A CRITICAL EVALUATION OF AVERY DULLES' DIFFERENT MODELS OF THE CHURCH APPLIED TO A CONTEMPORARY WORLD
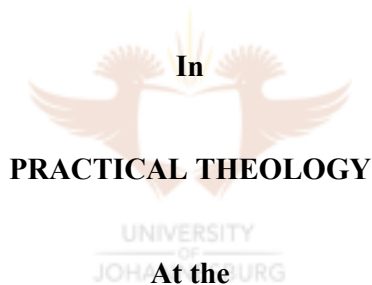

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DECLARATION

"I declare that

'A CRITICAL EVALUATION OF AVERY DULLES' DIFFERENT MODELS OF

THE CHURCH APPLIED TO A CONTEMPORARY WORLD'

is my own work

and that all sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by

means of a complete reference"

Andries Stephanus Scanlen

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

To my **Lord Jesus Christ**.

To my wife **Melinda** for your support.

To my children **Stephan**, **Marli** and **Lindi** for reminding me that God is love.

To **Dr. F.P. Möller** for being willing and always available to help and direct my thoughts.
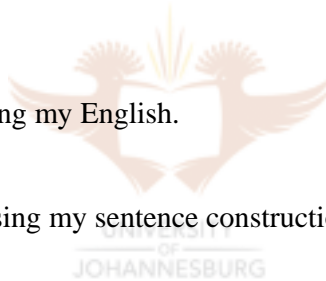
To **Prof. J.A. du Rand** for your support.

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SYNOPSIS

We are living in post-modern time that was preceded by the pre-modern and modern time. All the negative happenings and unfulfilled promises of the modern period gave rise to the post-modern period. This present post-modern period is characterized by a disillusionment with all the harmony, truths and prosperity promised, that didn't materialize during the modern era. Also the post-modernist challenges the church with its claim on absolute truths. Even so, the missionary task of the church hasn't changed. However, the church is increasingly under pressure to be relevant and effective in a post-modern world where the church is only one generation away from extinction (Gibbs & Coffey 2001:10-11).

From this perspective Averly Dulles' operational models as presented by different church traditions are evaluated in terms of there effectiveness in our post-modern world. These operational models are researched and explained as an avenue to move people beyond their own limitations and to open conversation between people with different outlooks (Dulles 1987:12).

To increase the saving capacity according to God's salvation plan, a Biblical perspective to missions was added to each of Dulles six models. They include: the visible power structures and functions of the church must recognize the sovereignty of God in saving people; the church as mystical communion must use relationships to reach out to the lost; the church as sacrament must become an event; herald dimension must capture people's attention; the servant approach must be taken to people's hurts, needs and interests; disciples must become doers of the word.

God's saving plan works in the post-modern period with the focus on the post-modernist as a person. The post-modernist is drawn away from modern activities and dimensions towards a religion of experience. The model that is introduced is the Pentecostal model where the self-revelation of God is prominent.

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OPSOMMING

Ons lewe in die post-moderne tydperk, wat vooraf gegaan was deur die pre-moderne en moderne tydperke. Negatiewe gebeure en onvervulde beloftes gedurende die moderne tydperk het aanleiding gegee tot die ontstaan van die post-moderne tydperk. Die huidige post-moderne tydperk word gekenmerk deur `n ontnugtering a.g.v. die onvervulde beloftes van die moderne tydperk waar harmonie, waarheid en oorvloed nooit gerealiseer het nie. Die post-moderne mens protesteer teen die kerk se aanspraak op absolute waarhede. Die verlede en ons huidige post-moderne siening het die missionere opdrag nie verander nie. Druk op die kerk het toegeneem om relevant en effektief te wees in die huidige tydperk waar die kerk, een generasie verwyder is van uitwissing (Gibbs & Coffey 2001:10-11).

Vanaf hierdie gemelde perspektief word Averly Dulles se operasionele modelle wat aangebied word uit verskillende kerk tradisies geevalueer in terme van effektiwiteid in die huidinge post-moderne tydperk. Die operasionele modelle is nagevors en verduidelik as `n poging om mense verby eie beperkinge te laat beweeg en gesprekke te bevorder tussen die gene met verskillende sieninge (Dulles 1987:12).

As `n poging om die reddende kapasiteit van elke model te verhoog, volgens God se verlossingsplan, is `n Bybelse benadering tot missies by elk van die ses modelle gevoeg. Die benaderings sluit in: die sigbare strukture en funksies van die kerk moet God se sovereiniteit erken as redder; die kerk as mistieke gemeenskap moet verhoudings gebruik om uit te reik na die verlore wêreld; die kerk as sakrament moet `n gebeurtenis word; die verkondiging dimensie moet mense se verbeelding aan gryp; dienskneg benadering moet geneem word na mense se pyn, behoeftes en belangstellings; dissipels moet doeners van die Woord word.

Die verlossingsplan van God in hierdie post-moderne tydperk moet fokus op die post-modernis as `n persoon. Die post-modernis word weggetrek van moderne aktiwiteite en handelinge na `n Godsdiens van belewenis. Die model wat voorgestel word is die Pinkster-model waar God se self-openbaring prominent is.

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CHAPTER ONE

**INTRODUCTION TO A CRITICAL EVALUATION OF AVERY DULLES'
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CONTEMPORARY WORLD**

1.1.   Study motivation

Since the start of the church in the New Testament special emphasis was laid upon its
missionary task. The command of the Lord in Matthew 28:19 was taken seriously.
The book of Acts especially highlights the church's missionary task.

Although the missionary task of the church has not changed, the world or
environment in which the church has to fulfil its task has changed dramatically.
Today we live in post-modern time, which was proceeded by the pre-modern and
modern times. The pre-modern, as it is called, is the period in history from the old
Greek philosophers, through the Renaissance and the Reformation, up to the dawn of
the Enlightenment (Fields 1995:2). The Enlightenment (Aufklarung) was the birth of
the modern period, and was especially applied to the active 18th century movement in
France and elsewhere toward intellectual light and freedom. Some historians believe
"modernity" actually began with the French Revolution on July 14, 1789 (Horton
1995:1). The storming of the Bastille, is argued, was a revolution that sought to
remake the world from scratch. Universal reason and planning would eventually
create the perfect society. However, after two world wars, ever increasing land and
air pollution, atomic bombs, famine and poverty in many parts of the world,
unemployment, crime and many other threats to mankind – it turned out that
modernity didn't produce the harmony, and prosperity that its prophets predicted.
This has lead to disillusionment concerning modernism and gave rise to post-
modernism. In fact, the post-modern thinker is a disenchanted modernist who no
longer wants to think in terms of a paradigm of absolute truths as presented in modern
times.

In this post-modern time, the church with its claim on absolute truths, is challenged to
fulfil its missionary task differently than before. Avery Dulles gives us operational

models as presented by different church traditions, and it needs to be evaluated in terms of its effectiveness in our post-modern world, otherwise the church may become irrelevant in its approach to the post-modern man. Therefore, through a model or models of the church, methods need to be established to reach the post-modern man with the gospel.

1.2.   Demarcation of study field

The subject under discussion is closely connected with ecclesiology, and is therefore also a theological matter. To address this matter, theology enters the picture by studying people's faith in God and human statements concerning the revelation of God. To understand the church correctly it must be seen from the point of view of God's intention with it, (Möller 1998, 4:39). The concern in this study is a theological evaluation of the accomplishments in the congregation and the religious actions of people. Thus it is all about the encounter between God and humanity and the role of human beings in this encounter (Heyns & Pieterse 1990:11).

Since the church is important to God, we must know what is God's intention and direction for his church in the present time and immediate future. Thus, in this study the focus is upon the efficiency of the church through continued rediscovery, reforming, repair and identifying God's present plan for the church.

1.3.   Problem statement

The church is increasingly under pressure to be relevant and effective in the context of the post-modern world. Gibbs and Coffey (2001:10-11) argue that the church is only one generation away from extinction. Churches must recognize that they face a missionary task as never before. This challenge must be met in the post-modern era, where there is no absolute value system (Clark 2002:5).

The question to be asked, relevant to this study, is! What are the most helpful model or models to be used in the post-modern world for the establishment of a missionary church? It is a question that becomes even more relevant in the light of Veith's evaluation of today's society: *"Many who have gone through modernism and post-*

modernism are recognizing that both are empty. They have been told that there are no moral absolutes, but they still feel guilty and see the wreckage of their lives. They have heard that they can create their own truths, but they yearn for something genuinely real. Christianity has thrived not by trying to offer them what they already have, but by offering them what they desperately lack, namely, the Word of God and salvation through Jesus Christ," (Veith 1995:4).

1.4. Background perspective

We as people can and must share in the divine glory (Möller 1998, 3:91-92). This can only be achieved through a relationship with the person Jesus Christ. Jesus is the link between God and mankind. We read in 1 Th. 2:5 *"For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Jesus Christ."* The researcher experienced this reality, when he was delivered on the 18th September, the evening, from the hostile and destructive power of sin and death, in which he was entangled. To minimize subjectivity models of the church as described by Dulles will be used to indicate how the church can be relevant and effective in the reality of the post-modern world.

The last command from the Head of the Church in Matthews 28:19 will be executed through models of the church. This must be done in the spirit of John 3:16 incorporating Ephesians 4:11-12 as the given method.

1.5. Methodology

This study will be done through literature review. From the missionary challenge, described in paragraph 1.3 "Problem statement", the focus will move to the six models of the church described by Dulles, A 1987 *Models of the Church*, published by Gill and MacMillan. The research of these models will be mainly theoretical but the application of the models will also be analysed.

A literature review of the missionary task of the church through models of the church will follow by using inductive reasoning. All identified views will interact with one another in an analytical way. Identified perspectives will then be incorporated into

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the post-modern world. Then, a conclusion, judgement and results of the functions of the church model will be presented in a logical way.

It is a descriptive type of research where the goal is to provide an accurate description of that which is studied (Christenson 2001:42). However, the researcher has more than an accurate description of the different models of the church in view. The aim of this study is also to accomplish a model or models relevant to a post-modern world.

1.6.   Aim of study

The main objective of this study is the critical evaluation of models in approaching the mystery of the church, as explained by Avery Dulles (1987:1-256).   This evaluation is done in the light of the missionary challenges the church faces in a post-modern world. Although Dulles is a Roman Catholic he doesn't attempt to promote his own church's model. He rather confronts the reader with different models used in the traditional churches (he doesn't discuss a Pentecostal model of the Church). These models are not discussed in terms of a missionary church in a post-modern world, but as an objective given in different traditional churches. In other words this study addresses a problem that is not addressed by Dulles, a problem that remains very relevant for the church of our day.

1.7.   Course of study

In chapter one the course of this study is motivated by the special emphasis the New Testament church gave to the missionary task. The present reality of this task is that both the environment in which the task must be performed and the person towards whom this task must be directed has dramatically changed. The fact that the church is only one generation away from extinction is a call for the missionary task to be taken seriously (Gibbs & Coffey 2001:10-11). The alternative to a missionary approach is an irrelevant church.   From this challenging point the models of the church as explained by Dulles (1987:1-256) will be considered in chapter two. The six models Dulles introduces will be discussed. Both the theory and application of the theory of these six models will be discussed. Chapter three will critically evaluate both the theory and praxis of what Dulles teaches. The different models will interact with one

another in an analytical and critical way. Conclusion and results will be presented. In chapter four the researcher will formulate his own opinion in the light of the literature studied and research. Certain proposals will be made in terms of the church in our world today.

CHAPTER TWO

DULLES' TEACHINGS ON THE SUBJECT OF MODELS OF THE CHURCH

2.1.   Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to introduce the reader to a critical assessment of the theology of the church through the models of the church as considered by Dulles (1987:1-256). Thus, the approach in this chapter will be to evaluate the teachings of Dulles from where a logical assessment of the theology of the church can be made. The focus will be to position the reader on a journey towards understanding the realities of the church including the reality that the church is also a mystery. Dulles define the mystery of the church in the following way: *"In selecting the term 'models' rather than 'aspects' or 'dimensions', the researcher wishes to indicate his conviction that the church, like other theological realities, is a mystery. Mysteries are realities of which we cannot speak directly. If we wish to talk about them at all we must draw on analogies afforded by experience of the world. These analogies provide models. By attending to the analogies and utilizing them as models, we can indirectly grow in our understanding of the church"* (1987:9).

Dulles' (1987:9-14) aim is to enhance the readers understanding of the church. Working with different models simultaneously has this objective. He believes that the church can only exist within an organisation or structure. Furthermore he explains the use of organization or structure: *"The church of Christ does not exist in this world without organization or structure that analogously resembles the organization of other human societies. Thus I include the institutional as one of the necessary elements of a balanced ecclesiology"* (1987:10).

For Dulles the balance of the church is situated in being whole or being open to all God's truth. According to Dulles, wholeness in the church is when the church is open to all God's truths not withstanding who utters those truths. Dulles explains wholeness in the church in his own words: *"Being 'catholic,' this church must be open to all God's truth, no matter who utters it. As St. Paul teaches, the church must*

accept whatever things are true, honourable, just, pure, lovely, gracious, and excellent (cf. Phlp. 4:8)" (1987:10-11).

Dulles wants a relationship between the Roman Catholic Church and other churches, and models are the dimensions that can make such a relationship, real and practical.

Dulles makes it clear that when focussing and dealing with models, a good ecclesiologist always focuses on more than one model. Models can also be seen as a way of dealing with problems in the church. Dulles explains this: *"In order to do justice to the various aspects of the church, as a complex reality, we must work simultaneously with different models. By a kind of mental juggling act, we have to keep several models in the air at once"* (1987:10).

One of the outstanding attributes of a model is the fact that it can be broken down into subtypes. In practice this means that models are a way of approaching theology from all directions and not only from an ecclesiologist point of view. Dulles makes this approach towards theology clear through the following words: *"The method of models is applicable to the whole of theology, and not simply to ecclesiology. To a great extent, the five basic types (types of models) discussed in these pages reflect distinctive mindsets that become manifest in a given theologian's way of handling all the problems to which he addresses himself, including the doctrine of God, Christ, grace, sacraments, and the like"* (1987:12).

The idea of models is to help people move beyond their own limitations when being church and to open conversation between people who have very different outlooks (Dulles 1987:12).

2.2.   The Use of Models in Ecclesiology

Dulles uses the dimensions and elements of Ecclesiology as a prelude to the chapters dealing with models of the church. Deist defines Ecclesiology (1992:78), as *"the scholarly study of the organisational, structure, government, history and dogma of the church."* From this wide angle with the emphasis on church, models of the church are used.

Models are used to standardise ways of measuring successes in the church. Dulles' (1987:15-33) emphasises the mystery of the church and causes him to criticise theologians who define the church in terms of visible elements only. The mystery of the church as identified by Dulles in Eph. 3:8, Col. 3:9, 1 Cor. 2:12 and Col. 1:2 leads him to move away from the baroque mentality that reduced the church to clear and distinct ideas. The baroque mentality of the seventeenth century, is explained by Dulles as follows: *"The baroque mentality wanted the supernatural to be as manifest as possible, and the theology of the period tried to reduce everything to clear and distinct ideas"* (1987:16).

Dulles doesn't define the church with scientific speech and from this perspective he calls the church a mystery. Through this absenteeism of speech to explain what church is, Dulles opens up the church to become more and not less. Thus there are riches in the mystery of the church. Because of our own involvement in the church we can't objectify the church. Dulles expresses this thought about the lack of scientific speech in explaining the church and the church as a mystery as follow: *"We cannot fully objectify the church because we are involved in it; we know it through a kind of inter-subjectivity. Furthermore, the church pertains to the mystery of Christ; Christ is carrying out in the church his plan of redemption. He is dynamically at work in the church through his Spirit"* (1987:17).

Dulles sees the church as a union or communion of men and woman with one another through the grace of Christ. This communion manifests it self in sacramental and juridical structures. However, at the heart of the church, one finds mystery. Dulles makes it clear that mystery has been given many definitions from biblical and non-biblical religions. From an ecclesiological point of view as an introduction to specific models Dulles approaches mystery as God's plan of salvation as it comes to concrete realisation in the person of Jesus Christ. Dulles says: *"The term 'mystery' has been used in many ways in the biblical and nonbiblical religions. For present purposes, the usage of the Pauline epistle (1 Cor., Eph., and Col.) would be of central importance. The mystery par excellence is not so much God in his essential nature, or the counsels of the divine mind, but rather God's plan of salvation as it comes to concrete realization in the person of Christ Jesus. In Christ are 'unsearchable riches' (Eph. 3:8); in him dwells the whole fullness of God (Col. 3:9); and this fullness is*

disclosed to those whose hearts are open to the Spirit which is from God (1 Cor. 2:12)" (1987:17).

Dulles (1987:18) identifies images as positive tools to illuminate the mysteries of faith. Thus Dulles works with images to formulate models. Within images Dulles identifies cognate realities such as symbols, models and paradigms. In the Bible illumination of the nature of the church is almost entirely done through images. For Dulles an individual's background determines his ability to understand Biblical images. Images are used for the purpose of gaining a better understanding of the mysteries of faith. Dulles also identifies these images as models. Within this understanding of models the approach is from the more visible images like temple, vine or flock to the more abstract images like institution, society or community. Thus, the aim of models is to touch and activate the whole person by influencing both the mind and heart of a person. This paragraph is put into perspective by the following words of Dulles: *"City dwellers in a twentieth-century democracy feel ill at ease with many of the biblical images, since these are drawn from life of pastoral and patriarchal people of the ancient Near East. Many of us know little from direct experience about lambs, wolves, sheep, vines and grapes, or even about kings and patriarchs as they were in biblical times. There is a need therefore to supplement these images with others that speak more directly to our contemporaries"* (1987:21-22).

Dulles argues that our religious language and symbols are often looked upon as models and he divides their uses in theology into two types namely explanatory (synthesise what we already know) and exploratory (a capacity for new theological insight).

Although Gl. 1:8 makes it clear that there can only be one gospel, this lives on because God is still giving himself to mankind in Jesus Christ. Dulles explains this past as follows: *"Theology has an abiding objective norm in the past – that is, in the revelation that was given once and for all in Jesus Christ. There can be no 'other gospel' (Gl. 1:8). In some fashion every discovery is ultimately validated in terms of what was already given in Scripture and in tradition. But even the past would not be revelation to us unless God were still alive and giving himself to mankind in Jesus*

Christ. Thus the present experience of grace enters intrinsically into the method of theology. Thanks to the ongoing experience of the Christian community, theology can discover aspects of the gospel of which Christians were not previously conscious" (1987:25).

Thus grace moves into the method of theology where the congregation lives through a kind of connatural experience and becomes aware of that which was not previously cognisant. Dulles' more personal view on theological verification is: *"Theological verification depends upon a kind of corporate discernment of spirits"* (1987:26).

When there is recognition of the inner and supernatural dimension of theological epistemology Dulles (1987:27) defines it as an inner familiarity. A person with such an inner familiarity given by faith is a competent judge of the value of models. Because Christians are living their faith they are good judges of the consequences that can come from each model.

Dulles agrees that any model used in isolation will lead to distortions because each model exhibits only a particular reality given in our human experience of the world. The moment a model succeeds in dealing with a number of different problems, it becomes an object of confidence. Dulles identifies the danger of such a model being used to address questions not outside the reality of the specific model.

In the following sections Dulles explains and discusses individual models of the church as part of an attempt to illuminate the mystery of the church.

2.3.   The Church as Institution

Dulles makes it very clear that the aim or consequences of the church as institution is to be as visible as any other society. This has been a standard feature of Roman Catholic Ecclesiology from about 1550 until 1950. In the words of Dulles: *"Insistence on the visibility of the church has been a standard feature of Roman Catholic ecclesiology from the late Middle Ages until the middle of the present century"* (1987:34).

