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Corruption in South Africa's liberal democratic context

Equipping Christian leaders and communities for their role in countering corruption

Edited by
Ferdinand Kruger & Ben de Klerk

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AOSIS

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■ Peer review declaration

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■ Research Justification

This book is meant for academics in the fields of theology and ecclesial management, for business leaders and governmental authorities in the private and public domain. This collected work by mainly practical theologians reflects on the phenomenon of corruption in the liberal democracy of post-apartheid South Africa. Liberal democracy has considerable salience in the contemporary world. Not only is it the form that many of the world's most powerful and influential nations approve of, but it is a political system that is being tried – and used – by many formerly developing countries. South Africa is described as predominantly Christian. In such a context corruption is not to be expected. However, it is strongly prevalent. It undermines the values of both democracy and Christianity. Not only does corruption promote a general lack of trust in institutions and leadership, but it stimulates a perpetual culture of corruption that invades all spheres of life. The research is based on a qualitative empirical study. Its aim is to stimulate discourse in theology and related disciplines. Data were collected by means of interviews with political, business, church, and labour union managers and leaders in South Africa's Gauteng area, who have experienced corruption. This area is the hub of economic, executive political and public office activities in South Africa. Respondents were specifically asked how their experience of corruption was informed by their norms, which in turn were influenced by their religious convictions and cultural conventions. The book suggests strategies for redressing the current 'culture of corruption'. Although the chapters represent different perspectives, the shared objective is to emphasise that corruption is unethical, to describe and explain why it is taking place and how the situation should appear. The explanation focuses on the negative consequence of corruption: it does not respect human dignity – the 'otherness' of others; it exacerbates poverty; it weakens religious values and norms; it is not conducive to social cohesion in the country. The authors also share the theological premise that God is present in this world. In the kingdom of God, believers are encouraged to participate in the 'clean-up' process which includes combating the phenomenon of corruption. This book roots theological research and reflection in the real life of both believers and non-believers who consider a 'clean' world without corruption as an absolute necessity for a country characterised by the ideals of liberal democracy. The book will stimulate on-going transdisciplinary research focusing on unethical lifestyles, and it will also encourage church leaders to engage with managers in other spheres of society, such as politics and economics in order to counter the evil of corrupt practices. The research outcomes are relevant not only in the South African context, but also globally.

Prof. Dr Andries G. van Aarde
AOSIS Chief Editor: Scholarly Books

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List of abbreviations appearing in the Text and Notes

AG	Auditor-General
ANC	African National Congress
CCAR	Country Corruption Assessment Report
CPI	Corruption Perceptions Index
DRC	Dutch Reformed Church
GKSA	Reformed Churches of South Africa
ICC	Inter-church Council
ICT	Institute of Contextual Theology
ISS	Institute for Security Studies,
NACF	National Anti-Corruption Forum
NGK	Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
NHK	Reformed Church
PSC	Public Service Commission
RSA	Republic of South Africa
SACC	South African Council of Churches
SAPF	South African Police Force,
TRC	Truth and Reconciliation Commission
UN	United Nations
WARC	World Alliance of Reformed Churches
WCC	World Council of Churches

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Part 1

Descriptive-empirical perspectives

Corruption in South Africa's liberal democratic context, and challenges faced by Christian leaders

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■ Introduction

Despite having been quoted so often as to be almost a cliché, Lord John Acton's (1834–1902) observation has lost none of its validity over the intervening years: 'Power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely. Great men are almost always bad men'.[1]

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1. This observation was made in a letter dated 03 April 1887 to Bishop Mandell Creighton, published in *Historical Essays and Studies*, J.N. Figgis and R.V. Laurence (eds.), Macmillan, London, 1907.

Indeed, corruption is a phenomenon that seems to be endemic in human society, although it is most commonly associated with totalitarian governments and their exercise of absolute power. Corruption, however, exists even in democratic systems where it is not expected that power-abuse would thrive; testifying to the accuracy of the often overlooked first half of Acton's assertion.

Although corruption seems to be a universal problem and even thrives in refined democratic systems, it seems to have an especially severe impact on the African continent. Calderisi compares the prevalence and effects of corruption in the African context with other regions and concludes (Calderisi 2006):

> Corruption is endemic in Africa for the same reasons as elsewhere. But it hurts the continent more than other regions, is more brazen, and accepted more readily. As much of the elite are [*sic*] involved, and the poor are powerless, there is little pressure for change. (p. 90)

This book is the result of a research project that was designed with the empirical results compiled from interviews with Christian leaders. These Christian leaders find themselves at the heart of the field of tension because of the effects of corruption. Corruption is our point of departure for connecting our theological theory with the challenges faced in real-world conditions on grassroots level. In the consecutive chapters the authors provide a picture, and deploy the research in, firstly, analysing and interpreting the instances of corruption in our society. Secondly, normative and strategic theories are offered with constant reference to, and in interaction with, our interpretation of the above-mentioned interviews and the contexts in which they arose.

In this book, the authors describe the design of their practical-theological study regarding the nature of corruption in the liberal democracy of the Republic of South Africa (RSA). The empirical results from a qualitative study amongst Christian leaders regarding the challenges faced by them in our current democratic environment are incorporated. Utilising the research methodology of practical theology, this book explores:

- The nature of corruption.
- Some of its major root causes in a South African context.
- Possible contributions that the Christian tradition can make in addressing corruption.
- Possible strategic approaches that Christian leaders can consider in order to combat the problematics involved in corrupt behaviour.

Description of corruption in the South African liberal democratic context

The liberal democratic system: Open to corruption despite its refined form

The concept of 'liberal democracy' has considerable salience in the contemporary world. Not only is it the form that many of the world's most powerful and influential nations approve of, but it is a political system that is being tried by many formerly developing countries (Bollen 1993:1209). According to Freedom House's[2]

2. Freedom House is an international non-governmental organization (NGO) based in Washington, DC, that conducts research and advocacy on democracy, political freedom and human rights. It publishes an annual report assessing the degree of perceived democratic freedoms in each country.

annual assessment of the global state of democracy, nations that bear the character of a liberal democracy include the following: the European Union, Norway, Iceland, Switzerland, Japan, Argentina, Brazil, Chile, South Korea, Taiwan, USA, India, Canada, Israel, Mexico, South Africa, Australia, and New Zealand (Freedom House 2011).

A liberal democracy is a form of a representative democracy that is characterised by the constitutionally specified election process through which a government is put into place. A liberal democracy manifests in a constitutional state under the rule of law (German: *Rechtstaat*) (Strauss 2008:182). Bollen (1993:1209) defines a liberal democracy as a political system that allows political liberties and democratic rule. Political liberties exist to the extent that the people of a country have the freedom to express a variety of political opinions in various media, and the freedom to form or to participate in any political group. Democratic rule (with the guarantee of political rights) exists to the extent that a national government is accountable to the general population and that each individual is entitled to participate in the government directly or through representatives.

A liberal democracy can be seen to some extent as a refined form of a democracy that is aimed at moderating and preventing the unbalanced application of basic democratic ideas. An example of such an unbalanced application is the demand that the will of the majority should prevail under *all* circumstances (majoritarianism) even if it oppresses minority groups. In a liberal democracy the praxis of society is moderated by a constitution that emphasises protection of the rights of minorities. These

rights normally include freedom of speech and assembly, freedom of religion, the right to private property and privacy, equality before the law, and due process under the rule of law (Fourie 2011:1). The constitution grants a democratically elected government the power to harmonise and balance interests of citizens in a truly retributive sense. The primary concern of a government within a just state is, therefore, to maintain a public legal order in which political freedoms, civil freedoms and societal freedoms are guaranteed (Strauss 2008:194).

Although the concept of a liberal democracy aims at providing justice and equal opportunities for all people in a particular society, it is apparent that even this refined form of a political system cannot guarantee a better life for all. One example of a notoriously undemocratic element at work even in countries noted for their free, open and democratic societies is the prevalence of endemic corruption. Defining corruption operationally (and broadly) as 'the abuse of entrusted power for private gain', the 2014 report of Transparency International rates South Africa, one of the younger liberal democracies of the world, 67th out of 175 countries on the Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI),[3] with a score of 44 on a scale of 1 to 100 (corrupt to non-corrupt). In the same report, one of the world's most powerful and influential democracies, the USA, ranks 17th with a score

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3. *The Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index ranks* countries in terms of the degree to which corruption is perceived to exist amongst public officials and politicians. It is a composite index, a poll of polls, drawing on corruption-related data from expert and business surveys carried out by a variety of independent and reputable institutions. On the list the 180th place points to the country with the most instances of corruption. Each country on the list is also measured on a scale between 1 (highly corrupt) and 100 (highly clean).

of 74. Denmark and New Zealand are at the top of the list with a score of 92 and 91 respectively. Bringing up the rear are Somalia and North Korea with a tied score of 08 (Transparency International 2014).

The prevalence of corruption in a society where it is not supposed to flourish indicates a complicated situation containing deeply rooted problematics. In our view, corruption cannot be rooted out simply by legal action or by replacing corrupt officials. Attempts to describe the problem of corruption only in terms of abusive behaviour by government officials manifesting in practices like commissions paid for illicit services, unwarranted fees for public services, gratuities, string-pulling, levies or tolls, petty white collar theft, and making money on the side as well as misappropriation (Blundo & De Sardan 2006:73–80), severely limit understanding of the extent and impact of the problem. Not only does corruption promote a general lack of trust in institutions and leadership, but it stimulates a perpetual *culture of corruption* that invades all spheres of life (Vorster 2011:33). Such a culture implies a corrupted human morality (not only amongst leaders but also amongst the general populace) in which a blind eye is turned to the fact that self-gain on the part of those who have been entrusted with the exercise of authority of various kinds, implies taking from others what is their due. Corruption is then seen as a grey area in a sea of opportunities that might as well be utilised in order to survive and make progress in this world. A deeply rooted culture of corruption can thus release eroding acids of despair and overwhelming cynicism that threaten all efforts to deal creatively with the problems at hand (cf. De Gruchy 2011:2).

The state of a liberal democracy in a South African context

The adoption and implementation of the interim Constitution on 27 April 1994 marks the formal establishment of a liberal democracy and constitutionalism in South Africa (Fourie 2011:1; Venter 2010:54). The dawn of a new democratic dispensation introduced concepts like restorative righteousness, affirmative action, black economic empowerment and indemnity from persecution for people who were guilty of politically motivated misdeeds during the previous dispensation. These concepts were clearly aimed at reconciliation and the restoration of previous imbalances (Vorster 2011:44).

Reflecting on the future after the 2009 elections, Venter (2010:6) pointed out that the essential choices open to the new government seemed relatively simple: they could either embrace the remarkable achievements of constitutionalism in South Africa since 1994 and build on them, or they could pursue the doctrinaire politics that produced, inter alia, the premature sacking of a president (Thabo Mbeki), the manipulative dismissal of a national director of prosecutions (Vusi Pikoli), the disbandment of an effective crime-combating agency (the Scorpions), and threats to the independence of the judiciary. The outcome of this choice will, according to Venter, be either progress towards the realisation of the ideals of justice, stability and prosperity or a decline into the abyss of the polarisation of society, distrust of the organs of state, the destruction of the ability of the state to meet the challenges of poverty alleviation, health care improvement and the struggle against rising criminality.

In its current state South Africa finds itself embroiled in the polarity between the promise of righteousness for all on the one hand and, on the other hand, an apparent lack of vision and political will to engage the issues that stand in the way of completion of the anticipated reform process (De Wet & Kruger 2013:16). Now that the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC)[4] has concluded its mandated task, rational South Africans are beginning to recognise the unfinished business at hand. South Africans have not yet successfully dealt with the past or overcome racism and economic segregation, nor have they fully acknowledged and dealt with the human complicities involved. Woven into this legacy are the challenges of health care and the human immunodeficiency virus, crime and corruption, bad housing and poor education, unemployment and land distribution (De Gruchy 2011:3).

The impact of these problems on ordinary citizens can be illustrated by referring to one of the burning issues currently plaguing and destabilising the lives of millions of South Africans, namely poor service delivery. According to Manala (2010:519), it is ironic that the present neglect regarding poor service delivery in especially South African rural villages and townships comes from the structures of the people's government that came to power in 1994 promising citizens a better life for all. This fact makes it all the more painful for the black citizens who had fought so hard for

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4. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) was a court-like restorative justice body assembled in South Africa after the abolition of apartheid. Witnesses who were identified as victims of gross human rights violations were invited to give statements about their experiences, and some were selected for public hearings. Perpetrators of violence could also give testimony and request amnesty from both civil and criminal prosecution.

liberation and the betterment of their lives. Instead, they continue to experience the ravaging effects of poor service delivery, which exacerbate poverty, contrary to recent election promises of improved service delivery by the administration of President Zuma's leadership.

The impact of deeply rooted corruption on the current state of the South African society cannot be denied. Widespread corruption not only involves diverting public resources to personal financial gain by corrupt officials or involvement in so called 'tenderpreneurship'[5]; it also promotes distrust in leadership and a spirit of despondency – posing great challenges to whoever wishes to address this issue with academic theory formation, political prowess or innovative leadership.

Vorster (2011:34) investigated the reasons for the relatively high instances of corruption in South Africa. He referred in his study to Treisman's research project (2000), *The causes of corruption: A cross-national study*, in which the author hypothesised that countries with an effective legal system and legal culture and countries with a Protestant tradition (where religions traditionally play the important monitoring role that they should) could be expected to have a lower incidence of corruption. Yet, Vorster observed that although South Africa has an open and democratic system, corrupt officials do not fear exposure and punishment. Furthermore, Protestantism in South Africa – especially the influential Reformed tradition – played a minor role in monitoring

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5. 'Tenderpreneurship' is a South African term used to describe a government official and/or politician who abuses entrusted power and influences the system to secure government tenders and contracts for personal gain.

the governments of both the pre-1994 and the post-1994 dispensation. As Vorster pointed out, factors present in the South African society caused the legal culture not to be so robust as might be expected and the religious monitoring not as uncompromising as it could be.

