have contributed to the designing of the model. Although not presented as a training programme, the three categories and nine components could provide the framework for a training curriculum for sports ministry leaders in South Africa which may be used for the equipping of these leaders.

7.2.1. Introducing the PROXIMITY Model

Figure 7.2, on the following page, diagrammatically presents the PROXIMITY model for the equipping of sports ministry leaders in South Africa. The model is divided into three categories, each made up of components – which spell the acrostic PROXIMITY. However, the model itself may only be effective as each of the components work in harmony towards this end.

The PROXIMITY model for equipping sports ministry leaders								
P	R	O	X	I	M	I	T	Y
Prophetic	Redemptive	Open-handed	eXemplary	Incarnational	Missional	Integrational	Transformational	Youth-focused
The role of the sports ministry leader as a Christian sportsperson				The approach of the sports ministry leader in the culture of sport			The focus of the sports ministry leader through the vehicle of sport	

Figure 7.2: The PROXIMITY model for equipping sports ministry leaders in South Africa

The three categories focus on: (a) the role of the sports ministry leader as a Christian sportsperson, (b) the approach of the sports ministry leader in the culture of sport, and (c) the focus of the sports ministry leader through the vehicle of sport. These categories will be further explained at each relevant point below. Within the three categories there are nine components which form the acrostic, PROXIMITY. These components are, Prophetic, Redemptive, Open-Handed, eXemplary, Incarnational, Missional, Integrational, Transformation and Youth-focused. The main body of the chapter below will define and explain each of these components, summarising their important contribution as a foundation for the equipping of sports ministry leaders in the South African context.

7.2.1.1. The proximity principle

Although serving as an acrostic, the word *Proximity* itself is key to understanding the presented model. The word defines the approach that sports ministry leaders in South Africa need to have in terms of their proximity to the church, the culture of sport, and the communities that they serve.

a. Proximity to the Church

The participants in the interviews in chapter 2 highlighted how critical it is that sports ministry leaders engage the church (both local churches and denominational structures) to ensure the long-term effectiveness of sports ministry (see 2.5.5.4.2). Given the challenge and the heritage of pervasive dualism examined in the polarised paradigm (see 6.3.1), or the opportunistic expediency associated with the pragmatic paradigm (see 6.3.2), sports ministry leaders need to focus on close engagement with the church in order to draw the church in South Africa towards a stronger scriptural,

theological and practical foundation for sports ministry. The PROXIMITY model provides sports ministry leaders in South Africa with a biblically robust theological and practical foundation with which they can empower the church to understand and engage in sports ministry.

b. Proximity to the culture of sport

Participation in sport provides a unique incarnational opportunity for Christian leaders to engage unbelievers at close proximity (see 6.3.5). Chapter 3 showed how influential sport has been historically, and continues to be, in South Africa (see 3.4.2). However, it is clear that there is much in the culture of sport that is not in line with Scripture and there are many millions of people engaged in the culture of sport, as participants or spectators, who are in need of salvation. Therefore, Christian sports ministry leaders should engage with the culture of sport in order to embody and proclaim the redemption of Jesus Christ (see 6.3.6.1), seeking to redeem the participants and practice of sport. The PROXIMITY model mandates sports ministry leaders to purposefully engage the culture of sport in South Africa in order to incarnate the Gospel through participation in sport *and* Gospel proclamation.

c. Proximity to the community

A clear emphasis of the data examined in the empirical research in chapter two was that sport enabled the participants to be engaged in long-term community transformation (see 2.5.5.5.2). Additionally, the contextual study of South Africa identified key challenges at community level that engagement in sport can address (see 3.4.2.3). Therefore, there is a challenge before sports ministry leaders to develop holistic ministry strategies that employ true Gospel proclamation *and* effect tangible change at community level (as per the mandate of Isaiah 61:1-3; see 4.2.3.6). Additionally, an emphasis throughout this research has been upon Jesus Christ's commission to "make disciples" (in Matthew 28:18-20; see also 5.2.1.7). Disciple-making is a long-term task that requires relationship-building at grassroots-level (see 2.5.5.3.3). The PROXIMITY model, therefore, provides a foundation for sports ministry leaders in South Africa to engage in community transformation through scriptural

Gospel proclamation, developing holistic interventions, and committing to long-term disciple-making.

7.2.1.2. Overview of the components

The components within the model all contribute towards the foundation which sports ministry leaders will require in order to have an effective and sustainable impact in the church, the culture of sport and South African communities.

The key-words making up the acrostic PROXIMITY could be defined and interpreted differently in different contexts. Therefore, what follows are very brief definitions, as used by this model, within the context of equipping leaders for effective and sustainable sports ministry.

- **Prophetic:** Spirit-led proclamation and demonstration of scriptural revelation within the context of sport.
- **Redemptive:** Sharing in Jesus Christ's task of redeeming people and sport to God's original intent.
- **Open-handed:** Serving God and people through the gift of sport.
- **eXemplary:** Being an example/model of Christ-centred discipleship within sport.
- **Incarnational:** embodying the Gospel through entering the culture of sport.
- **Missional:** Seeking to fulfil the Great Commission in and through sport.
- **Integrational:** Overcoming the sacred/secular dichotomy through demonstrating an integrated faith/life approach to sport.
- **Transformational:** Holistic transformation of people, communities and the culture of sport through the Gospel-oriented sports ministry.
- **Youth-focused:** Focusing on youth as a priority of sports ministry in South Africa.

7.2.2. The PROXIMITY Model Described

What follows is an overview of the PROXIMITY model's three categories, with their corresponding components.¹⁰⁷ The goal of these descriptions is to show how each has been derived from the research presented in chapters 2-6. To avoid lengthy explanations, the relevant portion of the research will be cited. To facilitate a scriptural basis for each component, the normative task will be considered first and supporting elements from the various theological paradigms will also be highlighted. The interpretative and descriptive tasks will then provide additional support respectively. Finally, for each component, the key factors for the equipping of sports ministry leaders in South Africa will be presented.

7.2.2.1. The role of the sports ministry leader as a Christian sportsperson

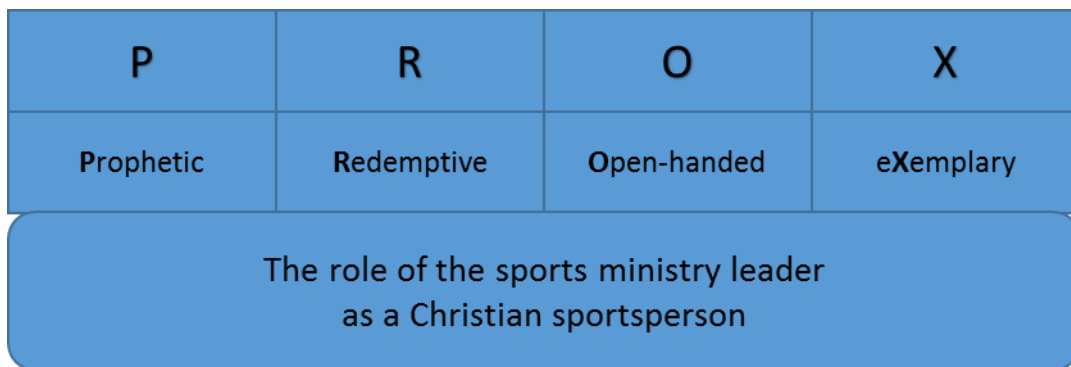


Figure 7.3: The PROXIMITY model - the role of the leader

The four components of this section of the PROXIMITY model (see figure 7.3) focus on the role of the sports ministry leader as a Christian sportsperson. This section acknowledges that all the sports ministry leaders who participated in the interviews in chapter 2 were either former, or current, participants in sport (see 2.5.5.1.1). The logical assumption is that most, if not all, sports ministry leaders have a background as a participant in sport, even if simply as a sport fan. The passion for sport is a strong contributing factor that drives sports ministry leaders to fulfil their ministry calling in sport. It is vital, therefore, that sports ministry leaders should have a correct understanding of their identity and priorities as Christian sportspersons. It is critical

¹⁰⁷ Categories and corresponding components:

- (a) the role of the sports ministry leader: Prophetic, Reconciliatory, Open-handed, eXemplary
- (b) the approach of the sports ministry leader: Incarnational, Missional, Integrational
- (c) The focus of the sports ministry leader: Transformational, Youth-focused.

that their participation in sport is shaped by Scripture and not by the prevalent sports culture. The four components provide sports ministry leaders with the necessary foundation to be Christ-centred sportspeople.

7.2.2.1.1. Prophetic

Proposed definition: Spirit-led proclamation and demonstration of scriptural revelation within the context of sport.

The following sub-sections outline why this research has identified that sports ministry leaders should be equipped to be *prophetic* Christian sportspeople.

7.2.2.1.1.1. Contributing factors from the normative task

Sports ministry leaders in South Africa have a responsibility to build their ministry upon the revelation of Scriptures and to proclaim the Scripture through their ministry, in word and deed. The Scriptural Manifesto for sports ministry (see 6.2.1) gives a foundation for sports ministry that leaders need to embrace and embody as Christian sportspeople. The prophetic task involves being able to interpret the revelation of Scripture and proclaim them within the culture of sport today. Beyond simply seeing sport as a platform for evangelism (as the proclamation paradigm, see 6.3.3), or even as an opportunity to teach from the Scriptures (as the pedagogical paradigm, see 6.3.4), prophetic sports ministry leaders will seek to be led by the Spirit to be His voice in the culture of sport.

The exegesis of Isaiah 61:1-3 (see 4.2.3) gave an example of the prophetic role that the “servant” played in proclaiming the year of God’s favour within the Israelite context of the day. The challenge for sports ministry leaders is to recognise that they have a prophetic task to fulfil in South Africa today. The task is to be able to “proclaim the year of the Lord’s favour” (Is. 61:1) within a culture and society that does not readily accept the Gospel. Romans 12:1-2 (see 5.2.2.6) demonstrates that this prophetic role includes listening and discerning God’s will through prayer and ensuring that His voice shapes one’s approach to ministry, rather than being “conformed” to the standards of the prevailing sports culture. Additionally, the prophetic role includes seeking justice

for the poor, marginalised and those in physical and spiritual captivity. As was seen in the purposeful paradigm (6.3.6), sports ministry leaders need to intentionally seek opportunities to present the Gospel within the culture of sport.

7.2.2.1.1.2. Contributing factors from the interpretative task

The importance of the prophetic role of sports ministry leaders is highlighted when considering the South African context as presented in chapter 3. Given the pervasive historical challenges that have led to huge racial, economic and other inequality (see 3.3.1), which has led to the contemporary cultural/sociological challenges of poverty, crime, gangsterism and HIV/AIDS (see 3.4.1), sports ministry leaders have a prophetic role to embody Spirit-led scriptural revelation into communities which are still experiencing the negative legacy of colonialism and Apartheid. Given that these challenges still impact the church (see 3.3.3), sports ministry leaders should prayerfully discern how to present the opportunity for sports ministry in a way that brings healing and hope in and through local churches.

Additionally, although sport has been largely viewed as having a positive role in post-Apartheid South Africa, sport itself is still divided along racial lines (see 3.3.2) and there are large elements of the culture of sport that do not follow scriptural ethics (see 3.4.2). Sports ministry leaders therefore need to have the confidence to address these challenges, recognising a responsibility to not merely accept the status quo, but advocate for change by being God's ambassadors within the culture of sport.

7.2.2.1.1.3 Contributing factors from the descriptive task

The prophetic role of sports ministry leaders was not overtly stated or highlighted by the interview participants. However, there was an emphasis upon proclamation-style-evangelism (see 2.5.5.3.2). There was also a recognition of a role that sports ministry leaders need to play to enable the church to better engage the culture of sport (2.5.5.4.2), which could be considered a prophetic role. However, the participants fell short of identifying the need to be a prophetic voice within the culture of sport and the idea of hearing from God concerning their prophetic role as sports ministry leaders within South African society.

7.2.2.1.1.4. Summary: Key factors relating to the equipping of leaders for sports ministry in South Africa

Sports ministry leaders in South Africa need to be equipped to be prophetic leaders within the church, the culture of sport and their local communities. Sports ministry leaders have a scriptural mandate to not conform to the prevalent worldview and approach that is evident in sport today. The prophetic task is to move beyond simply proclaiming the Gospel (critical though that is), towards being led by the Spirit, through prayerful discernment, in order to exhibit and speak scriptural revelation into the culture of sport. This approach will lead to sports ministry leaders exhibiting scriptural ethical standards within the culture of sport.

There is an additional prophetic task in relation to the church. In order to effectively engage the church in sports ministry, leaders need to be able to embody and teach Christians on God's perspective on sport as is it recorded in Scripture. This is happening to some extent in the South African context, but a clearer mandate should be laid out if the church is to fully understand the opportunities that sports ministry provides.

Finally, sports ministry leaders need to be empowered to have a prophetic voice at community level. Understanding their prophetic role will enable them to engage in the challenges that exist beyond the sports field and speak the message of the Gospel into issues of poverty, unemployment, lack of education, crime, HIV/AIDS and other community-related issues that they will encounter. Prophetic sports ministry leaders will, therefore, share in Jesus Christ's redemptive work, as discussed in the next section.

7.2.2.1.2. Redemptive

Definition: Sharing in Jesus Christ's task of redeeming people and sport to God's original intent.

The following sub-sections outline why this research has identified that sports ministry leaders should be equipped for the task of sharing in Jesus Christ's *redemption* of people and the culture of sport.

7.2.2.1.2.1. Contributing factors from the normative task

Redemption was a key theme that permeated throughout the discussion of the normative task. The exegesis of Genesis 1:26-28 revealed that a component of the *Imago Dei* is that Christians have the responsibility to seek the restoration of Creation to God's original intent (see 4.2.2.4). This task extends to the people of sport *and* the activity of sport itself; both fall within the scriptural mandate of redemption (see 4.2.2.7). Isaiah 61:1-3 re-enforces this responsibility by highlighting the "Jubilee" mandate, that God is prepared to "buy back" His people – a picture that foreshadowed the redemptive work of Jesus Christ (see 4.2.3.7 and Col. 1:20). Isaiah 61:1-3 demonstrates the broad nature of God's redemptive work, which glorifies Him through bringing redemption, justice and peace (see 4.2.3.3). The Great Commission re-enforces the redemptive task which is now assigned to all disciples of Jesus Christ (see 5.2.1.5).

The evaluation of the theological paradigms in chapter 6 demonstrated that the purposeful paradigm aligned strongly with the Scriptural Manifesto for sports ministry leaders because of its emphasis upon redeeming the culture and people of sport to God's original intent (see 6.3.6). The redemptive task moves sports ministry leaders beyond the pragmatic (see 6.3.2) and participation paradigms (6.3.5), and into the prophetic role of seeing people and communities reconciled to God through the Gospel.

7.2.2.1.2.2. Contributing factors from the interpretative task

The key evidence that redemption has occurred in a given situation is that reconciliation occurs: reconciliation between people and God, and reconciliation between people and one another.

