

**THE CALLING OF THE CHURCH AND THE ROLE OF THE
STATE IN THE MORAL RENEWAL OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN
COMMUNITY**

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Dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of requirements for the degree Magister
Artium (Ethics) at the Potchefstroom Campus of the North-West University

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Potchefstroom

2007

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My sincere appreciation to the following people and institutions for their support and encouragement during the process of writing this dissertation:

The Triune God who called me to ministry of the Word, and also gave me the necessary gifts to finish this work.

My wife, Dikeledi, and four children Katlego, Kentse, Omphemetse and Reaoleboga for their unwavering support during the course of my studies.

My supervisor, M.C. de Lange, for her uncompromising guidance in the entire process of writing this dissertation. I also thank my co-supervisor, Prof. J.M. Vorster for his support.

The librarians of Ferdinand Postma Library and the Theological Seminary Library for their untiring assistance.

My friends and the entire staff of the Faculty of Theology of the North-West University.

Prof. J.H. Van Wyk for his support and encouragement during my stay in Potchefstroom.

The family of Rev. Moretsi, who provided me with accommodation and physical support from time to time during my visits to Potchefstroom.

The support given by the Reformed Churches of Meadowlands and Linden during the course of my studies.

Potchefstroom

November 2007

ABSTRACT

“THE CALLING OF THE CHURCH AND THE ROLE OF THE STATE IN THE MORAL RENEWAL OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN COMMUNITY”

The **main aim** of this study was to investigate the prophetic calling of the Church and the role of the state in the moral renewal of the South African community.

The **method of research** followed in this study was to study primary and secondary sources, as well as appropriate biblical teachings and theological principles relevant to this study and to systematize the information therein.

The **gist of the study** was to outline the profile and manifestation of moral decay in South African community and, to define the role of the Church and state towards moral regeneration. What transpired was that due to the profile of moral decay within the South African context, the Church and state should play a critical and positive role towards the renewal of morality in South Africa.

In **conclusion**, the fact that the Church and the state each have a particular role to play as driving agents for moral regeneration of South African was confirmed. It is also important to stress the fact that the State cannot be value free or neutral. The word of God speaks of human governments in two-fold way: in a normative way, and in a descriptive way; telling us what they ought to do and be and what they actually turn out to do and be. Both these elements in God’s word are reflected in of the Reformed Confession. Therefore, the modern-day concept of a neutral or secular state can be questioned.

KEY WORDS

VALUES
CONSTITUTION
MORALITY
IMMORALITY
STATE
CHURCH

OPSOMMING

DIE ROEPING VAN DIE KERK EN DIE ROL VAN DIE STAAT IN DIE MORELE HERNUWING VAN DIE SUID-AFRIKAANSE GEMEENSAP

Die hoofdoel van hierdie studie is om die profetiese roeping van die kerk en die rol van die staat in die morele hernuwing van die Suid-Afrikaanse gemeenskap te ondersoek.

Die metode van navorsing wat in hierdie studie gevolg is, was om beide primêre en sekondêre bronne te bestudeer asook relevante bybelse leerstellinge en teologiese beginsels wat betrekking het op die studie en om die inligting te sistematiseer.

Die essensie van die studie was om die profiel en die manifestering van morele verval in die Suid-Afrikaanse gemeenskap te omskryf, en om die rol wat die kerk en die staat speel in morele agteruitgang te definieer. Wat hieruit volg is dat, as gevolg van die profiel van morele verval binne die Suid-Afrikaanse konteks, die kerk en staat 'n kritieke en positiewe rol behoort te speel in die hernuwing van moraliteit in Suid-Afrika.

Gevolglik is dit vasgestel dat die kerk en die staat elk 'n spesifieke rol te speel het as dryfkragte vir die morele herlewing van Suid-Afrika. Dit is ook belangrik om te beklemtoon dat die staat nie waardestry of neutraal kan wees nie. Die woord van God beskryf menslike regerings op twee maniere: in 'n normatiewe manier, en in 'n deskriptiewe manier; waarin ons vertel word wat hulle behoort te doen en behoort te wees en wat hulle uiteindelik is. Beide die elemente in God se woord word weergegee in die Gereformeerde Belydenis. Dus kan die moderne konsep van 'n neutrale of sekulêre staat bevraagteken word.

SLEUTELTERME:

WAARDES
GRONDWET
MORALITEIT
IMMORALITEIT
STAAT
KERK

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 TITLE

THE CALLING OF THE CHURCH AND THE ROLE OF THE STATE IN MORAL
RENEWAL OF SOUTH AFRICAN COMMUNITY

1.2 BACKGROUND AND PROBLEM STATEMENT

1.2.1 Background

The South African Constitution, which was adopted in May 1996, contains the most important rules of law concerning the political system of a country. These include rules of law on the institutions of government in the country, in particular at national level, their powers and how they must exercise these powers. A Bill of Rights as part of the new entrenched Constitution protects everyone's defined rights against infringement. The independent courts, which include the new Constitutional Courts, determine whether any action, including laws of Parliament, is consistent with the Constitution (Rautenbach & Malherbe, 1998:5). Through mechanisms such as one citizenship and values such as: human dignity, equality, non-racialism and non-sexism, the Constitution aspires to build one nation, but in various ways it also attempts to accommodate the diversity of interests in South African society and to ensure justice for all. Examples are: culture, religion, education, women, traditional law, the recognition of self-determination for communities, and the establishment of offices such as the Public Protector and the Commissions for Human Rights, Gender Equality and the Promotion of the Rights of cultural, religious and linguistic communities. This new constitutional dispensation has had a profound effect on the lives of all South Africans (Malherbe & Rautenbach, 1998:5).

The new government has already succeeded in a number of ways, e.g. its strong emphasis on human rights, taking a leading part in the campaign against nuclear proliferation, the banning of landmines and conflict resolution in Africa (Venter,

1998:321). In 2004, millions of South Africans celebrated a decade of democracy after a successful and peaceful political transition from the demise of segregated development in 1994 (Motloung & Mears, 2002: 531). However, one of the major and the most pressing challenges faced by the South African government, non-governmental organisation, churches, and the community at large is the issue of moral decay. The moral decay in South Africa is a growing threat to the country's new democracy. Principal problems like the high percentage of absolute inequality, the high incidence and levels of crime, rape, fraud and corruption, women and child abuse, disintegration of families, the high rates of HIV/AIDS infection and the serious deterioration of the natural environment threaten to destroy the South African society (De Villiers, 2003:25; Vorster, 2004:225). Other symptoms of moral decay include among others, murder, xenophobia, violence, drugs, racism, muggings, hijacking, the gap between "haves" and "haves-nots", perverted religion, divorce, abortion, prostitution, homosexuality, pre-marital sex, backbiting, greed and corruption in state and civil society (Richardson, 2003:5; cf. Kotze, 2000:431; Koopman, 2002:451; Koegelenberg, 2003:1; Kotze, 2000:421-436; Mashau, 2005:3; de Bruyn, 1996:103).

Other factors, which also contribute to the decay of morality in South Africa today, include among others: retrenchment, educational levels, unemployment, syndicates, corruption, bribery, and violence and family disruptions. Given this state of affairs, the time has come for the government, the church and other stakeholders to participate fully in the moral regeneration campaign of the South African society. Among the "seedbeds" that can play a vital role in the much needed moral regeneration include among others the local community, family, faith communities, voluntary civil organisations, arts and art institutions, education, the media, the government, and the nation at large (Meiring, 2003:223).

1.2.2 Problem Statement

This many-faceted issue of moral restoration has all along been of serious concern to many sectors in South Africa, including the Church. Evidence of this is found in the various name tags given to these periods, such as reformation, transformation, renaissance, ubuntu, to name but a few (see Schutte, 1994:29; cf. Smit, *et. al.*,

1999:6). Many moral issues that need attention in the new South Africa are not altogether new. While issues relating to poverty, human rights, economic inequality, and sexism have to some extent been discussed by Christian ethicists in the previous political dispensation (De Villiers, 1999:83), the role of the Church and State with regard to moral regeneration in the post 1994 South African context is yet to be clearly defined. De Villiers (2003:23) rightly remarked that there is at present considerable confusion in church and theological circles in South Africa about the most appropriate approach to issues of public morality. Given this context, the focus of this research will endeavour to answer this question:

What is the profile of moral decay in contemporary South Africa, and what role do the State and the Church have towards driving moral renewal in South Africa?

This question can be divided into four sub-questions. These are:

- What is the profile of morality in South Africa today?
- What is the role of the Church towards moral restoration?
- What is the role of the State in moral regeneration?
- What recommendations can be made towards moral restoration?

1.3 AIM AND OBJECTIVES

1.3.1 Aim

The main aim of this study is to outline the profile of moral decay in the South African community, and to define the calling of the Church and the role of the State towards moral regeneration.

1.3.2 Objectives

The specific objectives of this study are:

- To trace and outline the profile and manifestation of morality in South Africa today.
- To research and outline the calling of the Church towards moral renewal of morality in South Africa.
- To investigate and outline the role the State has towards the renewal of morality in South Africa.
- To make recommendations towards moral regeneration.

1.4 CENTRAL THEORETICAL ARGUMENT

This dissertation argues that there are definite signs of moral decay over a wide sphere of human endeavour in South Africa, and that the State and the Church each have a particular role to play as driving agents for moral renewal.

1.5 METHODOLOGY

- This study in ethics is based on the classic Reformed tradition.
- To research and outline the profile and manifestation of moral decay in South Africa today, primary and secondary articles and books indicated in the bibliography will be consulted, analysed and interpreted in a comparative literature study.
- To research and outline the calling of the Church towards moral restoration appropriate Biblical teachings and theological principles will be applied and primary and secondary comparative literature will be consulted, analysed and interpreted.
- To research and outline the possible role the State has in moral renewal, primary and secondary comparative literature will be consulted, analysed and interpreted.

1.6 CHAPTER OUTLINE

- Chapter 1: Introduction
 - Chapter 2: The profile and the manifestation of moral decay in South Africa today
 - Chapter 3: The calling of the church in moral renewal of South African community
 - Chapter 4: The role of the state in moral renewal of the South African community
 - Chapter 5: Recommendations and conclusions
-

CHAPTER TWO
THE PROFILE AND MANIFESTATION OF MORAL DECAY IN SOUTH
AFRICA TODAY

2.1 Introduction

The objective of this chapter is to outline the profile and the manifestation of moral decay in South Africa. Due to the limitations of a dissertation, only three of these social problems facing our country will be examined. In order to reach these objectives, the following will be dealt with: firstly, attention will be given to the problems of drug abuse. Secondly, attention will also be given to criminality and violence, which is a continuation and a worrying trend in South Africa today. Thirdly, attention will be given to the culture of corruption in State and private sectors. Finally, an overall ethical perspective of this chapter will be given.

2.2 Drug abuse

There may have been a time when the use of drugs was considered to be an American or British problem. However, today it has become an African problem to the extent that a month hardly passes without media reports on large quantities of drugs having been intercepted in a number of African cities and townships (Mwamwenda, 1995:485; cf. Lauer, 1995:108; Nevid *et al.*, 2000:305). Hosken (2007:2) also agrees saying, "Figures revealed that South Africa has 235 777 problem drug users, which cost the economy more than R10-billion a year." Huisman and Davids (2007:4) also support the above-mentioned statement saying South African's drug-dependence crisis is trickling down into all sectors of society, with professionals getting high at their work places.

2.2.1 Contributing factors

One of the major reasons for substance abuse and dependence is based on the fulfilment of the need for the use of drugs. Users experience calmness, pleasure and relaxation as a result of substance abuse and dependence. On the other hand, the various contributing factors have a double-barrelled effect: They maintain demand by

encouraging use of drug and they guarantee a supply. However, many people in South Africa are motivated to engage in drugs for one or more of the following reasons:

- **Powerful organisation**

The structural factors that create the demand for drugs are crucial. There is also a powerful organisation of supply. For instance, tens of thousands of tons of cocaine, marijuana and opium are grown in Latin America, processed in refineries, and smuggled into the United States of America every year. Some of the drug suppliers have their own armies and use terrorist activities to intimidate officials. In addition, the smugglers exploit the massive corruption that exists in all layers of government (including law enforcement agencies) and among business people (who may “launder” drug money) (Lauer, 1995:117). Given this situation the new political dispensation in South Africa has opened up its borders to international trade. This has created the tendency for individuals and groups from abroad to build links with individuals and groups within South Africa (Popenoe, 1998:151).

The following information confirms that South Africa has become a much-preferred destination for drug smugglers:

- In 2005 an estimated 2 tons of amphetamines entered South Africa and were used by 1.2 million people who paid R143 million for the drugs, while 100 000 people used a ton of ecstasy, for which they paid R610 million.
- In Pretoria, the use of Nyaope (a mixture of heroin and dagga) is on the increase, while mandrax use is rising in Durban, with the use of Cat on the increase in Gaunteng.
- In Cape Town, Tik is used by nearly 42% of all drug abusers (Hosken, 2007:2).

- **Conformity**

People like to conform as a way of getting approval from others. The testimony of drug users often includes phrases such as: “To be like the others” and “to be liked by my friends”. This is especially true for adolescents who may yield to peer pressure in an attempt to conform. This means that if certain group members use drugs, others in the group will want to subscribe to the expectations of the dominant majority only to maintain membership in such groups. This may not be necessarily the best way to conduct oneself, particularly in matters involving the use of harmful drugs (Mwamwenda, 1995:488; cf. Gouws, 2001:182).

- **Curiosity**

Concomitant with the above need is the adolescent’s needs to experience adventures and to feel the elation that may be the result of a job well done or obstacles and difficulties overcome. By nature people tend to be curious and, therefore, explore to find out what is unknown. As part of curiosity, people want to find out what kind of impact drugs will have on them. This type of experimentation can lead to a point of no return (Nevid *et al.*, 1998:311; cf. Ferron, 1990:174).

- **Rebelliousness**

There is a tendency once in a while for people in general to defy authority. This is particularly with adolescents as they relate to parents, teachers and society in general. It is known that it is illegal to use harmful drugs. Therefore, the use of drugs on the part of adolescents and others is a way of defying authority (Lauer, 1995:117).

- **Social psychological factors**

Some drug abusers seek certain psychic effects – euphoria, pleasure and change of mood. The quest for psychic effects, incidentally, may in turn be rooted in problems of low self-esteem, low self-confidence and a lack of purpose in life. In other words, for some users it is not just a matter of seeking quick gratification through drugs, but

of grasping at the one source of gratification that appears to be available (Lauer, 1995:119).

2.2.2 Consequences of drug abuse

Drug abuse in South Africa is a complex phenomenon that touches the lives of many people.

- **Crime and prostitution**

Most of the drugs to which people are addicted are expensive and are primarily available on the black market. In view of the fact that the addicts use them so frequently, they are enormously costly. Therefore, a way of funding the use of drugs is necessary for the addict so that the supply is sustained and constant. This may include stealing, prostitution, and drug trafficking. This brings to mind a statement made in parliament by the former President of Tanzania, Julius Nyerere, to the effect that if a person breaks a principle, a principle will find a way of breaking him. What is the principle broken here? Engaging in illegal use of drugs leads to addiction, which in turn forces the users to engage in criminal activities such as murder, sexual immorality and corruption (Mwamwenda, 1995:489).

- **Physical health**

Drug abuse contradicts our values of physical well-being. The physical consequences of narcotic addiction have been outlined by Lauer (1995:109) as follows:

- In general, addicts eat poorly (food being less important than drugs) and consequently they suffer the effects of malnutrition.
 - Anemia is common; they are generally underweight.
 - They have generally had a number of infections because of their carelessness in administering drugs.
 - The death rate of addicts is higher than the death rate of non-addicts.
-

- One of the great dangers of the use of these substances is that adolescents share hypodermic needles with which they administer the drugs, which is one of the ways in which HIV/Aids is spread (Gouws, *et al.*, 2001:177-8).
- Children born to addicted mothers have been found to have a significant number of problems in early infancy and developmental deficiencies in the cognitive and psychomotor skills. In later childhood, the children may exhibit disturbances in their activity levels, attention spans and sleep pattern (Lauer, 1995:109-10).

2.2.3 Possible strategy to eliminate a society's drugs problem

There is at least one concrete example of successful efforts to resolve a societal drug problem: In China, for example, the government forbade the planting of opium, destroyed existing opium crops and equipment used to manufacture the drug and closed the opium dens. Dealers were sentenced to capital punishment or long-term imprisonment (Lauer, 1995:119). Of course, one would not want to duplicate the brutality of the Chinese approach, but it illustrates the point that one must attack the social bases as well as treat individual addicts. This is not to say that enforcement is useless, but only that treatment and programmes of education and prevention must be given at least as much, and perhaps more attention.

Having given this context, the possible strategies to eliminate or to reduce a country's drug abuse are:

- **Enforcement programmes**

Enforcement programmes involve efforts to prevent drugs from entering the country or from being produced within the country. It also means the capture, prosecution and imprisonment of users, dealers and pushers. A controversial form of enforcement is mandatory testing of employees in the workplace and pupils at school. Some people feel that such testing is a violation of individual's civil liberties. In some communities, citizen-oriented policing is used. Knowing that the police cannot solve the problem,

citizens band together to eliminate the condition that renews abatement laws and jail space, and engage in neighbourhood cleanup projects (Lauer, 1995:119-20).

- **Treating addicts**

The purpose of treating an addict is to reduce or eliminate his or her dependence on drugs. Various methods can be used:

Cocaine addicts, for example, undergo a variety of individual and group therapies. One method that has claimed some success is a form of behavioural therapy contingency contracting. In contingency the addicts make an agreement with the therapists to pay a severe penalty if urine tests reveal that they have ingested any of the drug during the week (Nevid *et al.*, 1998:342-3).

- **Educational and prevention programmes**

In many countries the bulk of monies allocated to the drug problem goes into enforcement. However, many people believe that the most important mode of attack is education and prevention, reducing the demand for drugs. In schools for example, drug education must begin early (recall that many children start using drugs by the sixth grade). Such educational programmes can enhance self-esteem as a way to prevent drug use (Lauer, 1995:120-21).