The story of South Africa's young democracy is a case of making a promising start, but gradually moving into a direction where normal protection measures for the solid establishment of democracy over the long term, like an uncompromised legal system and the watchdog function of civil society, are being subjected to increasing pressure. We believe that the South African democratic dispensation is finding itself in a position where mere superficial measures will not be sufficient to break the deeply rooted hold that corruption is currently exercising on our society. A view on the deeply rooted causes of corruption that lie beneath the surface of the problem field is needed. We believe that practical theology can make a contribution towards exploring this problem field in an in-depth manner.

At the heart of the matter, we believe that the understanding and explaining of corruption have to do with the impact the human condition has on our actions in the relational networks we find ourselves in. Dealing with corruption implies not only the replacement of corrupt leaders but also the renewal of culture, public life and individuals (cf. De Wet & Kruger 2013:44). A more encompassing anthropology that explains aberrant human behaviour and offers a corrective for it is, therefore, essential if a problem as deeply rooted as widespread corruption in a society is to be understood and dealt with. In answer to this problem we

present in the next section a case for the contribution that Christian practical theology can make in addressing the culture of corruption at the root level of human actions in its responsibility and relationality towards God and fellow human beings.

■ A case for the contribution of practical-theological research towards addressing the problem of corruption in a liberal democracy

The problematics involved in the prevalence of corruption in a liberal democracy cannot be successfully investigated, interpreted and addressed by a one-dimensional and mono-disciplinary study. A vantage point that gives access not only to the surface manifestations of the problem but also to the underlying factors must be considered as the point of departure in embarking on a scientific study of this particular issue.

In our view, the perspective offered by Christian practical theology provides a unique opportunity to investigate the depths of the prevalence of corruption. Christian practical theology can, therefore, make a valuable contribution towards explaining, understanding and responding to the problem in interaction and interdisciplinary dialogue with other human sciences.

To explain the contribution that practical theology can make towards addressing the problem of corruption in liberal democratic societies, we give an overview of our meta-theoretical interpretation of the essence of practical theology and the vantage point with which it approaches the field of research, and discuss our view on the tasks of practical theology in making a well-defined and comprehensive

contribution towards incorporating this theological dimension in scientific research.

A conceptual framework for practical-theological research

When designing a theoretical framework for practical theology as an academic discipline, consideration should be given to the theological nature of this discipline as well as to its focus on the element of praxis. As a theological discipline, practical theology differs to a certain degree from the approach of other scientific disciplines researching humanity. As a praxis-oriented discipline, it differs from those that work strictly with conceptualisations that do not deal with the interaction between theory and praxis. As a praxis-oriented science, practical theology is, therefore, concerned with the forces that move human beings to action and guide them in certain directions. The subject matter is studied not only with respect to its factuality but also with consideration of its potentiality (Firet 1974:123), that is, what must be done to bring about change in a desirable direction. In short, practical theology is not only a *descriptive* science that explores empirical matters (discerning the 'is'); it is also a *normative* science that offers a vision for how the world should be and suggests ways to make it so (prescribing the 'ought').

Immink has proposed a theoretical framework that defines the essence of practical-theological research as a theological reconstruction of faith-praxis (Immink 2005):

> We may approach the reality of the human psyche from a behavioural, biological, materialistic, or constructive angle. Each of these perspectives

relies on distinct presuppositions, resulting in different reconstructions of the reality and know-ability of the human self. A theological reconstruction of the faith praxis is founded on the uniqueness of religion; that is, religion is not explained in terms of social cohesion or psychological development. Faith is to be approached from the point of view of its intrinsic meaning; it is to be determined from the perspective of establishing which data are relevant and how these data should be described and analysed. (p. 181)

Taking a cue from Immink (2005) with regards to the intrinsic meaning of faith-praxis in the context of the theological dimension, we proceed from the following conceptual framework concerning the essence of our approach in this research project:

In practical-theological research human actions (expressing faith-praxis or lack of faith-praxis) are considered in light of the extent to which these actions are anchored in and reflect the creative, redemptive and consummating acts of the triune God. (p. 183)

This conceptual framework and the meta-theory underlying its specific formulation consist of the following:

- Practical-theological research is an activity that has to do with *hermeneutical interaction between theory and praxis*. In its most basic form practical-theological research consists of observing human actions and considering these actions with the goal of designing descriptive, interpretive and strategic theory for improving the human condition. Bearing in mind that the research is focused on events in the process of unfolding in a certain direction, the relationship between theory and praxis cannot be visualised as a static relationship. The theoretical indicators designed for a renewal of praxis are met with a certain reaction in praxis that calls for a reinterpretation of various movements and a realignment

of the way in which strategic theoretical elements are articulated. Practical-theological research is, therefore, seen as cyclical research that constantly reassesses its results as new information and insights emerge.

• Practical-theological research is an activity that *views the reality observed in the research field from a theological perspective, connecting human reality with divine reality.* The researchers, therefore, view reality through the eyes of faith and assess the empirical actions of human beings in light of the extent to which the actions are anchored in and reflect the acts of the triune God. This approach is rooted in the affirmation of 16th century reformed thought that human beings can truly know themselves only when they know God. Human life is understood biblically as *Imago Dei*, finding its purpose in reflecting the goodness, holiness and righteousness of God and expressing the harmony and unity that mark the internal life of the Holy Trinity in all human relationships: with God, with self, with fellow human beings and with creation (Zimmermann 2004:30). Human life in its origin, progress, and the future is anchored encompassingly in God the Creator, God the Redeemer and God the Consummator (De Wet 2011:8).

• Practical-theological research is an activity that – at its heart – has to do with *measuring actions according to certain normative criteria* and *activating the vitality of normative elements* in directing the fulfilment of human life. Practical-theological research finds its measuring rod in normative compliance to God's standard as it is revealed in scripture (Wolters 2005:7). Scripture is seen as God's revelation regarding the renewal of human life and all

creation by reconciling with him through Jesus Christ. God manifests himself as a subject who speaks and acts, and we recognise and know him as such (Immink 2005:239). Activating the vitality of normative elements entails being brought through the Holy Spirit into a living faith relationship with Jesus Christ and bearing his frame of mind aimed at glorifying the Father and doing his will.

Deploying this particular practical-theological approach in research dealing with corruption in a liberal democratic context, provides – we believe – a means of gaining insight into the way deeply seated religious factors may influence human attitudes and behaviour. Applying the theoretical framework of this particular approach to practical theology will typically lead to a research question being formulated in the following way: what insight can the identification of distorting elements in the faith relationship with God provide regarding the conduct of people entrusted with civil authority who seem able to engage in blatant advancement of their own self-interest even if it amounts to withholding from others what is their due?

The cyclical nature of the methodology deployed in a practical-theological research project

According to Ballard and Pritchard (2006:71), a basic model for doing practical theology (and in the process covering the aspects at work in a situation where interaction between theory and praxis is set into motion) is suggested by the widespread use of the so-called *pastoral cycle*. Numerous variations and refinements of this basic method exist, but at the risk of oversimplification, the following

cycle typifies the most usual deployment of practical-theological research. The approach starts with the present situation, which is subject to analysis, to reveal the reality of what is going on. Then comes the stage of theological reflection, asking how the gospel should be heard in these circumstances to elucidate the path of Christian obedience. On this basis plans can be made before goals can be reached and resources can be deployed. This in turn leads to action, which becomes the basis for further reflection – and the cycle continues.

Dingemans similarly observed that most contemporary practical theologians distinguish amongst the following dimensions in practical-theological research (Dingemans 1996):

- Analytic description of the practical-theological situation.
- Research into normative viewpoints.
- Development of a strategy for change flowing from normative viewpoints. (p. 62)

Heitink (1999:165) works with three keywords in his approach to practical-theological research methodology, namely *understanding*, *explanation* and *change*. Three circles are set into motion during research: the hermeneutical circle (with *understanding* as its keyword), the empirical circle (with *explanation* as its keyword) and the regulative circle (with *change* as its keyword). Browning (1996:13) described research activity ranging from *description*, to *systemising* (exploring practical wisdom and understanding), to *strategising* (practicing strategic and practical theology).

This study utilises the four tasks that Osmer (2008:4–12) sets for practical-theological interpretation:

- The **descriptive-empirical task**: gathering information that helps to discern patterns and dynamics in particular episodes, situations or contexts; and asking the basic research question: What is going on?
- The **interpretative task**: drawing on theories of the arts and sciences to understand these patterns and dynamics better and to explain why they are occurring; and asking the question: Why is it going on?
- The **normative task**: using theological concepts to interpret particular episodes, situations or contexts; constructing ethical norms to guide responses and learning from good practice; asking the question: What ought to be going on?
- The **pragmatic task**: determining strategies for action that will influence situations in ways that are desirable and entering into a reflective conversation, with 'talk back' emerging when they are enacted, with the following as its key question: How might we respond?

It should be noted that in a practical-theological research project these four tasks are not to be performed independently from each other or in a strictly sequential way. In the course of the research the activities involved in the various tasks constantly circle back like a spiral as new insights emerge.

▉Research design

For the purpose of our practical-theological inquiry into the prevalence of corruption in the liberal democracy of South Africa, the following research design was developed:

Formulating the research question

The planning and framing of a research project is important. The end must already be in mind when starting the project. A research statement, a topic, or a specific and theologically defined question is needed with the eye on framing the research (cf. Stark 2005:90–99).

For the purpose of framing and specifying a research project of this nature, the following overarching research question was formulated:

> What insight can be gained from a practical-theological study with regard to the deeply rooted causes and far-reaching effects of corruption in the South African liberal democratic environment and what strategic elements are needed by Christian leaders to address this problem faithfully according to the normative indicators for their God-given calling?

Empirical data from interviews with Christian political and church leaders

With the purpose of bringing our research question into relationship with the real-world situation of the challenges faced by Christian leaders in their attempt to deal with corruption according to their Christian calling, a qualitative empirical study was undertaken with prominent Christian leaders as our respondents.

The purpose of the qualitative empirical study was to find data that reflect perspectives on corruption by informed people in the South African society. We, therefore, viewed political, business and church leaders as our target population focusing on the Gauteng area. This area is the economic heart of South Africa where the executive political powers and the public officials are situated. From

this population we have drawn a purposive sample.[6] From the described population we selected a political leader, a business leader and a black and a white church leader. We interviewed these four respondents.

The interviews were conducted by means of a semi-structured interview schedule[7] with four basic questions and sub-questions based on the four practical-theological tasks proposed by Osmer (2008). Utilising Osmer's four-fold task (cf. Osmer 2008:34) for practical-theological research the questions formulated by making use of semi-structured interviews pivoted around the following loci:

- The interviewees' description of the situation with 'What is going on?' as the key question. The interviewees (referred to in the later tables as Resp.) were asked to describe the extent, impact and major forms of corruption as well as the state of the Christian response in their respective contexts.
- The interviewees' interpretation of the situation with 'Why is it going on?' as the key question. The interviewees were asked to

....

6. 'Sampling refers to the process used to select a portion of the population for study … Purpose sampling simply means that the participants are selected because of some defining characteristics that makes them the holders of the data needed for the study' (Niewenhuis 2007:79).

7. Semi-structured interviews were utilised for the purpose of this study project. Whilst a structured interview has a formalised and limited set of questions, a semi-structured interview is flexible, allowing new questions to be brought up during the interview as a result of what the interviewee says. The interviewer in a semi-structured interview generally has a framework of themes to explore. The interviewer asks both open-ended and closed-ended questions in a planned sequence, which is then adapted to the emerging flow of the conversation (Lynch & Pattison 2005:147; Osmer 2008:63). See appendix 1 for the interview schedule designed for the study.

provide reasons for their interpretation based on theories with which they are familiar.

- The interviewees' normative view on the situation with 'What ought to be going on?' as the key question. The interviewees were asked to specify normative and ethical grounds for addressing the situation in a Christian way.
- The interviewees' strategic consideration in the situation with 'How might we respond?' as the key question. The respondents were asked to spell out their strategy for playing an influential role in dealing with corruption in their respective societies.

We analysed the interview data by means of coding.[8] From the codes we were able to formulate categories (themes) based on these codes (Saldana 2009:9).

We completed the first coding of content analysis of the interviews focussing on portions of content in reviews that did not overlap and wrote the results down on paper. From there we completed a second coding where categories of content which did not overlap with other categories were identified. The categories enabled us to formulate *concepts* (Saldana 2009:3).

The codes, categories and concepts which enabled us to construct an empirical-conceptual framework[9] that we established in our

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8. 'A code in qualitative inquiry is most often a word or short phrase … that assigns a summative, salient, essence-capturing portion of the language-based … data' (Saldana 2009:3).

9. A category is an abstraction of specific content in the data based on codes. A category has an own specific meaning and does not overlap with another category. A concept is a further abstraction of the content with unique properties. Concepts in relation to each other form a conceptual framework.

analyses of the interview data, are discussed in the next chapter. The conceptual framework that emerged from the empirical data plays an important role in the rest of our research project. This framework functions as a point of relationship for bringing our theological reflection on corruption – as it materialises in the consecutive chapters of this book – into a living relationship with the actual challenges and needs felt by Christian leaders on the ground level in interaction with the problematic praxis surrounding corruption in the South African context.

Deploying the research tasks of practical theology

The conceptual framework, gleaned from the empirical data, functions for our practical theological reflection on corruption in the consecutive chapters. Our research question was anchored in the empirical results of the current chapter – in what is viewed to be a focused execution of the descriptive task. We consecutively focus on the interpretative, normative and strategic tasks of practical theology in the following chapters by utilising the research design of Osmer (2008) in the process. A problem like corruption can, therefore, be addressed by this approach that allows the interpretative efforts, normative demands and visualised contribution of Christianity towards the renewal of a society to be brought to bear on the realities as they are actually experienced in the political realm.

Only within the background of what Christian leaders are actually experiencing in the rigours of engagement with the public sphere can we move on to the *interpretive* task. This task entails the attempt

to discover the motivations behind deeply rooted instances of corruption in our society as well as the subtleties of the complex and challenging reality Christian leaders have to face in their attempt to play an influential role in society. The conceptual framework that flowed from the empirical findings made us realise that in order to understand a problem as widespread and deep-seated as corruption as it manifests in the dynamic field of tension in the current South African democratic epoch, a deep-searching and nuanced examination is required.

