

**Applying Corporate Social Responsibility Principles
to the Church:
A Case Study of the interface between the Indian
Pentecostal/Charismatic Church in the Phoenix Community,
Durban North (KwaZulu Natal) and Social Responsibility**

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DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that the work contained in this thesis is my own original work and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it at any university for a degree.

Signature: Virginia Francis

Date: 5 March 2008

ABSTRACT

South Africa is a country in transition, and continues to develop new systems expected to positively shift the social and economic lives of 48 million people. Every sector of society is focussed on people's upliftment. Corporations in South Africa have Corporate Social Investment (CSI) programmes as their contribution toward this goal.

The Pentecostal/Charismatic Church is the fastest growing Christian denomination in the world, certainly even in Africa. Churches' also have a responsibility to society's upliftment, and since the Pentecostal/Charismatic church aspires to corporate principles this thesis explores the response of the Indian Pentecostal/Charismatic Church to social, economic and environmental issues of local and global magnitude. The theoretical framework proposes that a theology for social change in South Africa must be traced from the foundation of a theology of liberation from racial oppression, which is found in the Kairos Document; and combines this with CSI principles to present a composite framework for analysis.

The study uses qualitative methodologies of loosely structured interviews and a focus group discussion with Pentecostal/Charismatic pastors from the Phoenix community, north of Durban. The findings suggest that the Indian Pentecostal/Charismatic Church i) has divergent viewpoints on what constitutes social responsibility, ii) does not have a set of guiding principles for funding social programmes, and iii) does not have a discernable liberation theology, which is a real challenge facing the Church as this study argues that is a core reason for the Churches' inability to deal with social justice or sustainability issues effectively.

OPSOMMING

Suid-Afrika is 'n land in 'n oorgangsfase, en is in die proses om nuwe sisteme te ontwikkel wat benodig word om 'n positiewe verandering te bewerkstellig in die sosiale en ekonomiese lewensfasette van 48 miljoen mense. Bykans elke sektor van die samelewing is dan ook tans gefokus op die opheffing van mense. Om hierdie doelwit te bereik, en om by te dra tot sodanige opheffing, het korporasies in Suid-Afrika Korporatiewe Sosiale Beleggings (KSB) Programme.

Die Pinkster / Charismatiese Kerk is die denominasie wat wêreldwyd, veral ook in Afrika, die meeste veld wen. Kerke het ook 'n verantwoordelikheid ten opsigte van sosiale opheffing, en aangesien die Pinkster / Charismatiese Kerk daarna streef om korporatiewe beginsels toe te pas, ondersoek hierdie tesis die reaksie van die Indiese Pinkster / Charismatiese Kerk teenoor wêreldwye sosiale-, ekonomiese en omgewingsfaktore. Die teoretiese raamwerk suggereer dat 'n teologie vir sosiale verandering in Suid-Afrika gebaseer moet word op 'n teologie van bevryding van rasgebaseerde onderdrukking, wat te vinde is in die Kairos Dokument; en kombineer dit met Korporatiewe Sosiale Beleggings (KSB) beginsels om 'n saamgestelde analiserings-raamwerk voor te hou.

Die studie maak gebruik van kwalitatiewe metodes, naamlik los-gestruktureerde onderhoude asook die besprekings van 'n fokusgroep wat gehou is tussen Pinkster / Charismatiese pastore / predikante in die Phoenix gemeenskap, noord van Durban. Die bevindinge suggereer dat die Indiese Pinkster / Charismatiese Kerk:

- i) uiteenlopende menings het oor wat presies sosiale opheffing is;
- ii) nie 'n stel grondbeginsels rakende die befondsing van sosiale opheffingsprogramme het nie; en
- iii) nie 'n duidelike bevrydingsteologie aanhang nie, welke feit 'n groot uitdaging aan die Kerk bied, aangesien hierdie studie die standpunt inneem dat dit 'n fundamentele rede is waarom die Kerk nie in staat is om aangeleenthede van sosiale geregtigheid en volhoubaarheid effektief aan te spreek nie.

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FOREWORD

OPENING PRAYER

Good news for the Poor¹

“Loving God, we believe you are the God of the poor and that poverty includes being hungry, unemployed and orphaned; living on a pension or grant; meagre earnings for arduous and hazardous work; ill health, anxiety and stress; and the absence of power, worsened for women by unequal gender relations.

Loving God, we hold up to you all those living in poverty.

We believe that God wants all people to live a dignified life and engage in meaningful work; that workers should receive fair wages; and that those who possess more resources and skills must share them in neighbourly love with those who have less.

Loving God, open our eyes to the deep needs of those who are poor.

We believe that the challenge of fighting poverty does not lie solely with governments, but that faith-based organisations are ideally positioned to address it, with their human and financial resources.

Loving God, challenge us to see ways in which we can work against poverty.

We renew our commitment to be in solidarity with the poor and to work against any form of injustice. We commit ourselves to put our faith into action and to demonstrate our faith in practical terms, so that together we can overcome the scourge of poverty.

Loving God, in your mercy hear our prayer and strengthen us in our commitment. Amen.”

¹ Cited in Diakonia Council of Churches Annual Report 2005/2006:13. Issued at the Good Friday Service 2006, Durban City Hall.

PERSONAL DECLARATION

In this thesis, the researcher brings her own prejudice and observations to the subject matter. She is first a Christian and second she attends a Pentecostal church. My formative years were grounded in the Indian Dutch Reformed Church and my latter years were influenced by the Pentecostal Church. Through the privilege of living in different provinces of South Africa, the researcher has attended various multi-racial Pentecostal, Charismatic and Baptist churches in Venda, Pretoria and Cape Town. The term “happy-clappy” is derisively associated with the Pentecostal and Charismatic church, to describe people who freely use outward expressions, such as clapping hands and dancing. She considers herself as Pentecostal based on a personal² relationship with God through a) a life that is defined by our relationship; b) the presence of the Holy Spirit in the form of quiet prayer and gently weeping, and c) a sincere desire to contribute to making real the Kingdom of God in this world through caring for vulnerable people. The researcher has two strong prejudices against the church. The first relates to the uncritical promotion one finds in some congregations of a ‘prosperity gospel’. This refers to teachings that promise material blessings of wealth for the faithful that prevents poor people from feeling they are blessed by God. The second pertains to her perception that the church is little engaged in people’s life realities. Interestingly, in doing this thesis the researcher realised that her engagement with social justice issues earlier in her life was separate from her Christian belief. At present, intertwining the researcher’s Christian belief with the social world results in her questioning where, within the Christian framework she belongs. While this research will contribute to the body of knowledge on the broader Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches and their social responsibilities, it is birthed to provide a window of insight into the questions the researcher faces. The researcher mentions these

² The researcher notes her ‘personal’ relationship with God, because it is this relationship that ignited her deep desire to be actively involved in community. Her relationship with others is an extension of her relationship with God, His son Jesus, and the Holy Spirit.

points here to draw attention upfront to my subjective experience and presence, as well as its possible influence on this study.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

AFM	Apostolic Faith Mission
AIDS	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
ANC	African National Congress
BAT	British Association Tobacco
CSI	Corporate Social Investment
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
KZN	Kwa-Zulu Natal
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
PBO	Public Benefit Organisation
SAB	South African Breweries
TBN	Trinity Broadcasting Network
TRC	Truth and Reconciliation Commission
USA	United States of America

CHAPTER ONE

THE INTERFACE BETWEEN SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AND SPIRITUALITY

1.1 Background and Objectives

South Africa has been a democracy for over a decade. The seeds sown to win that democracy have not yet produced a harvest of wealth, social well-being, or safety and security for the majority of the country. While it may be impossible to eradicate centuries of oppression in thirteen years, remarkable strides have been made by this fledgling democracy towards a just state. These include the Constitution (1996), progressive domestic laws and a stable economy. However, this achievement is marred by escalating crime, an increase in mortality rates, child-headed households due to HIV & AIDS and related infections, and violent crime e.g. car hijacking and rape; and greater levels of poverty (South African Police Services, 3 March 2008).

Amidst a genuine desire to change the social landscape endangered by internal corruption and party politics, the government has realised that, on its own, it would fail in its mandate and responsibility. This led to the incumbent in highest office in the land, the President, Mr Thabo Mbeki, proactively engaging business and religious sectors to join forces with government in efforts to meet the country's social and economic targets, most especially to help reduce the crime rate, which dissuades foreign direct investment.

Both sectors took the request seriously; the business community speedily rallied, with the religious sector cautiously suggesting that government assist with financial resources. The necessity of such assistance may be debatable, but acceptable, since the Church relies on people following the principle of paying a tithe for its income (usually one tenth of their salary), while the private sector works from a profit margin. Such a high-powered request automatically increases

pressure on faith-based organisations to engage more effectively with communities.

This thesis considers Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches' awareness of, and engagement in, these social responsibilities. Like the rest of the South African society which attempts to re-define itself and moult from the evils of apartheid, the Church is also being afforded this opportunity to redress its sin of silent complicity during apartheid's grip. Some denominations, like the Catholic and Anglican Churches, were active in advocating justice, the dismantling of apartheid and financing social solutions. We are cognisant of figures such as Archbishop Desmond Tutu (Emeritus), Anglican priest, Nobel Peace laureate in 1984 and Chairperson of South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), set up in 1996. The TRC involved public hearings on apartheid human rights violations for the purposes of, inter alia, providing amnesty to perpetrators as well as restoring the public dignity and providing some reparation to those who had survived gross violations of human rights (Moreorless, 12 April 2007).

Mainline Churches were more vocal in social justice debates, unlike Pentecostal and Charismatic movements³ which were conspicuous in their quiet approach. The latter movement did yield an anti-apartheid activist from the ranks of the Pentecostal Apostolic Faith Mission (AFM), Rev Dr Frank Chikane, who advocated for justice from within the Church parameters. He now holds a senior government position within the Presidency as Director-General (Hollenweger, 1997:109).

Thirteen years into SA's new dispensation, there is no longer a racist government to oppose, and the Church continues to grow, with the Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches in particular, growing at an unprecedented rate. Hence we must consider its relevance to ordinary people's current realities. That concern forms

³ These terms will later be explained, suffice to say these movements advocate for the Holy Spirit's presence through speaking in foreign tongues (languages) and the gifts of the spirit.

the crux of this study, to ensure that the Pentecostal/Charismatic Church serve God and South Africa holistically.

Throughout this study reference to the 'Church' includes all Churches, mainline and Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches unless otherwise stated. The terms 'Pentecostal/ism' and 'Charismata/ic' are closely inter-related, both drawing on the active presence of the Holy Spirit in Christians lives and the social movements that developed around this belief / concept. It will also be noted that statisticians have largely differing numbers in their calculations of this global phenomena because there is little clarity on the definitions of these terms. There is the additional evolving nature of both these movements (as well as a merge of these movements) that keeps it changing according to new and different trends. Therefore, while this study operates within the definitions offered by theologians and scholars, the study does not differentiate between 'pure' Pentecostals or Charismatics. In order to indicate that it is not possible to clearly differentiate between both terms the researcher has maintained the awkward and cumbersome reference to 'Pentecostal/Charismatic'.

The Bible⁴ is the foundational instrument of the Pentecostal/Charismatic Church, which looks to it as inerrant and infallible and the final arbiter on all matters. Other denominations, eg. Catholics, do not consider the Bible alone to be foundational, but rather one of the sources of its theology - others being tradition and the continuous revelations of God to humankind through the work of the Spirit. The Pentecostal/Charismatic Church readily acknowledges that it has a role to play in society, but denominations differ sharply in defining their social role and executing their social responsibility agenda. Most Churches have a 'welfare' programme primarily providing feeding schemes such as food hampers to widows and the poor, as well as lay counselling for troubled Church members. One Church in Phoenix has a retirement residential home on its grounds, and another has a home for unwed mothers. The Church has not taken the lead in

⁴ All references from the Holy Bible are taken from the New International Version. 1984. International Bible Society, Colorado Springs.

initiating discussions with government on moral regeneration. It appears content to be a follower, though many scholars, particularly those within the liberation paradigm, would argue that the Church should be leading initiatives toward a more stable society.

This study explores the response of the Indian Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches embedded in Phoenix, to the challenges facing its communities. The apartheid classification of races according to White, African, Indian and Coloured is used in this study as these classifications still abound in South African parlance, and will remain for many more decades. Thirteen years of democracy has little changed geographical and other social and cultural patterns/practices; it has created “grey areas” for a particular economic bracket which has seen an amusing sway of non-whites changing their mannerisms, speeches and practices to ‘fit in’ with the next-door neighbor. South Africans are definitely in an identity crisis, not quite sure which foot to put forward, and what of each other’s culture to embrace. The researcher is a fourth-generation South African Indian who, as a consequence of being brought up ‘Christian’ did not learn a vernacular Indian language, which was taught at special classes that also required prayers to non-Christian gods. By virtue of being Christian the researcher did not grow up learning the full history and culture of Indian life; her connection with ‘being Indian’ stems from the way she looks, the people in her friendship circle, Indian food and wearing Indian outfits. This dilemma is possibly true for all Indian Christians.

Provided below is a description of the salient characteristics of Phoenix based on the researcher’s personal observations and reflection since returning to the Phoenix community, after living elsewhere in the country for ten years⁵.

⁵ The researcher was born and educated in Durban, and lived in Phoenix for 14 years until 1996. I returned in August 2006, after 10 years, to reside in Durban during the completion of this study.

1.2 The geographical context: Phoenix

Phoenix is the second of the two largest apartheid-styled Indian townships. It is located on the northern periphery of central Durban while to the south is Chatsworth. While there is no projected population for the Phoenix area, it falls within the eThekweni metro which had at 2001 an estimated population of 3 million, with an overall estimate of 800 000 Indians (8.47%) in KwaZulu-Natal (Lehohla, 8 October 2007). Phoenix remains predominantly of Indian occupation although there is a growing integration with African families who have purchased property in the area, and a sprinkling of whites, perhaps who cannot afford to purchase land elsewhere and those who have moved into the area as a result of inter-racial marriages. The area is a mix of those in a spiral of cyclic poverty and the nouveau rich, with the economically affluent population aspiring toward lifestyles of 'upward mobility'. This is usually noted in any of the following trends: house extensions, expensive cars (Mercedes Benzes and BMW's are most common); designer clothing; and, if one can afford it, moving to Mt Edgecombe which is no more than 5 kms away from Phoenix and boasts a golf estate. There is a clamour for visible economic mobility in Phoenix, and owning a car is prized higher than a house.

While there is still greenery in the suburb, much of it is being replaced by development. Real estate agents have recently established offices, finding a boom of property sales in the area with properties that were purchased at the government subsidy rate of R15 000, now selling for R500 000. Ten years ago, there were fewer cars on the road and traffic congestion was limited. Lift clubs were also a more common feature. Today, it takes almost 30 minutes to move two kilometres in the morning traffic exiting Phoenix, with most cars carrying no passengers.

Indians have a strong religious heritage, often linked to their cultural values, and those within Phoenix are Hindu⁶, Muslim or Christian. Religious structures such as temples, mosques and Churches exist throughout the suburb. Church buildings are more numerous than other religious structures, and community halls and school multi-purpose rooms are rented as venues for Church services on a Sunday morning. It is common to hear the 'unblended' singing of Church services, held alongside each other especially within school venues. It is also a common feature at busy intersections to find large banners inviting the community to Hindu festivals or Christian meetings. From where the researcher lives it is possible to get up to the sound of Hindu songs being sung at a Sai Baba service, or the sound of the moulana inviting Muslims to begin morning prayers. When there are Christian open air services, these sounds also filter into one's personal space.

Phoenix is also a thriving area for small to medium business ventures, with a lucrative industrial area bordering Phoenix and Kwa Mashu, a predominantly African residential area. It is not uncommon to find flourishing car-wash businesses, internet cafés and photocopy shops, hairdressing or beauty salons and spaza shops in various business locations, as well as home-businesses. Two shopping malls have been erected within the last two years around the Phoenix Plaza, which houses the economic activity of the area in terms of both formal and informal trade, bringing Pick 'n Pay to rival the longstanding Checkers grocery store among other new developments. As the community is seen to have economic potential, more businesses are moving into the area. A clear feature of the suburb's economic status is the number of competing petrol stations that have sprung up in the last few years and remain lucrative business ventures. Within a 10km radius there are at least eight (8) petrol stations, with two within 200m of each other.

⁶ These refer to linguistic groups rather than religious divisions, even though in South Africa the differences in religious practices have been linked to these linguistic differences.

Against this backdrop of progress and economic development, there is also high unemployment or seasonal employment; drug and alcohol abuse, crime, and poverty. Some parts of Phoenix are known as gang territory, a feature that remains from gang formation in those areas at Phoenix's inception.

1.3 The Church as a Corporation?

Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches use the Bible literally as the Word of God providing the theocratic mandate for its structure and operations. Its interpretation of the scriptures will therefore determine how far the mandate extends to care of the fatherless and the widow, to ensure justice is done, to give food to the hungry. Is the Church responding to social challenges? Is it visibly doing something like business corporations? Does it believe it has a responsibility to ensure society's upliftment? Does the Church have a voice?

The researcher proposes that the Church can be described as a 'corporation' – it has a leader⁷ who drives a vision toward profit (in the case of the Church that profit could be a 'whole' persons - spiritually, emotionally, psychologically and physically). While financial profit is the core focus of business enterprises, in order to fulfil its social obligations corporate institutions have established Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programmes and report annually to shareholders and to the public. While the debate rages about consumer trends that may be motivating the corporate sector's 'new image' towards social and environmental care, corporations profess to take their CSR seriously. Can the same be said of the fastest growing Church in Africa (Hollenweger, 1997:103; Hunt et al. 1997:27; Anderson, 2004:10)? This study inquires into ways in which the Church has felt itself propelled into action on the social, economic and environmental issues of local and global magnitude.

⁷ This research argues that as a result of the way that Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches operate they could be likened to corporations. While corporations unquestioningly accept hierarchal structures, liberation theology (particularly feminist theology) is positioned to deconstruct such notions of grandeur, promoting equal power and social relations, partnerships and mutuality. The researcher argues that because she is working within the framework of understanding that is familiar to Pentecostals/Charismatics, she is able to use the corporate framework for evaluation.

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CSR has emerged from the corporate sector, as a means to address societal demands that goes beyond a company's core business ie. profit-making. The church also has a core business, that of spiritual well-being of its members. Like the corporate sector, the church is also expected to broaden its mandate to address societal issues. This study argues that as a result of the similar process experienced by both sectors, the CSR framework is useful to assist the church go through a process of analysis and strategic thinking that parallels that undergone by corporations. It is therefore justifiable to use the tools and applications that emerge out of CSR for assisting the Church to think about its social and environmental responsibilities – tools and applications, of course, that will have to be suitably modified so that they are appropriate for the Church context.

To further support the argument for using CSR approaches to the Church, there is already, globally and in South Africa, a precedent for CSR approaches, tools and applications being applied to sectors other than the corporate sector, for example, educational institutions – schools, universities and colleges. All of these are underpinned by the researcher's personal exploration of the CSR literature after completing the Corporate Citizenship module as part of her studies towards this degree. It provided a level of insight into how to engage the problem of the Church's narrow focus on welfare issues ie. the researcher found

discourse and language that could be understood within the Church which, in turn, may regard business people and the language they use as legitimate and credible.

