

**Catechetical strategy to effectively minister the Reformed Churches
Youth Movement**

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Abstract

According to research conducted in some of the Reformed Churches, it became clear that most of the Reformed Churches, especially in the black communities, are encountering similar or almost the same problems with regard to the youth. The numbers of young people that belong to the churches, attend church services and participate in church-related activities facilitated for them are declining. Many of those whose presence and participation can be observed are not successful at taking the responsibility for applying their faith on a daily basis as they live their lives on a daily basis.

It was evident that there was room for improvement with regard to youth ministry and its effectiveness. The intention with this study was to focus on possible ways of improving youth ministry in the Reformed Churches, and more specifically in the context of black communities and congregations.

The approach included a look at the hermeneutical interaction between the basis theory and the meta-theory. According to the results, findings and conclusions obtained in this way, a set of practical guidelines has been formulated in an attempt to render youth ministry more effective. Attention was paid to contributions made by church leaders, parents and the young people themselves. By applying the Biblical principles together with meta-theoretical principles ministry to young people can be made more effective while keeping in mind that the purpose is to be to the honour and glory of God.

The study included interviews and a questionnaire to be completed by young participants from a few selected congregations in the Mid-lands Synod, South Africa. According to the findings it was possible to conclude that the young members of the church desire to feel that they have a place in the Church of Christ are indeed part of the body of Christ. It was also revealed that they desire to be equipped in such a way as would enable them to function as Christians in their daily lives and to spread the Gospel to the world outside. They need to feel that they are useful instruments in the faith community.

It is true that every member of the body of Christ is unique and has a role to play, and that is also true of the young people. The church and church leaders also have to consider the cultural differences, the existing generation gaps and the development of good relationships between youth and all other members of church. The young people, however, will have to accommodate, apply and adhere to the Biblical principles. That which remains of main importance in the strife for righteousness is to glorify God according to his Word.

Opsomming

Na aanleiding van navorsing wat in 'n paar Gereformeerde Kerke gedoen is, het dit duidelik geword dat ooreenstemmende probleme met die jeug in die meeste Gereformeerde Kerke, veral in swart gemeenskappe, ondervind word. Die getalle van jong mense wat aan die kerke behoort, die kerkdienste bywoon en aan kerkverwante jeugbedrywighede deelneem, is besig om te daal. Daarbenewens slaag slegs 'n klein hoeveelheid van die jong mense daarin om verantwoordelikheid te neem vir die toepassing van hulle geloofsoortuigings in hulle daaglikse lewe.

Die navorsing het daarop gedui dat daar ruimte vir verbetering op die gebied van jeugbediening in die Gereformeerde Kerke is. Deur middel van hierdie studie is 'n poging aangewend om moontlike probleme of tekortkominge in verband met jeugbediening aan te spreek, en veral dan binne die konteks van swart gemeenskappe en gemeentes.

As uitgangspunt is daar na 'n hermeneutiese interaksie tussen basis-teorie en meta-teorie gekyk. Na aanleiding van die resultate, bevindings en gevolgtrekkings is 'n stel praktiese riglyne saamgestel wat as basis vir moontlike verbetering van jeugbediening in Gereformeerde Kerke voorgestel kan word. Die rol wat kerkbetrokke jeugleiers, ouers en die jeug self kan speel, het aandag geniet. Deur die Bybelse beginsels met die relevante meta-

teoretiese beginsels te kombineer of te integreer, kan meer effektiewe bediening aan jong mense moontlik gemaak word met die doel om tot eer van God te strek.

Die navorsing het onderhoude asook vraelyste wat onder jong deelnemers versprei is, ingesluit (Middellande Sinode, Suid-Afrika). Een van die gevolgtrekkings wat op grond van die bevindings gemaak kon word, is dat die jong mense 'n begeerte het om te voel dat hulle werklik 'n deel van die liggaam van Christus in die Kerk van Christus is. Hulle begeer ook om sodanig toegerus te wees dat hulle die Evangelie in hulle eie daaglikse lewe kan implementeer en ook na buite kan versprei. Op so 'n wyse wil hulle as nuttige instrumente in die geloofsgemeenskap funksioneer.

Dit is waar dat elke lidmaat van die liggaam van Christus uniek is en 'n unieke rol het om te speel. Dit geld ook vir jong mense. In hierdie verband is dit nodig dat die kerk en kerkleiers verskille in kultuur asook generasiegapings in ag moet neem en verder aandag moet skenk aan die kweek van gesonde verhoudings tussen die jong mense onderling asook tussen die jong mense en die res van die lidmate. Die jong mense, andersyds, moet die Bybelse beginsels hulle eie maak en daarby hou deur toe te pas wat hulle weet. Wat belangrik is in die strewe na geregtigheid en regverdigmaking, is en bly die verering en aanbidding van God volgens die Woord van God.

Key words: Catechetics, Reformed Churches, youth movement, strategy, improve.

Sleutelwoorde: Kategetiek, Gereformeerde Kerke, jeug aksie (beweging), strategie, verbeter.

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Chapter 1 Introduction

1. Term and Historical Background

1.1 Definition of Catechetic

Catechetic is the term used for instruction in the Christian faith and it is linked to baptismal preparation or administration. The underlying Greek word *katecheo* “teach by word of mouth” (originally used in drama), acquired in primitive Christianity the sense of communicating the content of the faith by instruction (1Cor 14:19; Gal 6.6; Acts 18:25; and other parts). In Hebrews 6:1-2 the foundation for instruction is reflected as: “repentance from acts that lead to death, and of faith in God, instruction about baptisms, the laying on of hands, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment” (NIV). Catechetic would also include moral injunctions’, e.g. Ephesians 5:22-6:9; Col 3:18-4:1 and other parts from the Bible. The reference in 2 Clem.17:1 is clearly to baptismal instruction.

Many examples of baptismal catechetic may be found in the early church. The Catecheses of the times of Augustine (354-430; *De cat. Rud.*) are very impressive. He opens up the entire history of salvation before the candidates, describing the goal as one of leading from faith and hope to love. According to Augustine, catechesis must pay attention to candidates’ language as well as their knowledge and readiness to understand. Along with the catechesis for which teachers were responsible, the early church also had home catechesis for those already baptised. In the Middle Ages, catechesis to individuals was less common. Instead there was elementary catechesis, for example, the tribes that became Christian *en masse* (Germanic Mission). The content consisted of the creed (Confession of Faith), the Lord’s Prayer, and sometimes the Decalogue.

The Synod of Paris (825) ruled that the godparents should give instruction to baptised children. Catechesis occurred also in penance (Penitence), in the form of giving lists of sins and virtues (E. Paul, 125). Although expositions of the creed can be traced to the ninth century, memorization of the tradition was probably the main form of catechesis in the Middle Ages. This changed only in the later Middle Ages with the Bohemian Brethren and the humanists (Humanism), such as D. Erasmus (1469?-1536), who demanded the instruction of all baptized children, along with testing whether they knew the value of baptism and were ready to confirm it.

The Reformers paid great attention to catechesis. After many attempts to give written form to Protestant truth, M. Luther (1483–1546) in 1529 published his Large Catechism (for theologians and pastors) and his Small Catechism (for *Hausväter*, “heads of households”). These written works have established the content of catechesis for centuries. Still the main stress was on pure memorisation, though with some explanation. Terms were defined, summaries given, and the teachers encouraged to ask questions. Luther supplemented the catechism with Biblical stories confirming it. Methodologically, the Reformers followed humanist rules and the question-and-answer scheme of medieval penitential practice.

New methods came in only with pedagogical reformers like W. Ratke (1571–1635) and J.A. Comenius (1592–1670) who asked, among other things, for pictorial presentations of the truth and for attention to the ability of the students to understand. Comenius’s application of the catechism and the Bible to Christian living and dying was an early intimation of Pietism, for which the main aim of catechesis was edification (Devotional Literature) and the bettering of life. But even Pietism could not free catechesis from the prison of sterile memorisation.

J.B. Basedow (1723–90) was the first to suggest an alternative to rote memorising, namely, independent reflection that would lead to knowledge. He gave practical direction along these lines in his *Grundriß der Religion* (1764). J.G. Herder (1744–1803) expounded Luther’s Small Catechism in this way

(1800). The next 150 years presented a confusing picture of catechesis, with changing aims both with and without the traditional catechisms.

Roman Catholic, Orthodox, and Free Church Views

The Roman Catholic component, the Council of Trent, brought a renewal of catechesis, often following Reformation models. The orders were of great significance in catechesis, as were the catechisms of P. Canisius (1521–97) and R. Bellarmine (1542–1621). During the Enlightenment the catechism was enriched by vivid stories from the Bible and lives of the saints. Roman Catholic truth and the Christian lifestyle were to be successfully communicated by this means. During this period the catechesis of both confessions moved from the church and the home into the school. The original catechism was no longer at the centre but Biblical history variously applied. Thus the problem became that of relating the Bible to teaching and religious instruction and to church catechesis.

Orthodox churches of the 18th century and the Protestant Free Churches made use of catechisms in their catechesis. In Orthodoxy, catechesis covered the creed; the virtues of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving; the four cardinal virtues (prudence, temperance, fortitude, and justice); and a doctrine of sin.

The free churches emphasized different forms of evangelisation for children and young people and on the Sunday school along with the day school. Ordinary church members ran the Sunday school. Its pioneer was R. Raikes (1736–1811) in England. By the early 19th century it had spread to all parts of the world (especially the United States, Germany, Holland, Switzerland and virtually all mission fields). Along with initial instruction in the Bible and church teaching, its aim was to lead to a personal decision of faith.

1.1.1 Catechesis Today

Catechesis is still one of the inalienable tasks of the church. Differences arise concerning the aim, the relation between faith and experience, the importance of the human sciences, and the understanding of the church that *underlies* the

catechism. But catechesis still has the task of communicating valid tradition (the history of salvation, confessions, hymns, etc.), of leading to a decision for Christ, and of building up the core community.

Social developments brought other aims to the fore around 1970, including various confrontations between the world of experience and the Christian tradition, communication as an occasion for meetings between people in situations of action and conflict in which the gospel might have aid to offer, and occasions for fellowship in service groups. Next to the traditional contents of catechesis, those addressed have become the most important object of instruction. New forms of catechesis (involving projects, practical exercises, etc.) are customary. The common aim is to set present-day reality in the light of faith and to facilitate encounters with model Christians. The problems surrounding religious education at schools are of a different nature, especially as a country's legislation for public schools also has to be taken into consideration.

To many people, ecumenical learning is also important, which involves training in the ability to deal with conflict and achieve consensus in conciliar striving for the truth (Conciliarism). Concretely, this approach entails a readiness to enter into the experience of others beyond superficial pluralism or an overhasty levelling down of differences. It thus demands a removal of national, cultural, and denominational limitations.

How important catechesis has been and still is to the churches may be seen from Vatican II (1962–65), for example, in its statement on Christian education and its call for a renewal of catechesis. We see it also in the corresponding Catechetical Directory (1971), the documents *Evangelii nuntiandi* (1975) and *Ad populum Dei nuntius* (1978), the fourth Bishops' Synod on Catechesis (1977), and the apostolic exhortation *Catechesi tradendae* (1979). Note might also be taken of the working paper of the Synod of German Bishops on the theme (1974), that initiated a lively discussion of the content and method of catechesis. In the Roman Catholic sphere catechesis embraces not only the Bible and catechism but also instruction in the liturgy, the sacraments, prayer,

ethics, the symbols and other aspects as well. Among Protestants there has also been many discussions on religious education and preparation for confirmation. More recently discussion, especially in the Catholic Church, has focused less on people and more on the preservation of what is truly Christian. This development has led to a call for a new, authoritative catechism.

1.1.2 Adult Catechesis

Today there once again is talk about the need for adult catechesis. The orientation is not so much to a correct understanding of the faith as to dialogic understanding and a mutual communication of faith and reality in which the recipients and their problems are taken seriously. E. Lange (1927–74) called for adult catechesis as a “school for the language of freedom” where people would confront their analysis of reality with the unredeemed promises of the Bible, with a view, for example, to changing society. New forms of Bible study have become increasingly important.

1.1.3 Reformation Catechisms

The catechism as a written genre is older than the Reformation, but it was M. Luther (1483–1546) who established it. He viewed the catechism with its questions and answers in terms of preaching that is to be heard and learned. In 1525 he collected the Ten Commandments (Decalogue), the Apostles' Creed, and the Lord's Prayer in the *Kurze Form*. In this respect he was copying the Children's Questions (1502) of the Bohemian Brethren. Luther added material on the sacraments in 1528. His Large Catechism (April 1529) dealt with the commandments, creed, Lord's Prayer, baptism, and Eucharist, as did also his Small Catechism for Common Pastors and Preachers (May 1529). The new edition of June 1529, the *Enchiridion*, added a form of confession and some prayers. Luther managed throughout to emphasise theologically the doctrine of justification.

Before and alongside Luther, P. Melancthon (1524), J. Bugenhagen (1525), J. Brenz (1527/28), A. Althamer (1528), and many others wrote catechisms. When Luther's work achieved confessional status, however, there was room

for new catechisms only in response to specific instructional needs. Yet as early as the 16th century there were examples of the free handling of Luther's text, and from the 17th century attempts to replace it, from P.J. Spener's *Erklärung* of 1677 to the *Versuch* of D. Bonhoeffer and F. Hildebrandt in 1932. From the middle of the 19th century, efforts were made to revise the Small Catechism and establish a uniform text (e.g., in 1884, 1931, and 1951). Such revisions, however, could no longer accomplish what Luther had had in mind.

Thus far there has been no substitute for Luther. In the Lutheran churches of North America and the Third World, Luther's Small Catechism (sometimes the Large) is still the basis of instruction for confirmation. In many cases these catechisms are the only written materials available for Christian education.

In the Reformed churches the *Katechismus-Tafel* of L. Jud (1525) was the first catechism. Jud also wrote the *Catechismus* of 1534, in which the pupil asks the questions, and that of 1535, in which the teacher does the questioning. Also important were the *Gesprächbüchlein* (1526) of J. Bader of Landau, the *Kurtz schriftliche Erklärung* of M. Bucer (1534), Bucer's *Kürtzer Catechismus* (1537, dealing with the creed, Lord's Prayer, Decalogue, and sacraments), and H. Bullinger's *Catechesis pro adultoribus scripta* (1561), which has 294 questions.

In Geneva Calvin published his *Instruction et confession de foy* in 1537 and the Geneva Catechism in 1541/42. The latter dealt with faith, the law, and the command of love, prayer, the Word, and the sacraments, with 373 questions that were meant for a year's preaching. The Heidelberg Catechism of 1563, which also had a section on the power of the keys, achieved great popularity. Even today, many Reformed churches base their youth instruction on a simplified form of the Heidelberg Catechism.

In England Nowell's Catechism (1563), the Prayer Book Catechisms (1549, 1604), and the Westminster Larger and Shorter Catechisms (1647) played a leading role, the last also in Scotland and the whole Presbyterian world. Reformed catechisms tended to become textbooks of dogmatics and ethics

rather than simple manuals for parents or pastors, but they provided a solid theological grounding to those who took them seriously. The Heidelberg Catechism achieved symbolic status in many Reformed churches in 1618.

During the 19th century Germany saw some so-called Union catechisms, which tried to combine the Lutheran and Reformed positions. Between 1836 and 1928 Baden adopted these catechisms as textbooks (Fahlbusch, Erwin ; Bromiley.1999-2003. 360-367).

1.2 Definition of Reformed Churches Youth Movement

The Reformed Churches Youth Movement is the name that has been given to the youth groups in the Reformed Churches in Synod Midlands, South Africa. These groups meet regularly once a week in their different local congregations with the aim of edification by encouraging one another through Scripture reading and prayers. Their sole aim also is to help one another as youth become useful in the church. The acronym for the Reformed Churches Youth Movement is RCYM and henceforth this acronym will be used to refer to this youth movement in this study.

1.3 Definition of catechetical strategy

One main approach of transferring Biblical knowledge to believers in our Reformed Churches is through catechetical training. A catechetical strategy proceeds from covenantal instruction that brings about sound doctrine to youth in order to lead them to spiritual maturity. A comprehensive catechetical strategy should show how every Christian ought to be involved in serving Christ with the different gifts from the Holy Spirit. It could be concluded that a comprehensive catechetical strategy through its teaching of the Biblical truth to young believers should make young believers one in Christ and in such a manner that Christ becomes the centre of their fellowship (Vukich & Vandegriff, 2002:214-215).

Indeed the truths of the Word of God must be taught to the youth and a strategy that is based on Biblical principles is of utmost necessity and it must be a strategy that is guided by the Spirit of God.

Conner (2000:23) mentioned that this is a time for a strategic shift in the church and explains this strategic shift as follows “A change of thinking inspired by the Holy Spirit, resulting in a change of behaviour that produces a greater effectiveness in fulfilling the purpose of God for this moment in history”.

1.4 Background

Already forty years ago, Irving and Zuck (1968:13) made a statement that is still valid today, namely:

“Many men and women of our generation have devoted their lives to making the world a better place to live in. But if youth are unconcerned and unchallenged, the world could conceivably [sic] slip into a moral morass. Dedicated Christians in our generation have devoted the best years of their lives to reaching men and women for Christ, building Churches, sending out missionaries. But young people will help determine the answer to the question, ‘When the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?’ (Luke 18:8). Unless we minister Gospel and its saving grace to the youth for the Lord we ‘labour in vain’ (Ps127:1)”.

Similarly Veerman (1992:25) adds to this statement with regard to youth ministry and the withdrawal of the youth in the church today when saying:

“This is the most important ingredient for any aspect of youth ministry, the youth themselves. But often we take them for granted assuming that kids will get involved in whatever we suggest. Reality would

suggest otherwise. I can think of many examples of ministry plans that looked great on paper, but fell apart because nobody came”.

Indeed it is also reflected in the youth ministry in most the Reformed Churches in Synod Midlands. As member of the RCYM in the Free State, most of the youth in the resort of Synod Midlands are either without a minister or even an elder to guide them and lead them and, not to mention, someone that genuinely cares for them as young people in dire need of positive and reinforcing attention, encouragement and support. Consequently the youth are literally on their own. They have to do things on their own, whether right or wrong, so as to become useful in their own manner in their local congregations. Too little has been done to prepare them on how to be effective in their respective local churches.

As a result Smith (2005:10) also attests to such ignorance in a more concrete manner when highlighting the reason behind the disinterest reflected among the youth by arguing as follows: “When switching on a television, opening a news paper or just listening to the typical conversation around a dinner table you will hear negative conversation referring to young people”.

Most of the Church leaders are experiencing the same problem of ignorance instead of ministering to the youth as well as remarks referring to the youth as rebellious and stubborn.

In order to solve this problem of ignorance about young people and their innermost needs, a conference was organised for the youth together with their ministers and some elders in the resort of Synod Midlands and Soutpansberg. This assembly took place 1991 at Hammanskraal, at the then Hammanskraal Theological Seminary. These brothers who organised the conference were also students there at that time and presently are all now ministers in the Reformed Churches.

The aim with this conference was to discuss some effective measures on how to help the youth become effective in their churches and in witnessing Christ

in the world. Moreover, the meeting was also about unity among youth groups. This was because, even then, little attention had been given to the youth of the Reformed Churches in Synod Midlands and Soutpansberg. Most ministers were ignorant on how to work with their young people and ways of approaching them effectively. Hence, they did not attempt to deal with the situation of the youth.

The researcher has been a member of the Reformed Churches Youth Movement now for the past fourteen years and from what became evident the young people have a thirst and desire to be ministered to. They want to become active and involved in the church work, but there are no opportunities or activities in the church that properly involve them. There are no specific responsibilities for the youth except for them to grow and become deacons or elders or, if they have the calling, to become ministers of the Word. Regarding female members, there was/is absolutely nothing they could or even can do with regard to ministry – except for being obedient and silent church members.

In order to keep themselves busy, the youth formed some youth groups. Little background on the origin of these groups is available, but some of them have now been existing for the past forty years. What gave rise to these youth groups according to the evidence and information gathered through field work study, however, is that it would appear that these youth groups might have been influenced by the “MBB” of the Dutch Reformed Church, one of our sister churches. Before the name RCYM, the Youth Movement in the Reformed Churches in Synod Midlands was also known as “MBB”. “MBB” is the acronym for *Mokgatlo wa Bokreste wa ba Batjha*, Christian Youth Movement.

In 1991 at Hammanskraal during the meeting that was convened by the students who are now ministers, the name was changed from MBB to RCYM, so that the name “Reformed” should be included. Nevertheless, despite the attempts that were made during 1991, other synods of the Reformed Churches were not represented at that meeting at all. The reason for this is a

lack of sufficient contact between the youth of the traditional “white” and “black” churches. Nevertheless, this movement does exist and it continues with its ministry with whatever impact it has on the youth.

One aspect that has to be attended to is that young people from the Reformed Churches find themselves being confused by many youth movements from other denominations and end up being relocated to their respective denominations. In the Methodist Church, the young people have their organisation, which is supported by the entire church and the respective congregations, and most of these young people remain in their respective churches because they have been given some responsibility within the guild. This is evident from their annual report of 2007, where it is indicated that there is a strong support structure from the church. The same cannot be said of the black Reformed Churches of Synod Midlands, as is evident from the empty seats found in the churches due to the absence of the young people.

Due to the fact that the Methodist Church is societal of nature, the youth are trained on ways of how to be there for one another in their needs, be it spiritual or physical. They are informed about church issues and their responsibility as youth in the church. This is also where they learn to witness Christ. This is what the youth in the Reformed Churches lack, for as Lekalakala (2002:14) argues, the youth are growing to be an independent organ within the organ and that they behave and operate more as a social club than as specifically members of a church-related group.

This is the general state of affairs in spite of the reality that these church-related youth groups have now been in existence for more than forty years. One of the main reasons for deviation from what the original intention had been would be that they have not really been under the guidance of the church councils or the ministers and this is also one of the reasons why they have their own disciplinary committees (see Lekalakala, 2002:14). Young people in the churches feel that they do not really belong anywhere in the Church and in order for them to mean something in the church they became largely autonomous. Therefore some of them, instead of leaving their

respective denominations, would rather join the RCYM, knowing that there are at least some activities linked to the RCYM.

The Reformed Church today will have to acknowledge this reality as it can and should no longer be ignored. The potential church-attending generation of the future is gradually fading away, and in some cases misled while the church leaders are turning a blind eye or still merely asking themselves what can be done. Conner (2000:140) is of the opinion that “One of the biggest challenges faced by the Church today is passing the purpose of God to the next generation, being the youth”.

1.5 Problem statement

The young generations of the present era are different and have been referred to as Generation X or Generation Xer. They are the ones who grow up surrounded by all the results and accomplishments of a technology explosion. They are the ones exposed to television, computers and different types of available and advanced electronic material. They are the ones exposed to a great variety of views, opinions and influences. Much of what is available is to their advantage, but unfortunately much of what is available is also to their disadvantage. In which way are these young people to be guided, taught and involved? Codrington (2004:87-93) points out that they learn by means of audio and visual types of electronic material. The young people labelled as ‘Millenials’ include the young people of the era of technology-based information systems and they are familiar with cell phones and internet. The young generation of the day prefer to socialise and to be in the midst of others. They spend much of their time in groups and they are in search of an own identity. They have a desire to know more about whom they are, their roots and their cultures (Codrington, 2004: 93 – 124). All of these indications and characteristics point in one direction and that is that they really need a leader, or leaders, to guide them on the right way, to assist them in adopting sound principles and a secure way of distinguishing between the proverbial ‘good and bad’. The young people of black churches and congregations, very well-known to the researcher as reverend among them, today are becoming

more and more westernised and more and more defiant of authority, as is the case across the world. The aspects mentioned above understandably would lay certain responsibilities and considerations at the feet of churches and church leaders as far as church-related group activities of the young people are concerned, especially as the church has very specific and vitally important messages to share with them and establish within them and among them.

What is amazing, according to Cordington (2004:130-131), is the young people's willingness to participate and their desire to do things for themselves. To them integrity and a religious way of life are important, more important than many adults seem to realise, and they will thankfully hold on to basic truths that they are being made aware of. The key would appear to be well-pondered and well-meant guidance. They want to know how to behave as Christians and which expectations to live up to. They want to have appropriate 'tools' in hand to reinforce them and to protect them. It remains for the church and church leaders to accept the challenge.

For the purposes of this research the focus is mainly on young people from the black communities and an approach of teaching and guiding according to the Word of God would strengthen the arms of churches and congregations. Christian faith should be put into practice, and one of the ways of doing so would be to engage the young people in generation-relevant and principally acceptable church-related activities to build their faith for the present and for the future. Such an approach would be to the benefit of the young people themselves and local churches as well as to the benefit of communities and eventually society at large.

Whatever methodology is decided upon, adopted or implemented for ministry to include teaching and guidance, must at all times be based on Biblical truth. The aim with the ministry, *i.e.* the teaching and the guiding, must be in pursuit of leading the young people towards the right relationships with God and with one another. The Bible is the only Sourcebook of truth about God and about man's relation to Him and *vice versa*. For this reason a solid foundation in God's written Word would provide the proper framework for any Christian

approach when working with young people. Certainly, youth workers can gain much from psychology, education and sociology. Nevertheless, these can only enhance one's knowledge of youth and youth work (Irving and Zuck, 1968:27). Knowledge and information about God and God's relation to all of creation can be found only in the Word of God as revealed to human beings by God.

Nel (2000:57) further attests that, "Christian young people had to work together. From these motivations also large and strong denominational ministries grew. One of the largest in the world is the Southern Baptist Youth Ministry. In South Africa the development of the youth ministry in the Dutch Reformed church tells a similar story. The fact is that the churches intensely examined their youth ministry, especially during the latter half of the century (compare for the results the deliberations of the Dutch Reformed church's report by Jeugstudiekommissie (1966); in the Presbyterian Church [USA] [Little 1968]; in the Lutheran Church [USA] [Gilbert 1969]; in the Reformed Church in Netherlands [Heitink & Hogenhuis, nd]). There has always been disquiet about the state of the youth ministry. The view point is still prevalent that youth ministry in the Church is a stepping stone to a real ministry".

In alignment with Nel and Thesnaar (2006:94) it is true that to be a Christian faith community means above all else to be passionate about God because of the passion of God in Christ. Young people are not only in search of such passion but also have the right to expect it within their communities of faith. This provides us with our true identity. If and when it is absent they will go and look for it elsewhere, often where it is not found.

From this argument arises the question:

"What catechetical strategies or guidelines may serve as a basis for effective ministry to the youth, including RCYM?"

In order to answer this question the subsequent questions can be formulated:

- 1.5.1 What does the Bible teach catechetically with regard to developing a sound base for youth ministry?
- 1.5.2 What catechetical strategy do other reformed churches like NG, URC as well as the traditional “white” Reformed Churches in GKSA as well as churches in the resort of Synod Soutpansberg use to effectively improve youth ministry and what can be learnt from them?
- 1.5.3 Within the new dispensation of the Reformed Churches, how can the RCYM work hand in hand with youth groups of the fellow churches of the GKSA and Soutpansberg?
- 1.5.4 What impact does the RCYM have on the congregations as well as the youth themselves and what catechetical guidelines can be developed for effective youth ministry of the RCYM?