The third task that practical theology provides for this project is the *normative*. Here we attempted to bring the actual issues and shortcomings as voiced by our interviewees into living contact with the biblical standards for human communities as God intended them to be and as Jesus Christ demonstrated they should be. In the normative part of our book we try to assess the actual state of affairs faced by Christian leaders in a South African context through the lens of biblical revelation. A vision for human society in which justice prevails is affirmed, where those in authority use their positions for the benefit of all and Christians are equipped with regard to playing a vital role in the actualisation of this vision for human society.

Finally, building upon that foundation, the *pragmatic* task that was executed is explained in the last part of our book. This task functions as the culmination point of our study and posed the challenge of developing strategies consistent with Christian norms that will address the actual problem of corruption as experienced by Christian leaders. We attempted to align the strategic markers for dealing with corruption with the actual complexities faced by our respondents.

■ Conclusion

In this chapter the authors introduced their research design for a study on corruption as it manifests in the liberal democracy of the RSA. Departing from a practical-theological vantage point, we envisioned a project for describing the tension fields that manifest in a liberal democratic context where Christian leaders feel that they need to address the issue of corruption in a responsible way.

Research results flowing from interviews with Christian leaders in business, politics, labour unions and church sectors in a liberal democratic South African context

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▉ Introduction

This chapter results from the research design described in Chapter 1. The qualitative empirical research of interviews in

this chapter followed Osmer's (2008) approach. It is the descriptive task in his terminology that allows for empirical research. The results of this qualitative empirical research, especially the conceptual framework, serve as a correlation point for the rest of the chapters in this book.

For the purpose of our research project, we conducted interviews with two church leaders, a business leader and a political leader. The interviews were conducted in 2013. One of the interviews was conducted in Pretoria and three in Johannesburg. We initially completed a content analysis and coded the interviews by means of lumping following the method of Saldana (2009:1–31). We then analysed the initial coded data as the data emerged from the answers of the respondents with regard to the four practical theological dimensions (the descriptive aspect with the core question: 'What is going on?', the interpretative aspect with the core question: 'Why is this going on?', the normative aspect with the core question: 'What ought to happen?', and finally the strategic aspect with the core question: 'How might we respond?'). A second coding run was also used to emphasise emerging categories in the data. From the categories we could determine the underlying concepts that frame the dynamics of the actual situation that Christian leaders are facing in the contemporary iteration of the influence of corruption on our society.

The results of our data collection and analysis derived from the codes, categories and concepts. The movement from categories to a conceptual framework can be summarised by means of two

parts: firstly, a detailed account of the relationship between the codes and core categories that emerged from the four sections of the semi-structured interview data was provided and, secondly, an overview of how a conceptual framework gradually emerged from the analysis of the codes and categories, was presented.

■ The relationship between the codes and core categories

In the following set of tables we present a graphic depiction of the work we have carried out in moving from codes to categories to concepts (cf. Saldana 2009:9–11). This emerged from the four sections of the semi-structured interviews.

■ Section A: The descriptive question (What is going on?)

In this section the authors gathered information that helps us discern patterns and dynamics, in particular episodes, situations, or contexts (Osmer 2008:4). According to this methodology we

TABLE 1-2A: Categorising corruption in South Africa.

Core Category	The corresponding descriptive question
Category 1	The range and awareness of different levels of corruption
Category 2	Corruption is a threat to the democracy in South Africa
Category 3	Determining factors for evident corruption in South Africa
Category 4	Concern of Christians about corruption

TABLE 2-2A: What is going on in South Africa.

Code	The descriptive question	Respondents
A1	Range of corruption in South Africa	Property rights exploited for personal gain (Resp. 2). Tenders awarded to bloodline connections (Resp. 3). Misuse of power connected with finances (Resp. 3). Lack of service delivery and education due to corruption (Resp. 1). Some government officials are corrupt (Resp. 4).
A2	Becoming aware of different levels of corruption	Everyone thinks corruption is bad (Resp. 2). Aware of petty corruption (Resp. 1). Occurrence of corruption in business dealings (Resp. 1). Media exposes corruption (Resp. 3). Secret bill to protect powerful people (Resp. 3). Corruption goes with power (Resp. 4). For Christians it is a bad thing (Resp. 4).
A3	Threat posed by corruption in the democratic environment	Corruption poses an overwhelming threat (Resp. 1, 3, 4). A threat to democracy and harmony in society (Resp. 2). Poor people are robbing because they have no other means of securing an income (Resp. 3). Rich people manipulate the system to get rid of murder charges (Resp. 3). Marginal commitment to fight corruption by government (Resp. 1). Lack of political will to address issue (Resp. 2). Hampered by own involvement in corruption (Resp. 3). Government is committed but focus lies with other crises (Resp. 4).
A4	Christians' view of corruption	Concerned, but other burning issues need attention (Resp. 1, 2, 3, 4). Concerned, but unable to make a change (Resp. 1). Christians need a church leader to guide them (Resp. 1, 2).
A5	Elements that determine corruption in South Africa	Legacy of apartheid (Resp. 1). Certain forms of black economic empowerment (Resp. 1). A certain world view (Resp. 4).

DIAGRAM 1-2A: Relationship between category and responses.

	Code A1	Code A2	Code A3	Code A4	Code A5
Category 1	x	x			
Category 2			x	x	
Category 3					x
Category 4				x	
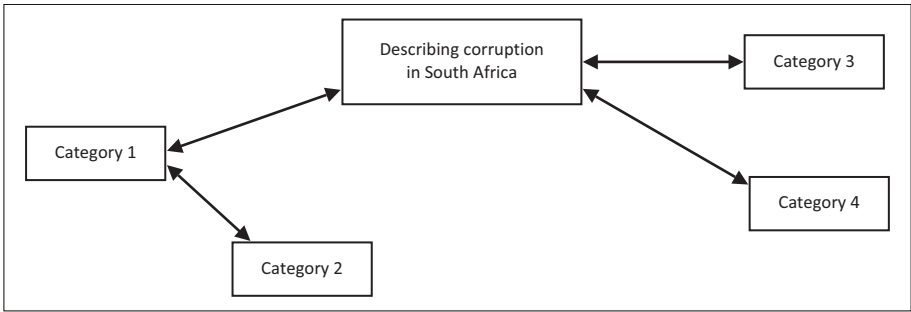
FIGURE 1-2A: Relationship between categories.
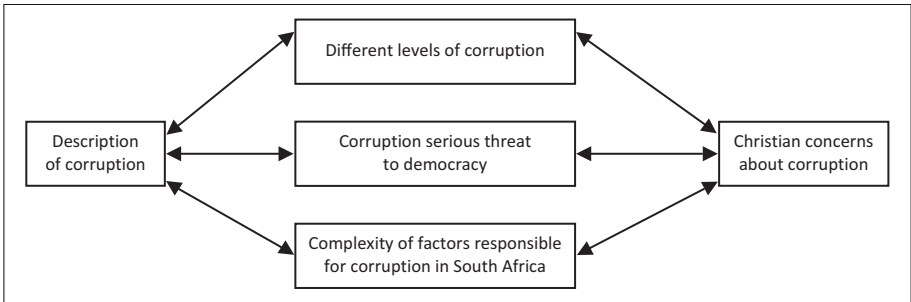
FIGURE 2-2A: Conceptual framework between the description of corruption and Christian concerns about corruption.

initially completed a content analysis and coded interviews by means of lumping following the method of Saldana (2009:1–31). In the introduction above the authors described the interrelationship between category, codes and core categories.

TABLE 3-2B: Categorising corruption in South Africa.

Core Category	The corresponding Interpretative question
Category 1	Greed for wealth
Category 2	Misusing political power
Category 3	Christian leaders are ineffective in addressing the government on corruption

TABLE 4-2B: Exposing and interpreting reasons for corruption in South Africa.

Code	The Interpretative question	Respondents
B1	Causes of corruption	Effects of apartheid (Resp. 1).
		Power to assign property rights with elements of personal and social gain (Resp. 2).
		Injustice – politicians are getting richer, people poorer (Resp. 3).
		Individual identity is getting lost (Resp. 1).
		Element of greed – black and white people (Resp. 1).
		In position to award tenders (Resp. 4).
		Corruption is a quick way for poor people to get rich (Resp. 4).
B2	A definition of corruption and its causes and effects	Corruption is sufficient power concentrated in the hands of groups or individuals to get some gain whilst changing the arrangements of property rights (Resp. 2).
		Corruption is a violation of the human dignity that degrades people to behave like animals and pushes people to get anything they can by any means (Resp. 3).
		Undue influence on other persons or systems for their own enrichment and gain (Resp. 1).
		Causes are greed, selfishness and a hunger for power and wealth (Resp. 1). Greatest cause is the concentration of power in the government (Resp. 2).
		Break and trespass laws to benefit people in their circles (Resp. 4).
		Some have too much; others have too little (Resp. 1).

TABLE 4-2B (Continues...): Exposing and interpreting reasons for corruption in South Africa.

Code	The Interpretative question	Respondents
B3	Reasons for actions by government leaders and officials	Actions of corruption underpinned by political ideology (Resp. 1). In order to gain wealth and power for self and political organisation (Resp. 1). Desire for personal wealth and enrichment (Resp. 1). Government officials understand it to be normal to go for personal gain (Resp. 2). Difference in African culture (Resp. 2). Element of culture determines how property rights are viewed (Resp. 2). Individualistic way and the notion that human rights are more important than other rights (Resp. 3). Ubuntu atmosphere – we cover for each other (Resp. 4).
B4	Reasons for lack of action by Christian leaders	Mainline English speaking churches are too close to the government (Resp. 1). African initiated churches and prosperity churches are more easily affected by offers of wealth and positions (Resp. 1). Many pastors have no theological foundation to understand churches' role on corruption (Resp. 1). Christian leaders do not act uniformly (Resp. 2). Christian leaders have no power to talk to politicians (Resp. 3). Christian leaders no longer address communal issues, only denominational issues (Resp. 3). Christians argue for survival in the current situation – will they survive or fall out? (Resp. 4).
B5	Reasons for action by Christians	Christians are far better than the Christian leaders – they are talking, toyi-toyi-ing and addressing issues (Resp. 3). Christians need a shepherd who would guide them (Resp. 3). More unity is needed amongst Christians to empower them (Resp. 3).

DIAGRAM 2-2B: Relationship between category and responses.

	Code B1	Code B2	Code B3	Code B4	Code B5
Category 1	x				
Category 2		x	x		
Category 3				x	x
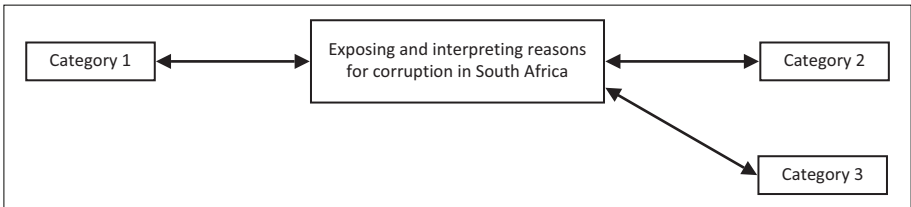
FIGURE 3-2B: Relationship between categories.
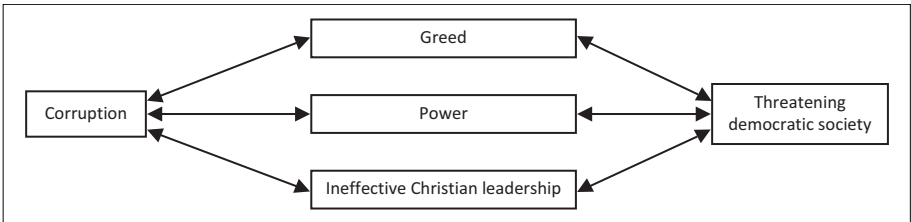
FIGURE 4-2B: Conceptual framework between corruption and threats regarding a democratic society.

■ Section B: Interpretative question (Why is this going on?)

The authors draw on theories of the arts and sciences to better understand and explain why these patterns and dynamics are occurring (Osmer 2008:4). This section is thus about a better understanding on why this problematic praxis is functioning.

TABLE 5-2C: Categorising corruption in South Africa.

Core Category	What ought to happen?
Category 1	God's view on corruption
Category 2	Christian leaders equipping Christians to influence society

TABLE 6-2C: Exposing and interpreting reasons for corruption in South Africa.

Code	Normative task	Respondents
C1	God's view on corruption in South African society	Unrighteousness through misuse of power (Resp. 1, 2). Sin must be addressed in a prophetic stand (Resp. 3, 4).
C2	Role of Christian leaders in addressing corruption	United ecumenical voice (Resp. 1, 3). Strong Christian leadership is needed in communicating the biblical principles to church and society (Resp. 1, 2, 4).
C3	Equipping Christians to influence society	The Church must empower its members to act in society (Resp. 1, 2, 4). The Church must restore the dignity of people in order to demand their rights (Resp. 3, 4). Pastors and/or ministers and church members must be educated in servant leadership (Resp. 1, 3, 4).
C4	Christians have a mandate to speak about God's will	Christians have been transformed in Christ to know God's will (Resp. 1). We are created in the image of God (Resp. 2). Christians have a mandate to speak about God's will (Resp. 1, 4).

DIAGRAM 3-2C: Relationship between category and responses.