1.4 Problem Statement and hypotheses

This research aims to evaluate the social justice awareness of the Indian Pentecostal/Charismatic Church and its role in implementing social responsibility programmes (social, economic, environmental) in Phoenix, Kwa-Zulu Natal (KZN).

South Africa is regarded as a gateway to Africa. It has a complex history that has resulted in myriad social challenges that are deeply rooted within mainly poor communities. Churches in South Africa thrive on these community bases, principally providing spiritual guidance. Churches also have an influence in society, and believe they have a mandate to be socially responsible given its literal reliance on the Bible as the Word of God. Rt Rev Dr Jo Seoka, Bishop of Pretoria, reflecting on the World Council of Churches 9th Assembly held in Porto Allegre, Brazil, in February 2006, challenges Christians to engage in morally responsible investment questioning what we buy, where we buy it and who it enriches (Seoka, 27 October 2007). As well as considering these questions it would be prudent for the Church to reflect on its own investments in the society it desires to offer a better life.

This study explores the following hypotheses:

- The Indian wing of the South African Pentecostal/Charismatic Church addresses social, economic and environmental concerns in accordance with Biblical direction.
- The South African Indian Pentecostal/Charismatic Church espouses a position on social responsibility that is based on a contemporary theology of liberation.

Although liberation theology and corporate frameworks historically have opposing positions on the role of hierarchy in social activism, the researcher uses a corporate framework for evaluation as it is a familiar framework to Pentecostals/Charismatics and one that, increasingly, these Churches strive toward. Further, one of the goals of this study is to encourage and define transformation within the Church, hence for it to have an activist edge it is important to work outside the epistemological framework of the Church.

1.5 Thesis Outline

Chapter Two provides a literature study that gives insight on the founding, and structure of the worldwide Pentecostal Church, and its historical roots among Indians in Durban. This chapter also explores the Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches' role in social development, considering Biblical principles against a secular backdrop of societal challenges. The literature review highlights the synergies and gaps in current knowledge on the link between Pentecostalism/Charismata and social responsibility.

Chapter Three details the methodological framework for the research conducted. The research method is a qualitative study, comprising unstructured interviews and a focus group discussion with Pentecostal/Charismatic pastors from Phoenix. The research sample consists of Church leaders under recognised umbrella bodies, and those operating autonomously as independent Churches.

Chapter Four offers a critical evaluation of the data, exposing understanding and practice of the Indian Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches' social responsibility. This critique uses the principles of corporate social responsibility and liberation theology, to examine these Churches' positions on social responsibility and relevance to liberation theology.

The final chapter summarises key aspects of the debate covered, collating the various salient points and proposing final conclusions and recommendations.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter will provide a survey of existing literature and research on three main themes:

- 1) Liberation theology and its relevance to social responsibility
- 2) A history of global Pentecostalism, Pentecostalism in South Africa, and among the Indian diaspora of South Africa where this study is conducted
- 3) Two approaches to social responsibility: the Church and Business

2.1 Liberation theology and its relevance to social responsibility

2.1.1 The historical roots of apartheid South Africa and liberation theology

To contextualise this study of Pentecostalism/Charismata and social responsibility in South Africa, it is necessary to consider the country's historical roots, and that of Indians in South Africa. Present day Africa has an embedded history of inequality, extortionism, slavery, gross human rights violations and dehumanisation, particularly on the basis of race. This was facilitated by colonialism and domination by a few powerful wealthy countries. In South Africa itself, segregationist policies were entrenched for over 300 years. The year 1948 however, will be remembered as the culmination of segregationist history with the creation of laws to formalise 'apartheid', based simply on racial prejudices. The most cogent of these acts were passed two years after apartheid began: the 1950 Group Areas Act and Population Registration Act followed by the 1953 Reservation of Separate Amenities and Bantu Education Acts, and the 1959 Promotion of Bantu Self-Government Act. Such pieces of legislation, together with the State's education policy, entrenched notions of white supremacy. Effectively, the apartheid regime, through its language and education policies,

ensured whites (English and Afrikaners) were privileged above other race groups ie. African, Indian and Coloured (Henrard, 2003: 2-3).

The former National Party government considered itself a Christian government, quoting the Bible as the blueprint that gave legitimacy to its policies. Christian national education was promoted exclusively for Afrikaners. Christian education allowed schools to offer religious or Biblical studies courses, which was limited to the Christian faith, and to promote values in keeping with the Christian spirit (Henrard, 2003:4). Christianity was used to perpetuate and grant legitimacy of gross human rights violations, atrocities, racism and separation. The Churches that dominated South Africa were white-controlled mother-Churches ('moederkerke') and segregated daughter-Churches ('dogterkerke') for non-whites. Christianity was presented to South Africa as a white man's God, brought by the British and the Afrikaner as a 'superior' religion. Missionaries came to South Africa from across the globe, bringing with them education and medical supplies and a belief in the only true God (Nadar & Leonard, 2006: 6). Within this context Christianity spread among non-white groups, and flourished in post-apartheid South Africa, which must bear witness to its tenacity and appeal.

For the most part, the Church was largely conspiratorial with apartheid. The revolution that was alive in society did eventually propel a call within the Church, to action, led by the likes of Archbishop Desmond Tutu, Rev Dr Frank Chikane and Rev Beyers Naude, drawing on the basic tenets of a school of thought known as liberation theology.

Within this context of grappling with skewed scales of justice a dialogue began between society and the Church giving rise to liberation theology. Gustavo Gutiérrez, a Peruvian Roman Catholic priest who is also a founding father of liberation theology, described theology as "critical reflection on historical praxis", suggesting that theologians must understand their own intellectual and socio-political histories – their own contexts - and recognise that as a living, dynamic,

changing process that “involves contemporary insights into knowledge (epistemology), man [sic] (anthropology) and history (social analysis)” (Believe, 7 September 2007). As this critical reflection took place, sectors within the Catholic and Anglican Churches in Latin America began debating poverty, social justice and political liberation. This metamorphosed into a theology “according to which the Gospel of Christ demands that the Church concentrate its efforts on liberating the people of the world from poverty and oppression” Ibid, 7 September 2007). Webster, a writer for the Elwell Evangelical Dictionary, suggests that this is not a new theological theory, but unification of theology with prevailing socio-political conditions, offering a contrast to the “ahistorical and individualistic nature of existential theology” (Believe, 7 September 2007).

Liberation theology engaged sociological and philosophical works of Immanuel Kant and Karl Marx, being influenced in part by some of their writings, and as such drawing severe criticism for looking outside the Church for insight. Kant argued for the autonomy of human reason, which when applied theologically, understands God to be experienced in human interactions with history, not as God having revealed a determined history through the Bible. Karl Marx, in turn, suggests that humanity’s wholeness required overcoming the alienating political and economic structures of society (Believe, 7 September 2007). Suspicion and a fear of the use of Marx’s teaching to analyse social structures and denigrate capitalist society, led to growing opposition, both from privileged classes and from well placed figures in the Church’s hierarchy, that Christianity was becoming “overpoliticized” (Boff et al., 7 September 2007). However, the role of Marxism within liberation theology has not been properly understood. Liberation theologians support Marx’s famous statement that while “philosophers have explained the world; our task is to change it” (Believe, 7 September 2007). Thus theologians must become actively engaged in the struggle for society’s transformation. Using a Marxist-style class analysis, liberationists are able to identify the oppressors and oppressed, creating an understanding of injustices and exploitation. Marxism and liberation theology have commonality in rejecting

religious support for an unjust status quo and the overbearing powers of an oppressor class. However, where Marxism denounces religion, liberation theology seeks avenues in the Christian faith for bringing about social liberation. “Marx failed to see the emotive, symbolic, and sociological force the Church could be in the struggle for justice” (ibid, 7 September 2007).

A theology that focuses on poverty and oppression has been combined with other perspectives such as feminist theology, Black theology and Third World theology, and remains a living theology that has the potential to evolve with changing social milieus. Liberation theology allows for liberationists to consider theology and the Bible through the lens of oppression, discrimination and injustice. Per Frostin (cited in Hallencreutz & Palmberg, 1991:128) quotes Kameeta’s position of a Black theology of liberation as being opposed to “the wretchedness of oppressive conditions” which is congruent with the Hebrew concept of the ‘poor’. South Africa’s anti-apartheid activist and theologian Dr Allan Boesak defined Black theology as a “theological reflection of black Christians on the situation in which they live and on their struggle for liberation. Blacks ask: what does it mean to believe in Jesus Christ when one is black and living in a world controlled by white racists”? Further, “what if these racists call themselves Christians too?” (ibid:130).

A closer look at liberation theology as espoused by Frostin (cited in Hallencreutz & Palmberg, 1991: 122-123) probes whether the relationship between God (sacred) and the world (secular) is analysed from a dualistic or holistic perspective. Dualism separates spirit and matter, Church and the world, God and humanity, portraying this world of lesser value than the world beyond – and therefore urging believers not to get caught up in its issues. Thus it seeks to render illegitimate any theological critique of social, economic and political injustice. This dualism augers against the development of a theology of liberation since the scales of liberation and Christian life become incongruent. Pentecostalism also has a dualistic frame of reference with an emphasis on the ‘mystical’, the ‘other-worldly’ and the ‘second-coming’ of Christ, to cite but a few

examples of aspects that have the potential to turn believers' attention away from day-to-day issues.

A holistic perspective on the other hand does not differentiate between spheres. If we apply the perspective that the sum of all the parts make up the whole, a holistic perspective offers a model that is mirrored and multifaceted, each mirror serving as a filtering reflection of the whole. Feminists argue that the personal is political, an opinion the researcher thinks can be applied in a holistic context of religion. One's personal belief in God is private; yet that belief is lived out in a social milieu and this thrusts religion into the public and political arena.

Essentially all liberationists have the following in common: a) a rejection of boxing the world into neat, independent compartments and b) an affirmation that believing in God must permeate all aspects of life. Liberationists theologise that the world is inter-related and inter-dependent to an extent that the Church and politics or economics cannot be separated, and that God must be seen as an integral part of this totality (Hallencreutz & Palmberg, 1991:130). Frostin (ibid: 122-123) suggests that if one analysed a dualistic perspective one could consider two opposing positions that might be available to the Church regarding its socio-political role: to be neutral ie. have *no* position, or to be situated to support the poor, underprivileged and oppressed; to be *actively* positioned (emphasis of researcher). Kameeta (ibid:128) however, emphatically argues that a holistic, liberationist perspective would reject any claims of neutrality since "neutrality has in fact no place in the vocabulary of God...How can the messenger of God be neutral, while the God who is sending him or her is never neutral?".

2.1.2 The Church and the Kairos Document

Farid Esack, a Muslim participant observer of the Church, purports that Christians have an "inflated liberation theology", an attempt at a "dubious authenticity and integrity" that is based on a few activist Christian organisations

and well-known clergy (Esack, 7 September 2007). Although these are the reflections of one individual on South African Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches, their limited activism against apartheid suggests there may be truth to Esack's words.

Anderson (1999(2):96) notes that during apartheid the National Party government, claiming to be a 'Christian' government urged Churches to "not mix politics and religion" and ensured that they understood that 'involvement with politics was sinful', which was also the prevailing view of AFM and other Pentecostal Churches (Hallencrutz & Palmberg 1991:125; Hollenweger, 1997:109-110 and Nadar & Leonard, 2006:8). In 1991, speaking at the 3rd 'Religion and Society in Africa' conference in Uppsala, the then chief representative of the banned African National Congress (ANC) in the Nordic countries, Billy Modise, counter-urged the Church to be active, engaged and upfront in the struggle against the oppression of black people during apartheid so that it could earn the right to influence the socio-political landscape after apartheid's demise (Hallencrutz & Palmberg, 1991:15-22, 125). He was supported by a scholar and Church leader from the Zimbabwe Catholic Bishops Conference, Patrick Mutume (Mutume in Hallencrutz & Palmberg 1991:148), who advised that unless the Church identified with the poor during apartheid, it would be irrelevant when independence was won.⁸ Archbishop Desmond Tutu, speaking at an inaugural lecture at Alberta University, Canada, in 1998 urged that "to oppose racism and its gross violation of the fundamental rights of people is not just a political act, it is deeply religious, a profoundly spiritual activity" (University of Alberta, 12 April 2007).

In South Africa, the Church was complicit in upholding and promoting apartheid. While various Church structures (Catholic, Anglican, Lutheran, Pentecostal) practised some degree of liberation activism, these were weak voices, unable to

⁸ Mutume was drawing on the experiences of Angola and Mozambique where it took a decade for Churches to engage government, hence their losing a valuable opportunity to be at the forefront of a positive socio-political landscape.

break down the hierarchical organogram that was white-controlled, and structurally designed to maintain power for white Church leaders (Pillay, 1994; Hollenweger, 1999 and Hallencreutz & Palmberg, 1991).

In 1973 the Evangelical Lutheran Church met Prime Minister Vorster and passionately asserted that “the conscience of the Church compels her to reject a policy that encourages whites to place obstacles into her path and that prevents the Church from functioning properly”. Vorster aggressively argued that “the government does not want to have anything to do with the Church if it is going to get mixed up in political matters....(She should) stick to her duty, which is preaching the Gospel” (Hertz (1976:257f) cited in Hallencreutz & Palmberg, 1991:125).

Against this thinking, an uprising within the Church emerged that eventually led to the 1985 ‘Kairos Document’, ‘The Relevant Pentecostal Witness’ and ‘The Evangelical Christian Witness’ (Anderson & Hollenweger, 1999:104; Leonard & Nadar & Leonard, 2006: 12). Essentially though, it was left to individual ministers and bishops to stick their necks out to “sacrifice(s) (themselves) for the liberation of (their) neighbour” and give substance to the Churches’ claims of opposing apartheid (Hallencreutz & Palmberg, 1991:127).

The Kairos Document deserves further mention as it was the pivotal theological voice against the oppressive political system when the South African Church was silent. “It (was) a Christian, Biblical and theological comment on the political crisis in South Africa” authored by a group of theologians who converged in Soweto after a State of Emergency was declared in July 1985. ‘Kairos’ is a Greek term meaning a “special moment for change, an opportunity”. It was chosen as a key term to describe the highly situational nature of this document” (South African Christianity, 77 September 2007).

The Kairos Document⁹ is mainly addressed to the Churches, which were divided on apartheid especially because the government that professed to be Christian, promoted racist, segregated systems that divided the Church into the white Church and the black Church. The Kairos Document tackles the issues of State theology, Church theology and Prophetic theology, and calls for a contextual theology of scripture which is not interpreted to support injustices.

With respect to State theology it confronts the use of scripture, most notably Romans 13 vs 1-7, where the Apostle Paul writes on obedience to the absolute rule of the State, to force Christians into a false belief that the National Party government was established by God, and should be upheld. These theologians suggested that a contextual reading would give an interpretation according to the context within which Paul wrote, and further expounded that there are many more instances of God not demanding obedience to unjust State systems. In Romans 13, Paul is not addressing the issue of a just or unjust State but he is simply offering guidance on obedience to the governing body of the land.

Secondly, the use of law and order to maintain an unjust system is decried in the Kairos Document as maintaining discrimination and oppression. Those that rejected this law and order were made to feel as though they committed a sin against God. Lastly, State theology labelled everything that opposed the government as communism and therefore evil. In strong terms the Kairos Document further argued the State's use of God "blasphemous" and "heretical" as it used God's name to justify the evil it perpetuated.

In considering Church theology, the Kairos Document argues against any form of reconciliation that is *not* premised by repentance, as "no reconciliation, no

⁹ References to the substantive aspects contained within the Kairos Document are taken from the following internet sources, downloaded 7 September 2007
[http:// www.bethel.edu/~letnie/AfricanChristianity/SAKairos.html](http://www.bethel.edu/~letnie/AfricanChristianity/SAKairos.html);
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kairos_Document;
<http://www.anc.org.za/ancdocs/history/transition/kairos.html>; http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Liberation_theology; http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kairos_Document

forgiveness and no negotiations are possible without repentance.”¹⁰ It questions theologians appeal to the apartheid State for ‘justice’ as a plea to those who were not capable of engaging such justice, as they were the oppressors.

This section of the Kairos Document drew attention away from individual conversion (in the hope that this would catalyse positive change) to the suggestion that structural injustice (sin) needed to be dealt with – the embedded roots of, in this case, racial injustice. This is a strong point of liberation theology – the location of the structural roots of social ills - to expose the wound rather than put a band-aid on it. The strength of the Kairos Document lay in its ability to highlight a difficulty with the Church, without fear of reprisal. Its position on non-violence called for Churches to be fair, applying the same standard to community and State violence, rather than condoning State violence while denouncing or condemning community violence. Although the apartheid government did not formally condemn the Kairos Document, its position on non-violence sparked much debate, resulting in an apartheid government spokesperson condemning it as an alleged call to violence and suggesting it therefore be banned. While the issue of violence was not a core element of the document, it caused a raucous that “soon came to eclipse much of the rest of the Kairos Document” (Wikipedia, 7 September 2007).

The section of the Kairos Document that looked at the fundamental problem asserts that the Church needs to become more involved in social analysis and strive towards understanding the political issues faced by society.

“The primary task of the Church at this moment, then, is not to call for peace but to call for justice. The culprit must be found and brought to justice. And there must be no cover-ups. Because unless justice is done and seen to be done, there is no hope of peace in the near future.” (Institute for Contextual Theology, 7 September 2007).

¹⁰ <http://www.bethel.edu/~letnie/AfricanChristianity/SAKairos.html> [Download 7 September 2007]

It acknowledged that the Church had been paralysed by an 'other-worldly' spirituality that gives very little attention to the real affairs of this world.

Finally, the Kairos Document called for a Prophetic theology based on a) an understanding of society; b) a recognition that oppression, including that discussed in the Bible, was not acceptable to God and that Jesus takes up the cause of the poor and oppressed; c) a message of hope. The Kairos Document challenged the Church to social action – to become a participant in the struggle for the freedom of South Africa's oppressed millions.

At the time of its release the Kairos Document had some positive impact, being welcomed by many Church quarters across the country, but it appeared to have had little lasting impact in respect of mobilising the Churches to social justice action. It however remains a document of monumental significance because it offered a tangible sign of hope that the Church was not wholly complacent, complicit and accepting of apartheid policy; that it did have an alternative theology that drew on people's real experiences, and supporting the voiceless.

In conclusion, while the Church may have relinquished its responsibility and opportunity during apartheid to share a gospel of "the truth [that] shall set you free" (John 8:32), South Africa currently offers another window of redemptive opportunity. Thirteen years into its democracy, this nation is struggling with social and economic inequalities that create an ever widening gap between the rich and the poor.¹¹ This is exacerbated by worldwide environmental destruction and natural disasters that cripple vast regions of the world through hurricanes, tsunamis, heavy rainfalls, heat waves, etc. When such disasters occur, the poor are always the first to suffer.