According to Dulles the main problem this model had to deal with was the need for some stable organisational features so that the church of Christ could perform its mission. The focus of the mission was to unite people of many nations into well-knit communities of conviction, commitment, and hope. Through this model, responsible and visible officers, using properly approved procedures can minister effectively to the needs of mankind. Dulles pictures this as follows: *"Throughout its history, from the very earliest years, Christianity has always had an institutional side. It has had recognized ministers, accepted confessional formulas, and prescribed forms of public worship. All this is fitting and proper. It does not necessarily imply institutionalism, any more than papacy implies dogmatism. By institutionalism we mean a system in which the institutional element is treated as primary"* (1987:35).

Dulles identifies this kind of institutionalism where the institutional element is treated as primary as a danger to the institutional church. This negative institutional development occurred in the late Middle Ages and The Counter Reformation.

In the institutionalist Ecclesiology, Dulles sees that the church's powers and functions are generally divided into three categories namely teaching, sanctifying and governing. From the teaching function the church is a unique type of school where the masters as sacred teachers hand down the doctrine of Christ. From the sanctifying function the pope and bishops assisted by priests and deacons are engineers opening and shutting the valves of grace. When it comes to governing, the leadership governs in their name.

Because only some are given the power to teach, sanctify or govern, the church is a society of unequals. The clergy rule by amplifying the place of law and penalties, while the laymen who have a lower position in the church play a passive role. Because theology was tasked to appraise these teachings, theology was institutionalised. Dulles writes: *"A characteristic of the institutional model of the church, in the forms we are considering, is the hierarchical conception of authority. The church is not conceived as a democratic or representative society, but as one in which the fullness of power is concentrated in the hands of a ruling class that perpetuates itself by cooption"* (1987:38).

According to Dulles the above can be viewed as total institution because it only exists for its own sake and serves others only by aggrandising itself. Since the Reformation, the institutional model of the church has rarely been advocated in its purity.

Dulles (1987:16 and 40) agrees with Robert Bellarmine that the bonds of union are, professing the approved doctrines, communication in the legitimate sacraments and subjection to the duly appointed pastors. Robert Bellarmine defines the church as: *"The one and true church is the community of men brought together by the profession of the same Christian faith and conjoined in the communion of the same sacraments, under the government of the legitimate pastors and especially the one vicar of Christ on earth, the Roman pontiff"* (1987:40).

This model points, only to its own members of the church, as beneficiaries. As described by Dulles: *"The beneficiaries of the church, in the institutional model, are its own members. The church is the school that instructs them regarding the truths they need to know for the sake of their eternal salvation. It is a refectory or inn where they are nourished from the life-giving streams of grace, which flows especially through the sacraments"* (1987:40).

Dulles (1987:41) compares the institutional church to "a loving mother" who nourishes her infants at the breast, thus the purpose of the church is that of giving eternal life to only its own members.

2.4. The Church as Mystical Communion

From the outset Dulles (1987:47) uses modern sociology, German language and other theologians to introduce the church as a Mystical Communion. According to modern sociology there is a formally organized and informal community in the German language. They are referred to as Gesellschaft / society and Gemeimschaft / community. The formally organised societies refer to the previous model namely the church as institution, where there are explicit rules, often written. Because an institutional approach to models can't do full justice to the church, the majority of theologians turn to the other pole namely the informal / interpersonal community as an approach to the church. Dulles, by referring to different theologians surveyed

different ecclesiological models where the emphasis is on the communion of church members with one another and with God in Christ.

Dulles also turns towards the concept of the church as a communion and he harmonises most notably with two images, namely the "Body of Christ" and the "People of God." The idea of the Body of Christ is found in both Rm. 12 and 1 Cor. 12. In Ephesians and Colossians the accent is on the headship of Christ and on the subordination of the total church to Christ. Dulles describes the functioning and the images of the Body of Christ and the People of God as follows: *"The image of the Body of Christ is organic, rather than sociological. The church is seen as the analogy of the human body equipped with various organs. It has an inbuilt vital principle thanks to which it can grow, repair itself, and adapt itself to changing needs. The Body of Christ, as distinct from any natural organism, has a divine life-principle. In most explanations this is said to be the Holy Spirit"* (1987:50).

Dulles describes the functioning of the image of the "People of God" as follows: *"The image of the People of God, however, differs from that of the 'Body of Christ' in that it allows for a greater distance between the church and its divine head. The church is seen as a community of persons each of whom is individually free. In stressing the continual mercy of God and the continual need of the church for repentance, the 'People of God' model picks up many favourite themes of Protestant theology, themes that can be at home in Roman Catholicism, as Lumen gentium proves when it speaks of the church as both holy and sinful, as needing repentance and reform"* (1987:53).

The "People of God" are rooted in the Word, having deep roots in the Old Testament. In the New Testament the Christian "Ecclesia" is referred to as the People of God of the New Covenant. Dulles points out that the People of God is coextensive with the Body of Christ.

For Dulles (1987:55) both models illuminate the notion of the church as communion or community. Thus the church is a communion of men, primary internally, but also expressed in external bonds of creed, worship, and ecclesiastical fellowship. The

relationship between the church and the Holy Spirit is very prominent. The Holy Spirit makes us one without ceasing to be many.

According to Dulles, the bonds of union in this approach are not known to sociology, they are primarily the interior graces and gifts of the Holy Spirit. Thus the reconciling grace of Christ is the primary factor that binds the members of the church to each other. These bonds of union in the words of Dulles: *"All who are made friends by the grace of Christ, in this view, would in some sense be members of the People of God or the Body of Christ"* (1978:57).

In this model the church members are the beneficiaries, and according to Dulles (1978:58) in a spiritual sense.

Because the church's aim is to lead men and woman into communion with the divine, the goal identified by Dulles is a spiritual one. Dulles (1978:58) sees the presence of the church and men united with God as the same reality.

2.5. The Church as Sacrament

Dulles define sacrament as follows: *"A sacrament is, in the first place, a sign of grace. A sign can be a mere pointer to something that is absent, but a sacrament is a "full sign," a sign of something really present"* (1987:66).

For Dulles (1987:63), the church as Sacrament is the answer to, two problematic models. Namely, no salvation outside the Institutional Model and in the Communicative Models and therefore there is no reason why an individual should join the church. In the words of Dulles: *"In order to bring together the external and internal aspects into some intelligible synthesis, many twentieth-century Catholic theologians have appealed to the concept of the church as sacrament"* (1987:63).

Dulles quotes Henri de Lubac's argument that all the sacraments are essentially the church's, and this makes Christ present. This harmonises divine and human elements and builds the church. Dulles quotes Henri de Lubac: *"If Christ is the sacrament of God, the church is for us the sacrament of Christ; she represents him, in the full and ancient meaning of the term, she makes him present. She not only carries on his*

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work, but she is his very continuation, in a sense far more real than that in which it can be said that any human institution is its founder's continuation" (1987:63).

Dulles (1987:64) identifies, Vatican II as the first to explicitly call the church explicitly a sacrament. Dulles builds this model, The Church as Sacrament, on several Council documents. In these documents the sacramentality of the church as a whole is expressed, by discerning the church as the primordial sacrament and the seven ritual sacraments.

Because of the lack of a theological explanation of the relationship among Christ, the church, and the seven ritual sacraments by the Vatican Council II, Dulles (1987:64-65) turns to philosophical and theological anthropology. Dulles wrote about philosophical anthropology: *"In some contemporary philosophical systems, man is seen as a polar unity of spirit and flesh. Man comes to himself by going out of himself. He becomes active only in reception, and receives only through encounter with the world about him. The body mediates that encounter. Without contact with the world through the body, the spirit simply would not actuate itself. As it achieves actuation, it expresses itself in tangible form. Whatever takes place in the recesses of the human spirit somehow comes to visible or tangible expression through the body"* (1987:64-65).

Dulles also wrote about theological anthropology: *"In theological anthropology these philosophical considerations are transposed to the supernatural plane the plane of man's life in grace whereby he becomes a partaker in the divine nature (2 Pt. 1:4). Man shares in the divine life not in a divine but in a human way, consonantly with his nature as man. The visible and social expression of the life of grace in the church does not merely signify some spiritual reality that exists prior to its expression, but it sustains the reality of the spiritual activity that it expresses"* (1987:65-66).

Dulles (1987:66) makes this sharing of man in the divine nature clear by referring to Rahner's discussion of the sacrament of penance. Penance is explained as a sacrament of both the expression and source of sorrow. This happens when the sinner's experience of sacramental confession and absolution transforms the attitude

of the sinner so that the initial aversion to sin becomes a motivation towards sorrow, and this is brought about by the love of God.

From a theological approach, Dulles (1987:66) defines a sacrament as a sign of something present. Dulles agrees with the Council of Trent, who described a sacrament as *"the visible form of invisible grace."*

Referring to Christian tradition, Dulles (1987:67) shows that sacraments are never merely an individual transaction. Because we belong to other people and they to us, a sacrament is a socially constituted or communal symbol of the presence of grace coming to fulfilment. In the words of Dulles: *"Man comes into the world as a member of a family, a race, a people. He comes to maturity through encounter with his fellow men. Sacraments therefore have a dialogic structure. They take place in mutual interaction that permits the people together to achieve a spiritual breakthrough that they could not achieve in isolation. A sacrament therefore is a socially constituted or communal symbol of the presence of grace coming to fulfilment"* (1987:67).

For Dulles (1987:67), Christ as a sacrament is real, because God is good and merciful. Jesus Christ is the sacrament of God from above. This sacrament is also from below because Jesus belongs to this history of salvation. Jesus is simultaneously the sacrament of God's self-gift and man's fully obedient acceptance. Here God's invisible grace takes on a visible form. More detail from Dulles: *"In characterizing Christ as God's sacrament we are looking at Christ as he comes from above. But there is also, so to speak, a "Christology from below." Grace impels men toward communion with God, and as grace works upon men it helps them to express what they are at any given stage in the process of redemption. Only in exteriorising itself does grace achieve the highest intensity of its realization. Already in the Old Testament, Israel as a people constitute a sign that historically expresses a real though imperfect yes-saying to God and no-saying to idolatry. Seen from below, Jesus belongs to this tangible history of salvation. As Servant of God he is the supreme sacrament of man's faithful response to God and of God's recognition of that fidelity"* (1987:67).

For Dulles (1987:68), the church as a sacrament is a sign. He explains: *"This sign appears fully when its members are evidently united to one another and to God through holiness, mutual love, visible gathering to confess faith in Christ and to celebrate what God has done for them in Christ"* (1987:68).

Dulles (1987:69), identifies the structures of the church as the external reality and the expression of faith, hope and love as the inner aspect of the sacrament. Visible unity among all Christians assures the absence of fragmentation into a multitude of disconnected signs. There must be links of continuity between churches. These same links should connect the church of today with the church of apostolic times.

Because a sacrament has an event character there must be certain happenings in the church. The more widely and intensely the faithful participate in corporate action of the church, the more the church realises itself. As explained by Dulles: *"The church becomes an actual event of grace when it appears most concretely as a sacrament that is, in the actions of the church as such whereby men are bound together in grace by a visible expression. The more widely and intensely the faithful participate in this corporate action of the church, the more the church achieves itself"* (1987:69).

For Dulles (1987:70), the church as a sacrament is present there where the grace of Christ is a reality. This grace will impel men to pray, confess, worship and do other acts whereby the church externally realises its essence. For Dulles the other side of the coin is also true in that wherever the grace of God is effectively at work something of the church as a sign will be present.

Because God the Father is a loving Father of all people, Dulles (1987:71) identifies all people besides Christians, as recipients of God's grace. From this point of view, the church can be seen as the association of men that palpably bear witness to the true meaning and nature of grace as God's gift in Jesus Christ.

The bonds of union identified by Dulles (1987:72), are all the visible signs of the grace of Christ operative in believing Christians. This is expressed on a social level when Christians manifest their faith, hope, and charity through witness, worship and service. Here Christians reinforce the spiritual unity they express. Dulles wrote: *"All*

the Church's doctrinal formularies, liturgies, and pastoral activities have a confessional and doxological dimension. By drawing believers together in witness and worship they reinforce the spiritual unity they express. The witnessing activity of Christians, both in word and deed, is not seen primarily, as in the institutional model, as a humble compliance with doctrinal laws, nor as a dutiful execution of official directives. Rather it appears as the expression of a heartfelt conviction inspired by the grace of the Holy Spirit" (1987:72).

The beneficiaries are those who are in contact with the believing and loving church. Dulles explains: *"Since sacramentality by its very nature calls for active participation, only those who belong to the church, and actively help to constitute it as a sign, share fully in its reality as sacrament"* (1987:72).

The goal or purpose of the church is to purify and intensify men's actions by the grace of Christ. The aim of the church in the words of Dulles: *"As believers succeed in finding appropriate external forms by which to express their commitment to God in Christ, they become living symbols of divine love and beacons of hope in the world"* (1987:73).

2.6. The Church as Herald

For Dulles this is the model where the Word is primary and everything else is secondary. This is why the church is seen as gathered and formed by the Word of God. From here the mission of the church is to proclaim that which it has heard, believed and been commissioned to proclaim. And Dulles explains: *"This model is kerygmatic, for it looks upon the church as a herald─one who receives an official message with the commission to pass it on"* (1987:76).

Dulles (1987:76) portrays the church as the institution which receives the official message, with the commission to pass it on. Thus, the message is kerygmatic. When approaching this model from an ecclesiological direction then the focus is radically on both the Word and Jesus Christ. This approach is made real through proclamation. Dulles agrees with Richard Mc Brien who states that the mission of the church is that of proclamation of the word to the whole world. Dulles quotes Richard Mc Brien as

follows: *"This mission of the church is one of proclamation of the Word of God to the whole world. The church cannot hold itself responsible for the failure of men to accept it as God's Word; it has only to proclaim it with integrity and persistence. All else is secondary. The church is essentially a kerygmatic community which holds aloft, through the preached Word, the wonderful deeds of God in past history, particular his mighty act in Jesus Christ. The community itself happens wherever the Spirit breathes, wherever the Word is proclaimed and accepted in faith. The church is an event, a point of encounter with God"* (1987:76).

Dulles (1987:77) sees the Word of God not as a substance immanent in the church, but rather an event that takes place when God addresses his people and He is believed. Dulles agrees with Barth in not following the theology of glory (this is when the church identifies the divine and also points to itself as containing what it proclaims). A more acceptable approach is the theology of the cross, pointing like John the Baptist away from the self to the Lamb of God. This view of Barth says the herald is that of Christ's Lordship and of the future Kingdom. Dulles (1987:77) stresses Kung's idea that by bringing God's message, the church becomes the reign of God.

In summarising the above-mentioned theologians' view, we understand that Christian proclamation is a linguistic event in which the body of Christ is constituted and assembled.

The primary bond of communication as identified by Dulles (1987:83) establishes union when there is a response to the gospel, thus the proclamation of the Christ-event. This proclamation is seen as an event, where everything else is secondary to the Word. Other bonds of union flow from the primary bond of communication. Dulles observes: *"The gospel is understood not as a system of abstract prepositional truths, nor as a written document, but rather as the event of proclamation itself"* (1987:83).

The beneficiaries according to Dulles (1987:83) are not those who hear the word of God per sé. The beneficiaries are those who hear the Word of God and put their faith in Jesus as Lord and Saviour. Explained in the words of Dulles: *"Faith, understood*

in the sense of reliant commitment to Jesus Christ, is regarded as the necessary condition for receiving the salvation that God promises in Jesus Christ" (1987:83).

The goal or purpose of the church according to Dulles (1987:84) is very clear and that is to herald the message. Thus the ecclesiology goes with a strong evangelistic missionary thrust as mentioned in the "The Great Commission" of Mt. 28:18-20.

2.7. The Church as Servant

Dulles (1987:89) draws attention to this model by pointing to the active relationship between the church and the world. This model places a responsibility on the church to respect the accomplishments of the world and learn from it. This focus establishes the understanding that there must be a relationship between the church and the world of the day. Dulles proves this attitude by pointing to Christ as the one who came into this world, not to be served but to serve in order to establish and promote the brotherhood of all men. Dulles uses an outline from the Pastoral Constitution as was mentioned during Vatican II, to state the following: *"Thus in Article 3, after asserting that the church should enter into conversation with all men, the Constitution teaches that just as Christ came into the world not to be served but to serve, so the church, carrying on the mission of Christ, seeks to serve the world by fostering the brotherhood of all men"* (1987:91).

Dulles argument (1987:92) in this model laid a dual approach. The first is secular, where the world is identified as a theological locus and where the task of the church is to discern the signs of the times. The second approach, which is dialogic for the church, operates as a frontier between the contemporary world and the Christian tradition. In this two-way approach Dulles sees dialogue as a tool to approach the world and not to criticise it.

Dulles (1987:92), using documentation from Vatican II, argues that the church and the individual Christian must announce the coming of the Kingdom also through work, the ministry of reconciliation, binding of wounds etc. Dulles quotes from the opening section of a pastoral letter titled "The Servant Church," issued by Cardinal Cushing of Boston: *"Jesus came not only to proclaim the coming of the Kingdom, he came also*

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to give himself for its realization. He came to serve, to heal, to reconcile, to bind up wounds. Jesus, we may say, is in an exceptional way the Good Samaritan. He is the one who comes alongside of us in our need and in our sorrow, he extends himself for our sake. He truly dies that we might live and he ministers to us that we might be healed" (1987:92).

Dulles (1987:93-95) quotes both Teilhard and Bonhoeffer in their belief that the world was bypassing, the church and wrongly assuming that it had all the answers to the world's problems. For them the answer is in taking the secular achievements of modern man seriously and so moving the world towards a positive attitude towards theology and Christology. So, Dulles is saying, through discerning reflection on God's promises and presence, the church can be a community within worldly structures, where God's gracious work for all mankind is acknowledged.

Dulles (1987:96), by referring to Bishop John A. T. Robinson identifies the mission of the church as working within the structures of the world. Dulles (1987:96) sees a servant as a person living in some-one else's house. Now the church will have no other option but to attract people by love. Dulles explains this service: *"To be of service the church must work within the structures of the world rather than build parallel structures"* (1987:96).

Being a church in the world, Dulles quotes Bishop John A. T. Robinson: *"The house of God is not the church but the world. The church is the servant, and the first characteristic of a servant is that he lives in some one else's house, not his own"* (Dulles 1987:96).

The bond of union for Dulles (1987:97) is the sense of mutual brotherhood when there is Christian service towards the world. This bond establishes a new communion among those who have moved away from one another ecclesiastically.

The beneficiaries are those who the church touches. The beneficiaries receive words of comfort, are listened to and receive some material help in an hour of need. In the words of Dulles: *"Rather they are all those brothers and sisters the world over, who hear from the church a word of comfort or encouragement, or who obtain from the*

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church a respectful hearing, or who receive from it some material help in their hour of need" (1987:97).

The goal or purpose of the church is to be of help. Dulles explains this as follows: *"The church's mission, in the perspectives of this theology, is not primarily to gain new recruits for its own ranks, but rather to be of help to all men, wherever they are"* (Dulles 1987:97).

2.8.   The Church: Community of Disciples

Dulles makes it clear that discipleship is a wide and flexible concept. Dulles (1987:13) added this chapter thirteen years later to his book titled Models of the Church; this is also the model that he personally prefers. He explains this concept under different headings. He starts with an introduction. Here pastoral leadership as Dulles (1987:204-207) explains, is in terms of the meaning of discipleship. In this model there is a calling for the ongoing relationship of the church with Christ, through the Holy Spirit. This model is also a bridge builder to the other five models that Dulles mentioned in his book titled, Models of the Church. He admits that the only time in Roman Catholic literature that the concept of discipleship is mentioned, is when there is mention of church members as disciples. From here it is only one-step further for the church to be called a community of disciples. Dulles wrote: *"The term 'community of disciples' does not appear as such in the documents of Vatican II, but these documents refer to church members as disciples more than twenty times. From this it is but a short step to calling the church the community of disciples, as John Paul II was soon to do. The term, once coined, has found a warm reception in recent official documents"* (1987:207).