	Code C1	Code C2	Code C3	Code C4
Category 1	x			x
Category 2		x	x	
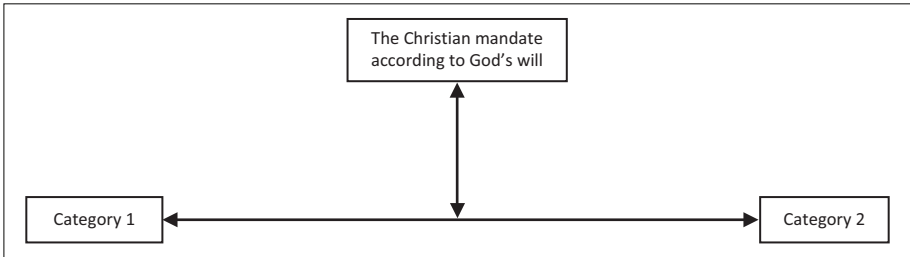
FIGURE 5-2C: Relationship between categories.
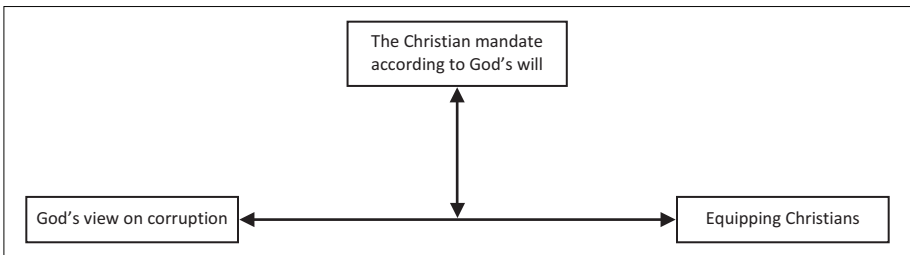
FIGURE 6-2C: Conceptual framework between God's view on corruption and the equipping of Christians.

Section C: Normative task (What ought to happen?)

The authors utilise theological concepts to interpret particular episodes, situations, contexts, constructing ethical norms to guide or responses, and learning from 'good practice' (Osmer 2008:4). We are concerned in this section about the kind of normative directives that should be applied in order to offer guidelines to a problematic praxis.

TABLE 7-2D: Categorising corruption in South Africa.

Core Category	Strategic task
Category 1	Christians are not equipped
Category 2	Effective Christian strategy needed

TABLE 8-2D: Exposing and interpreting reasons for corruption in South Africa.

Code	Normative task	Respondents
D1	Christians are not equipped to address corruption – social activism must be replaced by social movements	Christians are not adequately equipped (Resp. 1, 2, 3, 4). Christians must learn how to act in social movements such as reaching out in projects to the poor (Resp. 1, 2, 4). Start a Christian conversation – a conversation about our rights under our Constitution (Resp. 1, 2, 3, 4).
D2	Effective Christian strategy for dealing with corruption	Recapture ecumenical unity with the goal of awareness through the churches in South Africa about the importance of Christian citizenship (Resp. 1, 2, 3).
D3	The *Missio Dei*	The *Missio Dei* of God is breaking through and courageous Christians are joining in (Resp. 1. 2, 3, 4).

DIAGRAM 4-2D: Relationship between category and responses.

	Code D1	Code D2	Code D3
Category 1	x		
Category 2		x	x

FIGURE 7-2D: Relationship between categories.

FIGURE 8-2D: Conceptual framework between corruption and threats regarding a democratic society .

◼ Section D: Strategic task (How might we respond?)

The authors determine strategies of action that will influence situations in ways that are desirable and entering into a reflective conversation with the 'talk-back' emerging when they are enacted (Osmer 2008:4). The purpose of this section is to offer perspectives on how we should respond to a problematic praxis.

◼ A conceptual framework on the role of Christian leaders

As a result of the identification of the categories that were derived from the codes and the concepts we have formulated, and based on the categories, a conceptual framework could be developed which incorporates the final results of our analysis of the interview data.

This report on the empirical findings derived from the semi-structured interviews with its culmination point the development of a conceptual framework, was included in this chapter to function as the descriptive part of our study project. We followed a method in which we constantly brought our interpretative, normative and strategic reflections in interaction with these descriptive results. We also focused on the reality and challenges faced by Christian leaders in their public roles in the current iteration of a liberal democracy in South African society.

It became clear that our interpretative efforts will have to deal with the reality that corruption is viewed by leaders on ground level as a serious threat to democracy and that we will have to focus
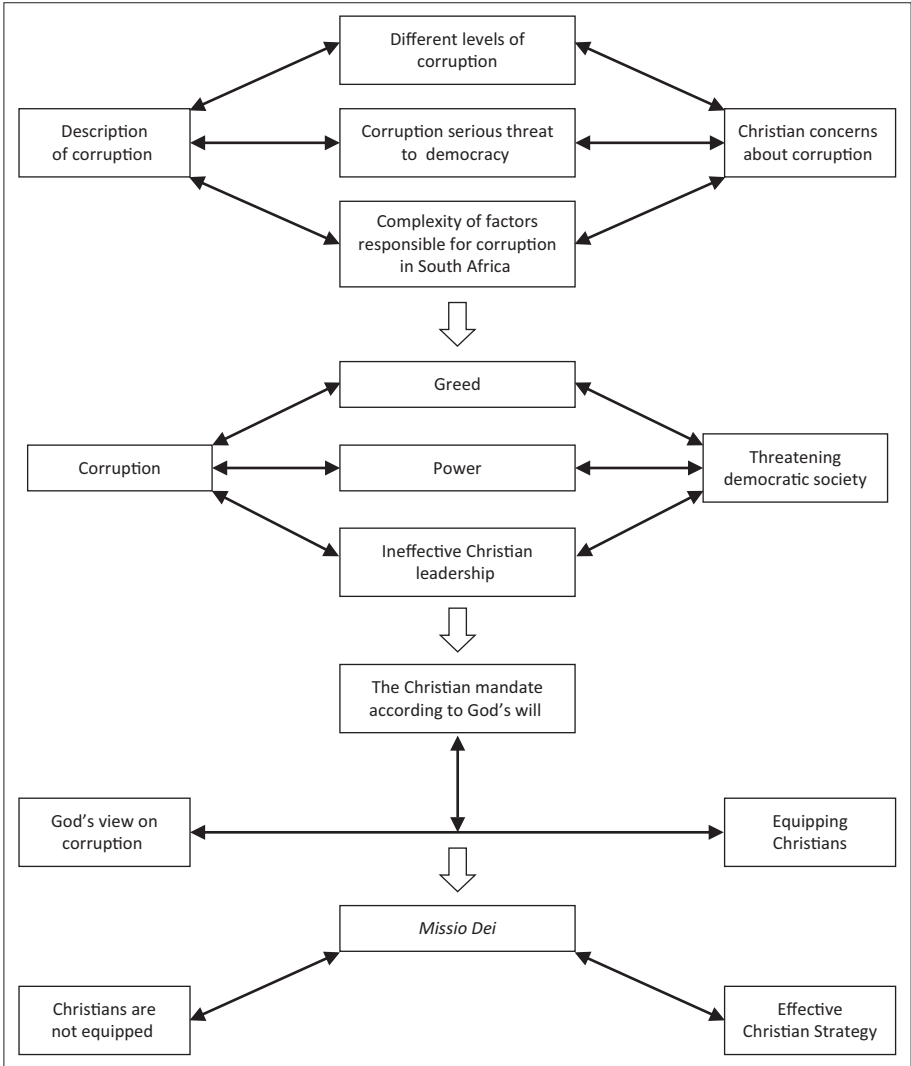
FIGURE 9: Conceptual framework of the empirical research on the role of Christian leaders in dealing with corruption in a South African context.

on greed, power and ineffective Christian leadership as the predominant issues at hand.

The conceptual framework also helped us to identify the following key factors with the eye on focusing our normative efforts: there is a strong need for confronting the society prophetically with God's righteousness as well as the need to equip Christian leadership in their ecumenical role and in their task of providing Christians with effective guidance regarding their role in civil society.

Finally, the conceptual framework made it clear that our strategic efforts will have to focus on how Christians can be equipped to join in the wave of the *Missio Dei* that is currently making a breakthrough in South African society. Some of the key factors that will need to be reckoned with in the design of a strategy, include equipping Christians for ecumenical involvement, making Christians aware of the rights of citizens and their role with regard to our Constitution and the importance of learning how to act in social movements.

Conclusion

The results from our qualitative empirical study in a South African context are included in this chapter in order to provide an important conceptual framework for the task we have visualised for ourselves in the consecutive chapters. We would like to equip Christian leaders to be informed, truthful and responsible when dealing with corruption. The empirical study provided a conceptual framework for how Christian leaders are actually experiencing the challenges that they need to address in trying to come to grips with their role

in the face of corruption. This conceptual framework showed that corruption is viewed as containing unhealthy configurations of power and greed in its heart, and Christian leaders are not viewed as adequately equipped in countering the serious threat posed by corruption to our democratic environment. The conceptual framework also revealed a consciousness that the Christian mandate, according to God's will, essentially requires that God's view on corruption should be communicated to Christians towards equipping them for their responsibility in countering corruption. The conceptual framework pointed in the direction of focusing effective strategic efforts on equipping Christians to see their anti-corruption role as an integral part of the *Missio Dei*.

Part 2

Interpretative perspectives

Challenges faced by Christian leaders regarding complex manifestations of corruption in post-apartheid South Africa

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◼ Introduction

This chapter gives an account of the interpretative part of the project. The conceptual framework developed in the previous chapter will be used as a dialogue partner and an interpretative lens for the

interpretation of challenges faced by Christian leaders in South African society. The particular way that corruption manifests will be the focus point.

In this chapter we focus on the part of the conceptual framework that reflects how the interviewed Christian leaders interpreted the presence of corruption in our society and its impact on the future of democracy.
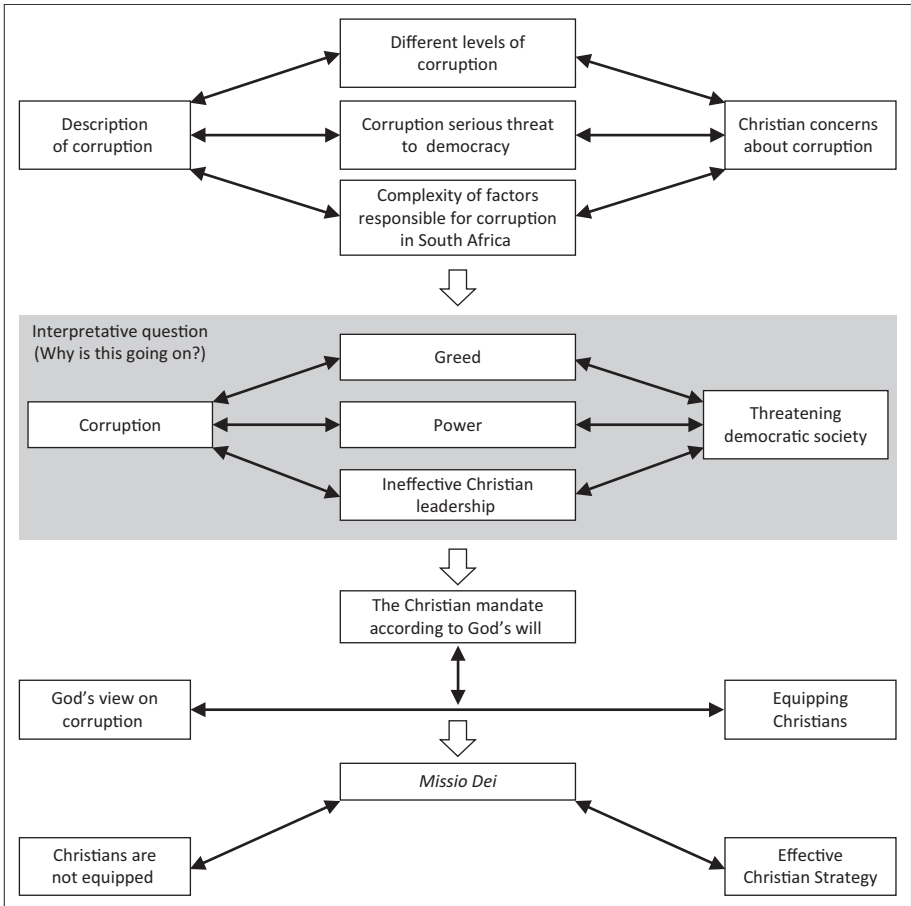
FIGURE 10: Conceptual framework of the empirical research on the role of Christian leaders with focus on the Interpretative question (Why is this going on?).

The following conceptual framework emerged when the data of a study amongst Christian leaders in a South African democratic context were interpreted:

As noted in Chapter 2, the following core category was formulated in order to group together the data concerning the interpretation of corruption.

Exposing and interpreting reasons for corruption in South Africa

Under this core category the following categories emerged from the coded data:

- Category 1: Greed for wealth (see Code A.1)
- Category 2: Misusing political power (see Codes A.2 and A.3)
- Category 3: Christian leaders are ineffective in addressing the government on corruption (see Codes A.4 and A.5)

These identified categories lead us:

- To focus on the underlying factors (beneath the surface level of human action fields) that could potentially explain why corruption has such a corruptive presence in the post-apartheid South African democratic environment as it manifests, for instance, in the disintegrating and oppressive effects of key factors like greed and the abuse of power.
- To try and determine the extent to which corruption as a serious threat to a democracy plays a role in prioritising the need to give serious attention to this issue.

- To try and obtain a perspective on the reasons why Christian leaders feel ineffective in addressing corruption.

When researching the interpretative question, 'Why is there corruption in democratic societies?' it quickly becomes clear that we are dealing with a complex problem field and that no easy answers can be found in defining the role of Christian leaders in addressing this issue in their respective situations. A few interpretative social and political-scientific perspectives as well as findings from recent empirical studies are discussed to illustrate the challenging nature of trying to address the problem field: the need for responsible and ground-breaking Christian action in democratic societies; African societies that have to deal with the harmful and disintegrative presence of this phenomenon; and societies that are in need of visualising the integrative-redemptive presence of the living God in Jesus Christ. It is in his living presence alone that life can flourish.