As was seen in 3.4.2, secular organisations and government have identified the important role sport can play in the role of reconciliation within South Africa. A major emphasis has been on the hosting of major sporting events (see 3.4.2.2) as a medium for “Nation-building”, although the long-term healing impact of these events is debatable. Quite clearly, given the historical and socio-cultural context identified in chapter 3.4, sports ministry leaders have a critical role to play in Jesus Christ’s redemptive work of reconciliation. The chapter identified that reconciliation is required because of the legacy of Apartheid (3.3.1), between churches who were divided during the Apartheid era (3.3.3), and in the arena of sport itself (3.3.2 and 3.4.2).

The socio-cultural study revealed that South Africa, as a country demonstrating the brokenness through sin, requires Christian leadership that can pave the way for genuine reconciliation through the power of Jesus Christ’s redemptive work.

7.2.2.1.2.3. Contributing factors from the descriptive task

The redemptive role of sports ministry leaders was only clearly articulated by one of the interview participants (see 2.5.5.1.3) and there was no stated emphasis on the need for reconciliation. However, the case studies (see Annexure F) demonstrate a focus on, a) the redemption on individuals to fulfil their purpose in Jesus Christ, and b) an emphasis on the role sport can play in bringing Jesus Christ’s redemption to communities (and see 2.5.5.5.2).

7.2.2.1.2.4. Summary: Key factors relating to the equipping of leaders for sports ministry

Sports ministry leaders have the opportunity to play a key redemptive role in the South African context, which will be particularly evidenced through the fruit of reconciliation. The task of sports ministry leaders is to ensure they have a scriptural understanding of God’s original intent for His creation, including that of sport. The fact that this was not clearly articulated by the sports ministry leaders in the interviews demonstrates that greater awareness of their redemptive role is required. Sports ministry leaders in South Africa need to be equipped to be agents of Christ’s reconciliation, so that they will understand the redemptive task that can restore the church, the culture of sport,

and their communities, into God's plans and purposes. Sports ministry leaders who desire to share in Jesus Christ's redemptive work will need to be open-handed servant leaders, as discussed in the next section.

7.2.2.1.3. Open-handed

Definition: Serving God and people through the gift of sport.

The following sub-sections outline why this research has identified that sports ministry leaders should be equipped to be *open-handed* Christian sportspeople.

7.2.2.1.3.1. Contributing factors from the normative task

Being open-handed is aligned with being a servant-leader. The normative task revealed that sports ministry leaders in South Africa should realise that they are firstly called to serve God with their talent in sport, and secondly to serve others through their sporting talent. The exegesis of Genesis 1:26-28 identified that human beings owe their allegiance to God and this is to be expressed through open-handed worship (see 4.2.2.5). The implication for those gifted in sport is that they can offer worship to God through serving Him with their God-given gift and talent (see 4.2.2.7). The study of Romans 12:1-2 gave the New Testament perspective (see 5.2.2) that sports ministry leaders should offer their bodies as a sacrifice to God, living, holy and pleasing to Him (see 5.2.2.4). This is a "reasonable" or "logical" act of worship.

The overflow of open-handed service of God will be open-handed service of others. Paul expressed this in 1 Corinthians 9:19-27 as becoming "all things to all people in order to win some". The implication is that sports ministry leaders who serve God with their gifts and talents, will also become "servant leaders" in order to demonstrate God's love to others (see 5.2.3.6).

The participation paradigm (see 6.3.5) demonstrated a strong theological foundation for open-handed service through participation in sport. The evaluation of the paradigm against the Scriptural Manifesto for sports ministry leaders demonstrated a strong alignment with Genesis 1:26-28, Romans 12:1-2 and 1 Corinthians 9:19-27 (see

6.3.5.2). The paradigm re-enforces that Christian sports-people, made in the image of God, should utilise their gifts in service of God and the service of others.

7.2.2.1.3.2. Contributing factors from the interpretative task

The interpretative task identified that leaders need to be primarily servant-leaders in the South African socio-cultural context (see 3.5). It is only through being open-handed servant leaders that sports ministry leaders can overcome the historical, cultural and other barriers that will face them, particularly if they utilise sport for cross-cultural ministry (see 3.4.2). Given the long history of South African leaders being shaped through sport participation and administration, the interpretative task confirmed that sport provides a positive avenue for servant leaders to emerge (see 3.5.1).

7.2.2.1.3.3. Contributing factors from the descriptive task

The empirical data revealed that sports ministry leaders in South Africa have a strong understanding that their talent in sport is a gift from God that is to be utilised to serve God and others (see 2.5.5.1.2 and 2.5.5.1.3). There was a strong emphasis upon having a “passion” for serving God through sport. However, the theological motivational factors highlighted by some of the sports ministry leaders focused more on reaching out in evangelism, rather than on utilising their gifts to worship God (see 2.5.5.2). The data confirmed that the participants placed strong emphasis on serving their communities through sport (see 2.5.5.5.2), but less emphasis on serving the culture of sport.

7.2.2.1.3.4. Summary: Key factors relating to the equipping of leaders for sports ministry

Sports ministry leaders in South Africa have a strong identification that their passion and talent in sport is a gift from God. However, greater emphasis can be placed on viewing their gift as primarily an avenue to worship God. The focus of open-handed servant leaders is to be faithful stewards who bring God pleasure through their participation in sport. Sports ministry is, first and foremost, an offering to God. It is from the overflow of worshipping God that ministry to others will occur. Effective and

sustainable sports ministry in the South African context must be God-focused, otherwise it can be in danger of compromise and of losing its effectiveness as a medium of spiritual transformation.

A further implication is that sports ministry training needs to be *practical* and have a *participatory focus*. Sports ministry leaders should actively serve God with their talent, literally on the field of play. They need to be able to worship God within the crucible of participation, thus allowing their ministry to flow out of their physical engagement with the sports culture. Therefore, open-handed servant leaders will need to be exemplary in their life and conduct, as discussed in the next section.

7.2.2.1.4. eXemplary

Proposed definition: Being an example/model of Christ-centred discipleship within sport.

The following sub-sections outline why this research has identified that sports ministry leaders should be equipped to be *exemplary* Christian sportspeople.

7.2.2.1.4.1. Contributing factors from the normative task

The Great Commission in Matthew 28:18-20 provides a scriptural foundation for the exemplary conduct of sports ministry leaders (see 5.2.1). Jesus Christ commissioned His disciples to go into all the world, to make disciples, and to “teach them to obey everything I have commanded you” (see 5.2.1.5). Sports ministry leaders are called to exemplify Jesus Christ’s teaching within the culture of sport and in their communities by being disciples of Jesus Christ whom others can emulate. Romans 12:1-2 shows that being an exemplary disciple is not through one’s aptitude or will-power, but through submission to the transformative work of the Holy Spirit. It is through the Holy Spirit that sports ministry leaders can resist being conformed to the pattern of this world, and have their minds renewed and transformed (see 5.2.2.4). However, Paul, in 1 Corinthians 9:19-27, does show that effort is required to truly love people in a manner that draws them to Jesus Christ (see 5.2.3.3).

The challenge of being an exemplary role model was supported by the *pedagogical, participation* and *purposeful theological paradigms*. The pedagogical paradigm recognises the role that sports ministry leaders should teach scriptural revelation through sport, by committing themselves to challenging sportspeople to develop Christ-like character (see 6.3.4.2). The participation paradigm provides a foundation of Christian sportspeople to excellence when partaking in sport (see 6.3.5.2). Exemplary conduct in sport provides a strong foundation for scriptural teaching on character development. The purposeful paradigm underlines that sports ministry leaders need to be intentional in their pursuit of excellence as a function of seeking to redeem sportspeople and the culture of sport through the Gospel (see 6.3.6.1).

7.2.2.1.4.2. Contributing factors from the interpretative task

There are three primary contributions from the interpretative task to the role of exemplary leadership. Firstly, the study of the sporting context in South Africa (see 3.4.2) demonstrated the role that sport can play in influencing society. Within a sport-mad culture like South Africa, sportsmen and women are looked up to as role models. Unfortunately, there are many negative role models within the culture of sport. Therefore, sports ministry leaders have the opportunity to exemplify Christ-like standards and to become role-models that display scriptural character. Secondly, secular bodies are recognising the potential for sport to shape character and are developing programmes to teach life-skills and other related subject matter (see 3.4.2.3). If secular organisations, who operate from a non-scriptural foundation, recognise the opportunity for sport to shape character development, **how much more should Christian leaders be engaged in exemplifying Christian conduct in and through sport?**

Thirdly, the leadership context (see 3.5) considered the role of the coach as a key influencer of youth in South African communities. Hence, the golden opportunity for Christian sports ministry leaders is, to be players, coaches, administrators and spectators who provide Christ-centred leadership that the youth can emulate.

7.2.2.1.4.3. Contributing factors from the descriptive task

The data collected from the empirical research indicated that the sports ministry leaders understood their responsibility to exemplify Christ-like character and conduct in and through sport. This was highlighted in the following ways; through the theological factor of long-term discipleship (see 2.5.5.3.3), through the leadership priorities of families and parenting (see 2.5.5.5.1) and through a commitment to long-term engagement (see 2.5.5.5.3). The sports ministry leaders particularly highlighted their function as exemplary role-models within the communities that they served. However, there was less of an emphasis on being an exemplary role model within the culture of sport as a participant.

The data also highlighted some of the barriers that sports ministry leaders can face in being exemplary leaders (2.5.5.4). These included the opposition of the churches, the lack of resources and the lack of understanding of sports ministry by Christians and others in society. These barriers can lead to the frustration of sports ministry leaders and a lack of effectiveness in their ministry in the South African context.

7.2.2.1.4.4. Summary: Key factors relating to the equipping of leaders for sports ministry

Given that the sports culture in South Africa has a high admiration for sports people, there is a particular responsibility that rests upon sports ministry leaders to exemplify Christian character and conduct. The cliché that character is “caught not taught” is particularly true within the culture of sport. There is certainly a place for a more traditional pedagogical approach that teaches life skills and scriptural principles on the sports field. However, sports ministry leaders should not just teach, but also display Christian character and conduct in their participation as players, coaches, administrators or spectators. The challenge is to become Christ-centred leaders that the youth can emulate.

Together with the commitment to being a Christ-like example, there should be a commitment to excellence in general. Whether participating as a player or organising a sports ministry event, sports ministry leaders need to demonstrate their love for

Jesus Christ through providing an excellent service to the culture of sport, their community and the church. For sports ministry in South Africa to be effective and sustainable, sports ministry leaders will require the support of the church and the availability of appropriate resources. Therefore, sports ministry leaders should be equipped to effectively engage churches, learn how to develop programmes proportional to their resources, and ensure that they are capable of delivering on what they promise within the culture of sport.

7.2.2.2. The approach of the sports ministry leader



Figure 7.4: The PROXIMITY model - the approach of the leader

The three components of this section of the PROXIMITY model (see figure 7.4) focus on the approach of the sports ministry leader within the culture of sport. These components recognise that the culture of sport in South Africa is a mission-field that needs impacting with the Gospel. As was seen in the data from the empirical study, (see 2.5.5.3.1), sport in South Africa is viewed as a medium to build relationships, through which Christians can share the Gospel. The culture of sport transcends other cultures and therefore provides a unique opportunity for the church to engage people who may otherwise not be interested in the Christian faith (see 3.4.2). Building upon the role of the sports ministry leader as a Christian sportsperson (see 7.2.2.1 above), these components provide a theological foundation that should undergird the approach of sports ministry leaders in South Africa. These three components maintain that sports ministry primarily exists to enable the church to impact those engaged in the sports culture, who do not yet know Christ. The approach proposed here facilitates reaching an unredeemed sports culture with the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

7.2.2.2.1. Incarnational

Proposed definition: Embodying the Gospel through entering the culture of sport.

The following sub-sections outline why this research has identified that leaders should be equipped to have an *incarnational* approach to sports ministry.

7.2.2.2.1.1. Contributing factors from the normative task

The exegesis of 1 Corinthians 9:19-27 demonstrated that sports ministry leadership should follow the example of Jesus Christ and Paul in terms of a commitment of being incarnational (see 5.2.3.5). Paul expressed this as; “I have become all things to all men so that by all possible means I might save some” (1 Cor. 9:22b). This primarily means that, in obeying the command of Jesus Christ to “go into all the world” (Mt. 28:18), sports ministry leaders are called to engage the people of sport on their “turf”. The Scriptural Manifesto for sports ministry leadership stated that sports ministry leadership should be “eminently incarnational” (6.2.1). Sport provides a unique platform for the church to engage the culture of sport in communities across the country in a non-threatening manner.

The incarnational approach was re-enforced through the pedagogical, participation and purposeful theological paradigms. The pedagogical paradigm affirmed that sports ministry leaders should utilise the powerful metaphors that emerge from sport in order to engage youth in scriptural instruction (see 6.3.4.2). The participation paradigm takes it further and affirms that the act of taking part in sport provides sports ministry leaders with the opportunity to build relationships with unbelieving sportspeople (see 6.3.5.2). The purposeful paradigm affirms that sports ministry leadership is an avenue to follow Paul’s example from 1 Corinthians 9:19-27, of becoming all things to all people in order to win some for Jesus Christ.

7.2.2.2.1.2. Contributing factors from the interpretative task

Rather than focusing on any one particular aspect of the interpretative task, the whole of chapter 3 is critical in showing how to aid sports ministry leaders to understand the

context into which they will incarnate the Gospel. The literature review considered the historical, sporting, socio-cultural and leadership context of South Africa on a macro-level (see 3.2). The study confirms the importance in understanding the context within which sports ministry is being developed and recognises the opportunity that sport provides to cross cultural and other barriers. Therefore, sports ministry can be viewed as incarnational both through entering the sports culture (e.g. playing one particular sport, be it rugby, football or tennis), and through engaging with a specific culture or people group who also play sport. In both cases, interpreting the context is a critical component of ensuring effective and sustainable sports ministry.

7.2.2.2.1.3. Contributing factors from the descriptive task

The empirical research provided data that confirmed that sports ministry leaders in South Africa understand that they need to have an *incarnational* approach (see 2.5.5.3.2). This was highlighted as a key factor in building relationships in order to share the Gospel. Many of the participants in the study viewed sport as an avenue to build bridges, particularly in relation to breaking down cultural or other barriers.

Additionally, the theme of long-term discipleship, which was endorsed by many of the participants (see 2.5.5.3.3), necessitates an incarnational approach to ministry that prioritises building deep relationships.

7.2.2.2.1.4. Summary: Key factors relating to the equipping of leaders for sports ministry

An incarnational approach is vital to the PROXIMITY model, reinforcing the priorities stated above (see 7.2.1.1) that sports ministry leaders need to be in proximity to the church, the culture of sport and local communities. A critical factor in preparing leaders for effective and sustainable sports ministry is to help them understand the context into which they are ministering. It is not sufficient to simply be incarnated into a game or competitive sport. The participants in the sport have also come from a particular cultural and community context that the sports ministry leader needs to understand. Participating together in sport can be a great bridge-builder and first step to incarnational ministry. However, effective incarnational ministry will move beyond the

relationship forged on the sports field, and into deeper discipleship relationships where the broader context of those being ministered to, will need to be apprehended and understood.

