

**PLANTING AND GROWING CHURCHES IN INFORMAL  
SETTLEMENT COMMUNITIES WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO  
ORANGE FARM**

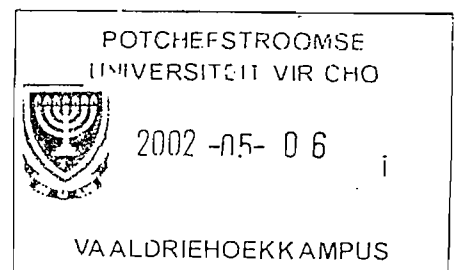
**MATHOLOSE PAULUS NTSHUMAYELO**

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**Supervisor: Prof. T.C Rabali**

**Co-supervisor: Prof. F. Denkema**

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**Soli Deo Gloria!**

## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

<b>SUMMARY</b>	1
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### **CHAPTER 1**

<b>ORIENTATION</b>	2
--------------------	---

1.1	Introduction and statement of the problem	2
1.2	The subject and its relevance	3
1.3	The purpose of the study	5
1.4	Delimitation of the subject	6
1.5	Methodology and some basic presuppositions	6
1.6	Chapter Division	7

### **CHAPTER 2**

#### **BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE ON MISSIONARY CALLING**

2.1	Introduction	7
2.2	Some general remarks about 'missionary calling'	10
2.3	Some general insights about 'missionary calling' derived from certain Old Testament passages'	12
2.3.1	Missionary calling in the story of creation	12
2.3.1.1	The Sabbath	13
2.3.1.2	Marriage	13
2.3.1.3	Labour	14
2.3.2	The missionary calling in the story of Adam and Eve	14
2.3.3	The missionary calling in the story of Noah	15
2.3.4	The missionary calling in the story of Abraham	18
2.3.5	The missionary calling of Israel	20

2.3.6	The missionary calling of Jonah	24
2.4	Some insights about the 'missionary calling' with reference to certain New Testament figures and passages	26
2.4.1	The missionary calling of Jesus	26
2.4.2	The missionary calling of the first disciples	27
2.4.3	The Great commission	30
2.4.4	The missionary calling of Paul	34
2.4.5	The missionary calling of the church	37
2.5	Conclusion	39

### **CHAPTER3**

#### **A HOLISTIC UNDERSTANDING OF MISSION**

3.1	Introduction	41
3.2	Evangelical view of mission	42
3.2.1	Conflicting viewpoints for Evangelicals	44
3.2.1.1	That social action is a distraction from Evangelism	44
3.2.1.2	That social action is a betrayal of Evangelism	45
3.2.1.3	That social action is Evangelism	45
3.2.1.4	That social action is a means to Evangelism	46
3.2.1.5	That social action is a manifestation of Evangelism	46
3.2.1.6	That social action is a result or consequence of Evangelism	46
3.2.1.7	That social action is a partner of Evangelism	46
3.2.1.8	That social action and Evangelism are equally important but genuinely distinct aspects of the total mission of the church	47
3.2.1.9	That social action is part of the good news – Evangelism	47
3.2.2	Historical perspective on the views of Evangelicals	47

3.2.2.1	The New Testament church (-95)	48
3.2.2.2	The Old Catholic Church (150-325 A.D)	48
3.2.2.3	The Post – Constantine Era (313-590 A.D)	49
3.2.2.4	The Early Medieval Church (59-1300)	49
3.2.2.5	Late Medieval Church (1300-1500)	50
3.2.2.6	The Protestant Reformation (1517-1600)	50
3.2.2.7	The Revival movement in Europe and North America	52
3.2.2.8	Liberal and Orthodox polarization of the church (20 <sup>th</sup> Century)	53
3.2.2.9	The Uniting Reformed Church In Southern Africa	53
3.3	Ecumenicals view of mission	54
3.3.1	Historical perspective about the views of Ecumenicals	57
3.3.1.1	The student Christian movement	57
3.3.1.2	Helder Camara (1909)	57
3.3.1.3	Liberation Theology	58
3.3.1.4	The Dutch Reformed Church	58
3.3.1.5	The World Council of Churches	59
3.4	Towards a holistic mission	60
3.4.1	Evangelism by witness	61
3.4.2	Evangelism by fellowship	62
3.4.3	Evangelism by service	64
3.4.4	Evangelism by worship.	67
3.5	Conclusion	69

## **CHAPTER4**

### **EMPIRICAL RESEARCH: SOCIO-CULTURAL SITUATION OF ORANGE FARM**

4.1	Historical background of Orange Farm	70
4.2	Empirical research conducted in Orange farm	72
4.2.1	Introduction	72
4.2.2	Response to the questionnaire for community	73
4.2.2.1	Biographical information	73
4.2.2.2	Community	75
4.2.2.3	Crime	81
4.2.2.4	Homelessness	85
4.2.2.5	Illegal immigrants	89
4.2.2.6	Literacy	90
4.2.2.7	Divorce	91
4.2.2.8	Aids Epidemic	92
4.2.2.9	Religious Information	94
4.2.2.10	Planting and growing churches	95
4.2.3	Response from church leaders	98
4.3	Conclusion	102

## **CHAPTER5**

### **DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION**

5.1	Introduction	104
5.2	The Biblical mandate for the mission of the church	105
5.3	Word and deed in practice	107

5.4	Planting churches in the informal settlement community	108
5.4.1	Incarnational ministry	109
5.4.2	Building Trust	109
5.4.3	Holistic ministries	109
5.4.4	Evangelistic Methods	110
5.4.4.1	Household Evangelism Method	111
5.4.4.2	Personal Evangelism Method	112
5.4.4.3	Literary Evangelism Method	113
5.4.4.4	Public Evangelism Method	113
5.4.4.5	Teaching Evangelism Method	113
5.4.4.6	Mass Evangelism	114
5.4.4.7	Mass Media Method	114
5.4.4.8	Follow-up	115
5.5	Conclusion	115

## **CHAPTER 6**

### **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

6.1	Concluding Remarks	116
6.2	Recommendations	116

## **CHAPTER 7**

<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>	119
---------------------	-----

Appendix I	126
------------	-----

Appendix ii	136
-------------	-----

## SUMMARY

The study of planting and growing of churches in the informal settlement communities is an important research topic. It has not been covered by most researchers in their research work. Although it is a very important research topic, it is also a very difficult topic to handle because there are no adequate written records on the activities of the informal settlement communities in South Africa.

In South Africa today there are millions of people who are staying in the informal settlement communities. These areas are mushrooming daily. Many people who are staying in these areas have not yet heard the gospel. Most churches neglect the planting and growing of churches in the inner cities and do very little to communicate the gospel to the informal settlement communities. This dissertation is an attempt to address the need to plant and grow churches in the informal settlement communities. Orange Farm informal settlement community is used as a special reference.

The church is given the command to evangelize the whole world (Mathew 28:18-20). Christians have been called to do mission work, but there are many misconceptions about the missionary calling. God calls all the converted people to a ministry within the church. Christ's servants must proclaim the gospel of the kingdom and bear witness in word and deed. We must therefore show that we do not only preach the gospel but our message is accompanied by skills we are offering to the poor.

Jesus Had a particular interest in the poor and other marginalized groups. In His ministry He used both word and deed to minister them. He addressed both the spiritual and physical needs of the people. The church in the informal settlement community, is also surrounded by growing numbers of those who are in need. It is the task of the church to reach out to all people with the gospel. The role of the church in the informal settlement communities is to interpret the reality of the gospel through the experience of the poor in the struggle for justice and wholeness.



## CHAPTER 1

### 1.1 Introduction and statement of the problem

The majority of fast-growing communities in South Africa today are the informal settlements. The term informal settlement refers to areas occupied by the very poor on the outskirts of cities. Their housing (more accurately called “shelter” or “shack”) is often constructed by the owners themselves from discarded material.

The statistics show that in 1994 there were 7, 7 million people who lived in the shacks (Race Relation Survey 1993/1994:322). By the end of 2005 the number is expected to have gone up tremendously. Many of the people who are living in these areas have not heard the gospel. There is therefore a need to plant churches in the informal settlements.

Church planting is primarily concerned with the ministry of the church, which is directed towards the world. It is pre-eminently an apostolic task and it is central to the mission of the church. Many aspects of this important task of church planting are first hand experience of the earliest church planters who responded to the great commission. The dynamics of church planting comes from the presence and power of the Holy Spirit among believers (Bosch 1996:105).

Church growth deals with the nature, function, structure, health and multiplication of Christian churches and how they relate to the effective implementation of Christ’s commission “*to go to all people everywhere and to make disciples*” (Matthew 28:19,20). Church growth seeks to combine the revealed truths of the Bible with related insights from the contemporary social and behavioral sciences (Pointer 1984:21)

In South Africa today most churches neglect the planting and growing of congregations in the inner cities, and do very little to communicate the gospel to the informal settlement communities. As a result of evangelizing, we have many groups

of people who migrated to these areas that have not been reached by the gospel. The need to evangelize these areas has therefore become urgent. God is concerned about these people and wants them to hear the gospel.

## 1.2 The subject and its relevance

The church has several functions, which include worship, teaching, fellowship, service and witness, but the prime function of the church at least in its mundane existence, is witness. The church is by its nature a witnessing community. Witness is an activity that is restricted to its life here on earth. Its witness is to extend to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8) and continue to the end of time (Mathew 28:20).

The church was constituted as a witnessing community by the nature conferred on it at Pentecost, after that it was natural and inevitable that it should witness (Kane 1986:42). In Acts 2:4 we read “*And they were filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak in other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterances.*” The early disciples were living witnesses to the central fact of the gospel: the resurrection. Indeed one of the requirements for the apostle was that he be a witness of the resurrection (Acts 1:22, 1Corinthians. 9:1) and wherever the apostles went, they preached Jesus and the resurrection (Acts 4:2).

Centuries ago Thomas Aquinas tried to define the aim of missionary work. In his “*Summa Theologica*” he writes that the aim of mission should be the *planting of the church* as an institute of salvation. According to him, mission has a threefold aim: First of all, conversion of heathen (*conversio paganus*), then *planting of churches* (*Plantatio ecclesiae*); and glorification and manifestation of the grace of God (*gloriae et manifestatio gratiae divinae*) (Dowley 1985:288)

Before Jesus ascended to heaven, He gave his disciples the Great commission. This commission entails Evangelical and Pastoral aspects:

*"Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, evangelize them in the name of The Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always to the very end of the age". (Matthew 28:18-20)*

The Great commission is the major Biblical foundation for the church's mission. But, very important is that Matthew 28:18-20 has to be interpreted in the context of Matthews's gospel as a whole and unless we keep this in mind we shall fail to understand it (Bosch 1996:73). In 1792 William Carey published his famous book "An enquiry into the obligation to Christians to use means for the conversion of the heathens". Since that time many evangelicals have accepted the Great commission as the major Biblical foundation for the church's mission.

The church is given the command to evangelize the world: *"Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation"* (Mark 16:15). These words were not given to apostles in their personal capacities but as representatives of the church. Churches are born through the grace of the Lord for a specific purpose (Cronje 1982:6), i.e. to be witnesses for him in this world, *"But when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, you will be filled with power, and you will be witnesses for me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria and to the ends of the earth"*. (Acts 1:8). The church is that body of people through which it is the will of God that the Gospel of everlasting salvation by Christ should be proclaimed to all man everywhere, to the ends of the earth and to the end of time (Kritzinger 1984:4).

Much has been done since the inception of the Great Commission, but the work is still far from being completed. There are many groups of people who have not yet heard the gospel. In South Africa today there are new communities, such as the informal settlements, which are mushrooming daily despite the governments' initiative with the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) project houses; and the church has done little to fulfil its role of communicating the gospel in such areas. These new groups of people also need missionary attention. What seems to be a problem today for the church is that most churches are Egocentric i.e.: they are self-centred and primarily concerned about their own security without

at the same time becoming also exo-centric. I.e. looking at the outside to reach out and evangelise the world. Unless the Church understands clearly the **significance and importance of the Great commission** it is likely to commit this mistake. This dissertation is an attempt to respond to this need.

God's command to all believers and the church at large requires from us to love the homeless and the poor such as the informal settlement community. Their situation inspired and motivated me to undertake the study culminating in this dissertation. The church should realise the significance of the Great commission and should move towards the world and across the frontiers, be it cultural, geographical, ethnic or social and proclaim the gospel.

Jesus had a particular interest in the poor people and other marginalized groups. The first words Jesus spoke in public according to Luke 4:18-19 contains a pragmatic statement concerning his mission to reverse the destiny of the poor. The prisoners, the blind and the oppressed are all subsumed under the poor, they are all manifestation of poverty, and are all in need of the good news (Bosch: 1996:100).

### **1.3 The purpose of the study**

The purpose of this dissertation is to make a contribution towards the church's interpretation of the great commission for a new generation struggling with issues of poverty within the context of informal settlement communities. This purpose entails a survey of other interpretations of the great commission as well as the evaluation of methods of planting and growing churches associated with these interpretations. A proposal regarding a method for evangelizing and planting churches in the informal settlement communities, arising and based upon the contribution relating to the interpretation of the great commission, will therefore also be made.

This study can therefore help the church's ministries towards those in informal settlements and similar circumstances. It is part of the Christian community's ongoing endeavor to care for the poor and to be relevant to their needs in ministering to them; because part of the unique situation of the informal settlement communities include poverty, unemployment, homelessness, and crime. Jesus came as the supreme expression of God's love for a fallen world. He taught us to love our neighbours as we love ourselves (Matthew 22:39). Jesus had passion for the poor, the blind, the cripple, the leprous, the hungry and those who weep. It is the example and commission of Jesus that inspired his church to continue seeking to be present and visible even among the poor.

#### **1.4 Delimitation of the subject**

The aim of this dissertation is to seek the meaning and interpretation of the Great commission for the church today. The people of Orange Farm informal settlement community function as a special reference.

Emphasis will be given to the following aspects:

- a) The interpretation of Biblical mandate for mission
- b) The obstacles, barriers and problems, which the church is facing in Evangelising the informal settlement community.
- c) The methods, which can be used to evangelize effectively in informal settlements.

#### **1.5 Methodology and some basic presupposition**

In order to develop and achieve the purpose of this dissertation a literature survey was done. The standard works in this field such as D.J Bosch (1996), J.H Kane (1986), and J.J Kritzinger (1984) were consulted. A socio-cultural study of the informal settlement community in Orange Farm was done. This study focuses on the community's circumstances, traditions, worldview, behavior and beliefs. Fieldwork among the informal settlement people has been done. Empirical data has

been obtained by means of a questionnaire. An attempt is being made to involve missionaries in the area.

For the past eight years the researcher has had the privilege of serving the Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa (formerly the Dutch Reformed Church in Africa) Orange Farm. The fact that the researcher lives and works within the Orange Farm informal settlement is not considered to be a handicap for this investigation. This is viewed as an advantage as the researcher has already established networks within the community and is likely not to be suspected when seeking further information about aspects associated with the community.

It is assumed throughout the work that although the Orange Farm informal settlement community is unique in certain aspects, it does also have much in common with other informal settlement communities in South Africa. This assumption makes it possible for other studies of informal settlements in South Africa to be helpful in understanding Orange Farm. The present study's results may also be useful when other informal settlements are researched.

Another assumption, which guides this investigation, is the authority and inspiration of the Bible. It is for this reason that an effort will be made to submit whatever observations and evaluations of the research to validate an interpretation informed by acceptance of the Bible's authority.

## **1.6 Chapter Division**

Chapter 1: Introduction

Chapter 2: Biblical perspective on missionary calling

Chapter 3: A holistic understanding of mission

Chapter 4: Empirical research: Socio-cultural situation of Orange Farm community

Chapter 5: Data analysis and interpretation

Chapter 6: Conclusion and interpretation

## CHAPTER 2

### BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE ON MISSIONARY CALLING

#### 1.4 Introduction

The Missionary calling of the church is one of the most misunderstood and misinterpreted themes in Christian theology because the word “mission” means different things to different people. The different meanings and interpretations attached to the word are not all acceptable as they are contradictory and some of them seem to clash with certain biblical teachings. We must be sure that we understand what “mission” means according to the word of God.

One of the unacceptable misunderstandings and misinterpretations regarding missionary calling is that it is the task given to individuals or a certain group of people in the church. For years some of the members of our churches have considered mission as the task given to others to reach the unreached, planting churches and making the word of God available in all languages of the world. Although this is part of our missionary calling, we should always remember that all Christians are called to do mission. Bosch (1981:47) defines Christian mission as “the total task, which God has set the church for the salvation of the world”. Mission is not the prerogative of a small band of specialists; it is the mandate of the whole Church, the Body of Christ (Scott 1980:108).

Another misconception is that mission began in the New Testament or with Jesus. Mission did not begin with Jesus. That is why the study of mission theology should begin with the Old Testament. Jesus Christ is to be understood against the background of the Old Testament (Bosch 1996:16). It is He who gives the Old Testament its perspective. In order for us to understand the New Testament, we must begin with the Old Testament. Jesus Himself recognized the authority of the Old Testament. The Old Testament should be taken seriously because it gives much of the background for the New Testament, including its concept of mission (Hedlund 1991:19)

The Old Testament is important for understanding Christian mission. The Christian mission, which begins in the New Testament, has its roots in the Old Testament, where long before the incarnation of Jesus, God was at work. God has been involved with man right from the very beginning of history (Hedlund 1991:20)

The Old Testament is to be taken seriously because it gives much of the background history concerning the calling of the children of God. (Bosch 1996:17). God was at work. God is involved with man from the very beginning of history.

Another misconception is that only men are called to be missionaries. In the scripture we can clearly see that women played a prominent role in preaching the gospel. To begin with, all four Evangelists agree that our Lord first appeared to Mary Magdalene after his resurrection. Although the Evangelists vary in their identification of the other women who were honoured as first witnesses of the empty tomb, all agree that women informed the apostles of the Lord's resurrection and instructed them to meet him later in Galilee where they would be given the Great Commission (Mathew 28:10, Mark 16:10, Luke 24:9-10 and John 20:18).

Women were present at Pentecost. Along with men Saul dragged them off to prison. Those who managed to escape Saul's clutches were among those who *"went about preaching the word"* (Acts 8:4). The home of Mary, served as headquarters for the band of witnesses during King Herod's persecution. In Philippi, two women, Eudia and Syntche, *"Laboured side by side"* with Paul in preaching the gospel (Philippians 4:3). Priscilla and her husband Aquilla helped Apollos. Paul acknowledges that at one point in his career Priscilla risked her life for him (Romans 16:4). Paul mentions several women who contributed to his ministry. We have no reason to doubt that many women actively shared the evangelistic labours of the other apostles (Scott 1980:114).



Another misconception is that it has become evident that there is a tragic separation between missionary work and other Christian work. This resulted in the fact that certain groups of people became the objects of mission and certain kinds of actions became "missionary" actions and that some people even decided that they are not "missionary minded". Missionary work thus became the task of those with a "special calling".

Another important misconception that has become a problem in most churches today is that "mission involves money". Modern missionaries operate under financial restraints comparable to those faced by the apostles in the book of Acts. Most traditional churches even go to an extent of sending a missionary to a strange and far away country, sustaining him financially, praying for him frequently and then proclaiming that they have become faithful to their missionary responsibility. This is however only a small part of what the concept of mission boils down to. To send someone to a far away and unreached country, to sustain him financially and to pray for him is a very important missionary action, but it does not mean that we have become faithful to our missionary responsibility by doing so.

This chapter will articulate a biblical perspective on the missionary calling of the church. This will be done by exploring or discussing certain biblical personalities and passages. Some conclusions will then be made from the observations we will have made in surveying these passages.

### **1.5 Some general remarks about 'missionary calling'**

In order to understand the meaning and interpretation of the Bible regarding the 'missionary calling' one should first begin with the study of the Old Testament. The New Testament cannot be divorced from the Old Testament. The Old Testament is fundamental to the understanding of mission in the New Testament (Bosch 1996: 17)

The word "missionary calling" has been discussed and used often and accordingly it has become overloaded with meaning. The term '*missionary calling*' necessarily

has a wide connotation. It includes the total obligation of the church to the world. In Christian terms the term '*missionary calling*' means a person who has been called and sent to spread the gospel to other communities (Neely 1995:108).

The sense of divine call to be a missionary, though experienced in different ways and described in different terms, is so frequent that most sending agencies in the past, and some today, have either refused or have been reluctant to encourage anyone considering becoming a missionary, who could not profess to having a sense of divine calling (Neely 1995:108).

The word mission is derived from the Latin word "*mitto*" which means to "send". In the New Testament the Greek word is "*Apostello*" which also means to "send". Since the 1950's there has been a remarkable escalation in the use of the word "mission" among Christians. In more general terms the word mission describes a person's vocation as his mission in life. This means that every person has a task and this task is called his mission. In Christian terms the word mission means to be sent into the world with a specific task and every person confessing to be saved by the grace of God is a missionary with divine calling (Kane 1986:139).

The entire terminology thus presumes that the one who sends has the authority to do so. The real sender is God and has an indisputable authority to decree that people be sent to execute his will (Bosch 1996:1).

The term '*calling*' means to have a strong urge or feeling of duty to do a particular job. Calling is communal, because God gave every person specific abilities and talents, which he can only develop in relation to his own personality. Therefore, for the sake of this study it is important to investigate how it has been done in the Bible. God is seen as the communicating God, He calls and sends man to do a specific task for Him.

## **1.6 SOME INSIGHTS ABOUT 'MISSIONARY CALLING' DERIVED FROM CERTAIN OLD TESTAMENT PASSAGES**

### **2.3.1 Missionary calling in the story of creation**

The Old Testament begins with the narrative about the creation of all things. This narrative focuses on the creation of man. God made man different from the other creatures, a special being with whom he could communicate. The fact that God created man in "*His image and in His likeness*"(Genesis 1:26,27) proves that He created him to have fellowship with Him and also to have the ability of communicating with his fellow human being. (De Oliveira 1992:11).

By the very act of creating man in His own likeness and image, God established a unique relationship between Himself and creation. In addition to this sovereign creation-act, God spoke to man, thus determining precisely the role of man in creation (Robertson 1982:67).