The conclusion that can be reached from the above-mentioned is that there are both pragmatic and moral/ethical problems for drug abuse: Pragmatically one cannot deny that drug abuse is a widespread problem in South Africa and that it affects all kinds of people. Ethically, drug use casts a shadow of fear over entire communities. Therefore, as one looks at the effects of the abuse or the quality of life of the individual, one must not forget how whole communities are impacted.

2.3 Criminality and violence

Lauer (1995:128) sees crime as: “those acts that are defined as threatening to the State or to citizens whom the State is obligated to protect”. The South African Police Service distinguishes between various types of crimes: violent crime (i.e. murder, attempted murder, robbery with aggravating circumstances, arson and malicious damage to property); property related crimes (these include burglary, stock theft, vehicle theft and theft out of motor vehicles and corruption); Crime related to the social fabric (i.e. rape, assault with intent to inflict grievous bodily harm), common assault and crimes against children (Popenoe *et al.*, 1998:147-8). Three alarming manifestations in the new South Africa are worthwhile considering in this regard. These are violent crimes, domestic violence and corruption.

2.3.1 A spiralling of crime rates

The old dispensation and its atrocities eroded the moral fibre of the South African society. Parallel with the rise of criminality at a time of transition, public morality also seems to degenerate (Vorster, 2007:36). Terreblanche (2002:401) supports the above-mentioned statement saying, “South Africa has among the highest rates of violent crime in the world. More than 16 percent of all deaths in South Africa occur as a result of trauma, compared to a global figure of 5 percent calculated by the World Health Organisation (WHO)”. Murders, hijackings, rape and rampant corruption are reported daily in the media, and this inevitably impacts on people’s minds, affecting the way they think, the perceptions they develop and the way they adopt to deal with these circumstances (Malan & Smit, 2002:1; Brown, 2001:512; Berry, 1996:59).

Moreover, these categories of crime which strike terror in the hearts of all South Africans have increased by an alarming 25% countrywide between April 2006 and March 2007. Gildenhuys (2007:4) reports that Sandton was named as South Africans most dangerous suburb. Three hundred and forty three families were been attacked at gunpoint in their homes between April 2006 and March 2007. Sandton was also named as one of the highest risk areas for three other categories of crime, hijacking, business robbery and general aggravated robbery.

It is because of startling figures such as these that commentators speak of “ a culture of violence” or a spiralling crime rate in South Africa (Kretzschmar & Hulley, 1998:2).

2.3.1.1 Factors that encourage violent crime

To curb or to minimize the tide of violent crime in this country, it is also important to question the cause of it and why South Africa seems to have a “pathologically” high rate of violent crime in comparison with other countries. The most apparent reasons for violent crimes in South Africa today are: ineffectiveness of the justice system, consciences have been cauterized and the most tragic misconception of pre-1994 elections.

- **Ineffectiveness of the justice system**

Crime is able to flourish in South Africa because the penal system lacks sufficient deterrent value. Factors contributing to this situation include: the easy granting of bail, inadequate and reduced sentences and a decline in the success rate as far as prosecutions are concerned. Compounding the problem is a judicial staff that lacks experience and a shortage of jail space (Popenoe *et al.*, 1998; Van der Walt & Swanepoel, 1997:330).

- **Consciences have been cauterized**

Another factor why the levels of violent crime in South Africa are so high is because consciences have been cauterized. These Biblical concepts belong together, etymologically and theologically. This historic discontinuity between “justice” and “righteousness” is perpetuated by a lack of moral norms in the new South Africa. There are no references to any divinity who could set some external standards for human behaviour. Instead there are given human rights whose most recognizable philosophical sources are secular humanism. One is given certain “rights” that encourage what normal conscience says is wrong. For example: rights for the criminal but not rights for the victims (Van der Walt & Swanepoel, 1997:329).

- **The tragic misconception of Pre-1994 elections**

“Jobs for All” was a campaign slogan of the ruling party alliance during the 1994 election campaign. Hence, the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP), which, was a commendable act of political bravery, was adopted as policy document by the ruling party alliance in 1994 (Terreblanche, 2002:108; cf. Fitzgerald, *et al.*, 1995:6). This fostered the expectation, especially among under-educated youths who were tenaciously fixing their hopes of a better future on political consideration rather than on a programme of education and employment. Sadly these growing multitudes believed that instant wealth and success would be achieved as soon as the new government was in place (Millian, 1998:51). Equally important was the test of whether a new government could translate its visionary policy making effectively into effective delivery of social services (cf. Tomlinson *et al.*, 2003:104). There are a number of issues that can be mentioned in this regard, the important one being that the tension between wish and reality, between ideology and practice, between policy and implementation has, and always will be, major sources of political discontent and conflict. Those who promise in opposition have to deliver when in power, and invariably promise outstrip performance, leading to disillusionment and frustration, which in turn generates new opposition and revolts (Adam *et al.*, 1997:160).

From the foregoing it is clear that the new government finds itself in a difficult position in trying to live up to its pre-1994 election promises of providing a “better life for all” and of creating “jobs for all”. As Veith (1994:268) states: “The cynicism and transparent phoniness of postmodernist politics have profoundly disillusioned ordinary citizens, further eroding democracy. Political promises are no longer meant to be kept – that old fashioned view assumes that truth is some sort of an absolute. Rather, political promises are ‘performative’, meant to achieve a momentary result, to sway an audience or make a statement. Once the moment has passed, the result has been obtained and the politician faces ‘new realities’, he or she openly abandons the promise”. Terreblanche (2002:112) also supports the above-mentioned statement by saying “This seems to show that the RDP was never an integral part of the new government’s policy programme, but only a policy option propagated for electioneering purposes”.

It became clear that there is a real sense of disillusionment with the normalisation of politics in 1994. People on the ground now felt that the government, whether local or national had become increasingly remote, inaccessible and unresponsive to their needs (Gumede, 2005:285).

2.3.1.2 Impact of crime

Apart from its direct impact on the daily life of the South African community, the current levels of crime have other far reaching adverse ramifications for the country's future economic development. Terreblanche (2002:121) recognized that: "In a series of surveys undertaken in 1999 by the World Bank in conjunction with Greater Johannesburg Metropolitan Council, 94 percent of the large firms interviewed identified crime as the most important obstacle to investment and growth". This means that crime in South Africa is very turbulent and internationally can affect tourism and the hospitality market's planning almost instantaneously (George, 1999:319). For example: no one will visit a place if they believe that it is dangerous – and the same goes for tourists. They are also concerned about their personal safety and security of their possessions. This means that safety is important and it can influence a tourists' decision about whether to visit a town, city, region or country. Political events, military action, crime and terrorism always disrupt international travel. If violence of some kind flares up in a country where a tourist was planning to go, he or she will most likely go somewhere else (Jones, *et al.*, 1998:14).

2.3.1.3 Summary

It is clear from the preceding paragraphs that crime is a threat to national security and, therefore, a threat to South Africa's young democracy. Due to its cross-cutting nature, the impact of crime is felt across all socio-economic strata, jeopardizing the enjoyment of the universal benefits of the Bill of Rights. In this regards one must bring about a situation in which consciences are been re-sensitised with inner moral values (Kretzschmar & Hulley, 1998:2; Van der Walt & Swanepoel, 1997:330). This means that measures aimed at eradicating crime must be shared as part of a vision and

commitment to deal with this formidable threat to the human rights culture, the moral destiny and the success as a nation.

2.3.2 Domestic violence

Although the O.J. Simpson case may have brought the problem of domestic violence into the public eye, battering or spouse abuse is a national crisis. Surveys show that each year in the United States, at least 2 million women are severely beaten by their male partners, and about 1 of 18 husbands engage in at least one act of spousal violence. Nearly 2,000 women die as the result of these beatings (Nevid, *et al.*, 1994:530). This does not exclude South Africa as country. Vorster (2007:37) provides the following information in his research on this subject:

It appears from studies and work by organisations offering support to victims that the incidence of domestic violence is very high in South Africa. Community- based studies have revealed that in some areas almost a quarter of women report having being abused in their lifetimes by a current or ex-partner, and that up to a half are affected by emotional or financial abuse. A survey of 269 women who had contacted helping agencies in three major cities found emotional or physical abuse to be the most prevalent form of domestic violence experienced by women, with 90 percent of the sample having experienced this abuse.

This is a striking and disturbing statistic, suggesting, as it does, that South African women confront very real dangers in the home, and that men in their lives- people from whom they are entitled to receive far, far better treatment, are responsible for much of the violence committed against them (Altbeker, 2007:85). In view of this, it can be stated without any fear of contradiction that South Africa has amongst the highest rates of fomicide in the world. The father would kill the wife and his children if he were no longer able to provide for them (Herman & Marshall, 1998:44).

2.3.2.1 The meaning of domestic violence

Domestic violence has been classified as a crime of moral turpitude, which refers to acts of behaviour that greatly violate moral sentiments or accepted moral standards of the communities and is the morally culpable quality held to be present in some criminal offences as distinguished from others. It has been called by many names, e.g., wife beating, battering, family violence and domestic abuse. All refer to abuse by one person of another in an intimate relationship (Berry, 1996:1).

Wiley (1999:75) defines domestic violence as follows:

“Domestic violence appears to be a behaviours or set of behaviour arising from multiple sources, which follow different patterns in different families, rather than being a syndrome with a single underlying cause. Parent-child relationships are likely to vary with the different patterns of violence, and children of different ages and gender are affected differently. There are also several trajectories for recovery and reconstitution of family relationships and the potential for future violence”.

It is clear from the definition that domestic violence may be either physical or psychological in nature. Physical violence refers to one member of the family beating another member. In most cases, this involves the husband beating either the wife or children. In a psychological sense, domestic violence may involve neglect of a member of family, particularly young children. It could also mean name-calling and treating a member of the family with contempt and as a person of little value, worthless, irrelevant and insignificant, which is likely to lead to a low level of self-esteem. This type of treatment and domestic violence in general is also referred to as either wife or child abuse. Both are serious, often life-endangering social problems that lead to family disorganisation and ultimately to dissolution (Mwamwenda, 1996:481; Greathead, 1998:267).

2.3.2.2 The dynamics of domestic violence

Unlike victims, most abusers tend to share a number of common traits, background factors and behaviour patterns. Virtually all of the experts in the various fields who have studied the dynamics of domestic violence and the abuser personality agree that the goal of the abuser is power and control over his partner (Nevid *et al.*, 1994:530; Berry, 1996:36; Weiten & Lloyd, 1997:278). Despite the changes of the past few decades, the educational, religious, military and recreational institutions still tend to encourage boys to be aggressive, authoritarian and to refrain from showing emotions ('Tigers don't cry attitude'). Such conduct is considered "manly". At the same time, girls are raised to be passive, submissive and with gentle traits traditional considered feminine. Too much power under any circumstances eventual leads to the abuse thereof.

Yet, indeed, male power has become an undisputed aspect in the way of living. Men maintain much authority over women and children in their homes, on the streets, in sport, in government institutions and many other private and public sectors (Marshall & Herman, 1977:44). Cultural attitudes towards domestic violence also contribute to its proliferation. One is trained to respect ones neighbour's privacy, which gives one a good excuse to look the other way when one suspects something ugly may be going on behind the drawn curtains. We tell ourselves that we are "minding our own business" when we ignore crashes and screams and perhaps even police cars late at night (cf. Berry, 1996:109).

2.3.2.3 The cycle of domestic violence

The cycle of the domestic violence may vary from home to home, but the cycle usually displays these ongoing components:

- **Tension building phase**
 - Minor fights and incidents, violence abuse occurs and increases.
 - Acute battering and incidents, violence abuse occurs and increases.

➤ The man assaults the woman badly enough for her to seek some kind of intervention.

- **Battered- woman syndrome**

➤ The women feel that they cannot control the abuser's violence and cannot escape.

➤ The women become more and more isolated from friends and family.

➤ Refusal to socialize and exceptional nervousness, jumpiness and fear

➤ Low self-esteem and denial minimisation of the abuse.

➤ A combination of love and fear for their partner.

➤ Dependent and submissive (Berry, 1996:31; cf. Wiley, 1999:71).

2.3.2.4 Effects of domestic violence on women and children

There are number of effects that have been associated with the apparent extent and seriousness of domestic violence:

- **Deviant behaviour**

There is no denying that domestic violence is the breeding ground of moral decay in South Africa. Perhaps the most disturbing effect of family violence is the way in which it teaches children that this is the way a family functions and that violence is an acceptable way to solve problems and, that men should dominate and abuse women, and women should submit (Baikanyo & O' Donnell 1997:98). It is in the use of violence by men against women in the domestic set up that their children, in particular the boys, frequently first become familiarized with violence as a means for conflict management. For example: If a person has been abused by someone powerful like a parent or relative, they want to inflict the pain back. A common threat through all types of rape was that perpetrators had experienced trauma during childhood, such as sexual abuse or other violence (Lauer, 1995:444; Smyke, 1993:54; Weiten & Lloyd, 1997:273).

- **Maladjustment**

Children who have observed domestic violence in their families tend to have various difficulties that one can subsume under the category of maladjustment. This kind of maladjustment produces anti-social behaviour (such as aggression and bullying), insecurity, over conformity to one's peers, a tendency to withdraw from relationships, difficulties in relating to others, and problems with one's personal identity where people want to project their pain on someone else ... they find relief in seeing others suffer (Lauer, 1995:444; Nevid, 1994:531; Bray, 1997:67; Smyke, 1993:54).

2.3.2.5 The long-term strategies to eliminate domestic violence

The long-term strategies to eliminate violence against women include:

- measures to raise the status of women and gain recognition of their full human rights;
- research to be able to prevent a fuller picture of the much under-reported violence against women;
- education of girls and boys from the earliest age in the idea of equality between sexes, respect for everyone's human rights and non-violent ways to resolve conflicts;
- lobbying to reform laws that allow violence towards women to go unpunished, and seeing that the laws are enforced;
- sensitizing police, lawyers, social workers, teachers and religious and political leaders to the issues;
- working to change public attitudes that tolerate and perpetuate violence against women. Traditionally, emphasis has been placed on a "macho" male role, in which aggression and violence are associated with power, masculinity and success (Symke, 1993:57; cf. Brigham, 1991:454).

2.3.3 Summary

It is clear from the above that the South African community still has a long way to go in promoting respect for the human dignity of women and children. However, the leadership of the present government in promoting the status of women and its strong stand and actions against domestic violence are praiseworthy.

2.4 A culture of corruption

When one talks about crime in South Africa, most people think of things such as burglary or car hijackings. However, there are other types of more subtle crimes which probably cost more to society than the value of all the burglaries and bank robberies put together. This hidden crime is known as corruption and consists of two types of overlapping crimes: White-collar crimes where the employee uses his/her position in the public sector to steal and business crime which is the routine abuse of the private sector (companies) in order to make greater profit (Moore, 1996:248; Cox & Wade, 1998:88-89; Brown, 2001:518). Yet, indeed, corruption in all its forms and manifestations constitutes a process that negates the democracy and development the ordinary people need to transcend the boundaries of their world of poverty, underdevelopment and disempowerment.

2.4.1 Corruption in state institutions

One reality already facing post-1994 South Africa is the stark fact that despite a new non-racial government and noble ideals, wastage and corruption still occur at government level and in private companies. International and local companies see some prize pickings to be made in the development programme that the new government wishes to pursue. Unfortunately, greed and bribery lurk in the corridors of both big business and officialdom. It has become an accepted way of doing business in many African nations and, if South Africa were to sink to the level of bribery and corruption of some of these states, the poor and needy will not see their expectations become a reality.

Because unofficial and official reporting of this problem are mostly done under the collective heading of corruption and almost always concern only hard-core transgressions, it is difficult to differentiate statistically between the various types of corruption. What is important, however, is to have a comprehensive picture of what is happening in society. The following examples provide evidence of its presence:

- Maladministration was the most common form of corruption in the public sector and is responsible for 60,42% of all cases. It is followed by alleged fraud at 20, 83%, bribery at 8, 38%, the abuse of state assets at 6, 25% and nepotism at 4,17% (Malan & Smit, 2001:11). According to Kretzschmar and Hulley (1998:3), these include the sale of matriculation examination papers, thefts within pension offices, fraud in the Housing and Land Affairs Department, and irregularities in the Low Cost Housing budget. In terms of Provinces, the following examples will serve as truth that corruption is rife in State institutions:
- In Mpumalanga, alleged fraud at 55, 86% and maladministration at 29,41% were the most general forms of corruption and were respectively responsible for 11,76% and 7,94% of all cases. In the Northern Province (Limpopo), alleged fraud and maladministration were responsible for 80% of all cases of corruption, while bribery, nepotism and the abuse of State assets amounts to 20% (Malan & Smit, 2001:11).

The North West Provincial Legislature, in its 1997 – 1998 financial report uncovered serious financial bungling in nine Provincial departments and the loss of millions of the taxpayer's money. The following statements can be used as proof:

- Loans, totalling R56 million were granted for which loan agreements were not in place and for which no repayments have been received.
- It was also found that in most departments budgets were exceeded, with the Education Department spending R304 million with no authorisation.
- Tender board regulations were violated, resulting in unauthorized expenditure (Van Niekerk *et al.*, (2001:122).

- The Travelgate scandal, in which it is alleged that certain MPs from various political parties had benefited from fraudulent travel expenses claims, is another case, which supports the notion that corruption is uncontrollable in the public sector (Gumede, 2005:106).
- Corruption also includes all forms of fraud, the failure to do one's work properly, greed, inefficiency and indifference on the part of the public at large (Kretzschmar & Hulley, 1998:2).

Moreover, this category of crime, which creates an atmosphere of distrust in society, lowering social morale, and creating widespread social disorganisation, has increased. According to a report of Transparency International issued in 2005, it is indicated that corruption is endemic at the provincial and local levels of government. This affects the capacity of the public sector to deliver services for the poor negatively. According to the report almost R2 billion (US \$332 million) was lost to corruption in 2003 in the area of social welfare (Vorster, 2007:36).

2.4.2 Causes of corruption in public sector

A number of factors combined are related to corruption in the public sector:

- **Lack of supervision**

Supervision, meaning to oversee, control and inspect the work of subordinates, is vital if an organisation is to function effectively, efficiently, economically and with integrity. If done constructively, supervision not only keeps people on their toes, but also provides guidance and forms an important part of in-service training. In a transformational phase such as South Africa is going through at present, proper supervision is vital to ensure that inexperienced officials do their jobs properly. If neglected, especially where people are not properly trained, misadministration and a fall in standards are inevitable (Van der Waldt & Helmbold, 1995:161; Botes *et al.*, 1992:361).