1.6 Aim

The aim of this study was to determine practical catechetical strategies or guidelines that may be used for effective youth ministry in Reformed Churches' Youth Movement.

1.7 Objectives

The specific objectives of the study were:

- 1.7.1 To determine what the Bible teaches with regard to catechetical strategies in youth ministry.
- 1.7.2 To investigate the catechetical strategy on how churches in the reformed circle of the GKSA may develop a sound base for ministering their youth.
- 1.7.3 To determine how the RCYM of the black churches may work hand in hand with youth groups of the fellow churches in the GKSA within the new dispensation of the Reformed Churches.

1.7.4 To analyse the impact of the RCYM on the congregation and on the youth themselves as well as to formulate catechetical guidelines for providing a sound base for youth ministry in the RCYM.

1.7.5 Central theoretical argument

This study holds that catechetical guidelines can be effective in providing a basis for youth ministry, *i.e.* RCYM included.

1.8 Methodology

The methodology as defined by Zerfass (1974), which places basis theory, meta-theory and praxis theory in a hermeneutical interaction was used in this study. This was done in the Reformed Tradition (Letšosa, 2005: 11).

1.8.1 Basis theory

To determine what the Bible teaches with regard to youth ministry the researcher made use of the basis theory method. An exegetical study of relevant Scripture portions that teach about the youth was conducted. The exegesis occurred according to the Reformed Tradition of the grammatical-exegetical approach.

Both the Old and the New Testaments were reviewed for relevant information. For the study of the OT the method of Van Gemeren (1997) was used and for the NT that of Van Rensburg & De Klerk (2005). Louw and Nida (1988) assisted in proceeding with the word study of the New Testament.

1.8.1.1 The exegesis was done according to the grammatical-historical method as to what the Bible teaches with regard to youth ministry. Scriptural texts (such as Ecclesiastes 12:1; Psalm 103:2-5; 2 Timothy 2:22; Psalm 119:9-10) and exegetical material were used. Different commentaries and theological dictionaries as well as Louw and Nida (1988) were utilised for exegesis of the New Testament.

1.8.1.2 For the meta-theory, a literature study was done to learn more about how churches in the reformed circle GKSA minister to their youth and to identify a catechetical strategy that would provide an underlying basis for a healthy youth movement.

An empirical study was launched to investigate the practical situation. Interviews were held and additional material incorporated (*inter alia*, minutes of the movements) in order to establish how churches may work together in an endeavour to develop and establish effective youth movements. The “status quo”, however, appeared to be indicative of a defective praxis.

The research design was of a quantitative nature according to the researcher’s preference of design. Five to six congregations in the Reformed Churches in old Synod Midlands were visited, as well as other Churches of the Reformed circle that have a movement similar to RYCM. The criteria for the selection of the congregation were based on the level of the involvement of the church in the RCYM. Interviews were conducted according to the guidelines and requirements of the ethical centre of the North-West University, South Africa. According to the latter anonymity and confidentiality were dealt with as important during the processes. Informed written consent for participation was obtained and participation of interviewees was voluntary.

1.8.1.3 The data in combination with the data from the basis theory and meta-theory were utilised to form the theoretical basis for the main elements that should be included in a new praxis.

1.8.1.4 Further interviews were conducted to analyse the impact of the RCYM on the congregation and on the young people themselves.

1.9 Praxis theory

After the basis theory and the meta-theory had been determined, a hermeneutical interaction took place by means of relating the two theories to

each other. Kruger (2002:9) states that the praxis theory describes how the basis theory has to function in practice. The researcher was able to identify basic principles from the basis theory and to obtain relevant data from the meta-theory in addition to the findings that resulted from the empirical research. The subsequent hermeneutical interaction implied that all the data had been processed in an interactive manner, by way of interpretation, reformulation and readjustment. The result of the praxis theory was then the development of a new praxis. This could be considered as the stage wherein the theory would become the practice. The intention with the new praxis was to focus on the values of the Kingdom of God, to lead to a new understanding of the Gospel in the context and situation under study, to bring about a change in the present context and then to establish and implement the changed praxis (Letšosa, 2005:15).

1.10 Schematic presentation

Problem Statement	Aim and objectives	Methodology
“What catechetical strategies or guidelines may serve as a basis for effective ministry to the RCYM?”	The aim of this study was to determine practical catechetical strategies or guidelines that may be used as sound basis for effective ministry to the RCYM.	The methodology as defined by Zerfass (1974) which is of basis theory, meta-theory and praxis theory was used in this study. This was done in the Reformed Tradition.
What does the Bible teach with regard to developing a sound basis for youth ministry?	To determine what the Bible teaches with regard to youth ministry.	The exegesis was done according to the grammatical-historical method as to what the Bible teaches with regard to youth ministry. Scriptural texts such as

		Ecclesiastes 12:1 and Psalm 103:2-5; 2Timothy 2:22; Psalm 119:9-10 and exegetical material were used.
What catechetical strategy do other reformed churches like the NG, the Uniting Reformed Churches as well as the White Reformed Churches in GKSA as well as Soutpansberg minister uses to effectively improve youth and what can be learnt from them?	To investigate what catechetical strategy was and is being used by churches in the reformed circle like the NG, the Uniting Reformed Churches as well as the white Reformed Churches of the GKSA and black Soutpansberg to minister their youth and what determine what can be learnt from them.	Different interviews were conducted to determine how churches in the reformed circle like the NG, the Uniting Reformed Churches as well as the White Reformed Churches of the GKSA and Soutpansberg minister their youth with regard to catechetical strategy which makes them to be effective.
Within the new dispensation of the Reformed Churches, how can the RCYM of the black churches work hand in hand with youth groups of the fellow churches GKSA and Soutpansberg?	To determine how the RCYM of the black churches may work hand in hand with youth groups of the fellow churches in the GKSA and black Soutpansberg within the new dispensation of the Reformed Churches.	A literature study as well as an interview was done to determine how RCYM may work hand in hand with other youth groups.
What impact does the	To analyse the impact of	Interviews were held

<p>RCYM have on the congregations as well as the youth themselves?</p>	<p>the RCYM on the congregation and on the Youth themselves.</p>	<p>and other materials (minutes of the movement) consulted where available in order to establish the impact of RCYM on the congregations as well as the young people themselves.</p>
<p>What catechetical guidelines can be developed for effective youth ministry of the RCYM?</p>	<p>To formulate catechetical guidelines for youth ministry in the RCYM.</p>	<p>A hermeneutical interaction took place, where the basic principles from the basis theory were related to the guidelines and inferences from the meta-theory and empirical study respectively.</p>

Chapter Two : Basis Theory

2 Biblical teaching with regard to Youth Ministry.

2.1 INTRODUCTION

2.1.1 Problem statement

The problem statement is introduced here by means of a question: "What are the Biblical teachings with regard to ministry to young people?"

Throughout the Bible God instructed his people to care for the young ones. Deuteronomy chapter 6 is a clear example of this. Jesus remained in the Temple at the age of 12 and could even debate with the elderly regarding the Law. During the early centuries young people already knew Scripture from an early age on. It could be argued that the reason for this was that Scripture was actually the main text book that was studied at that time by means of oral tradition.

In modern society our young people are faced with many challenges and academic choices and a vast variety of sources by means of which to conduct studies. The Bible is no longer the main text book in houses and very few people are still willing to memorise parts of it. Almost nobody exercises such an option or cares to inspire such a habit among younger people of the next generation.

Letšosa (2005:10) mentions that a problem exists when a current stage is no longer satisfactory. In the light of the fact that people, e.g. parents, teachers and church leaders, no longer convey the Biblical messages to the youth through oral tradition, alternative approaches or methods should be considered because the messages and truths are still as important and as valuable (and indeed as essential!) as they used to be. In which way, then, should youth be ministered in the current age?

In this chapter the focus will be on passages from the Bible that deal with youth ministry. Scriptural texts such as Ecclesiastes 12:1 and 2 Timothy 2:22 as well as Psalm 119 will be referred to and a thorough exegesis will be conducted in order to identify the catechetical strategies that can be used to effectively minister the young people of the church and the members of the RCYM in particular.

2.1.2 Exegesis on Ecclesiastes 12:1

On the exegesis of the Old Testament the method that will be used is that of grammatical-historical exegesis.

2.1.3 The writing of the book

The wisdom of Ecclesiastes comes from the one who is identified as the Qoheleth. It is not certain whether this is a personal name, some sort of pseudonym, or the title of an office. Judging from the meaning of the related verb, it would seem that the word means a convener or assembler, thus the common English translation would be "Teacher" or Preacher (Hill & Walton, 1991:293).

Shields (2006: 49-50) argues that there are scholars who argue that Qoheleth himself was the author of the epilogue. Duane Garret is a recent exponent of this position, arguing that

"treating the conclusion as a secondary epilogue, either as a pious gloss or as a part of an emerging canon consciousness, decapitates the entire work. Everything Ecclesiastes has affirmed up to this point, the sovereign freedom of God, the limits of human wisdom, thoughts on the use and abuse of wealth and power, and the brevity and absolute contingency of human life, all lead to the command to fear of God" (see Shields (2006:50).

Nevertheless, this position has little in its favour. The epilogue marks a change from Qoheleth's characteristic first person speech to a third person speech about Qoheleth and the wisdom movement. The most natural inference to be made from this change is that the epilogue was not authored by Qoheleth himself.

Hill & Walton (1991:293) state that Qoheleth has traditionally been identified as Solomon because of the information given in the first two verses of the book. It is argued that no one else was "son of David, king in Jerusalem". Yet it must be admitted that the designation "son of David" could be used to refer to anyone in the line of David. It is likewise enigmatic why Solomon would hide behind a pseudonym. The Solomonic flavour of sections like 2:1-11 leave no doubt that the author intended the reader to think of Solomon's experiences. But the claim in 1:16 and 2:9 that he surpasses all who were before him in Jerusalem would mean little if his father were his only predecessor. It is further noted that the language of the Book differs in numbers of ways from that found in Solomon's other writings.

Mills (2003:16) rightly agrees with this when he argues that, "In Qoheleth there is a clear point of contact with the self conscious reader in the 'I' who narrates the work. It is through the eyes of a 'self' that evaluative messages about life experience are expressed. Moreover this is not a 'disembodied' narrator whose voice is never identified within the text. Rather the speaker is one who has taken on a personalized critique of life in relation to received religious traditions and who deliberately records his findings. The scene is set in Ecclesiastes 1 where the source of the information to come is located as Qohelet (Ecclesiastes), preacher, and a self in Solomonic guise".

In conclusion, it is not impossible that Solomon was the Qoheleth, but evidence to the contrary is sufficient to make it doubtful. Since the Scripture is silent on the matter, we cannot be confident in identifying Qoheleth. Therefore it would be appropriate also in the study to refer the author of the book of Ecclesiastes as the Qoheleth.

2.1.4 Dating of the Book

Many factors point to a relatively late date for the composition of the book of Ecclesiastes. The vocabulary itself shows signs of being very late; a Hellenistic colouring may rest behind the vocabulary for rulers, perhaps also behind the observations about the individuals whose responsibilities brought them into regular contact with the Royal Court. At least one of the rhetorical questions, a literary device that the author uses nearly thirty times, is attested only in post-exilic texts, with possible exception. This rhetorical question, (who knows?), functions as an assertion that “no one knows”. The use of particles with accompanying personal pronouns also marks this language as late (Crenshaw, 1987: 50).

The question of Greek influence on Qoheleth, which often preoccupied scholars receives an exemplary treatment on the basis of Qoh 7:15-18 by L. Schweinhorst-Schonberger. He shows with a convincing argumentation that Qoh 7:15-18 recommends some form of *via media*, a *tertium quid* between righteousness and wickedness, which in the line of Greek philosophy is called “good”, and in the line of Judaism, “Fear God”. Moreover he goes on saying that, it is more than the ideas themselves, the degree of reflectivity we find in Qohelet was provoked by contact with Hellenistic culture and philosophy (Schoors, 1998: 5-6).

Moreover, the meagre political data that scholars have detected in the book point to a period prior to the Maccabean revolt in 164 B.C.E, for the attitude toward foreign rulers fits best the Ptolemaic period. The Zenon archives reflect a political situation of economic prosperity for the upper echelons of Jewish society about 250 B.C.E. He continue to argued that the Qoheleth belonged to the privileged class, although the evidence suggests rather that his students were well to do, hence could act on their teacher’s advice about wearing fine clothes and anointing themselves with expensive oils. Such freedom to follow one’s inclinations, whether personal or religious was severely restricted under Antiochus IV’s reign (at least for ordinary citizens).

Another argument for a date prior to 200B.C.E comes from Ben Sira, who knew and used the book about 180B.C.E. Whitley has attempted to show that Qoheleth actually used Ecclesiasticus, claiming that the language is later than Daniel, that the Mishianic tongue was widely used in Judea, and that the Qoheleth wrote before 140 but after Jonathan's appointment in 152B.C.E and its accompanying political change. The arguments are convincing. A date for Qoheleth between 225 and 250 remains most likely (Crenshaw, 1987:50).

Shields (2006: 35) is of the opinion that from this brief survey of material arguments the apparently distinctive thoughts of Qoheleth echo ideas that had found expression throughout the ancient Near East well before the period of the Exile. He further attested that we have, however, been unable to establish a precise historical setting for Ecclesiastes. Ancient literary parallels to Ecclesiastes do not help us to refine the historical context for Qoheleth because they are only parallel in rather broad linguistic, structural, or philosophical ways. What is clear, however, is that a postexilic date for Qoheleth is neither mandated nor excluded by evidence.

It is in this regard that it will be appropriate to follow the line of Hill and Walton (2000:365) concerning the dating of the book of Ecclesiastes:

"Some have dated the book in the third or fourth century B.C.E, claiming that the Hebrew of the book has the characteristics of post biblical Hebrew and that there is discernible influence from Greek philosophy. This view, while popular among some scholars, must treat that book as a royal fiction, a genre well known in both Mesopotamia and Egypt. More common among conservative's interpreters is the view that the distinctive Hebrew is dialectical and therefore cannot give much help in dating the book. But on the other hand those who do not adhere to dating the book in the times of Solomon, have been most inclined to place it sometime in the eighth and seventh centuries B.C., but one cannot really be more precise. Fortunately the timeless nature of the wisdom of the book makes it unnecessary to link it to any particular period".

The last remark above that refers to the timelessness of the wisdom of the book, is of importance for the purposes of this study and very reassuring as such. Similarly the common English translation for the name of the book, namely “Teacher” or “Preacher”, bears significant relevance to the context of this study.

2.1.5 The background of the Book of Ecclesiastes

According to Hill & Walton (1991:294) Ecclesiastes, like several poetic books, contains a number of literary genres. It makes use of allegories, sayings, metaphors, proverbs, and other forms. Beyond genre identifications there are a number of literary works known from the Ancient Near East that address situations in which conventional wisdom is viewed as incongruent with reality or experience.

It is in this regard that Mills (2003:165) shed the motion that

“It is reasonable to read the Qoheleth as one mythic map offered by biblical studies. It holds together both same and the other, and offers both order and its disordering. It asserts only to critique it, but then returns to assertion of the importance of order in daily life”

2.1.6 Outline of the Book

Introduction (1:1-11)

Fulfilment: Problem and Solution

A. Problem: Fulfilment not to be found

1. Not found in Wisdom (1:12-18)
2. Not found in escapism (2:1-11)
3. Not found in legacy (2:12-23)

B. Solution: Fulfilment not to be sought

1. Enjoy life as from the hand of God (2:24-26)
2. God has ordained life’s vicissitudes (3:1-8)
3. Desire to find meaning should lead us to God (3:9-15)

III. Frustrations: Problem and Solution

A. Problem unavoidable

Life is unfair and then you die (3:16-22)

1. Frustration of being a victim

- a. Victim of oppression without defender (4:1-3)
- b. Victim of your own envy (4:4-6)
- c. Victim of isolation (4:7-12)
- d. Victim of fickleness (4:13-16)
- e. Do not look for relief through vows (5:1-7)

2. Frustration of graft

- a. Victim of political injustice (5:8-9)
- b. Do not look to wealth for relief (5:10-6:9)

3. The Solution: Frustration not to be avoided

- 1. Learn lessons from the hard experience of life (7:1-12)
- 2. Accept prosperity and adversity as from the hand of God (7:13-18)
- 3. Do not expect to find righteousness or wisdom in a fallen world (7:19-29)

IV. Guidelines for plotting a course through life

- A. Live under authority, but do not expect government to solve your problems (8:1-9)
- B. Live as if the retribution principle were true, but do not expect to see it operating in your experience (8:10-14)
- C. Do not expect to know all the answers (8:15-17)
- D. It is a fallen world, and then is all it has to offer (9:1-6)
- E. Enjoy life God has given (9:7-10)
- F. Expect the unexpected (9:11-12)
- G. Wisdom is better than strength
 - 1. Much wisdom can be done by a little folly (9:13-10:1)
 - 2. Results and conduct of folly (10:2-20)
- H. Be cautious and prepared, but not to the extent of paralysis (11:1-6)
- I. Enjoy life, but remember that you are accountable for what you do (11:7-10)
- J. Do not wait till you are old to get the right perspective on life (12:1-8)

V. Colophon (12:9-14)

From the above outline it is clear that the pericope that will be dealt with in the process of exegesis that is Ecclesiastes 12:1 is found in the Old Testament among the poetic books, part IV under the heading "Guidelines for plotting a course through life" on the subheading I "Do not wait till you are old to get the right perspective on life".

2.1.7 The purpose and the Message of Ecclesiastes

The purpose of the Qoheleth was to contend that there is nothing "under the sun" that is capable of giving a meaning to life. Even if some level of fulfillment or self-satisfaction were achieved, physical death would be waiting at the end. Frustrations and adversity are unavoidable, and answers to the hard questions of life are not forthcoming. On these terms the book confronts the crookedness and uncertainty of life and shows, probably unconsciously, the

need for a concept of resurrection to bring harmony out of the discord of reality (Hill & Walton, 1991:296).

On the other hand the purpose and message of the Qoheleth would include that conventional wisdom developed the instruction into a significant didactic tool, in both its positive and in its negative forms. Exhortations and warnings shaped youngsters' lives in desired ways. Imperatives drew attention to the authority of the teacher as they cautioned students against prescribed actions and encouraged them to follow teachings that brought life. Unlike truth statements, which appealed to general consensus, instructions required supportive arguments. These defences included, among other things, an appeal to personal authority and accumulated traditions; they consisted of threats, often illustrated by common experience, and of promises rooted in moral and religious traditions. Qoheleth rarely uses instructions, and when he does he grounds it in private experience. Because human efforts ultimately have limited value, and given the powerful role of chance, Qoheleth exhorts young people to enjoy life. However, they must not forget God, the distant despot, so Qoheleth advises fear when drawing near for worship (Crenshaw, 1987:29-30).

The message of Ecclesiastes is that the course of life to be pursued is a God-centred life. The pleasures of life are not intrinsically fulfilling and cannot offer lasting satisfaction, but they can be enjoyed as gifts from God. Life offers good times and bad times and follows the pattern such as that proposed retribution principle. But all comes from the hand of God (7:14). Adversity may not be enjoyable, but it can make us the people of faith we ought to be (Hill & Walton, 1991:296).

2.1.8 Structure and Organisation

The inclusion of 1:2 and 12:8 and the recurring refraining "There is nothing better for man than to..." (cf. 2:24-26; 3:12-13, 22; 5:18-20; 8:15; 9:7-9), shows us that this is a unified work, but the author proceeds by introducing various pertinent topics for discussion. It is helpful to keep in *mind* that

wisdom literature often tries to convey how to think rather than what to think. After the introduction to the problem in 1:1-11, Qoheleth's own experience is used to suggest that nothing "under the sun" is able to give meaning. In life "under the sun", God is far removed and not a factor. Meaning that in life under the sun when God is not in control everything is useless. Actually there is no life without God and life becomes meaningless (2:28-3:15) and he advises a moderate course of action. Though nothing can offer fulfilment, one needs not to adopt a pessimistic, cynical, or fatalistic view towards life. The advice is that one has to enjoy life for what it is, that is being a gift from God Almighty (Hill & Walton, 1991:296).

By making use of pairs of antitheses in 3:1-8, Qoheleth begins to elucidate why it is necessary for us to maintain a God-centred worldview. We are not in control of the "times" of life, and many of the times of life can be difficult. Stability can only be found in a God-centred approach (Hill & Walton, 1991:296). In 3:16-7:29, the concern is about how one may apply one's worldview to the situations of life. The end results, however, are that frustration and adversity cannot be avoided and the Qoheleth proceeds to offer a solution in Chapter 7, it being that we should not try to eliminate adversity and frustration as such things are inevitably part of life. The better route would be to deal with what happens by means of a God-centred worldview that allows for a willingness to accept both prosperity and adversity as coming from the divine hand. Qoheleth's solution leads to the last section of the book, where the writer offers a guideline for plotting a course through life. Much of chapters 8-9 attracts our attention to ways of adjusting our expectations of this world. To follow then are a number of warnings in chapter 10 about the power and effects of foolish behaviour. Chapter 11 urges a cautious, but not too cautious, approach to life and reminds us that we are accountable for how we live and for the decisions we make. Finally chapter 12 uses a flow of diverse images and allegories to encourage the reader to act now. Following the inclusion line of verse 8 comes what we call a colophon. This was used in ancient Near Eastern literature to identify the author further and to epitomise what was written in the manuscript or tablet (Hill & Walton, 1991:296-297).

2.1.9 Major themes

2.1.9.1 The retribution Principle: Part 4

The primary sections of Ecclesiastes that address the retribution principle are 3:16-22 and 8:10-14, though the principle is also involved in the statements of 7:15-17 and 9:1-6. The position that Qoheleth comes to is an acceptance of the retribution principle in theory, but a denial of its ability to predict how one might fare in life or to explain any person's current situation. In this Qoheleth is in agreement with the book of Job. Both view the retribution principle as conveying something about God rather than offering guarantees in life. Time and chance "happen to them all" and neither time nor chance can be eliminated from this life and would remain two great factors in life (Ecc 9:11) (Hill & Walton, 1991:297).

Even though it is clear from the book that Qoheleth had no revelation concerning God's eventual judgement of the righteous and the wicked in the afterlife, his seemingly inconsistent position concerning the retribution principle can be vindicated by the progress of revelation. The fact that God will reward the righteous and punish the wicked in the eternity is consistent with Qoheleth's belief that the retribution principle is true, but cannot be applied solely to this life (Hill & Walton, 1991:297).

2.1.9.2 Experience versus Revelation

The second major theme in the Qoheleth's approach is one that is common in evidential apologetics even today. Qoheleth built his argument without any presupposition about revelation. He made no reference to the law or the prophets, and nothing was said about Israel's place in God's plan of salvation or covenant. The approach that the Qoheleth used was philosophical and based on experience and wisdom. Without mentioning anything about the Israelites theology does not suggest ignorance or rejection of them, but the Qoheleth in his case may reflect an attempt to address the wider spectrum of audience (Hill & Walton, 1991:297-298).

2.1.9.3 Epicureanism versus Piety

The fact that the Qoheleth made no mention of a life of piety, faith or even good works, does not mean that the Qoheleth supports the Epicurean dictum “Eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow you die”. The omissions may rather cause one to conclude that the book of Ecclesiastes is not intended to be a systematic theology. Much rather could the primary purpose of the Qoheleth be viewed as a way of emphasising that “life under the sun” cannot offer fulfilment and as a way of offering an alternate worldview. The philosophy expressed is not simply “enjoy life”, but “enjoy life and Fear God”. The difference is important. This does not mean an abandonment of all principles and values for a life of pleasure. Rather does it propagate a responsible, optimistic integration of ways to live and faith? Very few books of the Bible or passages from the Bible offer as clear a challenge to our contemporary worldview. Enjoyment of life comes not in the quest for personal fulfilment, but in the recognition that everything comes from the hand of God (Hill & Walton, 1991:298).

2.2 Syntactical analysis of Chapter 11:9-10- 12:1

2.2.1 Word studies of most important words

1. : to bring to mind or think of again **⟨remembers the old days⟩**
2. **archaic**
 - a: bethink 1b
 - b: remind
3. a: to keep in mind for attention or consideration **⟨remembers friends at Christmas⟩**
 - b: reward **⟨was remembered in the will⟩**
4. : to retain in the memory **⟨remember the facts until the test is over⟩**

2.2.2 Youth

Webster (2003) gives this explanation of 'youth':

- The time of life when one is young *esp* : the period between childhood and maturity
- The early period of existence, growth, or development
- A young person *esp* : a young male between adolescence and maturity

2.2.3 Remove

1 a : to change the location, position, station, or residence of *<remove soldiers*

to the front>

b : to transfer (a legal proceeding) from one court to another

2 : to move by lifting, pushing aside, or taking away or off *<remove your*

hat>

3 : to dismiss from office

4 : to get rid of: eliminate *<remove a tumor surgically>*

2.3 *Commentaries exegesis*

Willington (1997) is of the opinion that the pericope gives the warning in this sense: *11:7–10 Enjoyment now, but judgment later*. As a person enjoys the fruit of hard work, he or she should remember that death and judgment will surely come (see Heb. 9:27).

12:1–8 "Young person, prepare for old age!" Solomon/Qohelet warned the young among his readers to be prepared for old age, when all the joys of youth (see 11:9) would be merely a memory. The best way to prepare for that difficult time is to love God and live for him today (12:1). Without such a commitment of faith, life would end as it began, without meaning or purpose (12:8; see 1:2).

2.3.1 Basic principles of Qohelet

The young people have to enjoy a God-centred life

The young people must know that every action will be judged by God

The young people must remember God before the times of sorrow arrive

The young people must exclude all evils of the flesh from their way of living

The Youth must remove all the sorrows of life by remembering God

2.3.2 Twelve lines of the exegesis / Remember the Creator and live the joy

The Qoheleth in Ecclesiastes 11:7-12:8 brings to our mind that we are not going to stay young forever, but it is during earlier stages and in the present that we need to remember who we are. It is in the days of youth that we need to serve the Lord wholeheartedly so that all our energy will be spent enjoying the relationship with our Creator. Seeing that we, in the days of our youth, encounter so many temptations, the preacher calls upon a total devotion towards the life of faith, that is, fearing and serving God. It is in this regard that the Preacher has been describing the life of faith as one of enjoyment (2:24-26; 3:12, 22; 5:18-20; 9:7-10; 11:8-10). But the preacher presents another aspect that is very important by pointing out that where God has been neglected, the capacity for joy will be lost. This would also mean that when God is being served as a formality there will not be any kind of joy, but when God is served wholeheartedly a relationship with God will result and serving Him will bring joy. By this it is clear that there is no way a relationship with God can be found except through the redeeming work of Christ on the cross, according to which it is possible for a sinner to be reconciled with God and to live in a relationship with God. The Holy Spirit will lead the sinner to live a self-confessing life and to exalt in God rather than in himself/herself. According to 1 John 1:3-10 (NIV) all these things - *i.e.* from sin to purification to a relationship with God - are possible! To follow two of the verses have been extracted, *i.e.* 1 John 1:3-4: "We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ. We write this to make our joy [*some manuscripts 'your joy'*] complete."