It is also critical that the church in South Africa understand that sports ministry is eminently incarnational. Those engaged in sports ministry leadership may be involved in ministry at unconventional times that preclude them from regular involvement in other church activities. Unless church leaders grasp the importance of incarnating the Gospel into the culture of sport in order to reach the people of sport, they will struggle to understand and endorse those involved in day-to-day sports ministry. This falls into a broader understanding of what it means for sports ministry leaders to be missional, which will be discussed in the next section.

7.2.2.2.2. Missional

Proposed definition: Seeking to fulfil the Great Commission in and through sport.

The PROXIMITY model as a whole is a missional model for Gospel-focused ministry, seeking to serve God in His mission of restoring humanity to a relationship with Himself. The PROXIMITY model provides a foundation for sports ministry leaders to serve God's ultimate mission within the context of sport in South Africa.

The following sub-sections outline why this research has indicated that leaders should be equipped to have a *missional* approach to sports ministry.

7.2.2.2.2.1. Contributing factors from the normative task

The normative task revealed strong scriptural support for the missional approach of sports ministry leaders in South Africa. Genesis 1:26-28 reveals God as missional; creating humanity to be in relationship with Himself and to partner with Him in the task of caring for creation, thus sharing missional responsibility with humankind (see 4.2.2.4). It is imperative that sports ministry leaders always recognise that they have delegated responsibility from God and that sports ministry is always an act of service to God, as part of His mission on earth.

Isaiah 61:1-3 shows God's continued mission beyond the Fall: that of seeking to restore the broken relationship between God and humanity (see 4.2.3.3), which has holistic implications in terms of bringing redemption, justice and peace to the world. This passage essentially became Jesus Christ's mission statement in Luke 4:14-21 (see 4.2.3.5). This pericope also places a special emphasis on "the poor". The Gospel is "good news for the poor" - both the materially and spiritually poor. Missional sports ministry leadership will therefore seek holistic outcomes that prioritise bringing hope to the poor.

Matthew 28:18-20 gives further definition to God's mission (see 5.2.1). The command of Jesus Christ is to go into all the world and to make disciples as a continuation of His mission (see 5.2.1.3). This passage provides a strong foundation for sports ministry leaders to intentionally engage the culture of sport with the specific goal of making disciples. Additionally, sport ministry provides an opportunity for the Great Commission to be obeyed and for disciples to be made through engaging in cross-cultural mission (see 5.2.1.6).

Paul, according to 1 Corinthians 9:19-27, demonstrated his own missional strategy and motivation. His self-discipline in the cause of the Gospel was the result of His obedience to Christ, His desire to see people saved, and to "not be disqualified from receiving the prize" (see 5.2.3.4).

Of all the theological paradigms evaluated in chapter 6, only the *purposeful paradigm* fully embraces the missional approach that sports ministry leaders need to take (see 6.3.6).

7.2.2.2.2. Contributing factors from the interpretative task

The interpretative task revealed that there is a missional legacy for sports ministry in the South African context as 19th century missionaries were instrumental in introducing different sports in South Africa (see 3.3.2). Although historians differ on the efficacy and motivation of the missionaries, some positive developments did occur, for example, the education of leaders through mission schools and sport administration

(see 3.5.1). The impact of missions in and through sport diminished in the 20th century but it is important that sports ministry leaders in South Africa understand the historical context of the development of sport and its ties to Christianity.

The interpretative task also revealed some of the challenges that sports ministry leaders will face when engaging in cross-cultural ministry through sport in South Africa. In particular, sports ministry leaders need to recognise that the church, the culture of sport and the communities they are operating in, are all still facing the consequences of colonialism and Apartheid (see 3.3.2). The missional approach needs to be cognizant of these contextual challenges in the task of disciple-making. In particular, when relating to the missional task of bringing “good news to the poor”, the cultural/sociological perspective (see 3.4.1) identified the challenges of poverty in South Africa and the issues that emanate from the inequality that exists. The missional mandate of sports ministry leaders in South Africa includes seeking to address these challenges as a Gospel imperative.

7.2.2.2.2.3. Contributing factors from the descriptive task

The data analysed from the empirical research indicated that leaders have a missional approach to their sports ministry in South Africa, particularly in regards to understanding their role to evangelise and make disciples (see 2.5.5.3.2). This stems from their passion for sport and to serve the Lord through sport (see 2.5.5.1.2) and is also evidenced in the emphasis upon having a holistic approach to ministry (see 2.5.5.3.4). Many of the leaders emphasised a priority of working with the poor and the marginalised in South Africa. For the majority of the participants in the interviews, the Global Sports Leadership School (GSLS) served to equip the leaders to have a missional approach and develop strategies for the implementation of sports ministry (see 2.5.5.2).

A challenge which the sports ministry leaders face is enabling the church in South Africa to understand the missional role of sports ministry (see 2.5.5.4.2). It was mentioned that many churches need to have their mind-sets challenged so that they can embrace the missional opportunity that sports ministry provides, specifically for cross-cultural outreach. This particularly involves moving from a pragmatic theological

paradigm that focuses on sport programmes and events, towards the long-term missional focus of making disciples and seeking long-term transformation.

7.2.2.2.4. Summary: Key factors relating to the equipping of leaders for sports ministry

Effective and sustainable sports ministry in South Africa necessitates that leaders have a missional approach. Having this approach will mean that leaders need to adapt their present methodology to most effectively reach the South African context, without compromising on the core focus of serving God through fulfilling the Great Commission. The missional approach will specifically seek to also bring “good news to the poor”, recognising that sport can create opportunities for holistic engagement with economically-disadvantaged people.

The missional approach is key for engagement with the church, the sports culture, and local communities. With regard to the church, sports ministry leaders need to present the missional opportunities that sport provides and to present sports ministry as a missional opportunity, rather than simply as a form of social engagement or entertainment. With regard to the sports culture, sports ministry leaders need to follow Jesus Christ’s command to “go” and purposefully seek opportunities to present the Gospel within the culture of sport. With regard to the local communities, sports ministry leaders need to develop missional strategies that engage communities in their context, specifically looking for ways to cross-cultural and socio-economically divides in order to proclaim the Good News of redemption, justice and peace that can come through a relationship with Jesus Christ. The following section presents the integrational component of the PROXIMITY model and further discusses the challenge sports ministry leaders’ face to effectively engage the church.

7.2.2.2.3 Integrational

Proposed definition: Overcoming the sacred/secular dichotomy through demonstrating an integrated faith/life approach to sport.

The following sub-sections outline why this research has identified that leaders should be equipped to have an *integrational* approach to sports ministry.

7.2.2.2.3.1. Contributing factors from the normative task

The scriptural foundation for having an integrational approach to sports ministry comes from Romans 12:1-2 (see 5.2.2.6). Paul is debunking the mind/body dualism of Greek philosophy. Paul teaches that the mind and body are meant to be integrated and engaged when worshipping God. This integration means that all activity, including sport, can be offered in worship to God. It also removes the sacred/secular divide that is prevalent in church practice due to the polarised theological paradigm, as was discussed in chapter 6 (6.3.1). It was demonstrated that, although the polarised paradigm has been very influential in causing the church to abstain from sport involvement (and even considering sport as evil), the paradigm does not stand when evaluated against the Scriptural Manifesto for sports ministry leaders (see 6.3.1.2).

7.2.2.2.3.2. Contributing factors from the interpretative task

The interpretative task pointed out that there is a lack of integration that exists in the church in South Africa (see 3.3.3). Whether this is between “settler” and “missional” churches, as a result of division by Apartheid, or due to doctrinal and denominational differences, these are clearly challenges that sports ministry leaders will face.

Additionally, as was seen from the discussion of the development of sport in South Africa during the 20th Century (see 3.3.2) - although the church was initially engaged through the introduction of sport in South Africa - this did not last, and there was little integration between the church and the culture of sport in South Africa in the last century. The dichotomy was perpetuated because of the polarised theological paradigm that viewed church involvement as “sacred”, and sport involvement as “secular”. The result was that sport developed in South Africa with little scriptural influence. It is, therefore, not surprising that the culture of sport is currently involved in several moral and ethical crises (see 3.4.2).

However, the interpretative task also acknowledged that there has been a shift in the attitude of churches towards sport in recent times. This has largely been driven by event-based ministry related to major sport events hosted in South Africa (See 3.4.2.2). Yet, although this may have moved churches from the polarised to the pragmatic and proclamation/pedagogical paradigms as presented in chapter 6, these paradigms do not present an integrated approach to church and sports ministry. Therefore, there is still much further work to be done, as the empirical research demonstrated.

7.2.2.2.3.3 Contributing factors from the descriptive task

The challenge of the sacred/secular dichotomy was confirmed by the data analysed from the empirical research (see 2.5.5.4.1). The lack of understanding of sports ministry by churches in South Africa was a major concern of the sports ministry leaders that were interviewed. Most felt that the church considered sports ministry as either a distraction from more important spiritual pursuits, or something that was not at all scriptural.

However, the participants themselves held a strong integrational approach on their sports ministry leadership (see 2.5.5.3.1). This stemmed from the training at the GSLS which modelled an integrated approach to theological/leadership and practical sport training (see 2.5.5.2.4). There was also an acknowledgement that leaders need to have an integrated and holistic approach towards serving the needs of the people they are seeking to reach through sports ministry (see 2.5.5.3.4).

7.2.2.2.3.4. Summary: Key factors relating to the equipping of leaders for sports ministry

The sustainability of effective sports ministry in South Africa requires that the faith/life, sacred/secular dichotomies are addressed by sports ministry leaders. This research has shown that the polarised and pragmatic theological paradigms are totally insufficient when evaluated against the Scriptural Manifesto for sports ministry leaders, yet many churches seem to still be operating within those paradigms.

The first task of sports ministry leaders is to model a lifestyle based upon Romans 12:1-2 which demonstrates the integration of mind *and* body, faith *and* life, worship *and* sport. Secondly, sports ministry leaders should recognise that to fulfil the missional mandate as presented in the previous section, requires the integration of sports ministry with local churches. Therefore, an integrational approach to sports ministry will require that sports ministry leaders continue to engage churches in order to, a) present a robust scriptural/theological foundation for sports ministry, such as that which has been advocated in this research, and b) facilitate long-term effective engagement of churches to support sports ministry in the South African context. The integrational approach also recognises that sports ministry requires assistance from other church-based ministry, and Christians with other gifts and talents, in order to fulfil God's missional mandate. If sports ministry operates in isolation from the Body of Christ, then it will not be effective or sustainable in the long-term.

Additionally, an integrated approach is required in order to facilitate effective discipleship of those who become Christians through sports ministry. Those who confess Jesus Christ on the sports field need to be taught how they themselves can integrate their passion for sport and their new-found faith in Jesus Christ. This is critical if sports ministry is going to become a multi-generational movement, seeking Gospel transformation in communities and lives across South Africa.

7.2.2.3. The focus of the sports ministry leader

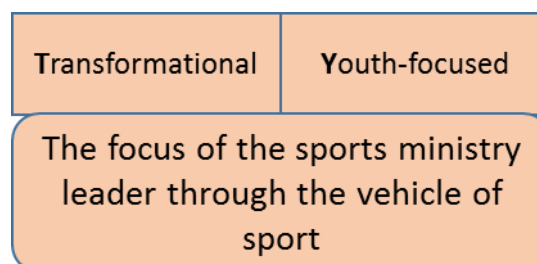


Figure 7.5: The PROXIMITY model - the focus of the leader

The final category of the model presents two components that identify the focus of sports ministry leaders in the South African context (see figure 7.5). As was stated above, the PROXIMITY model has the primary focus of glorifying God and extending His Kingdom in and through sport. The components presented here are two key focus

areas that this research has identified as priorities for sports ministry leaders as they seek to fulfil this ultimate goal in South Africa.

7.2.2.3.1. Transformational

Proposed definition: Holistic transformation of people, communities and the culture of sport through the Gospel-oriented sports ministry.

The following sub-sections outline why this research has identified that leaders should be equipped to have a *transformational* focus in sports ministry.

7.2.2.3.1.1. Contributing factors from the normative task

The scriptural exegesis in chapters 4 and 5 clearly demonstrates that sports ministry leaders should expect to see transformation occur as they serve God. Romans 12:1-2 highlights that this transformation is not just external, but also internal, as the sports ministry leader undergoes transformation through the renewal of his or her mind (see 5.2.2.6). Effective external transformation for the Kingdom requires that sports ministry leaders allow the Spirit of God to conform their minds to the will of God. Paul demonstrates, in 1 Corinthians 9:19-27, that being involved in Gospel ministry is not easy and requires perseverance like that of a marathon runner in a race (see 5.2.3.6). Servant leaders, engaged in sports ministry, need to have sufficient self-discipline to be committed for the long-haul.

Romans 12:1-2 indicates that sports ministry leaders should also expect to see transformation in those that are becoming Christians within the culture of sport. It should be anticipated that, when someone becomes a Christian, he or she will undergo a metamorphosis in their character and conduct. This metamorphosis, empowered by the Holy Spirit, will enable Christian sportspeople to respond to the numerous ethical and other challenges that they will face when engaging in the culture and activity of sport (see 5.2.2.5).

Jesus Christ concurs in Matthew 28:18-20 that the result of disciple-making will be obedience to his teaching (see 5.2.1.4). It is clear that sports ministry leaders are

required to teach what Jesus Christ taught. There is, therefore, merit in the *pedagogical theological paradigm* which emphasises that sport is an avenue for scriptural teaching, although the paradigm falls short of providing a sufficient theological foundation for sports ministry leaders (see 6.4.3.2)

Additionally, as the Gospel takes root in the lives of sportspeople, it should be anticipated that socio-cultural transformation will occur as the fruit of redemption. Isaiah 61:1-3 states that as the poor receive Good News, the broken-hearted are consoled, the prisoners set free, and those who mourn are comforted and receive a spirit of praise. These are the anticipated results of Gospel proclamation and discipleship-making, namely, people who are living righteous lives (see 4.2.3.4). The implications of this taking place should be tangible in the lives of those impacted by the Gospel, including poverty alleviation, crime reduction and community upliftment, as those impacted by sports ministry seek to live righteously in the South African context. Although these things won't necessarily happen immediately, the anticipation is that there should be palpable evidence of transformation over time.

It was seen in chapter six that the *participation paradigm*, as a theological foundation for sports ministry, affirms the focus of sports ministry as the transformation of the individual participant (see 6.3.5.2). The *purposeful paradigm* took this further by stating that sports ministry leaders should anticipate the transformation of the culture of sport, and the community they are serving, as an outcome of the redemptive work of the Gospel (see 6.3.6.2).

7.2.2.3.1.2. Contributing factors from the interpretative task

The literature study highlighted the context which needs transforming. The contemporary challenges of inequality, crime, youth unemployment, gangsterism, xenophobia, HIV AIDS (see 3.4.1) - all these have roots in South African history (see 3.3). Although the healing power of sport is acknowledged by government and civil society (see 3.4.2.1), sports ministry leaders should anticipate transformation at a deeper-level based upon the redeeming work of Jesus Christ.

7.2.2.3.1.3. Contributing factors from the descriptive task

The data analysed from the empirical research demonstrated that the leaders anticipate and experience transformation through their sports ministry. The interviews showed that the sports ministry leaders have been through a process of transformation themselves as they submitted their sporting gift and talent to God (see 2.5.5.1). And the sports ministry leaders all gave examples of how their engagement in sports ministry had brought transformation to others (see case studies in Annexure F).