Dulles (1987:207-210) finds the roots of the discipleship model in the public ministry of Jesus as mentioned in the New Testament. He identifies Jesus' original plan as converting the whole of Israel. When this didn't realise, a community of disciples was instigated Jesus.

According to Dulles (1987:207-210), Jesus then identified a small chosen band of followers, who he trained to carry the message further even after his death. Within

this community of disciples there existed different degrees of intimacy. The term disciple admits various degrees and kinds of intimacy. This exceptional life style was intended to attract attention to the value of the Kingdom of God. Strict rules within this structure were intended to draw attention to the value of the Kingdom of God and allow total focus on that Kingdom. An example of this was the sharing in the Lord's redemptive suffering. Explained in the words of Dulles: *"Even within the community of disciples there were degrees of intimacy. An outer circle comprised a relatively large number of men and woman, among whom we can identify Cleopas and his unnamed companion (Lk. 24:18), Joseph of Arimathea (Jn. 19:38), and Joseph Barsabbas and Matthias (Acts 1:23). The reader of Luke 10:1-16 is evidently intended to understand that the seventy-two sent on mission are disciples. The Gospels tell us also of a number of women, such as Mary Magdalene, Johanna, Susanna, and Salome, who followed Jesus and supported him with their possessions. Finally, we read in the first chapter of Acts of a band of some 120 persons gathered with Mary the Mother of Jesus, Peter, and the Eleven in the upper room in Jerusalem. In view of all these indications, it would be a mistake to underestimate the total number of disciples"* (1987:208).

After the death and ascension of Jesus, the notion of discipleship moved for Dulles (1987:210-212) into the dimension of the post-Easter community of disciples. Jesus was not visibly present, but present in Spirit according to Mt. 18:20. Then at the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost the presence of Jesus was universalised and the notion of discipleship was enlarged. Dulles explains the reality of Jesus in the Post-Easter Community, as follows: *"But Jesus was not absent. He was present according to his promise whenever even two or three were gathered in his name (Mt. 18:20). With the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost, the presence of Jesus was universalised. One could follow him by faith, worship, and inward transformation, without having to go to Galilee or Jerusalem or any other particular place"* (1987:210).

During the first years of the church all Christian believers were called disciples and the church itself was called the community of believers. In many New Testament verses the term "disciples" may be taken as a virtual synonym for Christian believer. Dulles elaborates: *"In the book of Acts, which gives the canonical description of the*

earliest years of the church, all Christian believers are called disciples, and the church itself is called the community of the disciples (Acts 6:2, NAB). Here and elsewhere in the New Testament, Christianity is represented as a way of life by which one follows Jesus (Acts 9:2, 22:4), who is himself the Way (Jn. 14:6)" (1987:211).

Dulles (1987:211), by using different studies, emphasises a rich and multifaceted concept of discipleship. In Mark he identifies special prominence to the empowerment for Christian missions; In Matthew deeper significance of the teachings of Jesus; In Luke the focus is on breaking old ties with a total attachment to the person of Jesus; In John opposition to the world is identified because of election; In the letters of Paul self-emptying love is identified as needed when imitating Jesus; In James the call is on single-minded obedience to the Law of God; In the first letter of Peter people are connected through their solidarity in suffering with the Lord Jesus. Dulles explains the actions flowing from this rich and multifaceted concept of discipleship: *"Throughout the early centuries, membership in the church retained something of that demanding and heroic character evident in the New Testament concept of discipleship. The Christian community continued to be a contrast society, maintaining a certain critical distance from its pagan environment. Frequently, it would appear, the faithful were required or at least strongly exhorted to abstain from engaging in war, from frequenting the baths and stadiums, and from wearing wigs and jewellery. Among themselves they practiced intense mutual love, caring for the poor and the sick, the widows and the orphans, and extending hospitality to travellers. Contemplating the Christian community, the Romans were allegedly moved to exclaim, 'See how they love one another' "* (1987:212).

With the conversion of Constantine, the church started to function in a Christianised society. Dulles (1987:213) identifies discipleship as moving into an accommodating dimension. Disciples were told that they must practice a more interior kind of discipleship, embracing the values and priorities upheld by Jesus. During the fourth century a more radical style of discipleship was offered, now self-denial was more rigorously observed. Here in Roman Catholic Christianity, religious orders extended spirituality to the concept of priesthood. Dulles referring to Brown states that the requirement of priestly celibacy can be seen as an application of the New Testament concept of discipleship. Dulles pointing to Vatican Council II in its decree on the

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ministry and life of priests, reminds priests that they share the status of disciple with others who are faithful in Christ. Dulles highlights the fact that the laity has a responsibility to in filtrate the secular sphere with the Spirit of Christ by saying the following: *"In our day the challenge of marriage and parenthood are enormous, as are the problems of introducing Christian norms into the worlds of business, government, and the professions. Only the committed disciple can measure up to these challenges"* (1987:214).

For Dulles (1987:214), discipleship and sacramental life have common denominators. These denominators are self-abnegation, humble service, generosity towards the needy and patience in adversity. He mentions the following examples from the gospels: *"The Gospels present us with the images of Martha and Mary, Peter and John, contrasting pairs that have been interpreted by the tradition as embodying the ideals of the active and contemplative life. But notwithstanding all this variety, there is a proportionately common element, the norm of which is given in Christ. All are held to self-abnegation, humble service, generosity toward the needy, and patience in adversity"* (1987:214).

Dulles (1987:214) identifies the presence of Jesus through Word and sacrament in contemplative religious orders and in homes for incurables. Although there is not any visible action, for Dulles this action is real as he explains: *"Some Christians who do little or nothing by way of external mission, excel in discipleship by reason of their suffering and contemplative prayer. Think, for instance, of the members of contemplative religious orders and of devout shut-ins in homes for incurables"* (1987:215).

Dulles (1987:215) identifies certain activities pertaining to discipleship. At the top of this list is worship. On this list is also the spoken word of Christ when the Scriptures are read. Here the high point of Liturgical action is reached when Scriptures are read as part of sacramental action. Dulles identifies the following seven sacraments namely Baptism, Confirmation or Chrismation, The Eucharist, Penance, The Anointing of the Sick, Christian marriage and Ordination, by defining them as follows:

"Baptism is the basic sacrament of initiation, in which a new relationship is established between the candidate and the church" (Dulles 1987:215-217).

"Confirmation or Chrismation, the second sacrament of initiation, involves a deeper mutual commitment on the part of both the individual and the church. The individual receives a fuller outpouring of the Holy Spirit, signifying the interior appropriation of the meanings and values imparted through catechesis" (Dulles 1987:215-217).

"The Eucharist is the climactic sacrament, signifying the deepest and most intimate union with Christ, who makes himself the life-sustaining food and drink of his spiritual family" (Dulles 1987:215-217).

"In Penance, a Christian who has failed to live up to the demands of discipleship is reintegrated into the community and reconciled with its Lord, as Peter was after his denials" (Dulles 1987:215-217).

"In the Anointing of the Sick, the healing power of Christ is made available to the ailing disciple, whose illness, moreover, is integrated into the redemptive sufferings of Christ, for the sake of his church (cf. Col. 1:24)" (Dulles 1987:215-217).

"In Christian marriage Christ imparts the needed grace for two individuals to embark on a career of joint discipleship, assisting one another to follow in his footsteps and to become, in most cases, parents in a new Christian family" (Dulles 1987:215-217).

"Finally, the sacrament of ordination is rightly understood as an instance of discipleship. Already in his lifetime, Jesus commissioned his close disciples to go forth, speaking and acting in his name and by his authority" (Dulles 1987:215-217).

Dulles (1987:217) introduces Christian formation in the community, as a pastoral dimension. He sees the Pastor as both close to Christ and under the authority of the

Chief Shepherd. Further, an abundance of leaders are needed to stay close to fellow disciples, as explains: *"To prevent an unhealthy alienation, the official leaders should foster the bonds of love, trust and familiarity with the fellow disciples under their care. They must resemble the Good Shepherd, who calls his sheep by name and whose voice is recognized as that of trusted leader. It would be unrealistic, of course, to demand that popes and bishops, or even pastors of large parishes, have close personal ties with all their charges. For this reason the church needs an abundance of leaders having various degrees and types of responsibility for the affairs of the community"* (1987:211).

In practice Dulles (1987:218) explains that ordained leaders must collaborate closely with the larger body of lay ministers. Faith must pass through a network of interpersonal relations. For Dulles (1987:218) this network of interpersonal relations must resemble the community life of Jesus with the twelve. This approach mentioned by Dulles (1987:217-219), was identified in several texts from Vatican II, Pope John Paul II as a family that can be called "church in miniature." Dulles explains religion as not being married to every day events: *"Even Catholics who are faithful to their religious obligations rarely experience church as a community of mutual support and stimulation. Although they may accept the teachings of the church, they find it hard to relate the church to their daily life, which is lived out in a very secular environment. When religion is so divorced from daily life, it begins to appear peripheral and even unreal"* (1987:218-219).

Dulles identifies discipleship and dechristianization (1987:219), in this world as pleasure, wealth and power, which are all alien to Christian ideas and attitudes. He writes: *"The mass culture purveyed by the popular press and the electronic media is preponderantly based on the pursuit of pleasure, wealth, and power. It is in many respects alien to Christian ideas and attitudes. Raised in such an atmosphere, young people do not easily respond to the biblical and liturgical symbols, such as Sinai, the Red Sea, the Virgin Mother and the Cross"* (1987:219).

Dulles finds the solution in authentic discipleship in the church by saying: *"Hence here is need for communities in which people can experience a full Christian environment, as monks presumably do in monasteries. Some thing analogous to the*

religious novitiate should, where possible, be made available to lay people who take their religion seriously. Such "novitiates for life" could be the training grounds for lay leaders in the community of disciples. Even brief gatherings for spiritual renewal are a great help toward achieving authentic discipleship in the church" (1987:219).

Dulles (1987:220) focuses on discipleship and mission work by seeing the church as more complete when assemblies carry on Christ's work in the world. Dulles (1987:221) quoting from Vatican II, makes it clear that *"every disciple"* of Christ has the obligation to take part in spreading the faith.

The church or as Dulles (1987:221) calls it, the community of disciples must carry on the forms of mission enjoined by Jesus upon his original followers. So the works of Jesus must be replicated. He (1987:221) identifies the Roman Catholic Church as acting out the works of Jesus by involving itself in the struggle against oppression and injustice.

With this approach to discipleship and dechristianization, Dulles' (1987:221) focus was to impact on political and economic life and he never moves away from expanding the church by attracting a contrasting society.

2.9. Conclusion

Through this work of Dulles "Models of the Church" the church as a mystery is revealed. This mystery is not fully understood but revealed as God's plan of salvation.

Dulles uses models of the church and other ecclesiological terms and dimensions to reveal this mystery. The mystery of the church is many things that boil down to one dimension and that is the reality that people must be saved according to God's plan, and in the words of Dulles: *"The mystery par excellence is not so much God in his essential nature, or the counsels of the divine mind, but rather God's plan of salvation as it comes to concrete realization in the person of Christ Jesus…When the New Testament tells us that marriage is 'a great mystery in reference to Christ in the church' (Eph. 5:32), it is implied that the union of the human with the divine, begun in*

Christ, goes on in the Church; otherwise marriage would not be a figure of the church. In a word, the mystery is 'Christ in you, your hope of glory' (Col. 1:2)" (1987:17-18). We as people have difficulty in understanding and explaining what the church is. Dulles uses models as a classical avenue to place the dimensions in the church into categories of familiar objects so that we may understand what church is and what God's plan of salvation through the church is.

The first model Dulles (1987:34) mentions is the Church as Institution. Here analogies from political society are taken and the church is defined in terms of visible structures with the emphasis on the rights and powers of its office. According to this model, the church only focuses on its own members like a loving mother. Through visible structures life-giving streams flow towards the faithful especially in the form of visible sacraments. God's plan of salvation is hampered through the institutional model in that first the Bible doesn't establish the church as a single tightly knit society. Secondly, members of the congregations are made passive through this model. Thirdly, creative and fruitful actions are not possible because the institutional model spends all its energy in defence of official positions. Fourthly, the salvation of non-Roman Catholics is not possible through the institutional model. Finally, to become part of the church and the plan of God individuals are forced to be bound to an institution.

As mentioned, the formal organization of the church does nothing to open the vagueness of what is church and how God's plan of salvation functions through the institutional model. As a solution or approach to revealing the mystery of the church, Dulles focuses on the relationship of people in Christ with each other, with God, the establishment of such a relationship and the maintenance thereof. Here Dulles (1987:47) identifies the church as mystical communion. This approach incorporates Biblical metaphors of the People of God and the Body of Christ where the relationship between the church and the Holy Spirit is prominent. God's plan towards salvation is weakened through this model in that first, there is no relationship between the visible and spiritual dimension of the church. Secondly, Christians don't have any mission towards the world. Thirdly, the actions between the church as a network and the church as mystical communion don't give clarity towards the salvation of others people.

Through the model, Church as Sacrament, Dulles (1987:76) opens God's plan of salvation in Christ Jesus as a gift of grace. Through the church people become part of God's plan of salvation and receive Christ Jesus. Thus the church is a visible event of grace because it signifies what it contains and contains what it signifies. Unfortunately, this model where the church is seen as sacrament weakens God's plan of salvation in that only those who are in contact with the church are saved.

Dulles (1987:76) clarifies God's plan for salvation by bringing the Bible closer to the church and identifying the Word as primary in forming and gathering the church, here the church is looked upon as a Herald. The Word of God in which the salvation plan of God is found is one with the church. Unfortunately this model says that people must come to the church to be saved. The outgoing power of the church is not mentioned or doesn't exist and it is expected of the world to humbly listen to the proclaiming of the gospel.

In the servant's model Dulles (1987:89) sees the mystery of the church revealed when the church and the world meet each other. The saving plan of God is accomplished because the Church as Servant is working in the world and is not a parallel structure of the world. Sadly, the saving plan of God is undermined because there is no direct biblical foundation for this model. The world may understand that the church is working under its orders and not Gods. There is only good in this model for the world, and no advantage to the worker or the church and this work is then seen as demeaning.

The model, Church as Community of Disciples, tasks ordinary church members to be disciples in this world so that God's plan of salvation can be real to all whom they come in contact with. Regrettably this model spells out that the mystery of the church is lived through excessive demands on the average Christian. The dimension that each person has a unique calling from God in God's saving plan, is ignored in this disciple model to the extent that the church is sketched as an organisation of individuals who generously do voluntary work.

CHAPTER THREE

THE MISSIONARY TASK OF THE CHURCH THROUGH MODELS OF THE CHURCH

3.1.   Introduction

We have seen in the previous chapter that Dulles in his book Models of the Church focussed on God's salvation plan through models of the church. What Dulles omitted was the dimension of the specific missionary task of the church. In this chapter the missionary task of the church will be discussed around the six models that Dulles mentioned. The reason for this inductive approach is the reality that salvation is still a fact (Rm. 3:24-26) and the church still has a missionary task as commanded by the Lord in Matthews 28:19. Dickson says about the missionary task: *"Thus as far as the New Testament times are concerned, to undertake or not to undertake mission was not the issue. The issues that seemed to have loomed large were: the missionary's message, and the ordering of the life of the converts"* (1991:67).

This missionary task originated in the Old Testament. When one opens the Bible the concern is not with the Hebrews but with God as the God of all men. In this encounter between God and man, God takes the initiative in the salvation of all peoples who were made in his image (Hedlund 1991:20). Although God separated his people from the nations, God worked on behalf of his people but not exclusively for their sake. God's work was to magnify his own name among the nations (Dt. 4:33-34) (Glasser 1989:34-35). From this initiative of God several missionary themes and directions can be identified namely: mission and God, mission and man, mission and redemption, mission and the nations, mission to the Jews, mission to the world, mission to the end of the age, mission and spiritual gifts, mission and hostile government, mission and the Christian community, mission and strategy, mission and the local church (Hedlund 1991:20 and 220).

This chapter will identify the missionary dimension from a Biblical perspective, highlighting both the lack of God's saving plan in the models and the reality of God's saving plan through each model when the missionary dimension is added.

3.2. The Church as Institution

3.2.1. The Church as Institution and the institution's origin in the Old Testament

The foundation of the church as institution is already present in the Old Testament. The roots of the church's missionary task are founded in the Old Testament (Hedlund 1991:19). God used a process of calling and sending. The sending in the Old Testament must be qualified as sending Israel so that the nations could be drawn like a magnet to Israel (Peters 1972:21). An example is Abraham, the Lord called him out of his country to an unknown land so that God could establish a great nation accompanied by blessings (Gn. 12:1-2). Here God established an institution by calling and sending people. This process became visible through visible powers and functions. God continued, as recorded in Deut 7:6-8 to make Israel part of this institution. This is God's institution, his treasured possession.

The establishment of this institution was not because of favouritism or for private enjoyment, but for service. Hedlund explains: *"God chose Israel so that he might reveal himself to Israel and through Israel to the nations (Dt. 4:5-8, 35)"* (1991:37). These nations are frequently mentioned in the Old Testament (e.g., Gn. 10; 12:3; 17:4; Ex. 19:5; 19:5; Dt. 32:43; 1 Kings 14:24; 2 Kings 19:19; 1 Chr. 16:24; 2 Chr. 6:33; Psalm 2; 47:8; 67; 86:9; 87; 96; 102:15; 117; Is. 2:2-3; 42:6; 49:6; 60:3, 11; 66:18; Jr. 10:7; 22:8; 46:1; Ezk. 36:24; Dn 4:1; 7:14; Joel 3:12; Ob. 15; Mi. 4:2; Zch. 8:22; 9:10; Ml. 1:11). In the midst of these nations was Israel (Ex. 14:4; 15:14; Dt. 28:10; Jr. 22:8; Ezk. 20:22). God's desire for these nations is not destruction but salvation (Is. 19:19-25; 45:22; Psalm 68:31-32; 86:9; 87) (Hedlund 1991:37). Thus God's desire for institutions is to deliver salvation. This can also be found in the covenant with Noah (Gn. 9:9-10), which was a universal covenant (Hedlund 1991:25). It is clear that the institutions God established must deliver a service that is part of God's salvation plan.

It is important to recognise and discern that there are two missionary methods in the Bible. The first is in the Old Testament and the second in the New Testament. In the Old Testament Israel was chosen to draw the nations to God. In the New Testament people are sent to the nations to turn them into disciples. Peters explains: *"According to the Old Testament, the world of nations is to come to Jerusalem. There the nations are to learn the way of the Lord and to worship. It will be remembered that the disciples were the last to leave Jerusalem during the early years of persecution and go farther and preach the gospel (Acts 8:1). No doubt they found it easy to preach on the day of Pentecost to the people who had come to Jerusalem, but why must they go from Jerusalem? It constituted a turnabout in methodology, but not in principle and purpose?"* **(1972:21). Let us now move to the New Testament and look at the function of the sending method as seen from the church as institution.**

3.2.2. The Church as Institution from a New Testament perspective

The New Testament launches an institutional side to ministry by introducing different ministries or offices. Braaten identifies these ministries as follows: *"What we find here and there in the New Testament communities is an irretrievable number of ministries: apostles, teachers, evangelists, miracle workers, pastors, leaders, bishops, helpers, prophets, elders, deacons, exorcists, faith healers, glossalaliasts, administrators, and others. The only constant, it seems, is the common Word and Spirit from which they all devolve, around which they all revolve"* (1985:121).