The complex landscape of communicative rationality concerning corruption in post-apartheid South Africa

During an interview with John Mukum Mbaku, consultant for – amongst others – the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) and the African Economic Research Consortium (AERC), we were advised to recognise that corruption is, by far, one of the most important constraints to economic growth and development in Africa (Hall 2015:24). Mbaku also made important remarks during this interview regarding the impact of corruption on the stability of democratic environments. Pervasive corruption

can force citizens, especially the poor and those belonging to groups that have historically been systematically marginalised by public policies such as minority ethnic and religious groups, to have a feeling of distrust in their government. Such distrust, if sustained, can force these groups to opt for violent and destructive mobilisation as a way to prevent further marginalisation and to improve their levels of participation in political and economic markets (Hall 2015:30).

In his publication, *Corruption in Africa: Causes, consequences and cleanups*, Mbaku (2007:110) elaborates on the serious impact of corruption, especially on the vulnerable communities of Africa. Civil servants, in an effort to illegally extract additional income for themselves, usually allocate public goods and services capriciously, favouring those who are willing and able to pay bribes. This practice subjects a large part of the population to unnecessary suffering. The poor are deprived of life-saving public services such as clean water, prenatal care for pregnant women, primary education and shelter. In countries where corruption is endemic, the poor and other vulnerable groups may be subjected to other indignities, which include the selling of young girls into prostitution whilst national enforcement agencies stand by and do nothing.

On the surface, it seems that democratic governments are aware of the fact that corruption is viewed as one of the most serious issues that threatens democratic stability. In South Africa, the manifestos of many of the political parties that contested in South Africa's 2014 general election regarded corruption as a major problem. This issue was amongst the most important that were

addressed in the campaigns leading up to the elections. For instance, the African National Congress (ANC) election manifesto committed their party to 'intensify the fight against corruption', stating that the ANC 'is committed to a corruption-free society, ethical behaviour across the society and a government that is accountable to the people' (Bruce 2014:49). The South African government illustrated – soon after the transition to democracy – a commitment to address corruption by establishing an intricate framework of ethical codes, regulations, laws and internal mechanisms for the management of integrity. It also established an extensive range of organisations with the mandate of investigating allegations of corruption. These agencies include, amongst others, the Directorate for Priority Crimes Investigation, the Special Investigations Unit, the Public Protector and the National Prosecuting Authority (Bruce 2014:50).

Despite this commitment to anti-corruption measures on the surface level of society, corruption continues to be a significant problem in South Africa, evident in the ongoing allegations of corruption, even against the highest ranking members of the current ruling party's leadership and in the way these same individuals are able to acquit themselves from any blame. For example, ANC leaders and associated individuals used the findings of an inter-ministerial task team to nullify findings against President Jacob Zuma in the current Public Protector's report on the construction of his homestead at Nkandla (Bruce 2014:54).

When the level of the communicative rationality surrounding corruption, its causes and effects (as well as accountability and

why corruption could be tolerated in some instances) are explored in an African context, a complex and multi-faceted landscape unfolds:

- Blame shifting is allowed to develop as a result of different conceptualisations regarding the impact that corruption is having on the African continent.
- In a South African context, an asymmetrically shaped public sphere is beginning to take shape, making it very difficult for participants on civil society platforms to be actually heard or to experience the feeling that their anti-corruption contributions are having an effect.

The above-mentioned characteristics of the complex African corruption landscape could pose opportunities to people whose corrupt behaviour is immediately felt by vulnerable members of the African society. Government leaders and civil servants find ways to not be held accountable for hidden motives of greed and the abuse of power that may mar their service to the people. In the following section these two characteristics of the complex African corruption landscape, especially as these characteristics manifest in a South African post-apartheid society, are discussed.

Different conceptualisations regarding the origin of corruption

Blundo and De Sardan (2006:26) pointed out the difference between a 'continuist' and a 'rapturist' sense of deploying the cultural argument in explaining the seemingly endemic presence of corruption in an African context.

'Continuists' work with the conceptual framework that corrupt behaviour is basically endogenous in nature. In support of this view, a reference could for example be made to a study on the popular semiology of corruption in Africa (based on interviews pertaining to the symbolic, ideological and argumentative landscape of corruption in Benin, Niger and Senegal) (Blundo & De Sardan 2006:111–119). This study found an incessant alternation between condemnation and tolerance in the normative discourse of corruption. On the one hand, corrupt practices tended to be justified or even legitimised, on the other hand, these practices are stigmatised. These authors found that actors shifted continuously from one modality to the other, not only in accordance with the context of delivery, but also on the basis of argumentative sequences within one and the same context. The archetypal justificatory argument for the tolerance of corruption that emerged from the data includes some grand utterances in which corruption is sometimes a question of recovery. Corruption is often seen as 'one's due' (being compensated for an injustice to which perpetrators believe themselves to have fallen victim) and as 'good manners' (compassion and common courtesy when, for instance, public servants know when to take pity on users and to give in to certain people's entreaties and supplications). From a critical stance against the 'continuist' view, De Maria (2007:3) argued that the view of Africa as a continent beset by corruption is a Western construct whose chief flaw is its individualism. The Western mind fails to see that in Africa the community takes precedence, as the concepts of *botho* and/or *ubuntu* [humanity] show. The individualistic Western mind tends to view the act of an educational officer who accepts a bribe to get a daughter and/or son without sufficiently high school

grades into a university as the malpractice of an individual rogue citizen, whilst in the context of an African culture this act will not be necessarily seen as an act of personal greed or selfishness, but as part of the communal duty to help an immediate relative (cf. Prozesky 2013:15).

'Rapturists' explain the emergence of corruption in African traditions and ancestral values as the result of a clear historical rupture that coincides with the importation of the colonial state into Africa. In this regard Wong (2014:83) draws a line between the wanton exploitation of natural resources by the European colonial powers, and the imposition of massive changes in the adaptive subsistence of Africa's people. The traditional African societies and their structures were effectively destroyed within a short period of time. Ardent local collaborators were routinely recruited to advance European national and economic objectives in Africa. For example, the 18th century human enslavement process between West Africa and the Americas could not have flourished without the active participation of local African chieftains. There were too few Europeans in Africa to capture a large number of African residents to ensure that they would be loaded on waiting slave ships and processed for chattel slavery in the Western hemisphere. This unfortunate history initiated a lasting pattern for Africa's leaders and public service officials to be involved in corrupt practices.

In the polarising debate between 'rapturists' and 'continuists', culture is either seen as the ultimate cause of corruption, or it is seen as the victim of an external force by which it has been perverted. From the one end of the spectrum, the modern state is seen to be subjected to a corruptive influence by traditional culture,

in contrast with the supposed integrity of 'first world' mentality in relation to its 'third world' counterpart and where there is no reckoning of Africa's view on the imbeddedness of life in communities in the process. From the other end of the spectrum, traditional culture is seen to be subjected to corruption by the advent of the modern state. Corruption is then condemned as a foreign element caused by the self-enriching behaviour of the privileged, accompanied by the implementation of capitalism and shifting the blame for any harmful effects on Western exploitation (De Wet 2015:3). In other words, in the communicative rationality with which people interpret the root causes of corruption whilst trying to establish their own blamelessness, the threatening presence of corruption in a democratic environment is declared to flow either from the perceived fact that the modern state is corrupted by traditional culture, or from the perceived fact that traditional culture is corrupted by the advent of the modern state. In this polarised situation in which distrust and blame shifting have the potential to drive deeper chasms between fellow South Africans, the prosperity of a select few are artificially inflated against the deteriorating situation of the poor. Loopholes are created to exploit vulnerable citizens unabatedly. The disastrous potential of this situation is, for instance, illustrated by the stellar rise of a growing black middle class in the post-Mbeki period, whilst the poverty of the poorest of the poor only became more pronounced. Unlike their white counterparts, the emergent black middle class did not have historical assets, and they had large nuclear and extended families to care for. As a consequence, they began to rely on massive debt and/or patronage. Even honest and idealistic individuals entering politics or the public service were drawn into corrupt

practices arising from their unenviable position at the interface of two contradictory worlds. Firstly, a working world that calls on individuals to pursue their work according to anonymous rules according to the principles of an exclusive liberal view on the modern state. Secondly, a system of patronage that binds its members to obligations and duties on the basis of family, kin or friendship, as the fruits of a marriage between Leninist bias towards the disadvantaged on the one hand and the unneutral warm-heartedness towards their kin that is so characteristic of African culture on the other hand (cf. Chipkin 2013:222).

Christian leaders have their work cut out to introduce a communicative rationality in which people from all sides of the spectrum will have to be confronted with the true nature of their involvement in corrupt practices. They should also be made aware of the vast destructive potential of their actions and to be reconciled to such an extent that fellow citizens from different backgrounds will be able to work together towards the common good of all South Africans.

☐ The implications of an asymmetrically shaped public sphere for Christian leaders' presence and participation in civil society

An important observation regarding the fields of tension created by corruption in African societies – and specifically in a South African context – has to do with the seemingly ineffectiveness of an anti-corruption dialogue and protest in the public sphere of civil society. Citizens feel that they have to take drastic measures in order to be heard. This frustration can lead to mass protests characterised by violence and damage to property and infrastructure. Patrick Bond

describes his prospect for what can be expected in the immediate future as follows (Bond 2014):

> In coming months and years, protesters will keep dodging police bullets and moving the socioeconomic and political-ecological questions to centre stage, from where ANC neoliberal nationalism can either arrange a properly fascist backlash or, more likely under Zuma's ongoing misrule until 2019, continue shrinking in confusion with regular doses of necessary humility. (p. 20)

Mothoagae (2013:5, 6) argues that there is a clear indication in the post-apartheid South African situation that those who raise these issues on whatever public platform, find themselves in a situation of not being afforded the space to voice their dissatisfaction. Dissatisfaction expressed through service delivery protests have made the citizenry conscious that they have an active role to play in public issues like the demarcation of municipalities, health systems, infrastructure, education and the use of public funds. Lack of communication, transparency and the pretentious character traits of leaders have caused the voice of the majority to remain voiceless. These circumstances have made them feel that they are not allowed their rightful role in sharing responsibilities with an eye on working together for the development of a healthy democracy in which there is the opportunity of a better life for all.

A historical analysis of the post-apartheid South African civil society shows that the ruling ANC government initially considered trade unions and community-based organisations that pioneered the struggle against apartheid as major assets in democratising and developing society. Government's overall appreciation of the active and independent role of civil society participants, however, gradually became more subdued and ambivalent. The roles of these

organisations were seen to be instrumental in the implementation of government policies, rather than playing an independent watchdog role or an influential role in criticising ineffective policies and co-constructing better policies. These developments in the post-apartheid dispensation caused the public sphere to take on an asymmetrical shape in which the government began to express themselves as role-players with an overwhelming mandate to drive development. Civil society organisations increasingly became frustrated because they felt that their critical observations were not being heard and that the power configurations in which government leaders and officials imbedded themselves made them increasingly untouchable (De Wet 2015:3).

Christian leaders will have to find a way of ministering the heart of the Christian gospel in this asymmetrically shaped communicative field without resorting to typical coercive devices that may seem as an option in situations like these. Rather than coercing those in power into change by means of mass protest (and risking the unleashing of violent and disintegrative forces in the process), the gospel needs to be ministered in an integrative way. The truth should be disclosed in such a way that will open up newness and abundance of life for all.

◼ The need to equip Christian leaders for the challenges that they are facing in the complexities surrounding corruption

The conceptual framework that surfaced from our empirical study (refer to Ch. 2) showed that Christian leaders are conscious of the

fact that focused attention needs to be given in equipping believers for the task at hand in the face of corruption and its threat to democracy.

Several aspects with regard to the need to equip Christian leaders seem to be involved in this context:

- The public sphere, in which Christian leaders need to exercise their calling, is clearly not an uncomplicated and tension-free space. In order to make an impact on anti-corruption deliberations on a civil society platform and the different aspects of renewal that need to flow from these deliberations, Christian leaders need to be equipped regarding the implications of what will be asked from them to engage with those in power in an asymmetrically shaped action field.
- Church leaders will especially have to be conscious of the fact that it is not only themselves that are in need of being equipped for their participation in debate and deliberations in the complex action fields of civil society, but that they also have a responsibility towards equipping all believers for their calling in the kingdom of God (this calling, for example, influences ethical conduct in the workplace). From a recent empirical survey conducted by Call24, a support platform organisation for businesses and ministries that partake in God's call for the working South African population, it appeared that the interviewees felt that churches struggle to adequately envision, equip and support leaders for playing a wholesome role in the world of work. They felt that there were not sufficient training and support for business leaders and employees alike (Call42 2013:2,5).

- Various Christian traditions played dominant roles in the power structures that shaped the recent history of South African society. Whether church leaders are currently members of the particular tradition through which the apartheid state was maintained (in the case of the traditional Afrikaans Reformed churches) or of the tradition that played a powerful prophetic role in dismantling oppressive apartheid structures (in the case of the English speaking mainline denominations that formed the South African Council of Churches [SACC]), they will – in both instances – have to be equipped regarding the implications of their changed situation in the post-apartheid dispensation. Unlike the period leading up to 1994, there is no longer a state church that can speak on behalf of the people, and the SACC finds it difficult to fulfil a uniting, ecumenical function in representing the collective will and intentions of the churches in South Africa (Forster 2015:10). Kuperus (2011:279) reminds us that the traditional Afrikaans Reformed churches currently find themselves in a position of having a muted voice. Justifying apartheid from scripture was revealed to be an act of misguidance and a case of sinful self-seeking at the expense of others. It led to incredulity and disillusionment amongst members of the Church as well as society at large, especially regarding the credibility of the Church as an authentic role-player in civil society (Dreyer 2004:3). Even churches that claimed to oppose apartheid's segregation policies had to face serious critical questions in a post-apartheid society where trust is not easily won and reconciliation cannot be realised superficially. The report of the TRC reminds us of the failure of churches when the report concluded with the following words (TRC Report, Vol. 4, Ch. 3):

> In most cases, faith communities claimed to cut across divisions of race, gender, class and ethnicity. As such, they would seem by their very existence to have been in opposition to the policies of the apartheid state, and in pursuing their own norms and values, to have constituted a direct challenge to apartheid policies. However, contrary to their own deepest principles, many faith communities mirrored apartheid society, giving the lie to their profession of a loyalty that transcended social divisions. (para. 29)

In the case of churches that traditionally were part of the SACC, leaders are struggling in the current situation to rekindle the same dynamic momentum that led to the dismantling of apartheid. A sense of 'arrived-ness' emerged in the circles of the ecumenical churches after the goal of dismantling the apartheid rule was achieved. During the first years since the inception of South Africa's democratic dispensation, the question was often asked: 'Where have all the prophets gone?' The predetermined conformist role that gradually became to be visualised for religion by the ruling ANC party poses a serious challenge for a voice that is currently in the process of reassessing its role two decades into the post-apartheid dispensation and realising anew that it will have to stay true to its prophetic roots (De Wet 2015:7). The implications for leaders living with the above-mentioned legacies are clear. The leaders of the traditional Afrikaans Reformed churches will – whilst being equipped for reassessing their role in South African society – have to find answers to the question: 'How can an authentic presence be established that will be able to break the subduing shackles of distrust and disillusionment?' The leaders of churches who claimed that they never became part of, or tried to justify, the apartheid system, will have to be equipped in ministering a kind of righteousness that does not only talk about the newness of life that

should be accessible to all. The leaders of churches that were traditionally part of the SACC will – specifically in their case – have to be equipped in visualising a momentum for a prophetic voice that will be so finely attuned to what lies at the heart of the current situation of impasse that corrupt behaviour will not be able to be hidden or side-stepped anymore, and the abundance of life will no longer be able to be kept from those for whom it is destined.