¹¹ See Bhorat & Kanbur, October 2005. The authors conducted a 10-year economic review South Africa titled 'Poverty and Well-being in post-apartheid South Africa. An Overview of Data, Outcomes and Policy.' The authors note that the first 10 years have seen an increase in unemployment, income poverty and income inequality.

The prophets of the Old Testament are often used in liberation theological discourses, since they frequently spoke out against the injustices of their time. For example, Isaiah 58:6-7 says “Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke? Is it not to share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter – when you see the naked, to clothe him, and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood?” Again in Luke 4: 18-19 Jesus cites Isaiah 61:1-2, “The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is on me, because the Lord has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favour and the day of vengeance of our God”. The link made in Luke and Isaiah between the Holy Spirit and social justice captures the essence of how the ‘fruit’ of the Holy Spirit may become a real presence in people’s lives. The researcher has here brought in a reference to the Holy Spirit, as the Spirit’s place is the fulcrum of Pentecostalism/Charismata, to which we now turn.

2.2 A history of global Pentecostalism, Pentecostalism in South Africa and among the Indian diaspora of South Africa

2.2.1 Pentecostalism/Charismata - the fastest growing Church

There are debates on the meaning of Pentecostalism. It is a concept that cannot easily be defined as diversity is a primary feature of the Pentecostal and Charismatic identity (Anderson, 2004; Hollenweger, 1997). Robert Anderson defines Pentecostalism as a movement concerned with “the *experience* of the working of the Holy Spirit, and the *practice* of spiritual gifts” (cited in Hollenweger, 1997:14) (his emphases). This is similar to Alan Anderson’s conceptualisation of Pentecostalism as including all forms of ‘spiritual gifts’ movements (ibid:14). In the global context Hollenweger (1997: 13) defines three distinct forms of Pentecostalism:

- a) Classical Pentecostalism
- b) The Charismatic renewal movement, and
- c) 'Pentecostal-like' Independent Churches

Classical Pentecostalism refers to first, a physical outward evidence that one has been baptised with the Holy Spirit in the form of speaking in a strange, unknown, 'heavenly' tongue or language as was evidenced at Pentecost (Acts 2:4. "All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them"). Charismatic renewals testify to a renewing, possibly second experience of the Holy Spirit, evidenced through the gifts of the Spirit.¹² . The Biblical text 1 Corinthians 12: 8-10 mentions nine gifts, namely wisdom, knowledge, faith, healing, miraculous powers, prophecy, distinguishing between spirits, speaking in tongues, and the interpretation of tongues. Romans 12: 6-8 notes the gifts of prophecy, serving, teaching, encouraging, contributing to others needs, leadership and mercy. The Independents are similar to the Classical Pentecostals in their emphasis on the *power* of the Spirit (Anderson, 2004:10). According to Poewe (1994:34), Pentecostals believe that life is fluid. They are uncomfortable with the distinction between reason and emotion, the mind over the body or society over the individual¹³. This seamlessness should not be confused with Frostin's explanation of a holistic perspective, as Pentecostals have not worked society into their plan. Instead, they have actually *reduced* the social field to the Church or the Pentecostal movement (Poewe, 1994:34).

Pentecostalism/Charismata is the fastest-growing, most dominant form of Christianity in the world, with estimates of between 345 million and 523 million adherents (Johnstone & Mandryk, 2001 and Barrett & Johnson, year unknown both cited in Anderson, 2004:10). The discrepancy in these numbers has been attributed to the inclusion of 394 million "independents" in Barrett and Johnson's study. The Third World is not immune to this burgeoning trend, with almost 11

¹² This definition is also supported by Karla Poewe in her Introduction to 'Charismatic Christianity as a Global Culture', 1994:xi

¹³ Pentecostals/Charismatics do however differentiate between the physical and spiritual worlds.

percent of Africa's population, including the Muslim north, classified as Charismatic in 2000 (Hollenweger, 1997:103-104; Richter in Hunt et al. 1997: 27). Hollenweger (1997:104) notes that one fifth of all Zimbabweans in 2000 were classified Pentecostals. Kenya, Nigeria, Ghana and Zambia clock in 10 percent of their respective populations, the Democratic Republic of Congo and South Africa as just fewer than 10 percent. Hollenweger's estimate contradicts that of Anderson (in Anderson & Hollenweger, 1999:89) who approximates 6000 Pentecostal Charismatic Churches in South Africa, number about 10 million members in total.¹⁴

Gifford (1998:20) asserts that the Church is a key element of 'civil society', although he acknowledges the paradox that Christianity has significantly declined in shaping modernity in the *West*, while the Church has had a significant impact on the creation of a modern, pluralistic *African* society (the researcher's emphasis). Karl Marx said that "(r)eligion is the sigh of the afflicted creature, the soul of a heartless world, as it is also the spirit of spiritless conditions. It is the *opium* of the people" (in Padover, 1979). It is true that the masses across the world, especially in the Third World, appear to be embracing Pentecostalism/Charismata as their panacea for all of life's problems, as it has the potential to take people out of their actual state of 'impoverished, squalid, disease-ridden' lives; yet the intensity of the 'born again' experience has also been observed to propel poor African people to another spiritual plane – that which is 'other worldly' (Gifford, 1998: 170, 330).

Land (2003:123) notes that there was the danger of emotionalism early in the Pentecostal movement:

"When persons, who had seen themselves (as well as having been perceived by others) as determined by the socio-political, economic, educational, class and racial forms, broke through by the power of the

¹⁴ The numbers are contradictory, as South Africa has a population of 48 million and 10 percent would then be 4.8 million people (as opposed to Anderson's summation of an estimated 10 million).

Spirit into a new existence of freedom and belonging, there were usually tears of joy and shouts of victory in the camp of the prayerful. They were truly liberated and not merely informed”.

It is this confidence in the ability to transcend one's squalid life circumstances that appears to draw many to Pentecostalism/Charismata.

The beginnings of Pentecostalism can be traced to the Azusa Street Mission in downtown Los Angeles where people were literally 'drawn' from the streets into the Church and the Holy Spirit manifested in unknown tongues (Cox, 1995). Surprisingly, there are two positions on the leadership responsible for the revival that took place – the black roots of Pentecostalism under William J Seymour in a poverty-stricken area, and its possible founding white roots under Charles Parham (Anderson & Hollenweger, 1999:21; Hollenweger in Poewe, 1994:201). Hollenweger asserts that Pentecostalism is the only worldwide Church that was initiated by a black; overcoming racial, social and linguistic barriers (Hollenweger in Poewe, 1994:201), eventually being acknowledged as such by the North American Assemblies of God. It is of course, quite powerful, that a little, poor, downtown African-American Church should be a place of pioneer revivalism that has propelled a sharp exponential rise in the global Church. Cox (1995:4) states that the story of the first Pentecost inspires people that have become disillusioned with religion/and or the world. For such people Pentecost heralds a hope and a future that can be better and different; a transforming attitude toward the present.

As in North America, there are two positions on the beginnings of the Pentecostal movement in South Africa. The one perspective is that Pentecostalism in South Africa ignited amongst disenfranchised blacks after white missionaries who experienced the Asuza Street Revival, the Oslo Norway Spirit outpouring and the teachings of T B Barratt and A A Boddy in England felt the ardent desire to bring that to South Africa (Nadar & Leonard, 2006:7). Those who are considered most instrumental in shaping Pentecostalism in South Africa, namely Thomas

Hezelmalhalch, John Graham Lake and Georgie Bowie, arrived at a volatile time in South Africa's history as Anglo and Boer fought to shape white domination according to their rules. The three formed three distinct streams of Pentecostal mission Churches – the Apostolic Faith Mission, The Full Gospel Church of God and The Assemblies of God (Nadar & Leonard, 2006:7; Pillay, 1994:xxi).

A second, opposing perspective of Poewe and Hexham (1994:61-62), is that, while these are the more generally acknowledged names, both in terms of South Africa and the worldwide Charismatic Renewal Movement, the development of both was initiated in a black Anglican Church in Natal and Zululand two decades before its appearance in the United States. This movement, Iviyo lofakazi bakaKristu (Legion of Christ's Witnesses) began without any Western influence, originating out of individual concerns that the Church lacked power and failed to affect local people's lives. Poewe and Hexham (ibid:63) note further that Christian revivals occurred many times among black South Africans. However, unlike revivals in white communities, these were not influenced or directed by the US. David du Plessis, who embraced Pentecostalism and brought its influence to mainline Churches, was also known to be deeply affected by African Christianity (healing, tongues, dreams, visions that were African and at the same time Christian) (ibid:3). The most poignant aspect of Pentecostalism is that "it was the religion of the poor, embracing their oral, narrative non-conceptual thinking, that in the West became a religion of the affluent", an elite language of science and technology, of conceptualisation (Hollenweger in Poewe, 1994:201) (the researcher's emphasis).

2.2.2 The Indian Pentecostal Movement and its liberation theology (a¹⁵)

The rise of Pentecostalism among South African Indians, specifically, begins with their arrival in 1860 to the Port of Natal mainly as low-caste indentured labourers

a¹⁵ This section on Indian Pentecostalism draws on the work of Gerald Pillay, who undertook meticulous research, comprehensively tracing the roots of Pentecostalism in South Africa in his book 'Religion at the Limits? Pentecostalism among Indian South Africans'. 1994. University of South Africa, Pretoria.

promised a better quality of life, after African labour became scarce. They performed unskilled labour for five years, after which they could remain in South Africa or return to India. Skilled in gardening, carpentry and other jobs, most decided to stay on in South Africa. Resettlement programmes curbed Indians' ability, however, to become a self-sufficient class and moving closer to the city for work brought common challenges associated with urbanisation. While many Indians may have wanted to return to India they had deculturalised: some had South African-born children who spoke English, and some had inter-married across castes¹⁶, creating barriers to their ability to reintegrate in India. In their acceptance of life in South Africa, a large percentage of Indians took up employment for the municipality, the Durban Corporation, living in barracks provided by the Corporation. In this environment, amid a foreign, dispossessed people who were peasants of low-caste, the Indian Pentecostal movement originated (Pillay, 1994:7).

Pentecostalism did not penetrate the trading 'free' and 'passenger' class Indians, who had more economic resources available to them, but found a captive audience for physical healing among a peasant society that could not afford medical care and social services. While white Pentecostalism would likely be a result of different experiences with the Holy Spirit, Indians would most likely undergo a 'conversion experience' from other religions, mainly Hinduism (very few Muslims and Telegu-speaking people converted)¹⁷.

Bethesda, the largest Indian Christian movement in South Africa, began as a result of a chance meeting between a local Indian trader, Ebenezer Theophilus

¹⁶ The caste system divides people according to their surnames into different economic and status strata; perpetuating a slave class, the untouchables (Dalits), and the high class. The system is still practiced in India. My mother takes great pleasure in mentioning that she is a member of the high caste 'Konar' family even though she is a third-generation South African who has never been to India!

¹⁷ Research undertaken by G C Oosthuizen (1975) indicates that converts were mainly from lower income groups and where traditional cultural practices had been least maintained. In Chatsworth the reason for conversion was mainly as a result of healing; but in affluent areas such as Reservoir Hills the reasons were as a result of intermarriage or a relative's influence.

and a miller, JA Rowlands. Theophilus, inspired by Rowlands and his ministry, formed a life-long friendship that made it possible for Rowlands to legitimately gain entry into the Indian community in Pietermaritzburg. Theophilus also firmly committed to follow the 'holiness principles' that Rowlands espoused – devout lifestyles, study of scripture, prayer, evangelism and *charity* (the researcher's emphasis). This is similar to other lifestyle displays of Pentecostal Christianity such as studies in South America which indicate that the 'Evangelical poor' also have communities which are Spirit-led and adopt a disciplined life of no alcohol or drugs, hard work, careful budgeting, honesty, family integrity, and discipline in the home (Martin in Hunt et al. 1997:27; Pillay, 1994:76-77).

When Pastor Rowlands Sr died, it seemed appropriate that the younger JF Rowlands should succeed him. While JF Rowlands succession was explained as a result of his natural flair and talents, Pillay (1994:23) opines that it may have been the psychological advantage of being 'more learned' to an Indian. The first Indian full-time worker, Arthur Naidoo, was only appointed at a time when JF Rowlands briefly went back home to England. JF Rowlands was fully supported by the Indians, ingraining himself in the community to an extent that a memorial centre bearing his name has been set up in Chatsworth, one of the biggest apartheid-styled low income residential Indian areas in Durban. In Durban the movement began after three Indians (DG Samuel, DM Gabriel, AJ Williams) introduced JF Rowlands to poor low-caste Indians employed as menial labourers for the Durban Corporation Barracks and Railway. The trend indicates white domination of Indian Churches, similar to that of other non-white Churches.

In the early days of the Pentecostal movement it was common for large tents to be set up on community grounds and for evangelists to hold well advertised 'revival' meetings, inviting people for healing and deliverance from evil spirits. These revival services were responsible for many conversions, often sparking the ire of Hindu leaders. When the Group Areas Act was passed in 1950 and people were segregated into different racial areas, most Indians were settled into

Chatsworth or Phoenix. Pentecostalism followed into these settlements through people's homes, with cell groups springing up everywhere and homes being used for services (Pillay, 1994:45). Later, people hired the local 'multi-purpose' rooms in schools, put up permanent tents and eventually, today, these have been replaced by Church buildings of grand scale.

The Full Gospel Church promoted conversion (salvation), spirit-baptism and charismatic gifts – such as speaking in tongues - as the 'full gospel'. Bethesda's principle was that the sign of baptism was outward manifestation in the 'fruit' of the Spirit, Matthew 7:16 "By their fruit you will recognise them" and again in Galations 5:22, "...the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control). Such an emphasis, one might have thought, would have translated into social action.

However, Pentecostal Churches have generally paid little attention to the gross inhumanity of South Africa's socio-political circumstances, contending that salvation of the soul was paramount and the Church's position on social justice was 'unspiritual'. Rowlands was one of the few Pentecostal pastors that expressed some disgruntlement with apartheid, but not enough to stir discontent from within the Indian Church. Sadly the sentiment was confined to a "strong displeasure" of the use of 'Europeans only' and to the fact that the Group Areas Act would displace 'Indians' when in fact it obviously created a similar emotional, psychological and social upheaval for Africans and Coloureds.

While the Pentecostal Church, like others, fundamentally offered a collaborative attitude toward apartheid policy, practising government's apartheid within the Church itself, a handful of 'non-white' leaders began to show and voice a growing discontent at the racial policy of the Church and its Constitution and the racial composition of its executive council. Fifty percent of the signatories of the 1986 *'The Evangelical Witness'* were Pentecostals, leading to the 1988 paper by Pentecostals *'The Relevant Pentecostal Witness'* on their position against

apartheid, laying claim to the non-racial origins of the Pentecostal movement as part of their inspiration (Anderson, 1999 (2) :104).

We have earlier noted that the Church practised what the researcher terms 'apartheid theology'. As a democratic country we continue to reverberate from the effects of an unjust system. The next section outlines progressive strides that have been made by the business sector and predominantly mainline Churches, to address pertinent current socio-economic and environmental crises.

2.3. Two Approaches to Social Responsibility

Collectively, businesses and Churches allow people to labour while praying for a harvest or good dividend. If religious communities can evaluate corporations on principles that are central to faith, it is recommended that faith communities evaluate themselves similarly – and moreover are open themselves to reciprocal evaluation, as faith organisations view themselves as setting the standards for justice, integrity and humanity. The 'King Report 1994' is a blueprint for CSR, while the *Oikos Journey* is a call to action written by the Church to end poverty by being socially responsible. The 'Bench Marks' is complementary to the *Oikos Journey* in ensuring that businesses are evaluated against their own governance principles and Biblical standards.

2.3.1 The Business Approach to Social Responsibility¹⁸

According to Cannon (in Alperson, 1995:3), the origins of corporate social investment can be traced to adoption, during particular historical periods, of Bible principles and injunctions. It was, however, the Industrial Revolution which transformed community structures and thrust new responsibilities onto employers. A few enlightened employers introduced worker welfare funds, supported laws that regulated factory work, health and safety, protected chimney sweeps from exploitation and controlled working conditions for poor children.

¹⁸ Some parts of this section are adapted from the researcher's Corporate Citizenship assignment. (V Francis, April 2006.)

Victorian paternalism, experiments with co-operatives and self-help “upliftment” programmes followed, often with religious overtones (ibid:3).

Milton Friedman, an economist and the most recognised authority opposing CSR, argued that “the business of business is business and the sole social responsibility of a company is to maximise profits for its shareholders” (McIntosh, 2003:34). He perceived social responsibility to be “a distraction from the real purpose of business: to make private wealth” (ibid:34). It is accepted that money-making is the primary responsibility of corporations, as spirituality is the primary responsibility of religious institutions; service delivery, in turn, is the primary responsibility of the State. What Friedman implies is that corporations have no other mandate than to make money for their clients, and if they wander into disciplines that are not their core business they could do more harm than good, or lose the focus of their core mandate. Margolis and Walsh (2003: 272) put it another way: “such corporate involvement (would be) misguided”, claiming that “corporations can contribute best to society if they do what they do best...provide goods and services to the marketplace”.

Friedman’s position is based on an assumption that only humans in their individual capacities are capable of moral responsibility for their actions - effectively excluding corporations from this responsibility (cited in Crane & Matten, 2004:39). Second, it assumes that a corporation’s job is to be profitable, a job that is the sole responsibility of its employees, and third, that it is the State’s responsibility to manage social challenges. This school of thought has since given way, under mounting societal and political pressures, in a debating arena that has shifted towards social responsibility as a clearly defined feature of business life. McIntosh (2003: 27) defines corporate social responsibility as the role, scope and purpose of business, asserting that “this is not a debate over private property rights, but a concern with how we manage the planet” and that “whether corporates like it or not (they) are public culture” and thus are subject to public scrutiny.

In so far as the position goes that profitability is primary, a few arguments can be put forward for CSR; the first being that social responsibility has the potential to increase profit (Crane & Matten, 2004: 41). Secondly, in a world where skilled personnel have open employment markets and greater mobility, firms have to compete to attract and maintain the best. Firms that are perceived as 'caring' may appeal to the humanity in all of us, and so be attractive to new recruits, and also be able to maintain loyalty. Thirdly, customers or clients must be kept happy and since people are increasingly aware of human rights and global warming, CSR may present an answer. Fourth, social actions can strengthen relationships with government, and prevent legislative amendments that may not bode well for corporations. Finally, Crane and Matten (ibid: 42) note that dealing with current social challenges can create better, more stable environments which will have long-term positive pay-offs for business.