Any grouping of people if it is called church or other, needs to be structured. These structures are always visible with people who order and lead these structures. In the New Testament these structures are called ministries and in Romans, 1 Corinthians, and Ephesians a list of these ministries are recorded. The question that can be asked is, *"How was ministry ordered in the first century?"* and Schreiter answers the question as follows: *"To answer the question, then: there was no single pattern for ordering the ministry in the first-century church, although, by the end of the century (when the Pastorals were written), more standard forms or uniformity were beginning to appear. Organizations were borrowed from other models available in the*

environment, especially that of the synagogue, the larger household, and the club or association. Nor did the same vocabulary (diakonos, episkopos) mean the same thing everywhere" (1993:172).

3.2.3. The Church as Institution and its inability to make God's plan of salvation functional

The inability of the institutional model to become part of God's salvation plan is build into its focus. The focus is unfortunately only on visible structures and its rights and powers. The focus must be on God and his plan or as Warren says: *"It's not about you"* (2002:17). The institutional model must be the vehicle that executes God's plan. However this doesn't happen because the institutional church and its agendas becomes the heart of mission (Van Engen, Gilliland & Pierson 1993:29).

3.2.4. The Church as Institution with a focus on the missionary dimension

God's given objective to save people must be given through by the church institution in the form of information, inspiration and programmes so that the congregation can offer themselves for service (Gibbs 1981:351). For Wagner the approach to service becomes real through nine components in the church namely: creative naming of churches, authority structures delegated by the Holy Spirit, continued leadership training for leaders, vision driven churches, active participating worship style, prayer expeditions as part of the congregations life, tithing is taught, outreach is aggressive and a sincere openness to the work of the Holy Spirit (Wagner 1998:17-25). All nine dimensions can only be made real in the church through visible, functioning structures. Thus the institutional dimension of the church is very important and crucial for success.

3.2.5. The Church as Institution with a purpose

The visible powers, structures and functions constitute the church as institution. No organisation or church can function without these dimensions. These dimensions must recognise the sovereignty of God in saving people. This is not a call for passiveness, but a call to be involved in what God is blessing. Or as

Warren puts it: *"Our job as church leaders, like experienced surfers, is to recognize a wave of God's Spirit and ride it. It is not our responsibility to make waves but to recognize how God is working in the world and join him in the endeavour"* (1995:14). The approach must be to recognize and become involved in what God is blessing and if there are any hindrances or unhealthy situations, to remove them. The institution must focus on church health and not church growth, because when the church is healthy it will grow.

All churches must have a system and structure. According to Warren (1995:128) the institutional dimension of the church must see to it that all systems and structures are in balance then the church will be healthy. Like the body, when all its systems and structures are in balance, it will be healthy. Still out of the church as institution actions must flow so God's saving plan can become a reality. Warren describes this idea as follows: *"Your church will never be any stronger than its core of lay ministers who carry out the various ministries of the church. Every church needs an intentional, well-planned system for uncovering, mobilizing, and supporting the giftedness of its members. You must set up a process to lead people to deeper commitment and greater service for Christ – one that will move your members from the committed circle into your core of lay (for the lack of a better word) ministers"* (1995:367).

Thus, members must be turned into ministers. God's method to establish ministers from out of the ranks of the congregation can only be done by men and woman who have been given the spiritual gift of leadership (Hybels & Hybels 1995:148). Practically executing the following ten points does this. Point one, teach the Biblical basis to every member in the ministry; two, streamline the organizational structure; three, establish a ministry placement process; four, provide on the job training; five, never start a ministry without a minister; six, establish minimum standards and guidelines; seven, allow people to quit or change ministries gracefully; eight, trust people by delegating authority with responsibility; nine, provide the necessary support; ten, renew the vision regularly (Warren 1995:365-392). Implementation of these ten points should turn church members into ministers (Hybels & Hybels 1995:181).

3.2.6. The Church as Institution in a world needing the presence of God

Various images in the Word of God describe the church as a visible organisation. This institutional character gives order and organisation to the church. Möller says the following about governing structures: *"The reign which God ordained on earth presupposes the ordering of people and governing structures which should be recognised and respected (Rm. 13:1-2)"* (1998, 4:90). From this perspective the institutional character of the church will include organisational arrangements, training of workers, finances and properties, operation of ministries, communal assistance, and the like (Möller1998, 4:91).

The church as institution is God's organized invasion into a world needing His presence. Institution is not an end in itself, but through spiritual life we as children of God respond to this call that the church be instituted. Understanding God's truth through the church as institution we will distinguish truth from tradition, institution will not be form and ceremony but life and experience (Getz 1986:253-254). Heyns puts this perspective in more theological terms by saying: *"The church is the officially institutionalised community of faith"* (1980:191).

3.3.   The Church as Mystical Communion and its inability to make God's plan of salvation functional

3.3.1. The Church as Mystical Communion and the mystical communion's origin in the Old Testament

The verses in the Old Testament that point to the church, as mystical communion are Jr. 31:31-34 *" 'The time is coming,' declares the Lord, 'when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah. It will not be like the covenant I made with their forefathers when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, because they broke my covenant, though I was a husband to them, declares the Lord. 'This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time,' declares the Lord. 'I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will*

be their God, and they will be my people. No longer will a man teach his neighbour, or a man his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest,' declares the Lord." According to The Complete Word Study Old Testament (1994:1886) these passages are the most important in the Old Testament because of the promise of specifics in the new covenant. These promises become real under the headship of Christ as mentioned in Rm. 12; 1 Cor. 12 and 1 Peter 2:10.

3.3.2. The Church as Mystical Communion from a New Testament perspective

The church as mystical communion flows out of two Biblical images namely the Body of Christ (as mentioned in Rm. 12 and 1 Cor. 12) and the People of God (as mentioned 1 Peter 2:10). Both the Body of Christ and the People of God stand under the headship of Christ. The headship of Christ is further highlighted in Ephesians 1:22-23 and Colossians 1:18. The four epistles of Paul mentioned in this paragraph explain the functions of the Body of Christ relating to and focused on missions. The detail of the mission explained by Hedlund are as follows: *"Paul was determined that the Roman church become a missionary church, as every church should become missionary, by active participation in the mission of Christ…The Corinthians epistles show the missionary task in the city and the struggle of the young church against corrupting influences…Ephesians expounds the implications of new life in Christ and the doctrine of the church for the new churches…Colossians develops the doctrine of Christ in order to fortify believers to live in a pagan environment"* (1991:220).

3.3.3. The Church as Mystical Communion and its inability to make God's plan of salvation functional

Braaten describes the weakness and danger of the church as mystical communion as follows: *"Belonging to a church is often seen as essentially no different than belonging to some club, lodge, league, or guild. When we speak of the company of God's elect in Jesus Christ, we are not thinking of a group of like-minded people who enjoy keeping each other's company"* (1985:164).

3.3.4. The Church as Mystical Communion with a focus on the missionary dimension

The moment the missionary direction in brought into the church, as mystical communion there will be a relationship between the visible and spiritual dimensions of the church, there will be a mission towards the world and a clear perspective towards the salvation of others. 1 Peter 2:10-12 makes it clear that as a people of God our lives must be lived visibly for the unsaved world to be seen and the world will ask us what we have (1 Peter 3:15). So the missionary question is, is the church an open invitation to other pilgrims? It must be a mystical communion so that it becomes a church-with-others. We haven't arrived as yet as Heb. 13:14 says: *"For here we do not have an enduring city, but we are looking for the city that is to come."* Because we haven't arrived we are church in such a way that fellow pilgrims see an open door to the church where there is sustenance and fellowship on our journey to the eschatological destination (Kritzinger & Saayman 1994:38).

3.3.5. The Church as Mystical Communion with a purpose

Multiple driving forces can disrupt the church as mystical communion. Warren (1995:76-83) identifies these driving forces as tradition, personalities, finances, programs, buildings, events and seekers. What must drive the body of Christ or the people of God is God's purpose as mentioned in Pr. 19:21 *"Many are the plans in a man's heart, but it is the Lord's purpose that prevails."* It is the Lord's plan that the unchurched must become the church and part of the mystical communion and this can only become possible when there is a specific focus on these people (Warren 1995:139).

The church as mystical communion is all about relationships, which is the glue that keeps people together. When one reads through the New Testament it is noticeable that the Gospel is spread primarily through relationships (Warren 1995:173). The relationships must invite and welcome and encourage others into the body of Christ. This can only be done when the church fits in with those that need to be reached. In

Luke 10:8, Jesus says: *"When you enter a town and are welcomed, eat what is set before you."* In saying this Jesus was commanding his people to be sensitive to local culture and fit in with those they wanted to reach (Warren 1995:195). The church as mystical communion is a wonderful vehicle to reach the unchurched. Within this true fellowship there is power to revolutionize lives (Hybels & Hybels 1995:159). Warren says this must be done in the way Jesus did it. Warren explains: *"Jesus did three things with crowds: He loved them (Mt. 9:36, et al.), he met their needs (Mt. 15:30; Luke 6:17-18; John 6:2, et al.), and he taught them in interesting and practical ways (Mt. 13:34; Mark 10:1; 12:37, et al.). These same three ingredients will attract crowds today"* (1995:208). But the church as mystical communion must focus on loving people and not loving audiences. Within this true fellowship there is power to revolutionize lives (Hybels & Hybels 1995:159). But still there is a front and back door in the church as mystical communion and when the people walk in at the front door they must not walk out again.

Thus something must make them want to become not members but permanent members of the body of Christ. Warren (1995:310) makes it clear that the body of Christ must have a system and structure to both assimilate and keep the individual as part of the body. Warren (1995:311-329) summarizes this system and structure through the following eight points: one, develop a plan to assimilate new members; two, communicate the value of membership; three, establish a required membership class; four, develop a membership covenant; five, make your members feel special; six, create opportunities to build relationships; seven, encourage every member to join a small group; eight, keep communication lines open.

When Christians are a community there should be no pretence of hiding. People should be real to each other. People should not pretend than they are more important that they are or smarter than they are. In this Jesus set the standard in Mt. 26:36-39 when he made it clear that his soul was overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death (Hybels & Hybels 1995:188). This community may gather any place, also in houses, as the Word point out in Acts 2:46, Acts 20:20, Rm. 16:3-5 and Phlp. 1-2 (Hybels & Hybels 1995:191).

3.3.6. The Church as Mystical Communion in a world needing the presence of God

Jesus Christ the Head of the church has two bodies (Best 1986:19). The first body is his physical body. This physical body was born from above (Mt. 1:18) in Bethlehem in Judea (Mt. 2:1), lived in a town called Nazareth (Mt. 2:23), died in the line of duty on Golgotha (Mt. 27:50), rose early on the first day of the week (Mark 16:9), was taken up into heaven and sat on the right hand of God (Mark 16:19).

His second body is His mystical body, which is his church. It must be clearly understood, that this second body is a symbol for understanding the church, and not a reality with the intention of establishing the church as an extension of Christ (Heyns 1980:50). This second body is the fruit of His death on the cross. It can be said that his second body was born on Golgotha. Jesus Christ is now incarnated on earth in His body, which is His church (Eph. 1:22-23) and he is the Head of this body (Best 1986:19). The indwelling of the Holy Spirit in the flesh and blood bodies of Christ's disciples makes the church the body of Christ (Snyder 1983:109).

Rikhof (1981:14) identifies five elements present in the body of Christ where He is the Head: first, the body is visible; secondly, it is an organism with many members, and these members are not functioning at the same level; thirdly, there is an intimate relationship with Christ; fourthly, the Spirit is the soul of the body; fifthly, some of the members are sick because of a lack of holiness.

Jesus Christ has all the power in heaven and on earth. In this power and sovereignty there is no real intimacy. However, there is intimacy between the headship of Jesus Christ over His body (Best 1986:22). Thus to experience the presence of God one must become an active part of the body of Christ.

3.4. The Church as Sacrament

3.4.1. The Church as Sacrament and the sacrament's origin in the Old Testament

The church as sacrament is a visible sign of God's grace. Dulles explains: *"The words, taken in isolation, would be empty, but in their concrete context they are living and effective, powerful to transform those who adhere to them. For this reason the Church is more than a messenger or herald; it bears witness not only by what it says but also by what it does and is. In other words, the Church is an effective sign of the Christ whom it proclaims"* (1982:46). From this perspective Hedlund argues that the promise in Gn. 3:15 is also a promise of the coming Messiah through a process 1991:24-25). In this process the church as sacrament is visible. Hedlund explains: *"At this point God reveals himself to be a missionary God. In the Garden God comes seeking man (Gn. 3:8ff.). The world's religions represent man seeking for God. Here we see the reverse. In Genesis God takes the initiative. Men may seek God but they also flee from him. Adam tried to hide from God, but God entered the scene of Adam's disobedience. God, someone has said, was the first missionary. He came, he sought and he found, and he provided salvation for his lost creature (Gn 3:8). Man is not left in his predicament. God provides the remedy (Gn. 3:15) for the human race. This is the gospel of the Garden"* (1991:24-25). All the characteristics of the church as sacrament are present in this promise of God.

3.4.2. The Church as Sacrament from a New Testament's perspective

The church as sacrament must be an effective sign of what it proclaims (Dulles 1982:46). Thus the church from a New Testament's perspective must both do and be. What the church must be and do is found in the ministry of Jesus as revealed to us in the New Testament. Hedlund explains the ministry of Jesus: *"Jesus, came not merely to teach, not to protest, not to reform society, but to reconcile human beings to God in himself. This is the substance of New Testament proclamation"* (1991:161). To summarize, the church as sacrament must not be the way, but point to the Way, who is a person Jesus Christ of Nazareth God's self-disclosure.

3.4.3. The Church as Sacrament and its inability to make God's plan of salvation functional

Contact with the church as sacrament is essential for people to be saved. Thus the crisis is that the static church expects people to become active and move towards the church to be saved. From this point there is a call for the church to move away from the static and apologetic mode.

3.4.4. The Church as Sacrament with a focus on the missionary dimension

The church as sacrament is a visible event of grace. The moment missionary themes from the bible are added to the church a as visible event of grace, then this model will have a missionary dimension. Hedlund identifies Pauline theology of missions as follows: *"Throughout Paul's writings certain dominant themes occur: The lostness of all men outside of Christ (Rm.3:10-12; 5:12; 18; 1 Cor. 15:22; Eph. 2:3). The Lordship of Christ (Rm.10:9; 1 Cor. 12:3; 2 Cor. 4:5; Phlp. 2:11). Redemption through Christ's death (Rm. 3:21, 26; 4:5; Gl. 2:16, 21; 3:11). Reconciliation (Rm. 5:10, 11; 2 Cor. 5:18-20; Eph. 2:14-16; Col. 1:21). New life in Christ (Rm. 6:4; 8:1-2; 2 Cor. 5:17; Eph. 2:1, 10, 15; 4:22-24; Col. 3:1-3). The church (Rm. 16; 1 Cor.1:2, 10-16; 11:2-34; 12:1-31; 14:1-40; Col. 1:18; 1 Tm. 2, 3, 5). Salvation of the Gentiles (Rm. 2:14-16; 9:30; 10:12; 11:11; 25, 32; 15:9-12, 18; 1 Cor. 1:22-24; 9:21; Gal. 1:16; 3:14; Eph. 2:11-13; Col. 1-27). Law and grace (Rm. 2:12-14; 17-18; 3:21-24; 7:4, 7, 12; 8:1-2; Gal. 2:15, 16, 21; 3:10-13, 24; 3:10-13, 24; 5:13-14; Phlp. 3:9). Suffering (2 Cor. 11:23-27; Phlp. 1:12-13; Col. 1:24; 2 Th. 1:5; 2 Tm. 2:3, 10-11; Phlm. 9). The Christian hope (1 Cor. 15:17-20, 51-57; 1 Th. 4:13-18; 5:9-10; 2 Tm. 4:8; Titus 2:13). Through these themes the church will become a missionary event. The event will flow out towards not only those people who are in contact with the church but now the church as sacrament will make contact with the world. Braaten calls for a new sense of mission by saying the following: "The church ought to be a sacrament of hope for the world's future. The church is needed as the voice of prophecy in the world to pursue the ways of civil righteousness, peace, harmony, and justice"* (1985:91). Mission is more than proclamation; the church through its liturgical life becomes a sacrament to salvation (Kritzinger & Saayman 1994:5).

3.4.5. The Church as Sacrament with a purpose

Warren (1995:103) agrees with Dulles's (1987:63-75) that the church as sacrament is a visible sign of grace. But Warren (1995:25-399) allows God's plan of salvation to become a reality through the five identified purposes of the church. These purposes are based on the five tasks Christ ordained for his church to accomplish (Warren 1995:103). These purposes are: first, love the Lord with all your heart; second, love your neighbour as yourself; third, go and make disciples; fourth, baptizing them; fifth, teaching them to obey (Warren 1995:103-107). From this point Christ is made real through applying the five purposes to every part of the church through programming, scheduling, budgeting, staffing, preaching and so forth. In this approach Warren explains the key to success: *"Making the leap from a purpose statement to purpose-driven actions requires leadership that is totally committed to the process"* (1995:137).

3.4.6. The Church as Sacrament in a world needing the presence of God

The word sacrament is not found in the Bible and is not a Biblical term (Snyder 1983:97). The word sacrament entered the church when Eph. 5:32 was translated into Latin by the Roman Catholic Church, called the Vulgate. The Greek word *musterion* (*"mystery"*) was translated into *sacramentum* that literary means, *"to make sacred."* The word and term sacramentum was used in the Roman jurisdiction where an individual's specific relationship and commitment to a party is confirmed. For example, it was used to describe the oath of allegiance, which a Roman soldier had to take on induction into one of the greatest armies in the world (Möller 1998, 4:121).

Thus we may say that when we are part of the Church we stand under the command of the Head of the church, Jesus Christ the Lion of the tribe of Judah (Rv. 5:5) our oldest brother. Jesus becomes more real to us when we receive the sacrament out of God's hand and Word. Heyns summarises this paragraph when he says: *"Faith is made effective in our hearts solely by the proclamation of the Word, whereas the sacrament does not make it effective, but strengthens it"* (1980:109). We as humans can make tangible contact with the invisible living Spirit through a tangibly visible sign of God, called sacrament.

3.5. The Church as Herald

3.5.1. The Church as Herald and proclamation's origin in the Old Testament

In the Old Testament a number of references are made to Yahweh's intervention and creation by his Word. Examples are Is. 55:11; 40:26; 44:24-28; 48:13; 50:2; Ezk. 37:4; Ps. 33:6, 9; 104:7: 147:4, 15-18; 148:3-5 (Hildebrandt 1995:42). Hildebrandt explains: *"In many of these references, the Word and subsequent fulfilment of the Word by God's power are indicated. In Ps. 33:6 the connection between the speaking of God and the activity of God is unmistakable. Stated poetically, the breath of God when speaking is meant and its effectual results are evident in what is created"* (1995:42). In the New Testament, God continues to create and save by his Word.

3.5.2. The Church as Herald from a New Testament perspective

The church as herald agrees with Paul's words as recorded in Rm. 10:14-15 *"How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? And how can they preach unless they are sent? As it is written, 'How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!' "* About this messenger Müller says: *"The messengers are only servants. They offer the deliverance from God's anger but they have no direct authority over those to whom they grant salvation. In the last analysis mission is the work of God"* (1987:63).

3.5.3. The Church as Herald and its inability to make God's plan of salvation functional

Two aspects of the church as a herald which prevent people from being saved according to God's plan, are: only those who have contact with the church are in a position to be saved and secondly, those who do come in contact with the church are expected to sit humbly and listen to what is said from the pulpit or stage.