2.4 *Psalms*

Psalm 119:9-11

2.4.1 The writing of the Book

When trying to reveal the heart of religion in Israel the Psalms deserve a place of pride. This has not always been recognised, and as a result many presentations of the ancient faith and sacred practices were impoverished. Perspectives which the Psalms offer on creation, the animal world, the nations, the holy centre of Zion, the king's vocation, the kingdom of God itself - these and other treasures of the Psalms were not properly taken into account or appreciated. Sometimes this neglect has been due to misapprehension about the date and composition of the Psalms. By working from theories of how the Israelites' religion developed from 'many gods' to a 'One God' outlook, some scholars have dated the Psalms very late in the Old Testament history. They have explained the presence of obviously ancient passages as due to the method of the late authors who, supposedly, drew on one piece of old psalms and built them into their new compositions (Eaton, 2003: 3-4).

Since the Psalms purport to have been written in the mid-second millennium B.C., while others are clearly post exilic (i.e., after 539 B.C.), we know that (1) the composition of the whole did not take place until some time after the exile, (2) thus the editor (the person or persons responsible for collecting and arranging organizing the psalms) is to be differentiated from the author (who composed individual psalm). Therefore the aspects of writing of the book that will be considered are the authorship of the individual psalms and the composition of the Psalter as a whole (Hill and Walton, 1991: 274).

Arguing further Eaton (2003:4) attests that:

"it is true that the ancient authors sometimes incorporated older elements into their works, but this was something which could occur just well in the early period. There was always something still earlier to draw on where appropriate. So the wisest procedure is first to receive

the total impact of a psalm, to allow it to speak as a genuine unity, eloquent of one time and setting, before resorting to theories of editorial cuts, compilations or additions. We then come to see the main period of composition as lying between 1000 and 400 BCE, with the early part of this period as having been especially fruitful. Favouring this conclusion are the obvious links with the dynasty of David and with the temple of Jerusalem in its first glory as a royal and imperial holy centre. Furthermore, we have to think of the Psalms, then, as among the great foundational elements of Hebrew religion. In particular, our understanding of the prophetic books should reckon with this. From the Psalms we gain a vantage point to recognize when a great prophet is working with older ideas, especially the concepts, ceremonies and ideal worship. In this perspective we may better understand the message”

2.4.1 Authorship

The main source of information for the authorship of the psalms comes from the psalm titles. Of the 150 psalms, all but 34 have titles of some sort. Of the 116 titles, 100 indicate an author (and often other information as well, such as musical style or directors for performance), and of those 100, 73 are attributed to David. Other authors identified are Moses (90), Solomon (72,127), Asaph (50, 73-83) Heman (88), Ethan (89), and the group called the sons of Korah (42, 44-49, 84-85, 87) (Hill and Walton, 1991:274 and Weiser, 1962: 94-95).

Eaton (2003:5) is of the opinion that caution is needed here in terms of the authorship. For one thing, textual evidence (for example from the ancient Greek translation) indicates variations in the occurrence of such headings, suggesting that some might be of late origin. For another, the meaning of the heading is often not certain. In 'Of David', for example, the preposition might have originally meant 'For' or "pertaining to', while 'David' might have referred to the Davidic rulers in general. Although many psalms are expressed as passionate statements of an individual, it is striking that there is scarcely anything that would identify any particular person. From various ancient

sanctuaries across the Ancient Near East archaeologists have recovered prayers and thanksgivings and offerings which specify circumstances and record names, but there is nothing of this kind in the Psalms. We are led to think of the composing and chanting of these pieces as the work of the skilled circles in the service of the temple. Organised by the temple authorities under the hand of the king, they handed down their art and compositions in largely hereditary guilds. Evidence of such guilds appears in the Books of Chronicles (especially 1Chron. 15-16; 25) and in the headings 'Of the sons Korah' (Psalm. 42; 44-9; 84; 85; 87; 88), 'Of Asaph' (50; 73-83), 'Of Heman' (88), 'Of Ethan' (89) and perhaps 'Jeduthun' (39: 62; 77).

2.4.2 Composition

According to Hill and Walton (1991:275) "the book of Psalms is divided into five books as follows: Book I: 1-41; Book II: 42-72; Book III: 73-89; Book IV: 90-106; Book V: 107-150". The point to note here is that from these the observations combine to suggest there is a definitive, purposeful arrangement of the Psalms that offers a message that transcends what any individual psalm has to offer. In the same way that the writers of the historical literature took narratives from various sources and edited them into a unified composition with a particular theological agenda in mind, so it may be with the editor of the Psalms (Hill and Walton, 1991: 275).

One should thus not consider the Psalter in its present form as the result of one single act of collecting or as been compiled throughout by the same people. These facts can be inferred from the Psalter itself for it still bears distinct traces of having grown in the course of history. The Psalter, which in its present form is divided into five books, represents the ultimate outcome of a process of collecting psalms which extended over a longer period. Thus the final compiler produced the present Psalter from various earlier collections (Weiser, 1962: 99).

There is evidence that the five books of Psalms were not initially compiled all at once but came from the psalm manuscripts found among the Dead Sea

scrolls. These manuscripts date to the last century and a half B.C. Among the thirty odd manuscripts available, the psalm books I-III are almost always in the same order as they are in the Bible. The order of the Psalms in books IV and V, however, frequently varies from that found in the Old Testament. This seems to suggest that books I-III had already attained final form by the second century B.C., whereas books IV-V may still have been under development. It is possible, then, that the editorial arrangement was fixed until just before the time of Christ. It is in this regard that the evidence shows that the book of Psalms is made up of individual poetic compositions written during a thousand-year period by several persons. These compositions were at various times gathered into small collections, that in turn were arranged in stages into a larger work edited with a particular theological agenda (Hill and Walton, 1991: 275).

The division of the Psalter into five books is the work of the final compiler. The same is true of the arrangement according to which each of these books ends with a closing doxology; this, in view of I Chronicles 16:8-36, allows us to draw the conclusion that the Psalter was used in the public worship. Again, it was perhaps the final compiler who assigned to Psalm 1 and 2, to which no superscription is attached, and to Psalm 150 their present position in the Psalter, intending Psalms 1 and 2 to serve as an introduction and Psalm 150 as a doxological conclusion to the whole Psalter (Weiser, 1962: 100).

2.4.3 The Background of the Book of Psalms

It is more appropriate to speak of the literary background of the book of Psalms than historical background. Study of the Mesopotamian and Egyptian hymns and prayers has provided much information by which the Psalms can be understood better. In a comparative study it is necessary to consider both similarities and difference to gain a balanced picture. Aspects of both form and content can contribute to analysis (Hill and Walton, 1991: 276).

2.4.4 Form

The psalms of the Bible can be classified into three general categories, *i.e.* praise, lament and wisdom with a number of subcategories as well. For the greater part, each Psalm falls into one classification, one exception being Psalm 22, in which verses 1-21 are characteristic of a lament Psalm while verses 22-31 remind of a praise psalm. Additionally, psalm type follows a fairly consistent format. Lament psalms regularly include elements such as complaint, petition, and confession of trust and vow of praise. The psalms of Mesopotamia do not contain distinctly lament compositions. Instead, lament and praise are characteristically combined into single entities. In this we can see both similarities and difference with psalms. Israelite psalms, on the other hand, manifest both “descriptive praise” and “declarative praise”, but only the descriptive praise is found in the Mesopotamian literature (Hill and Walton, 1991: 276).

According to Hill and Walton (1991:276), descriptive praise extols God for who He is; it focuses on the attributes of God. Declarative praise is usually the praise of a person thanking God for answering his prayers about a specific instance in the past.

2.4.5 The outline of the book of Psalms

I) Introduction (1-2)

II) David’s conflict with Saul (3-41)

III) David’s kingship (42-72)

IV) The Assyrian crisis (73-89)

V) Introspection about the destruction of the temple and exile (90-106)

VI) Praise and reflection on the Return and the new era (107-145)

VII) Concluding Praise (146-150)

3.1.5.1 Introduction Psalm 1. Ultimate vindication of the righteous

Psalm 2. God’s choice and defence of Israelite kings

Book	Seam	Theme	Content
Book 1	3-41	David's conflict with Saul	Many individual lamentations; most psalms mention enemies
Book 2	42-72	David's kingship	Key psalms: 45, 48, 51; 54-86 mostly lament and are "enemy" psalms
Book 3	73-89	Eighth century Assyrians crisis	Asaph and Sons of Korah collections; key Psalm: 78
Book 4	90-106	Introspection about destruction of temple and exile	Praise collection: 95-100; key psalms: 90, 103-105
Book 5	107-145	Praise/reflection on return from exile and the beginning of new era	Hallelujah collection: 111-117; Songs of Ascent: 120-134; Davidic reprise: 138-145; key psalms: 107, 110, 119

2.4.6 Purpose and message

There is no unified purpose or message that can be identified at the author's level because some Psalms would have been motivated by a particular historical occurrence. Most of the Davidic psalms would have been written for

various liturgical occasions. Still others may have been private devotional thoughts (Hill and Walton, 1991: 278).

2.4.7 Structure and Organisation

Psalms may use the arrangement of liturgical composition to reflect on the nature of God and the response of the individual. The arrangement is not based on the circumstances or dates when the psalms were composed (Hill and Walton, 1991: 280). However, following this lead, different scholars have discerned different festivals as the major sources of the Psalms. Mowinckel saw here a feast of the Ingathering and Tabernacles, at the turn of the year, as the chief of these writings and singing, celebrating God's epiphany and enthronement with a ritual so elaborate that it gave rise to more than forty psalms.

2.4.8 Major themes

The retribution principle can be summed up in two parts of affirmation. Part one: The righteous will prosper and the wicked will suffer. Part two: Those who prosper are righteous, while those who suffer are wicked. To the Israelites, this principle was a theological issue: if God is a just God, how can the righteous suffer or the wicked prosper? Though this question still perplexes even at times today, the situation was much worse to the ancient Israel (Hill and Walton, 1991: 281-282).

2.4.9 Kingship

There are nine psalms scattered throughout the Psalter that specifically concern the King "Ps 2: 18, Ps 21, Ps 45, Ps 72, Ps 89, Ps 110, Ps 132 and Ps 144. Of these, four are attributed to David (Ps 18, Ps 21, Ps 110 and Ps 144). It is affirmed that God promised victorious kingship to the kings who trusted in Him and that He was fully able to carry out that promise. This is best viewed as relating to the future ideal king, for there was not an abundance of kings in David's line who trusted the Lord. In contrast, the coming ideal king

would exercise perfect trust and would therefore enjoy all the blessings of God on his reign (Hill and Walton, 1991: 282-283).

2.4.10 Nature and Creation

The third major theme focuses mostly on God's relationship to nature. Creation and nature reveal the glory of God (19). Humankind on the other hand has been placed at the head of creation (8). The forces of nature are instruments of his power and blessing (29, 65). God is thereby elevated above nature in a way that was not possible in the polytheistic systems of the ancient near East (Hill and Walton, 1991: 283).

2.4.11 The devotional use of Psalms

Praise, complaint, and exhortations of God's people are used to reveal the character of God. As readers (during earlier times and at present) to whom the authority of God's Word is important, it would also be important to submit to the God who is revealed in this way. Affirmation of God's attributes is the goal of our devotional reading. This process prepares us for or sustains us through trial and loss. The fact that God prospered or delivered someone in a particular situation is testimony to what God can do, not a promise that he will always do so for us (Hill and Walton, 1991: 284).

2.4.12 Word studies of most important words Psalm 119:9

According to Webster (2003) "heed" is a verb meaning to guard, to pay attention: to give consideration or attention to : mind <heed what he says>
<heed the call>

2.4.13 Exegeses 9-16.

Verse 9 of Psalm 119 focuses on the Way of Cleansing. "How can a young man keep his way pure?" Answer: "By living according to the Word of God". The question and answer from this verse are in line with the emphasis of the answer to the problems of youth in any period of history. Young people have

to heed God's Word by "hiding" it in their hearts, by studying it, by meditating on it, and even by memorising parts of Scripture (Willington, 1997). Pfeiffer (1962) confirms the approach to the Word of God and God's ways by highlighting certain steps that believers can follow, *i.e.* by meditating on it (Ps 119:15) and committing it to memory (v. 11) and by testifying and conveying it to others (v. 13). Wiersbe (1993) points out that as you read the Word and meditate on it, it cleanses your inner being, in the same way as water cleanses the body (compare John 15:3 and Eph. 5:25–27).

Ps. 119:9–16. By acting in accordance with the Word of God, a young man is able to walk blamelessly in his path towards righteousness, and this is what the poet desires to do, hoping and patiently relying on God's gracious assistance in order to keep his ways pure. This would apply to every young person in the present time. To purify or cleanse one's way or walk (זָקַה, cf. 73:13, Prov. 20:9) signifies to maintain it pure (זָקַה, root זָקַה, Arab. *zk*, to prick, to strike the eye, *nitere*), to keep it free from the spots and stains of sin. By saying so it does not mean that one will be perfect, but it undoubtedly is a reminder that one may not deliberately continue in a way that is contrary to the Word of God. Psalm 119: 9b contains the answer to the question in v. 9a; לִשְׁמֹרֶיךָ signifies *custodiendo semetipsum*, for שְׁמֹרֶיךָ can also signify "to be on one's guard". One is said to 'hide' (צָפַן) the Word in one's heart when one constantly has it with one or within one. Having the Word in one's heart means much more than merely outward actions in the sense that it refers to an inward motivating power to continue according to the Word of God. In Job 23:12 staying with the Word of God and constantly keeping it with one is described as follows: "I have not departed from the commands of his lips; I have treasured the words of his mouth more than my daily bread" (NIV).

2.4.14 Basic principles from Psalm 119

2.4.14.1 Youth must be pure

2.4.14.2 Youth must meditate on the Word of God

2.4.14.3 Youth must live according to the Word of God

2.4.14.4 Youth must seek God wholeheartedly

2.4.14.5 Youth must not sin deliberately

2.4.14.6 Youth must be willing to give glory to God only

2.4.14.7 Youth must consider the Word of God as a way of righteousness

2.5 New Testament Exegesis

For the exegesis of the New Testament the method that will be used is the method of Van Rensburg and De Klerk that consists of twenty-seven steps. Only those steps that are necessary for identifying and elucidating the basic principles in the context of this study will be attended to.

2.5.1 The exegesis of 2Timothy 2:22

“Flee the evil desires of youth, and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace,

along with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.” (NIV) [*some translations use ‘lusts’ instead of ‘desires’*]

2.5.2 Pericope: 2 Timothy 2:22

2.5.2.1 The place of the periscope in the book, and in the Bible

In order to determine the place of the periscope in the book, the outline of the book itself will be useful. The outline can be summarised as follows according to Bruce, David & Neil (1993):

Opening of the letter (1:1-2)

Introductory Verses

- I. The sender and the addressee (1:1-2a)
- II. Greetings (1:2b)

The body of the Letter (1:3- 4:8)

An Appeal for fidelity in the service of the Gospel (1:3-2:13)

- I. Thanksgiving for Timothy’s loyalty to the faith and longing for reunion (1:3-5)
 1. Thanksgiving (1:3)
 2. Longing for reunion (1:4-5)

- II. Paul appeals to Timothy to profess his faith courageously and be willing to suffer (1:6-14)
 - 1. Keep safe the gift of grace and bear frank witness to the Lord (1:6-8a)
 - 2. Readiness to suffer through God's power (1:8b-12)
 - 3. Hold fast to the teaching handed down (1:13-14)
- III. Paul's bitter disappointment; Onesiphorus is praised for his loyalty (1:15-18)
 - 1. His bitter experience in Asia (1:15)
 - 2. Onesiphorus' loyalty (1:16-18)
- IV. Paul calls on Timothy to hand on the tradition received from the apostles and exhorts him once more to be willing to suffer (2:1-13).
 - 1. The transmission of what has been received from the apostles to men who could be trusted (2:1-2)
 - 2. An appeal for readiness to suffer as Christ's soldier (2:3-7)
 - 3. Jesus' resurrection (2:8-13)

The proper Attitude towards Heretics (2:14- 4:8)

- I. A warning against useless disputes and empty talk (2:14-21)
 - 1. A warning against disputes (2:14-15)
 - 2. A warning against empty talk (2:16-18)
 - 3. God's firm foundation (2:19-26)
- II. Paul's appeal to Timothy to lead an exemplary Christian life and instruct those who have strayed in a spirit of charity (2:22-26)
 - 1. An appeal for a genuinely Christian life (2:22-23)
 - 2. Instruct those who have strayed in a spirit of Charity (2:24-26)
- III. The activities of the heretics as the beginning of the final corruption to come (3:1-9)
 - 1. Paul foretells the moral degeneracy to come at the end of time (3:1-5)
 - 2. The activities of the heretics as the beginning of this corruption (3:6-9)
- IV. An appeal for loyalty and steadfastness (3:10-17)
 - 1. Paul appeals to Timothy to remain faithful to the example of his life and teaching (3:10-13)

2. An exhortation to hold fast to sacred Scripture (3:14-17)
- V. Unwearied service of the truth (4:1-8)
 1. Paul makes an urgent appeal to Timothy to preach God's Word (4:1-4)
 2. Wholehearted devotion to the service of the truth (4:5-8)

The closing part of the Letter (4:9-22)

Conclusion

- I. News about Paul's fellow missionaries (4:9-12)
- II. Paul makes a request to Timothy (4:13)
- III. A warning against Alexander the coppersmith (4:14-15)
- IV. The gravity of Paul's situation (4:16-18)
- V. Greetings (4:19-21)
- VI. Good wishes (4:22)

From the above outline 2 Timothy 2:22 is part of the New Testament, and more particularly one of the Pastoral Epistles found on the Theme: The proper attitude towards heretics under the sub-theme; An appeal for a genuinely Christian life.

2.5.2.2 *The genre of the text*

The genre of 2 Timothy is a Pastoral Epistle, and the Hermeneutic rules for the interpretation of the epistolary literature should be taken into consideration.

2.5.2.3 *Determining the key verse*

The exhortation in verse 22f could probably provide an example of what following the advice in 21 entails, but it is more probable that the writer is thinking here specifically of how the leader is to behave when faced with opponents. The appeal to him to act peaceably towards them is emphasised again. Three points are made in verse 22, followed by justification in verses

24-26. a) He is to avoid youthful desires. b) He is to be a general example of good character. c) He is to avoid dispute - a thought developed in detail in 24-26 with emphasis on how to deal with those who are dead set against the truth Moralists often exhorted readers to “flee” from vices. Certain passions were associated especially with “youth” (a category that could still include Timothy; see comment on 1 Tim 4:12) (Lea and Griffin 2001:219)..

2 Timothy 2:22 is also considered as a key verse because it has two commands that are identical to those in 1 Timothy 6:11. Paul also emphasises Timothy’s Christian character and doing so is based on the two commands that have their justification on verses 24-26. In 1 Timothy 6:11, Paul addressed Timothy as a man of God who should run away from the temptations of money. Perhaps by mentioning these characteristics of a man of God, Paul was affirming a positive quality that was already a part of Timothy’s character and therefore false teachers could have no power against a righteous, gentle leader with the truth on his side. Paul was aware of the fact that Timothy was merely a young man and probably not as experienced as some of the others (1 Timothy 4:12), at least young for the responsibilities he carried and indeed the youngest among those who went out to spread the Gospel. The desires mentioned would not refer to the sexually-related desires only but would also include other passions characteristics of young impatience, contentiousness, favouritism, egotism and intolerance (Barton, Veerman, and Wilson 1993, 129-130; 198-199).

What is worth noting is that Paul addresses Timothy in 2 Timothy 2:22 in the form of advice to a youthful person in that he advises Timothy to steer away from youthful desires, whereas in 1 Timothy 6:11 Paul encourages Timothy in terms of the general behaviour of a Christian man. Paul’s intention with these words, and in the rest of the letter, is to provide advice suitable for a young leader, and especially a young Christian leader who would act as a useful instrument in the church of Christ.

The focus of this study is on young people, the young ones in the church and therefore 2 Timothy 2:22 is very relevant because it focuses specifically and

explicitly on how the young should conduct themselves. For young people to be able to act and react according to the Word of God they would have to be able to distinguish, in principle, between acceptable behaviour and unacceptable behaviour.

Step 9

(Keener, 1993) argues that the two imperatives (“flee” and “pursue”) are identical with the commands of 1 Tim 6:11. In this context the “evil desires of youth” are not so much a reference to sensual allurements as to expressions of youthful immaturity. Hotheaded answers and extended discussions of trivia can hinder effectiveness, not only for youthful disciples but for those of all ages. Young men can be characterized by partiality, intolerance, halfheartedness, and unwarranted self-assertion. These were the qualities Timothy was to avoid. He further states (ibid) that Paul encouraged Timothy to follow hard after righteousness, an open rectitude in attitude and action. He was to show faith—a sincere confidence in God—and love—a growing affection for others. He was to seek peace—a genuine fellowship and harmony with other Christians. In urging Timothy to frequent the company of “those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart,” Paul was not suggesting that Timothy was to practice faith, love, and peace only with believers. His statement implies that traits of righteousness, faith, love, and peace are best developed whenever a Christian stays in the company of other believers. Williams brings out this idea in his translation “in association with those who call upon the Lord with pure hearts.

According to Webster (2003) the word “Lust” has three semantic domains

- 1 a : pleasure, delight
b : personal inclination : wish
- 2 : usu. intense or unbridled sexual desire: lasciviousness
- 3 a : an intense longing: craving ⟨a *lust* to succeed⟩
b : enthusiasm, eagerness ⟨admired his *lust* for life⟩

Webster (2003) gives the following definitions of the word youthful

- 1 : of, relating to, or characteristic of youth ⟨*youthful* inexperience⟩
- 2 : being young and not yet mature
- 3 : marked by or possessing youth ⟨*youthful* dancers⟩
- 4 : having the vitality or freshness of youth: vigorous ⟨*my youthful* grandparents⟩
- 5 : having accomplished or undergone little erosion ⟨*youthful* mountains)

Vincent (2002) states that the word only occurs here in the New Testament, never in the LXX, but is found in Josephus, who speaks of αὐθαδέια νεωτερική, “youthful arrogance,” and is common in classical Greek. Lusts (ἐπιθυμῖαι) include, besides the σαρκικαὶ ἐπιθυμῖαι of 1 Pet. 2:11, all those ill-regulated passions to which youth is peculiarly liable, such as intemperance, love of company, arrogance, petulance, ambition, love of display, levity, vehemence of action, wilfulness, and the like. Timothy at this time was probably under forty (Spence-Jones, 2004).

Despite the fact that some translations translate (δίωκε) with follow, Vincent (2002) prefers *pursue* which is stronger than *follow*. This is a favourite word with Paul to denote the pursuit of moral and spiritual ends.

According to Webster (2003) the following meanings are included in explanation of the word ‘flee’:

- a : to run away often from danger or evil : fly
- b : to hurry toward a place of security
- 2 : to pass away swiftly: vanish *vt*: to run away from: shun

Step 11

The historical place and meaning of the pericope

Theme	Scripture reference	Relevance in the revelation history.
As Youth we need to pursue righteousness in faith, love and peace in the community of the faithful, with pure hearts	1 Timothy 1:5. "The goal of this command is love, which comes from pure hearts and good conscience and sincere faith."	<p>The False teachers in this verse are being reflected as those who were motivated by a spirit of curiosity and a desire to gain power and attention from common people and the glory will go to them. By contrast, faithful Christians are motivated by sincere faith and desire to do what is right for the sake of Christ and glory is to God almighty.</p> <p>Place in revelation history: it may be exciting to impress people with our great knowledge, but if that effort is based on our own personal gain instead of serving God's purpose with faith in Him our hearts, then everything is in vain.</p>

	<p>I John 3:7 "Dear children, do not let anyone lead you astray. He who does what is right is righteous, just as He is righteous."</p>	<p>As believers we should consider the fact that God loves us and calls us his children. We are His children now and forever through the blood of Christ. Knowing that we are the children of God this should be an encouragement to us to strive to live as Jesus did in "obedience, humbleness and faithfulness towards God."</p> <p>Place in revelation history:</p> <p>John warns us never to be deceived by such false teachers but strive for righteousness because God whom we serve is righteous and His purpose about us is righteousness.</p>
	<p>I Titus 1:15-16 "To the pure, all things are pure, but to those who are corrupted and do not believe, nothing is pure. In fact, both their minds and conscience are corrupted. They claim to</p>	<p>Many people who claim to know God deny him through their actions, they only see evil in this world but those who are filled with the Holy Spirit (those whose live, are controlled by Christ) will</p>

	<p>know God, but by their actions they deny Him. They are detestable, disobedient and unfit for doing anything good”.</p>	<p>be able to see well even in this corrupted world without them being corrupted. And they will continue to serve God with pure hearts and pure faith without hypocrisy.</p> <p>Place in revelation history: this is good news to those who trust him without doubt but serve him in faith, righteousness, love and peace and mostly by shunning away youthful passions. But it is a terrible message to those who have rejected him through their actions and stand under judgment for not being alert but were influenced by the world.</p>
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	<p>1Corinthians1:7-9</p> <p>Therefore you do not lack spiritual gift as you eagerly wait for our Lord Jesus Christ to be revealed. He will keep you strong to the end, so that you will be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God, who has called you into fellowship with his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, is faithful.”</p>	<p>The Corinthians are encouraged to live a life with good Christian principles because God will consider them blameless when Christ returns.</p> <p>Place in revelation history: we as Youth and members of the body of Christ (Church) had all spiritual gifts to be able to live Christian life and the Holy Spirit helps us to shun all passions of youth but remain faithful to God because he is faithful.</p>
<p>Conclusion: It has been said in most cases or circumstances that actions speak louder than words. And it seems the same according to Paul's advice to Timothy. The fact that we know is not enough but our personality also plays a vital role. Therefore as Timothy was a youth at that time, Paul encourages Timothy to</p>		

set an example of all the virtues which dominate his personal relationship with God and those who call upon God with repenting hearts.		
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Step 12

	Father (Creator, Sustainer,...)	Son (Saviour)	Holy Spirit (Comfort, Help..)
Explicit			
Who is He?	Nothing explicit	Nothing explicit	Nothing explicit
What does he do?	Nothing explicit	Nothing explicit	Nothing explicit
What does he say?	Nothing explicit	Nothing explicit	Nothing explicit
Implicit	Father (Creator, Sustainer,...)	Son (Saviour)	Holy Spirit (Comfort, Help..)
Who is He?	The almighty who created us and who knows us more than we think, wants obedient servants who serve him only with purity from their youthful age.	The redeemer who took away our sins, so that we would be able to put our faith to practice, not only by words but with our personal attitude towards our fellow believers and most of all our relationship with	Our comforter who helps us to maintain good relationships with God and our fellow Christians and to keep our focus on serving God whole heartedly as youth.