- **Norms and standards confusion**

It is obvious that in any institution and in all moral choices the question about norms is of utmost importance. However, the lack of an adequate standard of norms creates a void for the idler and the opportunist to fill and abuse. Especially during periods of transition, when values and norms are being redefined, a high premium should be placed on personal qualities such as self-respect, integrity and loyalty (cf. Malan & Smit, 2001:46).

- **Ineffective delegation**

Leaders and employees usually behave unethically when the central principles of delegation are neglected. A major problem with the process of delegation arises when the person delegated to is not capable of carrying out the task delegated to him/her. This is more likely to happen in situations where public officials are inexperienced or not properly trained (Van der Waldt & Helmbold, 1995:162).

- **Incompetence and a lack of exposure**

Since 1994, the main focus in the public service was placed on representation and affirmative action. This succeeds in correcting imbalances, but often fails to maintain standards of efficiency. It is a national process that people have to spend much time in their jobs to gain experience. It is an indisputable reality that lack of skilled personnel in the public sector is one of the biggest factor hampering service delivery. Development of basic leadership skills through proper training and exposure is a time consuming process that cannot be hurried (Malan & Smit, 2001:45).

- **Inadequate legislation**

Inadequate legislation can be the result of autocratic rule, where the small governing elite passes laws, which benefit them and not all the people. However, in present-day South Africa it is more likely to be the result of inexperienced and improperly trained

politicians and officials failing to draw up efficient and effective legislation (Botes *et al.*, 1992:162; Mutahaba *et al.*, 1993:55).

- **Problems in the application of affirmative action**

Affirmative action is a principle accepted by most of the people of South Africa as a way to put right discriminatory practices of the past. It is, however, its unethical applications in certain government departments that is a cause for concern, which not only results in a drastic fall of standards, but is also costing the State millions of rand through inefficiency and inadequate control (Terreblanche, 2002:447; Ramphele, 1996:2). Problems arise when the policy is irresponsibly applied:

A major cause of problems is when affirmative action is treated as if it were the same thing as transformation, and so becomes more important than any other consideration, including those of efficiency and the maintaining of standards and effective service delivery. This largely happens because the difference between affirmative action and transformation has not been clearly defined by leaders.

Problems are also caused:

- When the judgment of those who apply affirmative action are clouded by subjective consideration such as self-interest.
- When all those involved (black and white) do not participate in drawing up the affirmative policy.
- When the policy is not implemented in the way that has been agreed on. This destroys trust and credibility in an area already loaded with sensitivities.
- When policy results in reverse discrimination.
- When the potential of specific candidates is not properly assessed and appointments are made for unethical reasons (favouritism and bribery).
- When staffs appointed because of affirmative action are not properly trained to do their jobs.
- When the policy is put into practice too quickly, resulting in a loss of knowledge and expertise in an organisation that cannot possibly be compensated for.
- When unrealistic expectations are placed on affirmative action candidates (Malan & Smit, 2001:47; Hebbert, 1994:19).

It is clear from the above that whatever is done, in the new political dispensation, one has to ensure that one does not confuse strategies for programmes, and use means which are politically attractive in the short-term, but which would, in the medium and long-term, compromise the vision of an equitable non-racial and non-sexist society.

2.4.3 Corruption in the private sector

Corruption is not only an observable fact within the public sector but also within the private sector. Vorster (2007:36) states that corruption and fraud in the private sector may cost the economy as much as R50 billion (US \$8.3 billion).

Therefore, it is obvious that almost every type of unethical behaviour seen in the public sector also applies to the private sector. Thus, only those types that are relatively unique to the private sector, as well as those types that appear when the private and public sectors interact in doing business they are both involved in will be discussed. The most dramatic example of the possible effects of these crimes is:

- One common factor of fraud in the private sector is inside dealings, in which individuals who know that the company is about to be the subject of a takeover bid bring shares in a company. These individuals illegally use their knowledge to make a killing on the stock market. A number of prominent businessmen have been accused of fraud when their businesses got into debt and collapsed (Haralambos & Holborn, 1995:402).
 - Contractors load their prices unrealistically to make excessive profits or to finance the bribe.
 - Contractors work together to draw up minimum specifications for a job that are not really necessary.
 - The supply of products and services that do not conform with the agreed specifications
 - Contractors put in unrealistically low tenders, knowing that they will never be able to do the job according to the tender specifications (Malan & Smit, 2001:21).
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2.4.4 The basic causes of corruption in the private sector

- **Competition**

Unethical competition can take many forms, but the motivation behind it is basically the same: the desire of particularly the managers of the companies involved for wealth and power. This can be worse if the government of the country concerned is corrupt and fails to set and enforce strict codes of behaviour for business. Taking their lead from the government, the managers of companies will feel that they can do anything they please.

- **Professional bodies and associations**

Because professional bodies and associations are primarily responsible for their own professional conduct, unethical behaviour can usually be traced back to efforts they make to over-protect their professions, making them more exclusive than necessary.

- **The provision of vital services**

Ethical transgressions in this arena occur because services such as water and electricity are usually provided by monopolies, which include public authorities. This means that there is no competition so consumers have to accept whatever such monopolies decide to offer in the way of service, at the prices often inflated. The scope of mismanagement and abuse is large in such circumstances (cf. Malan & Smit, 2001:58).

2.4.5 A number of factors combine to reduce the extent of corruption

- It is difficult to detect: Many white-collar crimes are crimes without victims.
- In cases of bribery and corruption, parties involved may see themselves as gaining from the arrangement, both are liable to prosecution and, therefore, neither are likely to report the offence.

- In cases where the victim is the public at large (such as misrepresentation in advertising) few members of the public have the expertise to realize that they are being misled or have knowledge of legal procedures to redress the wrong. In such cases detection and prosecution is often left to a government agency who rarely has the personnel or finance to bring more than a few cases to court in the hope of deterring the practice (Haralambos & Holborn, 1995:404).

Public sector leadership and behaviour form a major yardstick to measure a country's morality and credibility in the eyes of the rest of the world, and this accentuates the importance thereof. In addition, in the eighth commandment, the word rendered to steal literally means to secretly take for yourself something belonging to someone else, e.g. state, private company or to someone else. The actual meaning of this commandment is that one should have the right attitude – as willed by God, to all earthly possessions, be it one's own or that of others. Because this commandment is also a concretisation of the law of love, it requires one to protect other people's possessions to the best of one's ability and to prevent anything that could be detrimental to them (De Bruyn, 1993:22).

2.5 Ethical perspectives

Considering all the above-mentioned consequences and harmful effects of drug abuse, domestic violence, crime and corruption, the Scriptural and Confessional viewpoint on these relevant matters can be formulated as follows:

It is obvious that in any ethical system and in all moral choices the question about norms is of utmost importance. What is the content of these norms and where do we find them? In a Christian approach to ethics there can be no other starting point than that of theonomy. By this is meant that the questions about one's deeds and decisions, one's actions and choices, can only be answered correctly if one listens to what God says. This means in our daily lives we have to follow the will of God (Rom. 12:1-2; Eph. 4:24; Col. 1:9; Heb. 5:12; 1 John 2:17) – and not our own will (autonomy). In this approach, where obedience to the will of God lies at the very heart of ethics, we logically reject the idea that our experience, or tradition, or reason, or intuition, or nature, how important they may be, can have the last say in ethical decision-making.

Two further aspects need attention in this regard. The first one refers to our conscience. Scripture speaks of a “clear” conscience (Acts 24:16; 2 Tim.1:3) and a “good” conscience (Acts 23:1), but also of a “corrupt” conscience (Tit. 1:5).

Our conscience did not escape the disastrous effects of sin and has to be liberated (cleansed by Jesus Christ (Heb. 9:14). Therefore, we cannot identify the voice of our conscience with the voice of God, although God may speak through our conscience, something which should be appreciated. Our conscience has to function under the guidance of the Word and Spirit of God.

This brings one to the second aspect, namely the guidance of the Spirit. It is the Spirit of God who purifies our conscience, who changes our attitude, who transforms our minds and who regenerates our whole personality (Tit. 3:5, 1 John 3:9). If this does not take place, the Christian life is impossible, because “the mind of sinful man is death, but the mind controlled by the Spirit is life and peace” (cf. Rom. 8:6, Eph. 5:18).

CHAPTER THREE
THE CALLING OF THE CHURCH IN MORAL RENEWAL OF SOUTH
AFRICAN COMMUNITY

3.1 Introduction

The Church has always faced problems, but the scope and intensity of its problems now seem to be greater than at any previous time in its history (Gairns, 1996:528). Even in a new political dispensation, Christianity faces great challenges. Within the South African context, the following challenges can be identified:

- The first is to come to terms with the new status of Christianity under the emerging secular State. This means a full recognition that the churches and Christians no longer have the monopoly in matters of ethics and morality in society, and can, therefore, no longer impose their will upon other religious and even non-religious communities.
- The second major challenge facing the Church is that of resisting the threat of being marginalized in matters of socio-political and economic influence and policy-making.
- Thirdly, perhaps the most formidable contemporary challenge facing the churches is the awakening, or re-awakening of the moral conscience of a nation, which, by many accounts, finds itself on the slippery slope of widespread moral decay. The teaching ministry of the church is going to be subjected to one of its greatest tests, namely that of shaping sound moral character amongst its own constituencies (Kretzchmar & Hulley, 1998:150-1).

Having given this background, the main objective of this chapter, therefore, is to study and to outline the prophetic role of the church towards moral regeneration.

This chapter will, therefore, deal with the following aspects:

- Brief explanation of the concept Kingdom.
 - The relationship between the Church and the Kingdom.
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- The role of the Church in the perspectives of the Kingdom.
- The Church as organism.
- Summary.

3.2 Brief explanation of the concept Kingdom

Vorster (2007:252) maintains that the concept Kingdom can be regarded as one of the central issues in the biblical revelation". In essence, the term Kingdom can be summarized in the following three facets:

- God is sovereign King of the entire universe;
- He rules and directs his subjects through His will as expressed in His laws;
- With the result that all His creatures can experience life in its fullness. Summarised "Kingdom of God" includes the King (God Triune), His rules and His blessings (Van der Walt, 2007:84; Senkhane, 2002:32).

3.3 The relationship between the Church and the Kingdom

Ladd (1993:103) mentions that: "One of the most difficult question in the study of the Kingdom of God is its relationship to the Church. Is the Kingdom of God in any sense of the word to be identified with the Church? If not, what is the relationship?"

The specific relationship between the Kingdom and the Church will now be examined.

3.3.1 The Church is the object of the Kingdom

The Church is not the subject, but the object of the Kingdom. Therefore, the Church, in its suppressed situation, seeks preservation, support, shelter in God's government, and it is looking forward to the fullness of God's Kingdom in the coming age. The Kingdom is thus related to the history of the Church and the world alike. A connection exists between Kingdom and Church, but they are not identical, even in the present age. The Kingdom is the whole of God's redeeming activity in Christ in

the world; the Church is the assembly of those who belong to Jesus Christ. Perhaps one could speak in terms of two concentric circles, of which the Church is the smaller and the Kingdom the larger, while Christ is the centre of both (Bruce *et al.*, 1990:658).

3.3.2 The Church proclaims the Kingdom

The Church, as the organ of the Kingdom, is called to proclaim the Kingdom, to the missionary task of preaching the Gospel in the world; it is also the community of those who wait for the coming of the Kingdom in glory, the servants who have received their Lord's talents in prospect of his return (Vorster, 2007:197). Therefore, the Church receives its whole constitution from the Kingdom, on all sides the Church is beset and directed by the revelation, the progress, the future coming of the Kingdom of God, without at any time being the Kingdom itself or even being identified with it (Bruce *et al.*, 1990:658). This is illustrated by the commission Jesus gave to the twelve (Mt. 10) and to the seventy; (Lk. 10) and it is reinforced by the proclamation of the apostle in the books of Acts.

Implicit exegetical support for this view is to be found in the great emphasis Jesus placed on forgiveness and humility among his disciples (Mk. 10:35). Thus, those who have experienced the Kingdom of God are to display its life by humble willingness to serve rather than by self-seeking.

3.3.3 The Church is the custodian of the Kingdom

The rabbinic concept of the Kingdom of God conceived of Israel as the custodian of the Kingdom. The Kingdom of God was the rule of God that began on earth in Abraham, and was committed to Israel through the Law. Since the rules of God could be experienced only through the Law, and since Israel was the custodian of the Law, Israel was in effect the custodian of the Kingdom of God. When Gentiles became Jewish proselytes and adopted the Law, they thereby took upon themselves the sovereignty of heaven, the Kingdom of God. God's rule was mediated to the Gentiles through Israel; they alone were "sons of the Kingdom. In Jesus, the reign of God manifested itself in a new redemptive event, displaying in an unexpected way within

history the powers of the eschatological Kingdom. The nation as a whole rejected the proclamation of this divine event, but those who accepted it became the true children of the Kingdom and entered into the enjoyment of its blessings and powers. These disciples of Jesus, His *ecclesia*, now became the custodians of the Kingdom rather than the nation of Israel (Ladd, 1993:115).

3.3.4 The Church is the instrument of the Kingdom

According to Ladd (1993:114), the Church is the instrument of the Kingdom. The disciples of Jesus not only proclaimed the good news about the presence of the Kingdom; they were also instruments of the Kingdom in that the works of the Kingdom were performed through them as through Jesus himself. Therefore, the Kingdom is not confined within the frontiers of the Church. Christ's Kingship is supreme above all. Where it prevails and is acknowledged, not only is the individual human being set free, but also the whole pattern of life is changed (Mt. 10:8; Lk.10:17). The change, which Christianity brings about among peoples dominated by nature-religions, is a proof of the comprehensive, all embracing significance of the Kingdom. It works not only outwardly like a mustard seed but also inwardly like leaven. It makes its way into the world with its redeeming power.

It can be deduced that the word servant hood has a long history, that it has been woven into the religious heritage of Israel, and that it is a title, which is fitting that Jesus should inherit and possess. Even at this stage one can see that this title is important when it is applied to the prophetic role of the church (Barclay, 1995:161-2). Thus the church as a congregation of believers, as well as individual Christians, are servants (instruments) in service of the Kingdom of God. As servant of Christ the church is thus a unique community in the midst of many other human communities in modern society. It has its own character, calling and way of doing things. It is responsible for its actions not to humankind, but to Christ. The best way to describe this uniqueness is with the concept "holiness". To be holy means to be different from the worldly, not in a pietistic sense such as in Pentecostalism, but in the active pursuance of other principles and norms than those controlling modern society (Vorster, 2007:256-7).

The next logical step is to attempt to understand the relationship between Jesus' ethical teaching and his preaching about the Kingdom of God. During His earthly ministry Jesus was, in His person and in His teaching, disturbingly radical but at the same time intensely relevant. In addition, the cultural life of the younger generation, for example, changes completely about every four or five years. Moreover, many people find themselves quite unable to adjust to this speed of change, and consequently lapse into apathy, loneliness, frustration, depression or despair. Adding to the bewilderment is the time consuming and desperately slow business of trying to reform the structures of the Church, with endless reports and commissions, new methods of government, new patterns of ministry and new forms of service. The intention is good, but the speed at which the Church is changing is much slower than the speed at which the gap between the Church and the world is expanding (Watson, 1979:136). These issues are not only theoretical and theological, but they have far reaching practical implications and consequences.

How, then, can the Church become relevant, and stay relevant, in a world that is changing at an ever-increasing speed.

3.4 The role of the church in the perspective of the Kingdom

Senkhane (2002:9) observes that: "Most people believe that the Church is just an entity which is isolated from the community and is only there to serve its members in terms of the baptism of babies so that when they are grown up they can acquire baptismal certificates which allow them to become rightful and legal citizens". She goes further saying, the laymen probably assume this belief from the actual practice Church members often engage in, with regard to activities without proper acquisition of what the Church as opposed to other social organisations are all about.

However, the Church of Christ is the special covenant that exists, through God's grace, in response to God's action in Jesus Christ and that has its special calling the proclamation in word and deed of God's inclusive covenant with its declaration of God's love and its demand for faith in God and love with justice toward all persons (Allen, 1995:287; Dake, 1992:518; Monsma, 2006:108). This means that the Church

must be attached to the Kingdom of God if it is to serve God's purpose on earth fully (Van der Walt, 1991:354).

Because of the evident confusion in church and theological circles in South Africa today about the most appropriate to issues of public morality, research is once more needed – investigating from the Scriptural references. Therefore, this role will be investigated under the following elements:

- Stewardship
- Salvation
- Worship
- Prayer
- Missions
- Education
- Proclamation
- Evangelism
- Discipleship.

In most of these elements there are common sub-elements which feature in the main elements.

3.4.1 Stewardship

This basic Reformed dictum unfolds the conviction that Christians are always and everywhere in the active service of God. They serve God in politics, culture and economics, in the field of sport and recreation, in business and their daily occupation. Every action is an action in the service and to the honour of God. This means that the social life is not something neutral, but it reveals one's perspective on what it means to be a human being, and ultimately whether one is in the service of the real God or prisoner of one of the many surrogate gods. This truth determines marriage and family. Christians are first and foremost stewards of each other in their marital and familial relations (Vorster, 2007:180; cf. Van der Walt, 2007:84). In term of this

concept (stewardship) the churches in South Africa have to adhere to the following guidelines:

- **Self-denial**

Stewardship can be effective only when it is accompanied by the attitude of self-denial. Ep 5:21 expresses the calling to self-denial in the Christian marriage and family. For a husband and wife this instruction entails that they have to be submissive to each other in those spheres of marriage where they are differently gifted by the Holy Spirit. For example, if the wife has the gift of teaching, the husband should leave the basic instructions of the children to his wife (Vorster, 2007:181).

It is probable to believe that stewardship is the most important function of the Church, acting as an umbrella service embracing numerous activities performed by various Churches today.