Increased attention on environmental destruction and poverty alleviation has put companies in the spotlight and under critical evaluation.¹⁹ Roberts (2003:255-256) affirms that there is heightened scrutiny on business initiatives, especially with increased 'institutional investors' who have highlighted businesses' social conduct, and demand shareholder value in terms that go beyond mere profit. The media has also effectively been used by civil society and activists to expose the negative social and environmental consequences of corporate activity. These businesses and others that note the effect on the consumer market, has prompted various public relations exercises to mitigate damage control. McIntosh (2003:31) argues that there is a "global disconnection between finance, trade, business organisations and social and environmental conditions". It is this that corporate social responsibility addresses: an attempt to marry these issues "using the organisational power that lies in corporate hands to effect the

¹⁹ A case in point was McDonald's in Norway that attempted to launch a new sandwich called the McAfrika. The sandwich cost the equivalent of 42ZAR, in a country that has 33 percent living in poverty. Although the launch went ahead, there was much criticism, spearheaded by Norwegian Church Aid, of McDonald's insensitivity. Refer McIntosh, 2003: 57

management of global capitalism alongside global social development” (ibid:31). Essentially, companies are encouraged to deliberate their impact on society.

In South Africa, corporate social responsibility has a fairly short history, first publicly expressed in 1972 when a professor at the University of Cape Town's business school, Meyer Feldberg, urged business leaders to learn from their Western counterparts and become more involved in community development. He suggested that while it was irresponsible to prioritise social goals above profit social responsibility was actually necessary for the profit margin (Alperson, 1995:3-4).

Feldberg's postulations began a wave of discussions and deliberations that quickly resulted in the creation of the Anglo American and De Beers Chairman's Fund in 1973, which were philanthropic initiatives. In 1976, the Urban Foundation was established to address urban development challenges across the country. Many of the social investment cases prior to the demise of apartheid were donations; unregulated, and completely voluntary. However, American companies operating in South Africa came under scrutiny from their own shareholders, religious and civic organisations and trade unions that pressured them to disclose their social investments in apartheid South Africa or close down, and were resistant to giving aid to the State or military (Alperson, 1995:6). In South Africa today, business still prefer to define their efforts as corporate social investment, rather than the more internationally used corporate social responsibility as they attempt to deflect “questions about legacy, memory, history, justice, or moral and ethical responsibilities” (Fig, 2005:601).

Since 1994, CSR has intensified in South Africa. In 1994, the King II Commission was set up by the Institute of Directors in Southern Africa, to interrogate corporate governance in South Africa and develop appropriate guidelines for companies (Institute of Directors in Southern Africa, 2002:6). This led to the ‘King Report 1994’ first published in November of that year, setting out

the guiding principles for corporate governance.²⁰ The report outlines the tenuous, delicately difficult balance that is critical to make governance a success as the “key challenge is to seek an appropriate balance between enterprise (performance) and constraints (conformance)” (ibid:7). As one of the seven characteristics²¹ of a “well- managed company” social responsibility requires that the company “will be aware of, and respond to, social issues, placing a high priority on ethical standards...and (be) responsible with regard to environmental and human rights issues” (ibid:11).

The ‘King Report’ (1994) defines CSR as “the commitment of business to sustainable development and the improvement of quality of life by working with employees, their families, the local community and society at large” (Bench Marks Foundation (2), 23 May 2007). While historically, international and national companies operating in South Africa have been widely observed to be complicit with supporting apartheid, big business has deliberately and consciously increased financial and human resources toward CSR post-apartheid.

While corporations assert that managing societal challenges is the ambit of government, it has acknowledged it also has a responsibility, and remains committed to activate its mandate in this regard. In little over a decade, social investment in South Africa has a new face – it is regulated, companies comply with reporting guidelines, and many take seriously the social investment portfolios of their companies. While there is no clear formula, companies have created separate Corporate Social Investment (CSI) units, foundations, or have placed CSI within the human resource component of companies – no matter where, it exists somewhere in a company’s profile. The ‘King Report’ (1994) that

²⁰ Sir Adrian Cadbury has defined corporate governance as “concerned with holding the balance between economic and social goals and between individual and communal goals...the aim is to align as nearly as possible the interests of individuals, corporations and society” in ‘Executive Summary of the King Report 2002’. 2002:6

²¹ The other characteristics are discipline, transparency, independence, accountability, responsibility and fairness. Refer Executive Summary of King Report 2002: 10-11

institutionalised corporate governance suggests that social responsibility may result in “indirect economic benefits such as improved productivity and corporate reputation” (Institute of Directors in Southern Africa, 30 September 2007).

It should also be acknowledged that rhetoric and marketing framed around social and environmental responsibility is, not infrequently, used as a smoke-screen for ongoing unethical practices. An example of this deception is Sappi, a well known timber conglomerate whose business depends on growing alien eucalyptus and pine plantations (Fig, 2005:603). Its operations have resulted in, among other things, killing off biodiversity, using vast amounts of scarce water resources and paying employees paltry wages. Yet, Sappi’s external image promotes a ‘green’ public image, supports nature magazines and other environmental projects. Its rival Mondi has similar bad practices and deflection methods (ibid:603). Similarly, there is McDonalds with its fast food outreach into the sprawling South African townships, bringing even more revenue to McDonalds pockets fuelled by unhealthy lifestyle patterns and contributing to a growing obesity among South Africans, while the company also promotes health and safety awareness, ensuring that its meat and products are not depleting rain forest areas of the world (McIntosh, 2003:57).

South Africa is home to some of the biggest multinational global corporations such as Anglo American who profess to ‘balance’ their responsibilities towards their shareholders, society and the environment. All companies face the debate about the limits of this “delicate balance”. Mark Moody-Stuart, chairperson of Anglo American and former chair of Royal Dutch/Shell, said “the primary responsibility of the protection of human rights lies with the governments and international organisations” but “where it is within our power to do so, we will seek to promote the observance of human rights in the countries where we operate” (McIntosh, 2003:59). Companies, such as Royal Dutch/Shell who are also leaders in social and environmental reporting have said “we need to show that we use our resources and influence in society to the good (founded on the

principle that) sustainable development is about conducting business with an eye to the needs of the future” (ibid:59).

In many critical areas, corporations have indeed acted. In South Africa, crime and HIV & AIDS are two of the main destabilising forces. Proactive measures by corporations such as Business against Crime (BAC) have been instrumental in improving the skills, human resources and salaries of law enforcement officers, and corporations who are threatened by the loss of large masses of labour force have been providing life-saving anti-retroviral medication to their staff while government promotes potatoes and garlic (Fig, 2005:608-610). Examples of innovative approaches to social responsibility in South Africa are remarkably high, and growing.

John Capel of the Bench Marks Foundation is quoted as saying that “we cannot talk about good governance without talking about social responsibility and accountability. And we cannot talk about social responsibility without talking about sustainability. At the heart of social responsibility and sustainability lies good governance” (Bench Marks Foundation (2), 23 May 2007).

The ‘King Report’ (1994) review committee essentially equates good corporate governance with leadership that promotes the following important values (Institute of Directors in Southern Africa, 30 September 2007):

- a) spiritual collectiveness rather than individualism, enhancing the communality of life,
- b) consensus rather than dissension, which implies hearing all voices and accepting the majority voice,
- c) humility and helpfulness rather than criticism,
- d) non-discriminatory and non-prejudicial practices more inclined toward reconciliation,
- d) interdependent co-existence (ubuntu),
- e) fairness of all human beings,

- f) high morality based on historical precedents of kinship,
- g) inclusivity of consultations at various levels, and
- h) a perpetual optimism that derives from a strong belief in an omniscient superior being (the Creator of humankind).

As can be noted, corporate governance principles go so far as to acknowledge belief in a supreme being and to draw on this for inspiration. Drawing thus on the principles upheld by business, at the level of rhetoric and increasingly in practices open to the public, we now consider the responsibility of the Church to deal with contemporary social challenges.

2.3.2 The Churches' Approach to Social Responsibility

The impact of globalization is evident in evangelical Churches, which have embraced the virtual reality of technological advancements allowing us instant connections to each other. Evangelical preachers now have a global audience by broadcasting via satellite on the Trinity Broadcast network (TBN) and GodTV. This has launched an unprecedented number of mainly American ministries available at the touch of a button across the globe 24 hours a day. Ministries are also accessible via websites and ipods; as the technology changes the ministries update accordingly. Hunt (1997:110-111) notes that globalization is very much a part of the daily lives of evangelical Churches, drawing a large number of professionals and college graduates who are already a part of the global market.

Local Church communities who are affiliated to ministries across the world, have planted Churches in other countries²². Pentecostal/Charismatic preaching in the Phoenix community in KZN has become "Americanised" by forming affiliations with American ministries, devouring Christian books written by American Christians and promoting a 'prosperity gospel'. A teaching of moderation,

²² Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches in Phoenix affiliate with ministries in America, but often plant Churches in neighbouring African countries (Zimbabwe, Mozambique) and in India.

avoiding wastage, selflessness, and communal sharing may seem misplaced in this context.

How does this relate to the Church and its social responsibility? If Cannon is right, that social responsibility is a Biblical imperative, then a doctrine of individual prosperity at the cost of social and environmental responsibility is clearly open to question. There are other valid reasons, moreover, for holding a microscope to the Church's social responsibility agenda. The Church, like corporations, is also a public institution, in that it derives its finances from consumers of its products.

The difference lies in the fact that corporations are profit-making institutions, while the Church is a social institution. The primary aim of business is profit, and that of the Church is spirituality, and both have a level of influence in society. While corporate social responsibility may seek to provide guidelines for the morality of individual and corporate decision-making, the Church too has significant influence on individual and community decision-making. Corporations are expected to interact with society through consultation and reporting, just as the Church has a responsibility to meaningfully converse with the community it influences, understanding the social milieu in order to assist it in positive change. In "contributing to the common good" corporations have social and environmental responsibilities. Churches have similar responsibilities toward the common good, and influence the corporation bosses and employees who attend Churches, hence dictating a set of standards and principles that corporations can also uphold (adapted from McIntosh, 2003:39-40).

According to one of the doyens of Pentecostalism, Harvey Cox (1965:117), in his seminal writing four decades ago, "the starting point for any theology of the Church today must be a theology of social change". He asserts that the Church must firstly be aware of God's *action* in the world and then *respond* by joining in His work (the researcher's emphasis). As liberation theology propounds, God's action comes through 'historical events' social change, as it did in the Bible. So,

the Church's life should be defined or shaped by what God is doing currently, in the moment.

Cox (1969:15-22), in a later writing, claims that the Bible makes four assertions about the world:

- a) God created the world, He sustains it and it will be judged by Him
- b) The world, not the Church, is the object of God's love and concern (John 3:16, "For God so loved the world..."), and He is willing to die for it.
- c) The world (political and secular), not the Church, is where God manifests his liberating and renewing work.
- d) The world is the most appropriate location of the Christian life; the world is the place of Adam's assignment (Matthew 28:19 "...therefore go and make disciples of all nations..."; Matthew 6:10b "Your will be done on earth as it is in Heaven").

These early writings, have found some place within Christianity. This perspective requires the Church to deal with structural injustice as the root causes of social ills. However, most Pentecostal/Charismatic Church organisations have a primary focus on individual salvation, and a secondary focus on social issues, which is often philanthropic rather than social reform ie. removing underlying causes of social problems. Thus they are fundamentally not addressing the structural issues.

Moberg (1962:150) claims that a natural outgrowth of one's religious values is a spirit of generosity and benevolence but Church leadership lacks the boldness to condemn unjust systems itself in the name of a higher justice. Pentecostal Churches understand that they are to take care of the poor, the widowed and the orphaned based on teachings from the Old and New Testaments (Rhea & Keasling, 2004), but find it harder to identify with Moses being sent by God to deliver the Israelites out of Egypt, even though this is a clear example that early in the Bible God used humankind for deliverance from oppression, as noted by

some Biblical scholars. Brueggeman (1987 cited in Land 2003:126) suggests that “(a) social practice of righteousness impinges upon the character of God...Restoration of the covenant between Yahweh and Israel depends on a proper social practice.”

David Bussau, the orphan-turned millionaire who established Opportunities International, an organisation that provides low-interest loans to entrepreneurs to assist them to become self-sufficient outlines eight central elements of evangelical social justice: 1) an unconditional commitment to Christ, 2) a passion for evangelism, 3) a passion for the poor, 4) concern for the whole person in the community 5) consciously chosen projects that allow one to develop informal relaxed friendships with non-Christians, 6) relocation among the needy, 7) partnership with the larger body of Christ, and 8) the presence of the Holy Spirit (Campolo, 1991:119). Evangelical social justice combines the call for a humanitarian approach with that of a spiritual heart – one’s commitment to Christ and His principles must drive such an approach. This approach combines Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches primary mandate for individual salvation with a responsibility to care for the poor. Bussau addressed the structural corruption that kept people in poverty, not by addressing the problem directly, but by providing an alternative that allowed poor people to work their way out of poverty.

Fifteen years ago, Campolo (1992:1) asked evangelical leaders what they considered the greatest issue the world would face in the next 10 years; they announced that it would be the environment. Amongst those Campolo spoke to was Dr Paul Brand, well known for his humanitarian work in Africa, and whom he expected to declare would be poverty or disease. However, Dr Brand said, “the world will die from lack of soil and pure water, long before it will die from lack of antibiotics or surgical skill and knowledge.”

George Monbiot, a celebrated economist and writer, addressing a conference of British climatologists in Exeter stated that a 2.1 degree Celsius rise in

temperature, “almost certain to happen this century, will confront as many as three billion people with water stress”. While this will “result in tens of millions of deaths [of poor people]...countries like Britain will be able to buy [their] way out of trouble. While the price of food will soar as the world goes into deficit, those who are rich enough to have caused the problem will, for a couple of generations at least, be among the few who can afford to ignore it” (Mail and Guardian newspaper , 18 to 24 February, 2005:17 cited in Francis, 2005:1). In support, Paul Gifford accuses the West of designing the world for its own benefit (Gifford, 1998: 170, 330).

Campolo (1992:61) asserted that liberation theologies have also been convinced of the necessity to address environmental concerns and animal rights perceiving God at work delivering creation from abusers. Liberationists consider God’s work to be threefold:

- 1) deliverance of humanity from sin and death
- 2) deliverance of oppressed people into freedom and well-being and,
- 3) deliverance of *all* creation from oppressive, exploitative powers (the researcher’s emphasis). The importance of environmental justice is explained by some Christian scholars as directly linked to Jesus’ concern for the poor, as they acknowledge that environmental destruction will have devastating and far reaching consequences for the earth’s poor.

According to St Francis of Assisi, all of creation was purposed to worship God as outlined in Psalm 148) (Campolo,1992:174), which contains numerous references to the environment. This sentiment can also be noted in Isaiah 55:12, “The mountains and hills will burst into song before you, and all the trees of the field will clap their hands”, and again in Isaiah 49:13, “Shout for joy, O heavens; rejoice, O earth; burst into song, O mountains!” There are plentiful examples of a relationship between nature and God – He created nature (Genesis 1); creation reacted violently to the killing of Jesus (Matthew 27:45, 51 “From the sixth hour to the ninth hour darkness came over all the land...The earth shook and the rocks

split” making people fearful and amazed); and nature obeyed Jesus in Matthew 8: 23-27 when He “rebuked the wind and the waves, and it was completely calm.”

Campolo (1997: 181) asserts that many evangelical preachers wrongly argue there is no need to do anything about environmental catastrophe, as these are pre-determined outcomes, with the Bible affirming that in the ‘last days’ there will be disasters, as a sign that Jesus’ second coming is close²³. He however argues that we may be wastefully, selfishly utilising what God has created for His worship. We draw attention to an earlier point made by Kant that God is experienced throughout history in a living relationship with man, not through a predetermined history. As well, it is a Biblical command to not perpetuate selfish lifestyles, and God speaks against such selfishness and exploitation (Campolo, 1992:5, 94, 127). Numerous Biblical references can be found eg. Acts 4: 34, 35 says “There were no needy persons among them. From time to time, those who owned land or houses sold them, brought the money from the sales and put it at the apostles’ feet, and it was distributed to anyone as he had need”²⁴; Luke 20:47 “They (teachers of the law) devour widow’s houses and for a show make lengthy prayers. Such men will be punished most severely” and in Mark 10:17-25 a rich man asks Jesus what he should do to receive eternal life? After the man informed Jesus that he kept all the laws and commandments, Jesus commanded him to “sell everything you have and give it to the poor, and you will have treasure in Heaven” (verse 21).

2.3.3 Connections between the Church, Business and Social Responsibility

The Church in South Africa has found two tools to remain relevant to its calling - the ‘*Oikos Journey*’ which updates the Kairos Document, and ‘Bench Marks’

²³ Similar viewpoints were presented at the World Council of Churches Assembly in Brazil, 2006, where it was noted that some evangelical Churches (in the US) actually teach that by trying to save the earth one is actually going against God’s will, because they believe that in order for Jesus to return again the earth has to first be completely destroyed.

²⁴ In the verses following this Ananias and Sapphira are struck down dead for keeping for themselves a portion of what they had sold for the Church, even though it was meant to help the poor.

which adds an ecumenical dimension to ensuring corporations fulfil their social responsibilities with integrity.

2.3.3.1 The 'Oikos Journey'

'Oikos Journey: A Theological Reflection on the Economic Crisis in South Africa' is premised on the assumption that "we are at another *Kairos* moment – the present economic system is a challenge to us all" (Brittton, 2006:5). From the Greek word *oikos* (a home or household) is derived 'economy' and 'ecology'. The *Oikos Journey* asserts that "(a) concern for economics (*oikos-nomos*) has often been disconnected from a concern for ecology (*oikos-logos*) – or the environment" yet they "both relate to the undergirding of a society reflecting God's will" (ibid:5). Since the earth is our home, we are called to join God who is "busy at work seeing to justice and equality, reconciliation and the flourishing of all creation," (ibid:25), restoring harmony to the whole earth.

The *Oikos Journey* is alive to justice for the poor, asserting that our present system of economics is creating large pockets of poverty "and enormous wealth for a few" - a system that must be "tested against the standards of God's justice and the system's actual impact on the lives of the poor and on the well-being of the earth community – and it must be rejected if it fails this test" (Diakonia Council of Churches Durban, 2006:20). The document draws on seven Biblical principles concerning God's economy (ibid:25-30):

- 1) The earth is full of grace and love – it is not a hostile place but our home, and attempts at private ownership and control of scarce resources sets us against God's economy
- 2) Labour is both a blessing and a curse – God gave the land to till, but that has become alienated from humanity and is now cursed, with people no longer owning the product of their own labour or earning a wage that is enough to purchase that which s/he has produced.
- 3) Sabbath is the fundamental rule of God's economy – it is part of God's redemptive plan; it is part of the Biblical connection between

labour and rest (human dignity). There is also the special Sabbath (Jubilee) when the Israelites were commanded every 50 years to release slaves, cancel debt and return land to its original owners – this is a reminder that the economic system must serve justice and equity.

4) Shared prosperity is the goal of God's economy – God wants people to prosper (to have sufficient to eat and wear; to live in good housing) – this is the biblical vision of *shalom*. However in God's economy, prosperity is a shared prosperity. Old Testament prophets spoke about wealth-sharing as a matter of justice - Isaiah 58, Amos 5. "For God, economic justice is also ecological justice" (Brittton, 2006:28).

5) We cannot serve both God and Mammon – essentially, we cannot serve God and wealth (Matthew 6:24). Prosperity becomes a God when not weighted by justice and equity.