		God.	
What does he do?	He gave us Christ as the sacrifice so that we would be able to carry on his Workmanship from our early age.	He brings glory to God through his obedience so that we may be saved and becomes the heirs of the kingdom of God, starting from our youth.	He guides Youth through all truths
What he say?	He wants his servants to be faithful and holy as He is. Youth who are able to overcome their youthful passions (Jn. 4:34)	Do not be deceived by many who claim to know God. Young people should look towards Him through the Scripture as their example so that Youth can live a life that pleases God.	He whispers in our ears so that we can be able to do the good works that God requires from us from our young age (youthful days).

Step 13

THE FACTS OF SALVATION IN THE PERICOPE AND THE EXHORTATION BASED UPON IT.

13.1. The youth must not be led astray by youthful passions

13.2. The youth must strive for righteousness (Holiness, faith and Love).

13.3. Youth must not be rebellious but be at peace with all those who call upon the Lord with pure hearts

Step 14

Basic Principles/Communicational goal of the pericope Timothy

- 14.1. Youth must flee youthful lusts or desires and fully rely upon God to be able to execute their Christian tasks.
- 14.2. Youth must conduct themselves well before God.
- 14.3. Christian youth must set an example of faith for other youth.
- 14.4. Christian youth have to be at peace with all people.

2.6 *Exegesis of 1 Peter 5:1-11*

2.6.1 Authorship

Hughes and Larney (2001) state that the apostle Peter was the author. Both internal evidence and the testimony of the early church confirm the statement in 1:1 that the apostle Peter authored this letter. Peter in this letter shows an intimate knowledge of the life and teachings of Jesus (cf. 1 Pet. 5:5 with John 13:3–5, and 5:2 with John 21:15–17). The author was an eyewitness of the sufferings of Christ (2:19–24; 3:18; 4:1; 5:1).

The letter reflected impending persecution, suggesting that it was written not long before Peter's death. There are in this letter two things that indicate that it may have been written before the severe persecutions of Nero that began in A.D. 64. The first is Peter's teaching that the government could be expected to administer justice (1 Pet. 2:13–14) and the second is that a man who did what was right would be unharmed (3:13). Since Peter arrived in Rome in A.D. 62 it is most likely that he wrote this letter in A.D. 63 or 64 (Hughes and Larney, 2001).

2.6.2 PURPOSE

Hughes and Larney (2001) mention with regard to the purpose of 1 Peter that this letter was designed to exhort its readers to conduct themselves in accordance with the living hope they possessed as redeemed believers. The letter confirmed the believers' knowledge of salvation and also encouraged

them to submit to authority and to have a joyful response to suffering for Christ's sake.

2.6.3 Outline

Grudem (1988: 44-46) provides us with four basic outlines of 1 Peter whilst Willmington (1999) gives five basic outlines, dividing each chapter into an outline. The researcher preferred Willmington's division in this regard as his outlines are more detailed. The focus for purposes of this study is specifically on the fifth outline from which the selected pericope comes.

Peter gives advice to elders and other church members and sends his final greetings.

I. The Appeal by Peter (5:1–11)

A. **He writes to the elders in the church (5:1–4).**

1. *The role model* (5:1): Peter himself is an elder in his church.
2. *The responsibilities* (5:2–3)
 - a. Feed the flock of God (5:2).
 - b. Lead the flock of God (5:3).
3. *The reward* (5:4): To receive a crown of glory from the head Shepherd himself.

B. **He writes to the other members of the church (5:5–11).**

1. *Live as a servant* (5:5–7).
 - a. Be in subjection to your superiors (5:5).
 - b. Be in subjection to your Saviour (5:6–7).
2. *Live as a soldier* (5:8–9).
 - a. Recognise the enemy (5:8).
 - b. Resist the enemy (5:9).
3. *Live as a sufferer* (5:10–11).
 - a. The duration (5:10): It only lasts for a short time.
 - b. The dynamics (5:11): It makes one strong, firm, and steadfast (Willmington, 1997.14).

From the outline it is evident that I Peter 5:1-4 focuses on the Elders of the Church, while from 5: 5-11 Peter writes to the other members of the Church and this is where the focus is in this study because the young people are also addressed among the other members of the Church.

6.3 Word study

Webster (2003) is of the opinion that there are two semantic domains with regard to the word “younger” found in the Epistle of 1 Peter 5:5.

Younger

- a : a young person : youth
- b : child

6.3.1 Submit

Webster (2003) presents us with three semantic domains with regards to submission

- 1 a : to yield to governance or authority
- b : to subject to a condition, treatment, operation (the metal was *submitted* to)
- 2 a : to yield oneself to the authority or will of another : surrender
- b : to permit oneself to be subjected to something (had to *submit* to surgery)
- 3 : to defer to or consent to abide by the opinion or authority of another

There are four semantic domains found here according to Webster (2003) with regard to 6.3.2. Presbyterus

- 1 : of earlier birth or greater age (his *elder* brother)
- 2 : of or relating to earlier times: former
- 3 *archaic*: of or relating to a more advanced time of life
- 4 : prior or superior in rank, office, or validity

When Vincent (2002) comments on the phrase “be clothed with humility” (τὴν ταπεινοφροσύνην ἐγκομβώσασθε) he indicates that the last word is a very

peculiar one, occurring only here. It is derived from κόμβος, a *roll, band, or girth*: a *knot or roll* of cloth, made in tying or tucking up any part of the dress. The kindred word ἐγκόμβωμα, from which the verb is directly formed, means a *'slave's apron*, under which the loose garments were girt up. Hence the figure carries an exhortation to put on humility as a *working virtue* employed in *ministry*. This is apparent from the evident reminiscence of that scene in which Peter figured so prominently — the washing of the disciples' feet by the Lord, when he *girded himself* with a towel as a servant, and gave them the lesson of ministry both by word and act. This could be rephrased in the following context: "Put on and wrap yourselves about with humility, so that the covering of humility cannot possibly be stripped from you."

2.6.4 Exegesis commentaries

ye younger—The *deacons* were originally the younger men, the *presbyters* older; but subsequently as presbyter expressed the *office* of Church ruler or teacher, so Greek "*neoteros*" means not only (as literally) *young men* in age, but also *subordinate ministers* and servants of the Church. So Christ uses the term "younger." For He explains it by "he that doth serve," literally, "he that ministereth as a deacon"; just as He explains "the greatness" by "he that is chief," literally, "he that *ruleth*," the very word applied to the *bishops* or *presbyters*. So "the young men" are undoubtedly the deacons of the Church of Jerusalem, of whom, as being all *Hebrews*, the Hellenistic Christians subsequently complained as neglecting their *Grecian* widows, whence arose the appointment of the seven others, *Hellenistic* deacons.

Step 11

The historical place meaning of the pericope

Theme	Scripture reference	
youth must be humble when serving God	James 4:6 "But He gives us more grace. That is why the Scripture says "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble"	The only remedy that can be used in the Church of God for pride is humility. And this removes from us a self-centred life, but brings a God-centred life. Place in revelation history. Youth in the Church should humble themselves before God, but that action should also start from their Elderly people within and outside the boundaries of the Church

	<p>Proverbs 3:34 "He mocks proud mockers but gives grace to the humble"</p>	<p>The grace of God is abundant to those who are serving Him with humble hearts, not those who enjoy to mock others and whose pride does not allow them to recognise their faults.</p> <p>Place in revelation history: The author gives a warning to those who are serving God. It is a warning in the sense that "Pride comes before the fall". It is a good thing to serve God but pride makes one to serve God in formality without producing the fruits of faith.</p>
	<p>Colossians 3:12 "Therefore, as God's people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience"</p>	<p>When Christians clothed themselves with all of these five virtues they resemble Christ through faith and works. All of them are bound by Love or they are the results of serving God with love.</p> <p>Place in revelation history: All five of the characteristics mentioned for a Christian are helpful for those who put God and His command forth in their lives and they acknowledge that glory and honor must be to God. These virtues are not merely a set of moral principles but characteristics that must be reflected in the lives of every true Christian.</p>
	<p>Philippians 2:3 "Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain</p>	<p>Selfish ambition can ruin a Church, but genuine humility</p>

	conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves”	<p>can build it. Before God we are all sinners, saved only by God's grace, but we are saved and therefore have great worth in God's kingdom.</p> <p>Place in revelation history: Being humble involves having a true perspective about ourselves. It does not mean we have to put ourselves down. But we are to lay aside selfishness and treat others with respect and good attitude.</p>
Conclusion: Considering others' interests as more important than our own, it links us with the attitude of Christ here on earth, who was a true example of humility.		

Step 12

	Father (Creator, Sustainer,...)	Son (Savior)	Holy Spirit (Comfort, Help..)
Explicit			
Who is He?	Nothing explicit	Nothing explicit	Nothing explicit
What does he do?	Nothing explicit	Nothing explicit	Nothing explicit
What does he say?	Nothing explicit	Nothing explicit	Nothing explicit
Implicit	Father (Creator, Sustainer,...)	Son (Savior)	Holy Spirit (Comfort, Help..)
Who is He?	The almighty wants humble obedient servant who serve him only with purity from their youthful	The redeemer who took away our sins, so that we shall be able to practise our faith, not only by	Our comforter who helps us to maintain good relationships with God and our fellow Christians and

	age.	words but with our personal attitude towards our fellow believers and Be clothed with humbleness.	to keep our focus on serving God whole heartedly as youth being clothed with humility.
What does he do?	He gave us Christ as the sacrifice so that we would be able to be his part of his Workmanship from our early age.	He brings glory to God through his obedience so that we may be saved and becomes the heirs of the kingdom of God, starting from our youth.	He guides Youth through all truths
What does he say?	He wants his servants to be faithful, holy and humble as He is. Youth who are able to overcome their youthful passions are humble, not rebellious (Jn. 4:34)	Respect your elders and be humble like doves	Helps us to be humble and serve God with Love with all its characteristics "Humility, patience and holiness"

THE FACTS OF SALVATION IN THE PERICOPE AND THE EXHORTATION BASED UPON IT

- I) Humility preserves peace
- II) Where God gives grace to the humble, God will also give wisdom faith and holiness
- III) To be humble and subject to the living God gives knowledge. Pride and vicious ambitions does not please God.
- IV) All believers should submit themselves before God and He will exalt them at the appropriate time

A schematic presentation of the Old Testament and New Testament basic principles

Old Testament	New Testament
Youth must:	Youth must:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • enjoy a God-centred life 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • respect their elders
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • know that every action will be judged by God 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be clothed with humility
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • remember God before the times of sorrow come 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be submissive
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • put away all evils of the flesh 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • show humility to one another
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • remove all the sorrows of life by remembering God 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • do away with pride
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be pure in character 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • flee youthful lusts and fully rely upon God to be able to execute their Christian tasks.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • meditate on the Word of God 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • conduct themselves well before God
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • live according to the Word of God 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • set an example of faith for other youth
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • love/serve God wholeheartedly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be at peace with all people
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • not sin deliberately 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be willing to give glory only to God 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • consider the Word of God as a way of righteousness 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • consider the Word of God as a way of righteousness 	

Chapter 3 : Meta-theory

3.1 Introduction

Chapter two focused on the basis principles. This exegetical investigation made it evident both implicitly and explicitly that youth were ministered from early age till maturity, so that they could be useful instruments in the expansion of the Kingdom of God. This chapter will focus on the meta-theory which will comprise of a literature study as well as an empirical study with special focus on the importance of youth ministry.

According to Nel (2003:156) the purpose of youth ministry has been stated in many ways because of the uncertainties in the theology of youth ministry. The purpose of youth ministry is closely, if not directly, related to the theological departure points, or lack thereof. Böggeman (1985:90-109) is close to the truth when he contends that this is because of the complex history of youth ministry. Often youth ministry is evangelistic in nature and approach. However, it may be safe to say that *salvation* often was and is the main purpose in youth ministries.

3.2 Challenges that are facing youth ministry

3.2.1 A Western/European perspective

De Vries (2004. 145-146) argues that the challenges that are facing youth in the Church are in most cases not from the Church itself yet some of the events that arise from the Church are to be held responsible. He says "Strong undercurrents of our culture are carrying along the teenagers we work with, and yet they typically don't even feel it. Unless our youth programmes work intentionally to resist these currents, our efforts at disciplining youth may, in fact, simply entrench them more deeply in the very values that are in strong opposition to the Christian gospel" (De Vries, 2004:145).

Dreyer (2004) reasons that in an investigation done by 'Onderzoek', throughout Europe, the scores of the younger generation are lower than those of the elderly people on virtually every indicator for religious behaviour. Results obtained by means of 'Onderzoek' further indicated that fifty-three per cent of the Dutch youth did not belong to a church. This was the highest percentage in Europe. In countries such as Ireland and Italy the majority of the young people still belonged to the Church, but even in those countries the numbers were declining. This also applied to the United States.

It is with regard to this that Dunn (2004.9-13) attests:

"Young people who grow up in Church sit through countless biblical teachings and attend all sorts of such camps and conferences. They sing dangerous songs about knowing God personally, drawing near to his heart and being used as his hands and feet. Yet many of them sing as though this were a spiritual hobby instead of a holy passion. And this becomes a much to God's dismay [*cit*] we are raising a generation of young people who know a great deal about him but who really don't know him at all. They can recite Scripture and look impressive, but if they continue to keep God at a distance, they will grow up to be (weak, timid, petty, self-righteousness, antagonistic, frustrated, self-obsessed, arrogant, uninterested, undisciplined, unstable, unreliable and also unpredictable). This is the direct result of apathy because apathy dulls the spiritual senses and whispers lies of security to those who are infected by it. It is the door through which sin enters and faith leaves".

The truth of the matter is that the main cause of membership decline is the inability over the past quarter of a century to translate faith to children. Put simply, we are unable to keep our children in the Church when they become adults. As a result, we are not only an unstable church but an aging Church as well. The crisis therefore, in youth ministry is, simply put, that the ways we have been doing youth ministry have not been effective in leading our young people to mature Christian adulthood. Even with the massive increase in the funding and training for youth ministry, even with the exponential increase in the number of resources available to those doing youth ministry, there is no

appreciable increase in the percentage of adults in our culture who are living out their faith for themselves (De Vries, 2004:25-26).

3.2.2 A South African perspective

With regard to the South African perspective varying opinions emerge. In some instances things might appear positive but at a closer look, may show signs of negativity. In an annual report of 2007 Central District Youth Unit of the Methodist Church it is stated that the youth are spiritually active, with a strong support structure. However, integration is still a concern as it does not proceed to a satisfactory extent. The operational programme principles are aligned with the four mission imperatives of the Church. There is continuously more support from the black youths than from the whites. There is, however, also no uniform project for the whole district youth unit and a blurred vision for the unit is reflected, especially with regard to the four entities.

This is the state of affairs in the Methodist Church, but the same cannot be said of other churches or denominations. Nel & Thesnaar (2006: 96), speaking from a Reformed perspective, explain that even the churches have realised that the young people are leaving the Church because of the lack of identity they encounter or experience there. This is a result of the past history of South Africa but also the result of a different reality, namely that they fail to experience a feeling of really being made part of the church or of really belonging or of being actively involved and acknowledged. Instead they rather experience a feeling of not being understood as far as their needs in their present day environment are concerned. This has forced youth to try to find "Church" elsewhere. Youth are, rightly so, passionate about life. This is exactly what it means to understand the Gospel of the Kingdom. Christ did not come to teach us how to die but how to live. Even in this regard their search for life outside the community of believers is because within the church communities death appears to be more attractive than life: when you die you live.

As South African youth grow out of the legacies of apartheid they are hungrier for information and want to be part of the world culture. In America, where

many of the South African programmes find their origin, television has been honed into a consummate marketing tool. It sells not only products but also the lifestyles and values to go with them. It sells 'consumerism' (Leggett, 1997:106). To many South African young people these lifestyles are a way out of the legacies of the apartheid past and are starting to form an essential part of creating an acceptable identity. These lifestyles are marketed as the key to success and are accepted by all. South African youth, especially the black youth, view the depicted American lifestyle as a successful model to be followed. This is echoed by Leggett (1997:108) when he states that "The adulation of all things American seems to be particularly strong in the black community, which may be because America has one of the most visible and successful black communities in the world. American music dominates the airwaves across the planet, and black American sports stars and fashions are recognized worldwide." This is already evident in the way basketball has become a very fast-growing sport in South Africa. There is, however, more to it than meets the eye; the attraction is not necessarily only the game as such, but certainly also the lifestyle that accompanies it. There is a very real danger that the South African youth will blindly follow the American lifestyle as if it is the only acceptable style. There is also the question of whether the South African youth have the ability to develop values that can assist them in making choices about lifestyle. Leggett (1997:113) makes the point that the years of isolation and strong local cultures have given South Africa a unique opportunity to take a different path, to maintain the values that saw her through years of turmoil and therefore not merely to accept the American culture as the answer to all (Nel & Thesnaar, 2006: 104).

It is clear that young people are faced with various challenges and it is true that they cannot deal with everything on their own. How and by whom are they assisted? What Vukich & Vandegriff (2002: 50-51) say of America can equally be said of South Africa:

"Young people continue to be blamed for a lot of social misconducts, but harsh reality is that much of this misbehaviour has been conjured and marketed by adults to teenagers. Example after example can be cited that reflect the rejection of Christ in the society. One of the most

challenging problems facing society today is the use and abuse of chemical substances by teenagers. The number one drug problem, without doubt, is alcoholism. Alcohol is clearly the substance with which adolescents have the most experience. Statistics may vary, but the best estimates indicate that there could be more than four million American alcoholics under age. Henceforth, suicide on the other hand seems to be the third leading cause of death for ten to twenty years old, after car accidents and homicide”.

It is in the light of these statements that we might agree with the perceptions of some of the sociologists' argument when they view the scenario as the decline of the institutional Church to be the last phase in the process of secularisation. To Jürgen Habermas (1981,1987) this process is modernity's "unfinished task". The Church has little influence on matters such as science and politics, social issues, matters of everyday life and death. People are educated, exposed to many ideologies and philosophies (e.g. post-modernist views) and free to make their own decisions. They live according to their own insights and out of their own strength (cf Wilson, 2000). However, as churches find themselves in a crisis, so also do humanistic, agnostic and atheistic institutions (Dreyer, 2004:920).

Vukich & Vandegriff (2002: 50-51) further attest that not only will social ills continue to increase at rapid rate, but also the morals of young people will continue to degrade. One of the lamentable consequences will be that this generation coming to maturity in this decade will be a hurt generation. This is primarily due to the damage being done to family life. The breakdown of the family unit is considered the most significant factor that has negatively changed the sociological landscape of our culture.

Even though youth ministry has an important role to play in creating a culture of healthy relations, it cannot and should not replace the role of the family. As parents are the primary role models of relationships to their children, youth ministry should have the priority of nurturing and supporting the health of the relationships within families. This should start with continuous prayer for

families and creating opportunities for families to worship God together. So often families worship separately, with the parents in the adult worship service and the youth in a youth meeting. This causes families not to know God as the God of "our family". By creating opportunities to worship together, families could strengthen their collective relationship with God as well as with each other. Families could further be strengthened and nurtured by being offered regular family-support programmes, for example, on ways to communicate effectively with adolescents or dealing with the aftermath of divorce, et cetera. Unfortunately it is well-known that the nature of the relationships in many families is not healthy. In the light of this fact, the above proposals almost seem idealistic. Yet, youth ministry has a role to play in the lives of young people from families where relationships may be destructive and abusive. Youth ministry has the responsibility to present the youth with an alternative to the destructive relationships they experience every day (Thirion, 2007:188).

De Vries (2004:28) alerts the attention to an important approach with regard to the assistance and guidance of young people and points out that self-reliance and an individual ability or motivation to make choices should be developed and reinforced.

"Christian faith may begin on the mountaintop, but Christian character is formed in the crucible of pain. We should not be shocked, then, to discover that the depth of faith maturity among Christians in our country is a pale comparison to that of Christians who have lived out their faith under the shadow of persecution. Mature Christian adults, then, are those people who no longer depend on whistles and bells to motivate them to live out their faith. They have become proactive Christians not reactive Christians. When young people grow up to be reactive Christian adults, they are constantly waiting for someone or something to attract them, to involve them, to impress them. A reactive Christian always puts the responsibility for his spiritual life on someone else".

It can be agreed upon that Christian faith should inspire hope in the young people. This can be achieved in different ways and one of them is by

example. Young Christians can learn much from matured Christians or adult Christians and the example they set.

3.3 *Worship that is friendly to the young*

The youth of today are more interested in lessons, teachings and advice that are relevant and applicable to the world in which they live. They expect information that is practical and meaningful and mostly relevant to help them survive in a world that has left them empty. Not only do they expect this, but also do they need this. They need to be equipped sociologically and psychologically to find a way in a rapidly changing world, in a world that showers them with influences from across the globe via the media. They are not interested in lessons that have no meaning to their lives and that leave them searching for the truth. They are also not looking for pat answers, but they want the truth brought to them in a straight and honest fashion. Therefore, when we communicate the truth to young people, we must do so in such a way as would address questions and problems with which they are confronted on a daily basis. The truth must be presented in a way that would make it possible for them to take the truth, make it their own and apply it in their lives. The truth must assist them in drawing a straight line through present day confusions. The truth, illustration and application, must be relevant to this present day culture (Vukich & Vandegriff, 2002:263-264).

Trimmer (1994:86) believes that young people respond positively to a programme that does not offer fun and games only to attract large numbers of young people, or that does not have an external reward system in place to have young people attend programmatic youth ministry. Bertolini (1994:38) holds that the reason for youth not to attend the church or failing to live out their faith is because when they are in the Church they are bored. This is reflected in his statement when saying

“Preaching has become the lost art of our day. I have received too many letters from too many young people bemoaning the fact that their pastor bores them or their youth pastor teaches only the basics. What an inexpressible tragedy! It’s an old story; no one has ever come close

to reasoning me out of my faith many times. If the Word of the living God is itself "living and active and sharper than any two edge sword" (Hebrews 4:12), then it should be proclaimed that way. Too often it is not. Preaching has indeed become the lost art of our day. Various reasons can be identified with regard to this: Firstly, many speakers have been deluded into thinking that young people cannot handle, or are not interested in, hearing the truth. Yet, virtually every young person is crying for the answers. A second reason at this stage is that mostly those who are in the ministry simply do not want to pay the price required to deliver solid, relevant, gripping messages. How much easier to plan a party than to prepare a sermon! Thirdly the skilful communicative technique takes time and effort to develop. It comes from a concerted effort to scrutinize and evaluate skilled communicators. Personal practice and honest self evaluation [crit] are indispensable when it comes to developing one's own unique communicative style. Very few pursue the ability to communicate or see to it as a goal worthy of their time or attention".

Hence Lynch (2004:97) came with two important facts as to how youth should be kept in the church and be able to live out their faith. He says that relevancy and credibility are the two primary issues facing the Church brand. The fact that there is no longer relevance to young people's lives is like an old brand which has not kept pace with change. This makes youth to rebel: "well if you're not willing to meet my needs, my trends (respect me) then why should I bother myself with you?" Credibility is far more serious an issue to address for the sake of progress. There is a growing search for the "truth and simplicity" among youth and a need to belong. Hence the youth want to believe, need to belong, and are looking for truth and simplicity.

The teenage years are years of psychological home leaving. It is a time of loosening the strings which attached them to their parents and of developing their philosophy of life with the aim of finding their own identity and their own perspective on life. It is a time of change and uncertainty. Understandably the general feeling of despair is exacerbated in the experience of our teenagers.

Parker (2001:267) remarks that hopelessness is a constant refrain in the life stories of many teenagers today. Regardless of their race, gender or sociological context, when teenagers speak of the present or the future, despair is a common motive. It is said that our world today is faced with global despair on an unprecedented scale. Such despair is unprecedented in the sense that this crisis of hope rears its head at a time the world is experiencing its optimal political, economical and cultural moment in history (see Botman 2001:2).

This pervasive feeling in society is the context within which young people must find their inspiration for the future. This feeling of despair is further reflected in the music and songs that young people prefer to listen to. Mueller (1998:104) says in this regard that the final theme in popular music is the sum result of all the forces we have discussed – hopelessness. Mueller further states that young people who swim in a sea of hopelessness identify with music that expresses these feelings. In their quest for meaning of life, South African youth also find music essential. Music contributes in significant ways to forming the identity of young people globally as well as locally. Within the South African context it is specifically used to build racial identity, especially those cultural identities that have been depicted negatively in the past. Black and coloured musicians use the hip hop style for example to create black consciousness and are also keen to address social, political and economic issues in their own way (Nel & Thesnaar, 2006: 96).

Generation X needs hope for the future more than anything else, since at present it has no hope (Prins, 2003: 143). It is clear in this case that hope is a serious issue and that young people and their destiny really need attention.

In support of this Lynch (2004:13) mentions that young people will be attracted to the Church and committed to her service, only in as much as they see that the Church is prepared to stand up for and defend their fundamental rights to have their basic needs provided for. It does not matter what social changes take place around young people, the argument remains that their fundamental or basic needs remain the same as ever. Young people want to

feel that they are supported and that they are not on their own in what they do. They need to have a central figure in their life. Someone who can show them they are special and from whom they will only grow gradually. Prins (2005: 493) refers to this as value forming.

Prins (2005: 493) mentions that Preaching and Catechetical training are important in the church but are not complete. Role modelling and mentorship in life are quite relevant to young people of this era as well. Vukich & Vandegriff (2002: 55-56) believe that youth ministries will have to address the "crowd" because of the importance of peer pressure. Youth ministries will have to be more service-oriented with their Christian young people. Christian service will give young people the practical abilities they will need in coping with societal pressures. Too often, youth ministries deal with religious abstracts (being theoretical, as opposed to practical) that have nothing to do with living in today's world. Entertainment has replaced the instruction of scriptural principles for daily living in many youth ministries. This has been and is producing a group of young people who are observers and not participants. They sit back in their comfortable world and let the few people up front do all Christian activity. As a result of this entertainment style of programmes, the young people in these Churches are becoming spiritually callused, unless they receive mentoring to help develop their skills and talents.

Mentoring goes hand in hand with monitoring. According to Dausey (1983:95) a Church's programmes, regardless of how much time and energy dedicated youth workers put into them, will suffer from overlapping efforts, imbalanced programmes, and differing philosophies that lead to needless competition (or even confusion) if common sense plan coordination does not keep everyone pointed in the same direction. Whatever the programmes, youth ministry effectiveness should be measured by what happens in the lives of young people attending church, e.g. how many young people are leading Christ-like lives and are involved in service to others.