- **Sphere of love**

Though one may be persuaded that no single principle can account for the unity of the New Testament writings, love has been the fulcrum of the Church's great imperatives. In all the spiritual gifts and moral requirements of the Christian adherent, love is the greatest. Therefore, every societal context should give shape to God's central commandment of love in its own peculiar manner, for its own times (Van der Walt, 2007:124; Mbamalu, 2004:146). This Christian virtue of love is being described thoroughly by the concept of Ubuntu. Attempts to translate this term into English all fall short not only because of the lack of a precise linguistic equivalent, but because of loss of the holistic social reality from which the term Ubuntu springs. Close approximations, however, are humanness, compassion, and fellow feeling (Kretzschmar & Hulley; Buchann & Hendricks, 1995:179).

3.4.2 Salvation

God in initiating salvation enables man by His Grace to respond in repentance and faith. He works through His representatives, the Church. Therefore, it is a binding role of the Church today to call people to the saving act of God. This call takes form in different ways, such as:

- **Repentance**

Salvation is received through repentance toward God and faith toward the Lord Jesus Christ. By the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost, being justified by grace through faith, man becomes an heir of God, according to the hope of eternal life (Luke 24:47; John 3:3; Rom. 10:13-15; Eph. 2:8; Titus 2:11; 3:5-7). The evidence of salvation is the direct witness of the Spirit (Rom. 8:16). The outward evidence to all men is a life of righteousness and true holiness (Eph. 4:24; Titus 2:12).

- **Sanctification**

Sanctification is an act of separation from that which is evil, and of dedication unto God (Rom. 12:1, 2; 1 Thess. 5:23; Heb. 13:12). By the power of the Holy Ghost one is able to obey the command: "Be ye holy, for I am holy" (1 Pet. 1:15, 16). Sanctification is realized in the believer by recognizing his identification with Christ in His death and resurrection, and by faith reckoning daily upon the fact of that union, and by offering every faculty continually to the dominion of the Holy Spirit (Lewis, 1992:182).

3.4.3 Worship

Worship is the central and defining activity of the people of God. The worship of communities of expectant faith anticipates God's future and challenges the present. As Forrester (1997:45) states: "In worship we receive a new identity and, we are formed morally. By encountering God we learn how to be disciples. We learn to love by being loved, we learn to forgive by being forgiven; we learn generosity by being

treated generously". Therefore worship expresses and creates community, *koinonia*, and in worship one finds an ethics, a life-style, embodied and sustained.

The two main elements of worship for the role of the Church are: praise and service, and these are recorded in Exodus 15:1-21 and Isaiah 12:1-6. In addition to these elements, numerous other roles carried by the Church can be noticed, such as the ministry of the sacraments in which the community of God's people is fully manifested. The ministry of the sacraments embraces all aspects of life. The Lord's Supper for example, demands reconciliation and sharing among all those regarded as brothers and sisters in the one family of God and is a constant challenge in the search for appropriate relationships in social, economic and political life. All kinds of injustice, racism, separation, prejudices and inequality are radically challenged when one shares in the body and blood of Christ (Forrester, 1997:57).

Add to that the image of the vine and its branches in John Chapter 15. What then emerges as one celebrates the Holy Communion is a constant reminder not only of dependence on Christ but also of dependence on one another. The eye cannot say to the hand, "I do not need you"; nor the head to the feet, "I do not need you." Quite the contrary: those organs of the body which seem to be frailer than others are indispensable... If one organ suffers, they all suffer together. If one flourishes, they all rejoice together (1 Cor. 12:21). Therefore, eating and drinking at the anticipation of that banquet on earth provides more than food and drink: "the Kingdom of God is not food and drink but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit" (cf. Rom. 14:17). In view of these elements, baptism suggests a restoration of paradisiac motifs: the lost unity, the lost image and the lost glory (cf. Meeks, 1983:157; Brown, 1989:53). The challenge of these words in today's world is perhaps more acute than one sometimes recognise.

In order to fulfil this vital role and survive, the Church needs to exercise meaningful stewardship or organise proper worship services in which the name of God is glorified.

3.4.4 Prayer

In Christian life prayer forms an indispensable part and should never be neglected. Yet, indeed, prayer is worship that includes all the attitudes of human spirit in its approach to God. It means meeting God, communicating with God and trusting God. Prayer gives God the moral and legal right to act on our behalf. Prayer is important not only to us, but to God as well. He ever seeks a man to stand in the gap (Lewis, 1992:28; cf. Bruce *et al.*, 1990:958). Numerous ways in which prayer is to be offered are outlined by Senkhane (2002:25) as follows:

- Fellowship with God: Through prayer the Church is called upon to fellowship with God (cf. Genesis 5:24; 6:9; Numbers 10:35-36; 1 Kings 19:8-18; Psalms 16:1-11; 84:1-12; Romans 11:2; 1 John 1:3,6).
- Experiencing God's Presence: The Church brought people into the presence of God through prayer (cf. Genesis 19:27; Exodus 34:34-35; Psalm 7:1-17; 48:14; 122:1-9).
- Asking from God: "Ask and it will be given to you", says Jesus (Matt. 7:7), a text that stands in the context of ethics and neighbourly love (vv 9-12).
- Intercession: The Church's role is to intercede in politics through prayer.
- To advance God's Kingdom: The petition "Thy Kingdom come may, for general purposes, be used as the supplication that the divine dominion (*basileia*) of God will be extended 'here and now' (in this present age) in the heart of individuals as well as in the world as a whole (cf. Matt. 6:9-143; Mk. 9:1; 1 Corinthians 7:34; 1 Timothy 5:5).

Prayer is part of the Church's life as people experience the presence of God through it. The Church was born in the atmosphere of prayer (Acts 1:4). Therefore, prayer continued to be the Church's native air (Acts 2:42; 6:4, 6).

3.4.5 Mission

The Church is also God's agent in mission. It is through His body, the Church, that Christ communicates Himself to the world. It is, therefore, of the utmost importance

that the Church as seen by others is relevant to the cultural and social setting of the day, otherwise it will effectively negate the message that is being preached (Watson, 1979:135). From this perspective it is then reasonable to say that missionary calling of the Church has enormous and fundamental consequences for the world. The root meaning of the word 'Church' in both Hebrew (*kahal*) and Greek (*ekklesia*), from which is an assembly or community called out of the world (McBrien, 1996:8; cf. Van der Walt, 2007:78). The book of Acts relates another version of this commission: "When the Holy Spirit comes about you, you will be filled with power, and you will be witnesses for me in Jerusalem, in all Judea, and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8). The triune God, Father-Son-Holy Spirit, invites the Church, to be His co-workers on earth.

Furthermore, the Church's missionary calling is authentic. According to Greenway and Mashau (2007:81), this is attested by their question in Acts 1:6 "Lord, are you at this time going to restore the Kingdom of Israel?" In His answer to their doubts, Jesus highlights the fact that His kingship is directed not only to Israel, but also to the entire universe. He is the king of kings: the king of the Kingdom of God. The Lordship and honour that are due to Him are made possible by His death on the cross and His resurrection on the third day. The inference, which can be drawn from the above is that there is no single agreed-upon list of missionary roles that belong to the Church. However, the missionary role of the Churches in South Africa today should include the following elements:

- Witnessing to Christ and the Christian faith;
- Service to those in need;
- Sending people out to spread the word of the Lord.

3.4.6 Education

From the perspective of the Kingdom of God, education is nothing more or less than equipping people to fulfil their calling in the Kingdom of God. Humans enter this world uneducated, not equipped at all, and are dependent upon educated people to equip them for their calling. Because God calls all humans to extensive service in His

Kingdom (*Vocatio Dei*). The call of Christ is that those converted should also be taught – before but also after they have been baptised and initiated into the Kingdom (Van der Walt, 1991:356). This calling by Christ is divided into several “small” callings, such as choosing a profession, achieving something, getting married, serving your country. The key question in this regard is: What has to be taught? The concern is not merely with attainment of a certain amount of pure intellectual content or paper knowledge. The command (in “everything I have commanded you ...”) clearly indicates the laws of the Kingdom of God (cf. Matt. 28:19). As Christ commanded the disciples to live as subjects of the Kingdom of God, so they also have to teach the faithful of all the nations of the world to maintain this law. This means the social transformation of our country cannot be separated from its spiritual transformation. Therefore, the call to educate is more all embracing than a mere call to the member of a Church. In view of this call the Churches in South Africa should educate their members to embody the vision of the Kingdom in the following aspects:

- their family life;
- their schools;
- the field of higher education;
- politics; and
- labour relations.

These are all strategic fields. Traditionally the Church has limited itself outside its own field only to schools (mission schools) and hospitals (mission hospitals) – often with the motive to catch a few “souls”. In the field of politics and social life, the Church has failed to give young Christian clear direction (Van der Walt, 1991:358).

From the above-mentioned statement it is clear that Churches in South Africa today need solid Christian education programmes. Exposure to good Bible teaching through Church schools, Church, Bible study, and personal and family devotions are essential for living as God intended (cf. 2 Chronicles 17:7-9; Deuteronomy 6:1-12; Psalm 78:5). This is another important role the Church has to play in the new political dispensation. In this regard the Church has to acquire education from the great Teacher, Jesus (Matt 22:36).

3.4.7 Proclamation

The Greek word *kerygma* can best be translated as proclamation, and is usually linked to the Gospel or good news. According to McKee (1989:40), “this chief ministry includes a number of tasks: The primary one recognised by all Protestants was preaching of the word and administering the sacraments. The second and third, claimed by the Reformed Church, were teaching and moral guidance or discipline”.

The content of this ministry is the good news that ‘God, Creator and Lord of the universe, has personally intervened in human history and has done so supremely through the person and ministry of Jesus of Nazareth who is the Lord of history, Saviour and Liberator’ (Kritzinger *et al.*, 1994:36). However, it is unusual to distinguish between *kerygma* (public proclamation) and *didache* (ethical instruction). While the two activities ideally conceived are distinct, both are based upon the same foundation. The *kerygma* proclaims what God has done: the *didache* teaches the implications of this for Christian conduct (Bruce *et al.*, 1990:961).

3.4.8 Evangelism

God is concerned not only with personal salvation and the training of individual disciples, but also with the establishing of His Kingdom on earth. He wants us to become a new society, a living community that will demonstrate, by its new life-style, new values and new relationship (Watson, 1979:135). Hence, the present Church is called out of all nations to do the same work of evangelising the world that Israel and others were called for in other ages. This is the mission and, therefore, one of the major roles of the Church – a call to the whole congregation to spread God’s word (Senkhane, 2002:27; cf. Dake, 1992:522).

The author cannot give details here about the way in which a minister should fulfil this task locally, however, Van Rensburg (2000:65) recognised that: “In our society, ministers need to develop effective skills as guide to their people on their journey through complex and confusing issues from the Bible, which should guide the members of the Church in their own decision”. Adams (1986:60) concurred: “A

minister's call to his work should acknowledge the recognition by the Church of Christ of his gifts for ministry and their peculiar suitability for the task required to meet the needs of a particular congregation". Therefore, evangelism in the post -1994 South Africa context implies several aspects:

- It means that the Church remains prophetic in its stance towards a new democratically elected government, which means it must continue to stand for the truth, but now on the basis of a shared commitment to the realization of national reconstruction (Ban, 1995:50);
- It implies that the Church should not allow any authority other than the Word of the Lord, the highest authority, to govern its affairs. The interest of the State, or the people, or any political ideology should not hold greater sway in the Church than the Will of God (De Gruchy, 1995; cf. Van der Walt & Swanepoel, 1996:94-5);
- It means the Churches in South Africa have to restore their holiness and redefine their obligations by being a critical voice in the development of the new dispensation (Vorster, 2007:257).

3.4.9 Discipleship

Senkhane (2002:26) defines discipleship as follows: "It is a many-faceted lifestyle, an amalgam of several ingredients. In particular it includes worship, faith, obedience and hope". She goes further, saying that the Church was called upon to undertake this role in order to assume God's leadership:

- Providing shelter for the homeless is an undertaking and the responsibility of the Church;
- Providing for the poor is part of the discipleship of the Church;
- Taking care of the handicapped is part of the Church's task in its discipleship obligation;
- To speak on behalf of the oppressed is a task of the Church.

It is clear that the call to discipleship is a call from the King and is work of the Kingdom. Christ does give it to his disciples, the Church leaders of the time, but most probably also to a number of other people present at the time. Above all the “unto the end of the world” indicates that the call was not limited to the disciples (Van der Walt, 1991:345).

3.5 Church as organism

It is common in Reformed theology to distinguish between the Church as institution and the Church as organism. According to Monsma (2006:122-3), an organism is any plant, animal or human being that is living. Abraham Kuyper made use of these terms from biology to describe the relevance of the Church for the social and ethical problems. The apostle Paul also described the Church as a living body in two of his letters (1 Cor. 12:12-31, Rom. 12:4-8). Many of the gifts or abilities used by Christians to benefit others, as mentioned by Paul, are not used in the worship but on many other occasions.

From this perspective, then, it is reasonable to say that the Church must consciously view itself as God’s instrument par excellence for doing his work in the world. Through His Church God wishes not only to proclaim his work of grace (*kerygma*), but also to realize his love in the service of human beings to their fellows (*diaconate*). Hence, the Church, both as institution and organism, should be a visible expression of the Kingdom to those still in rebellion against it. It should show the good news of reconciliation by the relationships between its members of all social, ethnic, and economic groups (Monsma *et al.*, 1991:15; Kritzinger *et al.*, 1994:44).

Vorster (2004:263) correctly states: “Churches are important moral decision makers. Apart from promoting a theocentric worldview according to Scripture, many other issues relating to the protection of the environment can be attended to by Churches at local level.” Senkhane (2002:29) also agrees saying, “The Church both in the Old and New Testament addressed biblically some ethical and community issues that were found in some early communities with similar problems prevalent in South Africa today”.

Some similar major social issues in the current time – to mention a few –that should be addressed by the church are:

- Sexual immorality;
- Disintegration of the nuclear family;
- HIV/Aids;
- Poverty;
- Crime.

3.5.1 Sexual immorality

Sexual immorality is rife in South Africa today. This statement is proved by the visible increase of prostitution, even child prostitution, and the promiscuous lifestyle of many young people (Vorster, 2007:37). Yet, indeed, our children are being brought up on secular humanism, which undermines moral values and leaves the children vulnerable at every turn (Van der Walt & Swanepoel, 1997:329; Marais *et al* (2005:117).

In such a climate it is not surprising that some people will be led to do things they should not do, that they hurt themselves and others, that they program themselves into behavioural games that are futile and destructive. The loss of virginity once made one a “fallen women”. Homosexuals, when discovered, were hounded out of the community. Society acted as though these were the most offensive forms of human sinfulness. Nowadays many people now see the fulfilment of sexual desires as a right, which no one can criticize (Mashau, 2006:43; Veith, 1994:196; Brill, 1979:95).

Sexual immorality in the South African community manifests itself especially in the following phenomena:

3.5.1.1 Homosexuality

Over the last decades, the homosexual issue has deeply impacted the Church of Jesus Christ (Davies & Rentzel, 1993:22). As a result most mainline denominations are

struggling over the issue of whether to ordain practicing homosexuals into the ministry. The question is totally divisive in many of these denominations, potentially splitting some if not resolved. Others are struggling with the matter of same-sex marriages (Eckman, 2004:51; Hoad *et al.*, 2005:197; Zastrow & Ashman, 2001:550; De Bruyn, 1998:189). Traditionally the Christian faith has regarded homosexual activity as inappropriate, as contrary to the will and purpose of God for mankind. The Scriptural references to homosexuality are: Genesis 19:1-11; Leviticus 18:22, 20:13; Judges 19:22-25; Romans 1:26, 27; 1 Corinthians 6:9; 1 Timothy 1:9-11. However, much as one may wish quite legitimately to qualify or contextualise these references, it seems to the present Bible translators that one may not avoid the conclusion that homosexual acts are always condemned and never approved by God (Moberly, 1983:27).

3.5.1.2 Teenage pregnancies

Sexual activity before marriage is an ongoing problem, especially for the young men and women in this country. In the tertiary institutions (universities, technikons, and Colleges) many unmarried students have sex in their rooms and as result many young girls do not finish school because of pregnancies resulting from premarital sex (Mashau, 2005:3; Britten & Britten, 1999:64; Everett, 1995:2). Although this trend is noticeable all over the world, this problem seems to be greater in developing countries (Greathead, 1998:154; cf. Baron & Byrne, 1994:324; Van der Walt, 1998:11; De Bruyn, 1993:98).

Gouws and Kruger (2000:131) detailed the following statistics:

- Girls of 16 and younger give birth to about 50 000 babies each year. Which implies that in South Africa more than 30% of all babies born each year, are the result of premarital sex.

Statistics such as these underscore the fact that the consequences of adolescent sexual risk behaviour are of grave concern and are in immediate need of effort to prevent their occurrence. To do so effectively the adequate employment of biblical counselling by the Church is vital. From this perspective, it is clear that the families

and Churches can no longer afford the luxury of pretending that everything is right whilst everything is just not right. Youth leaders, parents and the Church as a whole should organise workshops, seminars and conferences to talk about these issues, lest our youths perish (Mashau, 2007:48; Van der Walt & Swanepoel, 1997:22).

3.5.1.3 Christians attitude towards sexual immorality

As far as ethics is concerned, the question that has to be answered is: What is the correct Christian attitude toward the phenomenon of sexual immorality? The duty of the Church is first to carry a Scriptural testimony into society and, secondly, the Church has a particular calling towards people with a homosexual orientation. In the fulfilment of this calling, according to Vorster (2007:241), the following Scriptural principles should especially be emphasized these days, these times being the result of years of secularization of sexuality with its harmful and painful effects on human relationships.

3.5.1.4 Doctrine of love

The Christian doctrine of man as image of God is the foundation for Christian human treatment of their fellow humans. Therefore, the homosexual person should be fully accepted into the community of believers and cannot be excluded from for instance the ecclesiastical offices as a result of the deviating orientation. Christian love cannot be limited to persons of the same group, nation, race, class or sexual orientation. As depraved people that fight against their own depravity, Christians should love all people unqualified, although they hate sin itself. The person with a homosexual orientation must be treated and regarded with love. As in the case of racism, ethnocentrism, xenophobia and sexism, homophobia should be rejected (Vorster, 2007:240).