3.5.4. The Church as Herald with a focus on the missionary dimension

For Müller two missionary actions must be part of the church as a herald so that God's plan to save people can become a reality. These missionary actions are: first the continuation of the mission of Jesus and secondly the message must be new with the ability to change the world (Müller 1987:35). A new message means that God must become new in an individual situation, Müller explains: *"It is not so much a question of a new teaching, a new ethic, or a new liturgy, but rather of the fact that the expectation of the prophets is fulfilled and the time of God's reign has dawned"* (1987:142). As part of the herald there must also be understanding and for that reason there must also be teaching. Braaten explains: *"Kerygma leads to didache. Preaching must be followed up by teaching in order that understanding might lead to witness"* (1985:179). Hiebert (1994:108-136) concurs with this reasoning by mentioning a Hindu with the name of Papayya who heard the gospel once and then became a Christian. All problematic dimensions in Papayya's life where improved through and because of teaching.

Kerygma is translated best, as the proclamation, which involves all the various forms of the Word so that evangelisation, building the church and building the body of Christ can be effective. These various forms of the Word include preaching, witnessing, providing literature, theological education, etc. (Kritzinger & Saayman 1994:36).

3.5.5. The Church as Herald with a purpose

Churches must be taught how to bring about revival, health and explosive growth to churches (Warren 1995:14). This must not be learned through trial and error, thus methods, but through implementing principles that have worked elsewhere. In teaching, the context of happening must be taken into consideration, then not methods, but principles can be taught and followed.

Warren (1995:293) found that the greatest complaint of the unchurched in his area (Southern California, USA) was boring and irrelevant sermons. Furthermore he pointed out that he became more successful when he adapted his style of preaching to suit the audience. Warren explains: *"When preaching to believers I like to teach through books of the Bible, verse-by-verse…..Verse-by-verse, or book, exposition builds up the body of Christ……I do not believe verse-by-verse teaching through the books of the Bible is the most effective way to evangelise the unchurched. Instead you must start on common ground, just as Paul did with his pagan audience at the Areopagus in Athens. Instead of beginning with the Old Testament text, he quoted one of their own poets to get their attention and establish common ground"* (1995:294).

However the Word must be preached for the Word is the primary agent of change as Heb. 4:12 says: *"For the Word of God is living and active"*. But the Word must also capture people's attention like Jesus did by using everyday experiences. He did it by saying, *"Look at the fig tree"* or *"Whose face is on this?"* (Hybels & Hybels 1995:187).

3.5.6. The Church as Herald in a world needing the presence of God

The church must be different from other organizations. Other organizations are also friendly, caring and bring different cultures together in harmony. The difference the church makes is a continual confrontation with the living Lord (Willimon 1990:11). Christians have heard the "Word of God" and not the words of the Bible. This approach is also central to Heyns' thinking: *"Christian faith is first and foremost faith in the message of the Word of Scripture; this is what God has willed, and so for the Church, in the actuality of this sinful life, it is the totally indispensable source of life and thinking"* (1980:108).

To experience God, the preacher must not preach "his" scripture or call the people together. God must call the people to listen to the Word of God. For Willimon (1990:72-73) this will happen through biblical stories, because biblical stories have the following characteristics: one, stories tend to be concrete; two, stories are flexible and open ended; three, stories are never finished; four, stories tend to be a catalyst for

our imagination; five, stories are experiential; six, stories tend to be communal in nature.

An example of a Godly story, is the presentation of the Ten Commandments. Here a peculiar God who wants a family, creates a peculiar community. The story approach is, that theology equips people to rise above their circumstances (Willimon 1990:76).

3.6. The Church as Servant

3.6.1. The Church as Servant and service's origin in the Old Testament

One of the unique characteristics of God revealed in the Old Testament is His involvement in human history. His primary concern was with a people, thus corporate in nature (Hedlund 1991:36). God elected for a single purpose and that purpose was one of service. The focus of God's election of Israel was not so much the object as the subject of divine election. The individuals God elected, for example Abraham and Moses, must be understood in the light of Israel's election to serve God (Hedlund 1991:37). God's election is not aimed at excluding any nation or person. God's election has a twofold purpose namely both a calling and sending. In this process the focus is on the salvation of the nations in that God's revelation of himself in one nation is aimed at introducing himself to another nation (Hedlund 1991:38).

It is important to notice that service is not humanitarian alone but the Old Testament ideal is that service should point to God as Ps. 144:15 explains: *"Blessed are the people of whom this is true; blessed are the people whose God is the Lord."* The focus of the service in the New Testament is also towards saving people, but the method is different.

3.6.2. The Church as Servant from a New Testament's perspective

The concept of servant in the New Testament is derived from the Greek word diakonia translated in English as deacon, service or ministry. According to common Greek usage it meant waiting on tables, taking care of life's needs, or serving in any capacity whatever. The role of the servant in Greek society was regarded as inferior,

debasing and unworthy. The aim of life was to become a master (Braaten 1985:158). But Jesus reversed this concept and said the following: *"For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and give his life as a ransom for many"* (Mark 10:45). Thus the approach to service will be to imitate Jesus of Nazareth (Kritzinger & Saayman 1994:37).

The life and work of Jesus must be understood in the light of the servant-messiah (Hedlund 1991:162). Which he announced when he began his public ministry by reading form Isaiah (Is. 61) as recorded in Luke 4:18-21. Jesus announced that the messiah is here and he is also your servant (Hedlund 1991:162).

3.6.3. The Church as Servant and its inability to make God's plan of salvation functional

The church as servant establishes the church not as a parallel structure to the world, but a structure in the world. This model where the church is a servant has a concern with the world. Müller says about this concern: *"Mission is always concerned with the world"* (1987:47). But the undermining factor in this model towards the saving plan of God is that the church works under orders from the world. The orders from the world make the work done through the church demeaning and of no advantage to the workers.

3.6.4. The Church as Servant with a focus on the missionary dimension

The church as servant must focus its service from a specific perspective to be successful. This perspective with salvation as goal is described by Bosch as follows: *"Those who know that God will one day wipe away all tears will not accept with resignation the tears of those who suffer and are oppressed now. Anyone who knows that one day there will be no more disease can and must actively anticipate the conquest of disease in individuals and society now. And anyone who believes that the enemy of God and humans will be vanquished will already oppose him now in his machinations in family and society. For all this has to do with salvation"* (1991:400).

3.6.5. The Church as Servant with a purpose

The multitude of problems are doors for the church to reach the world. This was also Jesus approach, when he met the world his approach was through hurts, needs and interests (Warren 1995:197). The moment the church enters through these doors the world will be touched with the gospel (Warren 1995:14). However, there must be a clear purpose. Purpose will direct the church as servant through those doors with morale, concentration, cooperation, evaluation and minimum frustration (Warren 1995:85-94). When we make contact with the world we must be witnesses, for on earth there are only two things we can do that we can't do in heaven and that is sin and witness (Warren 1995:116). But to be successful we must find, be equipped and do the ministry in the world that God has called us to do (Warren 1995:145).

From this point we can be sent to very specific people and problems in the world. Examples are Jesus who was sent to the lost sheep of Israel (Mt. 15:24), Paul was sent to the Gentiles (Gl. 2:7) and Peter was send to the Jews (Gl. 2:7). Because there are different problems and gifts a church should have a variety of ministries (Hybels & Hybels 1995:162). These ministries should be focussed on people who must be saved both for the Kingdom of God and from drowning in their sorrows (Hybels & Hybels 1995:165). In all our actions as servants we must understand what Jesus redefined greatness so that we may know and do what is great in God's eyes. When we consider the following verses where Jesus redefined greatness: *"If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me"* (Mark 8:34). *"If anyone wants to be first, he must be the very last, and the servant of all"* (Mark 9:35). *"Whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be the slave of all."* (Mark 10:44-43). *"When he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. 'Do you understand what I have done for you?' he asked them. 'You call me "Teacher" and "Lord," and rightly so, for that is what I am. Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you' "* (John 13:12-15).
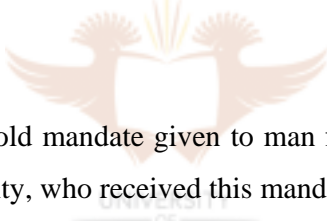
3.6.6. The Church as Servant in a world needing the presence of God

The presence of God in service starts with workers who work with God (Best 1986:112-113), called by God to a specific service (Schwarz 2001:44) and being empowered through Spiritual Gifts to be successful in being servants (Schwarz 2001:43). Murphy (1975:191) identifies all actions from the church towards the world in terms of the Great Commission (Mt. 28:18-20) and this includes serving the world and not being isolated from the world.

Christians are servants of Christ who are joined to Jesus. Jesus is not only Saviour and Lord, but he is the example and model. From this perspective there is a balance between the theology of glory and the theology of the cross. Out of this balance, ministry is defined as service (Snyder 1983:132-145).

3.7.   The Church: Community of Disciples

3.7.1. The Church: Community of Disciples and the disciple's origin in the Old Testament

There is a fundamental twofold mandate given to man from God at the beginning of each Testament. The humanity, who received this mandate, was in the first Testament the first Adam and in the second Testament the second Adam, Christ (Peters1972: 166-167). In the first mandate it was man's responsibility to build a wholesome society in which all people could live as true human beings according to God's order and creative purposes. The Bible expresses these purposes in the following terms: to populate, to subjugate, to dominate, to cultivate, and to preserve (Gn. 1:28; 2:15). This program of God was interrupted by sin. But this mandate still rests upon man.

Peters (1972:167) identifies the evidence that this mandate is still resting upon man in the message of God to Noah after the flood (Gn. 8:15-9:17) and the strong denunciatory messages of the prophets directed against Israel and the nations when they violated the moral order and basic human rights. In the New Testament these responsibilities that were placed upon man are heightened and intensified. Peters explains: *"The second mandate is carried forward by evangelisation, discipleship training, church planting, church care, and benevolent ministries"* (1972:167). Thus

the first mandate was to man a member of the human race and the second is to Christians as followers of Christ and therefore disciples.

3.7.2. The Church: Community of Disciples from a New Testament perspective

The risen Christ did not give last minute instructions to his disciples (as many writers assume) as recorded in the Great Commission (Mt. 28:19-20). Jesus during the forty-day interval between his resurrection and ascension gave different commissions on different occasions to his disciples for their worldwide mission (Hedlund 1991:187-190). These commissions are recorded in Luke 24:44-49; John 20:21-23; John 20:26-29; Mark 16:9-20; 1 Cor. 15:6-8; Acts 1:7-8; Acts 1:15; and Mt. 28:19-20. The central dimensions in making disciples are, discipleship must be of a known Christ; the making is towards all nations; only disciples can make disciples; and discipling means evangelising.

3.7.3. The Church: Community of Disciples and its inability to make God's plan of salvation functional

Through this model where the church functions as a community of disciples God's saving plan is hindered in that ordinary church members are expected to become part of excessive demands to generously do voluntary work.

3.7.4. The Church: Community of Disciples with a focus on the missionary dimension

The main reason the excessive demands are part of discipleship is that Dulles didn't ad all the Biblical dimensions in being a community of disciples. The main Biblical dimension Dulles didn't ad is the reality that a disciple is highly trained for the task and discipling only happened after the disciples received power on the day of Pentecost.

3.7.5. The Church: Community of Disciples with a purpose

Jesus recognised that all people are at a different level of spiritual commitment as described in Mark. 12:34 where Jesus said: *"You are not far from the kingdom of God."* (Warren 1995:134). In the light of this statement the church as a community of disciples must be a highly trained group of followers of Christ. Disciples are not only hearers of the word but doers. There for communities of disciples must be sensitive and loving toward people outside the faith (Hybels & Hybels 1995:161).

However, Warren says people will only become disciples when they are trained on purpose (Warren 1995:143). Warren explains the training for developing disciples at the Saddleback church: *"Saddleback's strategy for developing disciples is based on the six truths I identified in contrast with each myth (the myths are popular misconceptions about spiritual growth and maturity). We believe spiritual growth begins with commitment, is a gradual process, involves developing habits, is measured by five factors, is stimulated by relationships, and requires participation in all five purposes of the church"* (1995:343).

3.7.6. The Church: Community of Disciples in a world needing the presence of God

While on earth and in the flesh, Jesus selected and trained twelve men in a real-life learning situation. These disciples saw Him demonstrating, with His own life, how to do God's work. Jesus carefully helped them learn from their successes and failures (Getz 1986:56).

Then a new phenomenon came into being. This didn't exist while Christ was in the flesh on earth. This phenomenon was the establishing of local churches wherever believers made disciples (Getz 1986:57). People living in various communities and cultures could become brothers and sisters in Christ. What Christ did, disciples continued doing by the power of the Holy Spirit.

The church from 11 true disciples, to the 120 in the upper room, to the 3000 added at Pentecost, later increased to 5000, then a multitude, multitudes, multiplied, and multiplied greatly again (Acts 2:41; 4:4, 32; 5:14; 6:1, 7) (Best 1986:34).

3.8. Conclusion

From the above one can conclude that all models of the church are able to have a missionary direction and the only model of the church that is in line with God's salvation plan is a model with a missionary direction. The church and each model of the church must be seen as part of God's calling to evangelise the world. It would be wrong to classify *"the world,"* as only people in far distant countries. The term, *"the world"* includes all that is meant by Jesus in John 3:16 and these people who are part of this definition of *"world"* exclude no person, not even my neighbours, family or the people at work. From this perspective Kritzinger (2001:74-75) makes it clear that missionary direction must be understood to be all-embracing actions executed by every member of the church. These actions include the church being part of God's sending actions. Every believer is a missionary. Therefore, theological training and being church, should also equip the believer to carry the Spirit of God into the world. Thus God's aim must be reached through believers' presence in the world (Kritzinger 2001:73-74).

In the next chapter the researcher will focus on the post-modernist who must become part of God's saving plan in the post-modern world through an effective model of the church.

CHAPTER FOUR

EXPERIENCING CHURCH AS REALNESS IN A WORLD NEEDING GOD

4.1.   Introduction

In this chapter the time periods and their influence on people will be explained. The present time period, post-modern time will be discussed in more detail and what the post-moderns experience in the Christian environment will be examined. During all of this God's twofold view of us, namely that we are His children or the children of the devil will be kept in the background. However, all of the points mentioned in this chapter are aimed at establishing or finding a model to bring the lost to salvation and strengthen the faith of believers.

The need for such a model is necessary in the absence of the life that can only be found in the pulsating power of the promise that came true about a Man who died on a Cross so that we may have life in all its riches, vitality and abundance on this earth and eternity. This need is emphasised by the most generous and optimistic polls in England were only three million people out of a population of the forty-nine million were found to be active church goers (Dormor, D. McDonald, J & Caddick, J. 2003:1). This decline is evidence for Gibbs and Coffey's (2001:10-11) argument that the church is potentially only one generation away from extinction.

4.2.   Periods before the post-modern period

4.2.1. Pre-modern times

The pre-modern period extends from the Greek philosophers until the age of Enlightenment (Möller 2002:1-2). Jencks (1989:47) identifies this time as the period from 10,000 BC-1450 AD. This period can also be called the pre-scientific age. Almost all religions originated during this time. For the pre-modern person the world was flat, it stood on pillars and was coved with a dome shaped roof. Behind the dome was water and the place where God and his angels lived. In the roof were windows

that opened to let wind, rain and hail pass through. Under the roof were different lights each with its own function. On the surface of the earth people lived and under the earth was the realm of the dead. On earth evil lived and its aim was to do people harm (du Toit 2000:14-18). The perception was that all that occurred was because of the intervention of one or other creature and *"natural happenings"* did not exist (Muller 2000:71-72).

This world picture determined the philosophy or outlook on life. In this pre-modern time a person's life was determined by the interaction of two forces namely God and the Devil. If you did things right you were on the side of God and if not, you played into the hands of Satan (du Toit 2000:14-23).

Life during the pre-modern time can be categorised as a Neolithic Revolution that included agriculture and handwork with many facets. This society could be categorised as tribal/feudal and included a ruling class of Kings, priests, the military and peasants. Time schedules were slow changing and reversible. The people lived in cities or in the surrounding rural areas and were governed by an aristocratic class (Jencks 1986:47).

4.2.2. Modern times

The modern period is identified by Jencks (1986:47) as that from 1450 – 1960. For some the age of Enlightenment was the birth of the modern period. McGrath describes the Enlightenment as follows: *"The primary feature of the movement may be seen as its assertion of the omnicompetence of human reason. Reason, it was argued, was capable of telling us everything we needed to know about God and morality. The idea of some kind of supernatural revelation was dismissed as an irrelevance. Jesus Christ was just one of many religious teachers, who told us things that anyone with a degree of common sense could have told us anyway. Reason reigned supreme"* (1996:163-164). Grenz says: *"Many historians place the birth of the modern era at the dawn of the Enlightenment, which followed the Thirty-Years War"* (1996:2). The Enlightenment, also called the age of reason, was based on the ideology that man by his reason or intellect could control and conquer the world (Janse van Rensburg 2000:3); some people argue that the French Revolution was the

beginning of the modern period (Möller 2002:1-2). This modern period could also be described as the scientific era as many scientific discoveries were made during the 16th century. All this made it possible for people to free themselves from the post-modern world (du Toit 2000:24). At the end of the 19th and at the beginning of the 20th century modernism made many promises it could not deliver (Janse van Rensburg 2000:4-5). In the words of Janse van Rensburg *"The great expectations ended in immense disappointment for most. It also created feelings of despair of human finitude and a meaningless existence for those who were left untouched by the successes of science and technology. A change, a new frame of reference was inevitable"* (2000:4-5). In this modern worldview everything that happened was rational, controllable, verifiable, learnable and repeatable (Muller 2002:73).

Manufacturing during the modern time 1450 - 1960 could be categorised as an Industrial Revolution, which focused on mass production at a centralised level. The majority of society was capitalist with its ruling class of bourgeoisie and workers. Time schedules were linear. The people's orientation was nationalistic in a mass culture and reigning styles (Jencks 1989:47).

4.3.   Post-modern times

The consequences of the First and Second World Wars and disillusionment with human effort to establish a better world were some of the outstanding happenings that caused the birth of the post-modern period (du Toit 2000:24). Post-modernism is a period of time after modernism in which certain societies practice a distinct ideology called post-modernism. The theological philosopher, Diogenes Allen describes the turning from modern to post-modern era as follows: *"Our intellectual culture is at a major turning point. A massive intellectual revolution is taking place that is perhaps as great as that which marked off the modern world from the Middle Ages. The foundations of the modern world are collapsing and we are entering a post-modern world"* (1989:2). Promoters of modern times proceeded the post-modern period. The post-modern period began as a reaction to the happenings during the modern era (Möller 2002:1-2). Janse van Rensburg (2000:6) identifies modernity's starting point as the sixties.

In this post-modern period a distinct ideology namely post-modernism is functioning. Post-modernism is not a movement founded by an individual or group. The ideology of post-modernism is seen as shared ideals and beliefs by certain societies. This ideology can be characterised by liberal individualism. Pecklers describes this as follows: *"Theologians may give the impression that the people of God gather for the Eucharist as a warm and united community, bound together by God and each other, eager to hear the preaching of the Gospel. But this idealized view is remote from reality. The global, post-modern culture today, especially in the West, is highly individualistic. Parishes rarely reflect natural communities, especially in the great mega cities in which ever more people live; often the people who are gathered to share the Eucharist do not know each other, or even don't especially wish to do so"* (2003:135).

These characteristics of liberal individualism are manifested as resisting modernism's emphasis on universal truths, overwhelming powers and traditional certainties. The characteristics also include lack of absolutes, suspicion towards manipulation and a choice for relativism. The beliefs in this ideology are based on thoughts of individuality, individual freedom and respect between different human beings (Möller 2002:1-2).