The issue of despair and hopelessness already discussed does not only call for mentoring and monitoring, it goes a step further – there is a need for

identity or meaning of life. One of the basic social legitimisations for the existence of a "separate" youth phase is the fact that it is a preparation for the future, for adulthood (see Feilzer, 1990:243). An essential element in this preparation is finding one's own identity and one's own perspective on life which gives an answer in the quest for meaning of life.

Nearly two decades ago Exeler (1984:56) commented that the most burning question of the day has to do with the meaning of life. This search is the result of a pervasive feeling of an existential vacuum, and this feeling is at its strongest among the youth. But when you do not see any meaning in your existence, you also lack the courage to continue with life and accordingly have very little resistance against the urge to commit suicide (Frankl, 1955:28). The alarming statistics on the incidence of teenage suicide is a reflection of their perception that life is without meaning and their experience of hopelessness is overwhelming. This lack of hope is not only present among teenagers who are outside the Church. In a study done by Prins (2000:93) of 331 teenagers who were involved in church youth groups an alarming degree of pessimism about the future was found. Some of the respondents declared that they had considered suicide at one time and 22% stated that they experienced life as being without meaning. But in spite of all these negative responses, it seems as if a big shift for the better is taking place. The next generation has been labelled the "next great generation, the millenials". One of their important characteristics is their optimism.

According to Howe & Strauss (2001:7) surveys show that – compared to Xer teenagers a decade ago – today's teenagers are more upbeat about the world in which they are growing up. Nine in ten describe themselves as "happy", "confident" and "positive". Although we should be thankful that the paralyzing pessimism of our day is really changing into optimism, we must be on the alert for the danger that could be associated with this optimism. This danger is that it could be put on a par with Christian hope. Optimism as such has to do with a person's expectations of himself/herself and the promotion of a self-centred spirituality: "... a type of self-centred perspective about the expectation of a good future based on trust in God and the promises *God has made to us*.

Such expectations stand in opposition to hope experienced by the body of Christ (Prins, 2003:143).

But on the other hand the already existing culture among youth places teenagers at a cross-purpose with their own way of finding identity or their own way of development. They need to leave the world of youth, but during their teenage years they are indoctrinated into a culture that functions to maintain their attachment to it. It is therefore clear that youth culture, like most youth ministries, is essentially an orphaning structure. It does not carry its members through life; rather it isolates them the same time they are in need of a stable culture. The structures that carry young people to adulthood must become the focus of youth ministry for the next generation (De Vries, 2004: 54).

Dunn (2004:42), based on the argument of De Vries.(2004:54), points out that the reason on the other hand that influence youth not to be active participants in the Church is that

“Our teens are spending more time dwelling themselves in the influences of the media rather than facing the reality of their lives. Also time is not only the case in this regard but things that they ingest while focus on the media can also be very harmful. Many youth who confess that they want to live pure and godly lives spend their time and money on the other hand on things that are contrary to or contradicting their conviction, such as music with profane lyrics, movies with immoral images or magazines with unrealistic and dangerous messages. When teens are filled with these things, their lives are bound to be influenced as a result”.

Prins (2005:501) in the same breath points out the following with regard to his research on children and youth of the Dutch Reformed Church:

“Wat die proses van *identiteitsvorming* betref, worstel die tiener met 'n brose persoonlike identiteit en word emosionele veiligheid deur middel van 'n identiteit in die massa gevind. Die oomblik wanneer die tiener na sy/haar “eie” musiek en lirieke luister, is hulle emosioneel ingeskakel by

die wêreldwye tiener subkultuur. Die media het hulle eie plek in die jeugkultuur gevestig as 'n belangrike bron van inligting wat funksioneer soos 'n soort alternatiewe hoërskool oor die lewe. Dit reflekteer en interpreteer vir die tiener die lewe. Mueller (1998: 45) praat van die media wat as “maps of reality” vir die tiener funksioneer. Dit bied egter 'n eensydige en onvolwasse beeld van die lewe. Volwassenheid word byvoorbeeld gesien as gelyk aan die beoefening van seks. Daar is feitlik geen sprake van selfoorgawe of 'n langtermyn verbintenis nie. Die eensydigheid van die inhoud van die elektroniese media word veral gesien in die oorweldigende klem op die temas van seks, geweld en opstand teen gesag”. [Freely translated and in summary form this would mean: *Personal identity forming is a sensitive issue to the young people and emotional safety is found by means of a mass identity (the group of young people) and this is accomplished by listening to 'own' music, by joining the sub-culture of teenagers across the world. Alternative to other institutions, e.g. secondary school, information spread by the media serve as an important source of information. Such information, regardless of quality or value, is absorbed by the young ones to be used for interpreting life and ways of living, so-called 'maps of reality'. It can unfortunately not be said that such information would steer clear of a one-sided view and image. There is, for example, an inclination to over-emphasise sexual activities as equalling 'adult' life. Long-term commitment is neglected. Violence and antagonism against authority also receive much attention via the media.]*

Prins (2005:501) also mentions that the difficulty of the youth is that they cannot evaluate such music or videos on their own. A few indeed mention that they try but the problem is that they are not trained on how to do that. The basic problem pointed out by Prins is the fact that the church does not provide specifically programmes that deal with issues on sex abuse, violence, and exposure to all sorts of evil. Hence children remain vulnerable to problems of this kind. Amidst all the changes, confusion and uncertainty *reassurance and reinforcement* would be necessary. One reassuring truth is that this world, be it as it may, is still God's world and when dangers or 'dangerous influences'

lurk, lure or threaten, God is still the same and is capable of protection and guidance: "he makes my feet like the feet of a deer, he enables me to go on the heights" (Habakkuk 3:19 NIV).

This tendency to float away from church and continue independently but within the security of peer group members or by joining groups that herald certain philosophies and ideologies, was already pointed out in 1802 by Francois Rene de Chateaubriand who described it as follows:

"When people believe in nothing anymore, they start believing in everything; where they previously had prophets, they now want seers, where they once had religious ceremonies, they now want magic, and after the temples of the Lord had been closed down, they seek a home with enchanters (Dreyer, 2004. 920).

From this prophetic statement long ago Nel & Thesnaar (2006.108) derive a more practical view as to why youth are so easily abducted by their surroundings. They pointed out that a several young people expressed a fear of crime, which restricted their daily lifestyle and threatened their future. They regard unemployment of young people as one of the biggest problems. Crime, witnessed by them on almost a daily basis and as proclaimed by the media, has a direct effect on the quality of life of young people. Several young people relate how they feel unsafe in their own neighbourhood, and how crime restricts their movement. Because of these manifestations, growing numbers of young people feel insecure. They sense that the Church is not actively involved in dealing with their challenges. In other words they might feel that they no longer deal with a true Church! To a great extent they experience feelings of being without a safe haven anywhere.

In the same vein Richards (1972:48) believes that it is the responsibility of the leaders or ministers of the Word of God to understand that young people, during adolescence, are moving through a variety of developmental experiences, gaining in intellectual powers, struggling with a growing yet uncertain self-image (a factor that holds true even in favourable circumstances), reaching out toward emotional independence from parents,

learning new ways of relating to others of the same age and of opposite gender. These developmental characteristics mark adolescence as a special and stressful time of life, and significantly distinguish youth from adulthood. Young people need to be understood as they are; growing, learning, discovering, suffering and all in their special way.

Vukich & Vandegriff (2002. 154) also point out that the identity question is much deeper. They argue that irrespective of the different levels of youth development, the young person who knows himself/herself has a clear picture of what he/she is. He/she is the teenager who can make correct choices, especially when he/she is in the right relationship with God. He/she can find God's will and implement it for his/her life. Some young people who do not have a certain measure of ego strength still have to develop their self-identity to a satisfactory level. They may be manipulated to make correct choices in the present. Yet when they are removed from parental influence, they will probably not be able to stand up against outside pressure. The Christian young person who knows himself/herself, together with his/her strengths, weaknesses, values, moral standards and criteria and aims in life, is the one who will feel secure in embarking steadfastly on the road ahead.

In addition to the aspect of mentoring, monitoring and identity, it remains the responsibility of the youth to learn. Vukich & Vandegriff (2002.302) believe that true learning must produce a continuous experience in the life or habit of the heart. They point out that the teenagers may commit to memory facts, verses, and outlines, yet forget them in days. The question remains whether he/she has really learned something, has really integrated something as his/her own to keep and to use in future. This depends on whether the facts have truly become a part of him/her, *i.e.* more of a life style and a general attitude than a piece of knowledge. If true learning has taken place, the lessons become a part of the young person and become a continuous experience. He/she may forget some of the facts, but will have added to his/her sum total of knowledge that, in turn, would exercise an influence on experiences, decisions, choices and activities of the future. True learning has a permanent effect upon the individual.

To come to what Vukich & Vandegriff say, Lynch (2004:13) emphasises the fact that youth ministries need not be limited to the existing practices. By thinking outside the box of the Mass, the definition of ministries could be widened to maximise opportunity for all talents and all parts of life. Young people could carry their faith as torches in their football team, as writers of conscience, or as human rights campaigners. What is important is that good deeds are done in Jesus' name, where people feel competent and stimulated. In this manner the learning aspect gives rise to application. Dausey (1983:103) believes that the solution to this problem rests with the Church itself. It is for the church to equip as many young people as possible with as much reliable, valid and relevant knowledge as possible. It is for the church to show the way towards implementing such knowledge in society, towards active involvement and towards applying such knowledge to everyday needs. They should see that Christianity is expressed in a life of obedience to Jesus Christ. Instilling a sense of Christian responsibility in today's 'what do I get out of it', youth culture is a necessary and critical part of making the gospel a part of youth ministry.

Dunn (2004:39) also highlights the issue that youth must learn to be responsible for their faith. He states that despite the fact that many of our young people would love to blame someone else (their parents or their youth leaders, for example) for their stagnant spiritual life, they simply cannot do so and they must be made aware of it. They would have to realise that their responsibilities for their spiritual walk is theirs and theirs alone. The Scripture says, "Come near to God he will come near to you" (James 4:8). This promise is for everyone, and it assures us that by simply turning our heart to God and inviting his presence to invade our life, anyone of us who wants to be close to Him actually can be close to God. But on the contrary, the promise henceforth also has a negative or opposite effect, for a Christian who does not draw near to God will not have a close walk with him. The bottom line is this: Our relationship with God will be whatever we make it. We must remind our youth that He is waiting to be found by them (see Ecclesiastes 12:1; Isaiah 55:6),

and that the responsibility is theirs. Hopefully then they will begin to draw close to Him.

This issue of applying the Biblical truth in one's life has the advantage of theological urgency, since churches tended to enthusiastically support youth ministry when they perceived heaven and hell were at stake. But it had the disadvantage of strait-jacketing grace. Salvation can easily be seen as young people's "decision" for Jesus, instead of as the salvific work of God in Christ's life, death and resurrection. Meanwhile the church did little to account for Jesus' saving grace in terms that made sense to young people weaned on cultural pluralism and empirical science; leaving them to navigate the gap between faith and culture with whatever resources they already possessed (Nel & Thesnaar, 2006: 96).

In support to this Trimmer (1994:90) adjudicates that effective youth ministry needs to have programmes that can focus on various levels of the pyramid. Some programmes ought to be focused on those who are more committed and ready to learn; others more on those young people who are still being introduced into the faith or being called to make a commitment to Christ. We make a mistake when we expect youth to participate in all youth ministry programmes. Individual young people would need to be given an opportunity to join the youth of a local congregation at the place or level for which they are ready and where they would feel most comfortable and at home. Then they need to be challenged to grow in their journey of faith and mature in their faith. In some congregations the most committed young people tend to be peripherally involved in the youth ministry because there is little if anything that challenges them or calls for their commitment. In other congregations there is no way for those young people who are less committed or those who are from the community to find a place to start because the focus of the programmatic ministry is on the most mature young people.

Teaching and equipping youth must also only be through youth ministry. Bertolini (1994:72) rightly shed light on this matter focusing on worship services when highlighting that: "Our worship services should be equipping

services. Week by week youth can receive the truth they need to lead victoriously fulfilling lives, and the tools they need to help others experience the same”.

To equip youth is one of the basic tasks the church constantly has to confront without any hesitation, especially in this post-modernist society that influences our youth to think they are able to reach and make correct decisions on their own. And this does not mean that youth should be controlled as if they are mere instruments. Young people today want to be ministered as individuals. They are tired of being spectators and being simply a statistical number. Dausey (1983:49) states that in California, the graduation ceremony in many of their schools is simply a farce: on occasion the graduates get up and, as a whole group, walk right out, leaving the parents there. One young person once mentioned how, during their graduation ceremony, they blew bubbles, it was a big joke. Young people are tired of being clumped together as a big group. The big group mentality left as the Jesus Movement tapered off. Youth would approach their ministers more than any other time in the ministry by asking questions like: “Do you know my name?” “Do you know who I am?” They want to be taken as individuals and they will respond as individuals. But the problem is that this is very costly, and we would rather wrap it up in very neat, tidy programme packages, and call it a meeting. I think this is where we often fail. Christianity was meant to be a personal thing, a dynamic living experience, not necessarily canned and pushed through as a meeting or programme. So we have to face the fact that youth demand to be ministered to as individuals. This means that one has to multiply him/her so as to minister to individuals and teach them by modelling, to minister to each other. This is the only way that hurt, that thirst, that vacancy is going to be filled.

De Vries (2004:149) supports Dausey when stating the following:

“To expect that youth be committed to the Church with the same level of commitment that would be expected of them on an athletic team would draw a charge of legalism and insensitivity. Our culture has been so carried away by the current of religious individualism that the expectation of commitment to the church has become implausible to

the most Christians in our culture. Because the gods of individualism pressures us to program [*cit*] to the lowest common denominator, we seldom raise expectation high enough for teenagers to experience the real community. Real community means responsibility for each other. It means commitment to be there for each other even when the schedule is tight and motivation is low. But the typical Christian adult in our culture knows little about commitment to community”.

Trimmer (1994:80) gives a more extended vision, when it comes to manner in which youth should be ministered to in the Church. He states that too many people believe that the answer, or ‘secret’, to their youth ministry is to find new and creative programming. They believe that if they can find the ‘best’ programme their youth ministry problem would be solved. Nothing could be further from the Biblical truth. Programming can aid an effective youth ministry, but youth ministry needs to be intentional, relational, and faithful as well as programmatic. Those who believe that their programme is the ‘secret’ of youth ministry are in an endless search for the most recent programme. They choose to buy all the latest ‘canned’ programmes or the latest material from their denominational publisher. They search endlessly to keep their cup of programmes filled from whatever well is available. Congregational youth ministry needs to pause and consider how to replenish the well that contains water, instead of endlessly filling the programme cup with whatever ‘newest’ programme would be available. We need to consider several issues in the building of appropriate and effective programming in congregational youth ministry.

Nel (2003:160-161) agrees with this approach that youth experience in our society and singles it out as a concern which the church has to consider when equipping youth to be active and faithful participants in the Church. And this is how he explains this problem:

“This social process has become complex in every sense of the word, not so much because adolescents have changed but because societies are changing at a pace that is hard to keep up with. Becoming adult is for instance no longer confined to one initiation rite. It has become a

transitional social role. Add to this the difficult social task of learning how to behave in different spheres of life: living by the rules and role of its setting of life, whether it be the class room, the family room, the mall, the sports arena, the beach, etc. Adolescence is, socially speaking, the time to learn to distance yourself from the role you adopt in each sphere. Role distancing is one of the most powerful individualizing forces in modern society. They play the roles of athlete, student, child, friend, and church member, but identify themselves with none of them.”

Osmer (1996:11-16) further attests that in society youth have to learn independence while prolonging dependence. They have to come to a personal system of moral meaning in societies where morals are pluralistic, choice is maximised, norms are being relativised; where there is hardly any generational continuity, and where they are encouraged to go through a period of ethical relativism they simultaneously have to come to individualization of moral meaning in the midst of what is called utilitarian individualism.

Bertolini (1994:69) upholds that the upshot of this is a rather troublesome fact of life. In the history of life the generation of young people are ripe for picking where emotional manipulation is concerned. Rather than knowing how to think critically, they only know how to react emotionally. Youth are sitting ducks for someone to come along with a slick presentation, complete with tear-jerking stories, and manipulate them to do whatever they want for personal profit.

Dunn (2004.14-15) highlights the importance of commitment to the youth when he argues that the first step should be to pray for discernment and to confront those masks that students wear. It is imperative that we see through such facades to what is really going on inside them. When we recognise that students are playing games with us, we should lovingly confront them. We must care too much to look the other way. By affirming and convincing students of our commitment to them, we move them away from shallow tendencies and towards an authentic expression of their faith.

3.4 Report of Synod 2000 Decision of the RCSA (GKSA)

During a youth conference in 2000, deputies of the youth of the GKSA (by then the white Reformed Churches), had an interview with most of the young people who attended the conference. The questionnaire was divided into different categories. The focus was on the church service, church activities, house visitation, catechesis and pastoral care.

With regard to the church, the youth expect that there should be order, pure Word proclamation, clear preaching of the Word and the singing of psalms and Scriptural songs.

With regard to the problems they encounter in and during the worship service, the following were noticed: singing is too slow, needs of children are not taken care of.

Concerning church activities, they need more youth or church camps, youth gatherings, congregational activities where youth are involved.

Concerning house visitations they reported the following: The minister of the Word must pay special attention to me, children must be involved during house visitation they should not simply sit and listen to the minister or elder talking. The visit should not take up too much time and should not be at a time that is not convenient. It must reach its goal.

With regard to catechetical training, the youth indicated that they needed to grow in the knowledge of God and his Word. Spiritual growth had to take place. The questions youth struggled with should be answered; they should have fellowship with fellow Christians.

With regard to pastoral care they mentioned that they were more at home with their minister than with the elder or deacon. Some of them mentioned that they felt more at liberty to discuss their problems with their parents than with

other people. In order to communicate with other people such a person would have to be reliable, a person of integrity and who understands the need of the youth.

A report was presented in an article by Prins (2005) in 2002 for the children and youth ministry of the Dutch Reformed Church. In his research Prins focused on the important role of the family as the primary agent in faith formation and the children and youth ministry of the church as a secondary agent. He argued that not much was being done on a planned and structured basis to equip parents for their important role. Little also materialised with regard to involving parents in the programmes for children and teenagers. The aspect of the personal spiritual life was seen as of primary importance and it should receive the strongest accent in the programmes. However, the way in which attention was given to this important matter in general, was inadequate. He thus advised more attention to an intensified and co-ordinated approach to the establishment of the important faith practice of personal Bible reading and prayer; more attention to personal conversations with children and young people about their spiritual life. He mentioned the serious lack in the building of personal relationships with children and teenagers in whom adults would function as role models as well as the need for intentional programmes in norms and values education.

A number of issues received further attention in his study. Prins (2005:492) indicated that 61% of the young people expected the youth leader to be the role model instead of the parents. Yet there remained a translation of this concept in the sense that there were usually weekly gatherings for the youth leader to meet the large group. It was, however, very difficult for this individual to have closer contact with each and every one of them and hence not much attention could be paid to every individual. This state of affairs could not contribute much to the youth leader as being an individual's role model and the shortcoming could not be bridged to satisfaction. The issue of role modelling is still an aspect that needs attention in the present day situations and circumstances.

Another issue that received attention was the very issue evolving around values and conduct.

3.5 Schematic presentation of meta-theoretical guidelines

What young people need	What young people do not need
Role model	Not only parents
Close contact with each other	Not a distance relationship
Monitoring	Not a guard
Mentor	Not dictator
Individual contact with the Minister	Not only in group sessions
Need to grow in knowledge of God	Not to become mere church goers
Fellowship with fellow Christians	Not denominational fellowship
Need house visits that are convenient to them	Does not need to be inconvenienced
Need more youth activities in the Church	Not mere inactive members of the Church
Relevant sermons	Not sermons that do not address them
Singing that is more flexible	Not formalistic way of singing
Truth in sermons and pure proclamation	Not pleasing stories
Singing of Psalm and Scriptural songs	Not only choruses
Think independently	Not to be controlled
Intentional, relational and faithful programming	Not non-directed programmes
Real Christian community	Not individualistic Christian community
Worship service must be equipping service	Not mere non-beneficial service
Youth programmes must be balanced	Not one-sided
Be responsible for their faith	Not to base their faith on someone

	else
Be able to apply their faith daily	Not only to know about Christ
To be understood and reinforced	Not only to be reprimanded
Church that stands for their fundamental rights	Not a church that keeps the status quo
Church that helps them to find their self- identity	Not a church which does not take part in helping youth to find self-identity

3.6 Conclusion

Thus the goal of every believer (including adolescents) is to become mature in Christ. Maturity then, has a specific goal which is to equip the believers for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ; until we all attain to the unity of faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man or woman, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ. Hence the goal of youth ministry is to produce spiritually maturing adolescents (Vukich & Vadegriff, 2002. 242).

Due to the fact that young people have not before had the faith proposed to them in an attractive way, there would be no better time than the here and the now for doing so. Now is the time for Church leaders to propose the faith once more to young people. To paraphrase Pope John Paul, the current generation of young people is like “a continent waiting to be discovered”, ready to be won for Christ. But if the Church wants to “discover” this continent of young people, it must first rediscover its “pioneering spirit” of evangelisation (see Lynch, 2004:ix).

Chapter 4: Empirical study

4.1 Introduction

The previous section of the meta-theoretical aspect mainly focused on the information gathered from literature. Various sources of literature were consulted to detect some basics regarding youth ministry. This section will, however, focus mainly on the empirical aspect which has to do with the interviews. Questionnaires of about 100 were distributed to seven congregations. The questionnaires were distributed via the ministers. The purpose and contents of the questionnaires were clearly explained to the ministers. The purpose with the questionnaires was purely for academic reasons without any intention of any profit. It was also made clear that there would not be any reward for the completion of the questionnaire. All congregations responded positively, however, not all the young people from the various congregations responded.

A pre-consultation was done with the NWU Statistical consultation services for advice on the drafting of the questionnaire. A pre-test was done among members of one of the local congregations to determine whether the questionnaire was understandable and clear. It was recommended that they should give some suggestions with regard to the questionnaires.

4.2 Presentation of the interview results as from NWU statistical services

The results were once more analysed by the NWU Statistical consultation services and the results presented below are a true reflection of the analysis.

Frequency Table					
N1N1					
What kind of activities do you consider should be promoted in the Church?					
	youth camps	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	40	83.3	83.3	83.3
	Missing (Assumed No)	8	16.7	16.7	100.0
	Total	48	100.0	100.0	

N1N2					
	Church camps	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	26	54.2	54.2	54.2
	No	12	25.0	25.0	79.2
	Missing (Assumed No)	10	20.8	20.8	100.0
	Total	48	100.0	100.0	

N1N3					
	Conduct church services	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	27	56.3	56.3	56.3
	No	11	22.9	22.9	79.2
	Missing (Assumed No)	10	20.8	20.8	100.0
	Total	48	100.0	100.0	

N1N4					
	participation in Church services	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	35	72.9	72.9	72.9
	No	4	8.3	8.3	81.3
	Missing (Assumed No)	9	18.8	18.8	100.0
	Total	48	100.0	100.0	

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N1N5					
	Prayer groups	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	39	81.3	81.3	81.3
	No	2	4.2	4.2	85.4
	Missing (Assumed No)	7	14.6	14.6	100.0
	Total	48	100.0	100.0	

N1N6					
	Church choirs	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	12	25.0	25.0	25.0
	No	2	4.2	4.2	29.2
	Missing (Assumed No)	34	70.8	70.8	100.0
	Total	48	100.0	100.0	

What are the most important values of catechetical teaching? N2N1					
	Growth in the Knowledge of Christ	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	40	83.3	83.3	83.3
	Missing (Assumed No)	8	16.7	16.7	100.0
	Total	48	100.0	100.0	

N2N2					
	Practicing Gospel songs	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	32	66.7	66.7	66.7
	No	8	16.7	16.7	83.3
	Missing (Assumed No)	8	16.7	16.7	100.0
	Total	48	100.0	100.0	

N2N3					
	Being equipped to conduct services	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	18	37.5	37.5	37.5
	No	18	37.5	37.5	75.0
	Missing (Assumed No)	12	25.0	25.0	100.0
	Total	48	100.0	100.0	

N2N4					
	Spiritual maturity	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	39	81.3	81.3	81.3
	No	3	6.3	6.3	87.5
	Missing (Assumed No)	6	12.5	12.5	100.0
	Total	48	100.0	100.0	

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N2N5					
	Relatio nship with Christ	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	40	83.3	83.3	83.3
	Missing (Assum ed No)	8	16.7	16.7	100.0
	Total	48	100.0	100.0	

What should be the characteristics of the youth in and outside the Church? N3N1					
	Good Christi an condu ct	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	41	85.4	85.4	85.4
	No	1	2.1	2.1	87.5
	Missing (Assum ed No)	6	12.5	12.5	100.0
	Total	48	100.0	100.0	

N3N2					
	Wait for the Church	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent

council to discipline members who sin					
Valid	Yes	7	14.6	14.6	14.6
	No	32	66.7	66.7	81.3
	Missing (Assumed No)	9	18.8	18.8	100.0
	Total	48	100.0	100.0	

N3N3					
Discipline each other without the intervention of the Church council		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	28	58.3	58.3	58.3
	No	13	27.1	27.1	85.4
	Missing (Assumed No)	7	14.6	14.6	100.0
	Total	48	100.0	100.0	

N3N4					
Discipline		Frequency	Percent	Valid	Cumulative

each other with the intervention of the Church Council				Percent	Percent
Valid	Yes	38	79.2	79.2	79.2
	No	1	2.1	2.1	81.3
	Missing (Assumed No)	9	18.8	18.8	100.0
	Total	48	100.0	100.0	

N3N5					
Respect those who are in authority		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	43	89.6	89.6	89.6
	Missing (Assumed No)	5	10.4	10.4	100.0
	Total	48	100.0	100.0	

N3N6					
Love one another and look for the other's interest		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent

Valid	Yes	25	52.1	52.1	52.1
	No	13	27.1	27.1	79.2
	Missing (Assumed No)	10	20.8	20.8	100.0
	Total	48	100.0	100.0	

What type of worship do you consider friendly? N4N1					
Free worship service		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	38	79.2	79.2	79.2
	No	8	16.7	16.7	95.8
	Missing (Assumed No)	2	4.2	4.2	100.0
	Total	48	100.0	100.0	

N4N2					
Formal/Traditional worship		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	29	60.4	60.4	60.4

No	12	25.0	25.0	85.4
Missing (Assumed No)	7	14.6	14.6	100.0
Total	48	100.0	100.0	

N4N3					
Practical and relevant sermons		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	16	33.3	33.3	33.3
	No	24	50.0	50.0	83.3
	Missing (Assumed No)	8	16.7	16.7	100.0
	Total	48	100.0	100.0	