Homosexual people are, like all people, an image bearer of God. However, the Church cannot promote the so-called homosexual rights. This is evident for several reasons:

- Homosexuals have rights as citizens but not as homosexuals. However, when the practice of homosexuality interferes with the rights of others (as in solicitation of children), then their rights as citizens can be abrogated (by prison);
- Homosexuality is morally wrong, and the civil law should not encourage what is morally wrong and;
- It is as meaningless to speak of homosexual right as it is to speak of rapist's rights, child abuser's right or murderer's rights. Rapists have no civil (or moral) right to be rapists and child molesters have no civil right to be child molesters. Likewise, there are no civil rights to perform homosexual acts (Geisler, 1989:266).

3.5.1.5 Doctrine of the creation

The doctrine of creation teaches us that contrary to Gnostic heresy, our bodies are not an accident or a result of fall, but God's design from the very beginning. Therefore, sexual intercourse is intended by God to be doubly recreational: recreating children and for re-creational nature, pleasure and fun between wife and husband (Fowler & House, 1988; Jones & Yarhouse, 2000:160; Mashau, 2005:11).

On the other hand, the Bible presents a fundamental reason for teaching the one-man one-woman model of union described in Genesis 2:24. Paul also speaks of this purpose of marriage in describing the role that Christian marriage should play in instructing the world about the nature of the relationship between Christ and His Church (Van der Walt & Swanepoel, 1997:210). In summary, the church should make it clear that defining marriage in any way other than the way the Bible defines it is a denial of the essence of God's plan of redemption.

Regarding the phenomenon of teenage pregnancies in our country, Churches in South Africa will need to reflect anew on the theological and ethical dimensions and obligations. The core problem, in other words, will be to revive and implement an inclusive ecclesiology. The keys among issues where the Church can give guidelines are the following:

3.5.1.5 The essence of sexual intercourse

There is one message from the Church and that is: sex is a wonderful gift from God that should be enjoyed within the bond of marriage (Genesis 2:18-25). It is not to be abused in adultery, fornication, homosexuality or incest. Anyone who has sex outside the confines of marriage is sinning against God who created him or her. This means that the marriage should then be formalized according to the common law and the two would be considered husband and wife. Only after the rituals to unite have been performed, would they be allowed to have sex (Geisler, 1989:278). Thus Churches and families should stand together in preaching the gospel that African youths should wait for marriage before they engage in sex. Paul also encourages youths to get married when they can no longer bear to live without sex (Mashau, 2006:48).

The inferences that can be drawn from the above is that God's special revelation of His Will for our lives certainly contains what we must regard as universal principles that should guide our actions. This means that the consequences of our actions and choices are relevant to our ethical choice, especially as Christian's faith informs our understanding of what is good for us and others (Astley, 2000:33)

Based on this premise, traditional Christian ethical teaching on sexual immorality can be summarized along the lines of the following mandates:

- One should refrain from sexual activity until marriage;
- An essential and normal purpose of marriage is to produce children; and
- One should choose a spouse from the opposite sex; and marriage is a lifelong commitment (Boulton *et al.*, 1994:319; Geisler, 1989:280; Astley, 2000:33).

3.5.2 Disintegration of the nuclear family

The nuclear family has been present in one form or another during every historical period and every known society (cf. Greenway & Mashau, 2007:17). It is an institution which was established in God's creation of man and woman. Subsequently, God instituted marriage so that in marriage, men and women must reproduce to continue with God's creation (Senkhane, 2002:35; cf. Fowler & House, 1988:9; Jones & Yarhouse 2000:160; Mashau, 2005:11). However, the last four decades witnessed tremendous and wide-ranging changes in family patterns in Western societies. Among these changes are phenomena such as growing divorce rates, out-of wedlock births and father absence due to globalization (Vorster, 2007:169; Greenway & Mashau, 2007:17).

Concomitantly, the development of labour migration also contributed to the disintegration of the family. In rural African, traditional values have been passed down from generation to generation through a process of interaction. These values were important because they added significant meaning and purpose to everyday life. What this suggests, perhaps, is that the concept of ubuntu and supportive networks have been lost, which means that instead of looking to adults for guidance, children turn to their peers for "behavioural points of references". Another factor lost in the rural/urban transition is that of "meaningful roles." Many young people born into an urban culture today do not receive any validation or reinforcement of their cultural roles, which indigenous traditions and rituals provide (Boikanyo & Donnell, 1998:50-7).

From the above one is led to believe that the nuclear family is in turmoil and, therefore, the picture is a grim one for our "nation in making" when one considers the importance and functions of the nuclear family in society. In general, the challenge facing the Church is to revisit its purpose from the biblical point of view to be able to interact accordingly with the abovementioned issues.

3.5.3 HIV/Aids

Vorster (2004:225) notes that: “One of the most crucial issues in the modern human rights debate is the way in which society should deal with the implications of HIV/Aids. This new social problem challenges some of the core values underlying human rights in a constitutional democracy”. From the abovementioned statement it is clear that as a theological problem, HIV/Aids offers the Church one theological possibility which is the hermeneutical interpretive model, which identifies God with suffering (cf. 2 Cor. 1:5; Mk. 10:39; Rom. 8:17). In this perception God has a heart: all man’s actions and thoughts are taken to the crucified heart of a suffering God. Whatever form the suffering of a Christian takes it can be regarded as a cross which may be taken up in following Christ in the way of His cross (cf. Mt. 16:24; Rom. 8:29). Such suffering is indeed the inevitable way that leads to resurrection and glory (Heb. 12:1-2; Mt. 5:10; 2 Cor. 4:17). It is by tribulation that men enter the Kingdom of God (Acts 14:22; Jn. 16:21). The coming of the new age is preceded by birth pains on earth, in which the Church has its decisive share (Mt. 24:21-22; Rev. 12:1-2, 13-17; cf. Dn. 12:1; Mi. 4:9-10). Since the suffering of Christ is sufficient in itself to set all men free (Is. 53:4-6; Heb. 10:14, it is entirely by grace, and not in any way by necessity, that the sufferings in which His people participate with Him can be spoken of as filling up what is lacking in His affliction (Col. 1:24), and as giving fellowship in His vicarious and redemptive suffering.

Such an image of God does not induce Christianity to ask who and what is the cause of HIV/Aids, but how and what is the quality of ones compassion. This means that the debate about the role of the Church needs to address continually the prominent ethical issues such as the disturbing factor of stigmatization and the ethical dilemma of HIV/Aids (Vorster, 2004:237; Marais *et al.*, 2005:116).

The following remarks can be considered in this debate:

- A realistic insight and understanding, which acknowledges reality and does not play games. The fact is that the disease can be fatal. An ethic of love operates with the reality of the Aids patients’ adaptation to mourning and grief;

- Empathy. The message must be brought home: “I understand your loneliness, anxiety and feeling of guilt.” An ethic of love accepts the Aids patients unconditionally;
- Support. The complete attitude of the pastor should be: “I am here, I am available and you will not suffer or die in isolation” (Louw, 1994:129-30). Nouwen (1994:42-3) also mentioned that: “A good death is a death in solidarity with others, and to prepare ourselves for a good death, we must develop or deepen this sense of solidarity”. He went further stating that the mystery of life is that we discover this human togetherness, not when we are powerful and strong, but when we are vulnerable and weak. In light of this enormous human sameness, the many differences between the ways in which we live and die no longer have to separate us but can, to the contrary, deepen our sense of communion with one another;
- Another facet, which Christian ethics must take into consideration is the dimension of testing. Who are to be tested? Must testing, for example, be compulsory for people with high risk behaviour, for possible organ donors, patients to undergo surgery, surgeons and nursing staff, pregnant women, people applying insurance policies, rape victims, or for children to be admitted to children homes or schools? The problem of testing leads to the problem of confidentiality. Should someone be tested HIV positive, may this be made public? These questions are important because they are all part of coping with Aids patients in a systemic network of relationships and structures;
- Furthermore, Christians should define the Biblical concept of hope in a contextual sense for people who can see no brighter future. The local congregation, as a caring community, must provide a sphere of acceptance, fellowship and understanding for the people suffering from HIV (Vorster, 2004:237);
- Lastly, it is beyond doubt that the ethical dilemma of Aids affects patients profoundly. Therefore, the possible danger always exists that patients develop a type of fatalism: “I won’t go alone”. From the Christian ethical perspective they must be led to behave responsibly. Especially people who have been tested HIV-positive must realize that they can transmit the virus to others.

Personal responsibility, stability and maturity are thus important aspects when dealing with the ethical problems of Aids patients (Louw, 1994:130).

3.5.4 Poverty

One has examples in the Lord's Word showing that the Church was concerned about those who were in need of help, and that they were helped as there was the means to do so (Deuteronomy 15:11). Again in Acts 6 one reads of a dispute that came about between the Grecians and Hebrews because the Grecian widows were neglected in their daily ministrations. So the Apostles called the disciples together and had them choose seven men from among them so that they might be appointed to handle this phase of the work of the Church (Monsma, 2006:40; cf. Choate, 2000:51; Forrester, 1997:64; Meeks, 1983, 158).

In its teaching and preaching ministries towards its members the Church must proclaim the norms of the Kingdom regarding poverty, evaluate present conditions locally, nationally and internationally in light of these norms, and call its members to action against situations which are not in accordance with these norms. However, it must also proclaim the gospel of the Kingdom to institutions and people outside of the church. Both the internal preaching and teaching and the external proclamation should address structural causes such as policies of government and other institutions as well as the existence of poverty itself. The Church should call government and other institutions to just actions in accordance with their callings from God. However, the Church should do this in humility, confessing its own sins in this regard, and generally should not as an institution endorse specific legislation, political parties or candidates, or socio-economic-political systems (Monsma *et al.*, 1991:15-6).

In addition to the abovementioned, the diaconal service of the local Church is also important in this aspect because of the direct aid it can give to those within and outside of the Church. The diaconal dimension of the Church refers to the various forms of ministry and service in which the Christian community, in imitation of Jesus of Nazareth (who was among us as one who serves), puts himself at the service of the whole world (McKee, 1989:62; Kritzinger *et al.*, 1994:37).

3.5.5 Crime and violence

As indicated in Chapter 2, crime in South manifests in various forms: theft, killing, housebreaking and corruption – to name a few. All these are issues that affect society enormously and have since become the order of the day. The Church through its proclamation of the message of justice needs to preach the word of God to rebuke these crimes that have caused such a high rate of instability in life as whole (cf. Isaiah 9:5; 2 Cor. 13:11; Eph. 2:17).

On the other hand violence and interrogation were some of the issues that faced Jesus Christ in His Ministry (Mark 14:35). He prayed and interceded for women and children whose rights had been violated (cf. Mark 10:13-16; Matt. 5:28; Luke 1:3-4). This restoration of order was prophesied long before that when Jesus comes there will no longer be violence. The Church needs to learn from these Scriptures and become involved in the restoration of hope for the people (Senkhane, 2002:35).

3.6 Summary

The Church exists primarily to worship and adore God. It must praise His most Holy name. However, it can never use this as a form of escapism; it must take seriously the world He has created and which He loved so much that He gave His only begotten son (John 3:16). This means that the Church in new the South Africa cannot afford to cut itself off from the rest of society, living a separate and enclosed life of its own. If it were to do that, the Church would not be effective and might eventually become paralyzed or perish altogether. When Jesus called upon his disciples to be “the salt of the earth”, he was challenging them to be involved in the society (cf. Matt. 5:13).

Based on this premise, the prophetic calling of the Church in moral renewal can be summarized along the lines of the following mandate:

- Firstly, the Church is called to teach and work for justice in society. In its teaching office the Church has the responsibility to help shape the conscience of the society concerning people’s obligations to one another and the implications of this obligation for social life. In its action as a part of the

wider society, the church has the responsibility to join in efforts to bring about greater justice in social policies and practices;

- Secondly, the Church is called to work for right relationships within its own community as well as in the wider society. Within its walls the Church has a duty to express love and justice in the relations of its members to one another and to the Christian community: in its unqualified devotion to God, its continuing theological ethical reflection on its responsibilities, its respect and affirmation of its members regardless of their rank or talents and its honesty in the use of its own material possessions. This inward work of the Church is not mere institutional maintenance, but rather a continuing institutional renewal. This means that the Church's primary duty lies in outward rather than inward work. Within the society at large the Church is called to seek patterns of mutual affirmation and social practices by which people can better attack the immense injustices that beset them on every side;
- Thirdly, the Church's calling in the world belongs both to individual Christians and to the Church as a body. Obviously individual Christians in their roles as citizens have a duty to bring their faith to bear upon social issues through the various groups to which they belong. However, to stop at that would leave them with insufficient support in the midst of society's conflicts. This means that the Church as a body is called to help its members find effective means of action, to keep before them the awareness of their Christian orientation in the midst of the secular society and to assist them to bring their judgments carefully to bear upon complex social issues (Allen, 1995:295).

CHAPTER FOUR
THE ROLE OF THE STATE IN MORAL RENEWAL OF THE SOUTH
AFRICAN COMMUNITY

4.1 Introduction

No person, organisation or institution in modern society is totally exempt from the all-pervasive influence of government, irrespective of the nature of the political system and the form of State within which they reside. One has to deal with the government of our country every single day of one's life. When one is born, the registration of the birth is a state requirement. When entering schools the education is heavily influenced by government guidelines and regulations. Later in life one will need to apply for an identity document or card provided by the Department of Home Affairs. Similarly when one passes away, a death certificate is issued and state intervention is part and parcel of estate proceedings, even more so if we have not left a will (Venter, 1998:109; Van der Walt, 1996:46). Indeed, politics involve serious moral problems, but its moral evils lie in how it is carried out, and not in that it is (Allen 1996:255).

Having given this analysis, the objective of this chapter, therefore, is to outline the role of the State towards moral regeneration.

The following key issues are dealt with in this chapter:

- Theological founding of the State,
- The role of the State; and
- Summary.

4.2 Theological founding of the State

The idea of a theocracy in essence means that the State governs under the direct leadership of God (or an idea of God). All legislation and its execution should flow from a specific religious tradition. In the process other philosophical and religious motifs are declared invalid for the purposes of the State's household. In practice this

point of view results in an antithesis between the state religion and other religions and philosophical traditions (Macridis & Burg, 1991:55; Vorster, 2004:213). Theocracy also played an important part in the Reformed tradition. It was exactly this idea which brought Calvin to view the State as the protector and promoter of the Reformed religion. He was followed in his view by the Belgic Confession (articles 36) and the Westminster Confession (articles 23) (Vorster, 2004:211).

4.3 The role of the State in moral renewal

Although the functioning of a modern State is highly complex, the goals and purpose of the South African government towards moral regeneration can be expressed in simple terms: Applicable legislation or statutes, development of the core values of the community and improving the quality of life of the population.

4.3.1 Applicable legislation or statutes

As a result of rapid changes in society, constitutional law, like many other branches of the law, is largely contained in legislation. The term 'legislation' refers to generally applicable rules of law made by government authorities. Traditionally in South Africa the term has been associated with laws made by Parliament, provincial laws and ordinances, municipal by-laws and proclamations and regulations by the president and ministers all fall under legislation (Rautenbach & Malherbe, 2004:22). The legislature intends to promote the public good. The term "public good" refers to those things that are to the benefit of the community as whole. On the other hand, statutes determine what the inhabitants of this country may or may not do (Heerden & Crosby, 1996:6-7).

Belgic confession Article 36 also declares, that "we believe that our gracious God, because of the depravity of mankind, has appointed kings, princes and magistrates; willing that the world should be governed by certain laws and policies; to the end that the dissoluteness of men might be restrained, and all things carried on among them with good order and decency" (Kromminga, 1943:15).

Much the same principle was stated in the confession about the duty of the magistrate, the second Helvetic Confession (1566) stated:

Let him (the magistrate), therefore, hold the Word of God in his hands, and look that nothing be taught contrary there-unto. In like manner, let him govern the people, committed to him of God, with good laws, made according to the Word of God in his hands, and look that nothing be taught contrary there-unto (Vorster, 2004:201)

The same idea was stated by Calvin when he explained the purpose of the earthly regime as to cherish and protect the outward service of God, to regulate the sound teaching of *pietas* and the condition of the Church, to regulate our lives for human society, to form our morals for civil justice, to reconcile us one with another and to nurse the common peace and tranquillity (Parker, 1995:158). It is clear from the arguments above that God is the legislator. He subjected the whole of creation to laws. The Bible also uses different words to express this. Think of Psalm 19 and its hymn of praise directed at the words, teaching, commands, demands and instructions of the Lord. They are perfect, reliable; clear, right, good and more precious than gold because they offer insight, wisdom, direction and joy to those who obey them (Van der Walt, 1994:129; Lewis, 1992:23).

This order, which God set for His creatures, has been revealed in three ways:

- **Creational Word**

The best way to understand the concept of the law of God as it permeates every part of reality is to comprehend that law simply describes reality. Rather than being arbitrary rules to be obeyed or suffer the consequences, all the laws of God describe what things are and how they function. It is true that if you go against the law there is a consequence to be borne. If you try to defy gravity by jumping off the roof of your house you will suffer the consequence (Lewis, 1992:24). As Van der Walt, (1994:130) states: "If in the field of politics one does not observe the criteria for righteousness and justice, one will come to a point where one cannot be certain of a future in one's own fatherland any longer. If in the field of economics one exploits

the earth and one's fellow men, one will be faced by pollution, unemployment, poverty and even famine".

- **Scriptural Word**

Apart from His non-lingual creational revelation God expresses His will clearly in lingual terms in the Bible (Drane, 1976:39; Kammer, 1991:42; Forrester, 1997:2). It is true that one cannot simply use the Bible as a textbook and apply what it contains without more ado in this day and age. One has to distinguish between the erstwhile form and permanent norm, so that one can formulate contemporary norms along those lines (Maston, 1979:99).

- **Incarnated Word**

God's goodness extends so far that He clarifies His will to us in a third way. He does not only speak to us through creation and written Word. He has also incarnated His Word concretely in a human being. However, Christ is not a Platonic model which one should try to imitate. He is the example, whom one can follow. In Christ one does not only see a perfect embodiment of God's will. He also saves one from disobedience through His Spirit, so that one can once again voluntarily and joyfully obey God's laws (Van der Walt, 1994:130).