The Christian doctrine teaches us that God created the universe and all who dwell in it, and is the basis for an understanding of the mission of the church in the world. Man was created to have fellowship with God from the beginning. After the Creation God maintained His communication with the man as He intended it to be. Now because of sin the relationship between man and God was broken, because Adam and Eve ate the fruits of the tree that is in the middle of the garden (Genesis 3:6). They realised their disobedience and fled from God's presence. But God doesn't leave man alone He keeps on communicating with him (De Oliviera 1992:11).

Man, as part of creation, is responsible to obey the ordinances embedded in creation's structure. Three ordinances, inherent in God's creational orderings, deserve particular attention. They are the Sabbath, marriage, and labour.

### **2.3.1.1 The Sabbath**

God's blessing of the Sabbath day had a significant effect on the whole world. Furthermore, the reference to God's blessing the day should not be interpreted as meaning that God blessed the day with respect to Himself. It was with respect to his creation, and with respect to man in particular that God blessed the Sabbath day. As Jesus indicated in Mark 2:27 that: "*the Sabbath came into being for the sake of man*", because it was for the good of man and the whole of creation, that God instituted the Sabbath (Robertson 1982:69).

God blessed man through the Sabbath by delivering him from slavery to work. By the grace of God, provision for seven days of livelihood would come from only six days of labour. Just as God chose to rest from His labour on the seventh day, so man must choose to cease from his. On this day, the Lord rested from all His creational labours, and "*refreshed himself*" in them (Exodus 31:17). In the same way, God's people are to "*refresh themselves*" in association with this day (Exodus 23:12) (Robertson 1982:69).

The sanctifying of the Sabbath indicates that the Lord of creation has established the pattern by which He is to be honoured as Creator. By sanctifying the Sabbath, God has indicated that He expects man to constantly bring themselves, as well as the fruits of their labour to be consecrated before Him. Once every seven years, the land of Israel was to celebrate a Sabbath to the Lord (Leviticus 25:1-7). The purpose of this rest was to protect the land from abuse as well as to provide refreshment for man. At the same time the Sabbath year indicated something about man in relation to the world. Man was not to be captive to the creation. The Sabbath relates not only to creation but also to redemption. Because God gave rest by redemption, Israel must observe the Sabbath (Robertson 1982:73).

### **2.3.1.2 Marriage**

A second creational ordinance of God that has affected the total life of man is marriage. In the ordering of creation God himself indicated: "*It is not good that man*

*should be alone*" (Genesis 2:18). So God created a helper who corresponded appropriately to the man.

The woman was created by God to be a helper to the man in the marriage relationship. This internal order of the marriage relationship finds explicit confirmation in the New Testament. Paul in 1 Corinthians 11:9 states that "*the man was not created for the woman. Instead, the woman was created for the man*". The woman is the helper to the man specifically for the purpose of bringing all creation to its consummation-goal (Robertson 1982:77).

### **2.3.1.3 Labour**

The explicit command given to man concerning his responsibility towards the creation enforces the implication concerning labour in the Sabbath ordinance. Man in God's own image had a unique responsibility to "subdue" the earth and rule over every living creature (Genesis 1:27,28). This subduing involves the bringing out of all the potential within the creation, which might offer glory to the Creator.

Even more specifically, the charge given to man to cultivate and to keep the garden underscores the role of the creational ordinance of labour (Genesis 2:15). Man is to enjoy his life in the context of God's creation. But labour is to be seen as a principal means by which man's enjoyment of the creation is assured (Robertson 1982:80).

### **2.3.2 The missionary calling in the story of Adam and Eve**

In the Old Testament, God forms a covenant with the first human family. They are invited into a right and joyful relationship with their Creator and are to work with God in making the earth a better place. The parents of all humanity turned away from their creator. They misused the precious gift of human choice and freedom. In defiance against God, they ate from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Because of their disobedience, fellowship with God was broken and God's perfect

création was marred by imperfection. Yet, even in the crisis of Adam and Eve's sin, the fact that God is a missionary God is evident (De Oliveira 1992:14).

Although their fellowship was broken God sought out His created beings in order to demonstrate His desire for reconciliation and redemption: "*But the Lord God called to man, where are you?*" (Genesis 3: 9). So from the fall onwards, God has been seeking to call man and woman back to Himself. In Genesis 3:21 we read that, "*The Lord God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife and clothed them.*" (Borthwick 1987:26)

God created people in His image. This means that people are able to make valid personal choices. God experiences great joy when we voluntarily accept his invitation to worship him and enjoy fellowship with Him. However, He never violates our freedom to turn away from and ignore or defy Him. He respects our freedom. Evil enters when we choose to misuse our freedom. Facing the snake – like devil, God declared, "*I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel*" (Genesis 3:15)

God reveals Himself to be the missionary God. In the Garden God comes seeking man (Gen 3:8ff). God took the initiative. He sought and provided salvation for His lost creature. Man is not left in his predicament. God provides the remedy for the human race (Hedlund 1991:25).

### **2.3.3 The missionary calling in the story of Noah**

The world was a place in which there were none who followed after God. God then decided to wipe man off from the face of the earth within a period of 120 more years (Genesis 6:3). One man alone found grace in His eyes. Noah was chosen to be saved from the flood and to be the means of re-establishing the human race. The author of 2 Peter refers to Noah as '*a herald of righteousness*' (2 Peter 2:5). While it

is true that Genesis 6:9 refers to him as 'a righteous man, blameless in his generation'.

God made the covenant with Noah after the flood: *"I am now making my covenant with you and with your descendants, and with all living beings, all birds and all animals, everything that came out of the boat with you. With these words I make the covenant with you: I promise that never again will all living beings be destroyed by a flood: never again will a flood destroy the earth"* (Genesis 9:9-11).

Firstly, the covenant with Noah emphasizes the close interrelation of the creative and redemptive covenants. Much of God's bond with Noah entails a renewal of the provisions of creation, and even reflects closely the language of the original covenant. God's charge to Noah and his family to *"be fruitful, and multiply and fill the earth"* (Genesis 9:1,7) reflects the identical command given at creation. Still further, the cultural mandate to "subdue" the earth (Genesis 1:28) finds a close parallel in the covenant with Noah (Hedlund 1991:29). God's judgement of sin brought disharmony into man's ruling role over creation. Consequently, the fear and terror of man was to fall on every beast, bird and fish of creation (Genesis 9:2).

Secondly, the covenant with Noah binds together God's purpose in creation with His purpose in redemption. Noah, his seed, and all creation benefit from this gracious relationship (Robertson 1982:111).

Thirdly, the covenant with Noah relates to the nature of God's redemptive grace. Prior to the flood, the wickedness of man provoked God's decision to wipe him from the face of the earth (Genesis 6:5-7). In contrast to this solemn determination, God expressed a gracious attitude toward Noah: *"But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord"* (Genesis 6:8). Out of the mass of depraved humanity, God directed His grace toward one man and his family. It may be that God's grace had kept Noah from sinking to the levels of depravity found among his contemporaries. But nothing

indicates that Noah's favoured position arose from anything other than the grace of the Lord himself (Robertson 1982:111-112).

A fourth principle inherent in the establishment of the covenant with Noah relates to God's intention to deal with families in His covenant relationships. God will destroy all the earth. But to Noah God says: *"I will establish my covenant with you; and you shall enter the ark, you and your sons and your wife, and your sons' wives with you"* (Genesis 6:8). The repetition of this theme of God's dealing with the family of Noah throughout the narrative indicates the significance of the concept for the Noahic covenant. 'And God said to Noah, *"Go, you and your house, into the ark; for you, I have seen as righteous before me in this generation"* (Genesis 7:1). The righteousness of a single man serves as the basis for including the whole of his descendents in the ark. Because Noah is righteous, his family experiences deliverance from the flood (Robertson 1982:113).

Fifthly, the covenant with Noah primarily may be characterized as the covenant of preservation. This dimension of the Noahic covenant becomes evident in God's response to Noah's thanks-offering, after the flood-waters had subsided. *"And the Lord God smelled the soothing aroma; and the Lord said to Himself, I will never again curse the ground on account of man, for the intent of man's heart is evil from his youth; and I will never again destroy every living thing, as I have done. While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, day and night shall not cease"* (Genesis 8:20-22).

Sixthly, the covenant with Noah was a universal covenant valid for all time and for all peoples. There is no tribe or people that was not included in the covenant of God with Noah. The covenant with Noah was God's contact with humanity. The new generations of Genesis 10 show God's fulfilment of the covenant by filling the earth with the nations. This renewal of the earth following the judgement of the flood recalls God's earlier injunction in the Garden: *"Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it"* (Genesis 1:28). God's covenant expresses God's concern to redeem mankind, to replenish the earth, and to renew society (Hedlund 1991:29).



The divine calling of man after the flood must be viewed from the overall perspective that man is totally depraved, inclined towards self-destruction and worthy of judgement. But God in grace and mercy determines to preserve the life of man, and promotes the multiplication of his descendants. All created life is sacred. Yet the highest value must be attached to the life of man.

The covenant with Noah possesses a distinctively universalistic aspect. The whole of the created universe, including the totality of humanity, benefits from this covenant. Not only Noah and his seed, but also "*every living creature*" lives under the sign of the rainbow (Genesis 9:10). This universal character of the covenant with Noah provides the foundation for the world-wide proclamation of the gospel in the present ages (Robertson 1982:122).

#### **2.3.4 The missionary calling in the story of Abraham**

The call of Abraham is recorded in Genesis 12. God's activity among the nations culminates in a promise given to Abraham, an outworking of the universal covenant. The call of Abraham and the subsequent history of Israel should be regarded as an aspect of mission. Genesis 12:1-3 therefore reads: "*The Lord said to Abraham, Leave your country, your relatives, and your father's home, and go to a land that I am going to show you. I will give you many descendants, and they will become a great nation. I will bless you and make your name famous, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, but I will curse those who curse you. And through you I will bless all the nations*". Abraham and Sarah became the faith parents of people who accept God's invitation to turn toward Him and become His chosen people to serve Him in mission. Abraham and Sarah were a Mesopotamian family and lived in Haran.

The call to Abraham and Sarah was an invitation to enter into a voluntary covenant with God and His people. Their journey with God in mission reveals important qualities of all faithful missions (Bowen 1996:16). God clinched all blessings with

several promises. The most amazing was this: *"All people on earth will be blessed through you"* (Genesis 12: 3). God wanted to bless humanity by means of what He was doing to Abraham and through Abraham and his descendants.

In Genesis 12 God established a covenant of grace in which Abraham and all believers could become partakers through faith that obeys. In Genesis 17:4-5 God changed Abram's name to Abraham thereby pointing to the promise that in Abraham all nations would be blessed. God empowered them with the ability to prosper with their descendants including many others outside their realms. Whenever we turn towards God, our lives begin to bless others. That is even true when we experience hardship in our obedience to God. (Borthwick 1987:29)

Hardship is exactly what Abraham and Sarah experienced. Soon after leaving Haran they arrived in Canaan. The rains failed, and there was famine. It was not easy leaving home only to endure hardships. Yet even within these troubles, Abraham and Sarah were becoming a blessing to others. Abraham and Sarah reveal that it is the grace of God, which enables a person to be involved in mission. The call of God is a gift of his grace. Sarah and Abraham responded to God's call in wonder and unfaltering faith.

Following the call of God means denouncing the evil in our cultures and becoming a new kind of people who can influence our societies in upliftment. As an example, in Haran, people often sacrificed their babies to the nature god, the moon. Sarah and Abraham abandoned such practices as they began their journey with God (Borthwick 1987:30). God's covenant people are a people of change; they seek to transform culture and societies in ways, which enhance human well – being. They turn away from evil and destructive practices. Abraham and Sarah were vulnerable missionary pilgrims. Had the Canaanites turned against them they would have died instantly. They were completely dependent on the call and promise of God and the goodwill of the people among whom they lived.

The call of Abraham in Genesis 12 marks a turning point in God's dealings with the world. God did not choose Abraham and Israel for their own sake but for a much wider purpose, that is, for the salvation of the world. The promise, "*And through your offspring all the nations of the earth will be blessed*" was made twice to Abraham (Genesis 12:3; 22:18) (Kane 1986:26).

God chose and called Abraham to be His vehicle for mission. His scope and His object is universalistic, all families of the earth are to be blessed as a result of what He does through His particular agent. God's salvation concerns all men. The nations are not forgotten; they are prominent in God's call of Abraham. Abraham was chosen out of an idolatrous people as a true representative of the nations (Joshua 24:2). Abraham was called so that the nations might be called to faith and repentance; to recognize and obey the God of Israel as the One true God (Hedlund 1991:35).

### 2.3.5 The missionary calling of Israel

God chose Abraham and Israel for priestly service among the nations. The biblical doctrine of election has important ramifications for mission. The doctrine of election originates in God's choosing Abraham (Genesis 12) and Israel (Deuteronomy 7:6-8). Election is an act of God's grace. Yahweh adopted the slaves in Egypt, choosing Israel in her weakness in order that He might save her. "*From all the peoples on earth He chose you to be His special people*" (Deuteronomy 7:6).

Election involves both calling and sending. God's election of Israel, does not thereby exclude anyone, it does not imply favouritism. It is not for private enjoyment, but it was for service. The privilege of knowing God and being known by him is not primarily privilege but responsibility. God chose Israel that He might reveal Himself to Israel and through Israel to the nations (Deuteronomy 4:5-8, 35).

God made the covenant with the people of Israel; at Mount Sinai and this covenant determines their entire subsequent history. God chose Israel to be his covenant people. He did this for the sake of the salvation of Israel and all the other nations (Bosch 1996:17). Israel had a priestly function to fulfil: not to rule but to serve. Israel was called upon by God to live as a light to the nations, drawing them nearer to Yahweh. This has become known as the centripetal aspect of mission.

It suggests a movement from the circumference to the Centre. People outside Israel's territory were to be drawn to Israel's country, not because of any saving quality inherent in Israel, but through God's choice. Israel's witness was also taken as **centrifugal**: a movement from the centre (**Israel**) to the circumference (**the nations**). (Bowen 1996:40). The very idea of being a light suggest not only drawing others nearer, but also reaching out to others as in Isaiah 49:6; *"I will give you as a light to the nations, that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth"* (Kritzinger o.a 1987: 18-19).

God as revealed in history is, the One who has elected Israel. The purpose of Israel's election was **service** and where this was withheld election lost its meaning. Primarily, Israel is to serve the marginal in its midst: the orphan, the widow, the poor, and the stranger. Whenever the people of Israel renew their covenant with Yahweh, they recognize that they are renewing their obligations to the victims of society (Bosch 1996:18). *"For you alone have I cared among all the nations of the world; therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities"* (Amos3: 2).

The entire history of Israel unveils the continuation of God's involvement with the nations. The God of Israel is the Creator and Lord of the whole world. For this reason Israel can comprehend its own history in continuity with the history of the nations, not as a separate history.

As Yahweh's compassion reaches out to Israel and beyond, it gradually becomes clear that, in the final analysis, God is as concerned with the nations as with Israel.

Since God has made himself known to Israel, He is to be encountered only in Israel; and since the God of Israel is the only true God, He is also the God of the whole world. So if there is a "missionary" in the Old Testament it is God Himself who brings the nations to Jerusalem to worship Him (Bosch 1996:19). *"All the ends of the earth are called upon to look to God and be saved" (Isaiah 45:22). "His glory will be revealed to them all" (Isaiah 40:5).*

Israel was under obligation to serve Yahweh. This responsibility relates to the nations. Israel's election has in view the salvation of the nations (Genesis 26:4; 28:14). God reveals Himself to one nation so that He may be known to all the people. Israel was sent to serve God in a missionary sense among the nations.

The election of Israel primarily conveyed **responsibility** (Bosch 1985:51-52). The Hebrew word for election is *bahar*, which implies a special purpose, or mission, especially when people are involved (Senior & Stuhlmuehler 1983:94). In the Old Testament God reveals himself as the One who, among other characteristics, has compassion on the poor, the oppressed, the weak and the outcast. Israel's election is to be attributed to this divine compassion, not to any good qualities Israel might have possessed. The basis for God's election of Israel was to be found throughout in his spontaneous and unmerited mercy (Deuteronomy 7: 6-8).

In choosing Israel, God intended to reach out to the whole world. As Johannes Verkuyl (1978:91-92) has reminded us concerning Israel: "In choosing Israel as segment of all humanity, God never took his eye off the other nations; Israel was the '*pars pro toto*', a minority called to serve the majority. God's election of Abraham and Israel concern the whole world". God reminded the children of Israel that their election could not be attributed to their own extraordinary character but solely to God's compassion. God offered Israel the "Torah " which bestowed upon Israel a particular character, which made her practically dependent of God. Yahweh after all needed Israel, without her He would have been a God without worshippers.

God called Moses to lead these people to the Promised Land. God chose Israel to be his covenant people and a holy people *"For you are a people, holy to the Lord your God; the Lord God has chosen you to be a people for his own possession, out of all the peoples that are on the face of the earth"* (Deuteronomy 7:6).

God chose Israel for priestly service among the nations (Deuteronomy 7:6-8). Election involves both calling and sending. God's election of Israel does not imply favouritism. God's election of Israel does not exclude anyone. The privilege of knowing God and being known by him is but the privilege of glorifying him among the nations. God chose Israel so that He might reveal Himself to Israel and through Israel to the nations (Hedlund 1991:37).

Though Israel failed in her calling, God continued to act and chastise his people for not measuring up. The fact that God so acted in Israel is particularistic, but the scope of his action is universal. He is then the God of the whole earth. God deals with one people, Israel, in order to reach all the people of the world. He manifested His salvation through His works in Israel in order that all men may have the possibility of salvation. Thus the whole history of Israel is nothing but the continuation of God's dealings with the nations (Hedlund 1991:32)

### **2.3.6 The missionary calling of Jonah**

One of the messengers who served as a missionary in the Old Testament was Jonah who was called and sent to proclaim God's message to the people of Nineveh. Jonah 1:1-2 therefore reads: *"The word of the Lord came to Jonah the son of Ammittai and said: Go to the great Nineveh and preach against it because its wickedness has come up before me"*. Jonah has been selected and included here so that he may represent the prophets in the Old Testament who received the missionary calling to proclaim the word of the Lord (Hedlund 1991:120).

The dramatic tale of the prophet Jonah is more about a gracious God than about a reluctant missionary. Jonah symbolizes the people of Israel who have reverted their election into pride and privilege. The book does not aim at reaching and converting Gentiles; it aims, rather, at the repentance and conversion of Israel and contrasts God's magnanimity with the parochialism of his own people (Bosch 1996:18). In order to avoid God's call, Jonah journeyed in the opposite direction until the storm stopped him completely. After a series of adventures, Jonah found himself proclaiming divine judgement upon the city of Nineveh.

Though his message was one of judgement, not salvation, he is recognised as the only missionary in the Old Testament who broke the geographical, cultural and social boundaries and reached another nation with a message of God. In Nineveh Jonah preached and achieved great results. The whole city, under the leadership of the king, and his nobles, repented. God had mercy and spared the city. Jonah knew that God wanted to show mercy to all people and nations. He knew that God would send him as an agent of redemption to save the people of Nineveh. (Borthwick1987: 30-31).

But the call of God is significant. It takes us to places, which others regard as impossible to work in; which look like utter folly. Of course with the call of God comes God's provision, but we do not see that at the start. Out of Jonah's preaching a young church develops and much attention is given in the narrative to the quality and spiritual life of the new church (Bosch 1985:53).

Although Jonah first chose to run away from God's call, through the influence of the storm, three days in the belly of a great fish, and a direct confrontation with God, Jonah became convinced that he should go to Nineveh as a missionary as what was originally intended by God. Jonah was an heroic missionary convinced of his missionary calling, who went to a distant land, encountered unimaginable hazards, but gradually overcame them.

## 2.4 SOME INSIGHTS ABOUT THE 'MISSIONARY CALLING' WITH REFERENCE TO CERTAIN NEW TESTAMENT FIGURES AND PASSAGES

### 2.4.1 The missionary calling of Jesus

Mission became a reality due to the fact that man had fallen into sin. Because of the fall of man, God had to send His Son (John 3:16), to rectify what man had wronged. Thus sin resulted in the great missionary setting His foot on this earth when Christ became man. It is only because of Christ that we have regained our mission in life.

The central thrust of the New Testament is that Jesus has come to fulfil the Old Testament prophecy and that in His person and work the kingdom of God has become a present reality. Throughout the New Testament the missionary God of the Old Testament continues His redemptive work through His Son, and through the church by the power of His Holy Spirit. The predominant New Testament understanding of mission is centrifugal; it is from the centre moving outward into the world.

The New Testament leaves us in no doubt about the missionary purpose of Christ's coming into the world. The Lord Himself told of that purpose when He said, "*For the Son of Man came to seek and save what was lost*" (Luke 19:10). Again He said, "*For I have come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me*" (John 6: 38). John wrote much later "*God sent his only begotten Son into the world that we might live through him*" (1 John 4:9).

Jesus Christ, then was a missionary sent with a purpose. That purpose was the same as His missionaries who receive calls to serve Him today. It is to save those who are lost (Cook 1979:28).

The mission of Jesus embraces both the poor and the rich, both the oppressed and the oppressor, both the sinners and the devout. His mission is one of dissolving



alienation and breaking down walls of hostility, of crossing boundaries between individuals and groups (Senior and Stuhlmueeller 1983:148). In his ministry Jesus Christ used both word and deed to minister to people in announcing the coming of God's Kingdom. In Luke 4:18-19, Jesus indicated his own mission in terms of addressing the spiritual and physical needs of people. The Bible records: *"You know about Jesus of Nazareth and how God poured out on Him the Holy Spirit and power. He went everywhere, doing good and healing all who were under the power of the Devil, for God was with him"* (Acts 10:38).