N4N4					
Only minister of the Word conducting service		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	36	75.0	75.0	75.0
	No	4	8.3	8.3	83.3
	Missing (Assumed No)	8	16.7	16.7	100.0
	Total	48	100.0	100.0	

N4N5					
Youth conducting service and allowed to preach		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	35	72.9	72.9	72.9
	No	5	10.4	10.4	83.3
	Missing (Assumed No)	8	16.7	16.7	100.0
	Total	48	100.0	100.0	

N4N6					
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Free songs		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	34	70.8	70.8	70.8
	No	5	10.4	10.4	81.3
	Missing (Assumed No)	9	18.8	18.8	100.0
	Total	48	100.0	100.0	

N4N7					
Only Psalms and scriptural songs		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	9	18.8	18.8	18.8
	No	24	50.0	50.0	68.8
	Missing (Assumed No)	15	31.3	31.3	100.0
	Total	48	100.0	100.0	

How do you view the Church? N5N1					
Place for the youth		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	31	64.6	64.6	64.6
	No	8	16.7	16.7	81.3
	Missing (Assumed No)	9	18.8	18.8	100.0
	Total	48	100.0	100.0	

N5N2					
Place for the elderly		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	30	62.5	62.5	62.5
	No	9	18.8	18.8	81.3
	Missing (Assumed No)	9	18.8	18.8	100.0
	Total	48	100.0	100.0	

N5N3					
Coming to contact with the living God		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	42	87.5	87.5	87.5
	No	2	4.2	4.2	91.7
	Missing (Assumed No)	4	8.3	8.3	100.0
	Total	48	100.0	100.0	

N5N4					
Place to have fun		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	24	50.0	50.0	50.0
	No	13	27.1	27.1	77.1
	Missing (Assumed No)	11	22.9	22.9	100.0
	Total	48	100.0	100.0	

N5N5					
Place to listen to the Word of God		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	41	85.4	85.4	85.4
	No	1	2.1	2.1	87.5
	Missing (Assumed No)	6	12.5	12.5	100.0
	Total	48	100.0	100.0	

N5N6					
Place in which you can please your parents		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	10	20.8	20.8	20.8
	No	28	58.3	58.3	79.2
	Missing (Assumed No)	10	20.8	20.8	100.0
	Total	48	100.0	100.0	

N5N7					
Place to be when bored		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent

Valid	Yes	5	10.4	10.4	10.4
	No	33	68.8	68.8	79.2
	Missing (Assumed No)	10	20.8	20.8	100.0
	Total	48	100.0	100.0	

What type of activities should a minister have with youth? N6N1					
Dictator who manipulate youth issues		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	12	25.0	25.0	25.0
	No	25	52.1	52.1	77.1
	Missing (Assumed No)	11	22.9	22.9	100.0
	Total	48	100.0	100.0	

N6N2					
Spiritual Father		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	37	77.1	77.1	77.1
	No	2	4.2	4.2	81.3
	Missing (Assumed No)	9	18.8	18.8	100.0
	Total	48	100.0	100.0	

N6N3					
Always be involved in youth activities		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	36	75.0	75.0	75.0
	No	3	6.3	6.3	81.3
	Missing (Assumed No)	9	18.8	18.8	100.0
	Total	48	100.0	100.0	

N6N4					
Only be involved in youth		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent

activities when invited					
Valid	Yes	13	27.1	27.1	27.1
	No	25	52.1	52.1	79.2
	Missing (Assumed No)	10	20.8	20.8	100.0
	Total	48	100.0	100.0	

N6N5					
Counsellor and advisor in youth activities		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	39	81.3	81.3	81.3
	No	2	4.2	4.2	85.4
	Missing (Assumed No)	7	14.6	14.6	100.0
	Total	48	100.0	100.0	

N6N6					
Organiser and care taker		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	29	60.4	60.4	60.4
	No	11	22.9	22.9	83.3
	Missing (Assumed No)	8	16.7	16.7	100.0
	Total	48	100.0	100.0	

How should youth be ministeredN7N1					
Individually		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	19	39.6	39.6	39.6
	No	21	43.8	43.8	83.3
	Missing (Assumed No)	8	16.7	16.7	100.0
	Total	48	100.0	100.0	

N7N2					
Large group members		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	34	70.8	70.8	70.8
	No	9	18.8	18.8	89.6
	Missing (Assumed No)	5	10.4	10.4	100.0
	Total	48	100.0	100.0	

N7N3					
Few group members		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	26	54.2	54.2	54.2
	No	15	31.3	31.3	85.4
	Missing (Assumed No)	7	14.6	14.6	100.0
	Total	48	100.0	100.0	

What should be the characteristics of youth gatherings? N8N1					
Time for worship and praise		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	42	87.5	87.5	87.5
	Missing (Assumed No)	6	12.5	12.5	100.0
	Total	48	100.0	100.0	

N8N2					
Teaching one another how to preach		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	34	70.8	70.8	70.8
	No	5	10.4	10.4	81.3
	Missing (Assumed No)	9	18.8	18.8	100.0
	Total	48	100.0	100.0	

N8N3					
Encouraging one another with the Word		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	43	89.6	89.6	89.6
	No	2	4.2	4.2	93.8
	Missing (Assumed No)	3	6.3	6.3	100.0
	Total	48	100.0	100.0	

N8N4					
Bible study		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	40	83.3	83.3	83.3
	No	1	2.1	2.1	85.4
	Missing (Assumed No)	7	14.6	14.6	100.0
	Total	48	100.0	100.0	

N8N5					
General meetings to discuss issues that are		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent

not pleasing to the Church					
Valid	Yes	18	37.5	37.5	37.5
	No	17	35.4	35.4	72.9
	Missing (Assumed No)	13	27.1	27.1	100.0
	Total	48	100.0	100.0	

What type of Bible study is relevant?					
N9N1					
Panel discussion		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	37	77.1	77.1	77.1
	No	5	10.4	10.4	87.5
	Missing (Assumed No)	6	12.5	12.5	100.0
	Total	48	100.0	100.0	

N9N2					
Case study (e.g. teen pregnancy)		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	33	68.8	68.8	68.8
	No	11	22.9	22.9	91.7
	Missing (Assumed No)	4	8.3	8.3	100.0
	Total	48	100.0	100.0	

N9N3					
Chalk talk (e.g. drawing pictures)		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	13	27.1	27.1	27.1
	No	26	54.2	54.2	81.3
	Missing (Assumed No)	9	18.8	18.8	100.0
	Total	48	100.0	100.0	

What impact does the Church have on Youth? N10N1					
Makes one a reactive		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent

Christian					
Valid	Yes	32	66.7	66.7	66.7
	No	7	14.6	14.6	81.3
	Missing (Assumed No)	9	18.8	18.8	100.0
	Total	48	100.0	100.0	

N10N2					
Makes one a proactive Christian		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	30	62.5	62.5	62.5
	No	9	18.8	18.8	81.3
	Missing (Assumed No)	9	18.8	18.8	100.0
	Total	48	100.0	100.0	

N10N3					
Makes one establish new spiritual realm		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	39	81.3	81.3	81.3
	Missing (Assumed No)	9	18.8	18.8	100.0
	Total	48	100.0	100.0	

N10N4					
Makes one a humble Christian		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	38	79.2	79.2	79.2
	No	3	6.3	6.3	85.4
	Missing (Assumed No)	7	14.6	14.6	100.0
	Total	48	100.0	100.0	

N10N5					
Makes one a proud Christian		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	43	89.6	89.6	89.6
	Missing (Assumed No)	5	10.4	10.4	100.0
	Total	48	100.0	100.0	

Is the Church still relevant for today?					
N11N1					
Outdated		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	7	14.6	14.6	14.6
	No	30	62.5	62.5	77.1
	Missing (Assumed No)	11	22.9	22.9	100.0
	Total	48	100.0	100.0	

N11N2					
Has focus and contact with people		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	14	29.2	29.2	29.2
	No	26	54.2	54.2	83.3
	Missing (Assumed No)	8	16.7	16.7	100.0
	Total	48	100.0	100.0	

N11N3					
Is relevant and focused		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	35	72.9	72.9	72.9
	No	7	14.6	14.6	87.5
	Missing (Assumed No)	6	12.5	12.5	100.0
	Total	48	100.0	100.0	

N11N4					
Needs to be improved to fit the context		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	30	62.5	62.5	62.5
	No	11	22.9	22.9	85.4
	Missing (Assumed No)	7	14.6	14.6	100.0
	Total	48	100.0	100.0	

4.3 Analysis and interpretation of the table

N1N1. What kind of activities do you consider should be promoted in Church?

On youth camps, 83% of the youth considered youth camps as useful in the church activities because the percentage showed that they appreciated youth camps of the Church. The general implication to this is that young people consider youth camps as one of the activities that inspire them to be active participants in Church-related activities instead of being spectators or mere Church goers. This is a clear indication that young people want to be involved in Church activities and within their own context. A context that is youth-friendly, but without compromising the truth of the Word of God, it would help young people to identify with the community of believers.

N1N2. Youth Camps

With regard to Church camps, 54.2% of youth appeared to believe in Church camps though their percentage indicate a count only slightly above average.. The general implications would be that young people are willing to be around the adults, willing to accommodate the differences of generation gaps within

the church and it would be wrong to conclude that they are rebellious towards authority. But what the Church should work on is the interaction between the different generations in order to close the gaps that may exist and to help with the process of interaction on working together as a community of faith in the Church of Christ.

N1N3. Conducting Church services

Youth in about 56.3% of responses to this question agreed that young people must conduct Church services themselves. The possibilities surrounding such a suggestion may well include great opportunities in general as well as great opportunities of getting young people involved and keeping them involved. According to Letšosa (2005: 380) the way in which the youth should be able to take part in conducting a sermon may include the following: "The Church should have a worship team which will focus in co-operation with the liturgist and the choirs, and this group could be functional in the service before the entrance or in the other services such as the service of humiliation and the others by reading some text with pre-arrangement with the liturgist. For example in the service of humiliation after the reading of the law one of the youth can be asked to read Romans 13:8-10. In this manner our youth will be able to realise that on Sunday there are many ways in which they can conduct the Church service." The church leaders, therefore, should learn to engage youth by arranging with them through the worship teams to take part in the presentation of the service of the Church.

N1N4. Participation in the Church service

In response a convincing 72.9% of the young people revealed that they considered participation in the church service as a favourable practice. The general implication could be that the young people would be more attracted to Church if they themselves would have part in what they as young people have to offer in honouring and serving God. In their response the majority of them displayed willingness and a desire to have a task or certain tasks allocated to them. They want to be actively involved and they want to be part of what happens at church. The question is how to accomplish such participation and how to channel their efforts and contributions. Young people are energetic

and dynamic in their way of thinking and doing and it is of utmost importance to the church and the young people alike that the church should give this matter well-pondered consideration and arrive at sustainable decisions about it. There are a few ways of incorporating their participation. They could be used in the reading of the Ten Commandments, reading of the Word, prayers and singing and wherever they might be deemed necessary. A worship service is a meeting between God and his people and not between God and the minister. The truth of the matter is that if young people do not consider themselves as being useful in the Church they may endeavour to be useful somewhere else, and somewhere else may not be as healthy or as safe as in the church and where to find them and bring them back in future is something that cannot be predicted.

N1N5. Prayer groups

In response to this question a significant 81.3% of the young participants proved to believe in prayer. Most of them considered prayers and praying to be more relevant to them and their context. The general implication of this is that young people want to and also need to grow spiritually through prayer. Prayer groups would be helpful and through prayer they rely completely on God as prayer is to be in communication with God and nothing more (or nothing else), but fortunately also nothing less.. It is therefore important for Church leaders to find means to form such groups in the Church to help youth in their quest of having a relationship with God and Christ, and this could only be achieved through prayer.

N1N6. Church choirs

During my student years I understood that choirs were not allowed during the worship service. The argument that was used was that all of the congregation members attending had to be involved in a worship service and not a specific group of people only. Nevertheless, choirs could be useful as far as promoting congregational singing is concerned and other contributions are also to be gained and choirs need not replace the voice of the congregation. According to responses obtained from the questionnaire the majority of young people considered church choirs to be one of the activities *that should be*

promoted in Church. Music is one of the most influential factors in the lives of youth. As many as 25% of them admitted to enjoying music *more than anything else*. Many of them seek their role models from among the ranks of what the music industry has to offer. Most of them are directly influenced by music, even to the extent of it affecting their lifestyle or their attitude. The Church should grasp this opportunity in order to accommodate and keep the young people right there in church. It is upon the Church leaders to realise the importance that music has in the lives of young people, it is upon the church leaders to see it as a breakthrough that will bring a halt to the withdrawal of the youth from the Church. We should praise God through singing and allow music to fit the context of today without compromising the Word of God.

What are the most important values for catechetical teaching?

N2N1. Growth in the knowledge of Christ

About 83.3% of the young people viewed growth in the knowledge of Christ as a more important value for catechetical teaching than anything else. The general implication would be that the young people are so willing to have a relationship with Christ and that it means more to them than the tradition of the Church. The Church leaders must take this first step to help youth to know and deepen their relationship with Christ. Growth in the knowledge of Christ can be enhanced by providing youth with enough material to read and by engaging in their discussions about faith, rather than telling them that they will understand when they grow. It is clear that young people have a desire to gain in knowledge from an early stage on instead of waiting until they have grown older. This could be done by organising a programme during youth camps that will be focusing on how youth can learn to conduct Bible studies and the use of the quiz question in such events.

The better established their knowledge of Christ is the better they will be able to deal with events such as recent publications (2007 – 2010) according to which the figure of Christ, the life and sacrifice of Jesus Christ as reported in the Bible, are very negatively criticised. Such publications have been discussed in magazines and newspapers (even made front-page news).

Young people might well come into contact with such 'news'. If many theologians and adults have been upset about these publications, how much the more may the young ones be upset and confused or even discouraged to believe in Jesus Christ?

N2N2. Practising gospel songs

According to the responses 66.7% of the young people consider this as part of the catechetical teaching. The general implication here is that they feel that songs are part of serving God. Their voices should be heard through singing and with it others may be brought to faith through music. However, youth should be taught how to evaluate what they are embarking on and should be certain about aligning their music and songs with the Word of God. Letšosa (2005:171) supplies and discusses relevant criteria that could be used to evaluate songs.

N2N3. Be equipped to conduct services

To this question the youths equally voted for both "yes" (37%) and also "no" (37%). The young people would realise that conducting the service would be the office of the minister of the church, the minister being one who has completed certain tertiary studies focused on conducting a service and presenting or conveying the Word of God. Catechetical teaching cannot offer this knowledge and background, cannot equip the young person to do the same or to take the place of the minister of the church. Catechetical teaching can, however, convey more information on the liturgy of the church in order to enhance better understanding. Better understanding may in turn lead to an attitude of regarding proper worshipping as a seriously necessary part of leading the life of a Christian. Such aspects of knowledge about the church and its liturgy may even be added through teachings after the young people have completed confession of their faith and this may assist them in not worshipping God in ways that they may find fit, but which may not be in line with the liturgy of the Reformed Churches. Doing so may assist them in knowing why their church is as it is, knowing why their church conducts a service as it does instead of being like and doing like surrounding churches very often found more 'attractive' by them. Doing so may act as a *reassurance*

that their church need not change to be like the rest of the churches surrounding them. This is a challenge that needs to be attended to.

N2N4. Spiritual maturity

The majority (81.3%) of the young people considered spiritual maturity as one of the aspects to be envisaged and included by the catechetical teachings in the Church. The general implication is that youth within the Church need to grow not only physically through different stages but also spiritually. The church has to create the opportunity for spiritual growth to take place. The church is indeed supposed to help young people to grow spiritually. Young people who are spiritually matured will be in a much better position to deal with life's challenges. Spiritual maturity indicates growth in the knowledge of God and having a relationship with Christ through actions.

N2N5. Having a relationship with Christ

As many as 83.3% of the young people, considered a relationship with Christ, as an essential element to be included in the catechetical teaching strategy. With this statement it clearly reveals that young people are not interested in fantasy or any form of substitute, but in a real relationship with Christ. This aspect is not merely restricted to catechetical teachings, but in reality is the very calling of the church itself, leading to a lifelong relationship. In this sense there is much hope that church sermons will capture young people and help them to achieve spiritual maturity. To have young people who are interested in having a relationship with Christ clearly shows that young people are willing and ready to commit their lives to the Saviour Jesus Christ.

What should be the characteristics of the youth in and outside the Church?

N3N1. Good Christian conduct?

A significant majority (85.5%) revealed the belief that good Christian conduct is one of the characteristics of being young Christians both in the church and in the daily life routines. The general implication here is that young people are prepared to put Christian faith into practice, not only by word of mouth.

Christian youth must be able to identify with their Christian faith among those of their age. This means that peer pressure can be overcome when they stand up firmly for their beliefs in words and in action.

N3N2. Wait for the Church council to discipline members who sin

This question relates especially to youth groups in the Church who take it as their responsibility to discipline each other and they do so even to the extent of excommunicating some of their members from the RCYM. Quite a number of them (66.7%) still hold on to this practice, because they misunderstand discipline and admonishing one another in love. This practice must be reconsidered by the youth groups because Matthew 18 clearly shows that if a person has been admonished several times the matter must be referred to the elders meaning the leaders of the Church so that the matter can be resolved in an orderly Christian fashion. This does not mean that the young people should abandon all forms of disciplining or advising or drawing attention to better conduct, but rather that they should not take church discipline into their own hands. Instead they should discuss the problem or problems that they encounter with the youth member involved and do so in love and goodwill. If it proves to be necessary they should refer the matter to Church council as articles 71-80 of the Reformed Churches advise.

N3N3. Discipline each other without the intervention of the Church council?

About 58.3% of the participants were of the opinion that it is upon their shoulders to exercise discipline to their members. The general implication would be that the young people do not understand their role and responsibility as youth in the Church. Their responses create the impression that youth groups do not form part of the church and operate as if they were a separate or autonomous group/church within a Church, but without realising it. Youth groups should be well-informed about their place and position in church as well as their purpose. Over and above this it should be made clear to them, in all Reformed Churches and according to a set of standard guidelines in this respect, that they stand in a certain relationship to the Church Council, that they are not independent but subjected to the authority of the Church Council.

N3N4. Discipline each other with the intervention of the Church Council

Quite a number of young people (79.2%) indicated that discipline in the groups had to be conducted in cooperation with intervention of the Church Council. The general implication here is that the young people, on the other hand, seem to realise Matthew 18 is very important in terms of discipline and that those whom God has elected to receive authority to exercise such responsibility, must be allowed to exercise their responsibility, *i.e.* their authority over the youth groups included. This does not mean that admonishing one another would not be allowed at all, but that the Church Council must be consulted and referred to instead of taking disciplinary action on their own. At the same time they would know and realise that it is every Christian's responsibility to take care of a neighbour's life on the basis of love, because discipline in the Reformed Church is based on love, not hatred, and love is the essential element of Church discipline. The problem is therefore not because there is concern about a fellow-being's well-being in ways of thinking and doing, that is no mistake, but the problem is about how to approach the matter and deal with it.

N3N5 Respect those who are in authority

About 89.5% of the young people expressed the opinion that those who were in authority had to be respected and that this was an indication of Christian behaviour inside and outside the Church. The general implication here would be that young people or youth are to listen and humble themselves to those who are in authority, but on the other hand dictatorship would cause them to feel rebellious. To leaders in the Church the challenge would be that the relationship between the leaders and the youth would have to be revised so that a common goal can be reached in a collective manner. This would be a relationship that would endeavour to take into account the interests of the leaders as well as the interests of the young people.

N3N6. Love one another and look for the other's interest

A majority of about 52.1% of the youth considered this to be useful in terms of their conduct in and outside the Church. The general implication here would

be that young people in the church are indeed willing to reach out to their fellow-beings and serving each other's interests. Young people are willing to interact among themselves with the aim of extending a helping hand. What has to be taken into account is that we are living in a society that is very youth friendly but that may be harmful to their future, and it is for this reason that the Church has to provide a network among young people that would be conducive to their future so that the Church may be updated with what would adversely affect our youth in society and find measures to assist them with how to live a life of purity.

What type of worship do you consider to be friendly?

N4N1. Free worship service

An majority of about 79.2% of the young people considered a free worship service that would not be too formal as friendly to them during the church service. The implication here would be that they do not have a problem with worshipping God, but the manner in which it is done or the way the service is held in the church does not accommodate them. They have a need to express themselves in their own unique way during the service without the intention of compromising the Gospel. They have it in them to enjoy dancing and feeling the power of God in them while giving glory to God. The Church, on the other hand, should not accept anything for the sake of change. At all times it must be kept in mind that a church service has to be in honour of God, has to do with the Word of God and being responsible before God through actions. Any church service is attended by young ones and older people and leaders alike. Young people have to understand that leaders of the Church also have that responsibility as overseers to ensure that righteousness strived for by everyone. This would mean that the Church cannot accept change for the sake of quantity but would also have to protect and enhance the quality with regard to spiritual growth.

N4N2 Formal/Traditional worship

According to the responses 60.4% of the young people considered formal worship as friendly to them and not as outdated. They are in favour of an

arranged service of worship, of a coming together of believers at a certain place at a certain time. The general implication here would be that they are not completely against any type of worship, but that they would prefer changes as to style and rhythm. It is worth noting that the young people are not entirely unhappy about traditional worship or services of worship, but that it would please them even more if they could enjoy taking part in church activities related to worshipping and services of worship.

N4N3. Practical and relevant sermons

Only 33.3% of the young people considered the sermons as practical and relevant to them. One of the reasons for this lower percentage could be that they constantly seek entertainment and therefore also in church, rather than attending church for its purpose, it being to focus on the Word of God. It is often merely a formality to them to attend the service and enjoy the service more than only listening to the Word of God. That is why most of them fall asleep during the delivering of the sermon or they are busy with their cell phones or communicating with one another because they are unable to focus during Word proclamation. The general implication here would be that we have young Christians who do not understand why they have to be in church. This tendency is affecting our youth so much that they seek to fill their emptiness with worldly pleasures. They ever so often end up being tossed back and forth by Satan because they do not understand or listen to the Word of God.

N4N4. Only minister of the Word conducting service

With regard to the conducting of the service a majority of young people(75.0%) indicated that they preferred the minister of the Word of God to present the service and as a rule experienced the service to be friendly. The general implication here would be that they believe that when the minister of the Word conducts the service it gives meaning to them to be in the church and more so than to be in church without a minister.

N4N5 Youth conducting service and allowed to preach

Many of the young people (72.9%) considered themselves to be sufficiently equipped to do what must be done by the ministers. The liturgy in the Reformed Church is dynamic and the youth should understand that to lead a service and conduct a service might give a similar understanding. But actually in the Reformed Church, only ministers of the Word are allowed to conduct services and preach. It stands to reason that there are fundamental principles for reserving the activities of conducting a service to qualified ministers, especially as delivering sermons and leading a congregation would involve much more than standing up and delivering a public talk on the contents of the Bible, to put it that way. What can, however, be done is to allow room for young people to participate with regard to some parts of the service usually performed by the minister, e.g. to read the Ten Commandments in the church by one or more than one of them at a time. But this does not imply leading or conducting a service, e.g. a service of humiliation. Instead the young ones are allowed to take part in the worship service in different ways. Therefore the young people could discuss the possibilities and present their suggestions to be evaluated by the leaders. The end result would be the desired one, they would have an opportunity to be involved and would come to know more and more about the Reformed Church's liturgy and by these means would develop a better understanding of their church and loyalty to it.

N4N6. Free songs

A significant 70.8% of the young people would suggest the singing of 'free songs' (*i.e.* not the usual or traditional Psalms, or apart from these, etc.) to be sung during the worship service. It is a known fact that young people enjoy music and songs, as has also been proved by the results of this empirical study according to which many of them cherished their music 'more than anything else'. The implication here would be that the young people would also enjoy singing for God and worshipping God by singing. It would, however, be necessary for them to be guided, not to be influenced to a greater extent by the media than by the church. The criteria for a 'free song' would have to be related directly and uncompromisingly to the Word of God, especially as most of the free songs have nothing to do with God and rather

focus on entertainment. So many of the free songs contradict the teachings of the Word of God and their main message is not God-centred but rather focused on the glory of human beings. Considerations in this direction would pose a huge challenge to church leaders who are and remain responsible for whatever happens during a church service, and that would be the music and songs included. Everything, music and songs included, must proceed in a way that would honour and praise God, and nothing but God.

N4N7. Only Psalms and scriptural songs

As many as 68.8% of the young people appeared to consider the Psalms and Scriptural songs to be unfriendly during the worship service. The general implication here would be that young people, especially in the black communities, know little about Psalms and Scriptural songs that are being sung in the Reformed Church in accordance with the Word of God. They are more familiar with other ways ('genres') of singing. One of the solutions to this problem could be dedicated efforts (perhaps more easily said than done but nevertheless worth the effort) to educate the youths via parents and church leaders by forming choirs. To begin with a choir is a very good group activity to be part of and the young ones are inherently fond of singing in groups. In their group context they certainly enjoy music and the singing of songs. By exploiting these positive characteristics and the accompanying advantages there is no better opportunity than to deliberately let them sing! Teach them the lyrics of the Psalms and Scriptural songs and let them sing - let them sing in choirs and in the way that choirs contain possibilities for special presentations and individual talents. The possibility of choirs could change about the situation of young people's singing in church altogether. It would, of course, be essential to remain in communication with them and remind them of the idea of singing, in the first place, to honour and praise God.

N5N1. Place for the youth

According to 64.6% of the young people the church is a place for them to be. The general implication here would be that these young people believe that they form part of the body of Christ. Therefore, as a church we should keep them while they are still with us and prepared to form part of the Church. The

challenge would be to raise the number of those who are convinced that a church is a place for them to be. Jesus told Peter to feed his sheep (John 20:17)!

N5N2. Place for the elderly

According to 62.5% of the young people the church is a place for the elderly. The general implication here would be that they enjoy being in Church where there are elderly people as well. Building a bridge across the generation gap would also be important.

N5N3. Coming into contact with the living God

Many of the young people (87.5%) regard the Church as a place where one can be in contact with the living God. The general implication would be that they regard the Church as more than a place of fellowship as such, in the sense that it means a place to be in fellowship with the living God.

N5N4. Place to have fun

Some of the young people (50%) viewed the church as a place where fun could be had. The implication here would be that they view a church from a different perspective. To them a church is a place to meet God but on the other hand also a place for fun. There seems to be a crucial point in this statement because the church is an assembly of believers who come to God with different types of requests. There is, however, a reminder that we should come to church and have fun also, that being a Christian does not mean to emphasise how hard and difficult it is to be a Christian, a reminder that being a Christian is accompanied by joy and happiness. The church, too, is a place where we can enjoy in the presence of the living God and where we can share happiness with others who feel the same.

N5N5. Place to listen to the Word of God.