The only rule in post-modernism is that there are no rules (Janse van Rensburg 2000:2-3). This can also be seen in art, if there is no rule, anything goes. This way of thinking has a great impact on the definition of sin in the post-modern era. In the words of Janse van Rensburg *"The method of gaining and arranging information is called the epistemology… If the post-modern epistemology is that there are no fixed rules, then post-modern art will operate without the usual aesthetic rules of harmony in colour and design. In the post-modern art anything goes because the epistemology says that there is no fixed method of doing art"* (2000:2-3).

Development since 1960 can be categorised as an information revolution that included office workers and decentralised production. Society could be categorised as global and included a para-class of cognitariats and office workers. Time schedules were fast changing and cyclical. The people's orientation was either worldly or local in a culture with many genres (Jencks 1989:47).

4.4. Stylistic contrasts between modernism and post-modernism

The general differences between modernity and post-modernity have been summarized in terms of the stylistic contrasts. Three different summaries from three different authors are listed. The first list mentioned directly here under is from McGrath who comments as follows: *"Note how the terms gathered under the 'modernism category' have strong overtones of the ability of the thinking subject to analyse, order, control and master. Those gathered together under the 'post-modernism' category possess equally strong control, with the result that things need to be left as they are, in all their glorious and playful diversity. This applies just as much to the religions as to everything else"* (1996:185).

Modernity	Post-modernity
Purpose	Play
Design	Chance
Hierarchy	Anarchy
Centring	Dispersal
Selection	Combination
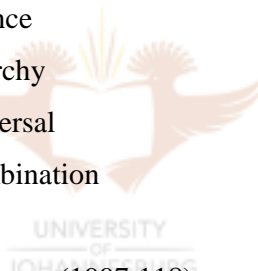
The second list identified by Conner (1997:118) exposes the antithetical nature of post-modernism. It is also evident that the concepts or words found in post-modernity are reactive to the concepts or words found in modernity.

Modernity	Post-modernity
Form	Antiform
Hierarchy	Anarchy
Mastery	Exhaustion
Logos	Silence
Art Object	Process
Finished Work	Happening
Distance	Participation
Creation	Decreation
Synthesis	Antithesis

Presence	Absence
Centring	Dispersal
Genre	Text
Paradigm	Syntagm
Hypotaxis	Parataxis
Metaphor	Metonymy
Selection	Combination
Root	Rhizome
Depth	Surface
Interpretation	Against Interpretation
Reading	Misreading
Signified	Signifier
Lisible	Scriptable
Narrative	Antinarrative
Master Code	Idiolect
Symptom	Desire
Genital	Polymorphous
Paranoia	Schizophrenia
Origin	Difference-Difference
Cause	Trace
Metaphysics	Irony
Determinacy	Indeterminacy
Transcendence	Immanence

The third list explained by Sweet as: *"These 25 transitions from modern to post-modern ministry are an attempt to turn toward what God is already doing in this new world"* (1999:92-93).

Modernity	Post-modernity
Critique	Celebrate
Pyramid leadership	Pancake leadership
Representation	Participation
Maintenance	Missions

Structure	Rhythm
Printed page	Screen
Control	Out-of-control
Authority structures	Relational structures
"Does it make sense"	*"Was it a good experience"*
Excellence	Authenticity
Performance	Realness
Theology of giving	Theology of receiving
Hi fi	Stereo to surround sound
Planning	Preparedness and prophesying your way forward
Politics	Bionomics to culture clashes
Church growth	Church health
Standing committees	Moving teams
Nation state	Mega-state
Mass structures	Demassed structures
Illustration	Animation
Think big and simple	Think small and complex
Boundary-living	Frontier/border living
Christendom culture	Pre-Christian mission fields
Pastoral care	Ministry development
"Re" words	*"De"* words

4.4.1. Evaluation of the above stylistic contrasts

The term *"modernity"* points to dimensions and actions that gave rise to post-modernism. The perception created here, was to analyse, order, master and control the modern world. The common factor in these words is that they are based on human reason and intellectual control that are verifiable, learnable and repeatable.

The words listed under *"post-modernism"* can be regarded as a summary of what post-modernism stands for. For example, the post-modernist will move towards celebrating life while moving away from critique. In the post-modern world where critique is absent, authority figures have lost their authority and the post-modernist would rather study authority figures than study under authority figures (Sweet

1999:186-187). Even giving, is viewed from the perspective that one must first receive before one is able to give. These messages are broadcasted in the post-modern world from a constant changing information channel including, surround sound, screens, animation, play, chance, antiform, silence and text. This movement of messages makes being out-of-control the norm and rhythm in the post-modern world. For example *"re"* words like revival and renewal are *"out"*. However, *"de"* words are in, examples are *"delurking"* which is to flame something or someone and *"decruited"* means to be laid off (Sweet 1999:147). Still the individuals in the post-modern world know that they are better off as a team than an individual (Sweet 1999:301). This team is not right or left but rather at the front or rear.

The reason for all this post-modern *"anarchy"* could be that, God is preparing this moment in history to do extraordinary things (Sweet 1999:34). These words that are linked to the post-modernist are not strange in our world as, everybody today shares a common set of symbols. Popular culture and symbols are becoming everyone's culture and symbols (Sweet 2001:146).

4.5. The post-modern worldview

The post-modern worldview is about how this world works. What this world looks like and what has shifted to the background. Worldviews have moved or developed from the working of creatures during the pre-modern era to atoms and science during the modern era, to a present worldview in this post-modern time that is in paved in systems. In the words of Muller: *"Spirits, demons or ancestors are not real, but within certain cultural systems they are very real, within that system they are as real as the chair you sit on, or the virus your doctor sees under the microscope – they direct actions, determine thoughts and even take part in human actions. To put it differently, we can't talk about things without considering specific systems"* (2002:74). Because we consider the same things in different systems, the post-modern worldview acknowledges that there is not only one-way of understanding reality and the world. Reality is not the same for everybody. Although we live in the same atmosphere, we are living in different realities.

Another feature of the post-modern worldview is the acknowledgement of different perspectives. As Muller puts it: *"A distinguishing mark of the post-modern worldview is the diversity of confirmations about the universe and human realities. When this is made applicable on human and cultural systems then a variety of cultural actions are acknowledge"* (2002:75).

On the other hand, it is also true that since the post-modern time not all standpoints are true or acceptable. Not all points of view are part of the post-modern worldview. Muller explains: *"Each discourse or representation can't be made applicable on every argument and is not real to all people. In other words, the post-modern worldview acknowledges that certain people are not convinced about spirits, demons or ancestors and their influence on the world. The fact that the post-modern worldview, acknowledges different world-pictures, shows that we are living in a very different world than the one the Bible comes from"* (2002:75).

An outstanding attribute of the post-modern worldview is that everybody must give account or proof of what they believe. Thus there must be a system to test what we say, do or believe. Muller explains: *"While the post-modernist allows a multitude of voices, all the voices must submit themselves to healthy opinion and ethic standards"* (2002:76). Thus everything is not uncertain in the post-modern world.

The post-modern worldview also acknowledges the reality that everything we identify as God, human or reality is only a human interpretation. Muller explains in his own words: *"Even arguments of divine intervention or actions by spirits, demons or ancestors are all human interpretations of what people perceive as real"* (2002:76-77).

The post-modern worldview is to a large extent formed by the media. This is explained in the words of Pecklers in the book "Liturgy in a post-modern world" as follows: *"No one who takes post-modernity seriously underestimates how important the media is in relation to every part of people's lives. As Pope John Paul has observed, 'The impact of the media can hardly be exaggerated. For many the experience of living is to a great extent and experience of media.' Whether we like it or not, even our people's liturgical expectations are now formed by the media. For*

example in my home country of Australia – and these figures are replicated all around the industrialized world and are emerging in the developing world as well – adults watch an average of three hours and 13 minutes of TV a day. This means that a 70 – year – old Australian has spend nine years in front of the TV; 61 per cent of all Australian homes now have two televisions" (2003:27).

4.6. Post-modern characteristics

The post-modern world is seen as a completely new world. What happened before the post-modern time has created a tidal wave of information and we are in a new reality. One of the outstanding characteristics of the post-modern world or culture is that opposite things happen simultaneously without being contradictory (Sweet 1999:27). Sweet explains: *"Where the modern age was predominantly either-or, the post-modern world is and/also"* (1999:27). An example of this reality is that post-moderns are "high on God" but "low on the church." (Sweet 1999:47). The reason for this phenomenon is the spiritual help people get from videos, books, radio, newsletters and a host of do-it-yourself sources (Sweet 1999:47). From this point the Bible becomes unknown causing post-moderns to be totally unfamiliar with church language, rituals and beliefs.

Post-moderns have the tendency to change with every gust wind and wave. They move from "trial to success" and not from "trial to error" as during the modern times. To succeed, post-moderns have redefined size at both the gargantuan and minuscule levels. This focus has changed the post-modern's perspectives. An example is the morphed of work into play and now post-moderns are making work play. Although work and play are opposites, they are mixed together without being contradictory. At this level metaphors are mixed and opposites work together. On this point Sweet elaborates: *"1. In the cosmic and quantum worlds, there are always two sides or parts to all the wholes…2. Truth is both objective and subjective…3. Not one of us can boast immaculate perceptions…4. The universe is an undivided whole and not a state of separate states…These four transitions, both together and single, sound double rings. The church sounds the double ring, not to eliminate the polarities, but to sound both notes in a dynamic embrace"* (1999:27-28).

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For the post-modernist reality is an experience and this is also visible in the marketing of experiences and not equipment. For the post-modernist relationship must be an experience. Even food is a relationship, as Sweet put it: *"Why is fried chicken becoming super crispy, yogurts more crunchy, and meats dry-rubbed in spices and crusts or marinated in exotic juices? Because people are looking for sensual and tactile stimulation at mealtime"* (1999:187). Television commercials agree with Sweet when a Dove soap advertisement says: *"I never say no to a new experience"* and a Toyota Avalon commercial announces: *"It's an experience above all else."*

Another activity the post-modern culture craves for is emotions or feelings. Sweet (1999:210) links this approach to emotions directly with modern times when emotions were ignored. This is also visible in worship where body, mind and soul are involved. Thus the post-modernist needs to participate in happenings.

4.7. The post-modern person

Looking at the post-modern person we must take into cognisance the reality that the post-modern person is a product of the modern age. Modernity produced, two world wars, ever increasingly land and air pollution, atomic bombs, famine, poverty and a range of other threats to mankind. Thus modernity took harmony and prosperity from people. The confusing part was that while standards of living were raised; technology and reason failed the human race (Möller 2002:2). Science cannot be blamed for the horrors on earth, but human being's actions were to blame for the disasters man came to know during the modern age (Bridger 1998:19). From this mixture of happenings the modernist became a post-modernist with specific ideologies (Möller 2002:2).

These ideologies or set beliefs or ideas are formed from the perspective that nobody, not even scientists have access to raw reality. All reality must be interpreted by means of paradigms and presuppositions, which they themselves are culturally generated and conditioned. In this post-modern period nothing is fixed, everything that was solid has melted away and everything is relative (Bridger 1998:29).

The post-modernist is the one who has experienced life in both the light and shadow of scientific successes and failures. Thus the post-modernist is a product of

happenings in a specific world.   Bridger describes this world as: *"The selfsame scientific and technological mindset that gave us economic, social and medical progress has also given us nuclear weapons, environmental disasters, the gulags and the Holocaust"* (1998:19).

Post-modern architecture is also a product of modern architecture. Jencks (1989:16), gives the examples of an English tower block of housing that collapsed in London England after an explosion in 1968. This and other similar tower blocks were demolished after this and replaced by post-modern architecture where the emphasis was on the technical solution of social problems. Even in post-modern literature there is a social motive for using past forms in an ironic way. An example is a man saying to his wife *"I love you madly".* Because this expression is known the man will in the post-modern era say, *"As Barbara Cartland* (well known writer*) would put it, I love you madly".* In the post-modern era this way of communicating is used to avoid false innocence (Jencks 1989:16). Another product of modernism is post-modern art where the art itself is directed against the exploitation and manipulation of information (Jencks 1989:48).

The mood and taste of the post-modernist is for variety, incongruity and paradox. Evidence of this is the profusion of specialist magazines proclaiming opposite virtues. Another example was the film *"The Gods Must Be Grazy"* where a Kalahari bushman, a Marxist guerrilla à la Castro, a love-sick backwoods-man and a pretty city teacher's life's were interwoven into a lyrical whole (Jencks 1989:54).

For the post-modernist god or God is either meaningful or meaningless. Because there is also a meaningful concept in *"god"* the post-modernist can learn about *"god"* in any way he pleases. All these processes happen in the universe, which is seen as a real place, consisting of a physical realm and a human realm. The human realm is seen as an extension of the physical realm. Humans are highly evolved animals, a product of the universe through evolution. But humans have the ability to think they are not part of the physical realm. Knowledge is obtained through any means that pleases the post-modern person. Their loves, hopes, and plans are as meaningless or full of meaning as a stone. Because there is no absolute value, every possible action is both good and bad (Clark 2002:2-5). Bruce uses the following metaphor to explain

post-modernism: *"The notion of post-modernism is unfortunately popular. It is the intellectual equivalent of velcro: everything sticks to it"* (2002:229). Post-modernisms are defined from different angles and this is confirmed in the words of Hassan: *"Post-modernism is often used as a mysterious ingredient like raspberry vinegar, which instantly turns any recipe into nouvelle cuisine"* (1987:85). For Nicol (2000:168) post-modernism is a very vague term that describes attributes of the period we are living in. About the advantage of post-modernism Nicol says: *"The post-modern climate helps one to realise the necessity for variety"* (2000:184). When one reads through the definitions and notions of post-modernism it becomes clear that post-modernism is also a state of mind and this is confirmed in the words of the Polish sociologist, Bauman when he describes post-modernism as follows: *"It means the exhilarating freedom to pursue anything and the mind-boggling uncertainty as to what is worth pursuing and in the name of what one should pursue it"* (1992:vii). Thus we can agree with the saying *"The future isn't what it used to be."*

The post-modernist doesn't share their parents' conviction that the world is becoming a better place. They see problems mounting from the heavens existing out of holes in the ozone layer to teen on teen violence on earth and human ingenuity is not the solution. From this point the post-modernist wants to break with the past. There is a new awareness that life is fragile and survival of humankind is now at stake. This survival is linked with an unwillingness to allow the human intellect to serve as the sole determiner of what we should believe. Nonrational ways of knowing are preferred to reason. The person is linked with the community in which he lives. Well-being is connected with the community. Post-modern truth is relative to the community. Naturally there are many human communities and for that reason there are many truths. Beliefs are ultimately a matter of social context. For that reason the argument will be, "What is right for us might not be right for you". In this context Christianity for the post-modern person may affirm both the classic doctrines of the church and very non-Christian ideas as reincarnation (Grenz 1996:13-15). Grenz explains about the postmodernist idea of a community: *"The conviction that each person is embedded in a particular human community leads to a corporate understanding of truth. Post moderns believe that not only our specific beliefs but also our understanding of truth itself is rooted in the community in which we participate. They reject the Enlightenment quest for universal, supracultural, timeless*

truth in favour of searching out truth as the expression of a specific community. They believe that truth consists in the ground rules that facilitate personal well-being in community and the well being of the community as a whole" (1996:14).

The post-modernist is emotional and is hungry for experience. Nicol (2000:196) points to charismatic singing and preaching to prove this point. He continues by saying: *"In this post-modern time there is a hunger to be a emotional being."* and *"One of the outstanding attributes of the post-modern time is the inflow of multiplicity. Each group and individual does it his or her own way. Thus, be yourself"* (2000:195 and 202). Pecklers sees experience as an issue of power, as he puts it: *"In this intercultural encounter, according to post-modernism, the issue of power is of paramount importance"* (2003:65).

4.8.   Evangelism in post-modern times as influenced by modernity

Deist defines evangelism as: *"Emphasis on the need for preaching and personal acceptance (through conversion) of the gospel rather than excessive preoccupation with formal church structures"* (1992:89). While Peters defines evangelism as: *"Evangelisation refers to the initial phase of Christian ministry. It is the authoritive proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ as revealed in the Bible in relevant and intelligible terms, in a persuasive manner with the definite purpose of making Christian converts. It is a presentation-penetration-permeation-confrontation that not only elicits but also demands a decision. It is preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ for a verdict. It is the effective presentation of the gospel for the conversion of the unbeliever or non believer, making him a believer in Jesus Christ"* (1972:11-12). McGrath moving away from presuppositions and values of the Enlightenment defines evangelism as follows: *"Evangelism is the proclamation and commendation of the trustworthiness of God"* (1996:177).

The Enlightenment promised that man would conquer the world with reason and intellect. But this was proved not to be the case, as McGrath puts it: *"Post-modernism is the intellectual movement which proclaims, in the first place, that the Enlightenment rested on fraudulent intellectual foundations (such as the belief in the omnicompetence of human reason), and in the second, that it ushered in some of the*

most horrific events in human history – such as the Stalinist purges and the Nazi extermination camps" (1996:164). Reason will always have a role to play where people realise that intellect is a God given gift that must be used. But the Enlightenment saw reason as the sole means of gaining knowledge.

From this approach four areas of controlling influence from the Enlightenment are identified in evangelism. The first one is the nature of Scripture and as McGrath puts it: *"There is a tendency within evangelicalism to treat Scripture as simply a sourcebook of Christian doctrines, and to overlook, suppress or deny its narrative character"* (1996:173). Thus the Enlightenment focused on Scripture in a rational, anti-supernatural way and ignored the reality that narratives possess authority (McGrath 1996:104-105).

The second controlling influence from the Enlightenment is spirituality and as McGrath wrote: *"There is a tendency to regard spirituality in terms of understanding the biblical text – that is, to reading it, making sense of its words and ideas, and understanding its historical background and its meaning for today"* (1996:174). Again the emphasis is on reason. The third controlling influence is Apologetics and as McGrath puts it: *"In relation to apologetics, evangelicalism has shown itself to be willing to operate within the Enlightenment paradigm of a universal human rationality, such as that which influenced John Locke's classic text of rationalist apologetics, The Reasonableness of Christianity (1695). This approach is deeply flawed in two respects. First, it assumes that the appeal of Christianity is purely rational; second, it rests upon a network of universalising assumptions that the gospel must be proclaimed at the global level"* (1996:175-176). The fourth controlling influence in evangelism is explained by McGrath as follows: *"Evangelism, on the basis of an Enlightenment worldview, is about persuading people of the truth of the gospel – with the crucial word 'truth' being understood in a strongly rational manner as 'propositional correctness"* (1996:177).

The concept truth here is exercised as a controlling function and thus a non-biblical concept. From the four above controlling influences it is clear that actions in evangelism are drawn from the Enlightenment and not from biblical tradition.

4.9.   Evangelism in post-modern time

To influence the world we must introduce biblical tradition into the post-modern world. As we have seen the Enlightenment is a voice from the modern era, and in this post-modern period concepts and dimensions from that period no longer have the ability to influence either positively or negatively. For this reason the focus must be to identify those concepts and dimensions that infiltrated evangelism so that we may evangelise during the post-modern era in both an effective and truthful manner. McGrath identifies the following concepts that discredited evangelism during the modern era namely human reason, rationalism, human wisdom and worldly ideas (1996:166-179). Lets continue to focus on each of these dimensions by identifying both the problem and solution.