It is clear from the foregoing that God's law is above the government. That is to say, the true law is the law of God, and is not the government but is over the government. In other words, "all men, even the king, are under the law and not above it (Lewis, 1992:28; Geisler, 1989:242). However, South Africa has entered a new future where the new Constitution can be considered as the greatest contribution to the separation model (Vorster, 2004:109; Van der Walt & Swanepoel, 1996:254). The contrast between the earlier situation and the present can be made clear amongst others in the following three points:

- Government is now considered as a purely human institution which gets its legitimacy only from the people it governs;

- The State is “neutral”, meaning that the task of the State, after all, is not to interfere and to give preference to one religion, but to guarantee the freedom of all religions (cf. Vorster, 2007:161);
- This does not necessarily mean that the State is hostile toward religion. Article 15(2) of Chapter 2 of the Constitution allows religious ceremonies in purely State or State-supported institutions under certain conditions.) In the public sector, however, religion is completely privatized, limited to the faith of the individual, in married life, family and Church (Van der Walt, 2007:226).

Indeed, the vacuum left in the public domain by the disappearance of Christianity was filled in most countries by the secular state and its judicial system, guided by a liberal, humanistic Constitution. The courts interpret and propagate this secular State. What they have legalized must be accepted as moral even though it may be decisions (Van der Walt, 2007:250). Only a few are cursorily mentioned:

- The children’s Act 38 of 2005;
- Civil Union Bill;
- The termination of Pregnancy Act 92 of 1996;
- The right to privacy;
- The right to health care, and social security.

These five laws (Acts) will be discussed here with the focus on the provisions of each, how each would affect the community of South Africa as well as a critical evaluation of each.

4.3.1.1 The children’s Act 38 of 2005

The Children’s Act, sections of which came into effect in 2007, has been met with mixed reactions. For some it is a victory, a piece of legislation that addresses core issues faced by children. For others, it is a ticket to destroy the country’s already weak moral fibre. However, everyone seems to agree on one thing that the Act has far-reaching implications, especially for girls. The main bone of contention centres on the Act granting 12 year olds the right to access to contraceptives and terminate a

pregnancy without parental consent. Another point that has raised eyebrows is the fact that 18-year-olds can now get married without permission from parents (Rapitso, 2007:1).

The Act says it addresses the plight of children as individuals outside the nuclear family and community however; the following critical remarks can be made about this Act:

- Greenway and Mashau (2007:108) recognize that: “Children in South Africa are regarded as an integral part of the society. As already noted this is clearly articulated in the Constitution of this country (Section 28 of the 1996 Constitution of the Republic of South Africa).” Section 28 (1) (b) inhibits any legislation or administrative action which has the effect of separating children from parents. For example, immigration legislation and policy should promote family life by allowing parents outside South Africa to join children already inside the State (Currie & de Waal, 2005:606). However, this Act will create conditions which remove children from parental care, deepening social problems such as teenage pregnancies;
- If a child undergoes an abortion without the knowledge of her parents, how is she going to obtain the aftercare that is required? If there are complications how are the parent’s going to intervene if they are not informed?
- A father’s power to arrange the marriage of his children is synonymous with African cultural traditions. In this regard the bride’s guardian in particular plays a pivotal role. He can prevent or delay his daughter’s marriage by refusing the bride offered. Women, of course, are never free of the need to obtain a guardian or parents consent (Bennett, 1995:117; Mashau, 2006:48). Indeed, this Act will erode the African value systems;
- The Act confuses and contaminates young minds and shakes and distorts their spiritual integrity. The contamination of young minds and removal of cherished values is particularly treacherous and evil. The Holy Bible is also clear on this: “Whoever offends one of these little ones who believes in Jesus, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea (cf. Matthew 18:6);

- It is true that many children in South Africa do not live with both or either of their parents. The right to a family care includes the right to be cared for by the extended family. Although the South African common law and statutes have always recognized only the nuclear family, Courts should realise that the South African family takes on various forms and should be careful not to favour one family form over the others. The inclusion of the extended family under the right to family care in Section 28 (1) (b) of the Constitution is, therefore, a welcome improvement and it is consistent with current law reform efforts aimed at including the extended family in providing for the child's welfare. In addition to members of the extended family, children often also have relationships with people who are not biologically related to them such as stepparents, ministers of religion, friends and other caretakers. These relationships should be protected through a wide definition of family membership which focuses on caring relationship rather than biological ties (Currie & de Waal, 2005:608);
- There should be intervention in cases where there are problems. Therefore, the right to alternative care includes the right to adoptive or foster care and the right to be cared for by the State where the child concerned is in need of care. However, for Currie and de Waal (2005:609), the Law Reform Commission has noted that the mere fact that a child is found to be in need of care should not necessarily mean that the child should be removed from the family. Instead, mechanisms that aim to maintain the family and to support the child within the family should be implemented and removal should only happen as a matter of last resort.

4.3.1.2 Civil Unions Act

Under the guise of freedom of expression and freedom of choice, gays and lesbians have gained publicity in South Africa because of a controversial clause included in the country's new Bill of Rights, which deals with "equality". In essence, the Bill of Rights prohibits any discrimination based on sexual orientation (McCauley & Steel, 1996:57; Hoad *et al.*, 2001:189). Hence, the Constitutional Court in 2006 ruled that the Marriage Act of 1961 as it stands discriminates against certain preferences,

especially against same sex marriage. As a result the South African government was forced to establish a new legal formulation of marriage (civil union) that altered drastically what the natural marriage is.

The Civil Union laws provisions are:

- The Civil Union will provide for the formal and legal recognition of gay and lesbian partnerships with the same rights as conventional marriages;
- Any two people aged at least 18 years may enter a civil partnership, which they call a marriage. Partners may legally refer to each other as husband, wife, spouse or partner;
- No one may be a partner in more than one civil union under either of the laws providing for marriage;
- Civil Union Marriage must, like all traditional marriages, be conducted indoor in a public office, a house or a church or wedding centre (Zulu, 2006:11).

Certain critical remarks can also be made about this Civil Union:

In addition to the repeated Biblical condemnation of homosexual practices, there are strong moral and social indications of the wrongness of this deviant sexual practice. The most important of these follow:

- God ordained heterosexual relationships when he created “male and female” and commanded them to have children. Sex was given a family context from the very beginning. God said, “A man [male] will leave father and mother and be united to his wife [female], and they will become one flesh”. Paul makes it clear that “one flesh” implies sexual intercourse. Therefore, a civil union is unnatural and it goes against the cumulative historical evidence that the best family unit consists of a father and a mother (Geisler, 1989:267; Smedes, 1983:167);
- The complementary roles of mothers and fathers as heterosexual parents to children are crucial to build stable societies. A mother and a father each contribute vital elements to the formation of their children’s characters and the

modelling of family structures. Parenting, thus, is a process in which both parents are expected to meet the spiritual, personal, physical and social developmental needs of the child. As the child grows up, a variety of needs (e.g. attachment, differentiation, individuation, constancy and generalization) need to be recognized and met (Kretzschmar & Hulley, 1998:63). In civil union the possibility and ability to raise children according to the traditional and universally recognized concept of marriage are virtually non-existent;

- The demand by gays for adoption rights may have sinister motives of generating a new 'gay race'. Because gays and lesbian cannot procreate, the only way in which they can enlarge their community is to attempt to programme young children, through adoption, into a gay lifestyle. In addition, if a man marries a man, can they by this law adopt a girl child? The current Section in the proposed Bill of Rights on children states 'parental care' and that means, in normal societies, fathers and mothers. Further, the same Section stresses that all decisions made on behalf of a child should serve the best interests of the child (McCauley & Steel, 1996:55);
- God created human beings in his own image (Gen.1: 27). Not only man was created to be the best, he was meant to rule the creation and to lead by example. He was meant to be the crown of all creation and to maintain high moral standards in order to keep the world from moral decay (Van der Walt & Swanepoel, 1997:209). This is also true of sexuality in general and of sex acts in particular. Human sexuality is guided by what is specifically human life. Animals are not rationally and morally responsible creatures. They act from instinct and, hence, are not ethically culpable for their actions. Humans, on the other hand, are created in God's image and are responsible to act in a God-like manner and not like animals (Geisler, 1989:267; Nelson, 1979:105; Mickleby, 1976:96);
- The verdict on marriages between people of the same sex in South Africa departs from a certain view of right to privacy in this case a secular-humanist life and worldview. According to Vorster (2007:243), the underlying life and worldview can be questioned from a Christian ethical perspective. It firstly disputes that the right of privacy is not the right to immorality. One's rights to privacy do not extend to unethical activity. For example, one has no right to

privately rape or privately kill. If, for instance, it is wrong to have a public orgy, then it is also wrong to have a private one. Changing the location of an immoral act does not change its violation of a moral law. Of course, the reverse is not true, for example, just because marital sex is good in private does not mean it is good in public (Geisler, 1989:266).

4.3.1.3 The termination of pregnancy Act 92 of 1996

The South African Constitutional Court described the rights to life and dignity as the most important of all human rights, and the source of all other personal rights in the [the Bill of Rights (Currie & de Waal; Van der Walt & Swanepoel, 1996:60).

However, in terms of the choice on termination of pregnancy Act 92 of 1996, any women in South Africa have the right to have a safe and legal termination of pregnancy. An abortion can only take place with the informed consent of the woman, and she cannot be forced to have an abortion because she is HIV positive. On the other hand, the Termination of Pregnancy Act does not require a woman to get her husband's consent to end her pregnancy. This means that health care workers cannot refuse to terminate a pregnancy because a woman has not told her husband. Only the pregnant woman's consent is required for the termination of the pregnancy. Another controversial question regarding this Act is that any girl of any age can consent to terminate her pregnancy. The girl does not need to have the consent of her parents or guardian for the procedures. Health care workers cannot refuse to terminate her pregnancy if she does not want to discuss her decision with her parents (Van Dyk, 2005:362; McCauley & Steel, 1996:48). In *Christian Lawyers Association of South Africa V Minister of Health* the Act was challenge in the High Court on the basis that it permitted the termination of human life, however, the challenge was rejected by the High Court (Currie & de Waal, 2005:288).

In these arguments, a view that is always advanced by the pro-choice lobby is that women should have absolute control over their own reproductive capacities. No one, not their husbands, the doctors, or the law should be able to make this choice on their behalf. That is why Rainey & Magill, (1996:165) maintain that: "The ability of women to participate equally in the economic and social life of the nation has been

facilitated by their ability to control their reproductive lives". Furthermore, this emphasis on the right of women to choose highlights a number of issues relevant to the life experiences of women in South Africa namely: "backroom" abortions. In a great many cases, these operations leave the women seriously damaged internally. Some die, while others are rendered permanently incapable of bearing a child. In the face of this alarming situation, many argue that the only solution was to liberalise the South African law so that any women in the country could request that a safe, medical abortion be performed if she did not wish to bear the child she was carrying (Kretzschmar & Hulley, 1998:95).

Notwithstanding the position of the pro-choice lobby and the depth of its moral commitment to defend women rights in South Africa, the following critical remarks can be offered in this regard:

- Usually, the more honest reason for abortions is the attempt to avoid unhappiness for the mother in having an "unwanted" child. In this view, for example, the termination of a pregnancy by taking the so-called "morning after" birth control pill would be a different kind of case from ending the life of a four-month-old foetus for reason of birth control (Stevens, 1981:46).
- The pro-choice view stresses the rights of women at the expense of the rights of the foetus. However, the foetus is not a passive, dependent, nerveless, fragile vegetable, as tradition has held, but a young human being, dynamic, plastic, resilient and in every large measure in charge of his environment and destiny. Furthermore, it is a scientific fact that the little being in the womb has fingerprints, hands, feet, skin, eyes, ears and genitals that are not the mother's (Ankerberg & Weldon, 1989:22). As Rainey & Magill, (1996:96) state: "No matter at which stage of development, the unborn life is granted an identical ethical value and it must be respected in an absolute way".

In the light of these scientific facts, one may now analyse the leading slogan of those arguing for abortion. Pro-choice lobby advocates argue that "Every woman has the right to control her own body". The words used in the slogan are examine below:

- Every woman does have the right to control her own body, but she does not have the right to control the destiny of another human being, the baby in her womb;
- Has the right – legally, Constitutional rights and freedom are not absolute. They have boundaries set by the rights of others and by important social concerns such as public order, safety, health and democratic values (Currie & de Waal, 2005:166). Therefore, no one has absolute rights over others. Human life is interrelated in such a way that many individual rights are necessarily curtailed for the welfare of society. For example, no female or male has the absolute right over his or her own body to mutilate it, to abuse it with drugs, to commit suicide, or to endanger the life of others. The same is true concerning human life in the womb (Ankerberg & Weldon, 1989:24);
- To control, or to be “in control” involves the assuming of personal responsibility. However, it is largely indiscriminate amoral sexuality that has led to many pregnancies. Thus, abortion has become the means to protect an immoral lifestyle, to cover over irresponsibility in birth control or to escape the personal responsibility of child rearing;
- Her own body, as has already been demonstrated, the foetus is not her own body. It is an independent person-with its own body (Ankerberg & Weldon, 1989:24);
- Last but not least, section 15(1) of chapter 2 (The Bill of Human Rights) reads as follows: “Everyone has the right to freedom of conscience, religion, thought, belief and opinion” (Van der Walt, 2007:169). In terms of this law (Termination of Pregnancy Act), where do the rights of medical practitioners stand? According to the principles of this law, the rights of medical practitioners were denied, because they cannot refuse to abort a foetus even when their beliefs are against the termination of pregnancy.

It is clear from the preceding argument that the dignity and equality of every human being, including the unborn child, must be recognized by civil society and protected by just laws. Defending the right of life is the foundational moral duty which should guide the conduct of every political society which aspires to social justice and which labours to establish and maintain the conditions necessary for humans flourishing in

civil society. Furthermore, human life is sacred because from its beginning it involves “the creative action of God,” and it remains forever in a special relationship with the Creator, who is its sole end. God alone is the Lord of life from its beginning until its end (Geisler, 1989:148). No one can in any circumstances claim for himself the right to destroy directly an innocent human being (Rainey & Magill, 1996:109).

Kretzschmar and Hulley (1998:97) support the abovementioned statement saying, “a foetus is potential human being, it is neither fully human nor is it sub-human, it is “in the process of becoming a human being” and God is at work in the process, no one has the right to interfere with the process of the development of a person unless some other moral purpose can be put forward”. In summary, although abortion may now be legally permissible in South Africa, it is still morally wrong, and no Court opinion can change the law of God prohibiting the taking of an innocent human life.

4.3.1.4 The right to privacy

The right to privacy is a fundamental right enshrined in the Chapter 2 on fundamental rights (article 13) of the South African Constitution and has two parts: the first part guarantees a general right to privacy, the second section protects against specific infringements of privacy, namely searches and seizures and infringements of the privacy of communications (Currie & de Waal, 2005:336).

The first section is used in the protection of HIV patients. The question may be asked why this principle is not used in the case of the other notifiable diseases? The obvious answer is the fact that HIV patients are stigmatized by the community. This situation proves that the government has a pragmatic approach that will lead nowhere. When the privacy of the individual overrides the interests of the community, then the right to privacy should be limited as in the case of the sufferers of all the other notifiable diseases (Vorster, 2004:235).

It is true that HIV positive people are victims of all forms of discrimination in the work place, educational institutions and even in religious communities. However, the following critical remarks can be made about this Act:

- The question should be asked: “What is the purpose of disclosure and notification?” The purpose is clearly to curb the spread of the disease and to protect people from being infected. Furthermore, the information gained can be used for better and more effective treatment. More information and transparency could be beneficial to the struggle against stigmatization and discrimination (Vorster, 2004:235);
- Keeping HIV a secret can cause more harm than good. Once HIV starts to affect a person’s immune system, that person needs proper health care. By refusing to disclose his or her status, he or she will not have access to the support, help and medication that is so important (Marais *et al.*, 2005:116).

In view of these principles, disclosure and notification should be considered. One should engage oneself in a ‘Heal the Nation-Campaign’ in which all, without pointing fingers, should know one’s HIV status and declare it public. That will help to reduce the infection rate while prolonging lives.

Concomitantly, the high level of crime in South Africa is eroding human rights at a pace that endangers the political stability of the country. This is given weight by the widely held perception in society that the Constitution favours criminals over victims. This perception stems from the fact that the criminals in South Africa manipulate the right to privacy for their ends. In terms of this Act, “Everyone has the right to privacy” and this includes the right not to have:

- Their person or home searched;
- Their property searched;
- Their possessions seized; or the privacy of their communication infringed.

The right to privacy prevents the police raiding suspected premises. As a result there is low success rate in apprehending criminals in South Africa. The Constitution and legislation must empower the police and not disempower them (Van der Walt & Swanepoel, 1997, 330).

4.3.1.5 The right to health care and social security

Child mortality is one of the issues of great concern in the South African context. This is the case because the majority of South Africans are born and reared in unhealthy conditions that harm their health and put their lives at stake. To date there are also many cases of children who are infected with HIV and those who are dying from Aids (Greenway & Mashau, 2007:112). In terms of the South African Constitution the State must take reasonable legislative and measures, within its available resources, to achieve the progressive realization of each of these above-mentioned problems. The Constitution of South Africa should be applauded for such a milestone in terms of protecting the rights of the people. However, everyone seems to agree on the fact that the Act has far-reaching implications, especially for the youth of this country.

The following remarks can be made regarding this Act:

Teenage pregnancy is on the rise in schools despite efforts by the government to discourage pupils from indulging in sexual activity. Teachers say the pregnancy rate has caused high levels of absenteeism and failure as girls attend to their babies during school hours (Mabuza, 2007:4). Whatever plans the government is implementing to combat teenage pregnancies and HIV seem to be fanning the flames rather than putting them out. The government claims that they first promote abstinence and/or remaining faithful to one's sexual partner, but when the "A" (Abstinence) and "B" (Be faithful) fail, then they advise people to "C" (Condomise). However, what has been most prevalent is government's promotion of condoms. This has been clearly seen by the allocation of resources to these methods of preventing HIV/Aids and teenage pregnancies. The bulk of the government's money has been directed towards condoms (Sibiya, 2005:19). It is true that every life matters and deserves to be fought for. However, throwing billions of rand into the government's strategy of encouraging the use of condoms has created the following problems:

- While it is true that condoms minimize the spread of the virus, it is also true that condoms give adolescents a false sense of safety and invites them to have sex more often, and with multiple partners (Greenway & Mashau, 2007:16).