The interviews revealed that sports ministry leaders have a holistic approach to transformation (see 2.5.5.3.4) which is an appropriate response to the challenges of serving God in the South African context. Additionally, the data revealed that sports ministry leaders have indicated that transformation occurs through long-term discipleship with people through sport (see 2.5.5.3.3). Their approach to ministry in the South African context was not built around events and “hit-and-run” type of ministry, but rather through the hard effort of long-term engagement with people and communities (2.5.5.5.2). This was the medium through which they saw evidence of genuine transformation occurring.

7.2.2.3.1.4. Summary: Key factors relating to the equipping of leaders for sports ministry

The PROXIMITY model for sports ministry leaders in South Africa has presented a foundation which anticipates that leaders will see the transformative work of Jesus Christ in operation through their sports ministry. Transformation will be in proportion to sports ministry leaders being prophetic, redemptive, open-handed and eXemplary as Christian sportspeople; and in their approach to sports ministry in an incarnational, missional and integrational manner. Long-term transformation will not occur without the other elements of the PROXIMITY model being in place. It is imperative that sports ministry leaders, and church leaders, do not see sport as a quick-fix solution to South Africa’s problems. Transformation should be anticipated, but only in proportion to the prayerful, committed, and long-term engagement with sportspeople, the sports culture, and South African communities.

As has been shown, the work of transformation needs to firstly take place in the life of the sports ministry leader. Christians engaged in sports ministry in South Africa should stand out from the crowd. The efficacy of sports ministry is in direct proportion to the Spirit-led transformation at work in the lives of the sports ministry leaders themselves. Sports ministry leaders also need to be prepared for the sacrifices that will be required in order to see transformation in individuals, in the culture of sport, and in the communities they serve.

Finally, a challenge for sports ministry leaders will be to empirically test the nature of the transformation that is occurring through quantitative and qualitative means. To truly demonstrate the efficacy of sports ministry, there needs to be a greater emphasis on monitoring and evaluating the outcomes relating to transformation. This, in turn, will provide much needed data to assist in the development of effective sports ministry for future generations.

7.2.2.3.2. Youth-focused

Proposed definition: Focusing on the youth as a priority of sports ministry in South Africa.

The following sub-sections outline why this research has identified that leaders should be equipped to have a *youth-focus* in their sports ministry.

7.2.2.3.2.1. Contributing factors from the normative task

The normative task revealed that sports ministry (particularly in the West) has a long history of prioritising the reaching of the youth. The Muscular Christianity movement had a strong emphasis upon engaging the youth in schools and universities. Youth and student movements such as the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA), the Student Volunteer Movement (both in the 19th Century), and Youth for Christ (in the 20th Century), were all pioneers in utilising sport as a medium to engage the youth. Chapter 6 demonstrated that these movements had differing theological foundations, although most were essentially pragmatic and proclamation-driven in approach (see 6.3.2 and 6.3.3). As the pragmatic and proclamation paradigms are not a sufficient

foundation for sports ministry leadership, it is not surprising that many of these movements are no longer Gospel-centred sports ministries. However, the example they set by focusing on the youth is one that can be emulated in different contexts. Yet, the focus on the youth cannot be pragmatic, but needs to be undergirded by a scriptural foundation that understands the goal of transformative, long-term ,discipleship, as proposed in the purposeful paradigm (see 6.3.6).

Although the Scriptures studied in chapters 4 and 5, do not explicitly give attention to the youth, the principles gleaned from all of the passages and formed into the Scriptural Manifesto for sports ministry leaders (see 6.2.1), provide the foundation required for sports ministry leaders to specifically focus on the youth as well. In particular, the mandate to make disciples from Matthew 28:18-20 is very appropriate when working with the youth who need strong Christian role models to nurture them in their faith. Additionally, the picture of the oak tree in Isaiah 61:3, can be applied as the end result of a young person who has been effectively discipled, and now demonstrates a righteous life that glorifies God (see 4.2.3.4).

7.2.2.3.2.2. Contributing factors from the interpretative task

The imperative to focus on the youth is confirmed from the study of the cultural/sociological context in South Africa (see 3.4.1). The literature survey revealed that there is a “youth bulge” in South Africa, with growing concerns about education, the levels of youth unemployment and the general disenfranchisement of the youth. The toxic combination of poverty and unemployment is leading to the growth of gangs which are involved in violent criminal activity in urban areas.

The sport for development movement and government movement has recognised that sport is a strategic way to access, educate and engage the youth in productive activity (see 3.4.2.3).

The literature survey also underlined the important role that coaches play in the lives of the youth (see 3.5). Given the challenges the youth are facing in South Africa, sports ministry leaders need to develop strategies that effectively engage them with the transformative message of the Gospel.

7.2.2.3.2.3. Contributing factors from the descriptive task

Many of the participants in the empirical research stated that they work with the youth (see 2.5.5.1.3). Although they also mentioned other groups of people, it is noteworthy that the case studies (see Annexure F) are mostly of ministry amongst the youth people, many of whom come from an underprivileged context.

This emphasis was further defined by the sports ministry leaders in identifying that working with the youth from broken homes, and dealing with the challenge of fatherlessness, was viewed as a key priority (see 2.5.5.5.1). The participants recognised that their role in sports ministry extended beyond that of preaching the Gospel or teaching life skills, but also included “parenting” youths from vulnerable and broken backgrounds. The participants also stressed that, to be successful in these contexts, required long-term engagement with individuals and communities, in order to be effective disciple-makers (see 2.5.5.5.3).

Finally, a focus on the youth also ensures the sustainability of sports ministry itself. The interviews highlighted that sports ministry leaders recognise the need to raise up the next generation of sports ministry leaders. They identified that long-term discipleship is necessary to raise up and equip more leaders and increase the impact of sports ministry in South Africa (see 2.5.5.5.4).

7.2.2.3.2.4. Summary: Key factors relating to the equipping of leaders for sports ministry

Although focusing on the youth cannot be the exclusive application of the PROXIMITY model, this research believes that the South African context necessitates special attention to the youth through the means of sports ministry. In particular, the identification of fatherlessness, and the associated challenges of youths coming from broken homes, demonstrates the opportunity that sports ministry leaders have, to make a life-long transformational difference in the lives of the South African youth. To this end, sports ministry leaders need to be trained and prepared to not only run effective programmes among the youth, but also to realise the deeper spiritual role of

disciplining and parenting that they need to embrace. Once again, this demonstrates the critical role the church should play in mobilising leaders to engage the youth through sports ministry and to see the broader missional/transformation opportunity that sports ministry can play in South African society.

Additionally, effective and sustainable sports ministry in the South African context requires a multi-generational approach that has an emphasis on training up the next generation of sports ministry leaders. Therefore, sports ministry leaders need to prioritise mentoring the youth in sport to become leaders in their own right. The PROXIMITY model is intended to help facilitate this process as a resource that can give sports ministry leaders a foundation for the mentoring of other leaders.

7.3. Summary

The PROXIMITY model for equipping sports ministry leaders in the South African context has been presented with three sections containing nine components, which can be summarised as follows:

A. The role of the sports ministry leader as a Christian sportsperson:

- **Prophetic:** The role sports ministry leaders in South Africa is to practice prayerful discernment and reliance on the Holy Spirit to enable them to proclaim and embody scriptural revelation in and through sport.
- **Redemptive:** The role of sports ministry leaders in South Africa is to be an agent of Jesus Christ's reconciliation, redeeming sportspeople and sport itself, to God's original intent.
- **Open-handed:** The role of sports ministry leaders in South Africa is to offer their gift and passion for sport in service of God and others.
- **eXemplary:** The role of sports ministry leaders in South Africa is to be exemplary disciples of Jesus Christ, and to demonstrate a commitment to excellence in their ministry.

B. *The approach of the sports ministry leader in the culture of sport:*

- **Incarnational:** The approach of sports ministry leaders in South Africa is to embody the Gospel through their presence and participation in sport.
- **Missional:** The approach of sports ministry leaders in South Africa is to fulfil the Great Commission by developing strategies that present the Gospel across cultural, socio-economic and other barriers.
- **Integrational:** The approach of sports ministry leaders in South Africa is to overcome the sacred/secular divide in the church and demonstrate an integrated approach to their faith, life and sport.

C. *The focus of the sports ministry leader through the vehicle of sport:*

- **Transformational:** The focus of sports ministry leaders in South Africa is to promote holistic and scriptural transformation in the church, the culture of sport and the community, through Gospel-oriented sports ministry.
- **Youth-focused:** The approach of sports ministry leaders in South Africa is to prioritise working with the youth in order to address the contextual challenges they are facing, and to facilitate the multiplication of effective sports ministry for future generations.

7.4. Conclusion

This chapter has conducted the pragmatic task of considering how to respond to the main research question: *How can leaders be equipped to implement effective and sustainable sports ministry in South African churches and communities?* The PROXIMITY model was designed as an action plan for equipping leaders for effective and sustainable sports ministry in the South African context. It was based on research conducted and presented in chapters 2-6 and provides a foundation for the ongoing development of sports ministry in the South African context.

CHAPTER 8:

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND AREAS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

8.1. Introduction

The research question for the study was stated as: *How can leaders be equipped to implement effective and sustainable sports ministry in South African churches and communities?*

The following subsidiary questions emanated from the main research question:

- In which ways have sports ministry leaders been equipped through theological and practical training to implement an effective and sustainable sports ministry in the South African context?
- What is the historical, socio-cultural and practical context in which the Sports Ministry Movement has emerged in South Africa?
- Upon what biblical and theological principles has the Sports Ministry Movement been developed and is it possible to identify a scriptural/theological foundation for sports ministry leaders within the South African context?
- What model can be developed to provide a framework to give leaders a strong foundation for the implementation of effective and sustainable sports ministry in South Africa?

The research objectives were therefore stated as:

- To research by way of an empirical study how sports ministry leaders have been trained and equipped theologically and practically to implement an effective and sustainable sports ministry in the South African context.
- To research by way of a literature study how the historical, socio-cultural, and practical context in South Africa has shaped and influenced the current practice of sports ministry.

- To demonstrate upon what biblical and theological principles the Sports Ministry Movement has been developed and to provide a scriptural/theological normative foundation for sports ministry leaders in the South African context.
- To propose a model in order to provide leaders with a strong scriptural/theological and practical foundation for the implementation of effective and sustainable sports ministry in South Africa.

Additionally, the central theoretical statement of this study was that *the future strengthening and growth of sustainable sports ministry in South Africa is dependent upon equipping leaders with a foundation that will enable them to have a strong scriptural and theological basis for ministry.*

This concluding chapter will give an overview of how the various chapters in this study contributed in a hermeneutical interaction in order to formulate a proposed model for the equipping of leaders for effective and sustainable sports ministry in South Africa, and give some reflection from the researcher with regard to his role and reflections from this process. Finally, some recommendations for further research will be presented.

8.2. Research Methodology

Osmer's (2008:84) Methodological Model for Practical Theological Interpretation was used to shape the research process of this study. The four tasks of Osmer's Methodological Model of Practical Theological Interpretation are represented in Figure 2.1 on the following page and described as follows (Osmer 2008:187):

- A. *What is going on?* (Descriptive-empirical task). This requires a careful look at situations and contexts and attempts to describe and understand them (Chapter 2 of this thesis).
- B. *Why is this going on?* (Interpretative task). This requires seeking out reasons for what is going on, i.e. interpreting why the present situation exists (Chapter 3 of this thesis).

- C. *What ought to be going on?* (Normative task). This research project utilises the Bible as the normative standard and basis for assessing what is going on and providing appropriate responses. The Bible forms the basis for theological interpretation, ethical reflection and establishes models of good practice (Chapter 4, 5 and 6 of this thesis).
- D. *How might we respond?* (Pragmatic task). This task requires an interpretation of the situational and normative data in order to propose a model for the equipping of sports ministry leaders in South Africa (Chapter 7 of this thesis).

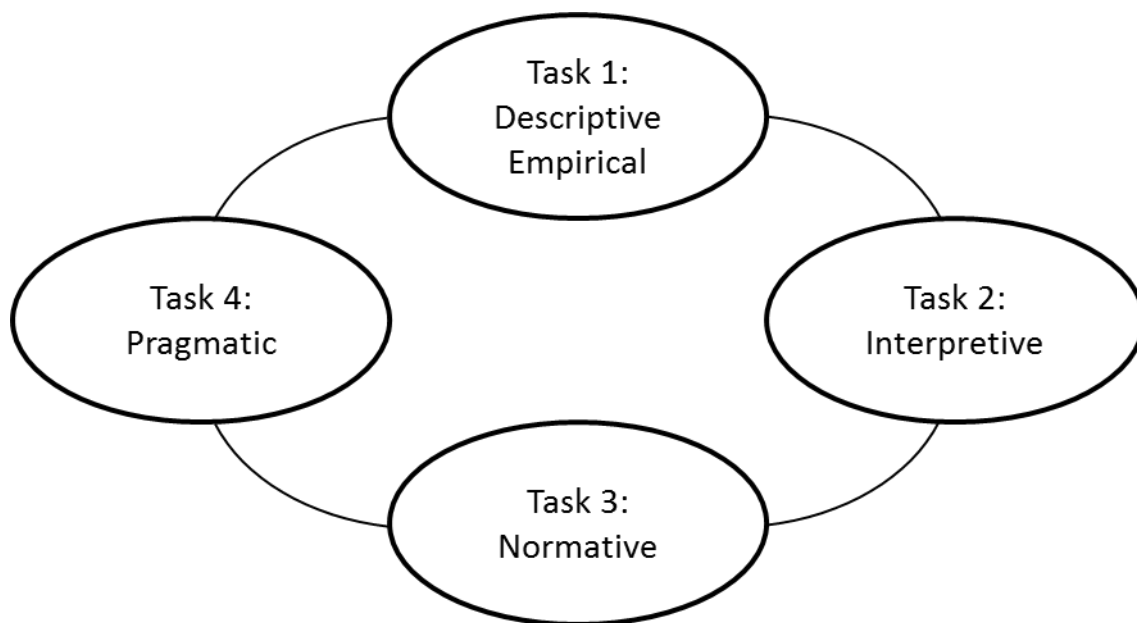


Figure 8.1: Osmer's (2008:187) Four Tasks of Theological Interpretation

8.3. Summary of Chapters 2 - 7

The structure of the chapters followed the four tasks of Osmer's model. This section will present a summary of each of the chapters.

8.3.1. Chapter 2

Chapter 2 addressed the first task of theological interpretation (Osmer 2008:84), namely, the descriptive-empirical task, which sought to describe the current situation and context of sports ministry leaders in South Africa. The chapter sought to answer the subsidiary research question: *In which ways have sports ministry leaders been*

equipped through theological and practical training to implement an effective and sustainable sports ministry in the South African context? The objective was, therefore, to research, by way of an empirical study, how sports ministry leaders have been trained and equipped theologically and practically to implement an effective and sustainable sports ministry in the South African context.

The first half of the chapter was focused on the research design and the process the researcher followed in seeking to address the primary purpose of the research. A clear explanation was presented on how the decision to conduct qualitative research through semi-structured interviews, was reached.