A significant 85.4% of the young people view the Church as a place to listen to the Word of God. The general implication would be that the focal point of the Church is nothing else but to listen and follow what God has commanded in His Word through His servants. This makes it clear that the reign of God

must be visible in the Church through exegetical and relevant messages from ministers. What has to be guarded against, however, is to indulge in so-called "Prosperity Gospel" only, that is to bring the Word of God to people in a way that people want it to be, instead of letting the Word of God speak to bring all its messages and truths in their diversity. The challenge is to uphold the basic purpose of the church service and that is to use the church as a place where there is an opportunity to listen to the Word of God, that is, in the true sense of what doing so would include or exclude - to listen to the Word of God means to listen to the Word of God and not anything else.

N5N6. Place in which you can please your parents

Of the young people 58.3% were of the opinion that the church was a place where one went to please one's parents. The general implication here would be that the remaining ones come to church because they are in a relationship with Jesus Christ. It is very important to attend Church activities when it comes from the heart, and attend the Church out of love of God.

N5N7. Place to be when bored

The greater part of young people (68.8%) did not view the church as a place to go in order to get rid of boredom. This would mean that they would attend church for the correct reasons. It would also mean that they would choose to go to church and that being there is pleasant to them and they feel that it is a place for them too. They consider themselves as part of the community of the believers. The general implication here would be that the young people really understand that the church is a place to serve God and to be for the sake of one's spiritual growth. In this sense a very positive attitude is displayed by them. This poses a challenge to the Church leaders as they should be properly accommodated in every aspect of the Church's programmes.

What type of activities should a minister have with youth?

N6N1. Dictator who manipulates youth issues

In 52.1% of the cases the view was reflected that a minister was neither a dictator nor manipulative. Instead they appeared to need a minister who would

come to their level of thinking and engage with them on issues concerning them. The general implication here would be that they were very rebellious with regard to dictatorship and would prefer to stay or move away from manipulative people. Therefore, communication with the young people on matters that concern youth opens up a door of trust between them and ministers and helps them to consider themselves as important in the body of Christ.

N6N2 Spiritual Father

Many of the young people (77.1%) considered a minister to be a spiritual Father to them. To them a minister was someone they could depend on when hope was lost and despair took over. The general implication surrounding this would be that they need close contact with a minister, not to replace their fathers but to have someone to lean on. They welcome ministers who are willing to lift them up and offer encouragement through the Word of God.

N6N3. Always be involved in youth activities

In this respect 75% of the young people preferred ministers to be always available for them, during their activities and also addresses their concerns. The general implication here would be that they need to be guided by ministers and not to be dictated by them. Linked to this would be a challenge to the minister to be sensitive to the difference. It is evident that a healthy and strong relationship with the minister would be welcome so that their activities can be successful. This shows that ministers have an important role in youth activities in the Church in order to offer guidance and support.

N6N4. Only be involved in youth activities when invited

According to 52.1% of the young believers the minister did not have to wait for an invitation, but would be welcome to be part of their activities at all times and it was actually expected of him to be present as often as possible. The general implication would be that the young people are comfortable about the presence of a minister in their midst and they expect to be known by their minister and would want him to be around whether expected or not. Once again there is a difference to be sensitive to, and that is the difference

between provoking feelings of being closely watched and guarded by their minister and feelings of being comfortably supported and supervised by someone who cares enough to do so.

N6N5. Counsellor and advisor in youth activities

A significant 81.3% of the young people consider a minister to be both an advisor and a counsellor. According to this view of theirs it is evident that they expect of a minister to be a person whom they can trust and rely on in difficult times. The general implication here would be that they are willing to disclose their innermost emotions and experiences, perhaps secret fears and problems they are sensitive about, and trust the minister to deal with these disclosures confidentially. By doing so they reveal confidence in their minister and a belief that he will be capable of assisting them by supporting them and offering solutions to those things by which they are upset or challenged. A relationship of trust between the young person and the minister is essential for this to take place and such a relationship must, therefore, be cultivated to meet the needs of the young believers.

N6N6. Organiser and caretaker

A total of 60.4% of the young people considered a minister to be someone who would take charge of everything in the church. This clearly reveals that there will be a commitment in our young people as far as responsibilities are concerned as long as the minister is around. The question is whether the minister will manage to attend to everything, because it might mean that too great a load lands on the minister's shoulders. Would it not be expecting too much of the minister, as would here be the case with the young people's expectations? It is true that a minister is a servant of God, yes, but it is equally true that the young people are also servants in the kingdom of God. This gives a general implication that the perception in our churches, which has been running through the ages, is that a minister is the servant of the congregation and that of God. This could to a large extent have a negative impact on the young ones and make them more of spectators than participators, or it could make them mere followers who never initiate things on their own. But the issue here is that we should all take care of one another and of what belongs to God.

How should youth be ministered?

N7N1. Individually

The opinion expressed by 43.8% of the young people was that they should not be ministered to individually. This means that most of them are comfortable to be ministered to in a fashion that does not place them in an isolated atmosphere. The general implication here would be that they want to experience the presence of their fellow youths when being ministered to. This is a challenge to the leaders when they minister to young people as an atmosphere of friendship should be maintained and the language should be suitable, even adapted to a certain extent, so that they will realise they are being accommodated. This would enhance their trust and their liberty to approach the ministers with their personal affairs. The more they trust, the more they will be prepared or willing to trust the leaders up to a point where they can open up or freely discuss their fears and challenges with the Church leaders without any hesitation.

N7N2. Large groups of members

To 70.8% of the young people it would be preferable if they were ministered to in large groups of members. This would be relevant and convenient to them. Young people are as a rule rather interactive in their way of living and therefore they would feel comfortable when they are in a large group. The implication here would be that they would prefer the same to apply to the way they are being ministered to. It creates the impression that they will be comfortable to reach out and to be reached out to, or will more readily receive what is offered to them, when they are part of a group and among their friends.

N7N3. Few groups' member (Smaller or selected groups of members)

To 54.3% of the young people a smaller group, consisting of only a few of the members at a time appeared to be preferred or acceptable as a way of ministering to them. The general implication here would be that they are not afraid to have face-to-face discussions with their leaders. The challenge is for

youth leaders to develop skills according to which to minister to smaller groups at a time. One of the advantages of accomplishing this would be that they would be in a better position to develop their self-identity as well as their identity in a cultural context. In their age group they identify themselves with the group and work along with their peers knowing that there is someone else among them who are experiencing what they are experiencing. Such circumstances make them feel at home and at ease and they may, therefore, end up revealing their innermost experiences, and sharing these things would have the advantage of an opportunity to offer such advice and assistance as would be deemed necessary and to the speaker's benefit.

What should be the characteristics of youth gatherings?

N8N1 Time for worship and praise

There was an 87.5% agreement among the young people that their youth gatherings would be a time for worshipping and praising God. In the light of the 'culture' of young people, namely that they love music and songs, the general implication here would be that they would love worshipping and praising God by means of music and songs. It would be best for Church leaders to encourage the young people to join the already existing choirs within the church or to form a similar choir of their own so that with their talent they will be able to worship and praise God through Jesus Christ.

N8N2. Teaching one another how to preach

In 70.8% of the cases the young people considered a youth gathering to be an opportunity to teach one another how to preach. The general implication here would be that they want to learn and gain a better understanding of the Scripture so that they may be more confident in proclaiming the Gospel wherever they may be. The distinction that has to be made here, is that young people cannot preach in the same sense as do ministers who have been called to preach the Gospel in an official church service as well as outside the Church. "How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?"(Romans 10:14). Youth should be

encouraged to know how to proclaim the gospel in terms of the missionary activities of the church. What they need to know is how to speak up about and convey their beliefs and convictions as related to the Word of God.

N8N3 Encouraging one another with the Word

As many as 89.3% of the young people encouraging one another with the Word of God, to be an essential element during youth gathering. The general implication would be that Christian youth rely on the Word of God, and they do so with what knowledge they have and despite a possible limited knowledge. This should serve as a challenge among Church leaders and would call upon them to include Bible studies that will help to equip young people with a deeper knowledge and understanding of the Scripture.

N8N4 Bible study

A majority of the young people (83.3%) considered the Bible study to be an essential element with regard to their gathering. The general implication here would be that they should be given the opportunity to know their faith and understand what they believe in. The secular world we are living in today offers a freedom with regard to everything, and it is therefore a necessity for the youth to meditate on the Word of God by studying it more often, in fact as often as possible, and not only on Sundays. It is also necessary that they understand what they learn or gather in knowledge, that they grasp the basic principles and values contained in what they learn.

N8N5 General meetings to discuss issues that are not pleasing to the Church

A total of 37.5% of the young participants considered the discussion of issues that are not pleasing to the Church as part of their gathering. The general implication here would be that they are more concerned about focusing on what could be helpful to the Church. The leaders of the Church are there to act as overseers, and this capacity should not be transferred to the young people. It is true, however, that the church leaders may not be aware of all matters that could affect the church, and in this regard the young people may be helpful, especially as they find themselves in circles where the leaders do

not venture and may come into contact with types of people or events never met or experienced by the church leaders. What they may encounter in the world may also differ from what the leaders encounter for the simple reason that they mix with a different age group on a daily basis. In this sense the young people may indeed be very helpful and it may even serve a good purpose to encourage them to share their observations and information. It is and remains of utmost importance to be watchful in the Church of Christ and the more one knows about what to be watchful for, the better.

What type of Bible study is relevant?

N9N1. Panel discussion

A majority of the young people (77.1%) considered panel discussions as a relevant type of Bible study, and a way of presentation that they enjoyed most. The general implication would be that they would prefer panel discussions as a manner of conducting Bible study. To discuss issues of our faith openly serves a good purpose, namely to develop quality within the church as well as quantity. Church programmes should include this type of discussion so as to equip young people with the Word of God.

N9N2 Case study (e.g. teenager pregnancy)

According to the results many of the young people (68.8%) appeared to appreciate case study discussions during Bible study. The general implication here would be that they enjoy being given a task or research to do on certain topics that will help them to gather information relating to their challenges. It is very important to encourage young people to spend much of their time searching for the truth in the Bible rather than spending much of their time looking for sensational material on the internet.

N9N3. Chalk talk (e.g. drawing pictures)

The general impression in this respect, *i.e.* 54.2% of the young people, was that they did not consider chalk talk to be relevant to the Bible study procedures. The general implication would be that they do not consider this way of doing as being suitable to their age, as chalk talk would rather apply to

the ministering of those of younger age groups and who are attracted to learning by means of pictures and who learn more easily in that way.

What impact does the Church have on Youth?

N10N1 Makes one a reactive Christian.

Some of the young people (66.7%) considered the Church to be the source of their reactive attitude. The general implication would be that the young people do not understand the impact that the church has on them as Christians. The Church follows the example of Christ and His teaching. The question is, "How did Christ walk?" the answer is found within the pages of the New Testament (Vukich & Vandegriff. 2002. 243-244).

- Prayer- Luke 5:16; 6:12; 11:1; John 11:41; 17:9, 15-17.
- Compassion- Matthew 20:34; Mark 6:34; Luke 19:41-42.
- Purpose- Matthew 5:17; Mark 1:38; Luke 4:18-19.
- Servant hood- Matthew 20:28; Mark 10; 43; John 13:3-10.
- Understanding/Knowing the Scripture- Matthew 7:29; 22:16.
- Disciple making- Matthew 10:1
- Unconditional love- Matthew 8:17; 18:11-13; John 10:3-4, 14-16.
- Pure Motives- John 5:329
- Holiness- Luke 1:35
- Meekness- Matthew 11:29
- Unity among the body- John 17:14-23
- Intercession- Matthew 6:9-13
- Obedience- Matthew 26:39
- Proper zeal- Luke 8:1

N10N2. Makes one a proactive Christian

Of the young people 62.5% were of the opinion that proactive should be regarded as essential with regard to the impact that the Church has on youth. The general implication here would be that they see the impact that the Church has on them as being conducive to an attitude of pro-activity. It is

inspiring to know that the Church is in a position to help produce, through grace, young people who uphold Christianity through their actions.

N10N3. Makes one establish new spiritual realm

A majority of young people (81.3%) considered the impact exercised by the Church as including the establishment of a new spiritual realm. The general implication here would be that the majority of them do not exactly understand what the mission of God with the Church is, the mission being to Reform what was deformed by sin. (It is possible that they might have understood the reformed result as a “new” realm.) The Church is, however, not a new spiritual realm establishment. Historically the definition of the word ‘Church’ emerges out of the Greek culture of Jesus’ time. The word ‘Church’ literally referred to a group of people called out of their homes to gather together for an important meeting in the city. Applying this spiritually, we see that the Church is God’s people from every nation ‘called out’ through Grace from the kingdom of darkness and translated through the New Birth by the power of the Spirit into the Kingdom of God. The Church is God’s people gathered together to meet with Him and accomplish His purpose.

New Testament gives priority to the gathering of believers, and the local assembly was the only basis for ministry in the pages of Scripture. The closer you come to the model of the NT Church, the more you will experience the blessings of God. A ‘church’, in the broader sense, is a group of baptised believers, in whom Christ dwells, under the discipline of the Word of God, organised for evangelism, education, worship, fellowship, and the administration of the ordinances. An interdenominational agency or a Christian Youth organisation can have a ministry on a significant level, but the further it departs from the local church, the less likely it would have the blessing or favour of God (Vukich & Vandegriff. 2002. 39-40).

N10N4. Makes one a humble Christian

As many as 79.2% of the young people appeared to experience that the church taught them how to be humble and included this aspect in the impact that the church has on them. The general implication here would be that they

realise that humility is one of the virtues that a Christian must have to enable him or her to walk in the example of Christ. The Scripture teaches us that Christ was humble up to the point of His crucifixion.

N10N5. Makes one a proud Christian

A majority of the young people (89.6%) considered the Church and its impact on them as rendering them as proud Christians. The general implication here would be that they are very proud to be Christians. To them it might mean, and innocently so, that they are not going to hide the fact that they are Christians, but care has to be taken when it comes to pride and being proud and the possible connotations attached to the terms. The statement may include a deep misunderstanding. Pride as such has never delivered good fruits in any Christian attitude and has also led to the fall. Instead young people are supposed to rather regard themselves as being blessed to be a Christian, because Christian faith is a blessing from God (Eph 2:8-10).

Is the Church still relevant for today?

N11N1. Outdated

Many of the young people (62.5%) did not consider the Church as being outdated. The general implication would be that they seem to be happy and satisfied with the way the Church has been all along. They do not consider any changes in the sense that they regard the Church as the Assembly of the people God which is not a time-bound entity but a time-address entity.

N11N2. Has focus and has contact with people

Quite a number of young people (54.2%) did not consider the Church to have lost focus or contact with the people. The general implication would be that the people might be the ones who have lost contact with God and have focused on things that matter most to them, very often to the exclusion of having a relationship with God. This is one of the reasons for empty seats on Sundays during worship services.

N11N3. Is relevant and focused

A majority of the young people (72.9%) considered the Church to be relevant and focused. The general implication would be that the message of the Church is still the relevant message as given to us today. The Church is a building but the congregants are the ones who have shown an inclination to withdraw from the Church. Relevancy and focus are two of the elements that the Church and its message has to uphold at all times, that is to this day as well.

N11N4. Needs to be improved to fit the context

Many of the young people (62.5%) were of the opinion that the Church would need to be improved or adapted to fit the context. The general implication here would be that they believe that within the Church some of the activities must be improved so as to accommodate different age groups. For example, singing and youth activities or youth programmes must be planned or designed in a way that would prevent a certain age group from feeling isolated in the Church. This would mean that the 'culture' within the Church must be improved or adapted, not the Church and its message.

4.4 Evaluation of the Statistical study

Joshua 1:7

"Be strong and very courageous.

Be careful to obey all the law my servant Moses gave you;

do not turn from it to the right or to the left,

that you may be successful wherever you go"

4.5 Inferences from the above analysis

The common reflection in the table above to a large extent supports the reason for this research, which is to come up with strategies for effective youth ministry. It is evident from the table above that most of the young people are in need of some change. Yet, the changes should not be viewed

negatively but rather positively. Most do not want to do away with the basics, which is the proclamation of the Word. What they want is the contextualising of the Word. A few, as it would appear, would rather go for 'cheap-line' gospel, emphasising the doing away with the pure proclamation of the Word and rather focusing on the enjoyment of being young. Among many of the young people enjoyment is of major importance and must be catered for. Enjoyment is one of the things that would attract them most. In other words, this table indicates the clear difference between the young people who would merely be concerned about the taste of the food, irrespective of whether the food is healthy or not, and the others who would be concerned about the nourishment and health benefit properties of the food they eat.

The following two important questions must be kept in mind and can be repeated: "Why do you go to church? What motivates you to go to church?"

There are some of the young participants who did not respond to certain questions. They were categorised separately under missing. The assumption could be both "yes" and "no". The researcher, however, decided to classify them with the assumption "no". If they were convinced that their response was positive, they would have responded accordingly and without hesitation.

In the statistical analyses above percentages were allocated to all response is the last line in each case is representative of a *cumulative percentage*, which is the sum of both percentages calculated together. According to the NWU statistical consultation services cumulative percentages are not considered in the case of "yes" or "no" questions, except for supplying overall percentages on both.

From some of the responses that were positive to certain questions it was evident that the young people are to a certain extent in doubt about the relationship between leaders and themselves, the impact that the church exercises on them and the general approach or that these aspects needed to be attended to. The information from the statistics clearly supports Lekalakala (2000:14) who argues that the majority of the young people in our Churches

are autonomous and as far as the RCYM in the Church is concerned, it seems as if it is an organ within an organ. For the young people to be active in the Reformed Church many aspects in terms of youth ministry should be taken into consideration by Church leaders or reconsidered. One of the main reasons behind some of the unease detected among the young attendees of church would appear to be traceable to a lack of Biblical knowledge among the young people.

Many responses containing positive indications were obtained. There were clear indications of knowledge with regard to some of the activities in the reformed Church. On the other hand, a serious lack of knowledge was also picked up. In the light of the latter it would be necessary for Church leaders to arrange for workshops and conferences to educate the youth so that their Biblical knowledge could improve and in this manner they would come to understand the Reformed teaching much better. This should challenge Church leaders to nurture the Biblical knowledge among youth and to focus wholeheartedly on what seems to be a reality among young people and the church at large. In Deuteronomy 6:4-7 we hear Moses saying to the children of God "Hear O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your strength. These commandments that I gave you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up". There is a clear statement with regard to those whom the youth look upon for guidance; those who are in authority must teach the youth. It is the responsibility of the Church leaders, parents and the entire community of faith to make faith an integral part of the life of the youth.

Chapter 5: Praxis-theory: Hermeneutical Interaction

5.1 Introduction

The aim with this chapter is to combine the basic principles, the meta-theoretical and the theoretical guidelines from the empirical study in a hermeneutical interaction. A comparison of the basic principles, the meta-theoretical and the theoretical guidelines derived from the empirical investigation will take place, followed by a discussion of the hermeneutical interaction.

5.2 Catechetical strategy for effective youth ministry

5.2.1 What is a strategy?

Johnson and Scholes (2010) define strategy as follows:

“Strategy is the direction and scope of an organization over the long term: which achieves advantage for the organization through its configuration of resources within a challenging environment, to meet the needs of markets and to fulfill stake holder expectations”

Conner (2000:23) further defines a strategy as “shift of change, a change of thinking inspired by the Holy Spirit, resulting in a change of behaviour that produces a greater effectiveness in fulfilling the purposes of God for this moment in history”

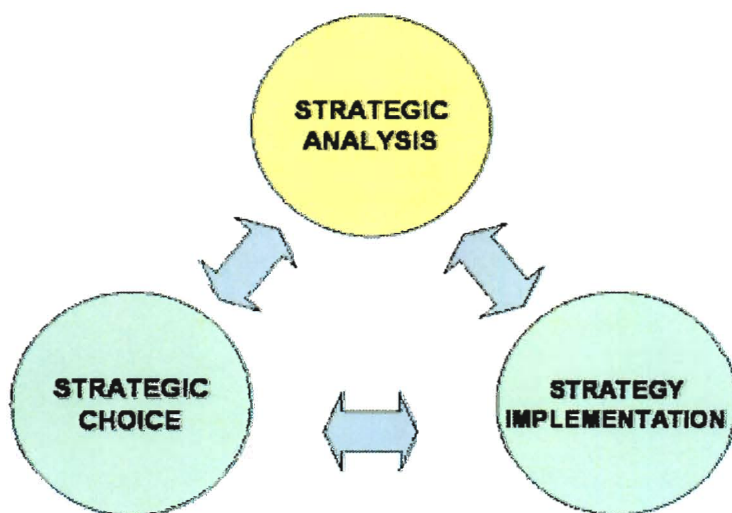
In other words, strategy is about:

According to Johnson and Scholes (2010) strategy exists at several levels in any organisation, ranging from the overall business (or group of businesses) through to individuals working in it. Corporate strategy is concerned with the overall purpose and scope of the business to meet stake holder expectations. This is a crucial level since it is heavily influenced by investors in the business and acts to guide strategic decision making throughout the business.

Business strategy is concerned more with how a business competes successfully in a particular market. It concerns strategic decision about choice products, meeting needs of customers, gaining advantage over competitors, exploiting or creating new opportunities, etc.

Operational strategy is concerned with how each part of the business is organized to deliver the corporate and business unit level strategic direction. Operational strategy therefore focuses on issues of resources, process, people etc.

Johnson and Scholes (2010) argue further by mentioning that strategic planning does not only end when effectiveness turns out to exist, but the strategy itself must be managed. In its broadest sense, strategic management is about taking “strategic decisions”. In practice, a thorough strategic management process has three main components, shown in the figure below:



5.2.2 Strategies related to youth ministry

In other words, if related to youth ministry according to the questions that apply to businesses, youth ministry strategies would include the following:

- Where is the business trying to get to in the long-term (direction)?
 The first and foremost within the strategy that will bring about effectiveness in youth ministry is the direction in which the Church of God is leading the youth. The Church should have a direction and that is Jesus Christ through the Word of God. The manner in which this direction is taken by the Church must be guided by the Holy Spirit. The youth must be equipped to focus on giving glory to God while their eyes are fixed on Christ. Biblical principles are very important, and this-long term direction is not only dependent on the Minister but also starts with the parents. Therefore the Church leaders must continually remind parents about their covenantal promise they made to God.
- Which markets should a business compete in and what kinds of activities are involved in such markets? (markets; scope)
 - While the Church is busy equipping the youth with the Word of God, the Church should try to find out what type of activities the world has to offer to our young people and which are lacking from our churches. Most of the young people today find it hard to carry or to buy a Bible. The majority of them, however, have cell phones that they carry along with them at all possible times. As a Church we can use technology to communicate faith to the youth (e.g. Mxit, Facebook, or Yahoo). This will enable the Church to attract many youth members through what they have and often use and are familiar with.
- How can the business perform better than the competition in those markets? (Advantage)?
 - The Church should establish a social network with various youth groups in the Reformed Churches that will enhance the process of spiritual maturity within the youth groups. The process could be enhanced by arranging for youth conferences, workshops and by distributing the contents or the information gathered to other youth groups via the use of technology. Internet offers a

variety of information that might be harmful to our youth, but if the Church uses such devices to spread the Word of God it will minister effectively the youth that the Church is in search of today.

- Effective teaching calls for and in fact demands disciplined study and proper planning of each lesson, therefore the Church leaders have to commit themselves to various ways of teaching in order to reach the young people by engaging themselves in such activities.
- What resources (skills, assets, finance, relationships, technical competence, and facilities) are required in order to be able to compete? (Resources)?
 - Through Bible studies, cell groups and youth programs, the Church must use such resources to improve the Biblical knowledge of the young people so that they will be able to stand boldly on their faith in Christ. The secular society we live in offers a host of attractions to lure away the youth. We have newspapers and the church should design its own newsletters (Church events, sermons or topics for workshops) use television, radio (inform youth about Gospel stations in our communities where issues concerning youth are being discussed) and literature (using magazines like Crossroads the then called Kruispad in (Gereformeerde Kerk / Reformed Church).
- What external, environmental factors affect the businesses' ability to compete? (Environment)?
 - The external factors that affect the Church would include events of the environment and to which young people are exposed, e.g. street bashing, house parties, lack of encouragement from parents, being the only person in a house to belong to or attend a church. Financial crisis and poverty within our communities, substance abuse, parental neglect, violence with children as

victims can all be counted among the adverse factors. In so many instances one can say that our young people do not have someone whom they can look up to. They literally very frequently do not have role models and find themselves to be on their own.

- What are the values and expectations of those who have power in and around the business? (stakeholders)

The Church leaders should understand their calling at this stage. It is from this understanding that the Church leaders or youth leaders should minister to the youth. Proverbs 1:4 tells one the purpose of instruction: "To give prudence to the naïve, to the youth knowledge and discretion". In other words, the youth leaders will have to lead by instruction and example in these areas for the sake of the young people's development (Vukich & Vandegriff. 2002.237).

Of the eight strategies used by Johnson and Schools, only five will be singled out to discuss below and apply to church-related context. Or depending on the context of the local church some might use all of the strategies or chose the strategy that will be relevant to them at that period.

PEST Analysis - a technique for understanding the "environment" in which a business operates. The Church leader and parents have to make an effort to understand the environment in which our young people spend most of their time. Like in our communities, especially blacks, the reality is that our young people are exposed to different kinds of entertainment, poverty, unbalanced society (those who are rich and those who are very poor), violence and different types of abuse in our societies. Knowing and understanding their environment or background will assist in knowing and understanding them better and will assist in knowing and understanding what the church can offer them, can guard against and knowing and understanding how to best approach them.

Scenario Planning - a technique that builds various reasonable views of possible futures for a business. This is a very important technique for the Church today, to sit down (brainstorm) and meditate on the Scripture and prayer, on how to build youth to be responsible members of the body of Christ today and for the future. This means the teaching of the Church should be emphasised, e.g. catechetical, planning youth conferences with various topics that concern youth, for example "courtship and marriage (we have many couples who stay together without marriage), teenage pregnancy, suicide and alcohol abuse and drug abuse". Sometimes during the house visitation programmes for the Minister and Church council members, it should be planned in a manner that once in a month the visitation would be focused on the young ones according to pre-arrangements that would indicate the date and ward. Have been made that on this day we will visit the youth starting from this ward A on Monday, ward B on Tuesday until Friday. This is a strategy of involving the youth in various activities face to face. This means that the Church must plan the relevant programmes and implement them to ensure that the young people are being involved in such discussions.

Five Forces Analysis - a technique for identifying the forces that affect the level of competition in an industry. This technique challenges the Church leaders to investigate what the world offers the young people that would make them reluctant to be committed to the church. There are activities which are not harmful (but enhance the relationship between youth and Christ who gave them those talents) that can be introduced into our Church without losing the focus and the goal of the message of God. Such activities could, *inter alia*, include soccer, aerobics, dance, gymnastics, chess, athletics (Fun run) and so on. With this technique the Church will realise that a lack of commitment is ever so often not only based on ignorance, but also on a shortage or the absence of what young people value as part of their growth, development and potential.