6) God's economy is a matter of discipleship. Being a Christian means being attuned to God's management of the earth. This is a message to the rich – with such wealth and affluence contrasted against dire poverty, the choice to be frugal and simple may be crucial to live according to God's laws, or face harsh judgement.

7) We are called to 'live long in the land'. Shared prosperity is for future generations; we are to live now in a way that will ensure future generations can sustain themselves (Deuteronomy 5:33; 25:13-16; 30:16-18).

Using Biblical readings that offer insight into Gods standards for social investment, the *Oikos* Journey is an example of a contemporary liberation theology that is relevant to the current crisis.

2.3.3.2 The 'Bench Marks' initiative

Complementing such principles is the Bench Marks Foundation, a South African ecumenical organisation that "questions (the) responsibility of corporations with the expectations of a Global Network of people and communities who hold the

concerns” expressed by the organisation of “ecological degradation and social deprivation (that) threaten the survival of human society” (Shilling, 12 April 2007). Bench Marks suggests that “there are specific courses of action” that management within corporations must adhere to in order to ensure that “those affected by them are considered and represented” (ibid., 12 April 2007). These actions include communication channels that value community and other stakeholder interaction; a reporting framework that aims for transparent disclosure towards the communities impacted by the corporation; and monitoring mechanisms that involve other participants such as civil society, community organisations and company employees. Bench Marks (Bench Marks Foundation (1). 2003:viii-xi) evaluates companies based on their ethical decision-making on a large range of entities within the wider community (ecosystems, national communities, local communities, indigenous communities) and the business community (employees – women, minority groups, disabled people, child labour, forced labour, suppliers and contractors, financial integrity, ethical integrity, corporate governance, shareholders, subsidiaries, customers and consumers). Bench Marks promotes a perspective of integrity, dignity and a culture of human rights.

According to Bench Marks, from a ‘faith’ perspective, “all human activity is the totality of creation...hence “we need to use our power to live in harmony with creation, affirm the interdependence of everything on earth and the dignity of all parts of creation...Faith communities evaluate companies...by what they produce and their impact on the environment...and by how companies contribute to sustainable community and protect or undermine the dignity of the human person” (Shilling, 12 April 2007).

3. Conclusions

This section has provided a gleaning of relevant literature and yielded a theoretical framework which guides us in analysing the social responsibilities of Pentecostal Churches sampled. The literature review has traced the history of

Indian Pentecostalism and CSR in South Africa. It further has explored Biblical positions that provide a theoretical underpinning for why the Church should explore social responsibility and offers insights into how corporates have largely risen to the challenge. It has also noted some real ambivalence within the Church in response to environmental issues. While both the corporates and the Church indicate dysfunctional attempts at addressing past social injustices, the 'King Report' (1994) and the '*Oikos Journey*' predict a better future record, and the principles they both aspire to underpins a framework for evaluation of the Pentecostal/Charismatic Church.

As a collective, mainline Churches intend to hold corporations accountable for their social and environmental actions, already noting this as a crucial sustainability element. The '*Oikos Journey*' on the other hand, challenges the Churches to deal with the structural injustices that are responsible for the murder of today's and tomorrow's innocent generations.

Conversely, Pentecostalism/Charismata has been accused of a spirituality that withdraws from 'worldly' issues like politics and the struggle for liberation and justice, and of a gospel that either spiritualises or individualises social problems. This may have encouraged the acceptance of oppressive conditions or a 'prosperity gospel' that promotes wealth as a spiritual virtue (Hollenweger, 1997:261). While Pentecostals have generally been considered to be 'apolitical', many have been actively involved in political arenas across the globe. In SA, while most white Pentecostals supported the apartheid structures, most African Pentecostals supported the ANC and some were "practically involved in the liberation struggle" (Refer Anderson *Zion and Pentecost* and Gifford '*Christianity and Politics in Doe's Liberia*' in Hollenweger, 1997:262).

Despite these failings, Pentecostalism/Charismata, are evidently doing something right. The movement continues to draw people of all walks of life, adapting according to people's needs. It therefore must be taken seriously, it

must be engaged constructively and it must be seen as an opportunity to influence people's lives holistically. Pentecostalism/Charismata offer salvation from sin, sickness and poverty. It is a movement that believes in miracles, signs and wonders. It is bold in its declaration of hope, and across the world, it connects with the most vulnerable and the unwanted. It believes it has the potential to offer a holistic gospel (emotional, physical, psychological, social, spiritual) and must therefore be harnessed for its potential and guided for its impact.

CHAPTER THREE **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

3.1 Introduction

“Social science matters – perhaps not as much as we might like, but a good deal nonetheless. And because of its prominent place in shaping the course of social science, *methodology* matters” (Gerring, 2001:xv). In studying the nature, behaviour and trends of human beings and their habits, quantitative methodologies offer a lot of data that arguably often provides little insight. Using qualitative methods are necessary to make sense of human actions, although “our blessing and our curse is to be implicated in the subjects that we study and to study subjects who are subjects, in the true Kantian sense” (ibid:xix). The researcher has attempted to convey fairly, without bias or interpretation, the viewpoints expressed by the ‘subjects’ themselves. The researcher offers an analysis of the empirical data that was gathered, and deliberately have chosen two methodologies to neutralise any sense of personal sway on the subject that might risk leading the discussion toward pre-determined conclusions, a valid criticism all too often of researchers interviewing style and methods.

This empirical study employed two qualitative methodologies: unstructured interviews and a focus group discussion with pastors from Phoenix. The methods were complementary, allowing for different levels of exploration of certain ideological viewpoints. In total, eight pastors were interviewed, six male and two female. Pastors that were interviewed were invited for the focus group meeting, but did not attend. So it was not possible to gauge the extent to which the research setting influenced the responses to similarly posed questions or areas of discussion.

3.2 Me, the ‘researcher’

Regardless of the methodology chosen for the research, the researcher is pivotal, as s/he guides the research agenda, constructs the research questions, records information, analyzes the responses and produces a report. Thus,

researcher “(self) understanding and position are central to representations of the social within... research writing. Researcher identity, then, is critical to the production of knowledge about the complexities of the social world” (Dunne et al. 2005:29).

Friedrich Nietzsche (cited in Grbich, 2004:11) argued that “(w)e cannot establish any fact “in itself”...(there are) only interpretations...”The *only* seeing we have is seeing from a perspective; the *only* knowledge we have is knowledge from a perspective.” According to Grbich (2004:80-81) both the researcher and researched bring “considerable intellectual baggage” to the research context. We are purported to use “meta-textual frames” - broad devices that help us to construct meaning and understand events. MacLaren and Read (1994 cited in Grbich, 2004:81) suggest four such frames that researchers must be cognizant of: *extra textual* (the imposition of our knowledge base on the world), *intra textual* (internal devices such as sex, age, ethnicity), *inter textual* (ideological and theoretical frames from life experiences or education) and *circum textual* (interpretation of contexts with respect to time, location and space). These are important reference points to consider, and in working through my own thought processes regarding this study, the *inter textual* frame of the researcher’s recent intellectual awakenings on sustainable development and internal urgency that change is critical, have been most prominent in analyses and interpretations. To a lesser extent, the researcher’s position of being female and ‘knowing’ that women make up the larger part of the Indian Pentecostal/Charismatic Church, yet still have less of a voice, may also filter through this study.

While the researcher desist any claims of overtly displaying power during the data collection process, it is true that the power of the researcher is evident in the “construction of accounts of social life through the research” (Dunne et al. 2005:36), and the researcher acknowledges that in that context she has asserted ‘her power’ to re-represent and analyse information using a filter that she has deemed appropriate.

3.3 Qualitative methodologies

3.3.1 Interviews

Pastors were interviewed in the Church office, allowing for familiarity of surroundings, especially since the interviews were tape-recorded. Six pastors were invited to be interviewed (5 male, 1 female); three consented to be included in the study.

As the researcher is known to two of the pastors, the interviews were fairly relaxed and conversational except that they were tape-recorded and every so often the researcher changed a cassette. The researcher found the same level of ease and conversational attitude with the one pastor the researcher met for the first time, whose wife was present throughout the interview, as she is also a 'pastor' of the church²⁵.

Interviewing is considered the most common source of data, often as "a means to an end", thus one creates an environment of trust and openness where the respondent can express him/herself authentically (Terre Blanche et al. 1999:297). Constructionist researchers consider the meanings created during interviews as co-constructed, arguing that it is not possible for an interviewer (regardless of skill) to 'allow' an interviewee to express him/herself unhindered (ibid:297).

The used an unstructured interview method, which is used widely when interviewing. This allowed for ease of discussions, allowing the researcher to explore further wherever required, and for starting at a place most comfortable for the interviewee. The interviews took a maximum of two hours, ensuring that it did not infringe on pastors work schedules.

²⁵ It is common for both husband and wife to be referred to as 'senior pastors'. In one church, the researcher heard the pastor's wife being called the First Lady.

The power balance²⁶ between the pastors and the researcher was leveraged by the fact that they have more theological knowledge than the researcher, while the researcher has more sustainable development knowledge - and the interviews solicited information on both aspects. The researcher was also interviewing people confident in public speaking, lessening any attempt for power plays or wanting to 'please' the researcher in their responses. It is possible, however, that as it was tape-recorded they did adjust their answers. The researcher does however acknowledge that 'she' was asking the questions, and so was responsible for 'leading' the discussion, and therefore remained in control.

3.3.2 Focus group discussion

The focus group discussion of five pastors was aimed at bringing an interactive, group together to elicit responses of the Churches social responsibilities. A focus group brings together people who share a similar experience, but which does not naturally constitute a social group (Terre Blanche et al. 1999:304). The five pastors who participated in the focus group are part of three existing fraternal meetings of pastors that meet regularly, depending on their status of being 'independent' or 'denominational', and who may have differences in belief systems and support for ministries.

Participants were invited through their fraternal. Two fraternal responded affirmatively and extended the invitation to their members. One member of the outstanding fraternal was represented. While the numbers vary on the size of a focus group²⁷, five was a manageable number with ample opportunity for participants to engage. Even though three gatekeepers (chairpersons) invited the fraternal members, the researcher personally received confirmations from fifteen pastors that they would attend.

²⁶ Dunne M et al. (2005) offer two subsections on power dynamics between the interviewer/see, suggesting ways to deal with this effectively.

²⁷ Terre Blanche et al. (1999) suggest between 6 and 12 persons, while Bloor et al (2001) suggest between 6 and 8 is ideal, although there have been groups of between 3 to 14 persons.

The meeting was held at a hired Church venue in Phoenix to ensure people could attend, and for maximum participation. Given that a local venue was arranged, it is possible that a short-coming was the length of time assigned for the discussion: pastors were invited to attend from 9h00 to 15h00, and were informed that tea and lunch would be served. The researcher was surprised at the poor turnout, and was informed by other pastors that as a pastor's life is unpredictable any number of circumstances could have prevented their colleagues attendance²⁸. Once again, the researcher's subjectivity comes to the fore, as more is expected from those who teach (and should uphold) moral and ethical standards; and found this facile explanation difficult to accept.

This focus group was unusual in two respects: firstly, the discussions were not tape-recorded, but were hand scribed by a research assistant who is highly skilled at accurate recording of information. Secondly the format of the focus group consisted of a free-flow discussion and a Powerpoint projection for discussion points.

According to Bloor et al. (2001:48-49) the facilitator is not meant to control the discussion (as happens in an interview), but is expected to 'facilitate' the group, with the ideal role of the facilitator being that of a background figure. This was not the case in this group, as participants waited for prompts from the facilitator to continue with the engagement. There was one participant who sometimes 'sidetracked' the conversation, which was allowed to provide scope for issues that were also important to the group to surface.²⁹

²⁸ Before we began, the researcher telephoned three pastors whose numbers she readily had to confirm their attendance. She could not get through to two by phone (switched off, with no voicemail), the other informed her that he had a visitor from out of town and was also babysitting his grandchildren so could not attend.

²⁹ Terre Blanche et al. (1999: 306) refer to this as 'zooming in' and 'pulling back'. One male participant commented after the focus group that one participant (who happens to be a woman!) had 'gotten out of hand' and raised issues 'unrelated' to the session; but that he didn't want to be the one to bring the discussion back 'in line'!

3.4 Research Ethics

Invited participants were informed that the interviews would be tape-recorded, transcribed and deleted; further that responses would be coded for the study itself so that individual identities would be protected. This guarantee could not be provided for the focus group discussion, as no responsibility could be taken for participants sharing information with others. Participants were free to truncate the interview or leave the focus group discussion at their discretion, and as one interview at the two-hour dot drew to a close, the pastor's secretary called to inform him his next appointment was waiting.

An important point is "individually responsible research" and ensuring "respect for others"; so as much intersubjective agreement as possible is required, "re-presenting multiple narratives as truthfully as possible or clarify(ing) whose view (researcher or researched) is dominating and which discourses have impacted...as well as maintaining the dignity of others" (Grbich, 2004:90). Given the researcher's open subjectivity with respect to the topic, I have endeavoured to respect the time and viewpoints of the pastors that participated, and to accurately re-present their views.

3.5 Personal reflections on the two methodologies

The complementary methodologies used offered rich data and allowed for a greater mix of viewpoints, but also raised other methodological issues. With interviews you are almost guaranteed data collection as people are prone to keep interview appointments. This contrasts with, and raises concerns about, the efficacy of focus group discussions where there is generally no control over attendee participation. Both require similar amounts of time and effort, yet the focus group offers no guarantee of a large enough group to ensure sufficient diversity.

The interviews gave the researcher the opportunity to explore particular viewpoints by contextualising the pastor's Church set-up with the responses

provided, unlike in the focus group discussion where more general viewpoints were put forward. The interaction between the focus group members was friendly and honest, though more guarded than the individual interviews, possibly as a result of the higher level of anonymity the interview provided. The focus group is more socially dynamic, lowering the levels of predictable outcomes, as opposed to the unstructured interview where the conversation is guided (Bloor et al. 2001:21). In this case, however, the group remained quite focused.

A multi-method research method ensured greater levels of engagement and information, which could not be ascribed purely to individual subjectivity, but to productive group interaction as well. An important aspect has been equalizing power differentials and ensuring that diverse voices (male and female, denominational and Independent) presented their positions on the subject studied. The researcher has acknowledged her biases to the best of her knowledge, keeping that at the forefront of the discussion, so ensuring that the researcher's attempts to be honest with the data presented, and the interpretation that has been given to it.

CHAPTER FOUR
A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE INDIAN PENTECOSTAL/CHARISMATIC
CHURCH AND ITS SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

4.1 Introduction

The 2001 South African Census indicates that almost 8.5 percent (about 67 847) of Indians residing in KwaZulu-Natal are Pentecostal/Charismatic, making it the largest category of Christians within the Indian community (Lehohla, 8 October 2007). This gives impetus to the importance of this study, and the ensuing analyses hone in on discussing the Churches' views on key areas that have gripped and continue to preoccupy global actors.

This analysis examines the viewpoints of eight pastors³⁰ from six Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches, three denominational and three independent Churches in Phoenix (coding for the purposes of this study: 1-3 are denominational and 4-6 are independent and where more than one person represented a Church, they are noted as 'a' and 'b'). Of the eight pastors engaged, two were women. Pastors were invited to participate personally and through pastors' fraternal. Additional input is provided from the Diakonia Council of Churches in Durban, a member (who is a pastor) of a denominational Pentecostal Church national welfare department, and a Pentecostal liberation theologian. Information was also gathered through observations by visiting a few Church services in Phoenix, and; attending two national ecumenical 'welfare' conferences hosted by Pentecostal Churches, held in May and August this year³¹.

³⁰ Of the pastors that were interviewed, the researcher was unable to indicate their level of secondary education. Five of the pastors have theological seminary training, one is currently pursuing a BTheology degree after 20 years in ministry and another is in the process of finalizing a Masters in Theology while the educational status of one pastor is unknown. The researcher is aware that two pastors resigned from their secular jobs to 'fulfil their calling.'

³¹ Names are withheld to protect pastors identities, and the responses are analysed in a way that prevents any breach of confidentiality.

4.2 Pentecostal/Charismatic Church life in Phoenix

The vast majority of Indians that would define themselves as Christian are Pentecostal or Charismatic, with little growth within the Lutheran, Methodist, Catholic or Anglican Churches³². Newspaper and roadside advertisements abound with invitations for healing and deliverance at Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches. Twenty years ago, Churches were held in tents, school classrooms and outbuildings, but as part of changing trends within the Phoenix community stone buildings have mushroomed all over .

The biggest Church building in Phoenix originated from a tent, and today seats four thousand people. While people attended services in the tent regardless of the wind, heat and rain which meant muddy floors, dirty shoes, perspiration in Durban's hot weather and wind-blown hair, the Church, now housed in a building, is in the process of raising R2 million for its air-conditioning system. Another newly erected Church - which was recently vandalised - is in the process of carpeting the auditorium. There is no lack of money flowing into the formal Church structures, people are generous in their giving regardless of their economic status, as they trustingly follow the principle of giving to God and perhaps believe that He will in turn bless abundantly.

It is then surprising, that to obtain an accurate indicator of the number of Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches in Phoenix, is a challenge. One approximation is 900 Churches in Phoenix, ranging from classrooms to Church buildings housing 4000 people. Given the unstructured way in which Churches are now established ie. someone, usually a male³³, has a call of God to preach and thereafter, often without any theological training, opens a Church, it is not possible to get accurate statistics on this growing phenomenon. Most new

³² There are a few mainline Churches in Phoenix but their membership cannot even begin to compete with those in the Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches.

³³ Very few women establish Churches in Phoenix, in fact the researcher tried to locate female pastors through word of mouth and kept coming back to the same 2-3 names. At the focus group there was one independent female minister (the other was a pastor at the same Church as her husband although she has equal decision-making and is firmly independent and vocal).

Churches are also 'independent' Churches with no formal hierarchical structure to which they are accountable (apart, they would argue, from God), and there is no comprehensive database of Churches within Phoenix. This unregulated approach to Church establishment makes trend analysis difficult and may have opened the door to some level of unscrupulous, unethical practices³⁴. An example of dubious endeavours was noted at the outset of this study, when the researcher booked a local Church for the interviews. On enquiring from the junior pastor (whose father established the Church) about catering for the day, the researcher was informed that could be arranged, and she was to contact his wife at the Church office. The researcher assumed that this was an additional source of income for the Church, but soon found out that the wife of the junior pastor had a 'small' unregistered business, catering for functions, mainly weddings, that were held at the Church (one cannot hire the Church only, but must take the 'package').

4.3 Presenting the data from Interviews and Focus Group Discussion

4.3.1 The concepts of Pentecostalism and Charismatic as defined by Churches in Phoenix³⁵

The pastors interviewed expressed different viewpoints concerning these concepts.

Pentecostalism: "The word Pentecostal means power, it is when the Holy Spirit empowered his disciples...Speaking in tongues is evidence of the Holy Spirit, but it can also be faked....The mission of the Holy Spirit was to set the captives free, etc" [4]. Reference was here made to Isaiah 61:1 which is quoted elsewhere. Pastor 2b suggested that to understand Pentecostalism one needs to "go back to

³⁴ There are accounts of medically boarded persons and those who take pension packages (early retirement) also establishing Churches after a "call from God".