Christ's mission had a definite twofold purpose: **to save and to serve**. *"The Son of man,"* He said, *"is come to seek and to save that which was lost"* (Luke 19:10). Paul said: *"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners"* (1Timothy 1:15). *He came to save them, not simply from the hands of their enemies as many expected (Luke 1:71), but from the penalty and power of their sins (Mathew 1:21).*

There was another purpose to Christ's mission: to serve. He said: *"Like the Son of Man, who did not come to be served, but to serve and to give His life to redeem many people "* (Mathew 20:28). He demonstrated this fact by the life He lived. He was the Servant of God. He was also the servant of men, which is far harder (Kane 1986:142). To His disciples He said: *"I am among you as one who serves"* (Luke 22:27). In the upper room, just before His passing, He gave the disciples a dramatic demonstration of His servant-hood, by washing their feet. This was not a token gesture; it was intended to teach them once and for all that the best way to serve God is to serve men. No man can be a true servant of God if he is unwilling to be a servant of men (Kane 1986:142).

#### **2.4.2 The missionary calling of the first disciples**

In Mark's and Mathew's gospel Jesus' public ministry begins with the proclamation: *"Turn away from your sins, because the Kingdom of heaven is near!"* ( Mark 1:14;

Mathew 4:17). Immediately following this announcement, both evangelists relate the calling of the first four disciples (Mark 1:16-20; Mathew 4:18-22).

This sequence of events cannot have been accidental. Mark, in particular, clearly has an explicit missionary purpose in mind in his account of the calling of the disciples. The calling takes place at the shores of Lake Galilee. This territory is, in Mark's gospel, the true scene of Jesus' preaching and the lake is for him a bridge toward the Gentiles. Mark thus puts a missionary stamp on his gospel from the very first chapter. The disciples are called to be missionaries (Bosch 1996:37).

Jesus called His disciples to assist Him in mission. The various evangelists present this call in different ways. In Mark 1:16-20 Jesus is walking along the lake of Galilee when he sees two brothers, Simon and Andrew, casting their nets. He says to them, *"Follow me and I will make you fishers of men"*. They followed; soon afterwards, they encountered two more brothers, James and John, who joined the group. In the Gospel of John (1:35-51), John the Baptist tells Andrew and someone else that Jesus is the Lamb of God. After two visits to Jesus, Andrew brings his brother Simon to him. The next day, Jesus calls Phillip simply by saying, *"Follow me"*, and Phillip informs Nathaniel that Jesus is the One predicted in the law and the prophets. Nathaniel impressed by Jesus' recognition of him before his call hails Him as the Son of God and the King of Israel.

Jesus summoned all men to repent and promised forgiveness to all who sincerely responded. But He called some men to stay with Him and be His special disciples (the Greek word for disciples, 'mathetai', which means "learners," or "pupils"). They were to be with Him, study His teaching, capture His spirit, and later extend His ministry (Mark 3:13:6:7). This implied that He was more than a rabbi whose disciples followed Him and learned His teaching. He wanted to reach His people and lead them to confess their failure and turn to God in repentance. This group of people was the nucleus and spearhead of a renewed Israel. Jesus aimed to build up within Israel a brotherhood who would be true Israel, the rallying centre of God's

people. He did not try to organize a separate church; He set loose a new force in Israel to make it truly the special people of God (Filson 1965:99).

The missionary call does not seem to expect anything but an immediate and positive response. The one called, leaves "everything", whether his tax collector's booth, as in the case of Levi (Mathew 9:9), or their fishing boats, as in the case of the first four disciples. Getting up and following Jesus is the same as repenting and believing. The call to discipleship is a call into God's reign and is, as such, an act of grace (Bosch 1996: 37).

Mark says, "*He made twelve to be with him and to send them to preach and to have authority to cast out demons*" (Mark 3:14). What we discover in the New Testament record, then, is that Jesus called twelve disciples to accompany Him and to proclaim His gospel; at the coming of the kingdom they were to act as judges of the twelve tribes.

That they expected such honour is suggested by the story of the sons of Zebedee (Mark 10: 35-45), who asked Jesus for positions on his right and on His left. It should be added that an element of judgement was already present in their preaching of mission. Those who accepted the gospel would enter into the kingdom; those who rejected it had judged themselves already. If men did not receive them, they were to shake off the dust under their feet as a testimony to them (Mark 6: 11; Mathew 10:14-15); Luke 10:10-12).

Therefore the disciples who are sent into the world are to share in his ministry and to follow his example in obedience to his command to love God and one's neighbour (Mathew 22:38). And his commission to make disciples of all nations (Mathew 28:19-20). To the disciples Jesus said, '*This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you*' (John 15:12).

Jesus limited his mission to Israel. He instructed the twelve not to go to any Gentile territory or any Samaritan town, but rather to go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel (Mathew 10:5-6). To the Canaanite woman He said: *"I was sent only to the lost sheep of Israel"* (Mathew 15:24) because the time had not yet come for an actual going out with the good news into the whole world. Israel was to be given the first opportunity to hear it and accept it. But later Jesus in His prophetic message to his disciples a few days before his crucifixion, He said the gospel of the kingdom would be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end would come (Mathew 24:14).

Jesus' mission was to **provide the gospel**; His apostles' mission was to proclaim it. By proclaiming the gospel they would be co-operating with Him in His mission of redemption.

Jesus told His disciples that they were to be the salt and light of the world (Matthew 5:13), that they were responsible to do good to all men, friends and foe alike. They were to love their enemies, bless them that cursed them, do good to them that hated them, and pray for them that despitefully used them and persecuted them (Matthew 5:44).

### **2.4.3 The Great Commission**

The Great Commission is the title given to Matthew 28:18-20. Mathew and the other Evangelists present the Great Commission as coming directly from the Lord Jesus Christ. It contains an Evangelical and Pastoral commission, *"Then Jesus came to them and said, all authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age"*. The Great Commission at the end of Mathews' gospel is to be understood as the key to Mathews' understanding of the mission and ministry of Jesus.

The gospel of Mathew reflects an important and distinct sub-paradigm of the early church's interpretation and experience of mission. Mathew 28:18-20 has to be interpreted against the background of Mathew's gospel as a whole and unless we keep this in mind we shall fail to understand it. No exegesis of the "Great Commission" divorced from its moorings in this gospel can be valid. It should therefore come as no surprise if we discover that, as far as use of language is concerned, the "Great commission" is perhaps the most Mathean in the entire gospel: virtually every word or expression used in these verses is peculiar to the author of the first gospel (Bosch 1996:56).

Mark 16:15-16 is shorter and slightly different: "He said to them, *'Go into the entire world and preach the good news to all creation. Whoever believes and is baptised will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned'*" (Mark 16:15-16) .

With these words Jesus commissioned us also to be His witnesses around the world in which the Father has sent Him, *"As the Father have sent me, so I am sending you"* (John20: 21). This is the call of Christ to those who follow Him to go out and witness for Him everywhere. It includes all of his disciples; not one is omitted from its scope. A Christian who fails to bear witness to his Saviour is disobedient to this call, which is meant for him.

This missionary call is general because it includes all Christians as prospective missionaries. It is also general because it includes all unbelievers as the missionary field. This is a call to be Christ's ambassadors to the lost sinners without regard to the places where they may be found.

Christ gave the Great commission to His followers after resurrection and before His ascension. It was the one great charge He gave to His church.

In all of the four gospels, what has become known as the great commission is to be engaged in a worldwide proclamation of the good news (Mathew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16; Luke 24:46-49 and John 20:21-23). Today it is widely accepted that the so-called Great commission should be regarded as the key to the understanding of the entire Gospel of Mathew (Bosch 1987:27).

Three terms in the "Great Commission" summarize the essence of mission for Mathew: make disciples, baptize and teach. "Disciple" (*Matheteusate*) is far more central in Mathew than in the other synoptic gospels. The term occurs seventy-three times in Mathew. The term in Mathews' gospel is not used for the twelve only as it does in Mark and Luke. For Mathew the first disciples were the prototypes for the church. The term thus expands to include the "disciples" of Mathew's own time. In other words, the followers of the earthly Jesus have to make others into what they themselves are (Bosch 1996:74).

Secondly, the disciples must admit the disciples by the sacred rite of baptism (*Baptismos*). This baptism must be administered in the name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. That is, by authority from heaven and not of man; for his ministers' act by authority from the three persons in the Godhead, they have their commission under the great seal of heaven, which puts an honour upon the ordinance (Hendrickson 1994:362).

Thirdly, those that are thus baptized and enrolled among the disciples of Christ must be 'taught' (*Didasko*). 'And teach them to obey everything I have commanded you'. Jesus' teaching is an appeal to his listeners will, not primarily to their intellect; it is a call for a concrete decision to follow Him and to submit to God's will. Moreover, teaching does not merely involve inculcating the precepts of the law and obeying them, as contemporary Judaism interpreted it. What the apostles should teach the new disciples according to Mathew 28:20, is to submit to the will of God as revealed in Jesus' ministry and teaching (Bosch 1996:66).

The Great Commission has to do with a mandate, which on the basis of Jesus' authority is instructing the disciples that a totally new era has been inaugurated which involves their involvement in a worldwide mission. The 'therefore go' (*poreuthentes*), usually translated as imperative, is the dominant element in the missionary command, whereas the 'make disciples' tended to assume a subordinate meaning (Bosch 1985:68-69). The risen Jesus boldly and unreservedly, sends His followers to cross the geographical frontiers and disciple all 'nations'. They should 'teach' the new disciples to submit to the will of God as revealed in Jesus' ministry and teaching (Bosch 1996:66).

When the Church omits the missionary program from its activity, the result is tragic. Its members lose their vision and become narrow-minded, and they lose their concern and become self-centred. This type of church must be called 'A Spiritual dead church'. But the church with a vision must be called 'The Spiritual living church'. (Mutavhansidi 1996:19).

In Mathew 28:16-20, it is clear that disciple making is the central focus of the Great Commission. The disciples in response to the mandate went out and planted churches, as recorded in the book of Acts and in the Epistles. For example, Barnabas and Paul arrived at a small city called Iconium and "*so spoke that a great company believed*" (Acts 14:1). These converts then met together while the two evangelists travelled elsewhere. When Paul and Barnabas returned to Iconium a short time later, they "*appointed elders for them*" (Acts 14:23a).

A major objective of discipleship evangelism, then, is to make disciples who are committed not only to Christ but also to the Body of Christ, the Church. This is in line with Jesus' expressed goal: "*I will build my church*" (Mathew 16:18). Since the disciples were to be the means of building His church, Jesus banded them together from the very beginning. By doing so He gave them experience in community living which they could draw upon later in establishing congregations in many cities and towns in the Roman Empire, beginning at Jerusalem (Scott 1980:183).

As soon as the disciples began to obey the Great Commission they were then involved in church planting. The dynamic of church planting in the early church came from the presence and power of the Holy Spirit among the believers. It was the Holy Spirit who enabled them to 'speak the word of God boldly'. It was the Holy Spirit who gave a fearlessness to the witness of the apostles, even when facing those who had crucified Jesus and had the power to destroy them (Hill 1984:13-14). *"Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them: 'Rulers and elders of the people! It is by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, but whom God raised from the dead, that this man stands before you completely healed'"* (Acts 4:8-13).

It was the same power of the Holy Spirit that enabled them to respond to the needs of the people around them in bringing physical healing, in casting out evil spirits and in bringing the message that changed lives (Hill 1984:14). *'Everyone was filled with awe and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles'* (Acts 2:43)

#### **2.4.4 The missionary calling of Paul**

In Acts Paul first comes on the scene at the death of Stephen; those who were stoning the first martyr laid their garments at Paul's feet (Acts 7: 58). Paul became a persecutor, arresting Christians in Jerusalem and imprisoning them (Acts 8: 3). Fairly soon he asked the high priest for the authority to become an 'Apostle' to the synagogues at Damascus, in order to continue his inquisitorial work there.

Paul did not intend to become a Christian the day he left Jerusalem to go to Damascus to arrest and imprison Christians. It was while travelling to Damascus to extradite Christians that the risen and glorified Christ confronted Paul. In Acts 9 it is stated that at midday a light from heaven flashed around him, and he fell to the ground and heard a voice say to him, *"Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?"* (Acts 9: 4). Paul asked regarding the identity of the speaker, and was told, *"I am Jesus whom you are persecuting"* (Acts 9:5). He was then instructed to rise and enter the



city. Ananias was sent by God to minister to him. It was through Ananias that Paul's sight was restored, he was baptised as a Christian and further instructions were given him concerning God's purpose for his life.

The call of God to Paul revealed Paul's weakness, humanity and sinfulness (Shenk 1988:32). Paul was converted, called and sent to the Gentiles from this time on the course of his life was set. He knew he had been sent as the chosen instrument of God for the Gentiles and he pursued this missionary goal with all the energy he possessed (O'Brien 1995:20).

Paul's encounter with the risen Lord Jesus Christ changed him from being a Pharisee into Christ's apostle to the Gentiles, a persecutor of the early Christian movement into a chief protagonist, a person who perceived Jesus as an impostor and a threat to Judaism into one who embraced him as the centre of his life. The emphasis of Paul's calling is certainly a most important correction to the traditional understanding of Paul's conversion. The encounter with the Lord Jesus radically altered Paul's understanding of the course of history; Paul understands this to mean that salvation in Christ is now to be offered to the Gentile world. In his experience, and according to his own testimony, his conversion and his call to the Gentile mission coincide. Paul inherited the Gospel he was to proclaim from the very people he had persecuted (Bosch 1996:127).

In Paul's own view this experience was the last of Christ's resurrection appearances, which had, began with appearances to the other apostles (1 Corinthians 15: 5-8). In Acts, however, the resurrection appearances are given only to the earliest apostles both Stephan (Acts 7: 55) and Paul (Acts 26:16) see Jesus, but they see Him glorified and at God's right hand. Acts also sets forth two conceptions of the relation of Paul's mission to his conversion

- a) His mission was given to him during the Damascus journey (Acts 9:10-19; Acts 22:10-16) or
- b) Jesus laid it Himself upon him while Paul was praying in the temple (Acts 22: 16-18).

As far as Paul himself was concerned, the crucial moment of his life was his conversion, and he speaks of the event twice.

2.3.4.1 In **Galatians 1: 11-17** we have Paul's first written account regarding his missionary commission. We must accept that Galatians was written during Paul's stay in Ephesus and is to be dated between late summer of 52 and summer 55 (Lategan 1985:99). In it he provides important testimony about his calling to proclaim God's Son among the Gentiles and thus he throws light on his apostolic self-consciousness.

Paul reminds his readers that he received the gospel by the revelation on the Damascus road. He emphatically denies having received the gospel from any human source, either in general or from specific persons. He also denies that it came to him through the medium of teaching. Rather the gospel came 'through a revelation of Jesus Christ' (Galatians 1:12). When Christ confronted him on the Damascus road, the gospel came to Paul and he was converted. He describes his conversion as his calling through God's grace or his commission to preach Christ to the Gentiles (Hedlund 1991:211).

God's gracious purpose in revealing his Son in him was that 'he might preach Him among the Gentiles'. This was an integral part of the revelation itself. The 'logic of the gospel according to Paul required that he should proclaim the Son of God to the nations and he grasped the essentials of it there and then. (O'Brien 1995:10). In 1 Corinthians 15:9-10 he says that he is unworthy to be called an apostle because he persecuted the Church of God, but by God's grace he became an apostle and worked harder than any of the others.

2.3.4.2 In **Ephesians 3:1-13** Paul makes it clear that his missionary calling to preach the gospel to the Gentiles is an integral part of God's redemptive plan. Three times within the space of a few verses in Ephesians 3:3,4, and 9) Paul employs the highly-charged theological term 'mystery' (God's 'open secret') when speaking of his missionary calling, which in its context showed that the salvation and unity of Jews and Gentiles had always been an integral part to the divine intention.

The Old Testament prophets had already looked forward to the day when Gentiles along with Israelites would be embraced within the sphere of divine blessing. This had remained a mystery until the time of its fulfilment and Paul, as the apostle to the Gentiles and the first steward of this mystery, had the privilege of unfolding its wonder (O'Brien 1995: 21).

Paul's conversion gave his life a meaning and direction it had not possessed before. In a sense it was a new life, a new creation. *'What was gain for me I count as loss because of Christ. I count everything as loss because of the profit of the knowledge of Christ Jesus. Our Lord. For whom I lost everything; and I count it as a refuse so that I may gain Christ and be found in Him- not having a righteousness of my own based on the law but the righteousness which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which comes from God and is based on faith- to know him and the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings...'* (Philippians 3: 7-10)

Paul's missionary vision is worldwide, He began to see mission in 'ecumenical' terms; the entire inhabited world has to be reached with the gospel. Paul concentrates his work on the provincial cities like Rome because it was the capital of the empire; it is natural that he would contemplate a visit to these metropolises because these were the centres as far as communication, culture, commerce, politics, and religion were concerned. Furthermore Paul is founding and planting churches, which he seeks to nurture through occasional pastoral visits.

#### **2.4.5 The missionary calling of the church**

Through the agency of the Holy Spirit, the New Testament church came into being as an evangelising, teaching, worshiping, serving fellowship of the people of God. The church is, says Hedlund, to *"take up the destiny of the true Israel, Servant Israel and become the missionary people of the Kingdom of God"* (1991: 199). The church is called to the task of bringing to all nations, salvation in Jesus Christ.

In the early years immediately following the first Easter, the early church's missionary engagement remained confined to Israel, as Jesus own ministry had been. Jerusalem remained the centre of the new community, the members of which continued to visit the temple regularly. To abandon Israel would be unfaithful to the intention of Jesus. The first Christian community was not opposed to the conversion of Gentiles. They believed that their mission was limited to the house of Israel and that the salvation of the Gentiles would take place by means of the eschatological pilgrimage of the nations to Jerusalem. Their self-definition made it impossible for them to embark on a mission to the world outside Israel (Bosch 1996:42-43).

The Hellenists differed from the Hebrews at decisive points. In their case, a paradigm shift was much more clearly in evidence. They translated Jesus message into Greek language. Their witness found a way into a Greco- Roman world. The Hellenists' critical attitude toward the Law and the temple reflected the attitude and ministry of the historic Jesus. The same was true of their openness to Samaritans and Gentiles. Thus when they were expelled from Jerusalem, they began to preach among the despised Samaritans as well as among the Gentiles in Phoenicia and Syria as far as Antioch. They proclaimed a gospel which no longer required circumcision and the observance of the ritual law (Bosch 1996:43).

The Hellenists did not immediately launch a worldwide mission from Antioch. Through the ministry of Paul and Barnabas the Antioch church became a community with a concern for people they had never met, people living on Cyprus, the mainland of Asia Minor and elsewhere (Bosch 1996:45). They decided to send missionaries in those areas and commissioned their leaders to go and preach the gospel in those areas (Acts 13:1).

The church, then, is an essential part of the plan of God for the salvation of the world. The church, according to the New Testament pattern, is sent into the world in the power of the Holy Spirit (John 20:21) to disciple the nations (Matthew 28:20). The church which neglects evangelism is not showing its respect for other faiths but rather its failures to experience and to share the joy of Christian fellowship (Hedlund 1991:201).

The church is called to be an instrument of God in mission. The apostle Paul in his letter to the Romans indicated that, *"For every one who calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved. How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? And how can they preach to them unless they are sent?"* (Romans 10: 13-15).

The church is called to be God's messenger to the world. This message is about our Lord Jesus Christ. It is the only message, which can turn men from darkness to light, from sin to righteousness, from death to life, from bondage to freedom (Mutavhansindi 1996:16). God loved us in such a way that He sent his only begotten Son Jesus Christ to die for our sins, so that all who believe in Him should not perish but have eternal life (John 3:16). We must also indicate that those who do not believe in Jesus Christ will not receive eternal life, but the wrath of God will be upon them (John 3:36).

## **2.5 Conclusion**

These then were the missionary calls of several great missionaries of Christ. The circumstances of their calling were different. In fact, one great lesson we can learn from their testimonies is the diversity of ways in which God may have called them. Most of them, however, were in places where they could readily hear the call when it came to them. Some missionaries saw a vision, dreamed a dream or heard a voice calling them to go.

The "missionary call" has been the stuff of modern missions. From this we can clearly see that the missionary calling can come in a miraculous way. Neither does it come to all people in the same way. We can thus conclude by saying that the missionary calling is the Great Commission received from God, plus the assurance in one's heart no matter how it comes, that God wants you to go as His witness to those who do not know the Saviour.

God calls each converted person to a ministry within the church. For some, that ministry is church planting, an apostolic ministry of extending the kingdom of God beyond the normal confines of the routines of life. All church planters need to be converted people. Each person's conversion story is different, just as the waves that break on an ocean beach show variety (Shenk 1988:33).

The commissioning of Paul brought together the call of God upon Paul and the confirmation of that call by the church. The church must confirm one's personal sense of call. Otherwise, two serious problems may arise. First, it might be that the aspiring church planter has ulterior motives. Perhaps the idea to plant a church is one of one's own making, and not from the Lord. If the church-planting ministry is not God's appointment, the church planter may become quickly discouraged and the efforts will not bear lasting spiritual fruit. The second problem is that the church planter needs a praying community to provide encouragement. If the planter is a loner, long-term survival is doubtful. Paul returned to Antioch occasionally for refreshment and retreat. All church planters deserve and need that same kind of home church support (Shenk 1988:34).

Every Christian has a share in the responsibility of the church to mission. But there are some other responsibilities that are purely personal. In fact, each individual's participation in the missionary program of the church will depend on his personal response to the appeal of Christ.

## CHAPTER 3

### A HOLISTIC UNDERSTANDING OF MISSION

#### 3.1 Introduction

This chapter takes up the most crucial points at which church growth and social issues intersect. Our aim is to see the greatest improvement in society, especially liberation and justice for the poor, while at the same time seeing the greatest number of people, especially the poor, reconciled to God through Jesus Christ.

It is necessary, therefore, to define these two terms as precisely as possible from the beginning. The Holistic understanding of mission is the kind of help, which fulfils the biblical mandate to evangelise the poor as well as relieve their physical needs. It is the fulfilment of the missionary mandate which requires the proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the planting and growth of the church, the extension of Christ's lordship over all areas of community life, and the reclaiming of the whole cosmos from the control of Satan and his servants (Greenway 1989:52).