In seeking new avenues for an authentic presence and a corruption-shattering prophetic momentum, several strategic options have been considered and suggested in the face of the reality that the church has seemingly lost its influence on the public sphere:

- According to Forster (2015:10vv), new groupings have emerged in an attempt to fulfil the vital social and public role of the Church after the demise of traditional ecumenical structures. Examples of such movements are, amongst others, the Religious Leaders Forum, South African Christian Leaders Initiative, Unashamedly Ethical, Transformation Africa and most recently the ForSA movement. There is, however, no clear indication at this point that these organisations have been able to unite South Africans in the battle against corruption or to form a prophetic voice that actually affects radical change in the hearts and minds and lives of those who have hardened themselves in an attempt not to be confronted with the harmful effects and destructive consequences of their corrupt behaviour.
- Another angle in finding an answer to the question of how the Church can reclaim its lost voice in a polarised and an asymmetrically shaped civil society platform amounts to a much

more modest and patient approach in which a sensitivity towards the culture of the 'other' is communicated in the post-colonial epoch we find ourselves in. Ahrens (2011:34vv.) discussed the typical problems involved in choosing a Western-minded order-perspective approach as a strategy for fighting corruption. An order-perspective approach has, first of all, an eye for the consequences of social acts for the political and economic stability of a system and consequently gives priority to defining the combat against corruption with regard to factors that can curb the development of corruption. It formulates formal rules that must be defined clearly regarding possible acts that should be allowed on the one hand, and acts that should be forbidden on the other hand. An order-political line of thinking can cause people whose lives are imbedded in African culture to feel insulted by just another form of colonial-style moral prescription. Corruption will, according to Ahrens (2011:36), only be successfully conquered when all participants on the civil society platform are committed to a form of dialogue in which the freedom of others and their rootedness in another context is honoured. This approach also entails a communicative rationality in which the complexity of corruption, as it occurs in the African continent, is reckoned with. The question asked here is whether this war against corruption should adopt a radical 'zero tolerance' type of strategy involving a full-scale abolishment of the multiple and, in some cases, the harmless existing 'arrangements', and thus run the risk of being unrealistic or impractical in demanding that everyone completely abandon their diverse habits; or whether this kind of strategy should

instead advance in small steps whilst outlining steadily (negotiated or imposed) dividing lines between the acceptable and unacceptable, and thus gradually surrendering its substance, requirements or soul (Blundo & De Sardan 2006:134).

- Then there is also the approach that maintains that the Church should not shy away from its calling to minister the disclosing light of the gospel at an in-depth level of the problem field. Edet (2009:635) reasons that the bulk of responsibility for corruption in Africa cannot stop on the colonialist and neo-colonialist desks, no matter the impact of their role in abetting and promoting this menace. The searchlight must be beamed inwards if Africa wants to tackle this refractory canker worm head-on. As an illustration of this bold approach, Edet refers to a communiqué issued at the end of a joint consultation by Episcopal churches regarding the corruption situation in Liberia and Sierra Leone (Edet 2009):

> We all know the root cause of conflict. It is sin that manifests itself in various ways: Human greed for wealth, selfishness and lack of sympathy for others, injustice and oppression in public and private life, ethnocentrism, pride, corruption, greed and power-drunkenness: All these create tensions which society cannot tolerate indefinitely. The people must continue to insist on good government and those who claim the right to rule must seek the common good. (p. 643–644)

Similarly, Mothoagae (2013:8) did not shy away from interpreting a statement by the president of South Africa in which the president allegedly said that, 'Businesses which support the ANC will prosper' (City Press, 11 December 2012) to be a clear indication of a lack of moral consciousness. Speaking from a black liberation theology point of view, Mothoagae (2013) feels that it is imperative to bring to the public deliberation a moral gravity that cannot be generated

simply by the negotiations of balanced self-interests. When Christian leaders consider this kind of approach, according to our mind, they will have to do so from a position of integrity. Their prophetic words will sound hollow and ignorable when there are still instances of corruptive, dehumanising and discriminating conduct in their own midst. True prophetic words that disclose the truth and open an abundance of life for all can be spoken in conformity through the spirit of the living Christ alone.

◼ Conclusion

In this brief interpretative research cycle, we have tried to bring the landscape in which corruption manifests in an African context into interactive dialogue with the conceptual framework that surfaced from our interviews with four Christian leaders.

Our empirical study showed that corruption is viewed by Christian leaders on ground level as a serious threat to democracy. An effective strategy against corruption will ultimately have to focus on the heart of the complex problem field surrounding the resilient presence of corruption in our society; a problem field in which factors like greed and the abuse of power need to be addressed in equipping Christians for prophetic actions.

Our interpretative perspectives showed that corruption occurs in a complex action field in which diverse conceptualisations concerning corruption can cause the communicative field of addressing corruption to polarise and to become subject to opportunities for blame shifting. Another challenging reality that Christian leaders will have to deal with concerns the asymmetrical shape of the public

sphere in which the South Africa civil society platform is currently configured. The implications of an asymmetrical shape are that Church leaders do not find themselves in an advantageous position in the sense that the authority and authenticity of their contributions to anti-corruption deliberations will be automatically recognised. Church leaders share the frustrations of the public populace and a civil society community that feel that they are not heard.

In light of the complex landscape opened up by this interpretative contribution, the normative and strategic cycles of this research project face the challenge of probing for theological perspectives that will be able to equip Christian leaders to communicate the presence of corruption and to reconcile the heart of the Christian gospel in an authentic, uniting and liberating way.

Reasons why government leaders, officials and church leaders have to act against corruption

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◼ Introduction

The research question of this chapter is: 'What insight can be gained from a practical theological study into the deeply-rooted causes and far-reaching effects of corruption in the South African liberal democratic environment. Additionally, what insights can be gained regarding the strategic elements required by Christian leaders to address this problem faithfully according to their God-given calling?'

In the conceptual framework (Ch. 2) which was developed as it emerged from the data of the interviews, it is clear that there are urgent reasons for government leaders and officials to start acting in the midst of the resilient praxis of corruption. In Chapter 2, three categories were identified to explain why corruption is taking place, namely, the greed for wealth, misuse of political power, and the ineffectiveness of Christian leaders in calling the government to account for corruption.

The responses of interviewees as given in Chapter 2, and coded as 2.3, suggest the following reasons for the corrupt actions of government leaders and officials:

- Corrupt actions underpinned by political ideology.
- The desire to gain wealth and power for self and the political organisation.
- The desire for personal wealth and enrichment.
- Government officials consider it normal to go for personal gain in civil society.
- The difference in world views in African culture.
- The cultural view of property rights.
- The individualistic way of doing things.
- The view that human rights are more important than other rights.
- The importance of understanding the *ubuntu* principle.

This chapter will address the problem of insufficient action against corruption by government leaders and church leaders. This explanation will also offer reasons for leaders and officials to start acting. Of the many challenges facing developing countries worldwide, corruption remains the most pervasive and the least

confronted issue. This repeatedly brings to mind the question of why leaders and officials are so reluctant to act (Sebake & Sebola 2014:744). The consequences of corruption have implications reaching much further than the obvious. Corruption manifests itself in various ways, including the inflation of government contracts in return for kickbacks; fraud and falsification of accounts in the public service; examination malpractices in educational institutions (including universities); the acceptance of bribes, and the perversion of justice amongst the police, the judiciary and other organs responsible for administering justice (Sebake & Sebola 2014:751). The same authors also identified the resilient problem within a South African context by indicating that South Africa and other countries claim to take a tough stand on corruption, to little or no effect.

The authors ask the question why South Africa's fight against the evils of corruption seems to be in vain. The most recent example of the Nkandla project debacle, more than any other, vividly demonstrates this question. The Nkandla project demonstrates how Makhanya, President Zuma's private architect and a non-security expert, was drawn into the project in August 2009 without following tender procedures. Everything was left to him 'to discuss and explain the President's preferences', and the total cost escalated to above R240 million (Public Protector of the Republic of South Africa 2014:32). Officials involved in the Nkandla project accepted that, because of the fact that the project related to the security of the president, 'the deviation from the norms was justified and not to be questioned' (Tsheola 2014:720). Responding to Parliament in 2013, President Zuma argued that all expenses at Nkandla were borne by his family and that the

state paid for security upgrades only, when in August 2010 the Director of Architectural Services of the Department of Public Works was astonished by the excessive cost of the project to the state (cited in Public Protector of the Republic of South Africa 2014:4). Is it possible that government leaders can still argue that there was no wrong-doing? Corruption Watch and Transparency International, for instance, have on numerous occasions released shocking statistics about the status of corruption in South Africa and other developing countries. On numerous occasions international financial institutions such as the World Bank and International Monetary Fund have taken a tough stand against countries listed as corrupt, but little progress seems to have been made as corruption in those countries has continued unabated (Sebake & Sebola 2014:752). These unanswered questions have urged the authors to consider possible reasons for government leaders and officials to start acting against corruption. In this discussion, only a few reasons for action from the side of leaders and officials will be highlighted.

■ Reasons government leaders and officials should act against corruption

In this section, it is important to have a look at the depth of this phenomenon and to investigate the possibility of a type of spiritual soul or spirit operating in people's minds that makes corruption acceptable to them. This issue will be addressed in the next section. Secondly, the authors will provide pointers as reasons for officials to start acting against corruption.

■ Toffler's futuristic view on a new civilisation as humus for the unwillingness to act against corruption

Toffler (1980:23, 1993:18) did extensive research on what he then called a 'new' emerging civilisation that offers a new family style, a new economy and also a new kind of consciousness. According to this 'new' kind of civilisation people are attuning their lives to the rhythms of tomorrow. Toffler distinguished three big waves that operated in history and also indicated that each wave offered its own social and political way of life, and asks the question what happens when a society experiences several waves of change running simultaneously, causing conflict and clashes of world views and value systems? (Toffler 1985:203). It brings conflict to the foreground. Toffler (1980:24) indicated that history is currently undergoing the third wave. Comprehending the collision of historical waves is important when considering reasons for government officials to start acting against the dehumanising effects of corruption. Which wave and/or waves are influencing government's understanding of leadership? Are we experiencing a society in the third wave with a government still in the mind-set of the first or second wave?

The first important wave that changed people's lives was the invention of agriculture that took thousands of years to play out. The second big wave was set in motion by the industrial revolution and lasted for hundreds of years. The defenders of the agriculture wave and the partisans of the industrial wave suffered a historical head-on collision. During the tide of the second wave (industrial wave) the importance of money, goods and property was prominent (Toffler 1980:55). The marketplace became very important. The problem during this industrial period was that production was

divorced from consumption and people became over-dependent on the marketplace instead of using their own skills for producing the necessities of life (Toffler 1980:55). In this kind of society it is not only products that are bought, sold, and traded, but souls as well (Toffler 1985:57).

People and communities from the industrial wave also experienced a relational problem (Toffler 1985:60). Human behaviour is regarded as a set of transactions. Instead of a society based on kinship and allegiance, the importance of contractual ties (actual or implied) became more prominent. The division between production and consumption became problematic and the need for gratification and a hedonistic lifestyle became increasingly important. During the functioning of the second wave the problem also arose, namely, who runs things in society? (Toffler 1980:75). The role of government became very important (Toffler 1990:7). Because of the government's coercive power and tax revenues it could do things that private enterprises could not afford to undertake and this led to corrupt practices. Governments could stimulate the industrialisation process long before companies could do so. Leadership styles changed rapidly during the industrial wave and presidents of countries became like managers of big companies. A pyramid of power emerged in all spheres of life and the powerful elite ('they') became overly important (Toffler 1980:80). With power and money came corruption, and in this sense corruption in governments was one of the results of the industrial wave that influenced the world for such a long period. South Africa was not immune to this wave, and the current praxis of corruption in South Africa is the productive harvest yielded by the fertile soil of history.