The second half of the chapter presented the results of the ten semi-structured interviews that took place with sports ministry leaders who had graduated from the Global Sports Leaders School (GSLs) in South Africa. When coded, the data provided five main themes and 18 sub-themes.

Table 8.1 (on the next page) provides an overview of the themes and sub-themes which the chapter elucidated, with specific attention to giving rich descriptions through providing quotes from the interviewed participants.

Themes	Sub-Themes
Sports ministry origins	Passion for sport
	Passion for God and sport
	Passion for others
The experience of the Global Sports Leadership School	Being part of a cross-cultural community
	Having access to a global network
	Developing leadership skills
	Developing practical sports ministry skills
Theological Factors	The role of sport
	Evangelism: proclamation and incarnational.
	Long-term Discipleship
	Having a holistic approach to ministry
Contextual challenges	Lack of understanding of sports ministry
	Church engagement with sports ministry
	Lack of access to resources
Leadership priorities	Prioritising families and parenting
	Sport as a medium of community development
	The need for long-term engagement
	The multiplication of leaders

Table 8.1: Themes and sub-themes determined from the interviews

The chapter closed by providing some summary conclusions from the data that had been analysed with regard to the primary theological and practical factors that motivate sports ministry leaders in South Africa today.

8.3.2. Chapter 3

Chapter 3 addressed the second task of theological interpretation (Osmer 2008:84), namely, the interpretative task. Through a survey of relevant literature, the chapter sought to answer the question, “*why is this going on?*” and provide interpretation as to why the situation described in chapter 2 exists. The chapter sought to answer the subsidiary research question: *what is the historical, socio-cultural and practical context in which the Sports Ministry Movement has emerged in South Africa?* The objective was, therefore, to research, by way of a literature study, how the historical, socio-cultural, and practical context in South Africa has shaped and influenced the current practice of sports ministry leaders.

With the understanding that practical theological interpretation is “deeply contextual” (Osmer 2008:262), the literature survey was designed to provide an analysis and interpretation of the *historical, socio-cultural, sporting and leadership*, influences upon sports ministry leaders in South Africa. The chapter presented reflection upon recent literature from diverse fields of research in order to provide insight into the current practice of sports ministry leaders in South Africa.

The *Historical Context* considered the role of colonialism and Apartheid that has shaped and defined South African society. This was then considered in relation to two of the key areas of interest in this study, namely, the development of the church and the development of sport in South Africa in the 20th century. It was acknowledged that all South Africans, including sports ministry leaders, are influenced and shaped by the historical context of the nation.

The *Socio-cultural Context* gave a cultural/sociological perspective on South African society, identifying some of the key challenges that sports ministry leaders will face when operating in the South African context. Special attention was given to the role that sport has played within the socio-cultural context, and as a cultural phenomenon

in its own right. The chapter acknowledged that, since the dismantling of Apartheid in 1994, sport has increasingly been viewed as a medium for healing and reconciliation, which has primarily been promoted through the major sports events that have been hosted in South Africa over the past 20 years. The study also examined the burgeoning “Sport for Development” Movement that seizes the pragmatic opportunity to utilise sport for social good.

The *Leadership Context* presented the task of leadership development in order to address the socio-cultural challenges through sport. It demonstrated that leadership development through sport has a positive historical track record in South Africa. The chapter also contained an overview of the Global Sports Leadership School aims and curriculum, which was the course that each of the interview participants in chapter 2 had graduated from.

In summary, the literature survey utilised a multi-disciplinary approach which drew from research in a number of fields and related disciplines. This research provided a deep understanding of the context into which sports ministry leaders are ministering, and contributed greatly to the process of developing a model to equip leaders for effective and sustainable sports ministry in the South African context.

8.3.3. Chapters 4, 5 and 6

Chapters 4, 5 and 6 are here summarised together because of the indelible link between the chapters. The three chapters addressed the third task of theological interpretation (Osmer 2008:84), namely, the normative task and sought to answer the question “*what ought to be going on*”. Chapters 4, 5, and 6, answered the subsidiary research question: *Upon what biblical and theological principles has the Sports Ministry Movement been developed and is it possible to identify a scriptural/theological foundation for sports ministry leaders within the South African context?* The objective of the chapters was, therefore, to demonstrate upon what biblical and theological principles the Sports Ministry Movement has been developed and to provide a scriptural/theological normative foundation for sports ministry leaders in the South African context.

Chapters 4 and 5 presented scriptural principles for sports ministry leadership based upon an exegesis of five passages of Scripture (two Old Testament passages in chapter 4, and three New Testament passages in chapter 5). These portions of Scripture were chosen because they had been cited by the sports ministry leaders interviewed in the empirical research, and because they have been highlighted as being significant by contemporary sports ministry authors.

Chapter 4 provided an Old Testament perspective for a normative theological foundation for sports ministry leaders in South Africa, through an exegesis of Genesis 1:26-28 and Isaiah 61:1-3. Chapter 5 provided a New Testament perspective for a normative theological foundation for sports ministry leaders in South Africa, through exegesis of Matthew 28:18-20, Romans 12:1-2 and 1 Corinthians 9:19-27.

The scriptural principles highlighted in Chapters 4 and 5 were then combined and presented as a Scriptural Manifesto for sports ministry leaders in chapter 6. Chapter 6 then evaluated six theological paradigms (the polarised, pragmatic, proclamation, pedagogical, participation, and purposeful paradigms), which have influenced sports ministry, against the Scriptural Manifesto.¹⁰⁸ The result of this evaluation found the following:

- The Polarised Paradigm is based upon a dualistic worldview that separates the sacred from the secular. It was concluded that this is not an acceptable theological paradigm for sports ministry leaders.
- The Pragmatic Paradigm views engagement in sport as justified if it is utilised for a beneficial end. It was concluded that this is not a sufficient theological paradigm for sports ministry leaders.
- The Proclamation Paradigm focuses on the platform that sport provides for evangelism. Although proclamation must play a key role in sports ministry, it was concluded that this was not sufficient as a theological paradigm for sports ministry leaders.
- The Pedagogical Paradigm views sport as primarily useful inasmuch as it is a metaphor for Christian teaching and training, and to move from proclamation

¹⁰⁸ The full results of the evaluation are contained in Appendix 4.

towards discipleship. It was concluded that this was not a sufficient theological paradigm for sports ministry leaders.

- The Participation Paradigm values the activity of sport and recognises it as a medium of worshipping God. It was concluded that it is a fairly strong theological paradigm for sports ministry leadership.
- The Purposeful Paradigm sees the sports world as subject to the Fall and seeks to bring Jesus Christ's redemption to the culture and people of sport. It was concluded that it is a very strong theological paradigm for sports ministry leadership in the 21st Century.

The extensive normative study in chapters 4, 5 and 6 presented and evaluated the scriptural and theological principles upon which the Sports Ministry Movement has been developed, and provided a scriptural/theological normative foundation for sports ministry leaders in the South African context.

8.3.4. Chapter 7

Chapter 7 presented the culmination of this research through addressing the fourth task of theological interpretation (Osmer 2008:84), namely the pragmatic task, by answering the question "what ought to be going on". The chapter sought to answer the subsidiary research question: *What model can be developed to provide a framework to give leaders a strong foundation for the implementation of effective and sustainable sports ministry in South Africa?* The objective of the chapter was, therefore, to propose a model to show how leaders may be provided with a strong scriptural/theological and practical foundation for the implementation of effective and sustainable sports ministry in South Africa.

Chapter 7 proposed the PROXIMITY model as a foundation to show what the equipping of leaders for effective and sustainable sports ministry in South Africa, may look like. Figure 8.2 presents the model diagrammatically.

The PROXIMITY model for equipping sports ministry leaders								
P	R	O	X	I	M	I	T	Y
Prophetic	Redemptive	Open-handed	eXemplary	Incarnational	Missional	Integrational	Transformational	Youth-focused
The role of the sports ministry leader as a Christian sportsperson				The approach of the sports ministry leader in the culture of sport			The focus of the sports ministry leader through the vehicle of sport	

Figure 8.2: The PROXIMITY model for equipping sports ministry leaders

The PROXIMITY model is proposed as a theological and practical foundation for the equipping of sports ministry leaders in South Africa. It was developed out of the data that emerged from the descriptive, interpretative and normative tasks presented in chapters 2-6 in a hermeneutical interaction. PROXIMITY is an acronym for the key words that define the proposed scriptural/theological role, approach and focus of sports ministry leaders in South Africa, and shows that sports ministry leaders should be equipped to be:

Prophetic

Redemptive

Open-handed

eXemplary

Incarnational

Missional

Integrational

Transformational

Youth-focused

Chapter 7 presented a full description of the model and how it was borne out of the research contained in the previous chapters. The model is summarised as follows:

A. The role of the sports ministry leader as a Christian sportsperson:

- **Prophetic:** The role of sports ministry leaders in South Africa is to practice prayerful discernment and reliance on the Holy Spirit to enable them to proclaim and embody scriptural revelation in and through sport.
- **Redemptive:** The role of sports ministry leaders in South Africa is to be agents of Jesus Christ's reconciliation, redeeming sportspeople and sport itself, to God's original intent.
- **Open-handed:** The role of sports ministry leaders in South Africa is to offer their gift and passion for sport in service of God and others.
- **eXemplary:** The role of sports ministry leaders in South Africa is to be exemplary disciples of Jesus Christ, and to demonstrate a commitment to excellence in their ministry.

B. The approach of the sports ministry leader in the culture of sport:

- **Incarnational:** The approach of sports ministry leaders in South Africa is to embody the Gospel through their presence and participation in sport.
- **Missional:** The approach of sports ministry leaders in South Africa is to fulfil the Great Commission by developing strategies that present the Gospel across cultural, socio-economic and other barriers.
- **Integrational:** The approach of sports ministry leaders in South Africa is to overcome the sacred/secular divide in the church and demonstrate an integrated approach to their faith, life and sport.

C. The focus of the sports ministry leader through the vehicle of sport:

- **Transformational:** The focus of sports ministry leaders in South Africa is to promote holistic and scriptural transformation in the church, the culture of sport and the community, through Gospel-oriented sports ministry.

- **Youth-focused:** The approach of sports ministry leaders in South Africa is to prioritise working with the youth in order to address the contextual challenges they are facing, and to facilitate the multiplication of effective sports ministry within future generations.

8.4. Conclusion

The research question addressed by this study was: *How can leaders be equipped to implement effective and sustainable sports ministry in South African churches and communities?*

Through following Osmer's (2008) research methodology for practical theology, the researcher believes a robust foundation has been given for the equipping of leaders for effective and sustainable sports ministry in the South African context. In particular, the PROXIMITY model, proposed in chapter seven, which emerged from the research contained in the previous chapters, may make a strong contribution to the field of equipping sports ministry leaders in the South African context.

This chapter will conclude by giving some personal reflections from the researcher, providing specific recommendations based upon the research, and presenting areas for further research.

8.4.1. Reflexivity

Chapter 2 (see 2.3.4) highlighted the important role that reflexivity plays in both the research design and ensuring the reliability of the research. I have sought to apply this throughout my research by continually reflecting and assessing my own attitudes and approach to the data emerging from this research.

I acknowledge that the area of sports ministry leadership in South Africa is of great importance to me, not only because I led a sports ministry for 12 years, but also because I am passionate about finding effective ways to impact South Africa with the Gospel. Sport has always been a natural avenue for me because of my own interest and passion for sport. Additionally, as a non-national who has lived and served in

South Africa for 18 years, I am deeply passionate about raising up South African leaders. I acknowledge that to truly impact a generation for Christ, the church will need to find effective ways to raise up leaders who themselves can develop other leaders. This also motivated me throughout this study.

A limitation of the study is the lack of female participants in the empirical research. Additionally, the participants were primarily from urban settings and I would have liked to have had more participants from rural environments. However, I enjoyed conducting the interviews, particularly hearing the stories of how the interviewed leaders are impacting their community through sports ministry.

As the research progressed I increasingly appreciated Osmer's model. I realise that, given my personal experience in sports ministry leadership, and having completed my Masters in Theology relating to sports ministry, I have some preconceived ideas as to what is required to equip leaders in the South African context. However, the combination of the empirical research and drawing from other disciplines for the literature review, gave me fresh insight that I believe is reflected in the proposed PROXIMITY model presented in chapter 7.

8.4.2. Recommendations

This research has proposed the PROXIMITY model for the equipping of leaders for effective and sustainable sports ministry in South Africa. The following are some recommendations relating to the implementation of this model:

- The chief focus of the PROXIMITY model (when applied) is to bring glory to God in sport and extend His Kingdom through sport.
- The model provides a framework for a curriculum for training sports ministry leaders in the South African context. However, it is envisaged that the curriculum should integrate *practical*, *cultural* and *theological* aspects.
- Sports ministry leaders need to maintain a balance between a strong scriptural/theological foundation, and the practical skills required to engage effectively in sports ministry. Additionally, sports ministry leaders need to give

due attention to the broader context in which they are serving, recognising that their role is to represent Jesus Christ within the culture of sport.

- Discipleship/mentoring over the long-term is a key emphasis of the PROXIMITY model. This includes the discipleship and mentoring of the leaders of sports ministry, as well as those being reached through sports ministry.
- Each component of the PROXIMITY model is equally important for the equipping of sports ministry leaders in the South African context. The effectiveness and sustainability of sports ministry could be compromised if some components are neglected. However, it is also true that, in some contexts, certain components may have a greater emphasis than others, but this should not be to the exclusion of the other components.

As was stated in chapter 7, the word PROXIMITY is itself important in relation to the findings of this research. Effective and sustainable sports ministry in South Africa requires that leaders operate in proximity to the church, the culture of sport and local communities. Here are some final reflections on the PROXIMITY principle that have emerged from the research:

A. Proximity to the Church.

- Sports ministry leaders need to value the church in South Africa and recognise the vital role the church plays in society.
- The church needs to be exposed to sports ministry in a manner that enables understanding of the missional opportunity that exists through sport. This will require theological engagement with church leaders in order that they gain a theological perspective of sports ministry that is consistent with the scriptural principles outlined in this study.
- Sports ministry should not be viewed in isolation from other missional foci of the church in South Africa, but should be integrated within the strategies that churches develop to impact South Africa with the Gospel.
- The church has multiple resources that sports ministry leaders require if their ministry is to be effective and sustainable. These resources include training

materials, discipleship strategies, human resources, leaders, financial resources, facilities and other strong ministries.

B. Proximity to the culture of sport.

- God desires to redeem the culture of sport in Jesus Christ.
- Sports ministry is eminently incarnational. Engaging the culture of sport in South Africa in order to redeem the people and culture of sport is essential towards effective sports ministry. This means that Christians should participate at every level of sport and in every sport role, e.g. players, coaches, administrators, spectators, chaplains, etc.
- As sports ministry is eminently incarnational, sports ministry leaders need to resist the temptation of creating an alternative, so-called “Christian”, sport structures. Rather, they are called to “go” and make disciples within the culture of sport.
- Sports ministry leaders need to consider how they can prophetically proclaim and model a biblical ethic of competition within the culture of sport. Sports ministry leaders are ambassadors for Jesus Christ within the culture of sport and should demonstrate a scriptural/theological ethic and character as they participate.