Whereas, the word "mission" roughly, means Evangelism. The word 'mission', includes Evangelism and social responsibility, since both are authentic expressions of love which longs to serve man in his need (Wagner 1981: 91).

Christ's servants proclaim the gospel of the kingdom of God and bear witness in word and deed to his saving love and compassion. By all that they do, they seek to call forth a saved people, the church, and gather believers into congregations for worship, fellowship and service. Missionary responsibility does not end when a church is initially planted. It moves to equip the developing church through instruction, leadership training and establishment of outreach programs so that the gospel may continue to spread to entire cities and nations. In carrying out this mandate, Christ's servants instruct by word and example concerning the kind of fraternal supportive relationships that should exist between churches and other Christian groups (Greenway 1989:52).

We must, therefore, show that Christianity answers all the needs of people in their lives. We do not only preach the gospel to them but our message is accompanied by skills we are offering to the poor, if they are hungry we must feed them. Our entry point to them may be an economic need such as food in times of drought or it may be a political need, such as peace between warring tribes, or it may be a religious need, such as the desire for God's salvation and blessing. Whatever the entry point, the church must move on to deal with sin and salvation, and with other individual and corporate needs such as food, shelter, health, education, community building, justice and reconciliation between peoples (Hiebert 1999:150).

The central concept of holistic mission embraces what God sends his redeemed people out from their own congregations to do: principally implement the cultural mandate and the Evangelistic Mandate.

It is in connection with the meaning of holistic mission that today we encounter the greatest misunderstanding. We shall discuss the two views of holistic mission, as Evangelicals and the Ecumenicals see it.

### **3.2 Evangelical view of mission**

Many Evangelicals take a very narrow view and equate mission with Evangelism. According to them their only obligation is to preach the gospel, to save souls, and in this way to assist Christ in building His church on earth. There are other Evangelicals who take the opposite view and believe that mission includes all that God is doing in the world today. They are convinced that He is working out His purpose in and through the revolutionary fervour of the times. According to this view, God is working primarily in the world not the church, and if the church wants a piece of the action, it had better join the revolutionary forces. To do this, the church should adopt the agenda of the world. In fact, they go as far as, to suggest that the best thing the church can do is to close its doors (Kane 1986:148-149).



The Evangelicals tend to regard the world in which we live as essential (John 16: 11). The Christian may not enjoy this world; rather he should consistently shun 'the things of this world'. After all his citizenship is in heaven. Contact with the world should therefore be reduced to the minimum. They believe more on the coming kingdom of God. All that really matters is the glorious future (Bosch 1985:32).

The primary motive for mission, according to the Evangelicals, is to be found in the fact that Christ commanded us in Mathew 28:19-20, and as the authority of scripture is accepted without question, this motive is sufficient. A second but equally important motive for mission is to be found in the conviction that if we do not do mission work, the people who have not heard the gospel will perish eternally, conversely, if they do hear the gospel and accept it, they will inherit the kingdom of God (Bosch 1985:31).

When the early nineteenth-century missionaries such as Cornwall, Samuel Walker of Truro, James Harvey and others went to the field, they engaged in a full-orbed program that included not only evangelism and church planting but also medical, educational and agricultural work. All of this they regarded as part of mission of the church. Doctors, teachers and technicians were all referred to as missionaries and no one quarrelled with their designation (Kane 1986:150).

Schools, hospitals, orphanages and the like are primarily seen as instruments affording pupils, patients and orphans the opportunity of hearing the gospel. By attending to man's body (for instance in the hospital) or mind (in the mission school) they are preparing him for the gospel. The success of mission schools and hospitals was often judged according to the number of converts they produced (Bosch 1985:33).

Such Evangelicals believe in the dualistic view. This means that there is a very sharp boundary between the church and the world, between the spiritual and the physical. According to this view they believe that the church is more important than

the world. Another implication of this view is that the spiritual human need for eternal salvation is far and away the greatest human need. Nothing should therefore be allowed to obscure that need (Saayman 1990:101).

Evangelism must involve both verbal witness and exemplary deeds. The 'simple' gospel is very full gospel indeed. One cannot for instance avoid social questions when he is witnessing to prostitutes about Jesus Christ. Biblical Evangelism is a twofold commission: to preach and to pray, to talk to people about God and to talk to God about people (Conn 1982:73).

Evangelicals of the eighteenth century such as the Methodists, the Calvinists and the Countess of Huntingdon believed in neither democracy nor in trade unions. The French Revolution had frightened them away from such radical ideas. Such Evangelicals were willing to do all they could for the poor- but not allow them to do it for themselves. Most Evangelicals observed Sunday and other Christian holidays strictly (Dowley 1985:513).

### **3.2.1 CONFLICTING VIEWPOINTS FOR EVANGELICALS**

B.J Nichols (1985:48-59) in his book *"In word and Deed"* mentions the ten facts of the Evangelicals, which helps us to understand the viewpoints and the diversity existing among such evangelicals.

#### **3.2.1.1 *Social action is a distraction from Evangelism***

Some conservative Christians holding an extreme view of dispensationalism consider evangelism as the exclusive mission of the church. This does not mean or imply that the adherents of this view disregard education, medical work and compassion. In actual fact, they are involved in social activities, which are considered as secondary.

### ***3.2.1.2 Social Action is a betrayal of Evangelism***

This takes the first viewpoint to an extreme. With a dualistic presupposition of conflict between spirit and body, sacred and secular, eternal and temporal and almost Gnostic type of personal pietism coupled with the hopelessness of the world (with wars and rumours of war, pestilence, drought, famine, earthquakes etc.). Adherents of this view consider social involvement as an undue shift from the legitimate to the illegitimate. The world to them is wicked and irredeemably corrupt. Believers should get away from it so as to avoid contamination.

Forgotten is the fact that the God of redemption is also the God of creation, who sits upon the circle of the earth and holds all things together. God has not willed away any part of his entire creation to any malevolent force.

### ***3.2.1.3 Social Action is Evangelism***

There are Evangelicals whose line of distinction between social responsibility and evangelism is so thin that it can be neglected. Evangelism takes place in a social context- at the temple, before a mixed audience of races and sexes. The church receives into its fellowship the despised, the weak, the foolish, the slave etc, thus confronting a given culture with a new norm of obedience to God, a new norm of what it means to be human- this is social action. Social action occurs at the moment someone heeds the call to discipleship.

The fact that Jesus Christ dealt with situations involving specific needs (social, therapeutic, or spiritual) does not mean that He obliterated what could be called 'divine distinctions'. Jesus would not consider feeding the multitude with bread and fish as one and the same as proclaiming the gospel with authority with the intent of conversion (John 6:15-29)

#### **3.2.1.4 Social action is a means to Evangelism**

The Evangelicals who are put in this group by Nichols are those who believe that social action is a means to evangelism. Any form of social concern therefore, be it feeding the hungry, medicine for the sick, education for the illiterate or rehabilitating the refugees, is regarded as a means to an end- the end being evangelism and conversion. Hungry people cannot listen to sermons.

#### **3.2.1.5 Social Action is a manifestation of Evangelism**

Proponents of this view believe in the analogy of faith and work as recorded in the epistle of James 'As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without deeds is dead' (James 2:26). They see social involvement as a demonstration of the gospel. The former gives visibility to the latter.

#### **3.2.1.6 Social action is a result or consequence of Evangelism**

Proponents of this view believe that changing people through verbal proclamation of the gospel is primary and that, secondarily, the transformed lives will become socially involved simply as a matter of course. The analogy of seed and fruit is often used in this connection. Proclamation with resultant conversion is the seed while socio-political involvement is the fruit. If we do not start with what is primary, we are not likely to achieve what is secondary. The call to become fishers of men precedes the call to wash one another's feet.

#### **3.2.1.7 Social Action is a partner of Evangelism**

Proponents of this view like Scott (1977:18) believe that 'If I do not relate what I "have" to what I "see", I cannot claim to be indwelt by the love of God'. In practice, the action taken in any given situation will depend on the need 'seen'- spiritual, social, medical or political-and the resources 'had'- gospel knowledge, social expertise, medicine or political action. He hastens to add that the two, namely evangelism and social action, need not always go together since situations vary just as do the Christian callings.

### ***3.2.1.8 Social Action and Evangelism are equally important but genuinely distinct aspects of the total mission of the church***

Proponents of this view believe that, the word which can best describe the mission of the church is 'martyria' (witness), which can be subdivided into 'kerygma' (proclamation) 'koinonia' (fellowship), 'diakonia' (service) and 'leiturgia' (liturgy) (Bosch 1985:227). Bosch believes that where social concern and evangelism meet, they resemble the two blades of a pair of scissors, which operate in unison, held together by the koinonia. The fellowship, which likewise is not a separate "part" of the church's task, is rather the 'cement' which keeps 'kerygma' and 'diakonia' together; or like the 'axle' on which the two blades operate. Both dimensions are indissolubly bound together. If you lose the one, you lose the other (Bosch 1985:228).

### ***3.2.1.9 That Social action is part of the Good News-Evangelism***

To its advocates, social concern is larger than just feeding the hungry and healing the sick. It is bringing Christ's righteousness to bear on every aspect of life-social, economic, religious, political etc. The task of the church remains the preaching of the gospel and winning the world for Christ. But this task of preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom includes everything, even the socio-political responsibility of the church and its members.

## **3.2.2 HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE ON THE VIEWS OF EVANGELICALS**

We will survey the historical perspective of the Evangelicals from the New Testament times up to 1960. This survey will help us to see whether the church throughout the centuries gave Evangelism priority over Social responsibility or whether the church in her calling stressed Evangelism and social responsibility equally as her mandate.

### **3.2.2.1 The New Testament Church (-95 A.D.)**

The Christians in the early church represented a very small minority. They were often misunderstood by the Jewish-Roman-Hellenistic world. Knowing that they were a small minority, the Christians were challenged to grow numerically and spiritually by faithful witness in words and in deeds. The Christians suffered persecution under the Roman emperors. Thousands of Christians were tortured and executed mercilessly for their faith. To be a Christian was a matter of life and death (Bong 1985:13-14).

Most Christians were Gentiles who had come out of a pagan, syncretistic Graeco-Roman background. The gospel of Christ was radically new to these Gentile converts. With simplicity of faith and zeal for evangelism, the early Christians shared their possessions with the needy widows. As recorded in Acts, Christians in the Jerusalem church shared their possessions with each other. Such generosity, motivated by deep love for the Lord, made a profound impact on the early church and on society. This willingness to sacrifice self-interest for the sake of others and for the furtherance of the gospel made it possible for Christians to evangelise the Graeco-Roman world by the end of the 5<sup>th</sup> century. The sacrificial love of these humble believers was attractive to the overwhelming majority of the population of the Roman Empire (Bong 1985:14).

### **3.2.2.2 The Old Catholic Church (150-325 A.D)**

The motivation for Christian charity changed during this time. During this period of the Apostolic Fathers, Christian charity was the result of spiritual conversion. Good works were one of the fruits of a believer's new life in Christ. Although Christians confined their charity largely to their own community, they also supported the unemployed, orphans, widows, the injured, the sick, and travellers. Churches sent relief goods to other churches during famines and other calamities. Christians were encouraged to fast to help the poor. After the death of Constantine, the church in Antioch supported 3,000 widows, virgins, sick people in inns, prisoners, and many other poor people. (Bong 1985:16).

Justin Martyr defended the church by saying that the early Christians had started a common fund and shared their goods, meals and everything with those in need. Justin also criticised the public exercise of prostitution practiced in his time, as a great injustice. Tertulian encouraged each Christian to deposit a small amount, on a certain day of the month according to his or her ability to help the needy (Bong 1985:16).

#### ***3.2.2.3 Post-Constantine Era (313-590 A.D.)***

In this period there was a close co-operation between the church and the state, the church became a very powerful institution. Both evangelism and social concept became a joint endeavour of the church and state. The church became a wealthy institution as compared to the past when it was used to support itself through small business enterprises as well as through the donations of its members. The rapid expansion of Christianity required extensive income for its church buildings, art galleries, and elaborate administrative system. Nominal Christians began to fill the church. The emphasis on conversion declined. Evangelism was no longer a personal matter but a matter of joining an institution and following its rituals. Many Christians became more interested in the kingdom of this world and in their own personal security than in the future kingdom of God. The church became a powerful institution. In co-operation with the state, it supplied Christian politics and administrators for government posts. These Christians tried to make the empire Christian by means of government regulations (Dowley 1985:237-239).

#### ***3.2.2.4 The Early Mediaeval Church (590-1300A.D)***

Proponents of this period such as Francis of Assisi (1182-1226) believed in a universal Christian state in which both the church and the state were God's instruments to achieve God's purpose for the man. It was, therefore, the responsibility of both the church and state to promote evangelism and social responsibility. It was the duty of popes, councils, monks, and clerks in the mediaeval church to regulate feudalism, protect labourers, and establish

educational and charitable institutions. And it was the duty of the state to support these programmes (Bong 1985 19-20).

#### ***3.2.2.5 Late Mediaeval church (1300-1500)***

The political, socio-economic, and religious climate changed during the Late Mediaeval Age (1300-1500). Feudalism began to decline and strong central monarchical governments were established in Europe. Economically, the continual development of trade and industry encouraged a capitalistic economy and changed the social structure. Large influxes of migrant peoples into towns for new jobs brought economic impoverishment to large sections of society, especially peasants and country gentry.

From the fourteenth century onwards the peasants were often restless because they suffered from growing economic pressures from landlords whose land was declining in value and who demanded more remuneration because of increases in the costs of the life style of the nobility. Suffering from these injustices and the burdens of famine, pestilence, and war, the peasants revolted against both secular and religious rulers (Bong 1985:21-22).

#### ***3.2.2.6 The Protestant Reformation (1517-1600):***

For the reformers, evangelism meant the restoration of the erring church to the Scripture's teachings. The reformers doctrines of 'sola gratia', 'sola fide', 'sola scriptura' and 'soli Deo Gloria' challenged every major tenet of the Roman Catholic Church.

##### ***a) Martin Luther (1483-1546)***

Luther taught that the Christian as the child of God, belongs to the kingdom of God, and as a citizen of this world he belongs to the kingdom of this world. He, therefore, is responsible to God as well as to the civil authority. Since God is in control of both kingdoms, Luther believed that God does not want the Christian to



compartmentalize his life into sacred and secular categories. The Christian is to live his life in this world in order to show forth the love of the kingdom of God.

Luther had a deep concern for evangelism; He therefore devoted his energies to translating the New Testament into German, so that all could read the Bible. He stressed preaching the Word, the communion and congregational singing. In regard to social responsibility Luther taught in his Ninety-five Theses that Christians are to be taught that he who gives to the poor or lends to the needy does a better work than buying pardons. He also declared that Christians are to be taught that he who sees a man in need, and passes him by, and gives (his money) for pardons, purchases not the indulgences of the pope, but the indignation of God (Dowley 1985:363).

***b) John Calvin (1509-1564)***

John Calvin had a deep concern for evangelism, he planted a mature church by preaching daily to the people. He published his commentary on the book of Romans. Many other commentaries followed. He was concerned about the social responsibility. He was invited to Geneva in 1541. The town council accepted his revision of the city laws, but many bitter disputes followed. Calvin also tried to bring every citizen under the moral discipline of the church (Dowley 1985: 380-381).

***c) Huldreich Zwingli (1484-1531)***

In 1515 he began to develop evangelical beliefs as he reflected upon the abuses of the church. He reformed society through the little and Great Councils. The Great council abolished street begging in 1524 and transformed the preachers' monastery into a 'poor house' where food was served each morning for the poor.

The council also converted monasteries and convents into schools, hospitals, and orphanages and established a charity bureau to distribute food for sick and pregnant women (Dowley 1985: 379).

### **3.2.2.7 The Evangelical Revival Movements in Europe and North America**

#### **a) Pietist Movement (1635-1705)**

The Pietists believed in changing society through changing individuals, particularly leaders, by the power of the gospel. By establishing the Universities of Halle and Tubigen, the pietists trained people in the Scriptures who later became evangelical leaders in Germany.

The pietists understood the doctrine of perfection to mean that a Christian should not just give intellectual assent to justification but he should also practice his faith by loving others as himself (Bong 1985:26-27).

#### **b) The Wesleyan Revival in England (1726-1817)**

John and Charles Wesley and George Whitfield were the greatest evangelicals in England in the eighteenth century. The Wesley brothers and other evangelicals brought a spiritual revival to England. The Methodist revival saved England from the horrors of a political revolution.

John Wesley often preached at 5:00 am so that people could hear the gospel before they went to work in mines and factories. He also preached in midmorning and midday in markets so that the crowds there would have opportunity to hear the gospel.

His passion to help the poor did not, however, stop with preaching. He did more than just talk about social reform. Among other things, he agitated for prison, liquor and labour reform; set up loan funds for the poor; campaigned against the slave trade and smuggling; opened a dispensary and gave medicines to the poor; worked to solve unemployment; and personally gave away considerable sums of money to persons in need (Bong 1985:27).

### **3.2.2.8 *Liberal and Orthodox Polarization of the church (20<sup>th</sup> Century)***

The seeds of major theological polarization in Protestantism were sown in mid-nineteenth century with the rise of biblical criticism. The emphasis in Evangelism was shifting from the traditional eschatological understanding of the kingdom to a horizontal earthly kingdom attainable here and now through purely secular means.

During the twentieth century, the liberal-orthodox controversy over the Scripture has greatly affected the way evangelicals understand the relationship between evangelism and social concern. The shift of emphasis away from social involvement does not mean that evangelicals totally lost their genuine concern for the poor and for social justice at home or abroad. However, mission stations provided various social services such as medicine, education, relief work and orphanages for the nationals. Most evangelicals interpreted social concern as a fruit of spiritual conversion and used it as a means of evangelism (Bong 1985:32-33).

### **3.2.2.9 *The Uniting Reformed Church In Southern Africa (U.R.C.S.A)***

The Dutch Reformed Church was transplanted from Holland to South Africa in 1652. They also considered it their duty to bring the Christian faith to indigenous peoples. The mission of the Dutch Reformed church family of churches is not only the oldest but also the most advanced. It is a young virile Church challenging the forces of secularisation, poverty and instability with which it is confronted, in the community it wishes to serve. It is very active in the in the field of evangelism and charitable services, thereby witnessing for the Lord in word and deed. Evangelism was done through the preaching of the gospel and planting of many churches through the efforts of the missionaries.

Through its ministry of Charity (Diaconal Services) the church became involved to an extensive degree in providing for the material and other needs of the destitute, handicapped and old aged persons, alcohol and drug addicts, neglected children etc. Some of the institutions for example Emnderi children's home, Kutlwanong school for the deaf, Groothoek Hospital etc. erected for such peoples were initiated

by the Dutch Reformed Church, but later transferred to the Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa. Financial support by way of contributions from the D.R.C and individuals assist the U.R.C.S.A to render excellent services. Subsidies from the state for these services also helped the church to a large degree to meet its budget .

We have seen that from the early church in the New Testament till the twenty-first century that evangelism and social concern are both intimately related in the history of the church, though they are expressed in different ways in different periods of history. From the early church to the present, God's people have an intimate and inseparable relationship between evangelism and social gospel.

### **3.3 ECUMENICALS VIEW OF MISSION**

The term ecumenism is the Anglo-Saxon transliteration of the Greek word 'oikumene'. The word means the inhabited earth (Luke 4:5; 21:26; Romans 10:18), or the world inhabited by mankind (Luke 2:1). Therefore, any gathering with a wide geographical representation can be called ecumenical in a non-technical sense.

The word 'oikumene' which is known also in classic Greek occurs in the New Testament only 15 times. Early church councils, such as the Council of Nicea (325), Constantinople (381), Ephesus (431), Chalcedon (451), and Constantinople II (553), are commonly referred to as ecumenical councils (Kato 1975:129). The word ecumenical is used to indicate councils, discussions, services, etc related to the unity of the church (Strassberger 1971:iv).

In the nineteenth century the word acquired a technical meaning and has come to be used to describe a specific effort on unity by a section of Christendom. The modern use of the term has two connotations. One is the general idea of a "brotherhood" gathering, which brings together both Roman Catholics and Protestants. This type of ecumenism is generally promoted by such projects as

Bible translation, Bible study, evangelism and charity, depending on the local atmosphere (Kato 1975:130).

The second type of ecumenism is the solidly institutionalised movement incarnated in the World Council of Churches. Its main aim is to bring all the churches together, including the Roman Catholic Church, under one ecclesiastical tent. Unity, almost at any cost is the greatest thing that could happen to the Christian Church. Any group that refuses to join the bandwagon of liberal ecumenism is considered a separatist, sectarian or uncooperative group (Kato 1975:130).

The ecumenical movement gave special attention to the poor. They laid emphasis on the humanization of social structures. Society, in its organizational structure, is to be made more humane for humans, inequalities in terms of power for example, are to be alleviated if not eliminated altogether. Humanization therefore, functions as a type of pre-evangelisation, preparing the sociological ground for a later reaping of the harvest and the establishment of the church in society.

A second and more recent direction for the attention paid to the world's poor society has been liberation theology and its emphasis upon the analysis of why there are socially oppressed groups and what can be done so that these groups can achieve their share of power in the world. Both ecumenical movement and liberation theology tend to be quite radical in analysing and providing solutions to social problems. The solution proposed is liberation from social injustices and equality, a solution that may involve social revolution in the name of God (Filbeck 1985: 122).

The ecumenical movement is being built on 19<sup>th</sup> century and early 20<sup>th</sup> century liberalism. Whereas liberation theology is a social hermeneutic modified by Marxism (Karl Marx 1883-1891). It offers solutions by the very nature of the social problems it reveals. That is, the solutions for social problems revealed by the hermeneutic are derived from and based upon the analysis (Filbeck 1985:123).