Toffler (1980:31) also highlights the fact that most countries are experiencing a struggle between partisans of the industrial past and the millions of the new civilisations. It is all about a struggle for tomorrow. This battle between partisans of the second and third waves is a political reality for most countries worldwide (Toffler 1993:41). In this light, it is possible that government leaders find themselves between two waves. When examining the problems in our own country it is important to do it against the background of global tendencies. Government leaders and officials have to reconsider their own attitude in the midst of a new perspective on life (third wave). Second (industrial) wave practices in a third wave civilisation cannot be hidden and will eventually lead to an inevitable collision. The third wave is tearing families apart, rocking the world's economy, shattering human values and is also paralysing political systems (Toffler 1993:22). Toffler made this remark 22 years ago. In this new emanating civilisation there is an emphasis on synthesis, and even in economics people tend to put things that are meaningful back together and also provide a major shift in economic power with the ability to direct or influence the behaviour of others or the course of events in society. Electronics, computers and ocean mining are, for example, becoming more and more important and help to create a techno-sphere (Toffler 1980:155). New technologies that are more environmentally friendly and socially acceptable become increasingly important. Daily life becomes dependent on information. The demassification of media leads to the fact that everything from music to politics is becoming less uniform and therefore consensus on important matters begins to shatter (Toffler 1980:176). People living in the

third wave are experiencing apathy on problematic societal issues, and also experience a willingness to withdraw themselves from the needs of people. Other people are equipped to move to higher levels of technology (Toffler 1980:178). Because of technology there is also the demand for continuous change. Computers make it possible to do business from minute to minute (Toffler 1985:61). Companies and governments experience moral pressure. Behaviour and patterns of the second (industrial) wave are suddenly reinterpreted as corrupt, immoral and scandalous (Toffler 1980:248).

Toffler (1990:470) also warned that the control of immense wealth, whether by individuals or officials, will become a bigger problem because of the fact that there is a shift in the relationship between violence, wealth and knowledge, as societies speed towards their collision with tomorrow. Leaders should realise that the struggle for tomorrow also offers new dynamic ways of decision-making, because the big struggle is no longer between marginalised ethnic groups or between capitalists and communists; it is to manage the dichotomy between partisans of the industrial era and the millions of people of the third wave (Toffler 1980:446).

The authors of this article are debating whether the liberal government of South Africa is not trying to cling to the values of the industrial era whilst they are facing the current problems of the third-wave generation of people. People of the third-wave generation are suspicious of government leaders and leaders have to learn to cope with that (Toffler 1980:449). Government leaders and officials are obliged to be aware of the fact that they cannot use second-wave tools in a third-wave civilisation. This is why there is

such a need for government to take moral and ethical action against corruption. The lesson from history is clear: the transition from the first to the second wave was bloody. Government leaders and officials reluctant to adapt to the third-wave movement are on a dangerous track.

■ South Africa as global capital of corruption where officials put their interests above that of society

Africa, like the rest of the world in the age of globalisation, is being confronted with diverse ethical issues (Udeani 2008:65–66). African governments are known for their problems with leadership, and a closer look reveals that these problems are of monumental proportions. As such it is evident that nobody claiming to be concerned about the welfare of Africa can afford to ignore issues of African leadership and corruption (Udeani 2008:66). Naidoo (2012:657) expresses his concern statistically and indicates that, despite tender legislation in government, 34% of all government departments awarded contracts to other officials and close family members. The three national departments of Health, Education and Public Works and their provincial equivalents – which together account for 70% of all state expenditure – failed to achieve a clean audit. Seventy six percent of national, and 55% of provincial departments had adverse findings made against them that related to the predetermined objectives or the goals that they had set for themselves, but had failed to achieve. Despite a number of initiatives to curb corrupt practices in government departments, it is evident that corruption is still rising (Naidoo 2012:658).

In the literature search, it became evident that authors are debating from different vantage points when it comes to the interpretation and functioning of corruption in South Africa. Two opposite views were explored. Certain authors have the opinion that South Africa is no more corrupt than other developed Western countries, whilst other authors are providing statistics intended to convince leaders of the importance of initiating action against corruption. On the one hand, authors are reasoning away from the normative approaches that dismiss corruption as a mere societal evil, towards revisionism, which offers more complex and more nuanced framing and understanding of corruption (Tsheola 2014:708). Tsheola also indicated that the characterisation of South Africa as a global capital of corruption is a function of the spectacular, dramatic and overt nature of pertinent occurrences rather than the sheer scale and volume of resources involved in the practice. The question of South Africa being a global capital of corruption has the appearance of a cynical Afro-pessimistic stereotype of Africans being 'corrupt' by nature (Tsheola 2014:708). The same author is arguing that the ongoing fight against corruption is a matter of reverence for perception and an attempt to use the West as a template for measuring Africa's and/or South Africa's conduct (Tsheola 2014:709). On the other hand, Sebake and Sebola (2014:749) indicated that corruption dominated all levels of government and very little has been done about the identified perpetrators of such malpactices in which the law rarely takes its course. The difficulty in dealing with perpetrators is mainly that most of them belong either to the political elite or are related or otherwise connected to the

political elite; hence the interferences and interventions in both departmental disciplinary and legal processes to save the skins of those involved.

Since its 50th National Congress, the ANC believed that the cadre deployment policy strategy should directly relate to the national democratic tasks as set out in the *Strategy and Tactics* document (Sebake & Sebola 2014:750). This was argued by public speakers as a strategy to swell the ranks in all spheres of power and ultimately in government administration to give space to loyalists who would in return create space for the inclusion of the political ideology of the ruling party. Whilst this may have been created with good intentions, the question remains whether or not it was manipulated as a passport to corrupt employment by the ruling class or by individuals to create patronage and gatekeeping, using government employment (Sebake & Sebola 2014:749). Thus far it is clear that it has opened up a way for corruption in the employment of public servants, which ultimately promotes nepotism, favouritism, poor service levels and brutal gatekeeping against the non-loyalists in government service. It has to do with a certain attitude where leaders and officials are putting their interests and political ideas above that of society.

What makes this issue more difficult is that most South African oversight institutions such as the Public Service Commission and the Auditor-General have their effectiveness limited by their advisory and recommendatory role; it prevents them from acting as institutions with power to enforce implementation (Sebake & Sebola 2014:750). The reality is that, in most instances, the findings of oversight institutions are not implemented by

government after final analysis. Often the government department fails to implement the recommendations because this would not fit the political or administrative notion of the ruling government (Sebake & Sebola 2014:751). Creating a distance between the corrupter and the corruptee is currently difficult in most developing countries. On the one hand, public officials find it difficult to resist the temptation of kickbacks from corrupt public members, whilst the legal system, on the other hand, has in many cases failed to prove beyond doubt the crimes of corruption committed by either public officials or politicians (Sebake & Sebola 2014:752). In instances where the legal system has been successful, the perpetrators were not directly found guilty of corruption, but were instead found guilty of corruption-related crimes such as fraud.

It is evident from this discussion that one reason for reluctance to act against corruption is the fact that leaders and officials are often so involved with their own interests and that of the ruling party that the best interests of society are not a priority.

Government leaders and officials who choose to remain mute condone corruption: Silence versus voicelessness

In a democratic society people have every reason to expect their leaders and officials to act against corruption; in fact, the law demands it (Naidoo 2012:663). According to Naidoo, the South African government in Section 195 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996, indicates that Public Administration should be governed by democratic values and principles, such as (Naidoo 2012):

- The promotion of a high standard of professional ethics.
- The promotion of efficient, economic, and effective use of resources.
- Transparency has to be fostered by providing the public with timely, accessible, and accurate information.
- Public administration should be accountable. (p. 664)

Furthermore, the Prevention and Combating of Corrupt Activities Act (Act 12 of 2004) outlines a framework for the strengthening of measures to prevent and combat corruption. It provides investigative measures in respect of corruption, places certain restrictions on persons and enterprises convicted of corrupt activities (relating to tenders and contracts) and provides for extraterritorial jurisdiction in respect of the offence of corruption and offences relating to corrupt activities (Naidoo 2014:664). Public sector departments are required to report offences relating to fraud and corruption involving an amount of R100,000.00 or more to the South African Police Service in terms of Section 34(1) of the Prevention and Combating of Corrupt Activities Act 12 of 2004. The Public Service Commission (PSC) recommends that internal controls in areas of procurement and financial management should be strengthened. Departments are required to periodically conduct surprise procurement audits of selected projects to identify weaknesses and malpractices in procurement processes (Naidoo 2014:665). Departmental risk management and fraud prevention plans should be continuously updated to tackle the risks identified. However, state departments have been dragging their feet. The implementation and enforcement of Act 12 of 2004 has clearly not been very effective, as corruption is rife in the public sector of South Africa.

Voicelessness is not the same as silence, as silence can have a positive connotation, like in meditation and contemplative prayer. Voicelessness has an inherently negative ring to it (Kritzinger 2012:233). When government leaders, theology and (by implication) theologians are assumed to be voiceless that is seen as negative and problematic.

According to Kritzinger (2012:234) voicelessness can be the result of a few factors:

- *Guilt*, for example, when people do not say anything in a group because they feel ashamed of their former actions. In their own minds, they lack the credibility to say anything in public about the particular issue.
- Voicelessness could also be the result of *apathy.* Often we do not want to say anything, or even discuss it, because we do not want our comfort zones to be disturbed. We are occupied with other priorities and are not willing, or able, to devote any energy to this issue.
- Even more disturbing is voicelessness for the sake of *friendship*, for example, when we fail to publicly expose or criticise a particular instance of corruption because the people committing it (or their superiors who are responsible) are our friends or relatives. After all, they are 'our people'. We can become voiceless when we allow ties of family and friendship to mute our prophetic voice into a complicit and nepotistic silence.
- A *specific world view* could also be a reason for voicelessness, for example, when believers assert that a particular matter is a political or economic issue and that they are called to be spiritual and thus only work on religious issues in a religious way.

- Voicelessness because of a sense of *inferiority*, for example, when someone remains quiet in a conversation because she or he does not want to make a fool of themself amongst people regarded as more informed or more powerful. Closely related to this is a feeling of relative ignorance, a sense of being overwhelmed by the complexity or enormity of an issue. Sometimes such a sense of inferiority comes from having been bullied into silence by a dominant group, thus giving rise to a 'culture of silence'. We can become voiceless when the power and influence of others intimidate us into silence.
- Finally, there is a *nepotistic* voicelessness caused by hesitation to publicly criticise leaders who are members of our families or congregations. It is more important for us to retain them as members than to prophetically expose their failures of policy and practises of corruption.

This discussion leads the authors to conclude that leaders' voicelessness regarding corruption draws a serious question mark over their ethical stance against this phenomenon.

Nepotism as possible reason for leaders not to act against corrupt practices

Nepotism can be defined as the showing of special favour or unfair preference to a relative in conferring a position, job or privilege. Therefore it has to do with unfair favouritism shown to friends, protégés or other persons within a person's sphere of influence (Jones 2012:2).

Booysen explained the reality of nepotism, namely:

- Favouritism always evokes negative feelings. In the workplace favouritism is also known as cronyism or workplace nepotism. In most instances it has to do with favourable treatment of family in the workplace. The appointment of friends is called cronyism. Both practises endanger the principle of fairness and transparency and also ignore the importance of competence.
- Nepotism is regarded as discrimination in the workplace. The practice of nepotism in large companies and government organisations is a worrying issue, because of corrupt motives and negative intentions.
- Nepotism is usually associated with practices like bribery, embezzlement, theft, fraud and the abuse of privileged information.
- Proper employment policies with proper selection processes and ethics policies are disregarded in cases of nepotism.
- Government leaders and officials should be held responsible and accountable when ignoring the principles of law and democracy.
- Nepotism creates dissension, frustration and distrust amongst citizens and employees (Booysen 2010:21).

Van der Walt (2003:405–406) adds to this and indicates that government leaders and officials have to set the moral tone for society and that no nation will rise above the level of those in authority. Therefore the leaders in South Africa should stop justifying their deeds with weak excuses like, for example, everyone does it, corruption is a minor offence, I was paid and treated unjustly and therefore I committed corruption. Those who claim that they did it for a higher purpose (their children) should consider the example they are setting. Dishonest and voiceless leaders compromise their

integrity and are in no position to act against others (Van der Walt 2003:405).

Ethical leadership – a sine qua non for curbing corruption and also a reason for promoting good governance

Naidoo made the following interesting suggestions:

- Ethical leadership in the public service should curb corruption and ensure good governance.
- Leadership should be participatory, consensus-oriented, accountable, transparent, responsive, effective and efficient, equitable and inclusive, and follow the rule of law.
- This could ensure that corruption is minimised, the views of communities are taken into account and the voices of the most vulnerable in society are heard in decision-making.
- Ethical leaders increase awareness of what is right, good and important, and they raise followers into leaders who set aside their self-interest for the good of the organisation. An ethical leader is honest, trustworthy and possesses integrity and moral fibre.
- To support governance, both political and administrative leaders should therefore act with integrity at all times and support the ethos of democracy as crafted in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996) (Naidoo 2012:769).

However, building an ethical climate in the South African public sector requires more than just ethical leaders. It requires the proactive management of ethics.

Leaders should lead by example so that they have the will to discipline those who do not toe the line. If the leaders themselves are engaged in unethical, corrupt practices, it is not possible to berate others (Mle & Maclean 2011:1376).

◼ The ineffectiveness of church leaders to act prophetically against corruption in South Africa

In the light of our interpretation regarding the reasons for the corrupt actions of government leaders and officials in the first part of this chapter, the results in our empirical study address the question: 'Why are church leaders ineffective in their calling for prophetic action and are Christian communities not equipped to act likewise in our society?' We consider possible reasons for this state of affairs.

The research question is:

> What insight can be gained from a practical theological study regarding the deeply rooted causes and far-reaching effects of corruption in the South African liberal democratic environment and regarding strategic elements needed by Christian leaders to address this problem faithfully according to their God-given calling?

In the conceptual framework we developed (see Ch. 2), it is clear that the concept of 'Christian mandate according to God's will' is in relation with the concepts 'God's view on corruption' and 'Equipping Christians'. But there is a problem, because, also in our conceptual framework, the concept of 'Corruption' is in relation to the concepts of 'Greed', 'Power', 'Ineffective Christian leadership' and 'Threatening democratic society'. For our respondents it is a great pity that the church leaders are ineffective in addressing the new democratic government on the corruption that is going on, and that the Christian

community is not equipped to influence society in this regard. That the Christian community is also not equipped to have an influence in society is clear in our conceptual framework: the concept '*Missio Dei*' is in relation to the concepts 'Christians are *not* equipped' and 'Effective Christian strategy'.

That was not the case during the struggle against the apartheid government.