C. Proximity to the community.

- God desires to redeem communities through Jesus Christ. Sport provides an avenue to share in Jesus Christ’s redemptive task in underprivileged communities across South Africa.
- Sports ministry leaders have a scriptural mandate to priorities the poor, the broken and the marginalised. In particular, this research demonstrated the opportunity for sports ministry to engage with the youth from broken-homes, and for sports ministry leaders to play a parenting role in the lives of the fatherless youth.
- Sports ministry leaders in South Africa are increasingly realising that sports ministry is a gateway to community transformation. Therefore, the skill-sets and

resources required to effectively impact communities will need to be developed alongside the functional aspects of sports ministry.

- Having an incarnational approach is more than just playing sport with someone, but seeking to understand the context that has shaped that person within a particular community. From this platform it is possible to minister to people holistically and facilitate long-term discipleship.

8.4.3. Areas for Further Research

The following recommendations for further research are made based upon the findings of this study:

- The transformative impact of sports ministry in South Africa requires further empirical testing. This research has focused on equipping leaders for effective and sustainable sports ministry. Further empirical research is required in order to determine the efficacy of sports ministry activities/programmes with regards to making disciples, impacting the culture of sport and positively changing communities.
- There is an opportunity to conduct a study on the sport context in South Africa with regards to understanding the ethical and moral concerns that Christians should have about the prevalent sports culture. The Scriptural Manifesto for sports ministry leaders in South Africa could provide a framework for research into this subject.
- The PROXIMITY model, as a scriptural/theological foundation for sports ministry leaders, could be tested against other fields of vocational ministry, such as music, business, creative arts etc. This could provide a broader scriptural/theological foundation for Christian leaders seeking effective and sustainable ministry through other gifts and talents.
- This study presented some case studies of effective sports ministry as identified by the research participants in chapter 2 (see Annexure F). There is an opportunity for further research to be done that examines case studies of people/communities impacted by sports ministry, and provides models of best practice for sports ministry in the South African context.

As was acknowledged in this study, empirical research of sports ministry is an untapped field. Many proclaim the efficacy of sport to champion various causes – including the cause of the Gospel. It is hoped that this study will pave the way for further empirical research that will truly identify how God can be glorified and the Kingdom expanded, through sports ministry.

ANNEXURES

Below are the various annexures that have been referred to in this study according to the chapters in which they first occurred:

ANNEXURE A: Form for Informed Consent

Confidential: This document contains confidential information intended exclusively for the applicant(s), the Ethics Committee of the North-West University and the designated evaluators. If this document, or parts thereof, comes into your possession in error, you are requested to return it immediately to the Ethics Committee of the North-West University, or destroy it. Unauthorised possession, reading, copying, studying, use or distribution of this material, or any other form of abuse, is illegal and punishable.

Title of Project: The equipping of leaders for effective and sustainable sports ministry in the South African context.

Researcher:

[Your first line of contact for enquiries, help and complaints related to your participation in the project. If you wish to terminate your participation to the project, you may contact him at any time].

PhD Student:

Tim Tucker

Cell number: 0827128235

Email address: timtuckersa@gmail.com

Supervisor:

Professor George Lotter

Phone: 018-299-1840

Email address: george.lotter@nwu.ac.za

The following information is provided for you to decide whether you wish to participate in the present study. You should be aware that you are free to decide to not participate

or to withdraw at any time without affecting your relationship with the interviewer or the North-West University (NWU).

The purpose of this study: is to conduct research in how sports ministry leaders have been trained and equipped theologically and practically to implement an effective and sustainable sports ministry in the South African context.

How the study will be conducted: The procedure for data collection is through semi-structured interviews. All those being asked to participate in the interviews are South African residents who have completed the three-month Global Sports Leadership School (GSLs). The participant's details have been provided to the researcher by the GSLs.

What is expected of me as a participant? Data collection is through one hour interviews which will be recorded and transcribed in full. The researcher will also make notes/memos. The transcript of this interview will be made available to you to confirm that it is an accurate record and to correct any areas of misinterpretation.

How are participants being protected? Please do not hesitate to ask any questions about the study either before participating or during the time that you are participating. I would be happy to share my findings with you after the research is completed. However, your name will not be associated with the research findings in any way and your identity as a participant will be known only to the researchers (my supervisors and me). All data collected will be securely stored in a password protected folder.

There are no known risks and/or discomforts associated with this study. The expected benefits associated with your participation are the contribution you will make towards equipping leaders for effective and sustainable sports ministry in South Africa.

Please sign your consent with full knowledge of the nature and purpose of the procedures to confirm that you are voluntarily participating in this research. A copy of this consent form will be given to you to keep.

You are invited to take part in this research project as described above. It is also important that you read and understand the following general principles, which are applicable to all participants in our research projects:

- Participation in the project is completely voluntary and no pressure, however subtle, may be placed on you to take part.
- It is possible that you may not derive any benefit personally from your participation in the project, although the knowledge that may be gained by means of the project, may benefit other persons or communities. You may not be bribed to participate.
- You are free to withdraw from the project at any time, without stating reasons, and you will be in no way harmed by so doing. You may also request that your data no longer be used. However, you are kindly requested not to withdraw from the project without careful consideration, since it may have detrimental effect on, inter alia, the statistical reliability of the project.
- By agreeing to take part in the project, you are also giving consent for the data that will be generated to be used by the researchers for scientific purposes as they see fit, with the caveat that it will be confidential and that your name will not be linked to any of the data without your consent.
- The project objectives are always secondary to your well-being and actions taken will always place your interests above those of the project.

CONSENT

I, the undersigned, have read the preceding premises regarding the project, and have also heard the oral version thereof and I declare that I understand it.

I was given the opportunity to discuss relevant aspects of the project with the Researcher and I hereby declare that I am taking part in the project voluntarily.

Participant

Researcher

Date

ANNEXURE B: Ethics Approval Certificate



NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY
YUNIBESITHI YA BOKONE-BOPHIRIMA
NOORDWES-UNIVERSITEIT

Private Bag X6001, Potchefstroom,
South Africa, 2520

Tel: (018) 299-4900

Faks: (018) 299-4910

Web: <http://www.nwu.ac.za>

Institutional Research Ethics Regulatory Committee

Tel: +27 18 299 4849

Email: Ethics@nwu.ac.za

2016-06-02

ETHICS APPROVAL CERTIFICATE OF PROJECT

Based on approval by **Research Ethics Committee of Theology (TREC)** at the meeting held on **30/05/2016**, the North-West University Institutional Research Ethics Regulatory Committee (NWU-IRERC) hereby **approves** your project as indicated below. This implies that the NWU-IRERC grants its permission that, provided the special conditions specified below are met and pending any other authorisation that may be necessary, the project may be initiated, using the ethics number below.

Project title: The equipping of leaders for effective and sustainable sports ministry in the South African context.																																														
Project Leader/Supervisor: GA Lotter & N Woodbridge																																														
Student: T Tucker																																														
Ethics number:	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>N</td><td>W</td><td>U</td><td>-</td><td>0</td><td>0</td><td>4</td><td>1</td><td>5</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>5</td><td>-</td><td>A</td><td>6</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="3">Institution</td> <td colspan="6">Project Number</td> <td colspan="2">Year</td> <td colspan="4">Status</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="15"> <small>Status: S = Submission, R = Re-Submission, P = Provisional Authorisation, A = Authorisation</small> </td> </tr> </table>	N	W	U	-	0	0	4	1	5	-	1	5	-	A	6	Institution			Project Number						Year		Status				<small>Status: S = Submission, R = Re-Submission, P = Provisional Authorisation, A = Authorisation</small>														
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Institution			Project Number						Year		Status																																			
<small>Status: S = Submission, R = Re-Submission, P = Provisional Authorisation, A = Authorisation</small>																																														
Application Type: PHD																																														
Commencement date: 2014-01-01	Expiry date: 2017-11-30																																													
Risk:	Medium																																													

Special conditions of the approval (if applicable):

- Translation of the informed consent document to the languages applicable to the study participants should be submitted to the TREC (if applicable).
- Any research at governmental or private institutions, permission must still be obtained from relevant authorities and provided to the TREC. Ethics approval is required BEFORE approval can be obtained from these authorities.

General conditions:

While this ethics approval is subject to all declarations, undertakings and agreements incorporated and signed in the application form, please note the following:

- The project leader (principle investigator) must report in the prescribed format to the NWU-IRERC via TREC:
 - annually (or as otherwise requested) on the progress of the project, and upon completion of the project
 - without any delay in case of any adverse event (or any matter that interrupts sound ethical principles) during the course of the project.
 - Annually a number of projects may be randomly selected for an external audit.
- The approval applies strictly to the protocol as stipulated in the application form. Would any changes to the protocol be deemed necessary during the course of the project, the project leader must apply for approval of these changes at the TREC. Would there be deviated from the project protocol without the necessary approval of such changes, the ethics approval is immediately and automatically forfeited.
- The date of approval indicates the first date that the project may be started. Would the project have to continue after the expiry date, a new application must be made to the NWU-IRERC via TREC and new approval received before or on the expiry date.
- In the interest of ethical responsibility the NWU-IRERC and TREC retains the right to:
 - request access to any information or data at any time during the course or after completion of the project;
 - to ask further questions, seek additional information, require further modification or monitor the conduct of your research or the informed consent process.
 - withdraw or postpone approval if:
 - any unethical principles or practices of the project are revealed or suspected,
 - it becomes apparent that any relevant information was withheld from the TREC or that information has been false or misrepresented,
 - the required annual report and reporting of adverse events was not done timely and accurately,
 - new institutional rules, national legislation or international conventions deem it necessary.
- TREC can be contacted for further assistance via Nadine.Havenga@nwu.ac.za or 018 299 1600.

The IRERC would like to remain at your service as scientist and researcher, and wishes you well with your project. Please do not hesitate to contact the IRERC or TREC for any further enquiries or requests for assistance.

Yours sincerely

Linda du Plessis

Digitally signed by Linda du Plessis
DN: cn=Linda du Plessis, o=NWU,
ou=Vaal Triangle Campus,
email=linda.duplessis@nwu.ac.za,
c=ZA
Date: 2016.06.03 09:27:57 +02'00'

Prof Linda du Plessis

Chair NWU Institutional Research Ethics Regulatory Committee (IRERC)

ANNEXURE C: Interview Guide and Protocol

1. Introduction

This Interview Protocol provides the process that is to be followed in conducting the semi-structured interviews during the data collection phase of the empirical research.

The primary purpose of this study is: *To determine by way of an empirical study what theological and other factors currently motivate sports ministry leaders in South Africa.*

The key questions that the qualitative research of this empirical study will seek to answer are:

- What theological and other factors currently motivate sports ministry leaders in South Africa?
- To what extent has the GSLS training-programme equipped leaders theologically and practically to implement an effective and sustainable sports ministry in the South African context?
- What factors have helped sports ministry leaders to develop their ministry in South Africa?
- What obstacles have hindered sports ministry leaders from developing their ministry in South Africa?

The particular interview questions have been developed, from the primary research questions, which are designed to generate data to contribute towards a greater understanding of the present situation (Maxwell 2009:230). As Maxwell (2009:236) states:

Your interview questions should be judged not by whether they can be logically derived from your research questions, but by whether they provide the data that will contribute to answering these questions, an issue that may require pilot-testing a variety of questions or actually conducting a significant number of interviews (Maxwell 2009:236).

The process of preparing for the interviews has been based upon Creswell's (2012) model of data collection.

2. Engaging interviewees

The interview participants are all South African residents who have completed the sports ministry leadership three-month training-programme of the Global Sports Leadership School (GSLs) in South Africa. A list of all graduates was provided to the researcher by the GSLs administration office. The following process then ensued:

- Sending an initial letter of introduction to each potential participant requesting their participation in the research via Email or Fax together with a letter from my Supervisor (see Annexure D).
 - Where only a phone number was available, an initial phone call was made requesting an Email address or Fax number.
- A follow up phone call to gain their consent and set up an appointment, either face-to-face, skype or phone call (in that order of preference).
- At the interview, follow the interview protocol form which includes a) gaining consent (See figure 3), b) conducting interview, c) closing with thanks for their participation and the next steps.
- Complete interview memo within twenty-four hours of interview.
- Transcribe the interview and send it to interviewee for any corrections and final approval.

3. Interview guide

The interview structure has been designed to allow for effective participant engagement. It has three main sections; A. The opening, which focuses on developing rapport with the interviewee as well as asking important questions on background and context, B. The main body, which utilises key questions which are designed to open up further discussion as the interviewer deems appropriate, and C. The closing section, where the interviewee is thanked and given an opportunity to make any

closing comments. The structure, with the specific questions for each section, is represented in Table 1.

Stage	Purpose	Details
1. Opening	A. Establish rapport	Researcher introduces himself to the participant, establishing rapport through informal conversation.
	B. Communicate purpose	Researcher explains the purpose of the interview, and the envisioned contribution thereof to the field of study.
	C. Ethical considerations	Researcher informs participant of ethical considerations, including details about voluntary participation; confidentiality of information; the fact that the interview is recorded, and that written consent will be required. The nature of the participant's contribution and any other pertinent ethical issues are also discussed.
	D. Familiarisation	The researcher asks questions aimed at creating a relaxed atmosphere, while unlocking valuable preliminary information through informal enquiries: Please tell me a little bit about <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Yourself (family, sports teams) 2. Your background (where you were brought up in South Africa, church background)? 3. How you first became interested in sports/sports ministry?

		<p>4. What year did you study at GSLS?</p> <p>5. What is your current engagement in sport/sports ministry?</p>
2. Body	A. Main interview questions	<p>Researcher asks main interview question:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. What theological factors initially motivated you to pursue ministry through sport and attend GSLS? b. What theological factors currently motivate you in your sports ministry? c. To what extent has the GSLS training programme equipped you theologically and practically to implement an effective and sustainable sports ministry in the South African context? d. What factors have helped you to develop a sports ministry? e. What obstacles have hindered you from developing a sports ministry? f. Describe some of the successes that you have experienced in ministering through sport. g. Describe what your biggest leadership challenge in sports ministry has been?

		<p>h. How would you advise someone looking to develop a sports ministry?</p>
	<p>B. Exploratory questions</p>	<p>The researcher may choose to ask some or all of the following ancillary questions to explore the participant's answer in greater depth and detail:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How has your understanding of Scripture shaped your approach to sports ministry? • Provide some specific examples of instances where you saw effective sports ministry in action? • How would you define success in relation to your leadership in sports ministry? • Which challenges that you experienced would you say are unique to the South African/your context? Motivate your answer.
	<p>C. Prompts and probes</p>	<p>Researcher may choose to use some of the following common probes to draw out more detail:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarification: Request to clarify statement • Justification: Request to justify a stance • Relevance: Question about relevance of answer to an issue

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Examples: Request for examples of a specific case or phenomenon.
3. Closing	A. Summary	Researcher concludes conversation and ensures participant does not have any other remarks to share.
	B. Maintain rapport	Researcher thanks participant for contribution, and ascertains whether any future communication with regards to the research is necessary or desired.