A basic characteristic of the Ecumenical position is its openness towards the world. They believe that God is not primarily interested in the church or in saved individuals, as Evangelicals tend to say, but that God is interested in the human world. The aim of mission today is the humanisation of society, by way of service to mankind. The church has to serve mankind unselfishly thus making life on earth more human in every respect (Bosch 1985:35-36). God in Christ therefore calls Mission to involvement with all structures, which dehumanise people. Eventually this involvement may even imply taking part in acts of violence such as participating in the acts of liberation movements.

Ecumenicals use scripture inductively in establishing a biblical basis for mission. According to Bosch this means that the situation in which they find themselves becomes the hermeneutical key (Saayman 1990:100). Emphasis among Ecumenicals is on doing rather than on the word. They often argue that the church has lost all its credibility in the world because it does not sufficiently champion the concerns of the down trodden. They believe that God is active in the world and that He reveals Himself through contemporary events. They regard social action as a major part, if not all, of the churches responsibility towards the world.

Ecumenicals are not interested in drawing clearly demarcated boundary items between the church and the world. There is so much of the world in the church that it is futile to try to segregate the two (Bosch 1987:52).

Apart from those ecumenicals that put all emphasis on the secularisation of the Church, there are also those who talk in specifically religious categories, but then in such a way that salvation in non-Christian religions is highlighted. These two approaches do not contradict one another, on the contrary, 'secular' and 'religious' ecumenicals complement one another. We should therefore no longer accept that the fulfilment of God's plan with the non-Christian peoples depends on the question of whether they get converted to Christianity and join one of its many denominations. The aim of our mission should not be to incorporate people into the

Church but rather to liberate them for a saving contact with the best in their own religious tradition (Bosch 1985:38-39).

### **3.3.2 HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE ABOUT THE VIEWS OF ECUMENICALS**

We will survey the historical perspective of the Ecumenicals from the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the 20<sup>th</sup> century. This survey will help us to see whether the ecumenical movement throughout the centuries was able to communicate the liberal version of the Gospel in the world.

#### **3.3.2.8 *The Student Christian Movement (1910)***

Ecumenism in the twentieth century began in a shared concern for evangelism in the Student Christian movement. There was a concern to recover shared denominational heritage. The movement was first organised at the Missionary Conference held at Edinburg in 1910. Its task was to survey the world mission of the non-Roman churches. In the first half of the century the Roman Catholic Church came to treating non-Catholics as anything other than heretics (Dowley 1985:634-635).

#### **3.3.2.9 *Helder Camara (1909-)***

Helder Camara was ordained as a priest in 1931 and became an archbishop in 1964. He has spoken out for the oppressed peoples of South America as the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Olinda. Although he held fascist ideas in his youth, the situation of poverty and his growing understanding of the social implications of the gospel led him to take up a radical position (Dowley 1985:637).

Helder Camara's greatest achievement has been to defend the rights of the poor through non-violent means. He has opted for non-violence, believing that it is rooted in the gospel. He believed that the force of truth, justice and love is greater than that of wars, murder and hatred. But he has claimed that the violence of the rich against

the poor, and the violence of the developed countries against the under-developed countries, is more worthy of condemnation than the revolutionary violence they create (Dowley 1985:637).

#### **3.3.2.10 *Liberation Theology***

Liberation theology is a term often used to encompass all the manifestations of liberating theology, but sometimes it is used to refer specifically to the form of liberating theology that emerged in Latin America. In black theology the emphasis falls on black people as the agents of mission. It is in such hopeless situations that liberation theologians seek to learn, together with the poor, what the liberating gospel of Jesus Christ means. When the gospel is discovered, change is indeed possible (Kritzinger 1987: 258).

Liberation theologians see the poor, not only as the most appropriate agents of their own political and economic liberation but also as the most authentic evangelisers (Kritzinger 1992: 258). Liberation theologians operate primarily in situations where most people are poor Christians. 'Church planting' in the evangelistic sense of the word is therefore not central to their theology. However if 'church planting' is understood as incarnating the church in society, then it can be said that one of the major purposes of liberation theologians is to 'plant' a living and liberating church among the wretched of the earth (Kritzinger 1992: 300).

#### **3.3.2.11 *The Dutch Reformed Church***

The Dutch Reformed church especially since 1857 has shown a strong sense of calling as regards the missionary task of the church, though some of the ulterior motives they had made their calling to be questioned by many theologians. In the execution of their calling the emphasis has been on evangelisation, but other needs of the people were not neglected, for example, medical and educational needs.



The failure of the D.R.C is related to an inability or unwillingness to adapt to changed circumstances as regards the general level of living of the citizens of South Africa.

The view that the "Christians" should not participate in politics is still held by some sincere, devoted members of the D.R.C. with the result that harmful effects of certain laws are not seen as related to the Christian responsibility to society. An overwhelming pride of race and culture has helped to blind many to the real situation in South Africa. The allegiance to race and to the then state, which protected the particular race, has blinded many to the fact that the Christian owes allegiance to Jesus Christ and to Him alone (Strassberger 1971: 46).

The General Synod of the Dutch Reformed Church (1999) finally accepted that Apartheid is a sin "Irrespective of how it might have been practised or experienced, apartheid in itself is wrong and sinful, also in its fundamental nature" The DRC is welcomed back by the World Alliance of Reformed Churches (WARC) to serve, and be enriched by other Reformed Churches once again. The General Synod agreed that "any theological justification of apartheid is a matter of status confession (that is to say a matter of faith) and its persistent disobedience to the Word of God is a theological heresy" (Botha 1999:14).

The Synod further decided that the essence of Belhar confession, which includes God's special concern for those who are poor, is to be accepted for the sake of unity. It even decided that Belhar does not contradict the DRC's present articles of faith, but they could not endorse Belhar as a confession of faith.

#### **3.3.1.5    *The World Council of Churches***

The World Council of Churches first met in Amsterdam in 1948. Its birth should, however be traced back to the 1910 Edinburgh Conference of the International Missionary Council (IMC). The World Council of Churches saw itself as a fellowship of churches searching for unity. While this continues to be the overall aim, today

there is a much greater appreciation of differences that arise from different historical, social and cultural contexts.

In 1948 there were 147 churches in this fellowship. Today the World Council of Churches has more than 330 member churches. Abounding with optimism, this conference of missionary societies and churches believed that the whole world would be evangelised in a very short period of time. Inheriting this optimism from the nineteenth century, the missionary delegates were totally Western in their thinking and blissfully unaware of the signs of war on the horizon. They saw themselves as part of the “advanced races” who had to go out and convert the “backward races”.

In December 1998 the World Council of Churches assembled in Harare with its theme “Turn to God, Rejoice in Hope”, which is interpreted as the turning to God in the form of turning to the poor and the marginalized, to women, to the handicapped, to gays and lesbians, to Africa and to people of other faiths (Botha 1999:4).

The World Council of Churches’ tireless commitment to ecumenism has enabled most of the world’s churches to act together and to speak with one voice especially when it comes to matters of social justice.

### **3.4 TOWARDS A HOLISTIC MISSION**

Clearly not every one agrees that Evangelism and Service should be separated as two distinct parts of mission. Many Evangelicals believe that Social action is not Evangelism. It has been too commonly assumed that evangelism is mainly confined to preaching or some other kind of speaking. This is not true.

The first Christians described their experience in two phrases: ‘we have seen’ and ‘we have heard’ (1 John1: 1). In Evangelism therefore every effort must be made to proclaim the Gospel visually as well as verbally.

The Gospel has to be seen in action as well as heard in words. This was certainly recognized in the New Testament. The life and fellowship was itself a visual aid to the Gospel. The life and witness of the individual Christian was a demonstration of what Christ can do in a human life.

### **3.4.1 Evangelism by witness**

The Greek term for witness is 'Martures' which means 'to testify' or to bear witness to a thing (Liddel & Scott 1984: 426). Jesus Christ told his disciples after the resurrection that "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth"(Acts 1:8). These words clearly mean that the disciples shall proclaim Christ as king, and publish those truths to the world by which His kingdom should be set up, and He would rule. They must openly and solemnly preach His gospel to the world. They shall confirm their testimony not as witnesses do, with an oath, but by the divine seal of miracles and supernatural gifts (Hendrickson 1994:6). This work of being witnesses must start at Jerusalem, Judea, and Samaria and to the end of the world.

The first Christians were witnesses in that they knew Christ. They were reiterating the words of Jesus that: '*And you will be my witnesses*' (Acts 1:8). A witness is someone who has heard or seen or known something; he has a particular experience or piece of knowledge (Douglas 1961:140). In this sense the first Christians were witnesses in that they knew Christ. Some of them knew him 'after the flesh'- they could remember His physical appearance. So deep was their conviction about the reality which they knew, that no threats could weaken them. "*Judge for yourself whether it is right in God's sight to obey you rather than God. For we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard*"(Acts 4:19-20). That was the compulsive nature of their witness.

Christians are expected to give their witness in the ordinary encounters of daily life, *"Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this in gentleness and respect"* (1 Peter 3:15). This is the kind of Evangelistic witness, which is obligatory for every layman and laywoman.

There is no stronger witness than the witness of changed lives and changed attitude towards the poor by loving them as we love ourselves. In a world of moral breakdown, it must be clear that a complete new order of things come about: *"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation: the old has gone, the new has come!"* (II Corinthians 5:17).

The poor should see that we bear witness not only through our lips but also through our deeds. Many people have come to think of Christian witness as standing up before a crowd of people and telling them one's own story of finding Christ. Witnessing is not a five minutes activity on a floodlit platform before some thousands of people; it is not the publicity excitement of a tremendous rally for Christ. Witnessing in its truest sense is when we are least aware of publicly demonstrating something, but is being simply caught up in the toils, heartaches, glories, depths and peaks and mundane chores of life (Douglas 1961:143).

### **3.4.2 Evangelism by fellowship**

Evangelism is also what Jesus Christ does through the church's fellowship. The Greek term which best describes fellowship is 'koinonia'. It has a wealth of meaning: association, partnership, community, and communion, joint participation a common share. Koinonia is the spirit of generous sharing as contrasted with the spirit of selfish getting. The Christian koinonia is that bond which binds Christians to each other to Christ and to God (Baclay 1973: 173).

In the New Testament we see how wide this Christian sharing is. Firstly, all men share in 'human nature' (Hebrews 2: 14). Secondly Christians share in 'material

things' (Romans 12: 13; 15:27; Galatians 6:6). Thirdly, sharing is used in 'an action' (1 Timothy 5:22) we are partners with each other and with God. Lastly, sharing is used as 'an experience' (1 Peter 4:13). The man who suffers for his faith, in that very suffering shares the experience of Jesus Christ (Baclay 1973:175).

There is an interesting use of the word by Paul in Philippians 1: 5 where he expresses thanks 'of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now'. The Greek version suggests that Paul is referring to their co-operation towards or in aid of the Gospel. The Philippians had taken their full part in community-evangelism.

It is quite clear from the New Testament that the very existence of the Church was of Evangelistic significance. It was from the outset a community with a difference. It was marked by intense fellowship, a new quality of love, awareness which have the Holy, and deep sense of the presence of the Spirit.

The poor people must experience that Christians care for each other. Our Lord Jesus Christ said: *"A new command I give you: Love one another. As I loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another"* (John 13:34-35). These words clearly mean that our love to one another must be free and ready, laborious and expensive, constant and persevering. We must also love one another from this motive and upon this consideration, because Christ has loved us (Hendrickson 1994:891).

As Christians we belong to a new family, the family of God *"Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow-citizens with God's people and members of God's household, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone"* (Ephesians 2:19-20). Poor people should experience this in the way that Christians care and support each other in times of stress and distress. They must also experience this in the way we pray for each other in times of sickness, financial need and family strain. They must see how Christians value each other's gifts and how we take responsibilities for one another

to make sure that everyone's gifts are developed and used to the full. They must even experience this in our discipline. Discipline is a part of our love for each other. One cannot allow one's brother to fall back into sin or to neglect his person, his gifts or his family. We must hold each other to the highest standard. Our fellowship should be the one which bridges all barriers of race, class and education, a fellowship which is only possible because we have fellowship with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ through the indwelling fellowship of the Holy Spirit (Greyling 1987:155).

Evangelism is the task of the Church, of minister and laity together. Paul makes it clear that the role of the Christian ministry is to rouse and equip the congregation for the corporate task of Evangelism. 'His gifts to men' were varied. *"It was He who gave some to be apostles, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up"* (Ephesians 4:11-12).

### **3.4.3 Evangelism by service**

The Greek word 'Diakonia' can best be translated as service. The three words 'Diakonein, Diakonia and Diakonos' come from the same classical Greek source, of which the verb form is 'Diakonein'. Diakonein means, in a more narrow sense, "waiting table" or "To care for one's physical needs", and "serving food as a sacrifice to the gods".

From these meanings there develops a broader sense of 'Diakonein' as service in general. The substantive 'Diakonia' is the action of 'Diakonein', and 'Diakonos is the person who performs 'Diakonein' (Van Klinken 1988:26). One can detect three different usages of these related words in the New Testament:

- a) A general meaning of service to others, but with a profound significance.
- b) A specialized meaning: a function or office within the church.

- c) A further restricted meaning –specialized function or office within the church, especially related to the poor.

In his book, Conn (1982 :42 ) best describes the Greek word *Diakonia* as the righteous deed, or as the doing of justice. To love one's neighbour was to do justice to the neighbour. Israel was to love the resident alien by giving the alien food and clothing (Deuteronomy 10:18-19). By displaying this justice, Israel witnessed to the nations. *"I have chosen him, so that he will direct his children and his household after him to keep the way of the Lord by doing what is right and just, so that the Lord will bring about for Abraham what he has promised him"* (Genesis 18:19). The New Testament church does not escape the obligation of doing justly for evangelism. We are marked as those who hunger and thirst after righteousness (Matthew 5:6). James calls us to a faith that works. And it works in terms of the poor and the hungry (James 2:14-17). The doing of justice becomes the distinguishing mark of the people of God before the world.

Jesus Christ commissioned the 'Diaconal' task of the church; whose life embodied 'diakonein'. The Son of man came to serve –the underprivileged that are described in the Old Testament as the hungry, the thirsty, strangers, naked, the ill and the prisoners. In his identification with them he suffers with them (Van Klinken 1988: 32).

The ministry of Jesus followed the pattern of the Suffering Servant. For this reason the church also must be in the form of a servant. The church exists to serve. It is only within this context that the Church's evangelism can be earthed and relevant and effective. Service must be the unchanging background to the Church's witness. It is only the fulfilment of its role as a servant that entitles the Church to present Christ to the world it serves. *"For we do not preach ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake"* (II Corinthians 4:5).

One of the essential aspects of 'Diakonia' can be found in Deuteronomy 15:7ff. It deals with poverty, which did not exist during the period when the Israelite people were nomads. The poor were referred to as the underdogs, the widow and orphans, the landless and the slaves; and their poverty was created by the unjust actions of other people. According to the Lord, there will never be any poor among those who obey him in carefully keeping his commandments, for the Lord blesses with great prosperity (Deuteronomy 15: 4-5).

John Calvin's teaching on the 'diaconate' defined it as permanent ecclesiastical ministry of care to the poor and sick, the ministry of the church as a body of the physical suffering of human beings (McKee 1989:93).

The implications of the ecumenical movement for 'Diakonia' are many. Perhaps the most vital is the fact that if (as all believe) the nature of the church is to be a servant as Christ was a servant, then no Christian, no church member can escape the obligation to 'Diakonia' and still claim to be faithful to Christ and the church (McKee 1989:93).

We must invite the poor to share with us in our Christian service. Christians are the followers of the great 'Diakonos', the great Servant—Jesus Christ, who came to this world to serve and not to be served and to give His life to redeem many people *'For even the Son of man did not come to be served, and give His life as a ransom for many'* (Mark 10:45)

We must also care for the jobless, the homeless and the hungry. We must, together with the poor battle against the wrongs in our society, which lead to poverty, and malnutrition in a country of wealth. They must fight with us for the renewal of broken lives and broken homes. They must experience that the driving force in our lives is the love of Christ, for Paul says 'Christ's love compel us' (II Corinthians 5:14).



In this world of human suffering, where service is always acceptable, it has been noticed that the sick or the hungry will listen to the Christian Gospel with far more attention if it is being proclaimed by the same individuals who are healing or feeding them. Specialization in this field is of little avail. Words may be the normal medium of evangelism but they are not the only medium.

Neither a deed-only nor a word –only strategy is adequate for the poor. Poor people need more than bread and more than verbal truth if their lives are to be changed and made whole. The mistake of some evangelists is to think that words alone are enough. The lie of some Marxists is that people need and want only food. Both approaches ignore the example of Christ, and both are inadequate for the poor. Diaconate ministry among the poor must be holistic, going beyond temporary relief to treating the long-range causes of poverty and the resulting conditions (Greenway & Monsma 1989:178-179).

We need to understand that every member of the congregation must use his/her charismata in the service of others. Every congregation is fully a manifestation of the one, universal church. This means among other things, that as with the church in general which has its origins in Christ, the head of the body (Colossians 1:18), Christ is also the head of the congregation. The love of God in Christ takes shape in the congregation. This love is related to God's love for the world in sending his Son. The congregation being part of the world participates in this love for the world when it fulfils the law of Christ.

#### ***3.4.4 Evangelism by worship***

The Greek word 'Leiturgia' can be translated as worship. In the very early days of Hellenistic Greek the word 'Leitorgein', the verb, meant to undertake some service of the state voluntarily and of one's own free will. Later the word meant to perform the services, which the State laid upon citizens specially, those who qualified to perform them. The services were the same, but now instead of being voluntary, they became compulsory (Baclay 1973: 177).

In the New Testament the word have been used on three occasions for the following purpose:

- a) It is used for the service rendered by man to man. So Paul, when he is set on taking the collection for the poor saints of Jerusalem, uses 'Leitorgein' "This service that you perform is not only supplying the needs of God's people but is overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God (II Corinthians 9:12).
- b) 'Leitorgein' is used specifically for religious service (Luke 1:23; Acts 13:2).
- c) In the letters of Paul, the word 'Leitourgos' in the later Greek simply meant 'a workman' (Baclay 1973:178).

Liturgy is the name given ever since the days of the apostles to the act of taking part in the solemn corporate worship of God by the priestly society of Christians, who are the body of Christ. In worship it is God who always takes the initiative: Christian worship is the response to the word of God (Loving 1989:2).

Since liturgy is the term, which covers generally all that worship, which is officially organized by the church and which is open to and offered by or in the name of all who are members of the church. The liturgy is applicable to those who have been called by Christ to be his own. Worship is the corner stone of the church.

Christians have regular weekly worship services, regular prayer meetings, home services, Sunday schools as well as women's and youth services which we can use to attract the poor to our services. We must invite the poor to join us in those services. Worship or liturgy is fellowship to God. The hymns of prayer and praise must speak the language of love. Our prophetic preaching must call people to repentance, to the experience of conversion and the renewal of life. In the worshipping church the presence of the risen Christ can be experienced, calling his people to a total dedication of their lives and demanding the renewal of their

societies so that God may rule completely over all (I Corinthians 15:28) (Greyling 1987:154).

### 3.5 Conclusion

Evangelism must involve both verbal witness and exemplary deeds. One cannot avoid social questions if he is witnessing to prostitutes, street kids, the unemployed, the hungry etc. about Jesus Christ. Evangelism does have a relation to the existential situation of humanity. At the centre of evangelism there should be an answer. Jesus' evangelism in the Nazareth synagogue is the announcement of the good news for the poor, the societies leftovers, the imprisoned, the blind and the downtrodden (Luke 4:18-21). For Peters evangelism is the demonstration of the church's service in love (1 Peter 1:22; 2:17). Paul's authenticity as an evangelist of the kingdom is proved by a collection for the Jerusalem poor (Galatians 2:9-10).

All people have both physical and spiritual needs. It is the task of the church to see to it that man's needs are met. It is not enough for us to give man bread to eat, we must also preach the good news to them. It is written: *'Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God'* (Matthew 4:4). In carrying out this mandate we must instruct by word and deed i.e. holistically. We must answer to the needs of the poor in the informal settlements by offering them skills accompanied by the living word of God.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **EMPIRICAL RESEARCH: SOCIO-CULTURAL SITUATION OF ORANGE FARM COMMUNITY**

#### **4.1 Historical background of Orange Farm**

Orange Farm is the largest informal settlement in the Gauteng Province. It is situated between the N1 South, 60km from Johannesburg, and the Vaal Triangle. In 1988 Orange Farm grew into one of the largest informal settlements in the PWV area. Most of the people were forcefully removed from the three squatter settlements, namely Weiler's Farm, Mshenguville, Jukskei and others were from the nearby townships of Evaton and Sebokeng. All these people were transferred to Orange Farm. They did not want to be transferred to Orange Farm because they were not paying for any services in their respective areas. Since they did not have any infrastructure, they were promised that they would be given enough land, water and electricity.

The first group who agreed to be transferred were from Mshenguville squatter community in Soweto. The reason for their removal was that they were overcrowded, almost ten families were using one toilet and only one big tap for the whole squatter community. Their neighbouring community in Mofolo had many complaints because they were sharing toilets and water taps with them. They were also complaining about the high level of crime in their community, which was caused by the squatters.

The second group came from Weilers Farm squatter community. Their living conditions were also bad. They really struggled to get water. The municipality had to transport water for them on a daily basis. The whites in the nearby farms were also complaining that their cows and sheep were being stolen on a daily basis and slaughtered at Weilers Farm. They also complained that ever since these people occupied that farm the level of crime had increased tremendously. Under the

leadership of Mrs Olga Luthu, the community leader, they then agreed to be transferred to Orange Farm.

The third group came from Jukskei in Alexander. Their shacks were erected next to the river, and during heavy rains, the shacks would be lost. These people were also transferred to Orange Farm.

The last group came from the nearby townships, namely Evaton and Sebokeng. Their main reason to move to Orange Farm was the shortage of houses in their areas, because the government did not want to build houses for them. Most of them were hiring rooms and paying rent on a monthly basis to the owner of the stand.