From this perspective, then, it is reasonable to say that this method has not yielded the desired results, especially judging by the demographics of HIV infections and teenage pregnancies in the country;

- On the other hand, the government has offered an attractive grant to young mothers. Boys can just impregnate young girls and then leave the responsibility of raising those children to the Department of Welfare. As for young girls from poor backgrounds, a child-support grant means getting money she could only dream of having (Sibiya, 2007:34). This argument stems from the fact that the child support grant system is being beset by a wide range of accountability problems from some of the many young mothers receiving it on behalf of their children and using the money for reasons other than the benefit of their children.

It is clear from the arguments above that if South Africa is to be a dignified constitutional country, then the Constitutional Court must play an even more important role in order that its citizens are fully protected. It is not enough that the Constitutional Court must only be empowered to interpret the law, as is currently the case. It must also be empowered to be the final recommending body for the bills to be signed into law. Not only so, but the Constitutional Court must also look again at the entire Constitution and make recommendations for amendments, in order to close all opportunities for manipulation by politicians.

4.4 Development of the core values of community

The normative values of society are undergoing constant change under the influences of historical and social change. At present the social fabric is very heterogeneous and values are fluid and relative. The onus rests on the individual to direct his behaviour in accordance with values of his own choice. This responsibility, which devolves on the individual in modern society, can create problems for the adolescent because he/she is confronted by a bewildering variety of values without guidelines or rules to help him/her to decide which of these to accept and which to reject (Gouws & Kruger, 1996:187).

This means that in the consolidation of a new and tentative democracy, no challenge is ultimately more important than developing a democratic political culture. Political culture may be defined as a people's predominant beliefs, attitudes, values, ideals and sentiments (Van der Waldt & Helmbold, 1995:162; Vorster (2004:283). These are:

- A culture of respect in schools;
- Ubuntu;
- Sexual morality;
- Family life;
- Respect for life and property;
- Accountability and responsibility;
- Honesty;
- Diligence;
- Love.

4.4.1 A culture of respect in schools

The years of struggle for liberation by African youth led to a new attitude towards authority. It resulted in pupil's rejection of the authority of teachers and headmasters. By means of student representative councils (SRC), pupils ran the school, deciding who would head the school, whether pupils would write examinations or not and who would pass. The slogan "pass one pass all" was common in African schools. Consequently pupils equated work with oppression and freedom with avoidance of work and defiance of authority. Many pupils became negative, defensive, reactionary and violent. A culture of learning was superseded by a culture of violence. This has led to educational problems, for example examination malpractice by pupils and poor work ethic among teachers (Mkhabe & Luthili, 1994:8; Everett, 1995:2; Van Zyl Slabbert *et al.*, 1994:333).

Having given this context, one of the greatest tasks facing the Department of Education in South Africa today is to search for those dynamics that will bring about a culture and constructive authority in schools. Learners must be helped to accept such authority because democracy does not exclude authority. Coupled with that, teachers

needs to be re-educated as to how they should exercise authority. As Vorster (2007:38) states: “The transformation of education will not function successfully if it is not accompanied by ethos or culture of human rights and respect as well as a sound work ethic”.

4.4.2 Ubuntu

In every transforming society the content of the environment in which transformation takes place needs to be looked at. In this regard the concept of ubuntu needs closer evaluation.

According to Rautenbach and Malherbe (2004:10), in the South African Constitutional Court, references were made to “ubuntu” as a concept. It was stated: “It recognizes a person’s status as a human being, entitled to unconditional respect, dignity, value and acceptance from the members of the community such person happens to be part of. It also entails the converse, however. The person has a corresponding duty to give the same respect, dignity, value and acceptance to each member of that community. More importantly, it regulates the exercise of rights by the emphasis it lays on sharing and co-responsibility and the mutual enjoyment of rights by all.

In essence ubuntu (humanity) is based on the premise that one can be respected only because of one’s cordial co-existence with others. It translates into “I am because we are” and is manifested in the slogan “iyandla yiyahlambana,” the Xhosa proverb, which is translated to mean, “The hands wash each other”. In other words, people are interdependent; without one another one can’t survive (Balshaw & Goldberg, 2005:44; Mbigi & Maree, 1995:121; Lessem & Nussbaum, 1996:70).

In initiating a comprehensive public awareness programme aimed at informing the public and stimulating discussion on moral regeneration, the society’s broader objectives need to be balanced against the concept of “Ubuntu” (Balshaw & Goldberg, 2005:44; cf. Buchanan & Hendricks, 1995:179). It is important to understand the above cultural beliefs and openly recognize their worth and role in the process of moral regeneration.

4.4.3 Sexual morality

There is a sexual revolution among African youth in South Africa. The 'who-cares' mentality seems to be gaining ground. Prostitution, cohabitation, homosexuality, pornography and prostitution are symptoms of the kind of sexual perversion among the youth today. There can be no doubt that this new pattern of sexuality is the largest contributing factor in the spread of HIV/Aids in this country. It is true that a government cannot control sexual morality with legislation. In this regard the educational system and civil society have a special duty. It is time to restore the pride of humanity by reminding oneself that one should start to behave like moral human beings by doing away with all sorts of sexual pervasions including pornography, rape, homosexuality, incest and prostitution (Greenway & Mashau, 2007:17; Vorster, 2007:38).

4.4.4 Family life

In actual fact family life shapes the outcomes of society in all spheres of life because it is the source or origin of any society. It has already been indicated that the tragic state of affairs in the South African context is that family life is in a deep crisis, and is, in fact, disintegrating.

4.4.5 Respect of life and property

Tsedu (2007:21) reports that "[a] total of 105 children were murdered in the intimacy of their neighbourhood and homes in the Western Cape between March last year and March this year." Those arrested for the murders ranged from boyfriends of the mothers to neighbours. In other words, the dictum of "it takes a village to raise a child" no longer seems to apply in South Africa. On the other hand, the perception persists, though, that many Africans still experience alienation towards public facilities, manifesting itself in vandalizing of essential resources by people who need those resources to survive.

Mkabela and Luthuli (1997:8) support this viewpoint by saying that “The origins of this attitude and its consequential sets of behaviour can be traced back to the political struggles of the 1980s that encouraged a revolt against public authority and public resources”. Under such circumstance a culture of violence (the idea that “violence is a useful and acceptable instrument by which aims can be achieved, as well as an intolerant attitude and an attitude whereby the preciousness of human life tends to be devalued”) could develop (Van Zyl Slabbert *et al.*, 1994:399). When the new government came to power, no rehabilitation was done around the notions of relationship to State, power and government.

Part of the problem may be about a lack of self-love, dignity and respect for humanity. Evidently, there is sufficient reason for national concern and a national campaign to first understand the phenomenon and second, start the process of dealing with it. Unless that is done, the slide towards acceptance of the abnormal as normal will be inevitable.

4.4.6 Accountability and responsibility

One of the traditional cornerstones of democracy is the fact that each political representative, as well as each public official, is subject to accountability. This means that they should each give account in public of their activities (cf. Cloete, 1988:63; Van Wyk, 1998:75; Gildenhuis, 1993:35; White, 1980:83). Accountability may also refer to the cause of a specific event. A person can, because of his/her personal conduct, be responsible for the success or failure of a specific programme or event. When someone is held responsible for a specific event, it is usually accepted that this person also causes such event. If a public official, for instance, is held responsible for the efficient and effective execution of a budget programme and the programme failed to realize its objectives, then such official must be held responsible for such failure (Cameron & Stone, 1995:80).

As Malan and Smit (2001:8) state: “When senior political figures are not prepared to take responsibility for whatever they may have done wrong or neglected to do, but instead justifying their actions by blaming everyone but not themselves for their failures (e.g. previous regimes or counter-revolutionaries), or when they attack the

press or the public for having the audacity to query their immoral behaviour, the death warrant of morality and ethical leadership is signed”.

4.4.7 Honesty

When one engages in conversation about government or business today, it does not take long before the matter of honesty and integrity in the workplace is raised. This means that it seems that many people are oblivious of the ethical implications of their actions or, if they are aware of them, seem to be quite happy to ignore them as long as they benefit from their actions. However, the entire world of business is built on trust (Murray, 1998:205). Without trust the economy will fail. Not only has that, without honesty society in general set a poor example for government officials. If the virtue of honesty pervades a society, the government may learn from the example of its citizens. On the other hand, if dishonesty and cheating others to obtain gains for one's self become a way of life in a society, that attitude will be present in the government as well and all will suffer (Monsma, 2006:35; Kretzschmar & Hulley, 1998:123; White, 1980:53).

4.4.8 Diligence

The goal of work today seems to be to enjoy the end product and work only because it is a means to that end leisure. However, the Bible acknowledges that work was part of God's original plan of creation (Brown, 1989:57). Much the same principle regarding work ethics is upheld in Reformed ethics. According to this principle all professions and all kinds of work, assuming they are legal and Biblical ethical, are honourable before the Lord. There is no dichotomy between sacred and secular work. All work brings glory to God and fulfilment to humans if it is done to God's glory (Vorster, 2007:84; Eckman, 2004:73). Given that God ordained work, everyone should work: “Go to the ant, O sluggard, consider her ways, and be wise” (Proverbs 6:6). This is an important proverb for the South African community because ants work as a community. Each ant makes its contribution to the entire community. The apostle Paul stated the case for diligence more boldly: “If anyone is not willing to work, let him not eat” (2 Thess. 3:10).

4.4.9 Love

Love does no harm to its neighbour. Therefore, love is the fulfilment of the law (cf. Romans, 13:9-10). The Bible's command to love our neighbours as ourselves underlines all of the virtues. When love fills society like water fills a sponge, the crime rate will go down, honesty will mark economic dealings, workers will do their work well, and their employers will pay them a fair wage, and in many other ways society will be as God intends it to be (Monsma, 2006:37).

It has been pointed out that the State cannot regulate or legislate morality in the hearts of its people. Therefore, the development of core values in the country requires that the government must be aware of the nature of the different entities in society, so that it may act justly in relation to them and establish just relations among them.

The nature and calling of some important entities in South African community may be as follows:

- Family;
- Education;
- Societies;
- Sports;
- Media;
- The family;

The family is the first unit with which children have continuous contact and the first context in which socialization patterns develop. It is a world in which they have nothing to compare and, as such, it is the most important socializing agency (Elkim & Handel, 1989:139). Thus, parental attitude and influence play a vital role in the following aspects:

- **Socialisation**

Brigham (1991:277) defines socialization as “the process of moulding’s child social behaviour to fit the expectations of the culture in which he or she lives”. Socially, the child is equipped to live responsibly in society because through the influence of the home he/she is led to conform, in the main, to the mores and traditions of society. This conformity is never absolute, however, because the home has a responsibility to help the maturing individual to know when and how to disagree and protest (Butler & Roberts, 1997:41; Maston, 1979:121; Moore, 1996:121; Baron & Byrne, 1994:143; Greathead *et al.*, 1998:45).

Parents are, of course, crucial factors in the socialization process through their social power (reward, coercive, legitimate and expert), their ability to teach their children desired behaviour and their status as models. In the case of young children these processes include imparting to children the basic values and modes of behaviour consistent with their culture. Generally these include moral principles, interpersonal skills, dress code, grooming standards, appropriate manners and speech, and the suitable educational or career goals (Brigham, 1991:277; Prinsloo *et al.*, 1996:149; Schiffmen & Kanuk, 2000:277; Walker, 1996:46; Maxwell, 1996:187-8; O’ Donnell, 1997:534; Webster, 1990:87).

- **Affection and companionship**

Young children need to be shown care and affection to become stable adults. In spite of seeming to be on their way out of the family, adolescents can and should feel some kind of belonging with parents and siblings. Love and companionship may be found in the nuclear family (Van Zyl Slabbert *et al.*, 1994:73; Hendrix & Hunt, 2004:75).

- **Sexual regulation**

The family is important for the moral development of a child, including his/her sexual regulation. Hence, one finds that everywhere societies have cultural rules that seek to control sexual relations (Haviland, 1996:222, Popenoe *et al.*, 1998:271).

From this perspective, it is clear that the nuclear family provides the best opportunity for reproduction and nurturing (bringing up) of children. There is no doubt that no programme of moral regeneration in South Africa can bear much fruit without also focusing its energy on promoting the resurgence of the respect and integrity that marriage and family deserve.

- **Education**

According to Shively (1997:74), the most basic service that most governments are expected to offer their people is education. Hence, one of the largest international organisations, the World Bank, invests a large sum of money annually in education projects in developing countries. This is because they are convinced that the improvement of education in these countries can help to alleviate poverty, either directly or indirectly (Swanepoel & de Beer, 1997:80). Haralambos and Holborn (1995:727) also agree with this viewpoint saying, "Education teaches individuals specific skills necessary for future occupations. This function is particularly important in an industrial society with its increasing complex and specialized division of labour".

The key element of this argument is that the relatively unspecialized division of labour in pre-industrial society meant that occupational skills could usually be passed on from parents to children without the need for formal education. However, in industrial society, social solidarity is based largely on the interdependence of specialized skills for example; the manufacturing of a single product requires a combination of a variety of specialists (O'Donnell, 1997:218; Mwamwenda, 1995:311). Thus education transmits both general values, which provide the necessary homogeneity for social survival, and specific skills, which provide the necessary diversity for social cooperation.

Owing to the history of racial segregation as well as the possibilities that the future offers, education in general must be aimed at reconciliation and must contribute to the policy of reconstruction and development (Vorster, 2007:38). This means that the building of a unified South African community will require an educational system that

will recognize that South Africa is a plural society. Furthermore, it must aim at making South Africa a truly pluralistic society. Integration, separatism, accommodation and tolerance will provide an education base for understanding interracial relations across the country. This means the effort to preserve or secure racial identity will require education to contend with all the paradoxes in promoting different cultures (Mkabela & Luthuli, 1997:13; Summers & Waddington, 1996:56).

- **Society**

Although families, schools and other social groupings often express divergent expectations towards those being socialized, they also often have convergent expectations. From this perspective it is then reasonable to say that society specifies certain outcomes or ranges of outcomes of socialization. For example every society, just to maintain itself, expends some of its resources to produce children who will become law-abiding adults (Elkim & Handel, 1989:27). Children who do not become law-abiding are likely to be judged socialisation failures.

- **Sport and nation building**

Marais *et al.*, (2004:148) note that South Africa has a reputation for being a sports-crazy nation, so it is only natural for sport to have played a part in reconciling people across cultures, racial groups and political division. Ask any adult if he or she remembers South Africa winning the 1995 Rugby World Cup, and it's likely he or she will recall the event with pride. Also, hosting an international sport event such as the 2010 Soccer World Cup can have positive effects on a nation's pride and encourage feelings of unity among its citizens. Other benefits for a nation that plays and watches sport are:

- Firstly, physical activity is good for everyone mentally, socially and physically. It is particularly good for young people;
- Sport and recreational activities can be a positive way for young people to spend their free time. When young people are involved in physical activity they are less likely to become involved in negative behaviour such as crime,

gangs, substance abuse and pre-marital sex (Mashau, 2005:6; Everett, 1995:2; Van Zyl Slabbert *et al*, 1994:45);

- Sportsmen and sportswomen can act as role models and pass on their behaviour patterns and values to their fans. Of course, this is only a good thing if those behaviour patterns and values are acceptable (Marais *et al.*, 2004:147).
- **The Media**

The media are a source of information concerning internal and international events. Reading, listening to or viewing the media informs members of the general public about events of which they have no first hand knowledge and thereby become more politically aware. One advantage of this is that public participation in policy making is facilitated. Public opinion is able to exert pressure on government over a wide range of matters (Joyce, 2003:118).

4.5 Improving the quality of life of the population

A government is regarded as a dynamic promoter of social reform and distributor of social services to the individual and groups in the community as a whole. To comply with this demand, the government is obliged to intervene in the economic and social domain of community life and especially in the liberty of the individual. The foregoing assumption implies that the State will be democratic in nature and, therefore, be based on the principles of freedom, equity and justice for all (Gildenhuys, 1993:10). Furthermore, it is reasonable to say that it should be concerned about the well-being of all, seeking to include all in the common good, applying its legislative process and its resulting laws alike to all, and enabling all above a reasonable age to have a significant say in the process by which they are governed (Allen, 1996:266). In contemporary South Africa this would imply the followings:

- Public justice;
- HIV/Aids;
- Safety and security;

- The availability of housing.

4.5.1 Public justice

According to Vorster (2007:80), the biblical concept of justice as it is used in the Old and New Testament is a soteriological concept with direct cosmological implications. God's justice indicates his governance of grace and judgment of a broken world and humanity. Justice, therefore, at the core deals with the new creation that God establishes, which is expressed in the Covenant relationship that is restored.

In South Africa public justice requires government to use power in an equitable way. This means that government must be aware of the different needs of diverse people, communities and organisations and balance and promote their public claims that each may have the freedom to fulfil their God-given calling and responsibility without oppression either from the authorities or from one another (Marshall, 1991:29). This prophetic vision of an egalitarian society in which justice rolled down like a mighty stream (Amos 5:24) has contributed more than simply ideas to the struggle for political equality, freedom and social justice in the course of human history.

One political trajectory, which supports the abovementioned statement may be traced in the Hebrew Bible, namely the Deuteronomic code. The Deuteronomic code called on Israel to emulate Yahweh's concern for the poor, oppressed, widows, orphans and other victims of society. Even foreigners were to be treated fairly and with respect for their rights. The administration of the law (*mishpat*) with regard to a plethora of personal and interpersonal matters had to be exercised in terms of the covenantal obligation to pursue God's righteousness (*tsedakah*), Yahweh's burning compassion for the oppressed. *Tsedakah*, social righteousness or justice, was the barometer of the health society. This meant that wrongs and social inequities were to be redressed regularly, as prescribed, for example, in the teaching on the year of Jubilee (cf. Leviticus 17).