Table1 (adapted from Creswell 2012:164)

4. Interview Protocol

Creswell (2007:135) states that the purpose of the interview protocol “enables a person to take notes during the interview about the responses of the interviewee”, and gives the following instructions for using the interview protocol:

- Use a header to record essential information about the project and as a reminder, go over the purpose of the study with the interviewee. This heading might also include information about confidentiality and address aspects included in the consent form.
- Provide space between the questions on the protocol form. Be aware that an individual may not always respond directly to the question being asked... Be prepared to write notes on all of the questions as the interviewee speaks.
- Memorise the questions and their order to minimize losing eye-contact with the participant. Provide appropriate verbal transitions from one question to the next.
- Write out the closing comments that thank the individual for the interview and request follow-up information, if needed, from him or her

(Based upon the template proposed by Creswell 2007:136)

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL: The equipping of leaders for effective and sustainable sports ministry in the South African context.

Time of interview: _____

Date: _____

Place: _____

Interviewer: _____

Interviewee: _____

Means of interview: _____

Read consent form and ask interviewee to sign.

Introduce project and purpose of interview:

Description of project.

The primary purpose of this study is:

To determine by way of an empirical study what theological and other factors currently motivate sports ministry leaders in South Africa.

[START RECORDING]

The researcher asks questions aimed at creating a relaxed atmosphere, while unlocking valuable preliminary information through informal enquiries:

Please tell me a little bit about

1. Yourself (family, sports teams)
2. Your background (where you were brought up in South Africa, church background)?
3. How you first became interested in sports ministry?
4. What year did you study at GSLS?
5. What is your current engagement in sport/sports ministry?

Researcher asks main interview questions:

- a. What theological factors initially motivated you to pursue ministry through sport prior to attending GSLS?
- b. What role has the GSLS training programme played in equipping you theologically and practically to implement an effective and sustainable sports ministry in the South African context?
- c. What theological factors currently motivate you in your sports ministry?

- d. What factors have helped you to develop a sports ministry?
- e. Which obstacles have hindered you from developing a sports ministry?
- f. How would you define success in relation to your leadership in sports ministry?
- g. How would you advise someone looking to develop a sports ministry?

The researcher may choose to ask some or all of the following ancillary questions to explore the participant's answer in greater depth and detail:

- How has your understanding of Scripture shaped your approach to sports ministry?
- Provide some specific examples of cases where you saw effective sports ministry in action?
- Describe what has been your biggest leadership challenge in sports ministry?
- Which challenges that you have experienced do you think are unique to the South African/your context? Motivate your answer.

Researcher may choose to use some of the following common probes to draw out more detail:

- Clarification: Request to clarify statement
- Justification: Request to justify a stance
- Relevance: Question about relevance of answer to an issue
- Examples: Request for examples of a specific case or phenomenon.

CLOSE

Researcher concludes conversation and ensures participant does not have any other remarks to share.

Researcher thanks participant for contribution, and ascertains whether any future communication with regards to the research is necessary or desired.

ANNEXURE D: Letters of Introduction Requesting Participation in the Research.

Dear GSLS graduate [insert name],

My name is Tim Tucker and I am a doctoral student from North-West University (NWU) currently conducting research towards my PhD in Practical Theology. I have been given your contact details by the administrative office at the Global Sports Leadership School in South Africa, from which you graduated in [insert year].

I am approaching you to request that you assist me with my research. The title of my research is “The equipping of leaders for effective and sustainable sports ministry in South Africa”. As a South African citizen and graduate of GSLS, I am requesting that you avail yourself for a one-hour interview to assist me with my data collection. The interview will be completely confidential and your name will not be associated with the research findings in any way. However, I believe that you have a valuable contribution to make towards this research project which will propose how sports ministry leaders in South Africa can be effectively trained.

Please confirm if you are willing to participate in this research. I am based in Cape Town and, wherever possible, would like to conduct interviews face-to-face. However, if we need to set up the interview via Skype or telephone, then this can be arranged. The interviews will be digitally recorded and fully transcribed, so that they can be checked for accuracy and/or points of clarification.

I have also attached a letter from my Supervisor confirming the legitimacy of this letter and humbly request your cooperation in assisting with my research.

I look forward to hearing from you.

My Email address is: timt@message.org.za and my phone number is: 0827128236.

Yours faithfully,

Tim Tucker.

Dear GSLS Graduate,

Regarding Mr Tim Tucker's request that you participate in the research:

The equipping of leaders for effective and sustainable sports ministry in South Africa.

This is to confirm that Mr Timothy Tucker is presently involved in doing research towards his PhD degree under the auspices of North-West University.

It would be greatly appreciated if you could assist by agreeing to be interviewed as part of his data-collection process.

The responses to the interviews will be kept in strict confidence.

Your cooperation is greatly appreciated as we believe your input will significantly contribute towards the success of the research project.

Yours faithfully

Professor George Lotter.

george.lotter@nwu.ac.za

018-299-1840 (w)

ANNEXURE E: Researcher Memo

The researcher memo must be completed within 24 hours of the completion of the interview. The following factors are taken into consideration:

- How they personally relate to the participants and the phenomenon;
- The research questions;
- The code choices;
- Emergent patterns and categories;
- Problems and ethical dilemmas in the study; and
- The future direction for the study.

[Adapted from Theron 2015:5].

ANNEXURE F: Case Studies – Transformational Stories

The following are verbatim accounts of the effectiveness of sports ministry as given by the participants in this empirical research.

Example 1

I remember the one day, just to give you an idea, I remember the one day we – I helped at a church somewhere in north Africa and we played soccer with the guys and we shared the gospel and we gave the Living Ball to the guy and as we packed up then, after the Jesus Film which we shared in the evening, or whatever, as we packed up we drove, and as we drove away, this guy was on his bicycle, and as we drove away this guy was standing at his bicycle, I mean this is like a few hours later, standing at his bicycle and sharing the Gospel from that ball with a bunch of friends. So for me, that type of thing. So the effect – you know the simplicity of little things like Living Ball and just playing with the guys, for me that was always the most effective way of... If you look at groups set up and community set up.

Example 2

In terms of, I mean, common interest, if I say common interest I mean the fact that I personally will try to watch sports events in a pub with the guys. And towards ministerial ideas like spending time with people and reaching people also using that time in that context. So for me that was... and just two weeks ago, another thing that maybe I can just mention, two weeks ago it was the All African Student Games in Johannesburg. So I was quite involved in the All African Student Games so we had a chapel every afternoon and this and this... and the fact that it was in Johannesburg the athletics for example, with all the people from Kenya and Uganda and all those people, trained on a track where I train on a daily basis. So what happened basically, we, this is how it started. It was a Monday morning and I had a track meeting in the early morning at the track, and as I led my session, these teams/guys started to arrive. So the Kenya team came, and the Uganda team and Zimbabwe team and all the teams and I'm busy with my session. And as I finish the session the coaches of the guys come to talk to me because they thought I'm one of the students that they race against. So we started to talk and stuff, and just to give you an idea, that one session – just me

doing my thing and being open to what God wanted to do – suddenly I was walking off the track with the numbers of four of these nations coaches where they have actually – the whole ministry through that week, the whole ministry through that week was lined up through those connections that I’ve made just be hanging around the track. Because later on, the Kenya team – me and the coach from the Kenya team- the next day we trained together for a while on the track. They did their thing we actually had this connection and they asked me “please can I just come and pick them up after for a chapel”. They even, before they went back, the interesting fact is, just after a week of training and spending time, really just doing what I love, in a system and supporting what I love, we were sitting in the hotel just before they went to the airport, me and my wife went to the hotel just to meet with the guys with breakfast, and as we greet the guys, we actually got invitations through that, through the coaches, to go and work. Because then one of the coaches began to speak about that he has 20 universities in Uganda, for arguments sake, and he also had a heartbeat to use... now coaches – coaches might do more, so I explained Ubabalo to him for arguments sake, and he was saying that – they literally – I got a message from them the week after, from Uganda where they invited us now and 20 universities that have opened up... as I just spoke to the coach -- and just things like that you know. And that’s simplicity, for me it’s just great because it’s an opportunity to connect with the bigger sphere of sports ministry. But I think sometimes where we’re missing it is to single out the whole sport and the ministry side all the time. This thing mixes when we are actively doing what we do and you’re actually looking out for the opportunities. And then the guys understand what you are and who you are.

Example 3

The principal called me in and said “you were a gangster” come and talk to our children. I didn’t go there with my gang theology, I went there with my weights and I picked up weights and we started a gym and out of Strandfontein we got three world champions, from Strandfontein High School. I took that same concept and today the Principal at Grassy High School started a church because of that. While one church was saying “Pastor, we’re from this denomination – it’s not going to work for us in Strandfontein”. The man who was a school teacher in that school who is today a Principal, said “let us take a classroom and enable you”. Many children gave their hearts to the Lord. Many were placed into churches. There’s one church today

Windows of Heaven, they can testify. The biggest church in Strandfontein currently whose children, youth come from there, whose youth pastor comes from there who I led to the Lord because of that – because of that day - the Pastor who is the headmaster of Grassy Park. His youth ministry, only youth ministry, started there. And he's got a children's ministry in Strandfontein today. He extended a property today – just children's ministry. And it came because I came with my weights and I picked up my weights and three young men got Western Province and national colours today. I took that same principle – Paul says “fan the gift that was within you”. What was [my] gift? [My] gift was that [I] loved sports – powerlifter. City Mission blessed me and we planted a church. But the church was planted through sports ministry. The gym – five world champions to this hour as we speak, come from the North Pine community. And North Pine community which those young men are at that church. But they came in through a gym environment. No crosses on the wall. Five days a week. Sunday's “guys you've got to come”. And I visited every young man's parents – and they came on Sundays. And then we started also - through a book I was sponsored from a church group... and I started to use that booklet, to do Bible Study – a sports booklet. It worked. Till today – youth leaders, young men in ministry. A church – if you pass Old Paarl Road today – North Pine opposite 7Eveven – you'll see at least forty to fifty cars parked. But ministry started.

Example 4

I'll take an example of David Moles¹⁰⁹. David Moles was a little boy growing straight opposite my house in Mitchel's Plain. David Moles knew I had a past. David Moles will tell you – he was my role model. David Moles became also a gangster. But the day he had his experience with God he came to me and said “I would like you to help – would you be my father?” And I said – “yes – I want to be your father”. And the day when I left City Mission – today David is the youth director. David has gone through the Ubabalo. David has gone through the ILSL short courses. As God has been kind to me, I have given to him in training. But David came to me at such a point when David said I come to you as a father but I don't have a place to stay. My grandchildren call David “botha” because they hear David calls me daddy. And they think David is the eldest of even their father or mother... and he's only a son taken in from the street.

¹⁰⁹ Name changed

And that is what sports ministry has done. And today David does the same protocol – he reaches out to the youth of our community. He has become the father, the mentor and the big brother, to the youth of our community.

Example 5

As I've mentioned it's not just playing sport – it's also human development where we capacitate these kids with life skills. What I did in terms of seeing fruits of the end results is I had to see beyond what we're doing and I've picked up that some of the boys and girls – they pass their matric and don't afford to go to the university. Then I approached some of the guys that is from the United States / Ireland – and we formed "these numbers have faces" where they were fundraising for them so that when they passed their matric then we registered them for the university or colleges and so on. So now I've got three boys that – one has completed his financial management, one is a boiler now and one is a welder, and one of the girls has done communication and one has done marketing. So these come from the football team –. JL Zwane FC is a church based club but the members mostly those who are playing are from the community – it's plugged into the entire community so we raise these responsible citizens. And then I've got some boys, actually one, who ended up playing for a national first division team. At least we – even those who are not good academically and couldn't make it at professional level, but they are responsible which is very important. And lastly, those who – let me put it this way – in Guglethu it's mostly a Christian community and some of these boys who left their parents churches and so on, And I had to motivate them to go back. Now we've got pastors that came out of the JL Zwane football club and those boys are very committed in Christ. So that's how we see it.

Example 6

There was an all-boys school high school and we saw almost a discipleship entry point or method being used so to try to really disciple the guys and train them up and they use adventure – but it was a five day, almost like a boot camp – extreme adventure thing. And it started a huge culture amongst the guys and it led to real wide culture of people disciplining younger guys. And it's almost about, it's being going for almost five years, 200 hundred people going through it. But it's a whole culture of maybe 100 young men strong that's really not scared and really mature and making disciples even

in the young age. I mean there's a guy now 22 and he has a group he's discipling and that group is discipling another, one of them is discipling another group of first years, they are discipling another group of grade 11's and they are discipling another group of grade nines. So you have four generational discipling example from a 23 year old and they use adventure ministry to actually create this culture. It's not a weird thing, from the experience you build a bond of friendship and a way to connect. So that's one of the best examples. I think with youth you can't just talk so with being able to do this experiential learning leadership programme we've seen, we've seen also another university student, age 23, almost running a ministry from just doing activities and asking deep questions on character after that. And so it's just seeing how people enjoy it and really connect with it and learn through it and it creates examples that you don't need to teach, they discover themselves in the activities and things. And that was quite awesome to see also young guys being kingdom minded and actually writing their own material, delivering it, training people in it, creating own activities to actually make sure they can learn from the activity. Ja again, through that it's also been an avenue again into discipleship and mentoring which we've felt is long term a great effect. It's not programme once off – but it's started long-term mentoring culture and process in a space of two to three years.

Example 7

I'm thinking of the six guys that I'm currently discipling. So I'm disciple by [my mentor] and obviously there is thing about discipleship that we talk about we call it the pushing and pulling of discipleship. You need to have both. You need to have the pushing and the pulling. Now the pulling is this. You need to have someone who disciplines you who are pulling you closer to the image of God – closer to the Word of God – constantly asking questions, spending time with that person. But then there must be the pushing. And the pushing comes from your disciples, the person or the people that you are investing in. And they are pushing you the whole time with questions they are asking you. So by being pulled and pushed you just go in one direction. So basically what we are seeing is that I am currently involved with a high profile athlete that are currently still participating at an international level, and what happens there is that you see this and this is the reality. We talk about it – generational discipleship – but with a high profile athlete that are participating in a single sport, this person travels a lot. So there are no team mates around him. So the discipleship is taking place in the pulling part,

but not a lot taking place in the pushing part because he has not in the same town or the same city for longer than a week due to the sport that he's doing. So there's that story, there's a lot of you know imparting that is taking place in the individual, but we don't currently see the generational thing. And I am assuming that in a sports environment where it is a single sport, either swimming, or golfing or tennis or something like that. You might see that. But then when you come to the sports thing the other point is that I'm discipling a guy that is playing in a rugby team and basically surrounded by 15 guys for a whole season and by investing into him and meeting with him on a weekly basis he has started inviting some of his rugby playing friends to join us for these sessions. Now there's not a intentional discipleship from me to him and him to them, but there is already a third generation that has joined by him sharing his faith and saying guys "if you want to be part of this then join us". So I think we see both models. We see a model that is working – generation 1,2,3,4, and I think there is the model that it's not so easy specifically in the high profile sporting world that that individual player or person will actually find people because they tour so much – they flights they are in hotels, and anybody just wants signatures and things. So I think they are the two models. The one is the young rugby guy that I'm discipling that are investing into young boys lives, and there's the one of the high profile athlete that actually has nobody that follows him just because he's touring so much.