Orange Farm was originally earmarked for agricultural land use, especially in the production of mealies, milk and chickens. In the early 1990's, there were already more than 300 000 (three hundred thousand) people, who live in Orange Farm (Race Relation Survey 1993-1994). The people were faced with many challenges of living in shacks in an area without the proper infrastructure. People live in structures made of tins, plywood, corrugated iron and other materials. These structures are commonly called 'shacks' (Douwes-Dekker 1995:8).

In certain areas the accumulation of refuse was so bad that access to properties could hardly be found. It is, however, obvious that residents usually try to clean up in the proximity of their own houses, but in some instances they have nowhere else to dump refuse than in the streets. Some landlords provide a refuse service at a cost, while others tried to burn it.

Both public and private schools are packed to capacity, and more than 80 per cent of children of school going age attend school. As a result of this obvious lack of educational facilities and also from the economic realities students are often forced to look for employment.

In this chapter we will examine the social and cultural systems of different types of people in the informal settlement and learn how to better plant churches in them. By social systems we mean the nature, allocation, and use of relationships. This includes the statuses and roles of those involved in the relationship. It also includes the types of social and societal groups people form, their institutions, and their larger societal systems (Hiebert 1999:32).

The second key concept we will use in analysing humans and their activities is culture. In ordinary English, we use this term to refer to the beliefs and the behaviour of the elite. In this study the term 'culture' refers to, "the more or less integrated systems of ideas, feelings, and values and their associated patterns of behaviour and products shared by a group of people who organize and regulate what they think, feel, and do" (Hiebert 1985:30).

## **4.2 EMPIRICAL RESEARCH CONDUCTED IN ORANGE FARM**

### **4.2.1 Introduction**

In this chapter I intend analysing the results of the empirical research, which was conducted among the members of the different churches in the community of Orange Farm informal settlement.

As far as it could be established, no empirical research has been done on this theme in Orange Farm. What is presented here is the results of sample research, conducted in Orange Farm on the planting and growing of churches in the informal settlement community. The empirical research flows directly from the arguments and theological stances analysed in the preceding chapters.

What is presented in this chapter and in the tables will provide relevant information, which is necessary for the planting of churches in the informal settlement community.

It is against this background that I decided on empirical research and sent a questionnaire to the various members of different churches in the community of Orange Farm to determine their standpoints, opinions and attitudes concerning the planting of churches. Without empirical data at one's disposal, one runs the risk of endless speculation about the best method of planting churches in the informal settlement.

#### ***4.2.1.1 Gathering primary data and the sampling process***

A questionnaire was used to gather primary data from different people from every extension in Orange Farm (See attached appendix i). The second questionnaire was directed at different ministers of religion in Orange Farm (see attached Appendix ii). Ministers of certain congregations were consulted. The reason for this decision was to get their support in allaying the fear of their congregants about the nature of the investigation.

#### ***4.2.1.2 Quota-sampling method***

The quota sampling method is employed in the research. Each selected church is generally represented in the sample proportion as in the entire population. Forty different churches managed to complete and return the questionnaires. Amongst the respondents, there were widows, the unemployed, the elderly and the young people.

#### ***4.2.1.3 Responses***

The ideal with every questionnaire is that all members of the initial sample complete and return their questionnaires. A total of 60 questionnaires were distributed equally to Reformed church members, charismatic church members and to the Independent churches. Finally 40 people responded. A minimum of a 50 % in response is adequate for analysis and reporting.

### **4.2.2 RESPONSE TO THE QUESTIONNAIRE (appendix I)**

#### ***4.2.2.1 Biographical information***

The youngest person who was asked to fill the questionnaire was 21 years old and the eldest was 63 years old. The average age for church member who responded is

35 years old. There were 24 females (60%) and 16 males (40%) who completed the questionnaire.

The overwhelming majority of those who responded (55%) were the Southern Sotho speaking people, (9,5%) people are from the two other Sotho groups, namely Tswana and Northern Sotho, Almost 30,5% of the respondents are Zulu speaking people, 5% belong to Venda, Tsonga or unspecified black ethnic groups.

Only 5% of the respondents attended school up to a primary education, a big percentage namely 65% indicated that they completed their high school education, 10% completed their primary education and 20% were at Tertiary institutions. The fact that all the respondents went to school shows that most of them can read and write.

The fact that almost 45% were unemployed, 17,5% are housewives serves as a clear indication that a substantial number of the respondents are from economically inactive strata of the society. Only 35% of the respondents are from the high socio-economic strata.

**Table 4.1**  
**Biographical information**

	<b>Numbers</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>1. Age</b>		
Below 30 yrs	01	2,5
Between 30-40 yrs	24	60
Between 41-50 yrs	07	17,5
Between 51-60 yrs	07	17,5
Above 60 yrs	01	2,5
<b>2. Sex</b>		
Female	24	60
Male	16	40



### **3. Home Language**

S. Sotho	22	55
N. Sotho	1	2,5
Tswana	2	5
Zulu	13	30,5
Tsonga	1	2,5
Venda	1	2,5

### **4. School qualifications**

Never at school	0	0
Primary education	2	5
High school	26	65
Diploma	4	10
Tertiary institution	8	20

### **5. Occupation**

Employed	14	35
Pensioner	0	0
Medically unfit	0	0
Housewife	7	17,5
Student	0	0
Unemployed	18	45

#### **4.2.2.2 Community**

The respondents live in the informal settlement. Almost 75% of the respondents were allocated stands by the local authorities or the government, and 10% by the street committees, the other 15% did not answer the question.

Almost 65% of the respondents agreed that their sites had been serviced, and 35 % do not agree. Most of the respondents agreed that these sites had been planned and were numbered. Some sites have water taps while some are using one

and were numbered. Some sites have water taps while some are using one common water tap for up to twenty families. Almost 40% of the respondents agreed that their sites had sewerage and 60 % do not agree. All the respondents (100%) agreed that they had electricity in their homes.

We need to differentiate between the **informal settlement** and the **squatter community**. Ntshumayelo (1994:15) describes the squatter camp as a place where people are living on a piece of land without prior permission given to them. South Africa has many squatters and they are found on the outskirts of "white cities". Maluleke (1997:22) describes the informal settlements, as the place where streets and roads are planned, although they are in a very bad condition

The term squatting has legal implications. Finlayson (1980:1) describes a squatter as a person who is illegally occupying a piece of land, building or other form of property and in the eyes of the law, is liable to eviction and prosecution.

Very few of the respondents are working, 30% indicated that they earn less than R500 per month, whereas 10% earn between R500-R1000, 5% earn between R100-R1500 and 7,5% earn between R1500-R2000. Only 2,5%, earn above R2000 per month and 45% of the respondents indicated that they were not working. This really shows that people with low income, stay in informal settlements and that most of these people are poor.

The respondents reveal that they earn their living in the alternative economic system known as 'informal economy'. They are creative in their ways of earning a living, and they support one another within the settlement with a variety of kinds of mutual assistance, for example, Tuck shops (100%), transport system (100%), and when there are funerals they help each other by means of burial societies (87,5%), which means that the bereaved family would not encounter trouble for burying their loved ones.

An overwhelming majority (100%) responded by saying that the needs of the people are ownership of the land, on which they have built their houses. They also need water, sewerage, electricity, better transport, clinics, schools and other technological infrastructure necessary for a decent lifestyle.

Most of the people responded by stating the following reasons for poverty;

- a) Firstly, people are poor because they are **unemployed** (65%)
- b) Secondly there are people who are lazy people who would rather survive on **welfare** than find a job and go to work (37,5%).
- c) Thirdly, they are **physically or mentally incapable** of working at a normal level (5%)
- d) Fourthly, many others are in the category of **working poor**. They are employed, but as a result of poor education, low skill level or racial factors, they do not earn enough to rise above poverty (2,5%)
- e) The fifth group consists of **women who are heads of the households** with dependent children (25%)
- f) Sixthly, there are the **elderly poor**, who have only a small pension to live on (37,5%)
- g) Finally, there are people who are poor because of **alcohol or drug addiction** or some other self-destructive lifestyle (2,5)

The majority of the respondents (87,5%) agreed that the statistics of the poor children in the informal settlements was a nightmare, whereas 12,5% do not agree. Most of these children are minors. They cannot vote, or work. Most of them do not even go to schools. Most of these children can be seen loitering in the streets at night.

The respondents cite the following examples as the root causes of poverty: unemployment (100%), divorce (25%), crime (62%), homelessness (37%) and 25% believe that Aids is the cause. We can thus conclude by saying that, the problem of

poverty and related issues, are complex. Poverty involves more than the lack of material goods and finances. It includes powerlessness, social and political oppression, lack of education and unemployment. Muthengi (1992:96) describes poverty as a global reality, which should be taken seriously. It is evident in the urban setting, where people have moved from rural areas to the cities in search of jobs and economic survival.

Unemployment is particularly serious among the youth (62,5%), whereas women (37,5%) and single parents (40%) are unemployed.

We can thus conclude by saying that unemployment is probably the most severe problem, which the informal settlement communities are experiencing, and is conceivably the root cause of many other problems.

**Table 4.2**

**B. Community**

	Numbers	Percentage
<b>6. Who allocated a stand for you?</b>		
Local government	30	75
Street committee leaders	10	25
Other (Please state)	0	0
<b>7. Is there any infrastructure where you live?</b>		
Yes	26	65
No	14	35
<b>8. If Yes, what kind of infrastructure is there?</b>		
Water on the stand	15	37,5
Electricity	40	100
Sewerage	15	37,5
Numbered site	40	100

Proper streets	5	12,5
Other (Specify)		

**9. How much do you earn per month? (Just tick)**

R 0- R500	12	30
R 500- R1000-00	4	10
R1000- R1500-00	2	5
R1500- R2000-00	3	7,5
Above R2000	1	2,5
Unemployed	18	45

**10. How do you support each other in the informal settlement?**

Tuck shops	40	100
Transport Systems	40	100
Burial Societies	35	87,5
Other	0	0

**11. What are the needs of the people in your area?**

Ownership of the land	40	100
Houses	30	75
Water	15	37,5
Electricity	0	0
Better transport system	35	87,5
Clinics	5	12,5
Other (Specify)	0	0

**12. What were the reasons that you became impoverished?**

Unemployment	26	65
Welfare donations	15	37,5
Physically incapable	2	5
Category of working poor	1	2,5
Mother as head of family	10	25
Elderly poor who live on pension	15	37,5
Drug addiction	1	2,5

**13. Are there many children who are poor in your area?**

Yes	35	87,5
No	5	12,5

**14. What are the causes of Poverty?**

Unemployment	40	100
Divorce	10	25
Crime	25	62
Homelessness	15	37
Aids	10	25
Other (Specify)		

**15. Which special group is the most unemployed in your area?**

Women	15	37,5
Youth	25	62,5
Single Parents	16	40
Specify (Others)	0	0

#### **4.2.2.3 Crime**

Crime is a very complex phenomenon. Almost 87,5% of the respondents agreed that the crime rate in their community is high and is not easily controlled, whereas 12,5% do not agree.

An overwhelming majority (75%) agreed that people who commit crime are people coming from our neighbouring countries like Zimbabwe, Nigeria, Malawi etc. and that they do not have legal permits to be citizens of South Africa.

Though a very small group of the respondents (25%) say people who commit crime are coming from our society. Marsh & Katz (1989:2) describes crime as an act, which breaks the law. In addition to breaking the law, a crime can be followed by criminal proceedings, including punishment. We should always remember that for every crime committed; there is a victim. We must not only address the criminal act and neglect the victim.

On the question whether crime rate escalates everyday in our area, the respondents differ. A high percentage (75%) of the respondents believe that there is more crime today, than in the past. There seems to be a more varied opinion as to whether there is actually more crime today than in the days of apartheid. Most people believe that in the days of apartheid the general level of fear and harassment kept crime to lower levels. What is different? Some contend that it is the publicity given to criminal acts today. Crime has become highly visible.

Around 50% of the respondents agreed that most of the crime, which is committed, is not reported, and people end up blaming the police. Most of the people today want to take the law into their own hands. Everyone agrees that crime today is more violent than it was in the past. And this violence, whether it is rape, child abuse, or killings by hijackers and burglars, is of particular concern to the people.

It is a fact to most of the people that crime says something about our morals, our religion, life, and our way of discipline, our way of education, our economics and our politics.

An overwhelming majority (100%) of the respondents agreed that poverty and unemployment were among the major causes of crime. Other people (12,5%) believe that the ever-widening gap between rich and poor gives rise to crime. This means that we will never have a peaceful and crime-free society, as long as there are such glaring disparities in living standards.

About 60 per cent of the respondents feel that we should not blame the present government for the high incidence of crime. What they say (40%) is that the present government inherited it from the previous government. They say the government is doing everything in its power to combat crime. Cardinal Napier believes that the government is encouraging this loss of respect for life by legalising and promoting abortion on demand and euthanasia ( Mdhlela & Nolan 2001:3). Whereas Archbishop Buti Tlhagale of Bloemfontein, list some of the good things this government has done, "It has introduced legislation to streamline the justice system, tightened bail conditions, seized the property of known criminals, set up special forces, like the Scorpions, to combat crime, a commission to investigate corruption and a public protector" (Mdhlela & Nolan 2001:3).

About 80 per cent of the respondents agree that the most dangerous form of crime, which is committed in the informal settlement, has been "murder" which is caused by young people who are carrying illegal firearms. They reiterate by saying that a great number of people are dying everyday and on weekends it is worse. In the past young people would carry knives, spears and kill people, the whole idea now has been changed to guns. Their main reason is, they say, "if a person is being stabbed with a knife, he suffers a pain for a long time before he dies, whereas with a gun a person dies immediately".



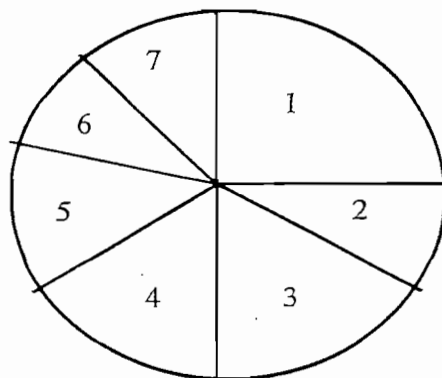
All the respondents (100%) say that assault of both human dignity and human life is the other kind of crime. Most women and children in the informal settlements are sexually abused. Some are not only raped but they are physically assaulted. Even small babies of four years old are being raped, some of the young girls are being raped and killed instantly.

About 75 per cent of the respondents say that car hijacking is one of the greatest problems in the informal settlement. Most of the cars stolen are normally found in Orange Farm. Sometimes if your car is stolen, they strip it into pieces and sell it as parts. "The most terrifying thing about these hijackers is that you cannot threaten them, because they do not value their own lives. They are not afraid of death. They have nothing to lose. And that's the tragedy of it" (Mdlhela & Nolan 2001:3).

The respondents were asked to list the kinds of drugs young people are taking. Almost 55 per cent of the respondents mentioned dagga, glue and spirit, whereas 45 % mentioned cocaine as the kind of drugs the young people are taking. In the interview that I had with the young people they said they use these drugs because they believe that when they are drunk, they start experiencing new things in their life, and they become strong, wiser and brave. The other reason is that drugs make them feel warm even in the cold weather.

Research on crime has been a successful one because there are records of the reported crime in the offices of South African Police Service. These records are being kept confidential. Nevertheless, comparative data is important in the understanding of crime in the informal settlement

Schematically it can be drawn as follows:



- 1) Car Hijacking – 25%
- 2) Taxi Violence – 20%
- 3) Murder – 20%
- 4) Child and Women Abuse – 20%
- 5) Assault – 10%

**Table 4.3**

**B. Crime**

	<b>Numbers</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>16. Is crime rate controlled in your area?</b>		
Yes	5	12,5
No	35	87,5
<b>17. Where do the criminals come from?</b>		
From our community	10	25
Outside South Africa	30	75
Specify	0	0
<b>18. Is the crime rate escalating everyday in your area?</b>		
Yes	30	75
No	10	25
<b>20. What are the major causes of crime?</b>		
Poverty	40	100
Unemployment	40	100
Ever-widening gap between the rich and the poor	5	12,5
<b>21. Who is to be blamed for this crime?</b>		
Present government	16	40
Previous government	24	60
Social institutions like churches, schools etc.	02	05
Our community	0	0

**22. Which is the most dangerous form of crime?**

Murder	33	80
Assault	33	80
Stealing	07	20
Other	0	0

**23. What kind of assault is imminent in your community?**

Abuse	20	50
Rape	20	50

**24. Which is the greatest form of crime committed in the informal settlement?**

Car hijacking	30	75
Abuse	10	25
Murder	10	25
Other		

**25. Which kind of drugs are young people taking?**

Cocaine	18	45
Dagga	22	55
Glue	22	55
Spirit	22	55

**4.2.2.4 Homelessness**

Housing is a problem for most of the people. Most of the families are really struggling to find a place to live because they came to the cities to look for jobs. Annually thousands of the poor move to the cities in the hope of work, excitement, and a better life. With no money to rent even the poorest of apartments, they are forced to build cardboard, wood or tin shelters where they find unused land (Hiebert 1999:270-271).

About 62,5 per cent of the respondents say that most people in the informal settlement are really facing the problem of housing, because they cannot afford the high rents of city housing and are also not able to buy their own houses. The other 25% of the respondents say the shortage of houses causes people to be homeless whilst 12,5% of the respondents say due to unemployment they are unable to buy their own homes.

The respondents were asked to identify the causes of homelessness. Almost 62,5% responded by saying it is unemployment, whereas 32,5% say its divorce and family disorganisation. The fact that many people are homeless really shows that there are thousands of people who are on the streets and they need to be ministered to.

According to the respondents (62,5%) their only hope is to occupy the unused land. The process of occupying land, is best described by Hiebert (1999:224) "dynamic leader organises a group of his relatives and friends and on a given night they move to an open piece of land and start building houses".

Almost all the respondents say the homeless people are the 'street people', the poorest of the poor (100%), whereas 37,5% of the respondents say they are the destitute, prostitutes, street children and the unwanted. According to Greenway & Monsma (1989:183), the term 'Street People' is actually a broad term that covers a heterogeneous population with one thing in common: its members are homeless. A wide variety of individuals is included: runaway boys and girls, displaced families, legal and illegal refugees, prostitutes, alcoholics and drug addicts, the aged and senile and the mentally retarded. Homeless street people are a nation's most visible social failure. Certainly they are one of the most serious challenges to our moral sensitivity. If we fail to see or care about the homeless and destitute at our doorstep, we dare not talk about our concern for the poor anywhere else.

About 75 per cent of the respondents say that one can see these homeless people loitering at night in the streets. Whereas 25% say they can be seen occupying the

About 75 per cent of the respondents say that one can see these homeless people loitering at night in the streets. Whereas 25% say they can be seen occupying the unused buildings. Greenway and Monsma (1989:183) confirms this by saying "children are among them, too: in growing numbers whole families drift from one temporary shelter to another or make their home in the cities' welfare hotels".

According to the respondents, it is actually impossible to get the exact figures of the homeless people. But our streets are full of homeless people. About 25% of the respondents say homelessness increase due to a growing shortage of affordable rental housing and 75% of the respondents say it is because of a simultaneous increase in poverty. Keller (1997:17) mentions two factors which cause an increase in poverty: the decrease in labour-market for large segments of the work force, and the declining value and availability of public benefits.

**Table 4.4**  
**Homelessness**

	Numbers	Percentage
<b>26. Why are most people homeless?</b>		
Lack of housing	10	25
Cannot afford high rents	25	62,5
Unable to buy a new house	5	12,5
Other	0	0
<b>27. What causes homelessness?</b>		
Unemployment	25	62,5
Family disorganisation & Divorce	15	37,5

<b>28.</b>	<b>What do the homeless people want to achieve in their lives?</b>		
	To get a home	15	37,5
	To occupy the unused land	25	62,5
<b>29.</b>	<b>Who are the homeless people?</b>		
	The poor	40	100
	The destitute	15	37,5
	The prostitute	15	37,5
	Street Children	15	37,5
	The unwanted	0	0
	Others	0	0
<b>30.</b>	<b>Where can one find the homeless poor?</b>		
	On the streets	30	75
	Unused buildings	10	25
	Other places	0	0
<b>31.</b>	<b>How many people are homeless in Orange Farm</b>		
	Between 0 –100	4	10
	Between 100 –500	4	10
	500 –1000	2	5
	Not sure	30	75
<b>32.</b>	<b>What causes homelessness to increase today?</b>		
	Shortage of affordable houses	10	25
	Unemployment	15	37,5
	Poverty	15	37,5

Other

0

0

#### **4.2.2.5 Illegal immigrants**

A majority (80%) responded by saying the immigrants come from the neighbouring countries of South Africa, for example, Zambia. Malawi. Mozambique etc. Whereas 20% say they are from other cities within South Africa. This means that in ministering to the people in the informal settlements we should know that we are going to meet the immigrants. A majority of 87.5% affirmed that these immigrants are illegal because they do not have permits to stay in our country, and as such they pose a big threat to the informal settlement community. The respondents say these people are unemployed, but most of them are skilled because they do motor mechanic, auto-electric work etc to earn a living. About 12,5%%5 of the respondents said these people are registered to be citizens and they work in South Africa.

**Table 4.5**  
**Illegal Immigrants**

	Numbers	Percentage
<b>33. Where do the illegal immigrants come from?</b>		
From neighbouring countries e.g. Malawi, Zambia, etc	32	80
From other cities within S.A	8	20
Other countries:	0	0
<b>34. Are they registered to be citizens of South Africa?</b>		
Yes	35	87,5
No	5	12,5
<b>35. Are they employed?</b>		
Yes	35	87,5
No	5	12,5

#### **4.2.2.6 Literacy**

According to the Oxford Dictionary of current English, the term illiterate means 'not able to read or write' or 'ignorant in a particular field' (Crowther 1996:591). Most people have the perception that the people of the informal settlement are illiterate. They think that most cannot read nor write. This can be true to a certain extent, we meet these people in our different churches and we can see that some of them cannot read their Bibles. Most of these people suffer from an inferiority complex. They are afraid to be laughed at by other people who are educated. They are afraid to take part in matters that concern their lives, thinking that they cannot make any worthwhile contribution (Maluleke 1997:8).