Market Segmentation - a technique which seeks to identify similarities and differences between groups of customers or users. The Church should use this technique to identify the similarities and differences between the different youth groups so as to find a balance, expand knowledge about different characteristics or things that are typical of young people, interchange ideas and plans, and offer a wider range of opportunities for developing and growing. Doing so could also enhance unity with a wider circle that would in turn strengthen feelings of belonging, of their needs being attended to, of being involved and of active steps being taken to accommodate them and their needs and from there to improve their spiritual well-being.

Directional Policy Matrix - a technique which summarizes the competitive strength of a business's operation in specific markets. This technique would allow for a church to identify its 'strengths' and by doing so the 'weaknesses' might also come to the fore, *i.e.* in this case strengths or weaknesses pertaining to healthy development of young people in the church towards spiritual maturity according to the Word of God. What would be conducive to youth ministry and what would have an undesired effect on youth ministry? After investigations by means of such a technique the Church leaders will be able to sit down and analyse the advantages and disadvantages of the previous programmes (introspection) and embark on designing programmes that would reflect reinforcement of the positive findings.

Competitor Analysis - a wide range of techniques and analyses that would seek to summarise a business's overall competitive position. One might wonder whether a church in any case is involved in any competition at all, because the concept of competition is not one that would naturally be linked to a church. Yes, it is. It is in competition with everything that works against the Word of God and the spreading of the Word of God. The church has to be prepared and has to be proactive as far as possible in order to fend for the church and to bring it to its goal of offering the Word of God, and more specifically in the context of this research, of offering the Word of God to the young people. The young people must be equipped to receive the Word of

God, to accept and cherish it and to stand their ground for their convictions. Many advantages as well as much insight can be gained from a survey and analysis according to this technique. Existing programmes and strategies can be examined and kept as they are, or modified or, if necessary, additional ones can be designed.

Critical Success Factor Analysis - a technique to identify those areas in which a business must outperform the competition in order to succeed. This technique would help the Church leaders to find out in which areas they performed well and in which areas they were less successful. The reasons or bases for the successes and failures can be determined and listed and then reinforced (the successes) or addressed and minimised (the failures). The road to improvement, where necessary, will be possible because there will already be an awareness of the elements of success on which to build. In basic principle the church with all its dedicated believers can successfully outperform whatever proves to be necessary to be outperformed because nothing is impossible with God and the honour and glory of God is the church's business.

SWOT Analysis - a useful summary technique for summarising the key issues arising from an assessment of a business's "internal" position and "external" environmental influences. By gathering all the information possible on "internal position" and "external influences" the Church leaders will know where to start for the next two-year or three-year programming and how to lead the young people without losing the focus on the way.

S- strength- church leaders can analyse the advantages of the youth programmes that they have implemented and use them as their strength in future.

W- weakness- this helps the youth and the leaders to identify the what is the reason behind the failures that they have encountered in their programs and how and where to improve in the future

O- opportunities- this is a chance for church leaders to look at the

competitive world and take from it the opportunities which they regard as a breakthrough in order to reach the youth from their respective backgrounds and discover the right approach to engage with youth.

T- threats- here church leaders can look at the things that threaten its position as entity that has the goal of spreading the Word of God. Once the threats have been identified or listed, specific steps can be planned to stop them from causing damage.

5.3 A reflection of the schematic presentation of the basic principles and meta-theoretical guidelines

<i>A schematic presentation of the Old Testament and New Testament basic principles</i>	
Old Testament	New Testament
Youth must:	Youth must:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • enjoy a God-centred life 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • respect their elders
know that every action will be judged by God	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be clothed with humility
remember God before the times of sorrow come	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be submissive
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • put away all evils of the flesh 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • show humility to one another
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • remove all the sorrows of life by remembering God 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • do away with pride
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be pure in character 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flee youthful lusts and fully rely upon God to be able to execute their Christian tasks.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • meditate on the Word of God 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • conduct themselves well before God
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • live according to the Word of God 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • set an example of faith for other youth
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • love/serve God wholeheartedly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be at peace with all people
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • not sin deliberately 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be willing to give glory only to God 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • consider the Word of God as a way of righteousness 	

5.4 Schematic presentation positive and negative meta-theoretical guidelines

Positive meta-theoretical guidelines	Negative meta-theoretical guidelines
What young people need	What young people do not need
Role model	Not only parents
Close contact with each other	Not a distance relationship
Monitoring	Not a guard
Mentor	Not dictator
Individual contact with the Minister	Not only in a group sessions
Need to grow in knowledge of God	Not to master in discussions
Fellowship with fellow Christians	Not only those with whom they worship together in one building
Need to be visited at home in appropriate time	Not inconvenient schedule
Need more youth activities in the Church	Not to be merely a member of the Church
Relevant sermons	Not general type of sermon
Faster way of singing	Not slower type of singing
Truth during the sermons	Not only programmes
Pure Word proclamation	Not stories
Singing of Psalm and Scriptural songs	Not only choruses
Think independently	Not to be controlled
Intentional, relational and faithful programming	Not creative programmes
Real Christian community	Not individualistic Christian community
Worship service must be equipping service	Not merely a peaceful service
Youth programmes must be balanced	Not one-sided
Be responsible for their faith	Not to base their faith on someone

	else
Be able to apply their faith daily	Not only to know about Christ
To be understood	Not only to be reprimanded
Church that stand for their fundamental rights	Not a church that focuses on matured Christians only
Church that helps them to find their self- identity	Not a church that does not take part in helping youth to find self-identity

5.5 Formulation of guidelines through the process of hermeneutical interaction between basic principles and meta-theoretical guidelines

From the schematic presentation it is evident that a number of guidelines could be formulated. Scripture lays the foundation and literature has shown that without the guidance of the Word, leading youth is a failure. This research would re-emphasise a number of points that have already been in practice but would also try to contextualise these within the context of the Reformed Churches and specifically the “black” Reformed Churches.

Some of the guidelines might not necessarily be new, because the Word of God remains the same. However, the application and interpretation might be more relevant to address the problem in this research.

5.6 Hermeneutical interaction and analysis

5.6.1 Relationship between youth and parents

Young people need role models, *i.e.* over and above parents. This is in line with the Biblical principle that parents should not make their children angry but instead treat them with love. They need close contact as this will help them to grow emotionally and spiritually under guidance. This does not mean that they should be guarded or dictated; instead it means that they should be guided with enough room for self-exploration. It would also teach them responsibility

in their daily activities and lifestyle. They need more well-balanced youth activities. This would help them to meditate on the Word of God and remain pure in character. This is also true according to the Scripture that says, "Children obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. 'Honour your father and your mother' - which is the first commandment with a promise" (Ephesians 6:1-2). On the other hand the apostle Paul emphasises the fact that parents should also give respect to their children when he says "Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord" (Ephesians 6:4). The general implication here is that ministry of the youth is not based on Church leaders or youth leaders only, but it is a responsibility that starts from home because it is an inclusive approach.

5.6.2 Relationship with the Minister

It is in this regard that a minister (reverend of a church) should be available to listen and have close contact with the young people, not only when they are in larger or smaller groups, but also and certainly individually, so as to assist each of them towards enjoying and professing a God-centred life in the context of today. By so doing the Church will be busy equipping young people to grow in the knowledge of God, and not only in quantity or in numbers, but also in lasting quality. The Church will be helping the young people, equipping them for their future, reinforcing them to live up to challenges of this life encountered by them in the reality of daily existence, so that when times of joy and sorrow come they will be able to deal with them according to a God-centred approach. This agrees with the basic principle that young people should remember God before times of sorrow come that young people should walk in purity by putting away all the evils of the flesh. As we hear God in Isaiah (55:6-7) saying "Seek the Lord while he may be found, call him while he is near. Let the wicked forsake his ways and the evil man his thoughts. Let him turn to the Lord, and he will have mercy on him, and to our God, for he will freely pardon"

5.6.3 Youth and the sermons preached during Church Services

The young people need relevant sermons and house visitations. Sermons that are too abstract (academical perhaps) or sermons that are not applicable or relevant to the world that they as young people live in, cannot mean enough to them and cannot support them sufficiently. This meta-theoretical guideline implies that the Church should always consider that societies and environment are dynamic (they change, in other words) and it is within this context that the church must continue to make disciples for Christ by preaching the Good news to the young people and this then not only on Sundays but also during planned and pre-arranged house visitations.

Furthermore, the young people expect to belong to a real Christian community by being recognised or acknowledged by their leaders. It is expected of them to attend church services or activities for the sake of their own spiritual well-being, but they should be made part of the church-related environment, they should be deliberately accommodated and made to feel welcome and even necessary. This indicates that they need an improvement in the communication during the church services. Communication or a sermon that addresses them as part of the body of Christ, is what they need and desire.

5.6.4 The manner in which youth must behave in the Church

Young people attending church must be willing to give glory to God alone. This is what is important when one goes to church. In this sense their context has to be taken into account so that they would have the opportunity to do exactly that and to express their faith in God and their praise or glory to God in ways that would be true to their age and level of development. From there they will have the reassurance that they can apply their faith in their daily living.

Moreover, the young people want to hear the truth in sermons and pure proclamation of the Word because despite the fact that they have no problem with the content of the Gospel as such, they do have a problem with the way the Gospel is brought to them. They have a desire to serve God

wholeheartedly and to dedicate this service towards God alone, not anyone else or anything else. Nevertheless, most of them are not aligned with the traditions found in our Churches. Hence one of the biggest challenges that they are facing in the Church is, how they can express that passion of serving God if they are not understood by the church. The Church Councils make decisions for and on behalf of the youth without consulting the young people themselves. This could leave the young ones with a false impression as they may read in it signs of dictatorship. Instead the feelings to be fostered in them should rather be those of experiencing support and encouragement and guidance. Such love-filled and positive care they would welcome in their quest to serve God.

5.6.5 The manner that the youth should behave in daily life

It is clearly stated in the basic principles that youth must be clothed with humility. According to the evidence found in Biblical history, humility was initially thought of as a vice only to be practised by slaves. Young people who are eager to serve God must be willing to be clothed with the garment of a slave (symbolically), with an attitude of servitude to God. God shapes the vase or container and I am the clay in God's hands. In this sense humility or a humble attitude turns out to be a wonderful virtue, a way of serving God faithfully. This is what the apostle Peter intends when he encourages believers by saying: "Humble yourself, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time. Cast all your anxiety on Him because He cares" (I Peter 5:6-7)

5.6.6 The manner in which young people should conduct themselves before God

Nobody is expected to sin deliberately, and nobody is expected to do so for whatever reason. Neither are young people expected to sin deliberately. It is true, according to the Scripture, that no person is perfect "If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive our sins and purify us from all

unrighteousness. If we claim we have not sinned, we make Him out to be a liar and his Word has no place in us” (I John 1:8-10).

This means that young people should be able to show spiritual growth in their life style. This in most cases will not encourage them to violate the principles of our faith deliberately with sinful actions or conduct. This can be seen through a self-controlled life style and in their approach to the Church leaders or when trying to bring about change in the Church.

5.6.7 Youth and the responsibility

Young people want to be trusted in decision-making processes. After they have attended Bible studies and participated in different activities in the church, they want to feel at home and part of the decision-making body. With regard to their church-related activities, their Christian Movement bodies or groups, they want to think independently in order for them to apply their faith in their context with and among their fellow Christians. This principle does not encourage them to think irresponsibly because they still have to be answerable to their actions, but encourages them to set an example to their fellow believers. In addition, this expands and reinforces the concept of being at peace with all people in their application of their faith rather than imitating someone else. It helps them to serve God in their own unique way.

The young people also desire and have a need for a Church and leaders that stand up for their fundamental rights. They need protection. They need to know that there are people who care and they expect to see that in practice. Else, what difference would it make if a child runs from home because of abuse only to find that the church is also silent about the issue and without any practical assistance to address the matter? Trusting their Church and their leaders with their difficulties and experiences of unfairness, *inter alia*, will motivate them to trust in and depend on the Word of God to be the only source of true righteousness, more so than any legislation contained in the constitution of any country or as executed in practice by any country.

5.7 Analysis: Interpretation

The interaction between the two tables indicates that in order to guide the youth correctly, the Biblical principles still have to be upheld. It is clear that any new system of working with the youth or strategy for approaching them, unless confirmed by the Word of God, could be of no value. Therefore, the problem in this context does not appear to be with regard to not following or knowing the basic principles. The greatest issue at stake among the young people is the issue of how to apply and implement these principles into their lives, into their daily existence, into what they “live” from day to day. One of the greatest challenges to Christian leaders would be to assist them in accomplishing exactly that. This should be put into practice by guiding the youth.

Hermeneutical interaction implies that the Biblical principles should not be compromised when dealing with the challenges with which young people are faced, whether outside or inside the Church. Therefore, the possible, and by far the best, solution in this regard is that the answer to all the challenges can be found in the Bible. It is true that the world and societies and norms and values are changing rapidly. However, and this is important, God does not change, the Bible does not change - the Bible is for all times and for all people, in other words also for now and for the young people. Thank God if they are brought to a point of realising this and using this. Thank God if the Church and its leaders are successful at accomplishing this. No stone should be left unturned to reach out to young people with this purpose in mind - to bring to them and establish within them the truths of the Bible and as they are in the Bible, so that these very truths may exercise an influence on everything they believe and do as they continue with living their lives today and in future.

The Churches and Christian leaders have a huge task, and more specifically so then in the Reformed Churches, in presenting and opening up the Biblical principles to be applied to efforts of preventing and absolutely minimising the

phenomenon of what seems to be a withdrawal of young people from the Churches.

A very important possible solution that will enable young people to be and to remain involved in the Church activities would be the issue of a positive attitude. The attitude of adults in general as well as parents and Church leaders, namely that the young people of today are rebellious, cannot secure a healthy relationship but may cause much damage to relationships instead. Without a proper relationship it would not be possible to reach out to them. The questions to be answered in this respect would be: "Why are the young people so rebellious? What is the cause of this behaviour?" It is of no use to know and focus on the problem instead of finding ways to solve it. The church must not forget its missionary calling, that is, to make disciples. Young people are part of the Church of Christ today, and will be the Church of Christ tomorrow and in future. If they find no one inside the Church who is willing to listen to them or understand them, the world outside will definitely be willing to do so and will take the place of the Church. This is exactly where they will go in order to seek what they need. We need to know their weaknesses and their strong points. In their weaknesses the Christian leaders of the Church must be there to help them back on their feet and this means we should allow for mistakes and misgivings, but the attitude, however, should be to correct them and not to judge them. The attitude of "I told you so" should not be found in the Church. Their strong points may be highlighted and used to help them to excel in serving God.

It is very clear today that the young people are an easy target to the Devil and may easily be lured into falling victim to unacceptable practices as the Scripture points out "Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that your brothers throughout the world are undergoing the same kind of sufferings" (I Peter 5:8-9). It is very easy for them to depart from the Church but to bring them back is an enormous and lifelong task. Those whom we have as youth in the Church should be our first priority as the Church, to keep them for Christ. Our attitude as Church leaders should

change from unreachable/unapproachable shepherd to available shepherd who understands the flocks.

The task that is facing the Church is that of understanding the young people of today. The Church must come down to the level of the youth in order to understand them. We cannot understand our young people if we do not have a relationship with them. It is striking to note here that Church leaders do not even remember the names of their young members unless they see them. Understanding youth cannot simply happen in the wink of an eye, it has to be developed and one certain thing is that better understanding will follow in the wake of a better relationship. To understand them properly, the leader has to first build a good relationship.

Each member of the Church is unique and so is each young person. To be able to reach out to them the atmosphere and social interactions would be important. Young people are very easy to reach when they feel that they, too, are free to breathe. This does not at all mean that formality has to be done away with altogether. Rather would it refer to the situation in the sense of learning to speak the language of the youth which is very much influenced by their surroundings, in the sense of not adopting an authoritative type of approach. In other words, instead of the approach "Thus says the Lord" one could use the words: "How about doing it this way?" Formality in this sense is relevant, but need not be a prerequisite to have relations with youth. Then if we understand them from the social level, it becomes easy to give them applicable tasks that do not compromise our faith, activities that will not isolate them but may help them to feel that they are part of the community of believers. This serves in a way to help youth through the process of self-identity.

The culture of our youth in the Church today differs completely from that of the youth ten or fifteen years ago, therefore the Church leaders should be at the level of the youth of today to help them or polish them in the right direction instead of closing doors.

What is important from this is the communication route to the young people. This is another aspect that is of utmost importance when reaching out to the young people. There is no way we can understand our youth without effective communication. They do not want to be told things as if they are distant from things or not yet part of things. They want to be part of the communication, part of the growth, expansion of the kingdom of God through the well-being of the Church.

5.8 From the interpretation, the following Practical catechetical strategic guidelines for effective youth ministry can be formulated:

5.8.1 Regarding the church and its leadership

The Church council should make decisions in consultation with the Youth. On matters that concern youth it will be good to invite them and engage them in the discussions, e.g. youth programmes, camps and so forth. They should feel part of the process.

5.8.1.1 The Church leaders and parents should change their attitude when dealing with youth, The negative way they speak about and towards youth must change. Search for and find something positive in youth culture to be used in the Church.

5.8.1.2 The Church must make it its priority to understand the culture of the youth of today if the church considers the fact that the generation gap is a reality. It will be easier to explore ways and means to bridge the gap if ways are found to communicate with youth in their context.

5.8.1.3 The Church must strive to keep the young people in Church instead of allowing them to abandon the Church. The Church must be willing to go an extra mile to bring youth back to God where they belong

5.8.1.4 The Church should help the youth to serve God in their own way without compromising the Biblical principles

- 5.8.1.5 The church has to allow youth to praise God within their culture without compromising the Gospel. The different possibilities of varying rhythms and lyrics must be accommodated.
- 5.8.1.6 The Church should support the young people in their weaknesses with constructive criticism and practical encouragement and reinforce them in their strong points.
- 5.8.1.7 The Church must develop a strategy to reach out to the young people with a friendly and inviting attitude that would make them feel welcome and wanted and that would contribute towards developing a healthy self-identity
- 5.8.1.8 The Church must bring about effective communication skills for approaching the young people communicating with youth, an approach which is collective and not one-sided because the latter may regard as dictatorship.

5.9 Practical guidelines regarding the young people and their behaviour

- 5.9.1 Youth should learn to obey their Church leaders by submitting to them and showing them the necessary respect. They may also approach some of the elders for advice as a sign to them that they are acknowledged as church leaders.
- 5.9.2 Youth should learn to interrelate with one another. They should not seek their own good but also show consideration for the interests and well being of fellow-being and other young people.
- 5.9.3 Young people should learn to control their emotions (self-control). They easily lose control and respect. Hence, the basic issue to be learned is to listen to one another before talking.
- 5.9.4 Youth should be humble when approaching God. Joy and reverence go hand in hand. They keep the order. Joy without reverence could easily get out of control God has to be honoured and feared even in the greatest moment of happiness.
- 5.9.5 Youth should strive for righteousness by attending Church activities and participating actively in church activities. Young people should in this regard not only seek what is pleasing to

them but should also try to look for what is right and what the Lord expects of them as young Christian

- 5.9.6 Young people should accept their mistakes and be willing to be led.
- 5.9.7 They should meditate on the Word of God, starting from an early age. They should not only read the Bible at church or when they are with other young people. There are also cell-phone and electronic Bibles available which they could download from the internet or buy at a reasonable price. Having access to a Bible at any convenient time could be useful in promoting Bible reading. The cell-phone Bible in this regard would be easily used by them. The majority of the are quite familiar with this device and easily become a useful instrument of spending time conveniently since most of them use it for "Mix It" or to play -games in their free time. Ministers and church leaders should be made aware of this in order not to fight with them when they make use of their cell-phones during worship services. This habit is of course, not to be promoted, but their habitual utilisation of cell-phones could be exploited to their benefit.
- 5.9.8 Youth should learn to apply Christian faith in their daily life. They must learn to have love for the Word of God and be equipped to not only read, but to study and apply it in their lives. God's Word has the answers to all of the questions and problems that they have to face and that leaders sometimes have to face when it comes to leading young people. Youth in their studying of the Bible must learn how to face the realities of life and live with joy and hope without having to escape through fantasy. They must not build their lives on fantasy, fables, myths and philosophies of men (1Tim 4:6-7), but on the basis of the Scripture, Life can be fun and enjoyable but we must build it on the basics of Scripture. All other types of joy are but short-lived.
- 5.9.9 Young people should learn to serve God out of love. They must have a relationship with God and more is to be learnt about God directly from the Word of God. Moreover, by actively attending

Church services, Church activities like Bible studies, and youth gatherings such a relationship with God can be enhanced. When taking part of all these mentioned activities their motive should not be to please anyone, but to expand their lives as Christians. Being part of a church is not a burden but a privilege and a joy.

5.9.10 Young people should commit themselves to Christ. In other words, Christian Youth should not be mere Church goers but should develop and have signs of growth in faith. This would mean practical and visible signs of their faith in Christ. Spiritual maturity must be a focus point among the young people within the Church.

Our centre or pivot of spiritual maturity in the Reformed Church is Christ Jesus, and our Biblical references for relevant standards and criteria are found in 1John 2:6, "The one who says he abides in Him ought himself to walk in the same manner as He walked" (NASB). Here John is simply saying that anyone who claims to be a Christian (a believer) must emulate and imitate the character of Christ in lifestyle, thoughts, and attitude. As believers we are to incorporate the example of Christ in all that we do (Rom.8:29; 13:14).

Christian youth would progress in spiritual maturity by incorporating the attitudes and actions of CHRIST. With this as a goal the question is: "How did Christ walk?" John is not asking us to consider the physical nature of Christ's stride but rather those attributes that Christ attributed as He ministered while on earth.

Jesus Christ is in the business of challenging young people to a deeper commitment. The challenge is to have a consistent walk with Jesus Christ in the midst of a society that offers a host of activities and monetary enticements to lure youth away from being fruitful followers of Christ. John Stam, who was martyred in China in the 1930s, said while he was studying at Moody Bible Institute the most difficult area of his life was not his studies or Christian service but his hour-a-day quiet time. However, his classmates and friends attested to his Christ-like lifestyle (Roger, Greenway 1990.44). Humility and

obedience to God and fellow brothers and sisters is the focal point while young people are in the process of committing themselves to Christ.

5.10 *Regarding parents and the attitude towards young people*

5.10.1 The parents should be able to commit themselves about the faith of their children

5.10.2 Parents should be willing to walk an extra mile for the education of the Christian faith to the youth at Church (Catechetical class, Bible studies) including at the academic institutions

5.10.3 Parents should be able to communicate with their children by reaching out to them through an attitude of guiding them, in other words not an attitude of controlling their thinking.

5.10.4 Parents should make it their first priority to understand the culture of their children in the context of today as it is evident that this generation has its own way of doing things. They want to explore life in a very different and independent way and parents must help them to do that in the context of the youth but with exploration steered in the right direction.

5.10.5 Parents should not impose ideas on youth but should mentor them in love. Parents should be role models to their children

5.10.6 Parents should be able to allow young ones to be part of the Christian community

5.10.7 Parents should be able to guide the young ones to take a God-centred decision by becoming their role model in the Church and also in the society.

5.10.8 Parents should be ready to help them with the process of self-identity and not to judge them.

5.11 *Conclusive remarks*

From these guidelines for effective ministry, it is beyond question evident that there has to be a clear co-operative relationship between the different parties in the church to make youth ministry a great success. All must abide in the first place with the principles from the Word of God and in some manner apply them as stipulated in this study. All parties involved

Chapter 6 : Summary of the study

6.1 Problem statement

The main problem focused on in this the study was to develop a catechetical strategy as a foundation/basis for effective youth ministry in the Reformed Churches And accordingly to bring forth the practical guidelines in line with Biblical principles to help the Church in her pursuit of making disciples for Christ.

In finding the solution to this problem, the following specific objectives of the study were addressed:

- To determine what the Bible teaches with regard to catechetical strategies in youth ministry.
- To investigate the catechetical strategy on how churches in the Reformed Churches, as well as the Reformed Churches in the black communities, may develop a sound base for ministering their youth.
- To determine how the RCYM of the black churches can be ministered by the fellow black Churches within the new dispensation of the Reformed Churches.
- To analyse the impact of the RCYM in the congregation and on the youth as well as to formulate catechetical guidelines for providing a sound base strategy for youth ministry in the RCYM.
- Therefore the main focus of the study was to formulate practical guidelines that could be used with regard to catechetical strategies in youth ministry.

6.2 Method

The method as defined by Zerfass (1974:166ff) was followed, which places basis theory, meta-theory and praxis theory in a hermeneutical interaction in this study. The tradition followed during the study was the Reformed approach of the grammatical-historical (see Chapter 1).

6.3 The research method

The research method was to determine the practical guidelines from the Biblical principles through the socio-historic context and the grammatical-historical exegesis in order to state the basis theoretical principles for the youth in the context of today. Moreover, the practical guidelines were formulated from the basis theoretical principles and empirical findings.

6.4 The following positive general principles were identified

- Youth should learn to obey their Church leaders.
- Youth should learn to integrate with one another.
- Youth should learn to control their emotions (self-control).
- Youth should be humble when approaching God.
- Youth should strive for righteousness by attending Church activities.
- Youth should accept their mistakes and be willing to be led.
- Youth should meditate on the Word of God, starting from home.
- Youth should learn to apply Christian faith in their daily lives
- Youth should learn to serve God out of love.
- Youth should commit themselves to Christ.

6.5 The parents and the Youth

- The parents should be able to communicate with their children about faith.
- Parents should be willing to walk an extra mile for the education of the Christian faith to the youth at Church (Catechetical class, Bible studies) including at the academic institutions.
- Parents should be able to communicate with their children
- Parents should make it their first priority to understand the culture of their children in the context of today.
- Parents should not impose ideas on the young ones but should mentor them in love
- Parents should be role models to their children.
- Parents should be able to allow the young ones to be part of the Christian community and related activities.

- Parents should be able to guide the young ones to take a God-centred decision.
- Parents should be ready to help them with the process of self-identity and refrain from judging them.

6.6 The following are negative principles

- Youth need role models, over and above parents
- Youth do not need a distant relationship with one another
- Youth do not need to be guarded
- Youth do not need dictatorship
- Youth do not want to be ministered only in group sessions
- Youth do not need denominational fellowship
- Youth do not need sermons that do not address them
- Youth do not need a formalistic way of singing
- Youth do not need an unbalanced programme
- Youth do not need a Church that insists on the status quo

Recommendation for further studies

- How can the youth culture be integrated with traditions found within the Church without compromising the Gospel?
- What precautionary measures could be developed that could be used in the Church to reduce the withdrawal of the youth from the Church and rather increase them in number?
- What could serve as effective measures that can help to combine and unite all the young people from Reformed Churches in South Africa to act as one body?

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