Example 8

If I let my mind go a bit I can come up with many examples, not just in what we've been doing but in our network. But I think closer to home we've seen a lot of kids coming to salvation and following God and being educated in God's Word, baptised and following the life of Christ. And sometimes it's like an up and down journey. We've had one boy particularly who's been with us from the beginning of the cycling project, and was a complete rebel and a pest really in the community. But he turned around and is a leaders and is following his dream of becoming a professional cyclist and being a musician in his church and so forth. But it's been an up and down journey of him having to discover what it means to God to turn from old ways. I think sometimes especially in the type of communities we work, one obviously has to look at the long journey towards success because often there's a lot of failure in that success story.

Example 9

First and foremost what I'm doing at the school. And secondly, through our church, you know, the church has given me their full backing to partner with local – in the Alexander township, which is the next suburb next to Buccleuch, after Calvin, is to just go alongside the soccer coaches and build relationship with them and add some input... to carry the kit bag and just try to reach out to the community there. But more than that, to enjoy the community again and obviously, with sports ministry, as a chaplain as well. Just recently I attended the chaplaincy level 1 and level 2 in Cape Town which I was invited to do by Sports Chaplaincy South Africa. And ya, we're trusting God that the community, even with the soccer club, being a chaplain there and reaching out to the kids and the parents.

Example 10

Let me say I've got three or four guys. One is one of the guys who was a church member in one of the churches, then he came and he moved. So there was a day I was in that church and I was doing my presentation with the youth pastor, youth games and everything – and the kids said, there was this kind of a guy who was coming to church and he's no longer coming, basically he was smoking dagga and all of those things. I think this guy had a vision of having sports in church, but he never had the tools and he never had the motivation to pass those boundaries. Then I met with the young guy – he was already giving himself to dagga and smoking [drugs] those drug addict. I started having motivation with him and we talk and we talk. And he said that he believe in God but he thought that the Lord has failed him – or he does not even know. And then I gave him the Scripture to say to him, go back and read Job. He went back and read the whole of Job. Then he get back to me and says to me 'if Job had to suffer so long, what's so important that he will get – the motivation that he had?' Then he get back and said he will firstly need help in terms of to take off the drug addict. Then I assist him in psychological with certain NGOs that I know well, then he went to rehab... then when he got back he went to church and currently now he is the one that runs the sports ministry in his church.

Example 11

That time I was playing for Ambassadors we used to pray and share some Scriptures with other teams. So after that we will hear some response, like “really, God is good”, or maybe some people want to go to church.

Example 12

I've got a few, a few guys in my community – well one now is playing five aside from the region. We call him Ginger. I'm his mentor actually. We sat together as his coach - I'm coaching him, or actually I'm the mentor. And now he's – I mean he's gone to a level now in terms of football because I always talk sense to him. Not only – because he's empty when he's playing sport, also, I said there's the life-skills part of the game. But if you take God out of that, He's meant to guide you, to lead you, to protect you, for me that is empty. It leaves a gap. There's a lot of brilliant players, a lot of money, but they always mess up. It means there's a gap, there's something that... I believe in every person there's a gap – they call it a vacuum inside you. And that gap you will never fulfil as a player. That place is God's place. So that guy also, I'm working with him two days a week, to talk about life. He's got a young kid – three years old – so we always talk about life.

Example 13

Yes also in my church. There are a few – three - boys there also playing for other team. But they are a member of team of mine – the youth. I try to ask them now – they are at a school in Bellville – DF Malan – there's no soccer team there... So a friend of mine is a teacher there so he want to establish now the soccer team. So I'm taking those boys now every Friday to play there friendly games, they come to Khayelitsha, we go to Bellville. I'm trying to coach these three boys now to start coaching clinics and stuff like that. So, to motivate them because they are very good players, they are very busy in the community, so I want them to focus to start something new for other race, other guys.

ANNEXURE G: Evaluation of Six Theological Paradigms

1. POLARISED PARADIGM

Theological Paradigm: Polarised Paradigm			
SCRIPTURAL MANIFESTO	Not supported	Partially supported	Highly supported
Genesis 1:26-28			
Sports ministry leaders engage in sport as a medium through which one's relationship with God is demonstrated and developed.	X		
Sports ministry leaders recognise that the gift and talent of sport comes with a responsibility to discern and exercise God's purpose in the world.	X		
Sports ministry leaders, in dependence upon God, must provide proactive stewardship within the created order of sport, seeking to redeem it to God's original intent.	X		
Isaiah 61:1-3			
Sports ministry leaders are called to become part of God's redemptive mission through Spirit-anointed proclamation of the good news of God's redemptive plans.	X		
Sports ministry leaders have a mandate to proclaim the Gospel which includes a priority to seek justice for the poor, marginalised and those in both physical and spiritual captivity.	X		
Sports ministry leaders should be fruitful, seeking to move God's people towards righteousness which in turn results in the glorification of God.	X		
Matthew 28:18-20			
Sports ministry leaders must focus on Jesus Christ. The Great Commission is central to developing a Christocentric theology.	X		
Sports ministry leadership should develop cross-cultural mission. The church is called to reach all Nations with the Gospel.	X		
Sports ministry leaders will develop disciples.	X		

Romans 12:1-2			
Sports ministry leaders respond to God's mercy through offering their bodies in worship.	X		
Sports ministry leaders must resist conformity to the world and allow God to continue a process of transformation which restores the <i>imago Dei</i> in them.		X	
Sports ministry leaders should be seeking to discern God's will for their lives and ministry.	X		
1 Corinthians 9:19-27			
Sports ministry leadership is counter-cultural.	X		
Sports ministry leadership is eminently incarnational.	X		
Sports ministry leadership crosses socio-economic boundaries.	X		
Sports ministry leadership requires perseverance and endurance.	X		
Sports ministry leadership is goal-oriented.	X		

2. PRAGMATIC PARADIGM

Theological Paradigm: Pragmatic Paradigm		Pragmatic Paradigm		
		Not supported	Partially supported	Highly supported
SCRIPTURAL MANIFESTO				
Genesis 1:26-28				
Sports ministry leaders engage in sport as a medium through which one's relationship with God is demonstrated and developed.		X		
Sports ministry leaders recognise that the gift and talent of sport comes with a responsibility to discern and exercise God's purpose in the world.			X	
Sports ministry leaders, in dependence upon God, must provide proactive stewardship within the created order of sport, seeking to redeem it to God's original intent.		X		
Isaiah 61:1-3				
Sports ministry leaders are called to become part of God's redemptive mission through Spirit-anointed proclamation of the good news of God's redemptive plans.			X	
Sports ministry leaders have a mandate to proclaim the Gospel which includes a priority to seek justice for the poor, marginalised and those in both physical and spiritual captivity.			X	
Sports ministry leaders should be fruitful, seeking to move God's people towards righteousness which in turn results in the glorification of God.			X	
Matthew 28:18-20				
Sports ministry leaders must focus on Jesus Christ. The Great Commission is central to developing a Christocentric theology.			X	
Sports ministry leadership should develop cross-cultural mission. The church is called to reach all Nations with the Gospel.		X		
Sports ministry leaders will develop disciples.		X		

Romans 12:1-2			
Sports ministry leaders respond to God's mercy through offering their bodies in worship.	X		
Sports ministry leaders must resist conformity to the world and allow God to continue a process of transformation which restores the <i>imago Dei</i> in them.	X		
Sports ministry leaders should be seeking to discern God's will for their lives and ministry.		X	
1 Corinthians 9:19-27			
Sports ministry leadership is counter-cultural.		X	
Sports ministry leadership is eminently incarnational.		X	
Sports ministry leadership crosses socio-economic boundaries.			X
Sports ministry leadership requires perseverance and endurance.	X		
Sports ministry leadership is goal-oriented.			X

3. PROCLAMATION PARADIGM

Theological Paradigm: Proclamation Paradigm		Not supported	Partially supported	Highly supported
SCRIPTURAL MANIFESTO				
Genesis 1:26-28				
Sports ministry leaders engage in sport as a medium through which one's relationship with God is demonstrated and developed.		X		
Sports ministry leaders recognise that the gift and talent of sport comes with a responsibility to discern and exercise God's purpose in the world.			X	
Sports ministry leaders, in dependence upon God, must provide proactive stewardship within the created order of sport, seeking to redeem it to God's original intent.		X		
Isaiah 61:1-3				
Sports ministry leaders are called to become part of God's redemptive mission through Spirit-anointed proclamation of the good news of God's redemptive plans.				X
Sports ministry leaders have a mandate to proclaim the Gospel which includes a priority to seek justice for the poor, marginalised and those in both physical and spiritual captivity.				X
Sports ministry leaders should be fruitful, seeking to move God's people towards righteousness which in turn results in the glorification of God.			X	
Matthew 28:18-20				
Sports ministry leaders must focus on Jesus Christ. The Great Commission is central to developing a Christocentric theology.				X
Sports ministry leadership should develop cross-cultural mission. The church is called to reach all Nations with the Gospel.			X	
Sports ministry leaders will develop disciples.			X	

Romans 12:1-2			
Sports ministry leaders respond to God's mercy through offering their bodies in worship.	X		
Sports ministry leaders must resist conformity to the world and allow God to continue a process of transformation which restores the <i>imago Dei</i> in them.	X		
Sports ministry leaders should be seeking to discern God's will for their lives and ministry.		X	
1 Corinthians 9:19-27			
Sports ministry leadership is counter-cultural.		X	
Sports ministry leadership is eminently incarnational.		X	
Sports ministry leadership crosses socio-economic boundaries.		X	
Sports ministry leadership requires perseverance and endurance.		X	
Sports ministry leadership is goal-oriented.			X

4. PEDAGOGICAL PARADIGM

Theological Paradigm:		Pedagogical Paradigm		
		Not supported	Partially supported	Highly supported
SCRIPTURAL MANIFESTO				
Genesis 1:26-28				
Sports ministry leaders engage in sport as a medium through which one's relationship with God is demonstrated and developed.		X		
Sports ministry leaders recognise that the gift and talent of sport comes with a responsibility to discern and exercise God's purpose in the world.			X	
Sports ministry leaders, in dependence upon God, must provide proactive stewardship within the created order of sport, seeking to redeem it to God's original intent.		X		
Isaiah 61:1-3				
Sports ministry leaders are called to become part of God's redemptive mission through Spirit-anointed proclamation of the good news of God's redemptive plans.			X	
Sports ministry leaders have a mandate to proclaim the Gospel which includes a priority to seek justice for the poor, marginalised and those in both physical and spiritual captivity.			X	
Sports ministry leaders should be fruitful, seeking to move God's people towards righteousness which in turn results in the glorification of God.				X
Matthew 28:18-20				
Sports ministry leaders must focus on Jesus Christ. The Great Commission is central to developing a Christocentric theology.			X	
Sports ministry leadership should develop cross-cultural mission. The church is called to reach all Nations with the Gospel.			X	
Sports ministry leaders will develop disciples.				X

Romans 12:1-2			
Sports ministry leaders respond to God's mercy through offering their bodies in worship.	X		
Sports ministry leaders must resist conformity to the world and allow God to continue a process of transformation which restores the <i>imago Dei</i> in them.		X	
Sports ministry leaders should be seeking to discern God's will for their lives and ministry.		X	
1 Corinthians 9:19-27			
Sports ministry leadership is counter-cultural.		X	
Sports ministry leadership is eminently incarnational.		X	
Sports ministry leadership crosses socio-economic boundaries.		X	
Sports ministry leadership requires perseverance and endurance.		X	
Sports ministry leadership is goal-oriented.			X

5. PARTICIPATION PARADIGM

Theological Paradigm:		Participation Paradigm		
		Not supported	Partially supported	Highly supported
SCRIPTURAL MANIFESTO				
Genesis 1:26-28				
Sports ministry leaders engage in sport as a medium through which one's relationship with God is demonstrated and developed.				X
Sports ministry leaders recognise that the gift and talent of sport comes with a responsibility to discern and exercise God's purpose in the world.				X
Sports ministry leaders, in dependence upon God, must provide proactive stewardship within the created order of sport, seeking to redeem it to God's original intent.				X
Isaiah 61:1-3				
Sports ministry leaders are called to become part of God's redemptive mission through Spirit-anointed proclamation of the good news of God's redemptive plans.			X	
Sports ministry leaders have a mandate to proclaim the Gospel which includes a priority to seek justice for the poor, marginalised and those in both physical and spiritual captivity.			X	
Sports ministry leaders should be fruitful, seeking to move God's people towards righteousness which in turn results in the glorification of God.				X
Matthew 28:18-20				
Sports ministry leaders must focus on Jesus Christ. The Great Commission is central to developing a Christocentric theology.				X
Sports ministry leadership should develop cross-cultural mission. The church is called to reach all Nations with the Gospel.		X		
Sports ministry leaders will develop disciples.			X	

Romans 12:1-2			
Sports ministry leaders respond to God's mercy through offering their bodies in worship.			X
Sports ministry leaders must resist conformity to the world and allow God to continue a process of transformation which restores the <i>imago Dei</i> in them.			X
Sports ministry leaders should be seeking to discern God's will for their lives and ministry.			X
1 Corinthians 9:19-27			
Sports ministry leadership is counter-cultural.			X
Sports ministry leadership is eminently incarnational.			X
Sports ministry leadership crosses socio-economic boundaries.		X	
Sports ministry leadership requires perseverance and endurance.			X
Sports ministry leadership is goal-oriented.			X

6. PURPOSEFUL PARADIGM

Theological Paradigm: Purposeful Paradigm		Purposeful Paradigm		
		Not supported	Partially supported	Highly supported
SCRIPTURAL MANIFESTO				
Genesis 1:26-28				
Sports ministry leaders engage in sport as a medium through which one's relationship with God is demonstrated and developed.				X
Sports ministry leaders recognise that the gift and talent of sport comes with a responsibility to discern and exercise God's purpose in the world.				X
Sports ministry leaders, in dependence upon God, must provide proactive stewardship within the created order of sport, seeking to redeem it to God's original intent.				X
Isaiah 61:1-3				
Sports ministry leaders are called to become part of God's redemptive mission through Spirit-anointed proclamation of the good news of God's redemptive plans.				X
Sports ministry leaders have a mandate to proclaim the Gospel which includes a priority to seek justice for the poor, marginalised and those in both physical and spiritual captivity.			X	
Sports ministry leaders should be fruitful, seeking to move God's people towards righteousness which in turn results in the glorification of God.				X
Matthew 28:18-20				
Sports ministry leaders must focus on Jesus Christ. The Great Commission is central to developing a Christocentric theology.				X
Sports ministry leadership should develop cross-cultural mission. The church is called to reach all Nations with the Gospel.			X	
Sports ministry leaders will develop disciples.				X

Romans 12:1-2			
Sports ministry leaders respond to God's mercy through offering their bodies in worship.			X
Sports ministry leaders must resist conformity to the world and allow God to continue a process of transformation which restores the <i>imago Dei</i> in them.			X
Sports ministry leaders should be seeking to discern God's will for their lives and ministry.			X
1 Corinthians 9:19-27			
Sports ministry leadership is counter-cultural.			X
Sports ministry leadership is eminently incarnational.			X
Sports ministry leadership crosses socio-economic boundaries.		X	
Sports ministry leadership requires perseverance and endurance.			X
Sports ministry leadership is goal-oriented.			X

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