³⁵ It is only the views of pastors that are solicited in the following discussions (unless otherwise stated) as they are the decision-makers (all of them spoke about decision-making in the first person – "I" - with council members that authorise those decisions. Of course, this focus on authoritarian hierarchy is opposed by liberation theology, and good governance principles.

the beginning...the day of Pentecost was the beginning of the Church era or the mission of the Church...The Holy Spirit came, and people were imbued with power by the Holy Spirit....We can either embrace Pentecost superficially or by its true meaning". It was also stated that Pentecostalism began with the early Church (Catholics, Presbyterians³⁶), who "found tongues" [5a].

Charismatic: Being Charismatic was interpreted differently. While Pentecostalism focussed on the gifts of the Spirit, Charismatic Churches were called as such because of the leader's character or charisma ("the Pentecostal anointing brings forth these attributes"), or performance ("God pouring out his Spirit in the last days, charisma is part of that outpouring") [4]. Another pastor noted that because the gift of speaking in tongues was pronounced at Pentecost, "charisma, which was always there, was not noticed" [2b]. This pastor noted that there were a lot of Charismatic people in Biblical times but the Charismatic movement, which replaced 'Pentecost', began in the 1920s, and allowed more outward expression of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. This pastor's counterpart from the same Church [2a] was of the opinion that Charismatics are less structured in their worship, and mainly under the umbrella of 'Independent' Churches where an autocratic form of leadership exists - the minister is answerable to God only. This pastor believed that this is the 'right' approach to spiritual affairs – the Charismatic pastor is the authoritative voice and figure, has a God-given mandate to take decisions and surrounds himself with like-minded men who support his ministry and vision. A further viewpoint [5b] was that while the Charismatic movement gave more expression to the gifts of the Spirit, its distinct disadvantage is a focus on one person, ie. the pastor who becomes the focus of the Church's existence. The danger in such authoritarianism is obvious.

All the pastors agreed that there is need for a debate on Pentecostalism and Charismatic approaches because there is merging of Charismatic leadership with the expression of the Holy Spirit's gifts in all Churches; and Churches cannot be

³⁶ Presbyterians can hardly however, be called the early Church.

defined as Pentecostal or Charismatic. The pastors agreed that there is more to Pentecost than the outward evidence of tongues as this can be faked [4], and that they do not promote this restrictive definition of Pentecostalism.

4.3.2 Does the Indian wing of the South African Pentecostal/Charismatic Church have a theoretical and practical position on social responsibility?

a) What does the Church understand by 'social responsibility'?

The Pentecostal/Charismatic Church is firm in its conviction that its primary priority and responsibility is 'salvation' of those who do not know Jesus Christ. While this is the first and primary mandate, some pastors have expanded their understanding of the Churches responsibilities. Pastor 7, who also is a member of a denominational national welfare board, had this to say: "An assembly will only function according to the vision of the local pastor and how he sees the needs of his community...There are many (pastors) who still think that welfare is not their ministry". The same pastor notes that "after 30 years in ministry the fact is pastors think their ministry is above any other ministry and that if we do not have more souls getting saved, baptised, baptised in the Holy Spirit and involved in discipleship then we have failed the divine commission." He further notes that "I doubt the majority of our membership in the country understand the broad context of the term 'social justice', many think that this relates to some court and legal matters as opposed to welfare, job creation, poverty alleviation and numeracy and literacy".

When probed about why the focus of the May welfare conference was to invite partnerships with businesses rather than pool Church finances for social responsibility programmes, his response indicates that pastors may not yet universally agree on their social responsibilities: "...to understand the scope and implications of social development and make the paradigm shift from Bible talk to social or community talk is our first priority".

The local pastors interviewed described social responsibility as “attending to widows, that’s social responsibility. Also they sold land, houses and brought money to the apostles – that’s social responsibility” [5a]; “Christian-based schools, mission hospitals, Christian orphanages” [4]; “social responsibility is not a Biblical culture, it is for any religion or culture, for example in the old days when an Indian man married he brought his wife to his home – it was [still] his responsibility to take care of his parents³⁷. Social responsibilities crept into Churches because of the story of the Greek and Hebrew widows” [2b]. For pastor 5b social responsibility is “other gifts apart from the nine gifts”.³⁸ Pastor 5a equated social responsibility to the social gospel; while Pastor 2b said that “Pastors are to be blamed for thinking the social gospel is preaching, (while Jesus in) Matthew 25 speaks about reaching out”.³⁹

Pastors agreed that they have a Biblical mandate to do what they term ‘welfare’ work eg. care for widows, orphans, elderly, the poor – mainly through regular feeding schemes or monthly food hampers. Some also included marriage seminars, youth empowerment programmes, women’s and men’s fellowship meetings within this umbrella as this teaching equips people with skills to have strong family structures.

b) Is the Church addressing contemporary social, economic and environmental concerns according to its Biblical mandate? How does the Church determine relevant programmes that should be supported?

³⁷ This is more cultural than Biblical, as the Bible very early instructs in Genesis 2 vs 24 that “a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh”.

³⁸ Refer to the Literature Review section, page 23 of this thesis for a list of the nine gifts.

³⁹ Matthew 25:31-46 is a reference to God’s judgment for our care towards humanity: “For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me....whatever you do for the least these brothers of mine, you do it for me.”

- **Social issues**

During the interviews and focus group discussion, pastors were probed on what they considered to be global and local threats to stable societies. This was done as a measure to gauge their connections to contemporary global issues and the communities they serve. They listed terrorism, diseases, poverty, xenophobia, holy war, unemployment, marriage breakdowns and sexual violence. Only one pastor alluded to global warming and HIV & AIDS. All pastors noted crime eg. robberies, rape, car hijackings as the biggest challenge facing Phoenix, followed by substance abuse ie. drugs and alcohol.

Crime has crippled communities, and although pervasive throughout Phoenix it is especially rife in those communities that border informal settlements. Pastors 3 and 6 pointed out that their Church areas were “hardest hit with crime” as they border informal settlements. Both also specifically spoke about people’s high levels of “fear and intimidation” and “a strong sense of insecurity” such that “people don’t walk in the evenings unless to take a taxi or bus” (3), inhibiting social activity. Pastor 3, whose sister was murdered by an Indian, pointed out that crime was not the monopoly of one race group even though the “bad elements” from the predominantly African informal settlements were responsible for the tension in the area. Both pastors expressed a desire to have fully integrated Churches, but that is not the case at present. One of the pastors is actively seeking to employ a Zulu speaking pastor who could be instrumental in reaching the neighbouring community.

Substance abuse was noted as a distressing endemic social problem, with drug and alcohol use widespread, even among very young children. A lot of children grow up in a home environment where alcohol is readily available, especially at house parties, which are still a common feature of modern lifestyle. All the pastors noted substance abuse as common problems that the community brings to the Churches’ attention.

Pastors were also probed about specific national and provincial issues that are part of the link between the social, economic and environmental features of religious life. Corroborating national and provincial statistics, all pastors acknowledged that rape is a rampant crime in Phoenix and a growing concern for them, although direct Church involvement is not uniform. One pastor (6) said that rape was a “definite problem. Pastors are having a problem trying to handle this – they are trying to do the job of a social worker or psychologist...we seem to spiritualise everything, even abuse cases.” This pastor had intervened and exposed a case not dealt with correctly (an attempt by someone else to spiritualise the crime), and “believes we need to expose such issues, deal with issues”. In effect, we are “dealing with mindsets, and have to work with that over a period of time.” A female pastor (5b) said that “rape is strong, but we don’t address it from the pulpit, while people in the congregation are being abused.”

None of the pastors interviewed received reports of HIV & AIDS from their predominantly Indian congregants. One pastor (3) reports dealing with a single case of HIV & AIDS of an African congregant, successfully networking with a doctor who was a Church member, to provide free treatment and medication for four years, until the person died. Another pastor [2a] indicates that “it (HIV) may be a common problem in the country but it is not a common problem in the congregation”; further that because it is a “national and international issue “a lot of the young people have been made aware of it. There is nothing new that we can tell them about it.” He added that “you are at risk of contracting HIV if you have, that is gay or lesbian, kind of lifestyle”. Another pastor (6) said that “it (HIV) is coming to the attention of the Church. We don’t have a ministry for that in Phoenix, not one...I don’t know of any place that offers counselling.”⁴⁰ Pastor 1 has purchased an old dilapidated hotel and is in the process of converting it into a hospice offering specialised care for HIV-positive patients. He has

⁴⁰ The researcher is aware of one other Church that holds a weekly counseling session for HIV-positive people, using the services of government social workers, and which has volunteers attached to this service, for other assistance required.

developed relationships with Churches across the Phoenix border, and said there are many reports of HIV- positive people seeking assistance from the Church.

In seeking to generate other links to HIV & AIDS, pastors were probed in the interviews about whether premarital sexual activity and extra-marital affairs were a challenge to their Church⁴¹. One pastor said that he would not know if people were engaging in premarital sex, because they would not inform the Church [2a]. Two other pastors (3 and 6) said that they were being approached by parents to counsel their children, who have left Durban to seek employment in Johannesburg, and moved in with their partners outside of marriage. The pastors had been told by the 'errant' children that the Church is outdated in its thinking and beliefs. On the issue of extramarital affairs, pastors conceded that this was highly prevalent, although they did not elaborate on the extent of the problem.

- **Economic Issues**

Pastors note that there are high levels of unemployment in Phoenix, with one pastor citing unemployment as high as 60-70 percent (6). Some of the causes of poverty the pastors referred to are job losses, inconsistent work - a lot of people do not have steady jobs, and a certain degree of laziness where able-bodied people choose handouts and turn to an ever increasing cycle of borrowing and begging, rather than even finding temporary work.

Pastor 2a said that "skills development in our country is not relevant" when asked if people struggle to find jobs because of a lack of skills. He further stated that "people are not short of a job because of the lack of jobs" but that "people thrive on day to day welfare". Pastor 3 said that "some people are used to sitting back and receiving." Pastor 6 concurs that "guys don't want to go and work. They would rather go and beg, and they will label their price for begging – give me R5

⁴¹ The Church supports a position of sexual activity within marriage only, so where parents or spouses encountered sexual activity outside these bounds it is expected that they would seek pastoral counseling.

instead of saying 'What can I do for you, sir?'...people want to work little hours for more money.....it's a lazy community". However, while interviewee 2a does not think skills development is important Pastor 6 said, "this leaves the Church with a big challenge. Basically those individuals are in your congregation...and skills development can be run by Churches...The Church has the potential, it has the infrastructure, it has everything at its disposal."

All pastors used the services of Phoenix businesses, including contracting Church members, when erecting their Church buildings, and considered this an important way in which to offer short term employment. They also employ local people on a regular basis for maintenance of the Church eg. cleaning services and gardening. Pastor 6 employed someone to work from the Church yard to make the bricks that were used for the Church building. He also intends to operate a weekly car wash from the Church premises that would contract unemployed persons. He is keen to develop a business venture in India, which he calls the 'Triple C network – Church, Corporate, Community', with local Church businessmen, so boosting revenue in the Church community. Pastor 3 often manages the catering for large Church functions including the May conference the researcher attended, and some of his Church members, mainly women, are in this way able to be self-sufficient.

- **Environmental issues**

Some pastors are aware of global warming as a concern, but few are knowledgeable of the interwoven connections and have not associated that with responsibilities of the Church. In both the focus group and individual interviews pastors did not immediately highlight environmental issues as a global or local threat, except one pastor who mentioned global warming together with poverty, crime and HIV & AIDS as pertinent global issues. The same pastor [3] stated that "in terms of global warming the Church needs to pray...it's our world". When probed about what the Church does regarding environmental care, he was uncertain whether the denomination was participating at a "high" level, but stated

that “(p)astors at local level are functioning according to the Bible to help us be conscious of global warming”, yet emphasising that the “core role of the Church is to spread the gospel”.

Pastor 2a was of the opinion that “it is very difficult to pinpoint what role the Church should play in environmental issues. I don’t know what role the Church can play.” He stated that environmental care, like HIV & AIDS management, was primarily the domain of government and, apart from some basic teaching to young people on sexual abstinence preceding marriage, he did not consider it necessary to duplicate government’s role within the Church. Pastor 6 concedes that the Church has not attended to environmental issues, “but I think it is a big thing where the Church has to come and get involved. I feel in some ways God is trying to give a message to the world by what’s happening.” He does not hold the pre-deterministic view that God has planned this for the end days, but believes that “the shores, the sea sand has been put there for a purpose and ... when man violates the ... laws that are put in place, like the law of gravity, there are consequences.... there is going to be worse coming our way”. For him, the Church’s role is to give a positive message: “...the environment is changing...and there is a part for us to play...we must not violate the laws. God never intended all the environmental disasters to happen but it’s happening because people are violating something, the principle, so human beings must behave as human beings”.

Pastors had never before considered that Biblical passages could be filtered from a lens of sustainable development. The various discussions on environmental issues and social disasters became a sharing session in which the researcher had to deliberate the best way forward, and found herself explaining the linkages. The researcher had not set out to do this, but when asked direct questions by the group, felt obliged to provide the necessary information. We discussed the Biblical text, Luke 12: 15-21, where Jesus warns His disciples, “Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; a man’s life does not consist in the

abundance of his possessions.” Jesus then told them this parable which was used to illustrate sustainable development principles:

“The ground of a rich man produced a good crop. He thought to himself, ‘What shall I do? I have no place to store my crops.’ Then he said, “This is what I’ll do. I will tear down my barns and build bigger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. And I’ll say to myself, “You have plenty of good things laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry.” But God said to Him, “You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?’ This is how it will be with anyone who stores up things for himself but is not rich toward God”.

We began this discussion with creation, and the text’s conclusion that all God had created was “good”. We further discussed such aspects as the ground producing good crop, and deliberated whether the rich man suddenly developed good soil, or whether the generations before had taken care of the soil, so that he could get a good harvest. In addition, we discussed the man’s selfishness and his lack of thought to even thank his workers, who tilled the land for him, with a portion of the harvest. Further discussion was elicited using Genesis 8:21b which records God’s promise that “never again would (He) destroy the all living creatures, as (He) had done”. We used this as a basis for my sharing about how human beings are destroying the earth, and its consequences for the poor. We also considered passages such as Job 38, which details how the earth reports to God. Lastly we discussed Psalm 65:5-13 which details God’s love for the earth.

4.3.3 Did the South African Indian Pentecostal/Charismatic Church address apartheid and is that activism still alive?

The pastors were asked why the Pentecostal Church has lagged behind other established, mainline Churches in engaging social justice issues. The following responses were elicited: Pastor 3 said, “...if you look at existent Churches they have been in existence longer than the Pentecostal Churches and have a larger

following, especially overseas. Statistically, the Pentecostal Church has increased over the last few decades, but overseas the Catholic Church is largest, and with a lot of funding. Hence they are at the root of mission work – setting up schools and hospitals.” He further notes, “(t)he apartheid regime suppressed Churches. For years the Church had no choice in the matter, apartheid was in the Church. This prevented other races from aspiring to leadership positions.”

Pastor 2a said, “(w)e didn’t have to battle racial integration because we were never associated. Even now, we are still not integrated...it’s always been because of apartheid; unless you are fortunate enough to have a Church in a situation where there is a mixed congregation, as that can happen in areas like eg. Umhlanga, Westville.” Further, “(w)e don’t stop the integration but it is obviously due to the apartheid era. There was never that kind of crossing of pulpit, because of the thinking of the white man that he was higher than the non-white man; therefore what can the non-white man tell me? Some of them still think like that today. The Church is supposed to be the example you know, but until the other half change properly you can’t be a proper light in this world.” Pastor 6 said “The Church was very active and very involved during apartheid; it advocated apartheid.”

4.3.4 How does the Church finance the social responsibility programmes it supports?

What level of social responsibility is possible can be gauged by whether there is an allocation for this in the overall Church budget. Pastors were asked about what funds they currently put into social programmes. Such questions were posed to learn about principles regarding donations received from donors outside the Church toward Church-based social programmes.

Each Church leader decides what portion of the Church’s overall budget will be utilised for social responsibility, with variants from 25 to 40 percent allocated, depending on what they include under the umbrella of social responsibility. There are no guiding principles or standards. Pastor 5a asserted that “(w)e

should use 75 percent of the Church's income for outside work ie. social programmes and 25 percent inside; today Churches are doing the opposite".

When pastors were probed about external funding for social programmes, they all concurred that such funding would be welcomed though they did differ with regard to the sources from which to accept funds. Pastor 3 said "(w)atever funds would be welcomed. I have had companies that offered to fund programmes. To be honest, with the takings from the Church alone we are unable to do much, we are limited. We need businesses to come on board and sow financially into programmes. Likewise corporations need the Church, which has expertise and labour. The Church is available to go to the grassroots, and meet the needs of the community and to interact, but the Church does not necessarily have the finances to do that. Corporations with finances may not have manpower – this is a ministry where we both must work together. As a pastor, it would be most welcome. The more people that we get involved in programmes the better". Pastor 2a said that "(t)he Church can receive donations from any legitimate source." Pastor 6 shared a slightly different viewpoint: "The Church should rely on funds that God provides. If we are doing anything to uplift communities - the whole community, not just the Christian community – if that Church is an NGO (non-governmental organisation) or PBO (public benefit organisation), and if it has good accountability, it wouldn't be wrong to receive external funds for specific projects".

Further discussion highlighted inconsistencies in the approach to accountability for external funds. When probed about receiving funds from corporations and organisations that may make their profit from activities that ethically the Church does not support (eg. sale of alcohol or nicotine, and gambling) the responses were surprising. Pastor 2a asked, "(w)hy would I not take a donation from them eg. SAB, BAT, casinos, because they are legitimate companies? If they give me a donation to do community work I will take it, but I am not going to promote them or advertise for them... or mention them anywhere."

Pastor 3, echoing Pastor 2a's viewpoints said "If money is required to touch people's need and we are the middleman, we'll use the money to touch someone's life, and be instrumental in winning them for God. The Bible says the wealth of the heathen belongs to the Church, and God says he will bring the wealth of the heathen into the Church to bless others through the Church. Sometimes Hindus come on board the feeding scheme, I cannot offend and alienate them by leaving them out. We have got to welcome them...You can't encourage the sale of alcohol or drugs, that is not morally acceptable according to Biblical standards. As a pastor I will not advocate the sale of these items, but should SAB or another questionable company want to sow into some of the projects, I will have to reconsider and will not want to come in the way of the beneficiary or recipient. I still have the liberty to decide - what will companies be expecting in return? They must not get advertising coverage, nor expect the Church to pardon or condone what they are doing, do not expect that we advocate they are a good company. There are some regulations or rules."

Once again Pastor 6 shared a different viewpoint on the matter, "(t)he Church needs to be very accountable when receiving funds, when receiving funds from outside the Church. We must exercise caution. I am careful that I don't want to receive from people who are not following Biblical standards eg. pro-abortion, homosexuality, SAB, lotto – I will not receive from such organisations. Let the Church be the Church – we are the salt and the light, we can't compromise. If we are getting funds, we must do it clean."