4.5.2 HIV/Aids

The Aids scenario in South Africa is not related to individuals only. This means that the acuteness of the problem does not stem merely from the fact that communities are affected or could even be wiped out by the end of this decade, but from the fact that Aids has a specific impact on a range of sectors such as health care, the economy, education, housing, the delivery of public services and especially the rising levels of unemployment and poverty (Louw, 1994:122). More importantly, Aids was not high on the first democratic government's 'to-do' list either. During his term of office, Nelson Mandela effectively ignored AIDS, avoiding the subject on the grounds that, in his culture, an elder did not publicly discuss sexual issues. However, since then, he has recognized the severity of the problem and become deeply involved in efforts to stop the spread of AIDS (Gumede, 2005:152).

Concomitantly, there are escalating numbers of heart-rending stories. These include an ongoing stream of HIV/Aids related personal tragedies such as abandoned babies, increasing numbers of street children, breaches in confidentiality, rapes, suicides and evictions. These burdens are made worse by the stigma attached to the disease, which among other effects prevents those affected from being able to grieve openly. On the other hand many children affected by Aids are left abandoned and vulnerable and in need of attention for care and support (Barnett & Whiteside, 2002:182; Abdool Karim, 2005:361).

- **Practical aspects of HIV/Aids prevention programmes**

The purpose of HIV/Aids education is not only to disseminate information, but also to change attitudes and behaviour, to equip people with the necessary life skills, to empower them, to prevent the spread of HIV infection and to help them to care for people who are already infected.

Therefore, the following practical aspects should be kept in mind when developing HIV/Aids prevention programmes:

- **National support**

Gumede (2005:173) notes that: "The fact that President Mbeki has never led the way in talking openly about Aids, as President Yoweri Museveni did in Uganda, has seriously undermined all government efforts to combat the disease". Feinstein (2007:124) also states that: "This denialism had cast a fatal shadow over the provision of treatment to the ever-growing millions of HIV-positive South Africans and had prevented the clear, coherent public education that was needed to stem the inexorable spread of the virus. " Hence, Van Dyk (2005:99) believes that HIV/Aids prevention programmes can be successful only if political will and leadership back them. No prevention programme can be successful without the support, commitment and high-profile advocacy of a country's leader. A single, comprehensive, powerful national Aids plan involving a wide range of role players ranging from government to the private sector is necessary. Successful programmes should impart knowledge, counter stigma and discrimination, create social consensus on safer behaviour and boost HIV prevention and care skills. Indeed, it is crucial for President Mbeki to emerge from the morass he has created and lead the country out of the moral void of Aids denialism that has already lasted far too long.

- **Countering harmful gender norms**

Women in Africa are seriously affected by HIV/Aids, and a large percentage of people living with HIV in South Africa are women. Apart from their biological vulnerability, women become more vulnerable in societies in which they are seen as having lower status than men. This makes women dangerously vulnerable in sexual relationships because they are not in a position to negotiate safer sex practices because they fear violence and abandonment should they try to do so. One needs programmes that should seek to counter harmful gender norms that lead to sexual coercion and exploitation of women and girls. Through the use of media, public information

campaigns, the arts schools and community discussion groups, such programmes should:

- Teach and promote respect for, and responsibility towards women and children;
- Teach and promote equality in relationships and in the domestic and public spheres;
- Support actions to reduce male violence, including domestic and sexual violence;
- Challenge concepts of masculinity and femininity that are based on inequality and aggressive and passive stereotypes (Greenway & Mashau, 2007:15; Van Dyk, 2005:102).

- **Respecting human rights and improving social structures**

HIV/Aids is also a developmental challenge. Society as a whole would become less vulnerable to HIV and the stigma surrounding it in the long run if government were not to make a serious attempt to grapple with social problems such as poverty, unemployment, migratory labour, the subordinate status of women and child abuse. Social goals such as education, the empowerment of women and human rights should, therefore, be promoted (Machel, 2001:42; Marais *et al.*, 2004:116).

4.5.3 Safety and security

The security function of the State relates primarily to the most basic of human needs-protection. Protection is not limited to the obvious, such as protection by the defence forces from hostile aggressors from outside the State's borders and protection from criminal activity by law enforcement and crime prevention services such as the South African Police Services. However, it also includes aspects such as the management of the judicial system and the administration of justice (Department of Justice), and the use of prisons to rehabilitate and separate criminal elements from society as whole (Department of Correctional Services) (Venter, 1998:117). This means that it is a prime responsibility of government to ensure that all citizens can go about their normal daily life without fear or risk of attack on person or property (Shusta *et al.*,

1995:373; Moore, 1996:5). Shively (1997:70) agrees with the above-mentioned statement saying, “The government may also directly lay down rules telling people how to conduct their affairs. Traditional areas of regulation prohibit crimes such as murder, theft, or extortion”.

In Christian ethics it is also accepted that all authority comes from God and that He instated government to make order possible within a broken dispensation (Vorster, 2007:135).

The above-mentioned statement is based on the following Biblical principles:

- In Romans 13:3-4 it is said that God gives rulers the instruction to punish offenders (if necessary by capital punishment) in society and for the benefit of society. The institution of government to protect society against crime is part of God’s general grace, by which He enables people to live peaceful and quiet lives (1 Timothy 2:2). Vorster (2004:32) confirms the above-mentioned viewpoint saying “it is the task of the civil authority to maintain law and order because the sin of human nature creates the need for civil order”.

In the Articles of Faith of the Reformed Church in South Africa there are especially two pronouncements which relate to capital punishment.

- In Art. 36 of the Belgic Confession it is stated that it is the task of the magistracy (or the civil government) “to the end that the dissoluteness of men might be restrained and all things carried on among them with good order and decency”. And then there is added: “For this purpose He has invested the magistracy with the sword for the punishment of evil-doers and for the protection of them that do well”;
- In the Heidelberg Catechism (40:105) it is clearly indicated that the killing of people (others and yourself) is forbidden by God in the sixth commandment. In linking up with that it is said: “Therefore, also the magistrate is armed with the sword to prevent murder” (Ex 21:14; Matt. 26:52).

From the abovementioned principles it is clear that the criminal justice system in South Africa should be revamped in four ways:

- Firstly, punishment for crime must be made more certain. In extreme cases, the death penalty may apply (Gen. 3; 9:5, 6; Deut. 22; 1 Cor. 5; Rev. 20);
- Secondly, justice must be effective so that it deters crime. Some punishment decreed in God's law for Israel had deterrence as their motivation (Deut. 13:6-11; 17:12,13);
- Thirdly, there must be congruence between what is right and what is just. "justice" and "righteousness" must not contradict each other. Immoral laws are repugnant to a holy God (Neh. 9:13; Jer. 22:15, 16);
- Fourthly, should be just retribution. Just retribution implies that the punishment should fit the crime that was committed. Should someone live violently and rob other people of their lives, it is surely just that in the same way there must be action against him/her (cf. Mt. 7:2). Besides, the offender should expect fitting retaliation (cf. De Bruyn, 1998:249).

The fact that both these pronouncements are said on the basis of Romans, 13:4 that the authorities bear the sword, and that this Scriptural text is interpreted as reference, among others, to capital punishment, leads to the conclusion that government has the right and duty to impose a death penalty on those who are guilty of murder without extenuating circumstances (Eckman, 2004:60; Astley, 2000:81; Geisler, 1989:195).

4.5.4 The availability of housing

The availability of housing and quality of the home environment has everything to do with the well-being of the community. This would include political matters like safety, stability and order. However, housing in rural and urban South Africa is still a problem, in spite of efforts by the present government to provide people with houses through its Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) (Greenway & Mashau, 2007:108; Kritzingner *et al.*, 1994:93). Most important is how many people are forced to share the space with no privacy for either private or family life (interpersonal density). Interpersonal density may be related to poor mental health,

poor social relationships in the home, poor child care, high rates of violent crime and poor relationships outside the home (Brigham, 1991:508).

4.6 Summary

The conclusion, which can be reached from the foregoing, is that the government has authority to assign values on the community's behalf and the relevant directives are usually laid down in a Constitution. A Constitution thus serves as a framework within which a government acts. In reality, therefore, the functions of government reflected in the Constitution represent the government's envisaged actions and deeds for satisfying the values and needs of the community.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

The essence of this study was to outline the profile and the manifestation of moral decay in South Africa and to define the role of the Church and State towards moral renewal. The main objective of this chapter, therefore, is to give the conclusive remarks and the recommendations on the finding of the entire research. The following can be stated:

5.2 Findings

In Chapter One, the background underlying the study under reflection was outlined.

In Chapter Two, research was done on the position of the profile and manifestation of moral decline in South Africa. The fact that South Africa is facing a moral crisis was confirmed by the research. What transpired finally is that the moral regeneration of the country is important and any procrastination at this critical stage will be a disaster.

In Chapter Three, research was done in the position of the calling of the Church in moral restoration. The fact that reformed theology is known for its "*sola sacra* Scripture" point of departure has been affirmed by the research and, also the fact that the Church has a role towards moral renewal was also confirmed.

In Chapter Four, the role of the State towards moral renewal was examined. What transpired is that the South African Constitution, which was adopted in May 1996, contains the most important rules of law and values concerning the political system of a country and that consequently, the State is compelled to partake in moral renewal programmes.

5.3 Recommendations: (The process of moral renewal)

The following guidelines are suggested for the process of moral renewal in South Africa:

- **Positive role models are needed**

In the Bible it is easy to identify positive role models and moral examples. Lydia for example, was a model of generosity (Acts 16:15), Abraham, a model of faith (Rom. 4), and Peter and John models of boldness in witnessing (Acts 4). However, in South Africa is difficult because many people in our country who are in the government and others in the public domain who are supposed to be role models are not. The latest example is the deputy president of the ruling party Mr. Jacob Zuma, a man who not long ago led the country's Moral Regeneration Movement and, who still wishes to lead the whole country as the president. In 2005, the Durban High Court found that Zuma had a generally corrupt relationship with his financial advisor. However, he fails to take responsibility for his action but perfected the victim game. He has taken the same line regarding the rape charges levelled against him. Dismissing the alleged rape against him, Zuma said it was consensual sex. The complainant told the Court she sees him as an uncle. Furthermore, he also spoke of his confidence that despite having unprotected sex he would not contract Aids, as he had showered vigorously afterwards. This from the man who was chairperson of South Africa's National Aids Council before his removal from office. HIV is arguable the country's most pressing challenge it was demonstrated in previous sections of this study. Anyone who wants to be president should inspire people to act to limit the spread of Aids. As a leader of the Moral Regeneration Movement Zuma was supposed to be the moral compass of our nation.

Indeed, the time has come for the man and woman in the street, for the leaders of all faiths and for those who govern the land to make choices that are shared by the universal human conscience, irrespective of race, creed or culture. Using culture, religious tradition or political ideology to accept or reject values can be highly selective and easily manipulated to suit specific agendas. It is also dangerous when leaders justify their behaviour as being acceptable within their own culture and

tradition; mocking the principles espoused in the Ten Commandments, the essence of which is not only enshrined in all major religions, but forms the basis of the Constitution.

- **We need a fundamental reorientation**

Evidence has revealed that since the 1960s, there has been a decline in the recognition of traditions or institutions within the Western world, which can be upheld onto for orientation. All forms of authority for example, political, academic, judicial and ecclesiastical have been regarded with suspicion. Consequently, all values are regarded as suspect or even openly rejected. In other words, authoritarianism was exchanged for relativism, which frequently leads to nihilism. The result was not freedom. The result was meaninglessness, practical nihilism, criminality and political and religious fanaticism. The problem is not that there are no regulations and laws. The creation of laws and regulation do not give orientation, but actually confuse the moral maze in which people are trapped. The ambiguity of reality forces people to have more than rules. The need is a fundamental reorientation. One cannot experience meaning without a basic orientation towards reality. Every human being needs a compass and a map to partake in the journey of life. Briefly, the first reason for the indispensability of morality is to give orientation and meaning to an individual's life. In this regard one needs to make people aware that morality not only gives meaning and direction to individuals, it is also the fabric of society at large.

- **We need social cohesion**

Social cohesion requires South Africans to create a special national identity and to have national pride. On the other hand social cohesion also means the following:

- Social cohesion is a call for a new community defined by new value systems and social relationships. For South Africans this call is linked to the project of redefining for ourselves as a nation, different from anything previously known in our history. The pertinent question is: How do we choose to redefine ourselves? Or by what values and symbols do we wish to be identified? Here
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the concept of *koinonia* becomes a companion symbol to describe the content of social cohesion. A *koinonia* is a community that is founded above all on the values of mutuality and co-operation. In this community every member is first and foremost a fellow human person and sisters or brothers. This is what social cohesion concept requires as one goes through a process of moral regeneration in South Africa;

- The social cohesion idea challenges South Africans to take part in government's efforts to fight poverty, create jobs, support democracy, fight crime, fight HIV and Aids, increase the number of skilled workers, grow the economy and respect the rule of law;
- Social cohesion requires us to eradicate the culture of violence in our community. People should be encouraged to support government's campaign, which mobilise people to fight violence and abuse against women and children, and campaigns that are meant to restore good family values. The involvement of the public in such campaigns will help the government to deal with the evil of domestic violence and abuse;
- Social cohesion means people should respect each other's rights. Government has created special courts like the equality courts in an effort to end discrimination;
- Last but not least, social cohesion means equality within business and the government should provide guidelines and a number of partnerships between different racial groups. Therefore, the phrase "Black Economic Empowerment", for example should be changed to the phrase "economic empowerment", as it best describes what actual relationships are. Put simply, it is predominantly black and white people entering into business relationships on a daily basis. Indeed, such actions will rightly place economic empowerment within the ambit of reconciliation and nation-building and it deserves to be recognized and praised.

- **Dialogue between the Church and the State must be encouraged**

God does not only use the Church to further the cause of his Kingdom but He also uses institutions such as the State as His instrument. The State is thus charged with

looking after the external man and the Church with the internal. Hence, the dialogue between the two institutions must be encouraged because:

- there is always an overlap between these two institutions. Again there are many Christians in South Africa (more than 70% of the population) and many of them would also like to make contribution to the new political dispensation.

The key factors to note in view of this are:

- The Church's responsibility is to spread its message and have reasonable access to anyone who is willing to listen to its message. That is what is meant by the term 'freedom of religion';
- Besides its spiritual ministry, the church must be free to exercise social functions, providing relief to the poor, needy and the sick;
- The church needs to develop a theology of reconstruction. Initially it must remind the people that they are a people who, as individuals, possess an inherent dignity because they have been created in the divine image (Gn 1:27). The people also have been entrusted with the task of being stewards of the earth (Gn 2:15). This means that God entrusts human beings with the creative task of making the place where they live an environment fit for them to live in. In a sense, the earth is our home and one must keep it in good condition. The Bible also provides us with images that serve to motivate one to build a new communal future. For example: In the post exilic literature such as Haggai, Zechariah and Isaiah 56-66, one finds people rebuilding the country. The books of Nehemiah, Ezra and Joel are also important sources for a theology of reconstruction. Yes, indeed, Christian theology can provide a particular vision of the earth and humanity's role as member of the wider community of creation. The ethical values embedded within this vision have a significant contribution to make to the theory and praxis of sustainable development;
- The Church should not only train its people concerning their spiritual duties, but also train them to apply Christian ethics to all areas of life, including civil government, education, economics and law. This implies that the Churches will, however, has to convince its members of the side effects of the following: pornography, sexual immorality, abortion and drug abuse;

- The Church should be the moral conscience of the government, calling it to account to the people when it oversteps the mark;
- While these distinctions may be defined, the Church needs to be vigilant to ensure that the government does not attempt to intrude or impose too much control over its territory. Conversely, the Church must not interfere with the defined the task given to government;
- On the other hand, the essential function of the State is to protect its citizens by punishing evil-doers and commending honest citizens, to maintain a limited defence force to protect its citizens from foreign aggression and impartial judicial systems, including a police service, to protect its citizens from crime;
- In addition, it must protect society from monopolistic practices and from those who could inflame and exploit man's lower nature for commercial gain. This, of course, is aimed at big business which is able to control market prices and those that exploit, for example, the pornographic market;
- While admitting that the State make wicked men good, it has the responsibility to create the conditions in which good can flourish.

It is clear from the above that dialogue between the Church and State on the matters of morality and ethics should be encouraged from the two camps for the good of South African community. This should be done on the basis that each institution could learn from the other. This call is a reiteration of what has been remarked by one of the theologians of this age who said: "I believe it is part of our academic responsibility to help open up communities and prepare our Churches for serious theological dialogue and co-operation and to continue to do so" (Mashau, 1999:118).

5.4 Contributions

Having dealt with the study under focus thoroughly, the following contributions can be made:

Accordingly the South African Constitution's Bill of Human Rights is built on the values of human "dignity", "equality" and "freedom". The following cautionary comments are important:

Apart from giving one the only true foundation for human rights, the Bible points out that it expects more from one than respecting human rights in order to do real justice (the main aim of the State). As long as people do not have the special revelation of God, such is of course impossible; but when that special revelation reaches a nation, its rulers become inexcusable when they maintain order and decency as a necessity of human society. That does not mean that one should abandon the principle of the separation of Church and State as a practical solution to the political exigency which the extreme diversification of Christianity in our country has created. However, while recognizing it as a historical growth and a historical necessity one should recognize also that the principle is historically of dubious origin, to say the least. That dubious origin has, in fact, put its imprint upon the official formulation of the principle in the First Amendment to the Constitution. It does not speak of a Church establishment by law, but of the an establishment of Religion by law (cf. Section 15 (1) of Chapter 2 (The Bill of Human Rights)).

It thus avoids the formal recognition not merely of any concrete denomination, but of the Church of Christ itself and subsumes Christianity under the general, broad and vague heading of religion. This can by no means be harmonized with the declarations of Article 36 of the Belgic Confession, which unequivocally call for the recognition by the government of the Kingdom of Christ and of His gospel and its preaching. The South African political position and the Reformed creedal position are distinctly not harmonious and one shall have to make a choice between the two. This call is a reiteration of what has been remarked by one of the theologians of the 20th century who said: "It is good that we are patriotic sons of our country; but I trust that we are also soundly Reformed to such an extent, that it is enough to have this discrepancy pointed out to us to prevent our patriotism from carrying us away from our Reformed position" (cf. Kromminga, 1943:27).

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