About 62,5 per cent of the respondents say their leaders are also illiterate. In most cases they misinterpret the information from the authorities for their community. And most of them can hardly express themselves in good English. 37,5% did not answer the question.

Most of the respondents (37,5%) say illiteracy is caused by the high drop out rate of children who are leaving school at an early age, whereas 37,5% attribute it to the fact that most people never attended school in their childhood, about 25% of the respondents say the cause is lack of schools. Maluleke (1997:56) confirms this by saying that thousands and thousands of people are flocking to the cities to seek employment but they cannot read nor write.

**Table 4.6**

#### **Literacy**

	<b>Numbers</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>37. Are the leaders in your community educated?</b>		
Yes	25	62,5
No	15	37,5



**38. What causes the high rate of illiteracy?**

Was never at school	15	37,5
Drop out rate at school	15	37,5
Lack of schools	10	25
Other :	0	0

**4.2.2.7 Divorce**

Though it is difficult to get the exact figures of the divorced people in Orange Farm, about 37,5% of the respondents indicate that one in every ten marriages ends in a divorce. An overwhelming majority (62,5%) of the respondents affirm that lack of communication and depression are the causes of divorce. Whereas 37,5% attribute it to jealousy and sexual problems.

About 62,5 per cent of the respondents contended that parents in the informal settlement do not want to communicate and this in most cases leads to divorce. Most husbands and wives do not want to sit down and discuss their problems. They also say drug addiction, depression and sex is a problem to most marriages, that is why we have such a great number of couples divorcing almost everyday.

Divorce is complex phenomenon, because there are many reasons that cause divorce in the informal settlement communities. The old saying that 'when poverty comes in the door, love flies out of the window' is not far from the truth.

**Table 4.7**

**Divorce**

	Numbers	Percentage
<b>39. How many divorced people do you know?</b>		
One in every ten marriages	15	37,5
About 50 per cent	15	37,5
Do not know	10	25

**40. What are the major causes of divorce?**

Lack of communication	25	62,5
Drug addiction	15	37,5
Depression	20	62,5
Sexual problems	20	62,5
Other :	0	0

**4.2.2.8 Aids Epidemic**

Aids stand for **Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome**. It is the final stage of infection with HIV (**Human Immunodeficiency Virus**), which enters the body's white cells and makes it impossible for the body to defend itself against illness, and this is what causes people to die. The proportions of the epidemic of Aids have seized everyone's attention. Claims and projections differ wildly, yet the disease is no longer confined to the homosexual community. Now, Aids, is a disease of the young people as well. Some say that one in every ten female adolescents have Aids, or the HIV virus compared to one in ten adults. However, all agree that the medical costs of treating AIDS have become massive and devastating (Keller 1997:21).

An overwhelming majority (87,5%) of the respondents agreed that AIDS cannot be cured. So far, AIDS is an incurable disease. The other 12,5% of the respondents believe that AIDS can be cured. They believe that traditional doctors and some of the Independent churches can heal it. The traditional doctors display boards, which are inviting AIDS sufferers to consult them.

A very few percentage (10%) of the respondents believe that AIDS is not a disease but is the "isidliso" (kind of bewitchment) and to cure it they give people different

medicines called "imbiza" (form of medication). Whereas about 90% believe that Aids is a disease and it kills.

About 90% of the respondents say most of the people are getting infected by Aids through sexual intercourse. They also say babies born to mothers with HIV can also become infected just before and during birth, or during breast-feeding. Infected blood can spread the virus, for example, if it splashes on broken skin, or by friends or family members sharing blades, razors or toothbrushes. Drug addicts who share needles can infect each other.

**Table 4.8**

<b>Aids</b>		
	<b>Numbers</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>41. Can we cure AIDS?</b>		
Yes	4	10
No	36	90
<b>42. What perception do people have about AIDS?</b>		
Is not a disease	4	10
Can be cured	4	10
Does kill	32	80
Other:	0	0
<b>43. How do people become infected by AIDS?</b>		
Unprotected sex	36	90
Using same needles	36	90
Babies born to mothers with HIV	36	90
Breast feeding	36	90

Sharing blades	36	90
Bewitchment	4	10
Other :	0	0

#### **4.2.2.9 Religious Information**

A substantial number of the respondents (40%) belonged to the main stream churches like Reformed church, Lutheran church, Roman Catholic Church and Presbyterian church. The other 30 percent belong to the Independent churches, whilst the other 30 percent belonged to the charismatic churches.

The overwhelming majority (90%) of the respondents are baptized members. Most of them were baptized while they were infants. Very few (10%) respondents believe in infant baptism.

Most of the respondents (75%) said they have made a confession of faith in their respective churches. Those who joined the charismatic churches agree that they made the confession again in their new churches they have joined. The other respondents (25%) agree that they have made a confession of faith when they were 16 years of age in their present churches.

**Table 4.9**

#### **Religious information**

	<b>Numbers</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>44. To which church do you belong?</b>		
Main stream churches	16	40
Charismatic churches	12	30
Independent church	12	30
Other :	0	0
<b>45. Are you a baptized member?</b>		
Yes	36	90
No	4	10

**46. Did you do a confession of faith?**

Yes	30	75
No	10	25

***4.2.2.10 Planting and growing churches***

All the respondents have given different dates of the establishment of their churches. But on the average most of the churches have been established in the late eighties. Most of the respondents indicated that their churches began with very few members, the Independent churches with the average of ten members, charismatic churches with an average of fifty members, and whereas other churches like the Anglicans, the Roman Catholic Church, The Lutherans and the Uniting Reformed churches started as a ward, depending on the mother church in the nearby district, and due to an increase or growth in membership they ended up being autonomous.

The respondents gave different responses when asked about membership of their churches. Most of the Independent churches, have on the average 120 members in their congregations including their wards; whereas the charismatic churches have a membership of about 250 while most of the other main stream churches have a membership which ranges from 600- 1200.

On the question whether they have a Pastor or a leader, almost all of them (99%) answered positively. The Independent church leaders stay with their members in Orange Farm. In time of grief, sorrow, troubles and happiness, their leaders are always with their members. Whereas, few (10%) of the charismatic and the mainstream churches said their leaders come from other communities in the nearby suburbs. For most of the members, it becomes difficult to reach them because they only come on Sundays. Their leaders have to incarnate themselves to the situation where they work.

The respondents were asked to describe the task of the church, and they answered by saying the task of the church is:

- To preach the gospel (50%)
- To bring good news to the poor (60%)
- To comfort those who are crying (35%)
- To be on the side of the poor (40%)
- To assist the poor in seeking employment (80%)
- To start projects that can help the unemployed (75%)
- To give handouts (80%)
- To give food everyday (80%)

About 20 per cent of the respondents say they have needlework and knitting classes, gardening projects, illiteracy school for the adults, and computer classes for the youth. Very few (5%) of the respondents, say in winter they have soup kitchens in their churches. They organise and distribute clothes and blankets for the poor. Almost 80 per cent indicated that they are also poor in their churches so there is nothing they can do. Others indicated that they can hardly pay their ministers' salary so they find it strange that they should assist other members with their needs.

About 30 per cent of the respondents agree that their churches are involved in mission work. They conduct outreaches, Open air, Jesus Film outreaches, distribute Christian pamphlets, and the Christian witness campaigns.

**Table 4.10**

**PLANTING AND GROWING OF A CHURCH**

	Numbers	Percentage
<b>47. Do you have a Pastor/ leader?</b>		
Yes	39	99
No	01	01

**48. Does he/ she stays in Orange Farm?**

Yes	36	90
No	4	10

**49. In your opinion what is the task of the church?**

To preach the gospel	20	50
To bring good news for the poor	24	60
To comfort those who are crying	14	35
To be on the side of the poor	16	40
To assist the poor in seeking employment	32	80
To start projects that can help the unemployed	30	70
To give handouts	32	80
To give people food everyday	32	80
Other :	0	0

**50. What kind of program are you following to assist the poor?**

Needlework	08	20
Gardening projects	08	20
Literacy school	08	20
Computer classes	08	20
Other:	0	0

**51. Is your church involved in mission work?**

Yes	12	30
No	28	70

**52. If yes, state how (method used):**

The following methods were mentioned: Outreaches

Open Air and Christian

Witness campaign

#### **4.2.3 RESPONSE FROM CHURCH LEADERS (Appendix ii)**

About 60% of the church leaders in Orange Farm started working in the early nineties, whereas about 40 % started working in the late nineties.

In presenting the gospel the church leaders used the following methods:

Household Evangelism 100%

Personal Evangelism 100%

Public Evangelism 73,3%

Literary Evangelism 60%

Mass Evangelism 40%

Media Evangelism 40%

For winning converts to Christ, 93,3% of the respondents used the strategy of visiting the people, whereas 40% of the respondents used the film shows and 86,6% of the respondents used outreaches and 80% of the respondents said they associated themselves with the people.

There were serious problems pertaining to church planting in Orange Farm, 80% of the respondents said their members are coming from poor families, whereas 46,6% had a problem because they did not have fixed church buildings, 60% had members who were not dedicated and almost 80% of the respondents were having a problem with church funds.

Almost all (100%) the church leaders received theological training for their ministry. For the church leaders to be acceptable in their community, 86,6% responded by saying they had to love their people, 93,3% responded by saying they had to respect and love the culture of their people. There is no respondent who criticized the culture of the people.



For one to succeed in planting a church in Orange Farm, 93,3% of the respondents believe that we should learn the people's language; live with the people; be acceptable to them and extend hospitality to them. No respondent believes that we should be strangers to the people.

Almost 40% of the respondents use English in presenting the gospel and about 60% uses African languages e.g S.Sotho, Zulu and Xhosa.

About 20% believe that we should give the people food when we present the gospel to them, 13,3% of the respondents believe that we should give them clothes and 66,6% believes that we should present the gospel together with the people's social needs.

Almost 30% of the respondents believe that church growth has to do with the increase in numbers, whereas 30% believe that it means to grow spiritually, whilst 40% believes that church growth has to do with both the increase in numbers and to grow spiritually.

On the issue of church growth, an overwhelming majority 80% believes that their churches should grow because it is the command given by Christ to evangelise, 13,6% of the respondents desire church growth so that they can have big membership and 6,6% believes that by church growth they will get a bigger salary as church ministers.

Almost 30% of the respondents believe that church growth is caused by the church's involvement in witnessing and evangelisation programmes. The other 30% of the respondents believes that the solutions which the church offers to the people's social needs makes the church to grow e.g giving food packets to the poor, visiting and praying for those who are sick and comforting and supporting the bereaved families etc. Whereas 30% of the respondents believe that the relevant

messages preached from our pulpits, which addresses the people's needs causes the church to grow. A minority (10%) of the respondents believes that the physical church building attracts the masses to the church.

**Table 4.11**

	<b>Numbers</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
1. Start work in Orange Farm	9	60
2. Methods of presenting the gospel		
Household Evangelism	15	100
Public Evangelism	11	73,3
Personal Evangelism	15	100
Teaching Evangelism	11	73,3
Literary Evangelism	9	60
Mass Evangelism	6	40
Media Evangelism	6	40
	<b>Numbers</b>	<b>Percentages</b>
3. Strategy for winning the converts?		
Visits	14	93,3
Film Shows	4	40
Outreaches	13	86,6
Association with people	12	80
4. Difficulties encountered in planting a church?		
Poverty	12	80
No church building	7	46,6
Members who are not dedicated	10	66,6
Lack of funds	12	80

Other

5. Are you theologically trained for your job?

Yes	15	100
No	0	0

6. For you to be acceptable amongst the people, what method did you use?

Loving the people	13	86,6
Respecting and loving their culture	14	93,3
Criticizing their culture	0	0

7. What is the key for success when planting a church in Orange Farm

Learning the people's language	14	93,3
Living with them	14	93,3
Always be a stranger to them	0	0
Extend hospitality to them	14	93,3

**Numbers**

**Percentage**

8. When communicating the gospel which language do you use

English	6	40
Afrikaans	0	0
African Language (state which one).....	9	60

9. In your opinion, do you think we should assist the poor with the following:

Food	3	20
Clothes	2	13,3
Money	0	0

100

	Lack of funds	12	80
	Other		
5.	Are you theologically trained for your job?		
	Yes	15	100
	No	0	0
6.	For you to be acceptable amongst the people, what method did you use?		
	Loving the people	13	86,6
	Respecting and loving their culture	14	93,3
	Criticizing their culture	0	0
7.	What is the key for success when planting a church in Orange Farm?		
	Learning the people's language	14	93,3
	Living with them	14	93,3
	Always be a stranger to them	0	0
	Extend hospitality to them	14	93,3
8.	When communicating the gospel which language do you use?		
	English	6	40
	Afrikaans	0	0
	African Language (state which one)	9	60
9.	In your opinion, do you think we should assist the poor with the following:		
	Food	3	20
	Clothes	2	13,3
	Money	0	0
	Gospel and social needs	10	66,6

10. In your opinion, what is church growth?

Increase in numbers	5	33,3
To grow Spiritually	5	33,3
Both the increase in numbers and spiritual	6	34

11. Why do you think your church should grow?

So that as a minister you can get big salary	1	6,6
So that you can have a big membership	2	13,3
It is the command of Christ to evangelize	12	80

12. What causes church growth?

Church's involvement in witnessing and evangelism	5	33,3
Social needs which the church offers	5	33,3
Fix church building which attracts the masses	2	13,3
Relevant messages preached by your Pastor	4	26,6

### 4.3 Conclusion

This panoramic view of the informal settlement community is overwhelming, yet it is this view that Christ advocated when He says that anyone in need is our neighbour (Luke 10:25-37). The data given in this chapter shows that there are many people in need, their needs are deepening, and they are a diverse group.

Growing numbers of the unemployed and underemployed, new immigrant population, single parents, divorced persons, the elderly, the HIV-AIDS sufferers, and the disabled surround the informal settlement communities. Poverty is on the rise and the percentage of the poor in our society is exploding.

It is the ministry of the church of Jesus Christ, and the planting and growing of churches in the informal settlements that can eradicate the roots of social problems. The church can minister to the whole person. The true gospel understands that sin

has ruined us both individually and socially. Christians, armed with the Word and Spirit, planning and working to spread the kingdom and righteousness of Christ, can transform a nation as well as a neighbourhood as well as a broken heart (Keller 1997:26). We must give our faith active expression through deeds of compassion coupled with evangelism and discipleship.

Jesus' ministry is a model of the way the Christian's twin responsibilities of evangelism and social involvement is to be integrated. Jesus preached, taught, and healed. His concern for the physical needs of people flowed from his love and compassion for them as people, image-bearers of God who are burdened down by sin and its consequences, hurting, hoping seeking and dying. His healing ministry served as a bridge to his preaching ministry, as he blended concern for the temporal and eternal dimensions of human existence (Greenway & Monsma 1989:175).

Christ's compassion was holistic compassion, concerned for sick bodies, empty stomachs, and perishing souls. Out of compassion for a leprous man He reached out and healed (Mark 6:34). When people were hungry and had no food left, Jesus used His power to feed them (Mark 8:81-10). Both His words and His works were expressions of His compassion for people. In the prayer Jesus taught us, He kept humankind's two essential needs together- daily bread and forgiveness of sins (Greenway & Monsma 1989:176)

## CHAPTER 5

### DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

#### 5.1 Introduction

*The informal settlement communities are growing faster today in South Africa, despite the governments' initiative with the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) project houses. It is a radically different way of organising human life. Many of us live in cities, which are surrounded by the squatter communities, but we know little about how they operate. Until we do we will not be able to minister to them in relevant ways. Too often people try to plant churches in the informal settlements, and they do not know why they fail.*

The massive flow of poor people from the cities to the informal settlements continues. In our century, modern cities are exploding. Never before in history have so many people moved from one place to another. Statistics show that in 1994 there were 7,7 million people who were living in the shacks (Race Relation Survey 1993/ 1994:322). Towards the end of 2005 the number is expected to have gone up tremendously. Most of the people who are living in these areas have not heard the gospel. There is therefore a need to plant churches in the informal settlement communities.

The research conducted, showed that many people see the city as the place of crime, poverty, and secularism that depersonalises people and reduces them to powerless pawns in the grip of powerful social systems. Hiebert (1995:262) shows that we may exaggerate this view and not see that people can live happy lives in the city. When we examine the social order of the cities, we must constantly remind ourselves that cities are not a single, uniform organization. Internal structures vary greatly from one area of the city to another. Even in one area, there may be a great variation from one street to the next. What is clear is that informal settlements differ from one city to another depending on their distinct histories and cultures. For

example, other informal settlements have infrastructure, whereas others do not have them.

## **5.2 The biblical mandate for the mission of the church**

The fulfilment of the biblical mandate of the church in the informal settlement communities like Orange Farm is more than 'evangelism'. It is 'sacrificial service' for which Christ sends his redeemed people into the world. We have seen from the outcome of the empirical research conducted in Orange Farm that there are many people who are affected by crime; and many are poor, divorced, illiterate, homeless, and HIV positive. It is the task of the church to minister to these people not only with the word but also by addressing their social needs. Jesus Christ is the model and norm for the church's mission because His redeemed people are sent as the Father sent his Son (John 20:21). Jesus manifested in His life the love of God: *'In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him'* (1John 4:9). In this love of God Jesus has served and given his life as a ransom for many (Mark 10:45; Romans 5:8).

The role of the church in the informal settlement communities is to interpret the reality of the Gospel through the experiences of the poor in their struggle for justice and wholeness. The informal settlement communities need the solidarity of the church. Transformation must also take place in the life of the Christian church (Maluleke 1997: 210).

Concern for human justice may seem to many to be far from the Gospel of Jesus Christ, but we are to respect those people who stay in the informal settlements. They are human beings, created in the image of God. They may be poor but they are not stupid or fools, therefore, they have their human dignity. We are to listen and learn from their experiences and wisdom. Let us look carefully and listen carefully to what they do and say (Maluleke 1997:153).



The real meaning of the Good Samaritan parable, therefore, lies in the discovery of a fellow human being and the commitment to act according to his needs in order to secure his healing (Luke 10). Helping the poor has to encompass several actions, which are driven by compassion and taken according to the needs of the poor. One has to always respect the fact that the poor are human beings made in the image of God (Bruwer 1994:16).

Bruwer (1994:84) says we can restore their human dignity by the following:

- a. Go to the Poor
- b. Live among the poor
- c. Learn from the poor
- d. Work with the poor
- e. Start with what the poor have  
and build upon what the poor possess
- f. Teach by showing
- g. Learn by doing

The mission of the church for the informal settlement community should be seen in the sacrificial service, which Christ has sent his redeemed people into the world to perform. In this 'service' both evangelism and social concern are included.

Therefore, we should not regard social responsibility as merely a means or preparation for evangelism, nor as a manifestation or by-product of evangelism. Both evangelism and social action are a Christian's duty. Every Christian is a witness and every Christian is also a servant. In carrying out the mission of the church, we must *'be wise as serpents and innocent as doves'* (Matthew 10:16); *for different situations will demand a different strategy for the efficacy of the mission and each member of the church has different gifts and callings* (Ephesians 4:7) (Nichols 1985:228)

### 5.3 Word and deed in practice

In His ministry Jesus Christ used both word and deed to minister to people in announcing the coming of God's Kingdom. In Luke 4:18-19 Jesus indicated His own mission in terms of addressing the spiritual and physical needs of people. The Bible records: 'Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every disease and every infirmity' (Mathew 9:35; Acts 10:38). Now Jesus Christ sends his disciples into the world as the Father has sent him (Jon 20:21).

Therefore the disciples who are sent into the world are to share in his ministry and to follow his example in obedience to his command to love God and one's neighbour (Mathew 22:38), and His commission to make disciples of all nations (Mathew 28:19-20). To the disciples Jesus said, *'This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you'* (John 15:12). *'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with your entire mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it; you shall love your neighbour as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the law and the prophets'* (Mathew 22:37-38). Jesus also said *'By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another'* (John 13:35).

We are thus under the commandment to love others. This certainly implies that the church as a body is also under the commandment to love others. Moreover, this love of God- that Christ died for our sins while we were yet sinners (Romans 5:8) compel his people to be ambassadors for Christ (2Corinthians 5:14). His love is to be understood as comprehensive as well as complete. Christians are to *'do good to all men'* (Galatians 6:10; 1Thessalonians 5:15), for everyone is our neighbour. Our love must also be complete as was that shown by Jesus Christ. We must love the whole man. Obedience to the command of love should manifest in concern for all

man in all of his dimensions. Christ's love should reach out to the unsaved with the gospel (Luke 19:10). It should be concerned also for man's social needs, for man is a soul-body unit and lives in society. The Christian concern is to visit those who are imprisoned (Matthew 25:26), and those who are sick need to be healed (James 5:14,15).

## **5.4 PLANTING CHURCHES IN THE INFORMAL SETTLEMENT COMMUNITY**

### ***5.4.1 Incarnational Ministry***

Planting and growing of churches in the informal settlement communities needs the incarnation ministry method. Incarnational approach to ministry means that we must meet people where they are, not where we are. We must learn to see the world as they see it if we are to help them know the gospel. We cannot reject their culture and try to replace it with our own. To do so is to destroy their identity and dignity. Intimate face-to-face relationships can be built, however, only when we identify closely with people. We need to love people for who they are, and respect their culture. We need to live with people, to sit where they sit, walk where they walk, and weep when they weep. (Hiebert 1995:76). A lack of knowledge leads us to misunderstand people. We need, therefore, to study their culture carefully to see the world as they see it. We must learn the categories they use to order their world, the beliefs they use to explain it, and their worldview. Without such understanding we cannot communicate the gospel to them.

Most Christians approach the informal settlement community people with a sense of cultural superiority. They come from large, complex societies and take pride in their technological superiority. We look at the informal settlement community people as primitive and backward. We need to incarnate ourselves to their situation, identify ourselves to their needs and love them. Identification requires a deep love for the people themselves. We may live like the people but not really love them. People soon know this. They also know if we genuinely love them. Genuine incarnational love for people gives us a deep desire to learn about their ways and to share with

them both the gospel and ourselves. It leads us to treat them as equals with dignity and respect. It enables us to trust them not only with material goods, but also with power and positions of leadership. It prevents us from treating them with condescension as “children” or with disdain as “uncivilized.” Love is the basis for all identification. When we love people and see them as humans like ourselves, we are able to identify more fully with them in lifestyle and roles than when we act out of duty alone (Hiebert 1995:146-147).