Further probing highlighted that Churches had no guidelines for receiving external finances for Church or community projects. All the pastors interviewed had no guidelines, either as an individual Church or as part of any larger Church body, and indicated such decisions were unilateral. None of the pastors mentioned that their councils were involved in taking such decisions. Pastor 6 made a significant point, "most Churches in this region are independent not

denominational, and each has its own way of operation – there is a big danger. Some Churches have no guidelines, just do projects because they are getting some money. (It is) important to do an inquiry into those who want to give substantial donations, find out where the money came from, that they didn't rob a bank. One must do a proper audit."

This pastor has a congregation in a crime-ridden community that, according to him, has a 60-70 percent unemployment rate although there are good houses in the area. He has paid off the R1.8 million it cost to erect his Church building, but has not yet determined what his social responsibility programmes would entail. He is however, actively involved in addressing crime in the area by mobilising community meetings involving relevant government agencies, the Church and the community to develop solutions. This pastor offers an inclusive approach that is aimed at addressing the root of crime, and has the potential to become a replicable good practice model for integration across a variety of sectors to address social challenges. It also opens the Church to the community.

4.4 Analysis

The theoretical framework that underpins this general discussion acknowledges that all sectors of South African society are aware of the country's manifold challenges of increasing poverty gaps, high unemployment, and a culture of violence that has far-reaching negative repercussions. Government, the corporate sector and progressive faith-based organisations have made these concerns a priority, forging innovative partnerships which are producing results.

The King Report 1994's guiding principles for businesses draws attention to a business perspective that it is good for profit and for social stability if corporations also become socially and ethically responsible. Corporations in South Africa have standards and guidelines, well-developed programmes and innovative partnerships indicating their commitment to the betterment of society and to ensuring a level of transparency by reporting annually on their social

responsibilities. Smaller businesses generally however, have little public commitment to these principles, and can be exploitative by nature of a survivalist mentality.

Biblical social responsibility as contemporary liberation theology is poignantly reflected in the *Oikos Journey*, which suggests that the Church needs to engage a holistic perspective, and find synergies between social and environmental responsibilities to ensure that it contributes effectively to caring for the poor. The Church has an influence across all society - certainly to this sector as well. Churches are highly influential: Sunday School, youth meetings, women's meetings, men's meetings, professional persons' breakfasts and Sunday morning meetings - at a minimum.

The *Oikos Journey* and good governance principles outlined in the 'King Report 1994' finds support in Bench Marks, serve as pertinent theoretical and implementation tools to springboard the discussion of a contemporary, transparent theology for social change.

4.4.1 A contemporary theology of liberation

As discussed in the literature review section, a theology for social change in South Africa must be traced from the foundation of a theology of liberation from racial oppression. Liberation theology in South Africa has its most prominent relevance in the Kairos Document which presented the Church with a challenge to take a stand against apartheid. While the African Pentecostal/Charismatic Church actively resisted apartheid, the Indian Pentecostal/Charismatic Church does not appear to have effectively engaged the challenges presented to it, as it concentrated on its primary mandate – spiritual salvation; offering this as a panacea for all problems. The ethereality of the Pentecostal/Charismatic experience has not yet offered room for the pragmatism and structural depth of 'liberation' from oppressive conditions.

The denominational Pentecostal Churches had an apartheid hierarchy and structure operating from within the Churches, which obviously then did not lend support to the challenges of the Kairos Document. Although some of the responses elicited above indicate a need to have challenged apartheid, there appears to be a level of complacency in the situation, and Churches have made no attempt, even now, to challenge historical issues that continue to plague them. It is clear that the change is necessary, but is expected to come from elsewhere. The researcher attended a national welfare conference in May this year, hosted by a denominational body, and observed the lack of integration among pastors who did not readily mix, mingle or huddle into multiracial groups for chats. Although this particular denomination has been unified for seven years, it remains divided and still needs to address the racial divisions that prevent true unification. Other sectors of society have been and are, far more progressive in shedding racial barriers. These divisions suggest major rifts within a movement whose founding principles were grounded in non-racism.

Unlike the Kairos and revised *Oikos* Documents that guide other churches, the Pentecostal/Charismatic Church does not have a relevant foundational theology, so there is no baseline to measure whether the Church has revised its theology or whether it addresses present contextual challenges with any vigour, according to any documented accountability. Would it be fair to conclude therefore that because the Indian Pentecostal/Charismatic Church did not have a liberation theology that enabled it to speak against the injustices of apartheid, it continues to be in lack of an adequate theology to respond to the other oppressive issues and urgent developmental matters because it is too “heavenly minded and no earthly good,” as the saying goes?

While it can be assumed that the intense indoctrination of what is ‘sin’ prevented a Biblical appraisal of political involvement or the challenge that the Kairos Document presented to Churches, what is clear from the historical readings of liberation theology in South Africa and from pastors current responses on

apartheid within the Church, the Kairos Document never actually found full support in the South African Church as a whole, although some Churches made submissions to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

Having established that the Indian Pentecostal/Charismatic Church has no contemporary liberation theology, it continues to have a Biblical mandate to be socially responsible.

4.4.2 Viewpoints on Social Responsibility

The Pentecostal/Charismatic Church pastors sampled generally have differing perceptions of social responsibility which, for them, range from individual meetings such as a senior citizens weekly gathering to feeding schemes. They embrace social philanthropy rather than social justice perhaps because their theology is individualistic rather than communitarian. This philanthropy is premised on the social problems people bring to the Church rather than researched and explored 'community' needs, not only of those individuals that are Christian or fellowship at a particular Church. The decision of what social philanthropy programmes to administer resides with the pastor.

Pastors note that substance abuse, rape and non-monogamous relationships are extensive in Phoenix. This corroborates news reports, especially of schoolchildren being lured into substance abuse, with a recent Sunday Times Extra supplement reporting that "primary school children as young as eight are experimenting with drugs and sex in the sprawling suburbs of Chatsworth and Phoenix, causing panic in the two communities" (Govender & Mthethwa, September 9 2007:1). Quoted in the same article, Sayed Rajack of the Phoenix Education Forum explains that "drug peddlers are looking for a younger, lucrative market...We have received reports of children as young as eight who are drug addicts. The drugs lead to sexual molestation, underage sex, alcohol abuse and theft". Rape is another common crime. A Sunday Tribune Herald newspiece reported that a recently launched Thuthuzela rape management centre in

Phoenix deals with between “130 and 150 new rape cases every month” with “60% of victims under the age of 18, and 99.1% women” (Premdev, August 12 2007:1).

One cannot talk about rape without considering the impact of HIV & AIDS. A frightening reality is that according to the ASSA2003 model HIV & AIDS is responsible for approximately 47 percent of all deaths in South Africa, with a 71 percent mortality rate among the 15-49 year age bracket. All study estimates point to between 5.4 and 5.5 million people infected with HIV. The South African National HIV Survey (2005) suggests the prevalence rate among different race groups shows a rate of 13.3% for Africans, 1.9% for Coloureds, 1.6% for Indians and 0.6% for Whites (Noble, 12 April 2007). It was noted that Indians and Whites were the least co-operative to be tested⁴². Proportionally, KZN has the highest rate of HIV & AIDS infections in the country, resulting in ever-escalating numbers of HIV-related deaths and orphaned children.

Hence, HIV & AIDS, as a destabilising factor in all communities, must not be underestimated. Studies show that substance abuse leads to uninhibited sexual behaviour, and is often a precursor to rape⁴³. The risks of HIV infection as a result of rape are well-documented and government health policy ensures the provision of anti-retroviral medication as a preventative measure for survivors who are HIV-negative. Since HIV is mainly spread through sexual activity, non-monogamous relationships pose a serious risk. It is clear that HIV affects everyone, and congregants who are approaching the Church with the social

⁴² People at high risk of HIV were more likely to co-operate, and results were accordingly adjusted to compensate for the possible bias.

⁴³ The researcher has worked with rape management for over five years, and these links have been confirmed through many national and international studies, the most pertinent being a currently embargoed study ‘Towards developing an understanding of rape in South Africa: discourses from rapists, communities and activists’. 2004. See also the following websites downloaded 8 October 2007: ‘Sexual Violence and Substance Abuse’ <http://www.danenet.org/dcccrsa/saissues/alcohol.html>; ‘Alcohol and Sexual Assault’ http://www.athealth.com/Practitioner/ceduc/alc_assault.html; ‘Alcohol Abuse as a Risk Factor for and Consequence of Child Abuse’ <http://pubs.niaaa.nih.gov/publications/arh25-1/52-57.pdf>

problems outlined above are also indirectly drawing attention to HIV exposure, although they may not articulate the associations. The Church does not make these connections, however, and so is of the opinion that HIV & AIDS is not a problem in Phoenix.

The incidence of HIV & AIDS reported to the Church appears to be exceptionally low, frankly it is not reported at all. This could also be indicative of the stigma attached to HIV & AIDS and its transmission.⁴⁴ This silence surrounding HIV & AIDS is a sinister reminder of the deafening, heartbreaking silence that previously existed concerning domestic violence and the oppressive culture that made it acceptable for a man to hit a woman, without any fear of recourse or punishment. While domestic violence has always been high in the Phoenix community, until recently it was an 'acceptable' part of a woman's life and seldom reached the formal court structures. Now, with increased awareness and more economic mobility, women are speaking out and seeking assistance.

All the outward manifestations of social problems within Phoenix have roots in cyclic poverty, which is a consequence of a large contingent of unskilled labour. Many people work as clerks, shop assistants, packers, cashiers, machinists, gardeners, and perform other menial labour. With the closure of clothing factories due to cheaper imports, many people have been retrenched [Pastor 6]. Churches have not given consideration to addressing systemic poverty in Phoenix as a whole. The regular employment of Church members, often women, for maintenance services, is an excellent way for the Church to assist the poor to earn a living. However, pastors need to interrogate their own viewpoints about local economic development so they can create Church-based solutions to the problem of poverty within the community. Innovations, such as that suggested by Pastor 6 can potentially be a good practice model as it opens the Church to the community and offers a legitimate form of income for the unemployed.

⁴⁴ Refer to Chetty, A.P. 2002. "HIV/AIDS is not a threat to the Christian Indians of Northdale/Raisethorpe : is this a myth? ; with special focus on identifying the absence of pastoral care for those infected and affected by HIV/AIDS in this suburb." (unpublished Masters thesis).

Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches have definitely not apprehended their responsibilities toward the environment, or the Biblical mandate to care for the earth. It is too far removed from their first and foremost responsibility to save souls and ensure spiritual upliftment of people. Given that these pastors are not engaging with environmental care, sustainability principles were not given consideration when their Churches were built. None of the Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches⁴⁵ have recycling containers or a garden patch or information sessions/pamphlets on responsible care of the earth. With respect to addressing environmental issues, the Pentecostal/Charismatic Church has colossal strides to be made. While it could be argued that pastors receive no Biblically-based teaching on such issues, the researcher was informed that pastors can attend any seminar, training or conference they choose; even those that are under a national umbrella are not restricted from continuous learning. This teaching is available from the Diakonia Council of Churches as well as readily available from internet resources. It is imperative that the Church understand and engage their role in environmental management, and the influential role it can play in teaching and promoting sustainability. There is a definite need for training, making resources available and continuing to engage the Church on this critical issue.

Overall, a grave weakness of Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches approach is the lack of guidelines and standards to assist pastors take decisions on external funding, accountability and ethics. The current ad hoc approach has the potential to create dire ethical and moral dilemmas for ministers, resulting in dangerously flawed decisions that could bring the Church into disrepute. The vast majority of Churches in Phoenix do not present a financial statement to congregants; a practice that shows a lack of transparency, openness and standard ethical practice. Implementing such a practice would keep the Church

⁴⁵ The Dutch Reformed Church in Phoenix has a paper recycling container on the Church grounds.

accountable for funds, and its utilisation. Since corporations promote financial integrity and have a transparent process by reporting annually on their social programmes they are likely to report on donations to Churches as well. Approaches by Churches to receive donations which it will not report on is dishonest and does not depict an institution of ethical conduct and integrity.

Given that much of what was discussed with pastors is new territory for them is a sign that they have been sufficiently aroused to interrogate their approaches and learn more about how to engage communally with the planet. If we broadly applied corporate social responsibility principles that require engaging with the social, economic and environment towards sustainability, in this context the Church would be seen to be weak in theory and practice.

- There is no programme that engages communities for effective collaboration and community ownership, or that considers the structural social challenges of the community within which it thrives.
- Decision-making does not appear to be inclusive of people's viewpoints. They are not community, or Church or council decisions – they appear to be that of the leader of the Church, with each Church leader projecting an arbitrary decision concerning how much of the Church finances should be spent on social responsibility, benevolence or welfare.
- There is not yet a spirit of co-dependence between Churches, communities and businesses, except in the request and receiving of finances.
- There is no financial accountability.

If we could apply the principles of the *Oikos* Journey to the Pentecostal/Charismatic Church we would have to conclude that the Indian Pentecostal/Charismatic Church has not yet grasped the challenge of this document, to end poverty. Some pastors' attempts to drive social responsibility are impactful, even with limited resources. The philanthropic services offered by Churches are necessary and its removal would possibly cripple current

beneficiaries. However, while pastors are able to locate the immediate social challenges facing the Church community:

- The approach is short-sighted and one of crisis management. Some pervasive social issues, such as rape and unemployment, are not directly addressed in many instances.
- Churches have not invested in skills development. It does not teach people to develop sustainable livelihoods and so become self-sufficient, economically active members of society.
- The Churches' cosmesis for poverty is feeding schemes and food hampers, which exist throughout Phoenix.
- Linking the poverty problem to the vulnerability of women and children, and to environmental care, appears non-existent.

The reality in this sample, seems consistent with Moberg's (1962:50) claim that the Church places secondary emphasis on social issues, mainly dealing with it as philanthropy. Hence it cannot address the plea of the *Oikos Journey* to end endemic poverty. An important point of the *Oikos Journey*, that of 'a shared prosperity', is lost – there is no shared prosperity for those within or outside the Church – to the extent it is practised, the Church building and paid staff are its beneficiaries.

It is, and should be, disquieting that there appears little focus by Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches on broad social responsibility and good governance principles, or on environmental concerns. The two female pastors took the lead in concurring that the Church *is* 'failing' in its responsibilities toward the vulnerable groups of the Phoenix community. As the need for social justice becomes urgent and more sharply visible, there appears to be a stabilisation – or perhaps even a decline in the growth of mainline Churches that actively support social justice causes. According to Morran and Schlemmer (Poewe & Hexham in Poewe (ed). 1994: 54) declining figures are as a result of mainline Churches

emphasis on social justice⁴⁶, as opposed to the Holy Spirit movements that tend to focus fairly exclusively on the spiritual. Poewe and Hexham (ibid: 54) have criticised this study as biased, suggesting that the research was commissioned by the Diakonia Council of Churches to ascertain why the 'new' (Pentecostal/Charismatic) Churches did not have an interest in social justice. Regardless of what draws the masses to Pentecostalism/Charismata, it continues to grow, and is therefore a powerful force in society. It must be harnessed well to produce effective, long term social change.

⁴⁶ Refer Morann and Schlemmer, (1984), 'Faith for the fearful?: An investigation into new Churches in the greater Durban area' who conducted a study, mainly among white Pentecostals and concluded that there was a mass exodus from mainline Churches to Pentecostalism/Charismata as a result of a move away from the 'social gospel' to the 'word of God'.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Overarching Conclusions

This study has concentrated on the sampled churches responses to the ordinary, everyday challenges of the parishes they serve. Has the church been able to combine the message of hope with a message of social justice?

Key findings are summarised below:

Issue	Church response
Understanding of definitions related to social responsibility	No standard definition of social responsibility
Guidelines for developing programmes eg research, statistics, community engagement	No guidelines. Anecdotal action on a case by case basis as brought to pastors/workers knowledge.
Maximising resource utilisation through collective strategising, planning, implementing.	Non-existent. Churches are fragmented.
Relevant social programmes	Programmes not based on scientific evidence, but rather on crisis management only. They address overt problems, not the cause – they meet a definite need which is symptomatic, not curative and sustainable.
Economic programmes	No skills development programmes from within the Church - individual groups (women/men/youth), 'empowerment'/ motivation talks
Environmental programmes	None
Social responsibility dialogue with congregation/community	Exists within Church community only, but is limited – verbal, ad hoc.
Financial reporting to congregation/community	None
Guidelines for receiving external funds (government, corporations, international) for social programmes	None
Foundational ethical principles	Not consistent, no blueprint

Accountability	Theocracy (accountable to God); dissuades accountability to man. Denominations marginally accountable to national umbrella body. Independents not accountable to anyone, except God.
Contemporary Social Pentecostal/Charismatic Theology	None

This summary, quite simply, supports the researcher's contention, that Pentecostalism/Charismata is still the religion **of** the poor, yet it is not **for** the poor (researcher's emphasis). Although Pentecostalism/Charismata has no boundaries and permeates all of society, it remains a movement that attracts large sections of the world's impoverished and vulnerable eg. the Dalits (untouchables) of India. Phoenix, is also a vulnerable community, that has readily embraced Pentecostalism/Charismata.

While the offerings of the poor make up the collective material wealth of Pentecostal Churches, the fragmentation in the Pentecostal/Charismatic Church erodes the small pockets of good that they do. It also prevents them from engaging pertinent social issues as a collective, or developing strategic collaborative programmes that maximise scarce human and financial resources without adding further strain to already poor communities. Effectively, the wealth that comes into the Church is not strategically returned to people, to better their quality of life⁴⁷.

Pastors themselves concurred that "(t)hings are changing and the Church is silent" [2b], "we have about 900 Churches in Phoenix. We should divide social responsibilities, so we have few and can do our best" [2a]. In addition, "(e)verywhere the Churches are involved in charity, but we need to combine our

⁴⁷ It is more common to find foreign Christian missions investing in infrastructural and development programmes in poor Southern and Eastern countries.

resources for greater effect" [1]. Pastor 5b noted that "wealth is in the Church, but it is not utilised properly".

Harsh criticism has been levelled against the Pentecostal/Charismatic Church. One pastor, a liberationist from the Pentecostal Church, who was not part of the researcher's sample group, when interviewed declared "the Pentecostal Church has made the error of raping the poor" (August 20, 2007). The President of the All Africa Conference of Churches, Rev Dr Nyansako-ni-Nku, referred to Pentecostalism as a "disease", having witnessed that "the preacher who promises prosperity for everyone gets richer while the congregation gets poorer" (Brittton, February 2007:7). This sentiment is echoed by Anderson who contends that Hollenweger, has a love for the Pentecostal experience and what it stood for in the past (rooted among the dispossessed, radical freedom, wide variety of expression, original ecumenical vision, non-racial character) but has come to "hate what it stands for in the present - materialistic ideology" (Anderson in Anderson & Hollenweger, 1991:21). These criticisms need to be interrogated openly by the Church, to unearth the truth of the gospel it preaches and how that is perceived by mainline Churches and the secular world.