Firstly McGrath identifies human reason as a problem (concepts that discredited evangelism during the modern era) and defines it as follows: *"The primary feature of the movement (Enlightenment) may be seen as its assertion of the omnicompetence of human reason. Reason, it was argued, was capable of telling us everything we needed to know about God and morality. The idea of some kind of supernatural revelation was dismissed as an irrelevance"* (1996:163). Here the need and the solution is Jesus Christ as a supernatural revelation. But still we can't ignore reason. McGrath sketches the approach towards reason in a post-modern world as follows: *"Reason is no longer regarded as having the potential to deliver unaided the theological insights upon which the church must depend. Yet, this does not mean that reason has ceased to be of importance theologically. It simply means that the way is clear to recover the proper role of reason in theology, now that the distortions and illusions of rationalism are behind us. To reject the supremacy of reason in theology is in no way to reject the real and valid role of reason in this context. Rationalism is one thing; a rational faith is quite different. Reason will always have a role to play within evangelism"* (1996:167). The solution is to allow divine revelation on its own terms and in its own categories. We must allow Scripture to be Scripture and not use fallen human reason to judge God's revelation. Neither must human reason be used as the foundation of the revelations of God.

Secondly McGrath identifies rationalism as a problem (concepts that discredited evangelism during the modern era). On the doctrine to which evangelism is fiercely committed namely that Jesus is both God and human at the same time, McGrath speaks out about the logic in this revelation: *"If divine revelation appears to be logically inconsistent on occasion (as it undoubtedly does: witness the doctrine of the two natures of Christ), this cannot be taken to mean that the doctrine in question is wrong, or that the doctrine is not divine revelation on account of its 'illogical' character. Rather, this merely illustrates the fact that fallen human reason cannot fully comprehend the majesty of God. The point was made regularly by Christian writers as diverse as Thomas Aquinas and John Calvin"* (1996:171).

Worldly ideas are the third point McGrath points to as a concept that discredited evangelism during the modern era. When theology moved out of its original Palestinian context it was clothed in Greek philosophy to ensure a hearing from the Hellenistic world. From this point McGrath explains the influence of worldly ideas as follows: *"On the basis of the perceived 'neutrality' and 'universality' of Greek philosophical ideas, Christian theology thus became increasingly enmeshed in a series of intellectual adventures which brought it further and further away from the gospel of the New Testament. The Enlightenment has affected evangelism in much the same way. Certain central Enlightenment ideas appear to have been uncritically taken on board by some evangelicals, with the result that part of the movement runs the risk of becoming a secret prisoner of a secular outlook, which is now dying before our eyes. Evangelicals are under an absolute obligation to ensure that their central ideas are Scripture-based, not the result of the influence of the Enlightenment"* (1996:173).   To stop this controlling influence theology must not be culturally conditioned or influenced by the ideas and worldviews of those it sought to address.

For Sweet (1999:195-196) the Biblical avenue to evangelism is through relationship. In the words of Sweet: *"When Jesus was asked to name the greatest commandment, he cited the shema-'love God and love others.' When Jesus was asked how to pray, he defined God in terms of a relationship: 'abba' "* (1999:195). In the post-modern time evangelism and relationships are one and the same thing as Sweet explains: *"Post-modern evangelism also can be summarized in one word: relationship. According to Billy Graham Evangelistic Association, 80% of adults coming to faith in*

Jesus Christ do so as a result of the influence of a friend. Whereas churches reaching moderns organized around functions-missions, finances; worship-churches in mission to post-moderns must organize around relationships-relationships with God, with each other, with the community, and with creation. Whereas people used to go to church to meet old friends, they now go to church to meet new friends. Church is relationship building" (1999:196).

Because relationship towards evangelism is connecting with people, going to people, helping people and saying what I have is also available to you. To do relationship practically so that there can be a connection to the living Christ, Sweet says: *"Post-modern evangelism doesn't say to the world, 'Come to church.' Rather, it says to the church, 'Go to the world.' Evangelism in a culture that is transitioning from Christendom to post-Christendom is different. Post-modern evangelism is more John the Baptist than Peter and Paul. Post-modern evangelism is constructing new constituencies for Christ. Post-modern evangelism is recognizing that God is already at work in people's lives before we arrived on the scene, and that our role is helping to see how God is present and active in their lives, calling them home. Post-modern evangelism is not 'I have Jesus, and you don't. How can I get you here so that I can give you Jesus?' but 'you already know Jesus, even if you don't think you know Jesus. How can I help you see and know what you already know, and how can I know and meet your Jesus.'...More John-the-Baptist ministries mean more body evangelism and lifestyle evangelism that emphasizes the quality of living in Christ"* (1999:53-54). Thus, we as Christians must show others how to get a life and this is also what the people from Antioch did in Acts 11:26 and for that reason they were called Christians.

4.10. Resistance against the truth

Post-modern writers have successfully tossed aside those beliefs in Christianity that are called truths and that have classically been understood as truths. Christianity has moved to the position where doctrinal formulas are covered in scepticism. This ethos in post-modernism has arisen from the assumption that there is no unified whole we can call *"reality."* In the post-modern era the terms valid and invalid have become meaningless terms (Grenz 1996:162-165). In the words of Grenz: *"The abandonment of the belief in universal truth entails the loss of any final criterion by*

which to evaluate the various interpretations of reality that complete in the contemporary intellectual realm. In this situation, all human interpretations – including the Christian worldview – are equally valid because all are equally invalid. At best, say the post-moderns, we can judge these interpretations only on the basis of pragmatic standards, on the basis of what works" (1996:163-164).

Janse van Rensburg (2000:34) warns that the solution to the problem of sin in this world can't be found in the renowned philosophers who write on post-modernity. These philosophers' works are read, studied and discussed. However, they are not Christians, they have no regard for the Bible, they act with aggression towards any effort to proclaim absolute truth and some of them act in blatant aggression towards Christianity.

The philosophers Janse van Rensburg refers to are Nietzsche, Heidegger, Derrida and Lyotard. Janse van Rensburg summarises the above post-modernist and philosophical theories as follows *"They may proclaim and substantiate their theories in different ways, but none of their discourses makes it possible to accommodate the truth of the Bible as a universal truth in any way. The collapse of unity and the multiplicity of discourses have made it impossible to choose one truth as 'the truth'. No grand narrative can claim any kind of legitimacy. Instead of the one truth, there is difference, a continuous change of perspectives. This explains the blatant aggression of some of them towards Christianity in general, and the legitimacy of the Bible in particular"* (2000:34). The argument about Heidegger as a post-modern writer and anti-Christian is made clear in the book of Ward where the being of God is not proved. Ward says it as follows: *"Indeed, Heidegger does not merely say that God is not a being; he specifies that He has nothing to do here with Being"* (1997:184). Ward focuses on Derrida as an atheist by quoting Derrida as follows*: "There may be a God, and this God may be pure self-presence; but he cannot be intuited or revealed in the present. Derrida himself inclined to atheism – 'I quite rightly pass for an atheist,' he says – and this is consistent with his argument"* (Ward 1997:165). What is confusing about some post-modern writers is the fact that they say there is no truth, but atheism is the truth.

Janse van Rensburg (2000:13-14) referring to different authors identifies the roots of post-modernism. In identifying the roots we may understand the fruits of post-modernism. Janse van Rensburg refers to Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900) who attacked modernism by announcing that nihilism was at hand. Deist defines nihilism as: *"Denying the existence of any objective authority, and consequently denying the objective existence of notions like truth or morality, maintaining that science, materialism, revolution, and 'the people' are the sole sources of knowledge and morality"* (1992:171). Nietzsche used nihilism to spell the death of God and the fact that man can't be sure of anything. This reasoning resulted in the absence of meaning and an emptiness in existence, causing fear. Janse van Rensburg expresses Nietzsche's approach to Christianity as follows: *"To Nietzsche Christianity is the crutch to which frightened and desperate people cling in order to make the nothingness of their existence bearable"* (2000:13-14). Janse van Rensburg continues on this point about Nietzsche saying: *"From this perspective Christianity must be seen as a product of modernity, for Christianity supplies the objective truth of life after death to calm the fear of death. Thus the irony is that man flees to Christianity, while Christianity is in fact, a product of the very thing that causes pain"* (2000:14).

Janse van Rensburg also identifies Martin Heidegger (1889-1976) as an immense influence in the development of post-modernism by establishing that text is not an independent entity because there is meaningful interplay between the reader and the text (Janse van Rensburg 2000:16-18). Janse van Rensburg's comments on Martin Heidegger: *"The act of dialogue with the text entails, according to Heidegger, that the interpreter should not only deal with the text presented, but should also contribute to the subject matter, thus bringing forth a truer interpretation of the text. There are, however, certain preconditions for any interpretation of the text. Heidegger works with three basic concepts: - What is presented to us must be interpreted (Vorbabe). – What we perceive (Vorzicbt). – What we understand (Vorgriff). The last two, Vorgriff and Vorzicbt, are the instruments that offer new possibilities for understanding the first. Thus, interpretation of the text is made possible by an interaction among all three. Understanding is therefore a process, a continuous happening, and not an act of objective identification. Undoubtedly this resulted in Heidegger's being unable to develop any sort of ethics"* (2000:17).

Janse van Rensburg refers to Jacques Derrida (1930-) as the opponent of structure in language. This opposition to structure in language caused the absence of fixed principles in knowledge and morality (Janse van Rensburg 2000:21-24). About Derrida's absence of faith Ward says: *"His trace of a gift, a promise, a yes, a hope bears none of the specifics of Christian proclamation or Jewish eschatology"* (1995:256).

Jean-Francois Lyotard (1924-) popularised the term *"post-modernism"* and in this process argued that the existence of God and religion is based purely on the assumption that God exists and Christianity represents the abuse of authoritative force (Janse van Rensburg 2000:24-128).

4.11.   The post-modernist and the problem of sin

When we look at sin from a Biblical perspective, it is disobedience to God. Sin in the context of the Old Testament is identified as actions against the will of God; when His specific orders are not adhered to; when God is not acknowledged; when God is not trusted and trust is misplaced; when charitable actions are absent; when widows and orphans are ignored. After the Ten Commandments many other laws were added that placed a heavy burden on the nation of Israel. The reason for all the laws was to order Israel in the wilderness and later in the Promised Land in a peaceful manner. Later all these laws and others became an unbearable burden (du Toit 2000:154-155).

Sin in the New Testament was made worse by the evil forces and the Devil who came to kill and steal. Jesus complicated sin by stating that certain thoughts about killing and sexual relationships are sin before the actual deed. Here it must be remembered that Jesus didn't proclaim Christianity, because the salvation message that came from the crucifixion and resurrection was not a reality as yet. In the New Testament sickness was seen as a manifestation of sin and evil (du Toit 2000:154-155).

Regarding the question about the origin of sin, the answers may range from a simple statement that it came from the devil or from Adam and Eve to complicated philosophical theories. But in all these reasonings we can identify 'general sin'

because of the fall of man and 'personal sin' because of wrongs people do. Since our relationship with God consists out of loyalty, connectedness and love. This relationship is not mechanical but filled with a dynamic and creative relationship. These dynamics can cause our relationship with God to fail and in this sum of our relationship with God sin originates. Thus, sin is not from God but can be born from our relationship with God (du Toit 2000:153-154).

Jesus summarises the relationship between God and man in Matt. 22:37-39 when he said: *"Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind."* And *"Love your neighbour as yourself."* Here a framework was given to understand what sin is and isn't. Jesus gives clarity about both the *"how"* and the *"what"* in our relationship with both God and man. In the post-modern theories what and how we must believe is not clear, as Martin explains: *"Post-modern theories which are primarily concerned with philosophical abstraction, tend to focus on how humans know rather than what they know. Such theories are epistemologically based critiques on what passes for knowledge"* (Heelas, P, Martin, D. & Morris, P. 1998:103). Craffert agrees with this post-modern argument when he says: *"The outstanding attribute of the post-modern world has in the first place nothing to do with how the world looks but everything to do with how the world works"* (Muller 2002:74).

Towns defines sin as: *"An act, attitude, or response against the Person or law of God"* (Towns 2003:259). From a post-modernist view of the non-existence of true order and values, this definition is meaningless. Griffin doesn't agree with this and says: *"The modern mind, with its faith in order and progress, is evolving into a post-modern mind that is relativistic and nihilistic. This post-modern mind rejects the modern belief that human reason can discover the true order of the world; it even rejects the belief that there is a true order. The ideal of a comprehensive vision of reality is, hence, completely rejected. Neither philosophy, theology, neither science can provide any support for values or any sort of orientation for life. Theologians have acquiesced to this situation, toning their theologies down to fit the secular mind-set. The most we can be told by philosophers or theologians is that we must decide for ourselves. However we are then told that everything is meaningless, which implies that our decision itself will be meaningless"* (Griffin & Smith 1989:19).

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4.12. The post-modernist and the answer to sin

For du Toit (2000:158-159) sin in the post-modern time must be approached from a different aspect and then the causes identified must then be dealt with. Examples are: in hostility the reasons for the hostility must be worked through; in homosexuality the complexity of the situation must be acknowledged and factors causing this should be dealt with. Du Toit summarises the methods of dealing with sin in our post-modern time as a softer, more pastoral and therapeutic approach without ignoring or relativizing sin (du Toit 2000:158). This is a non-judgemental approach where we all live in the mercy of God. Du Toit identifies forgiveness and reconciliation as central in all our actions and approaches to sin (2000:158-159).

Bridger (1998:1) through his discussion group by the name of Agnostic Anonymous identified three obstacles to the Christian belief in the post-modern age. They are the relation between science and faith, the problem of suffering and the person of Jesus Christ. He (Bridger 1998:132) concluded that the obstacles to Christian belief are not intellectual or moral, but fear. This fear is towards a relationship with Christ Jesus where truth, meaning and purpose will be found. Such a person will receive new life, new horizons and new challenges. Liberation will take place towards loving Christ, others and us. All of this newness will flow from a relationship with the One who made us, who died for us and who rose for us. Jesus must be met through the Biblical message.

Du Toit (2000:60) identifies three phases of Bible reading in the post-modern time. The first phase is the naïve reading of the Bible in the way we were taught as children. This is the literal understanding and interpretation of the Bible on one level. In the second phase the contents are examined very critically and we compare the contents with scientific data. For du Toit (2000:61) this phase causes uncertainties, doubt and insecurities. Then the third phase, the second naïve reading of the Bible when the circle is completed and one is able to read the Word with new amazement. In the third phase one can become again a believer in the Bible where truths are discovered in a sense for the first time (du Toit 2000:61).

Thompson agrees with du Toit in that when written words are read there is only that which is seen. In the words of Thompson: *"According to the post-modern movement in philosophy, you cannot get beyond the language and signs by which people communicate: there are no hidden meanings – everything is as it is perceived to be"* (1997:153). We may now ask the question what is available in the Bible. Nicol (2000:177) in his book "Religion that works" explains what can be found in the Bible, in this post-modern time that we are living in. Nicol says: *"What do we have in the Bible? In the first place it is not theory but life. Not words to get information about God but to get in contact with God"* (2000:177). Sweet explains the use of the Bible in this post-modern world as follows: *"The Bible is a book of promises and potentials, not predictions. Promises are fulfilled and potentials are realized in ways that could not have been imagined at the time by those making the promise or seeing the potential. Biblical promises have a 'transformable quality' that enables them to be fulfilled in ways that were very different from how they were originally understood"* (1999:25).

Du Toit (2000:43-50) explains the above three phases of Bible reading and the movement from phase one to phase three in terms of paradigms and their progress. Paradigm is a way of thinking. Pre-modernism, modernism and post-modernism can be regarded as paradigms in which specific thoughts were the norm of the time. Du Toit (2000:46-50) explains the functioning of paradigms by using Thomas Kuhn's book *"The structure of scientific revolution"* (1970) in which paradigms are explained in terms of paradigm phases and paradigm movement. According to this explanation paradigms work as follows: After the pre-paradigm period or commencement period of a certain paradigm or thought structure a normal phase follows. During the normal phase there is stability and peace. The faith tradition is maintained. Everybody understands everything in the same manner and to all questions the answers are the same. When there is a change in the thoughts about the current paradigm then the integrity of the current paradigm is under suspicion. This can't be tolerated and counter measurements come into play to keep the present paradigm in command. This tension continues because of counter measurements until the system of questions and answers becomes unstable and untrustworthy. At the moment of insight a switch takes place towards a new paradigm. The movement to a new paradigm can be a slow process or a sudden happening. Over a period the new paradigm establishes its own

system of questions and answers. This new paradigm brings to its supporters stability and peace. This paradigm theory is also applicable to the development from the pre-modern time through to the post-modern time (du Toit 2000:43-48).

Janse van Rensburg (2000:2) agrees with du Toit (2000:43-50) in that we do move into certain beliefs, frame of mind or paradigm when we gather and arrange information so that it becomes our conviction. Janse van Rensburg (2000:2) calls this gaining and arranging of information epistemology and he explains: *"How do I get into a certain frame of mind? We get into a certain frame of mind when we gather knowledge about a particular subject and arrange that knowledge in such a way that it becomes our conviction. The method of gaining and arranging information is called epistemology"* (2000:2).

Janse van Rensburg (2000:1) uses the metaphor "frame of mind" to explain a paradigm. Everything we do, plan and think including sin, is determined by our frame of mind. Thus, our frame of mind or paradigm determines our perspective and conviction on life, the world, sin and God. By implication a post-modern paradigm is never absolute but always contextual (Janse van Rensburg 2000:2). The post-modern person's conviction about whether a certain situation or actions are sin or not, will come after a process of gathering information on the subject and then arranging that information to become a conviction or not. This process is called epistemology. Thus the solution to sin is within this process called epistemology (Janse van Rensburg 2000:2). Janse van Rensburg uses a metaphor of a painting to explain the movement towards conviction: *"If my frame of mind is realism, then I will organise the paint on the canvas in such a way that the picture will be a realistic interpretation of life. In my frame of reference is abstraction, I will arrange the paint in such a way that I give an impression of what I paint. The frame of mind (paradigm) determines the painting, while the epistemology is the theory of how the paint should be organised on the canvas to fit the paradigm: that is, how the knowledge should be gathered and organised in order to come to a conclusion. From this metaphor we can see that the epistemological premise indeed co-determines the manifestation of a foundational theory"* (2000:2).

Because of our faith we move into contrast with post-modern thoughts. Christians can move and argue with any philosopher or post-modern thinker, but only up to a point. We as Christians have a point or centre and He is Jesus of Nazareth, who is the eternal Word present among us (Grenz 1996:162-165). Grenz summarises this thought by saying: *"To put this in another way, we might say that because of our faith in Christ, we cannot totally affirm the central tenet of post-modernism as defined by Lyotard – the rejection of the metanarrative. We may welcome Lyotard's conclusion when applied to the chief concern of his analysis – namely, the scientific enterprise. Indeed, we can live quite well without such myths as the progress of knowledge. But we cannot accede to the extension of Lyotard's thesis to reality as a whole"* (1996:164).

It is also the duty of theologians to be watchful about certain aspects derived from post-modern thoughts, especially the tendency to embrace varying points of view as equally valid and to deny the existence of an objective reality (Barrett 2000:11).

In the midst of all the arguing and reasoning about this post-modern time and its future and past, Tracy says the following about the presence of God in this post-modern period: *"No one knows, I believe, where those post-modern suspicions and retrievals will finally lead. But this is clear: amid all the shouting of the present, the reality of God has returned to the center of theology. This is not the time to rush out new propositions on the reality of God. This is rather the time to allow wonder again at the overwhelming mystery of God – as some physicists and cosmologists seem so much more skilled at doing than many theologians are. This is the time for theologians to learn to disallow the logos of modernity to control their thoughts on God as we learn anew to be attentive to God. We must learn somehow, in God's absent presence, to be still and know God is God"* (1994:54).

In their study Dormor et al (2003:17-35) have found that the mystery of God is real in the post-modern context through the three 'wisdom books' in the Old Testament namely Proverbs, Job and Ecclesiastes. These three 'wisdom books' offer an effective and unusual path to faith in the post-modern context. Dormor et al explain: *"Through various rhetorical strategies the hearer is invited to complete the connection, to reason out something that is implied. Thus the teaching is offered*

without heavy authoritarian insistence; rather, the proverbs serve as invitations to reflection, in which the listener is expected to make connections toward which only hints are supplied…Contemporary culture has an uneasy relationship with tradition. If modernity rejected it, in the hope that reason will lead to new truths, then post-modernity has questioned the limitless power of reason. Amidst the undermining of old certainties are a hunger for ancient traditions – and a longing to know how to make sense of their plurality" (2003:19-20).