#### **5.4.2 Building Trust**

People in the informal settlements live in tight-knit communities in which trust is essential to relationships. Most of them are illiterate and are at the mercy of those who can read and write. They are wary of the outsiders because their experience with strangers is usually negative.

We must, therefore, take time to build acceptance among people. We need to learn their language well and live among them so that they learn to know us as trustworthy and steadfast. We must adopt a lifestyle compatible with that of the people, and extend hospitality to them. We need to take time to bring people to Christ, help organize them in churches, and nurture them to maturity.

#### **5.4.3 Holistic Ministries**

The church in the first century proclaimed the divine message in public, taught from house to house and in public places, gossiped the gospel through informal witness, ministered to the sick, demonstrated the transforming power of the gospel in the lives of people, formed fellowships of believers that showed the world a new kind of community based on love for one another, performed miracles and cared for the poor.

The mediaeval church in the city saw itself as the refuge for the poor and needy. Protestant churches gave birth to the first public hospitals, schools and orphanages.

Only in the last century, with the emergence of the modern welfare state, have people looked to government as the body responsible for the well-being of everyone, including their education, medical care, retirement benefits and welfare.

Today the church of the poor in the informal settlement must proclaim and live the whole gospel. It cannot relegate concerns for everyday human needs to the government and expect to be relevant to people. It must provide for the care and nurture of its members, help feed the poor, heal the sick, counsel the distraught, care for the widows and orphans, and preach the Word with boldness. It must avoid the mental dichotomy that separates evangelism from social ministries and see both as ways to bear witness to the transforming power of the gospel (Hiebert 1995:346).

Holistic approach to church planting is needed. Since most of the respondents indicated that they are not working, we can help them to begin a number of short-term projects, like the small businesses which range from bread shops to market stalls. We can teach people skills so that their business will succeed.

#### ***5.4.4 Evangelistic Methods***

Christians cannot work in poor urban areas without offering the good news of Christ. If they do social work and all kinds of things and fail to offer the good news, they will fail to offer their best gift. There is no excuse for not sharing that news with all people every day, and in clear ways that gives people the opportunity to accept or reject Jesus (Bakke 1987:146).

Present-day life is controlled by methods, especially in Western culture, which is very much a method-oriented culture. For every field men seek to find the most efficient method. We need to find the best methods we can use in planting churches in the informal settlement communities. As the time goes by methods also need to be adjusted. Methods, which were effective in the New Testament time and in the early church, may not be effective today for the informal settlement communities.

However, when dealing with evangelism one should remember that methods represent only one of the components of a strategy, and that though they are important, they are not sufficient in themselves to guarantee effectiveness or success. The right methods do not guarantee a large response to the gospel (de Oliveira 1992:71).

#### **5.4.4.1 Household Evangelism Method**

The household evangelism method is a New Testament model; they take many forms, from cells in parishes to informal groups. House churches suit people who are looking for reality and integrity in their personal relationships. They are a strong body-life and are without strong professional leadership (Bakke 1987:13). Homes were the places where the first Christians came together for worship and for learning more about their faith (Romans 16:5). In Acts we read of homes being used extensively, such as the homes of Jason, of Justus, of Philip, of Mark's mother, of Lydia and of the jailer. Sometimes it was a prayer meeting, sometimes an evening for fellowship and instruction, other times a communion or a meeting for new converts.

The linear house church model develops a small congregation, usually in the home of one of the converts. As the congregation outgrows the home, another church is started in the same manner. These congregations are usually ministered by a trained layperson who is bi-vocational and therefore requires only a small salary. Each new house church is a separate entity and supports its own lay pastor. This strategy works best in an area responsive to the gospel where converts can be quickly absorbed into small relational training units. Some of these house churches emerge as large congregations. Others remain small and move from location to location until a building or larger place becomes available (Conn 1997:206).

In the network model each new house church is integrally tied to the others. When enough house churches are formed, they can merge and buy a suitable facility. The key in this strategy is one coordinating pastor or leader, with trained leaders

ministering in the house churches with the intent of merging in the future (Conn 1997:206).

#### 5.4.4.2 Personal Evangelism Method

The best method evangelism suitable in urban contexts is personal. This means that church members minister to their own **“worlds of relationships”-family and extended family** (biological); geographical; recreational; and vocational. By family we refer to “nuclear family” living at home and the extended family. The second network- the **geographical-** consists of people you have a primary relationship with e.g. Neighbours. Another network, **a person’s recreational life**, takes many forms in the city. It may be gang, the bowling team or the bar crowd. This is especially an effective world in which to reach non-Christians for Christ, because it can be expanded at the person’s discretion. The fourth network is **vocational**. There we meet at the work place with the word of God. Calvin affirmed that and went further, suggesting that you could serve God with your vocation. Pastors can help members to minister within their vocations (Bakke 1987:148-149).

Personal evangelism is the most efficient method that can be used to bring people to Christ. In personal evangelism one has the opportunity to be more open, the listener will have more opportunity to ask questions where he does not understand and will also be able to express his doubts and his needs. The messenger will be able to help the person to come to a conclusion and solution for his problems and finally come to a decision. Today there are countless people who have come to Christ through personal contact with other people (de Oliveira 1992:76).

Personal evangelism is a method that Jesus employed a great deal. The gospel of John is clear in showing the personal encounters of Jesus with individuals, and the variety of approaches He took with each of them.

Personal evangelism in the informal settlement communities, can best be done by supporting and witnessing to the bereaved families by sharing the gospel and conducting daily prayers. Night vigils are the best opportunities where we can win many people. The youth can easily share the gospel and win their friends in the sports grounds.

#### **5.4.4.3 Literary Evangelism Method**

The Scriptures were the writings, which were used more than anything else for evangelism. Certainly the Bible is and will ever be the book, which will guide man for salvation. Other examples of literary evangelism include the Christian pamphlets, the 'Every home for Christ' booklets, 'Assurance of salvation' booklets and 'God's healing on Aids' booklets by Dr. Bruce Wilkinson etc. In the informal settlement communities the church can ask the youth to distribute these booklets.

#### **5.4.4.4 Public Evangelism Method**

One of the means of communicating the gospel used by the early Church and first missionaries was Public Evangelism. The method of preaching in the open air was greatly used by the apostles and those involved in the task of communication of the Gospel. Apostle Paul used this method wherever he went (Acts 13:16-41; 17:22-31; 17:2,3,18). Peter and the other missionaries did likewise, and one can find an example of their success in Acts 2:14.

Examples of public evangelism are: Preaching in the Public places like Halls, stations etc. In the informal settlement communities we can put up a big tent and invite the people to our daily evening services. The use of the loudspeaker is highly recommended so that those who are far can hear the gospel.

#### **5.4.4.5 Teaching Evangelism Method**

Teaching is the best method of introducing Christ to other people. The first missionaries like Paul, not only preached the Good News for salvation, but also



taught the new Christians. Origen, opened a school at Alexandria with the main purpose of educating his pupils in the Christian faith.

Pastors should learn not to do things alone. Teach people to do certain tasks in the church. People need to be trained singly or in small groups to give a simple testimony. Examples of teaching evangelism are: Workshops for the youth, mothers, fathers, church councils, different wards, and the married couples etc.

In the informal settlement communities we can conduct biblical classes in our churches, homes and schools e.g Good News Bible clubs.

#### **5.4.4.6 Mass Evangelism**

The purpose of mass evangelism is not solely to incorporate people into the church. Mass evangelism is sometimes used to stimulate personal evangelism. It also serves as a means of secular public relations for the church and creates a "dynamic equivalent" festivity for members to enjoy (Corn 1997:214).

Jesus Film outreach programme is the best method of mass evangelism we can use in the informal settlement communities to plant churches. The film group identifies an open space in the community, preferably the sports ground and show the film at night.

#### **5.4.4.7 Mass Media Method**

The word 'media' denotes all those means used to convey verbal and nonverbal messages to audiences through films, radio, television or drama. Media have a great power nowadays. It is very highly recommended to be used among illiterate or semi-illiterate people. Examples are: The Radio, TV and Video lessons. Pastors who are working in the informal settlement communities can encourage their members to listen to radio programmes like Radio Pulpit where the word of God is preached everyday.

#### **5.4.4.8 Follow-up**

Having new believers join the church will not lead to church growth if proper follow-up is not well executed. Data collection for statistical analysis plays a vital role as a diagnostic tool for leaders by revealing problems as well as enhancing systematic follow-up. We should keep the records of all visitors and new believers. Correct names, addresses, important dates, maps and convenient places of contact are filled out when these people first enter the church.

These forms are computerized and a copy of the printout is given to the pastoral leader overseeing that given geographical area. Follow-up within twenty-four hours of the conversion decision is emphasized. This helps to ensure that all doubts can be dealt with and proper spiritual nurturing and encouragement can be given from the start of their newfound faith. Thereafter, the person is visited once or twice a week to lay proper biblical foundation for faith in Christ.

### **5.5 Conclusion**

The data received from the empirical research show that there are many people in need, their needs are deepening and that the needy are in a diverse group. The church in the informal settlement community is surrounded by growing numbers of those who are in need. Poverty is on the rise and the percentage of the elderly in our society is exploding. It is the task of the church to reach all the people with the gospel. We must give our faith active expression through deeds of compassion coupled with evangelism and discipleship. The planting and growing of churches in the informal settlement communities can contribute towards the find of solutions to most of the social problems of the people.

## CHAPTER 6

### CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 6.1 Concluding Remarks

The church faces new theological challenges in planting churches among the informal settlement communities because new questions emerge that were not faced in the past.

The early church was also an urban movement. It began in Jerusalem and spread through persecution to the cities of Samaria (Acts 8:5), Damascus (Acts 9:2), Caesarea (Acts 10:1) and Antioch (Acts 11:19). Paul saw the importance of the city. His strategy was an urban strategy. He did not go to small villages in Asia Minor but to the cities; when he had planted churches in them, he declared his work finished in that region (Roman 15:23).

The Reformation, too, was an urban movement. It began in the cities of Northern Europe and captured the urban centres. From there it spread to the surrounding countryside. In the past the growth of Christianity was connected with cities. The protestant church has since become largely a rural movement. This is due in part to the growth and adaptation of the church on the American frontier. It is due to the fact that many Protestant missions focused their work on rural communities around the world.

Today, mission societies around the world are focusing on planting and growing churches in the urban centres, but too often they start in the inner city centres and neglect the informal settlement communities. Many church planters misunderstand and fear the informal settlement community life. They succeed best in the inner cities. The city is also a place where God is mighty at work establishing his rule over human societies. In the Old Testament, Jerusalem stands in contrast to Babylon and the cities of refuge to Sodom and Gomorrah. In the New Testament, Jesus was associated with the city. He was born in the city (Mathew 9:35), wept over the city

(Luke 19:41). And was crucified and rose in the main cities with the expectation that they would spread the gospel to neighbouring towns and villages (Acts 16:11-40; 17:16-33; 18:1-11; 19:1-10; 28:16:31). The writer of Hebrews looks for a new city whose builder is God (Hebrews 11:10).

There is no simple formula for planting churches in the informal settlement communities. God acts in the lives of people, calling them from sin, giving them the power to respond to his call, and gathers them together in communities of faith. On the other, Christians should invite other people into the church and disciple them for Christian maturity. God plants his church among people who are fallen, yet created in his image. These people bring their humanness and are transformed into the church. For effective church planting we need to know both how God works and how humans work.

## **6.2 Recommendations**

The following can serve as guidelines for people who are planting churches in the informal settlements:

6.2.1 As Pastors, we have been called to proclaim the gospel and to serve the informal settlement communities holistically

6.2.2 In ministering to the informal settlement communities we should use both word and deed

6.2.3 Incarnational ministry method is needed for church planter in the informal settlements:

- a. We must meet the people where they are and not where we are
- b. We need to love people for who they are and respect their culture
- c. We need to learn the people's language well and live among them so that they learn to know us as trustworthy servants

The writer of this dissertation suggest that further study in connection with planting and growing of churches in the informal settlements should be done. Because of the limited scope I could not address other issues related to church planting in the informal settlements. These issues need to be clarified, for example:

- a. How the church in the informal settlement communities can be financial self supporting and
- b. How the church in the informal settlement communities can mobilize its community to achieve justice.

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**APPENDIX I**  
**QUESTIONNAIRE**

**M.A (BIBLICAL STUDIES)-RESEARCH PROJECT**

The questionnaire is aimed at obtaining a general background of the received socio-cultural circumstances relating to the object of this study

Questionnaire number.....

**A. BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION**

1.What is your sex? (Just tick)

Male ☐

Female ☐

2.How old are you? (Select your age group)

Below 30 yrs ☐

Between 30-40 yrs ☐

Between 41-50 yrs ☐

Between 51-60 yrs ☐

Above 60 yrs ☐

3. What is your home language? (Tick your language)

S. Sotho ☐

N. Sotho ☐

Tswana ☐

Zulu ☐

Venda ☐

Tsonga ☐

Other

**4. What are your highest school qualifications? (Tick)**

- Was never at school ☐
- Only primary education ☐
- High school ☐
- Diploma ☐
- Tertiary Institution ☐

**5. Presently what are you doing (just tick)**

- Employed ☐
- Pensioner ☐
- Medically unfit ☐
- Housewife ☐
- Student ☐

**B. COMMUNITY**

**6. Who allocated a stand for you?**

- Local government ☐ Street committee leaders ☐
- Other (Please state)

**7. Is there any infrastructure where you live?**

Yes ☐ No ☐

**8. If Yes, what kind of infrastructure is there?**

- |                    |                          |                 |                          |
|--------------------|--------------------------|-----------------|--------------------------|
| Water on the stand | <input type="checkbox"/> | Electricity     | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Sewerage           | <input type="checkbox"/> | Numbered site   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Proper streets     | <input type="checkbox"/> | Other (Specify) | <input type="checkbox"/> |

9. How much do you earn per month? (Just tick)

R 0- R500-00	<input type="checkbox"/>	R 500- R1000-00	<input type="checkbox"/>
R1000- R1500-00	<input type="checkbox"/>	R1500- R2000-00	<input type="checkbox"/>
OO	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Unemployed	<input type="checkbox"/>		

10. How do you support each other in the informal settlement?

Tuck shops	<input type="checkbox"/>	Transport Systems	<input type="checkbox"/>
Burial Societies	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

11. What are the needs of the people in your area?

Ownership of the land	<input type="checkbox"/>	Houses	<input type="checkbox"/>
Water	<input type="checkbox"/>	Electricity	<input type="checkbox"/>
Better transport system	<input type="checkbox"/>	Clinics	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (Specify)	<input type="text"/>		

12. What made poverty to dominate your life

Unemployment	<input type="checkbox"/>
Welfare donations	<input type="checkbox"/>
Physically incapable	<input type="checkbox"/>
Category of working poor	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mother as head of family	<input type="checkbox"/>
Elderly poor who live on pension	<input type="checkbox"/>
Drug addiction	<input type="checkbox"/>

13. Are there many children who are poor in your area?

Yes ☐ No ☐

**14. What are the causes of Poverty?**

Unemployment ☐

Divorce ☐

Crime ☐

Homelessness ☐

Aids ☐

Other (Specify) ☐

**15. Which special group is the most unemployed in your area?**

Women ☐

Youth ☐

Single Parents ☐

Specify (Others) ☐

**C. CRIME**

**16. Is crime rate controlled in your area?**

Yes ☐ No ☐

**17. People who commit crime where do they come from?**

From our community ☐

Outside South Africa ☐

Specify ☐

**18. Is crime rate escalating everyday in your area?**

Yes ☐ No ☐

**19. Do you report incidents of crime, which is committed?**

Yes ☐ No ☐

**20. What are the major causes of crime?**

Poverty ☐

Unemployment ☐

Ever-widening gap between the rich and the poor ☐



21. Who is to be blamed for this crime?

Present government

☐

Previous government

☐

Social institutions like churches, schools etc.

☐

Our community

☐

22. Which is the most dangerous form of crime?

Murder

☐

Assault

☐

Stealing

☐

Other

☐

23. What kind of assault is imminent in your community?

Abuse

☐

Rape

☐

24. Which is the greatest form of crime committed in the informal settlement?

Car hijacking

☐

Abuse

☐

Murder

☐

Other

☐

25. Which kind of drugs are young people taking?

Cocaine

☐

Dagga

☐

Glue

☐

Spirit

☐

26. Why are most people homeless?

Lack of housing

☐

Cannot afford high rents

☐

Unable to buy a new house

☐

Other

27. What causes homelessness?

Unemployment

☐

Family disorganisation

☐

Divorce

☐

28. What do they want to achieve in their lives?

To get a home ☐ To occupy the unused land ☐

29. Who are the homeless people?

The poor	<input type="checkbox"/>	The destitute	<input type="checkbox"/>
The prostitute	<input type="checkbox"/>	Street Children	<input type="checkbox"/>
The unwanted	<input type="checkbox"/>	Others	<input type="text"/>

30. Where can one find the homeless poor?

On the streets ☐ Unused buildings ☐  
Other places

31. How many people are homeless in Orange Farm

Between 0 –100	<input type="checkbox"/>	Between 100 –500	<input type="checkbox"/>
500 –1000	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not sure	<input type="checkbox"/>

32. What causes homelessness to increase today?

Shortage of affordable houses	<input type="checkbox"/>	Unemployment	<input type="checkbox"/>
Poverty	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

## E. ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS

33. Where do the illegal immigrants come from?

From neighbouring countries e.g. Malawi, Zambia, Nigeria etc ☐  
From other cities within S.A ☐  
Other countries:

34. Are they registered to be citizens of South Africa?

Yes ☐ No ☐

35. Are they employed?

Yes ☐ No ☐

## F. LITERACY

36. What is your highest school qualification? (Just tick)

- Was never at school ☐
- Only primary school ☐
- High school ☐
- Tertiary institution ☐

37. Are the leaders in your community educated?

Yes ☐ No ☐

38. What causes the high rate of illiteracy?

Was never at school ☐ Drop rate at schools ☐  
Lack of schools ☐ Other :

## G. DIVORCE

39. How many divorced people do you know?

One in every ten marriages ☐ About 50 per cent ☐  
Do not know ☐

40. What are the major causes of divorce?

Lack of communication ☐ Drug addicts ☐  
Depression ☐ Sex problems ☐  
Other :

## H. HIV-AIDS

41. Can we cure AIDS?

Yes ☐ No ☐

**42. What perception do people have about AIDS?**

Is not a disease ☐

Can be cured ☐

Does kill ☐

Other :

**43. How does people become infected to AIDS?**

Unprotected sex ☐

Using same needles ☐

Babies born to mothers with HIV ☐

Breast feeding ☐

Sharing blades ☐

Bewitchment ☐

Other :

**I. RELIGIOUS INFORMATION**

**44. To which church do you belong?**

Uniting Reformed Church

Presbyterian church

Anglican

Lutheran

Roman Catholic Church

Charismatic churches

Independent church

Other :

**45. Are you a baptized member?**

Yes ☐ No ☐

**46. Did you do a confession of faith?**

Yes ☐ No ☐

## J. PLANTING AND GROWING OF A CHURCH

47. When was your congregation/ church established in Orange

Farm?

48. With how many members?

49. Presently, how many are you in your congregation? :

50. Where do you conduct your services?

Members House ☐

Church building ☐

Under a tree ☐

Classroom ☐

Shack ☐

Specify ☐

51. Do you have a Pastor/ leader?

Yes ☐

No ☐

52. Does he/ she stays in Orange Farm?

Yes ☐

No ☐

53. In your opinion what is the task of the church?

To preach the gospel ☐

To bring good news for the poor ☐

To comfort those who are crying ☐

To be on the side of the poor ☐

To assist the poor in seeking employment ☐

To start projects that can help the unemployed ☐

To give handouts ☐

To give people food everyday ☐

Other :

54. What kind of program are you doing to assist the poor?

Needlework

☐

Gardening projects

☐

Literacy school

☐

Computer classes

☐

Other :

55. Is your church involved in mission work?

Yes

☐

No

☐

56. If yes, state how (method used)

## APPENDIX II

### Questionnaire for church leaders

1. When did you start your work in Orange Farm? (state the year).....

2. What methods of presentation of the gospel did you use?

Household Evangelism

☐

Public Evangelism

☐

Personal Evangelism

☐

Teaching Evangelism

☐

Literary Evangelism

☐

Mass Evangelism

☐

Media Evangelism

☐

3. Which strategy did you use in winning the converts?

Visits

☐

Film Shows

☐

Outreaches

☐

Association with people

☐

4. What difficulties did you encounter in church planting ?

Poverty

☐

No church building

☐

Members who are not dedicated

☐

Lack of funds

☐

Other

☐

5. Are you theologically trained for your job?

Yes

☐

No

☐

6. For you to be acceptable amongst the people, what method did you use?

Loving the people

☐

Respecting and loving their culture

☐

Criticizing their culture

☐

7. What is the key for success when planting a church in Orange Farm?

Learn the people's language ☐

Live with them ☐

Always be a stranger to them ☐

Extend hospitality to them ☐

8. When communicating the gospel which language do you use?

English ☐

Afrikaans ☐

African Language (state which one).....

9. In your opinion, do you think we should assist the poor with the following?

Food ☐

Clothes ☐

Money ☐

Gospel and social needs ☐

10. In your opinion, what is church growth?

Increase in numbers ☐

To grow Spiritually ☐

Both the increase in numbers and spiritual ☐

11. Why do you think your church should grow?

So that as a minister you can get big salary ☐

So that you can have a big membership ☐

It is the command of Christ to evangelize ☐

12. What causes church growth?

Church's involvement in witnessing and evangelism ☐

Social needs which the church offers ☐

Fix church building which attracts the masses ☐

Relevant messages preached by your Pastor ☐