Amidst the endemic poverty in Phoenix, Churches appear rich and flourishing. Pastors drive the latest models of expensive cars, from salaries that they draw from local congregations whose social circumstances do not improve. Church buildings, numerous⁴⁸ and worth millions of rand are erected, with one large Church at present installing a R2 million air-conditioning system. Churches are also fenced properties, with the latest technological equipment that is for use a few times a week. Additionally, programmes implemented are for Church folk only, and there is very little emphasis on effecting attitudinal changes, moral regeneration and the underlying causality of social problems.

⁴⁸ In one community where the researcher interviewed a pastor there were three churches with steady congregations on a single road, in a 500m radius.

Church leaders still display archaic and patriarchal social practices. An example is excluding women from actively influencing change within the Church. This is important, as women intuitively understand and connect with issues of vulnerability, and so could bring a more attuned dimension to addressing social maladies. All the pastors affirmed that women make up the majority of their Churches, yet women are seldom represented on the executive council except in one Church where four couples make up the council. However, they are seldom involved in serving communion and seldom receive the opportunity to preach at a Sunday morning service. In only one case that the researcher is familiar with (5a and 5b), does a woman, who is theologically trained, have equal opportunity to preach from the pulpit; and Pastor 4 noted her struggle to be recognised as a minister. There are some women pastors in Phoenix, but they are few and far between.

The liberation theologian interviewed suggests that the Pentecostal/Charismatic movement needs another Kairos moment, possibly a revolution. He argues that there is a huge focus on individual icons “who are a law unto themselves”, but that this trend is declining. He further suggests that there needs to be a reawakening of Pentecostalism’s holiness principles, which also included ‘charity’. He expressed hope that creating a forum for interrogation and debate within the Church, would produce a more robust Pentecostal/Charismatic Church. Speaking at the August Compassion Conference at Bethsaida Temple in Phoenix, Carl Richardson, President of Stewardship Ministries in USA, said that “true evangelism is discipleship, true discipleship leads to benevolence, and benevolence is the bridge/switch/gateway to the unbelievers territory” (August 24, 2007). As businesses engage CSR ultimately for profit, the Pentecostal/Charismatic Church can engage social responsibility to save souls, if that is the only way they reconcile the spiritual mandate to win lives to Jesus, with addressing pertinent social challenges.

Mainline Churches are skewed toward social justice and Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches are skewed toward other-worldly spirituality. One pastor [3] spoke about locating “the balance” between both worlds; the researcher argues that the Church is far from that balance, although the Bible, arguably, does offer a balance.

5.2 Recommendations

The researcher’s recommendations, which will hopefully provide some guidance to Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches, are listed below:

- 1) The Church needs an urgent reappraisal. Ministers have expressed that they need to interrogate the definitions and movements that have proliferated - and arrive at common positions of what is the Pentecostal/Charismatic Church.

- 2) The Church must become contextually relevant to communities, not Church members. The Church needs to become strategic in assessing societal challenges and develop appropriately structured social programmes.

- 3) The Church needs to dissolve its fragments, even within individual Churches, and coalesce into a collective voice if it is to be impacting⁴⁹. The Churches in Phoenix are disconnected from each other, mainly due to competition and status. If Churches could unite, fewer buildings may be required taking up less land, and people may have access to better resources as there will be more money for dealing with ‘real’ issues.

- 4) The Church needs to develop good governance principles. It needs to develop a set of guiding principles and policies that defines its spiritual and social mandate, and that addresses issues of integrity and ethics.

- 5) The Church needs to establish an accountability board that promotes financial integrity and ethical practices, a board made up of financiers that can guide and discipline Churches as required and to which Churches are

⁴⁹ This may require including the viewpoints of more women in decision-making for social responsibility programmes.

regulated or legislated to join. Essentially the Church needs to hold the Bench Marks document as a mirror of its own practices.

6) The Church needs to move away from its individualistic paradigm, to a collective paradigm that promotes sharing, caring, joint learning and development. Church buildings are empty for much of the week and can be used for skills development, to take care of children after school, for community meetings, libraries, senior citizens clubs, etc. The Church perimeters need to be open spaces that invite the community in an interactive way to develop.

7) The Church needs to develop a holistic theology. It needs to encounter, comprehend and apprehend the issues outlined in the *Oikos* journey and use the Bible to establish a framework for action.

While this study investigates a microcosm of Indian Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches positions on social responsibility, it is possible its findings are true for Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches at large. As Christian organisations collectively strive to bring good news to the poor and leave behind a decent world for all our children, it is hoped that the world would see its compassion and care.

It is hoped that this study will urge an internal interrogation of the Pentecostal/Charismatic Church on its social and environmental responsibilities, and propel it to use its influence and power to empower people to the abundant Zoë life by partnering with them in transforming their everyday social and environmental realities.

Undertaking this study has helped the researcher locate her voice within the Church, without abandoning her social, environmental and developmental values. On the contrary, it has presented an avenue for the researcher to express these values and request response to them from my spiritual home, the Church. The researcher remains convinced that the Church is the greatest agent for social change, for it proclaims the radical person and teachings of Jesus

Christ who “is the centre and model of compassionate⁵⁰ love” (Land, 2003:145); and whose teachings remain alive to the concerns of 21st century society. Pentecostalism/Charismata offers a hopeless people a real, personal relationship with a God who is able to radically change lives and circumstances; but who also depends on those that follow His teaching to become His heart to the vulnerable of this earth. It allows for a relationship with a God who gives hope – hope that there is a heaven, hope that miracles do happen, hope that life’s circumstances can change – through supernatural power.

On reflection of that which has been presented, the Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches’ emphasis on the Holy Spirit seems incongruent with the Spirit’s characteristics as noted in Isaiah 61:1-3 which says, “The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is on me, because the Lord has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives, and release from darkness for the prisoners, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favour and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all who mourn, and provide for those who grieve in Zion.” According to Land (2003:132) “Christians confess that God is love”, and the Bible commands that people should exercise the gift of love above all other gifts, as far as loving each other through the Holy Spirit, as “Christ loved his disciples and others during his earthly ministry”. In this, it is hoped we can bring truth to the opening prayer of this thesis.

⁵⁰ Land expands on a compassionate spirit, suggesting that it moves with urgency and pity toward the lost; “moving the believer toward the world and draws the world into the sphere of redemption” (Land, 2003:147).

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ANNEXURE A:

RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE

Unstructured questionnaire administered to Full Gospel Church and Independent pastors.

Thank you for this time, and allowing me to interview you. I will be recording this interview to ensure that I capture all the necessary information. The information is confidential, it will be transcribed and the tape cleaned out. You will also not be identified on the coding sheet as I have given each person a code that I understand but does not identify you to anyone else. The only other person privy to the actual information is my supervisor, who is also bound by the university's ethical codes.

- 1) How long have you been a pastor at _____?
- 2) Did you start this assembly (founding pastor)?
- 3) Specifically, which parts of Phoenix do your congregants come from?
- 4)
 1. How many members?
 2. What is your church racial composition?
 3. What is your church age composition?
 4. Gender composition?
 5. Composition of church council – number/male-female ratio
- 5)
 1. What are the primary needs in the community that you serve?
 2. How do you know this?
- 6) What, in your opinion, are the greatest threats facing a stable society -
 - a) locally, here in Phoenix
 - b) globally, as part of the world
 - c) are these interlinked?
- 7) What programmes/ministries does the church administer to tackle social problems?
 - a) What prompted each of these ministries?
 - b) Who decided on these ministries? (yourself, church council, congregation)
 - c) What percentage of the overall church budget is allocated to social responsibility programmes?

8) What role *should* the Pentecostal church have in society? What role *does* it fulfil? (pastorally, socially)

9) Do you think that any of the ffg challenges exists in the community you serve?

- a) teenage pregnancies
- b) rape or indecent assault,
- c) premarital sex
- d) extra marital affairs
- e) HIV & AIDS

How does the church address/deal with such issues? Each of these was chosen because of the link between sex and HIV & AIDS. Do you think that areas such as HIV & AIDS, and sexuality are issues that the church should be addressing?

10) I now want to address some issues through providing scenarios or raising debatable positions.

a) Ethics: What is the church's position on receiving funds from corporations for community development? Are there companies one should not take funds from, how does one make those decisions? Are there some standards/guidelines on what constitutes an ethical church? Is the church debating such issues? Should it?

b) What about taking government funds? Govt gets taxes from casinos, etc and govt has legislated laws that supports abortion, same sex marriages – how do we reconcile these positions? How can we oppose govt position if we take money from them, would we not be compromising ourselves?

11) How does the church choose suppliers for contracts, what is the criteria? Does the church engage with whether the supplier is BEE compliant, pays its workers a living wage, provides basic benefits, does not exploit its workers for profit?

12) What are your own responsibility issues toward the employees of the church? Pension fund? Medical aid? Bursary scheme for children? Does the national office determine such priorities or do local churches take such decisions.

13) Environment: Global warming is considered one of the world's foremost threats, the recent floods in England and hurricanes in China bring this to the forefront. a) Do we as Christians have any role to play in addressing environmental issues?

d) Do you think the church should be talking about such issues? Are we talking about it? (environmental disasters affect the poor first)

e) Is it an area that you have personally thought about engaging, how?

(God told man to 'subdue' the earth, but he also made man responsible for the earth – faithful over little, He would give much?, Bible replete with beauty of nature, all bow to God & praise Him; 'God so loved the *world* – includes everything)

15. Sustainable development practitioners talk about the ecological footprint that we all use up. The richer one is/richer countries use up a larger footprint than poor families/poorer nations. Globally this has dire environmental and human consequences; and we are a part of the crisis or the solution. The tendency today is to become rich for oneself (as one increases in wealth the house gets bigger, the car gets bigger/fancier/ the school fees get more exorbitant) – is this a sign of God's blessing or man's greed? Can this be interpreted to mean that God makes one person responsible for so much so that he can live modestly/within his own footprint and be responsible toward others? What is your understanding of the Biblical perspective on financial blessings, and how we are called to be stewards of this?

16) Economics: The Bible says that 'a lazy man should not eat' – what is your opinion on what is happening in communities? Are people actively seeking employment, supplementing where they can, or are they willfully unemployed and expecting handouts? Does the church offer any skills development so that people could not just pray for jobs but become employment candidates? Would this be outside of the scope of a church?

How does the church determine who the poor are within its boundaries?

b) The Bible teaches that we should take care of the poor that live among us. The church often teaches that if we give finances to God, God will give back to us, even for the very poor. How do we relate this principle to the poor among us that truly do not have to give – will God not bless them financially? Those that live among the church community that are not church-goers - does this mean that they must go hungry/unclothed? Do we have a duty to them? Is it possible that salvation can be brought to someone through providing them with a coat?

b) A related question: a lot of people are choosing to get medically boarded and set up home-businesses. Do you know of such cases and what is your opinion on this – is this acceptable?

17) The Pentecostal church has taken much longer than other denominations (Catholics/Anglicans) to begin actively engaging in social justice issues? Would this be correct? Why?

18) What in your opinion is the greatest challenge facing the Pentecostal church? Is the church equipped to deal with these issues?

19) Do you think a lot of what has been covered in this discussion is actually government's responsibility? In your opinion what would be the best/most appropriate way for the Pentecostal church to engage such issues with its primary mandate of salvation? How should it reach the lost/unsaved?

*I have often asked myself **why** in our meetings the Spirit is so eloquent on "peace of heart", on marriage problems, and on questions of individual ethics, and so silent on racism, oppression, and starvation? I do not think that the Spirit is unaware of these problems and that he does not want to lead us to better solutions than the politicians. Could it be that we do not listen or that we do not have the institutions or "places" where he, or she, can express him or herself? Could it be that by using a language that excludes the majority of our deliberations, we unconsciously have passed over "the least of these my brethren?" (Matthew 25:40) Walter Hollenweger, the Pentecostal elites and the Pentecostal poor. P209 (Poewe, ed).*

FOR Full Gospel Church Members Only:

20.. The national FGC requires that 10% of a church's income be sent to them.

- a) Do you support this principle?
- f) Do local churches contribute to how those funds are utilised?
- g) What is the role/function/mandate of the national welfare council?
- h) What is your opinion of the work it does? Is it adequate or can it do better?

21. Does the larger Pentecostal church (national office) offer any training to pastors on social justice? Employment equity? Assessing the needs of your congregation?

ANNEXURE B:

Focus Group Discussion with Pastors – Phoenix region Ms Virginia Francis 29 August 2007

Pentecostalism and Social Responsibility

- Reaching common ground on understanding concepts
- What does the church consider as global threats?
- What is the church doing to respond to global threats?
- **Through what lens do I filter the Bible?** Is the church understanding and relevant to the world and world issues?

Session 1: Concepts 09h15-10h15

- Explore what we understand by:
 - pentecostal'
 - charismatic
 - social responsibility
 - social gospel'
 - social justice
- **Social Gospel**—Rauschenbusch summarized his main idea as follows: To show that the social gospel is a vital part of the Christian conception of sin and salvation, and that any teaching on the sinful condition of the race and on its redemption from evil which fails to do justice to the social factors and processes in sin and redemption, must be incomplete, unreal, and misleading.
- **Social Justice:**
Believers can do actions of love and mercy to other humans in need because of God's love for them. They can call out for justice and harmony between the races because they know that is what will prevail in God's future kingdom.

The truth is that the church should be a microcosm of this coming Kingdom.

In the church, one should be able to see an overflow of equity, justice, fair treatment, kindness—in other words, a picture of the future kingdom of God. (How do we fair?)

Source: Caring for people in need 21 C Benevolence

- What are the global threats facing humanity?

Session 2: Social and economic responsibility
10h30-12h30

- **What do we understand by/define as “being rich”?
what are our indicators of wealth?**
- How does the Bible define riches?
1 Tim 6:17-18 “Command those who are **rich in this present world** not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. Command them to do good, to be **rich in their good deeds**, and to be **generous** and **willing to share**.”
- **Why does God bless man with riches?**
Acts 4:31-35:4
After they prayed....filled with the Holy Spirit and **spoke the word of God boldly**
All the believers were **one** in heart and mind. **No one claimed that any of his possessions was his own, but they shared everything they had. ..there were no needy persons among them.** For from time to time, those that owned lands and houses sold them (unselfish, ceased to be greedy, accumulating for oneself only), and put it at the apostles feet, **and it was distributed to anyone as he had need.**
- Following this is the story of Ananias and Sapphira
- What do we learn from this?
- Why did God mete out such a harsh punishment?
- Do we rob the poor ?
Why did the widow only have two coins?
- **Luke 21:1-4** As He looked up, Jesus saw the rich putting their gifts into the temple treasury. He also saw a poor widow put in two very small copper coins. “I tell you the truth”, He said, “this **poor widow** has put in **more** than all the others. All these people gave their gifts out of their wealth; but she out of her poverty put in **all she had to live on**.”.....
- **James 5:3-4:** You have hoarded your wealth in the last days. Look! The wages you failed to pay the workmen who mowed your fields are crying out against you. The cries of the harvesters have reached the Lord Almighty.
Is God pleased with our conduct?

Isa 58: 1-12

- “ Shout it loud, do not hold back. Raise your voice like a trumpet. Declare to my people their **rebellion**, and to the house of Jacob their **sins**. For day after day they seek me out, to seem eager to know my ways, as if they were a nation that does what is right and has not forsaken the commands of its God 3 ‘ **Why have we fasted’ they say, ‘and you have not seen it’?** ...humbled ourselves and you have not noticed?
- Yet on the day of your fasting, ***you do as you please and exploit all your workers.***
- ***4 Your fasting ends in quarrelling and strife, and in striking each other with wicked fists. You cannot fast as you do today and expect your voice to be heard on high.*** Is this the kind of fasting I have chosen, only a day for a man to humble himself? 6 Is not this the kind of **fasting I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke? Is it not to share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter – when you see the naked to clothe him, and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood?**
- 8 Then....
- 9(a) ...you will call to the Lord and He will answer you...
- 9(b) do away with yoke of oppression...spend yourselves in behalf of the hungry....satisfy the needs of the oppressed...then....

Session 3: Environmental Care & The Church
13h15-14h30

- Should the church be concerned with the natural environment?
- Does God delight in man alone? What about the rest of His creation?

God speaks in detail about His creation

- - God begins His blueprint with creation: Genesis 1 -**“it was good”**
- - God’s covenant to man that He would not destroy the earth again was through a rainbow (His creation)
- - God said He would not destroy the earth again: **so who is destroying the earth?**
- - Job 38: God answered these men with His creation; the earth **reports** to the Lord...
- - Psa 65: 5-13 “hope of all the ends of the earth and of the farthest seas....” 6 you care for the land and water it, you enrich it abundantly. The streams of God are filled with water to provide the people with grain, for so you have ordained it.....
- - Psa 66: 1 Shout with joy to God, all the **earth...**

Justice - about sharing creation

Luke 12: 15-21

“watch out, be on your guard against all kinds of greed. A man’s life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions. Parable: The **ground** of a rich man produced **good** crop. He thought: WHAT SHALL I DO? I HAVE NO PLACE TO STORE MY CROPS?

His Solution: / will tear down **my** barns and build bigger ones, and there / will store all **my** grain and **my** goods. And /I’ll say to **myself** “you have plenty of good things laid up for many years. Take life easy, eat, drink and be merry.”

But God said to him: You FOOL. This very night your life will be demanded from you. (Ananias and Sapphira?). This is how it will be with anyone who stores up things for himself but is **not rich toward God**.

- **Luke 15: 22-28**

v29 -33: ..do not set your heart on what you will eat or drink, do not worry about it. **For the pagan world runs after all these things...**and your father knows you need it. Seek His kingdom and these things will be added to you as well...

Sell your possessions and give to the poor. Provide purses for yourselves that will not wear out..

- **1 John 4:16-17:** This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down His life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers. If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has not pity on him, how can the love of God be in him? **Let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth.**

- ***Richest 25% of world’s population consume 85% of its wealth, and produce 90% of its waste. If the rich reduce wasteful consumption by 25%, worldwide pollution would go down 22.5%. But, if the poor 75% of world popn reduce consumption totally and disappear from earth, it will only reduce pollution by 10%.***

The question is:

- What kind of world will we leave behind for our children?
- Write a note to your child or grandchild, that they will read 20 years from now – how will you describe the world you will leave behind for them? Have you ensured that they will be able to survive with scarce resources?

Questions for the church to ponder...

- **Can we afford to be quiet about multinational corporations and exploitation of poor countries natural resources?**

- Can we afford to leave the poor in Zimbabwe, Darfur, Ethiopia at the mercy of the rich and unscrupulous or does God expect to hear our voice?
- Do we know if our businessmen in the church pay their workers decent wages, offer benefits, engage in environmental care?
- Do we teach our children at home, church, Sunday School to be responsible toward everything that God has given?

Session 3: Ethics

14.30-15.00

- What does it mean for the church to be ethical?
- How should churches engage corporations? Who will it not take money from and why?
 - Can the church be a witness for Christ if it takes profit made through harmful addictions? How can it witness to an alcoholic if the alcoholic knows it took money from SAB for a community project – that may house the very women who are beaten when a man is inebriated? Does the end justify the means?

Closure!

- Feedback
- Thanks
- Tea