The answer to sin where approaches from different dimensions are followed through a relationship with Christ Jesus as revealed to us in the Bible must be done through the church so that, the post-modern's frame of mind can open to the mystery of God.

4.13.   What is understood by *"church"*?

Lets first look at a number of definitions of church. Deist, divides in "A Concise Dictionary of Theological and Related Terms" the church into six different categories. According to Deist these categories are: *"1. The totality of Christian believers. 2. A local congregation. 3. A building used for worship. 4. Public worship. 5. A particular denomination. 6. Religion and religious affairs. 7. The body of office-bearers of a denomination"* (1992:44). This definition of Deist is focused on helping students of Biblical Studies and theology to find their way through the maze of terminology used in scholarly literature.

Murphy defines the church from what the New Testament says about what the church is and what the church is not and puts it as follows: *"The New Testament never allows the church to see herself primarily as a special people ministering to themselves and to God, isolated from a lost humanity. The New Testament everywhere presents the church as God's messenger to that spiritually dead humanity"* (1975:xii). This definition of Murphy is given from the perspective of the Great Commission as recorded in Matthews 28:18-20 *"Then Jesus came to them and said, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of age.' "* Gibbs and Coffey agree with this

definition of Murphy and point to the other gospels (Mark. 16:15-18; Luke 24:45-49; John 17:18; 20:21) where each version of the Great Commission contributes a different emphasis, but at the same time underline the one objective of sending the church out into the world bearing the good news (2001:59).

Peters (1972:199-241) defines the church in the light of the New Testament where world evangelism is the imperative and this he does by pointing to Mark 13:10 that says *"And the gospel must first be preached to all nations."* Peters makes a study of the word "church" in the New Testament. He identifies the Greek word ekklesia that conveys the concept of church. The word ekklesia is a compound taken from kaleo *"to call"* and ek, *"out from."* Thus the compound verb means, *"to call out from,"* and the noun means *"the called out ones."* But Peters (1972:200) emphasises two dimensions of the word namely that ekklesia means *"called unto"* and that ekklesia is a very positive word not focusing on moving away from the world but rather obeying God. In Peters own words: *"However, the usage in the New Testament has more the meaning of 'called unto.' The word ekklesia, which always has a positive implication, refers to an assembly of people who are related to God and obey God, rather than a negative conception of those called away from the world"* (1972:200). Still focusing on the word ekklesia from the perspective of classical Greek, the Septuagint and the New Testament; the church is both *"a called out"* and *"called unto"* people. The church people are of a special kind and their calling is for a specific purpose. When the church conducts it affairs, it is done on the principles of equality and brotherhood. But still we are uniquely related to God, (Peters 1972:200).

Peters (1972:199-241) has argued and explained what church is from studying the word "church," studying metaphors to express the nature of the church and studying the designation of the church. Peters defines the church ideal as follows: *"I define the church ideal as that body of people which has been called unto God by means of the gospel of Jesus Christ, brought into a life relationship with Jesus Christ by faith, and baptized into the body of Jesus Christ by the Holy Spirit, constituting a brotherhood in the household of God, a peculiar people to serve a unique purpose of God in this age with a blessed hope of occupying a unique position with the Lord in the ages to come"* (1972:222). Therefore Peters defined the local church as follows:

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"A local church may be defined as that ordered body of professing baptized believers who, on the basis of common experiences of the Lord and convictions of the Word, in the bond of mutual love and understanding, in the interest of common concerns and causes, and for the purposes of mutual spiritual benefits and fellowship, assemble themselves together according to the Word of God, conduct worship services in an organized and orderly manner, observe the Lord's ordinances, perform such functions as they deem advantageous to themselves and their community according to the Word of God, and discharge such other responsibilities as they judge their duty before God and man" (1972:202).

Koopman and Vosloo approach the church from a moral orientation in a post-modern time and define the church as: *"The church is the space for moral development. It is the ekklesia where stories are heard, where role models are identified and observed. Where practises consisting out of prayer and Holy Communion form character"* (2002:58).

Whatever we may say about church, it must remain a company of people sent by the Lord to others (Stumme 1986:9).

4.14. What is the church suppose to do?

In the post-modern world there are a multitude of truths and Sweet says the following about the task of the church: *"One of the church's great roles is as the great dissenter of every age, the bearer of unwelcome truths, the rebuffer of the wisdoms of the world"* (1999:21). To do this practically Sweet says we must do church *"our way"* and be unsuccessful or do it the *"people's way"* and be very successful (Sweet 1999:306). The people's way is to attend to their spiritual problems or needs by introducing Jesus as the Saviour of the world and not as Saviour from the world (Sweet 1999:325 and 21). Only empowered Christians who realise their spiritual potential and gifts will be successful in introducing Christ as Saviour (Schwarz 2001:44).

For Sweet the actions in a successful church is living out of Biblical traditions and not living on traditions (Sweet 1999:91). In practice tradition will cause church health to

flourish and when anything is healthy there will be growth. But, each generation has different cultural experiences and according to Sweet this means: *"Each generation operates in a different linguistic, sartorial, and mythical system from the preceding generations. In religious terms this means that every generation must be reached for Christ differently. If we are to pass the baton of a living faith in Jesus Christ on to the next generation, we must find ways of handing it to them in ways whereby they can receive it. Just as Jesus laid down his life for us, so we are to 'lay down' some things in order to pass the gospel 'from generation to generation' "* (1999:175).

4.15. The post-modernist and the church

The post-modernist has placed the accumulation of material things in the background. However, for the post-modernist the following has moved to the fore: self-discipline, meditation, mindedness, and wisdom. The post-modernist wants to be spiritual since intellectual reason and technological experiences left the modernist with many unsolved problems (Möller FP 2002:2) and (Sweet 1999:411).

During modern times the post-modernist was fitted into ideologies that either have been exhausted or expired. From this experience the post-modernist doesn't want to be fitted into anything and this includes the church. For this reason the post-modernist must rather be fitted together with people and not into groups. This fitting together must be done through love towards the truth. The church will be more acceptable to the post-modernist when the church doesn't look like a crowd, so boundaries must not be visible (Sweet L 1999:387-388). Nicol (2000:188) identifies a movement in the post-modern time from the individual towards the community. In the words of Nicol: *"Another advantage of the transition from the modern to the post-modern time is the need in the religious world to move away from individualism to a community of people"* (2000:188).

The church of today must resemble Paul's sermon in Acts 17:22. Here the post-modern person must be told that the unknown he/she is looking for has a name. That name is Jesus Christ a person, a God who is present through His Spirit. In this situation there are only two choices, namely Christ or sink. When this Jesus is introduced it must be remembered that the post-modernist has had a constant diet of

TV, the result is an addiction to violence and an imagination now replaced by images (Sweet 1999:324-355).

God calls believers to live in different cultures and times. The church must be equipped to articulate and embody the gospel in the context of post-modern thinking. Grenz (1996:167) proposes that the church must minister the gospel in four (4) different ways namely post-individualistic, post-rationalistic, post-dualistic and post-noeticentric.

First in the post-individualistic approach the emphasis must be on the community of faith in our evangelistic efforts. As Grenz explains: *"In the post-modern world, we can no longer follow the lead of modernity and position the individual at center stage. Instead, we must remind ourselves that our faith is highly social. The fact that God is the social Trinity-Father, Son, and Spirit gives us some indication that the divine purpose for creation is directed toward the individual-in-relationship. Our gospel must address the human person within the context of the communities in which they are embedded"* (Grenz 1996:168-169).

Secondly in the post-rationalistic approach to the gospel, humanity doesn't consist solely in our cognitive dimension. Scientific enterprise and intellectual reflection cannot put us in touch with every dimension of reality or lead us to God's truth (Grenz 1996:169-170). For Grenz (1996:171-172) the post-rationalistic solution is a personal relationship with God. In the words of Grenz: *"At the heart of being a Christian is a personal encounter with God in Christ that shapes and moulds us. On the basis of this encounter, we seek to bring into an understandable whole the diverse strands of our personal lives by appealing to certain categories. Prominent among these are 'sin' and 'grace,' 'alienation' and 'reconciliation,' 'helplessness' and 'divine power,' 'having been lost' but 'now being saved'. It is in this context of making sense out of our life by means of recounting the story of a transformative religious experience that doctrinal propositions find their importance. Thus, the encounter with God in Christ is both facilitated by and expressed in categories that are propositional in nature. The categories that form the cradle for this experience in turn constitute the grid through which the believer comes to view all of life"* (Grenz 1996:170-171).

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Thirdly, when the gospel is articulated in a post-modern world, it will be done in a post-dualistic way. Dualism during modern times was focused on soul and body. In other words, thinking and physical substance. Saving souls ignored the body. Now in the post-modern period there is an increasing interest in the human person as a unified whole. The gospel must speak to human beings in their entirety (Grenz 1996:171). Grenz explains: *"But the post-modern Christian holism must go beyond reuniting the soul and body torn asunder in the Enlightenment. As we noted earlier, our gospel must also put the human person back into the social and environmental context that forms and nourishes us. We must not dwell merely on the individual in isolation but also on the person-in-relation ships"* (1996:172).

Finally, the post-modern articulation of the gospel will be post-noeticentric. In other words post-noeticentric emphasizes the relevance of faith for every dimension of life (Grenz 1996:173). Grenz elaborates on the post-noeticentric approach to the gospel: *"It refuses to allow commitment to Christ to remain merely an intellectual endeavour, a matter solely of assent to orthodox propositions. Commitment to Christ must also take its lodging in the heart. In fact, the post-modern world provides the occasion for us to reappropriate the older pietist belief that a right head has value apart from the right heart. The Christian gospel is concerned not only with the reformulation of our intellectual commitments but also with the transformation of our character and the renewal of our entire lives as believers"* (1996:173).

4.16. The solution to the post-modern situation

The solution is through the church as a worldly reality, introducing Christ's work of conciliation as part of God's eternal plan and purpose with man (Möller 1998, 4:41). Identifying both the post-modern ideology as the problem and the church as the solution and instrument, a correct attempt should be instituted to mobilize the church in reaching those on their way to eternal condemnation. Bridger (1998:132) argues that the reason why people don't want to choose faith in Jesus Christ is not intellectual or moral, but fearful. This is fear of committing oneself to something, which might change one's life (Bridger 1998:132).

4.17. Positive points in the encounter between the church and the post-modernist

The modernist was against everything with a historic background. This was visible during the modern era where architects erected buildings in the form of plain boxes of steel and glass as a reaction against historic forms. Now the post-modernist is restoring old buildings and even erecting new ones according to old designs (Möller 2002:3). This move towards rediscovering the past is also happening in Christianity. Historic Christianity with its profound depths in: doctrines, liturgies and disciplines are of significance to the post-modern person. The post-modernist's interest in the supernatural and mysterious (Möller 2002:3) must be used as a door into or towards Jesus by way of the church. This accoutrement or attribute of the post-modernist must be used as a point of entrance for the gospel of Jesus Christ.

The post-modernists believe that they are in control of their lives and that they have a lot of power. They believe Satan's lie as recorded in Gen 3:5 *"you will be like God"* (Sweet 1999:288). Post-modernists are prone to go to church to worship themselves. In this desire to be pumped up, they must receive the truth that God is God and they are not.

Everything the post-modernists do is about an experience. Examples are TV, Internet, extreme sport and so forth. The church must provide the opportunity for an experience. Jesus Christ can be introduced as an experience. If this is not done a generation will be lost (Sweet L 1999:192-194).

The post-modernist is living in a world where everything is getting simpler. Highly complicated technology is making life simpler. This must also happen in church. Preaching, ministry and being a child of God must be simpler (Sweet 1999:167).

4.18. Establishing a model in the post-modern world

My approach in establishing a model in the post-modern world is to identify both those dimensions that must not be done and those that must be done.

4.18.1. Dimensions to be avoided in establishing a model in the post-modern world

Because people have needs, preferences and gifts, it is only human to develop a model that would satisfy those needs, preferences and gifts. Such a model will not be focused on doing the Lord's work, but the focus will be on the self.

Focusing and identifying criteria for establishing a model is a good approach. But, when one or more of the criteria are dysfunctional then so will be the model.

Another way to launch a model is to take a number of models and identify a working principle in each of those models. Then those identified working principles are reconciled into a model. The question that arises in this advance towards a working model is: Is the working principle working and if so according to whose standards.

A definite dead end is to accept any number of models without qualification. Because models suggest different priorities, such an approach will establish a model that is in conflict with itself.

On the other hand, to accept only one of the models that Dulles has mentioned in his book *"Models of the Church"* will lead to imbalances and distortions. The reason is that the models Dulles mentions, only function according to one or two principles.

The most inviting wrong way of establishing a model is to take high-profile churches, known for their success and use them as blueprints. Imitations won't succeed because different dimensions influence different churches, including political, social, material resources and environmental factors. New wine must always be poured into new wineskins. We can't cut a template from a blueprint. However, we must learn from growing churches (Gibbs & Coffey 2001:11).

4.18.2. Do's in establishing a model in the post-modern world

We must realise that each model has its uses and limitations. Both the limitations and uses were born out of different points of view. Thus the solution is not only to focus

on different points of view, but also to get hold of God's view on a model of the church that will function in this post-modern time. We must not limit the communication from God to us, but rather open all communication avenues from God to us. Examples of such avenues are: lines of communication between different theological schools and traditions, trends in church history, happenings within social movements, the richness of church heritage, responsiveness of men to the Holy Spirit and the free initiatives and working of the Holy Spirit. All of this boils down to us knowing what God's purpose is for the church today.

Realising that the only church model that will work is one that is compatible with the post-modern person is the first step in establishing a working model. Knowing that specific types of people will be drawn to specific types of models we must focus on a model that will draw the post-modern individual to the church. However, the model must still allow for progress towards people moving into the Kingdom of God (Dulles 1987:191). In each step towards establishing a model the message must not be compromised.

4.18.3. An effective model in the post-modern world

The complexities of the church incapacitate the ability of a model to give a complete picture of the church. Bevans explains: *"Using models is a way of dealing with a complex, highly differentiated reality. Even though models are not, so to speak, the axe, they can function as a kind of wedge; even though they cannot bring the whole picture into focus, they can provide an angle of vision"* (1992:25). To bring all that was said in this study together and into perspective, we must do church our way and fail, or do church *"the post-modernist way"* and be successful. Every generation must be reached for Christ and every generation must be reached with a method that will make the unchangeable good news effective.

The principle that must be given is, life through contact with God and not more information about God. Since the post-modernist is disillusioned with human effort, manipulation, human reason, rationalism, human wisdom, worldly ideas and all those actions that established the modern era with the intention to establish a better world, but was not able to deliver the promise. The crisis the post-modernist faces is a lack

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of the presence of God. Pope Benedict XVI agrees with the post-modernist when he says that the greatest crisis the world and the church is facing is *"the absence of God"* and he continues by saying the solution is *"the presence of God"* (Moynihan 2005:4). The absence of God is dealt with in the post-modern world where everything is permissible through spiritual help found in books, videos and a multitude of other self help sources. These resources or any available *"means"* are tapped into as part of spiritual help. For the post-modernist this approach is permissible as the post-modernist culture allows "god" to be approached without rules through any avenue. The post-modernist obtains knowledge through any means that pleases them and is free to pursue anything. In this freedom the post-modernist longs to have more of God but doesn't know how to get hold of God. From this perspective the church should recognize what God is doing in our time and become part of those actions. The open door for the church into the post-modern world is the fact that the post-modernist wants to experience being human. God has placed a craving in the post-modernist being for experience. The quest for experience moves the post-modernist to be interested in how the world works.
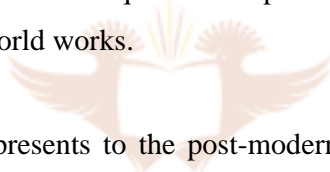
However, what the church presents to the post-modernist must be proven as being correct through other means than fallen human reason. The post-modernist will accept the church when the church is presented as an experience with variety and without control and manipulation. The church model where experience is accessible was established during the beginning of the previous century, when people from different parts of the world were searching for the reality of God, and the Pentecostal movement was established. The need at that time was the same as today. The need was and is today to move away from rational and emotional religion towards the reality of God. The post-modernist in his search for an experience of power wants to have an encounter as a spirit being with God as a person. This connection will be made when the church becomes an element of what God is already doing. The Pentecostal model will not differ from the six models of Dulles, but will show that there is more available than what Dulles offers through the six models. Even the missionary dimension will only become real when God as a person is part of missions. This has already been highlighted in the missionary dimension in chapter 3.

The church is attached to the purposes of God. God's purpose with the post-modernist is to save them from sin, so that they will become His bride and body. In other words, the post-modernist was given to Christ (cf. John 17:2) and the post-modernist must become Christ-like (cf. 1 John 3:2). In practice the Pentecostal model would be to organise the church as both God's work place and God's instrument. Thus the Kingdom principles will not only be heard but also be established and made known on earth, so that both individuals and communities can become part of God's plan.

Only when the Pentecostal model is authentic and pure will God reveal himself though such a model. In such a model the basic theological accent is that God can only be known through His self-revelation. Post-modernists become part of God's self-revelation when the church is in the hands of God, the people pray, the attitude is one of dedication towards God and all of this is supported by the Holy Spirit. Still God's self-revelation stays an act of God that humans can't control but only faithfully pray for. The post-modernist will not be impressed by rational objective dogmatic truths, but will be drawn to transcendence. Thus, the good news must be a happening in which the reality of God is visible through lives that change, manifestation of spiritual gifts, healings, in-filling and baptising with the Holy Spirit.

The Pentecostal model will only agree with the mentioned models of Dulles when the models are avenues towards the self-revelation of God through the work of the Holy Spirit. In practice this will mean: Institutional actions in the church must take place in the name of the Head of the church, Jesus Christ; The mystical communion or from a Pentecostal perspective, spiritual community, is possible because of the personal relationship between Jesus and each individual member of the congregation; The Church as Sacrament and any other sacrament only has power in the hands of God, this is also valid for the herald model; Service will be powerful when it is done differently from the worldly welfare service, in other words, power will be present when service is done in the name of the Lord; The church as community of disciples with its ongoing relationship with Christ through the Holy Spirit must be visible like a written and published document, as Paul mentioned in 2 Cor. 3:2-3.

There are definite dangers in the Pentecostal model. Because of the revelation of God within this model there is the temptation for fanatic leadership to use psychological methods to mimic or imitate the revelation of God. An example of this is the use of mass suggestion to suggest an encounter with God. Psychological actions in the church, for example to take hands across the congregation as a sign of oneness or to sing with emotion to allow a bigger openness towards the Holy Spirit are not wrong. However, when these actions are held as revelations from God and suggestions are taken as an encounter with the Holy Spirit, then they are wrong. A second danger is leadership believing that the self-revelation of God is because of the leader's excellence. Pride is always part of the temptation of fallen human nature. Other dangers like the extreme focus on money, God as different ideas, other skills and programs about God and so forth, are not discussed in this research but will be a useful research project.

May this short-dissertation be an inspiration to experience more of God as a person, through the presence of the Holy Spirit.
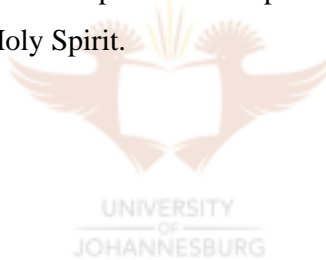
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