■ The prophetic stance of church leaders against apartheid

One of the important conditions for church leaders to be able to speak out prophetically against injustice, oppression and corruption that are affecting the poor, was the support and backing of the Christian community as a prophetic faith community in the country, as was the case during apartheid (although they also had international backing) (cf. Pieterse 2013:6; Pieterse & Van der Ven 1996:537). With an informed and equipped Christian community during that time in the mainline English-speaking, racially integrated churches, individual church leaders and groups of church leaders could speak out freely and effectively against the injustices of apartheid and the negative effect it had on black South Africans. Later on, the Christian communities in Western countries also provided support for them.

Prophetic witness was given by individuals and groups of church leaders supported by the mainline English-speaking churches organised in the SACC. Firstly, we are going to discuss some individual contributions and then the testimonies of groups of church leaders.

Prophetic witness by individual church leaders

The most prominent individual church leader during the struggle against apartheid was Desmond Tutu. Tutu's witness, basically in sermons (cf. Pieterse 2001a), was perceived by the National Party government as a security risk. The following statements were made regarding Desmond Tutu's witness:

- The government 'used all the means at their disposal to communicate a negative message' to the public (Hulley, Kretzchmar & Palo 1996:11).
- He was maligned at every opportunity (Hulley *et al.* 1996:11).
- He opposed apartheid because it was fundamentally unjust and, therefore, unchristian. As such, he was a prophetic witness, a spirituality of struggle (Hulley *et al.* 1996:12).
- In his prophetic witness in sermons he 'thinks from the classical theory of salvation – the revelation of God's grace and love in Jesus Christ, the victory over Evil and sin on the cross through his resurrection and ascension' (Pieterse 2001a:55).

Allan Boesak's greatest contribution was his leadership in the *moderamen* (Executive Church Council) of the Dutch Reformed Mission Church (NG Sendingkerk) with the declaration of a *status confessionis* in the apartheid context and the drafting of a new, additional confession to the Reformed Confessions, the Belhar Confession, adopted by the Dutch Reformed Mission Church in 1986 (De Gruchy & Villa-Vicencio 1994:166). Boesak was not only supported in his prophetic witness by his own church denomination, but also by the World Alliance of Reformed Churches (WARC); thus, also by international Christian communities. In 1982

he addressed the WARC meeting in Ottawa and this ecumenical body then declared the stance of the Dutch Reformed Church (DRC) to justify apartheid theologically, as heresy (De Gruchy & Villa-Vicencio 1983:xvi–xvii).

The Afrikaans-speaking white DRC [NG Kerk] did not participate in the prophetic witnessing against the government of that time, but there were individuals amongst the Afrikaans-speaking people who spoke out against the apartheid policy of the government. These individuals did not have the support of their own church, but eventually received support from the English-speaking mainline churches which also had black members in South Africa. The most prominent of these individuals was Beyers Naudé. He was a strong student leader at Stellenbosch University and a young minister of the DRC. The years of his ministry in Potchefstroom (1955–1959) were important to him, because he realised that apartheid could not be based on the Bible. Some members of the Reformed Churches [Gereformeerde Kerke van Suid-Afrika] attended his Bible studies at his congregation learning much from him for a new understanding of the Bible (Berkhof *et al.* 1985:15–16). He also attended the meeting of the Reformed Ecumenical Synod in Potchefstroom where he realised that the overseas Reformed people understood the Bible differently in view of the unity of all races in the church with no segregation (Naudé 1995:42). The Reformed Churches of South Africa (GKSA) also 'did not follow the apartheid "daughter church" practice of the NGK, and its general synod is an integrated, multi-racial body' (Serfontein 1982:127).

In 1960 the world was shocked when South African police killed 69 and wounded 180 black people who were protesting against the pass laws in Sharpeville. The World Council of Churches (WCC) then arranged a meeting in the same year with eight member churches in South Africa at Cottesloe in Johannesburg. The resolutions against the apartheid laws taken there were accepted by all the members at the meeting, including a strong group of delegates from the DRC (Naudé 1995:46–47, 52). The Transvaal Synod of the DRC rejected the resolutions in April 1961. Beyers Naudé did not agree to reject the Cottesloe resolutions at that synod because he was convinced that it was based on the Bible (Naudé 1995:58). He established a theological journal *Pro Veritate* in 1963, and after disagreements with the newly established South Transvaal Synod of the DRC where he was elected as moderator in April 1963, he resigned as a minister of the church (Naudé 1995:65). His thinking was directed during this time by the biblical truth that we must be more obedient to God than to humans. He then established the Christian Institute with a multi-racial editorial board from where he strongly witnessed against apartheid. He was later placed under house arrest by the government from 1977 to 1982 and again for three more years until 1984 (Berkhof *et al.* 1985:20). In 1984 he was suddenly released.

Another Dutch Reformed minister, Prof. Nico Smith, decided to protest and prophetically witnessed against apartheid in the church and the country. He was a missiology professor at the Theological Seminary at the University of Stellenbosch. He became involved when '2000 Nyanga squatters just outside Cape Town ... were harassed and subsequently arrested and deported

to the Transkei' (Serfontein 1982:162). After disagreements with the curatorum of Stellenbosch he resigned his post as professor, joined the black *Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk in Afrika* (today the Uniting Reformed Church) and became a minster in the Mamolodi congregation near Pretoria (Serfontein 1982:162).

☐ Prophetic witness by groups of church leaders

On 31 October 1980 on Reformation Day, eight Dutch Reformed theologians, namely H.J.B. Combrinck, W.D. Jonker, B.A. Müller, C.F.A. Borchardt, A.B. du Toit, J.A. Heyns, W.P. Esterhuyse and H.W. Rossouw published a statement in which they expressed their (Serfontein 1982):

> … deep concern about the apparent powerlessness of the institutionalised church in South Africa to carry out its divine calling of reconciliation on a meaningful and credible basis in a situation of increasing tension and polarisation between various population groups in our country. (p. 270)

This witness was directed to the DRC. The statement had three points which we will not repeat here because of space. It also called for 'a form of church unity' amongst the DRC family (Serfontein 1982:270).

From 18 to 21 January 1982 a Theological Conference was organised by the academic theological societies catering for the different theological subjects. It was a non-racial meeting consisting of mainly all the mainline churches and some Catholic members in South Africa. Prof. Hennie Pieterse, chair of the Society for Practical Theology, was the secretary of the conference. 'One of the features of the conference was the way in which particularly the NGK theologians

of UNISA attacked their church for its racial policies and practices' (Serfontein 1982:176).

The paper by Prof. David Bosh, in which he claimed that the DRC's justification of apartheid based on the Bible was nothing but heresy, was a strong prophetic witness. Prof. H.J.C. Pieterse (Serfontein 1982):

> ... put forward the view that the bureaucracy of the NGK stood in the way of the renewal of the church. The failure of the NGK to speak out against social injustice ... was because the bureaucracy smothered new thinking; theologians and ministers with 'renewal ideas' were 'sifted out' by the commission of the church. (p. 177)

Pieterse quoted empirical research results on this issue of church bureaucracy in Britain. The conference's witness was hailed as something that had received much publicity in the papers, especially because of the articles by Dr Pierre Rossouw, Prof. H.J.C. Pieterse and Prof. David Bosch (Bosch, König & Nicol 1982:25).

The Open Letter by 123

On 08 June 1982 an open letter [Ope Brief] 'signed by 123 white ministers of the DRC churches was published in *Die Kerkbode*' (Serfontein 1982:182). A huge reaction followed and a theological discussion amongst DRC theologians for and against the content of this letter followed. The whole discussion was published in 1982 in a book by Bosch, König and Nicol (as editors) titled *Perspektief op die Ope Brief*. A prophetic witness that attracted and influenced South African and international churches and theologians was *The Kairos Document* (1986). It was published by the Institute of Contextual Theology (ICT), of which one of the

authors of this chapter, Hennie Pieterse, was a member. It contained strong criticism on 'state theology', and 'church theology' and made a call for prophetic theology. In 1995 the ICT held a conference celebrating 20 years of prophetic struggle which had ended in a new, free, liberal democracy – the new South Africa (Dladla 1996).

Gous (1993:266) indicated that the situation in South Africa at that time changed so dramatically that the context (in the 1990s) required something more than just a resistance theology. Churches were confronted with the issue of what kind of prophetic voice would help offer new hope to Christians in a new political dispensation. The Church was struggling to adapt to the new situation and to redefine its role in society. What were the contours of the task of the Church in a period of transition in a new dispensation? The debate at this stage was what kind of proactive theology (prophetic voice) aimed at the future should replace the reactive resistance theology. Gous (1993:267) indicated that churches in South Africa were confronted by serious issues, namely a theology of responsibility that would emphasise not only one's rights but also one's responsibilities. A theology of responsibility does not sit passively in the sun of newfound freedom, but urges people to accept responsibility for constructing the long awaited 'new' South Africa. Without a theology of personal responsibility, a theology of reconstruction would have an unmotivated workforce that would expect somebody else to take responsibility for the construction. In this chapter it has become evident that this may still be the case in 2015.

Rustenburg was the host of the famous Rustenburg Church Conference from 05 to 09 November 1990 (Alberts & Chikane 1991):

> Not since the Cottesloe Consultation in the 1960s has the Church been presented with so significant a challenge to rediscover its calling and to unite Christian witnesses in a changing South Africa. (p. 15)

Rustenburg was 'the largest and most representative gathering of Christian Churches ever held in South Africa' (Hofmeyr & Pilay 1991:30). Approximately 230 church leaders from more than 80 denominations and parachurch organisations attended the conference, representing more than 90% of Christians in South Africa. Rustenburg came the closest to a truly local ecumenical council in South Africa (Gous 1993:437–438). The watershed event of the Rustenburg Conference was, according to Gous (1993:270), Prof. Willie Jonker's confession on the first morning (cf. Alberts & Chikane 1991):

> I confess before you and before the Lord, not only my own sin and guilt, and my personal responsibility for the political, social, economic and structural wrongs that have been done to many of you and the results of which you and our whole country are still suffering from, but vicariously I dare also to do that in the name of the *NG Kerk* of which I am a member, and for the Afrikaans people as a whole. I have the liberty to do just that, because the *NG Kerk* at its latest synod has declared apartheid a sin and confessed its own guilt of negligence in not warning against it and distancing itself from it long ago. (p. 92)

Gous (1993) indicated that Desmond Tutu spontaneously rose to receive the confession and offer forgiveness:

> I believe that I certainly stand under pressure of God's Holy Spirit to say that when confession is made, then those of us who have been wronged should

say 'We forgive you.' And that together we may move to the reconstruction of our land. It [the confession] is not cheaply made and the response is not cheaply made. (p. 260)

Since that day, with its strong emphasis on a prophetic voice towards reconciliation, much has changed. It seems that the relationship between government and churches from the reformed tradition is facing tremendous challenges. The authors want to highlight the difficulties that churches from this tradition are currently experiencing in a liberal South African democracy. This also entails to what extent it is possible to utter a prophetic voice in the midst of moral decline and corruption. Is it possible to have bilateral discussions with government when the evidence suggests that there is a reluctance to act against immoral practices? But the main issue is still how Christians and Christian leaders can start to act against corruptive practices. It is clear that it will be irresponsible if churches remain silent. The prophetic voice of Christians have to be heard, but the burning question is – what should the mode and manner of this prophetic voice be? This became clear in the declaration (prophetic voice) of the Inter-church Council (ICC) in June 2015. Deputies from the DRC, the Reformed Church (NHK) and the Gereformeerde Kerke in Suid-Afrika (GKSA) refused to have bilateral talks with the government. They chose the medium of written communication. They addressed government in a strongly worded letter and indicated that they were pulling out of bilateral discussions with government. In their prophetic voice against government, the ICC referred to the government's condonation of the personal enrichment of President Zuma through public funds. The ICC expressed their concern about the ANC's willingness to release President Zuma from any responsibility

in this regard whilst the Nkandla report and the findings of the Public Protector clearly proved his guilt. In their letter the ICC also indicated that the ANC is promoting systemic corruption in government departments and that they are concerned about the party's immoral leadership. The ICC continued by stating that reciprocal cognisance of moral values was a prerequisite for any further discussions between the ICC and the government (ICC 2015:9). The ICC also declared that they were willing to speak to the ANC if the issues about moral leadership and the responsibility of government regarding the moral crisis in South Africa could be part of the agenda.

Although much can be said for or against the decision of the ICC, it is clear that Christians are fully aware of the implications of corruption in South Africa. Churches are uttering their prophetic voices through leadership. Is it enough? What are the reasons for the voicelessness of the majority of Christians against corruption? The following sub-section will provide an answer to this question.

■ The reasons for a lack of prophetic voices from church leaders since 1994

After this tiring and stressful time of bearing prophetic witness against apartheid in the church and the country, Prof. Pieterse realised that after 1994 the churches had become silent. Criminal violence broke out after 1994, and this compelled him to ask at an international conference held at UNISA in 2000: 'Where have all the prophets gone?' (Pieterse 2000). In the light of the results our

empirical research yielded on corruption in our country, discussed in Chapters 1 and 2, the question remains valid. However, a slightly reformulated version of the question asks: 'What are the reasons' for the inactivity church leaders are showing on this issue and the resultant fact that church members are not equipped in this regard? The following six reasons are attempts to answer this question:

- The goal of the prophetic witness during apartheid, namely to address the injustice of a racially segregated society in order for its entire people to be restored to equality in one united South Africa, was reached in 1990 to 1994. The thanksgiving sermon by archbishop Tutu in 1990 in St George's Cathedral (after President F.W. de Klerk's speech in parliament) on the miracle from God that has taken place, expressed the fact that the goal of the prophetic witness had been reached (cf. Pieterse 2001b:47).

- After 1994 the president established a presidential religious leaders' working group at which the leaders of all religious groups met with the president and some of his ministers once a year where they could express their concerns face to face. There is no longer a need to witness prophetically in public, because the idea is that it can be brought to the government, as at the meeting of February 2015, where they could discuss their concerns over racism of the past months (Prince 2015:2).

- The ANC tolerates no interference by church leaders in politics. An example is the occasion in 2012 when the church leaders of the English-speaking mainline churches published an open letter addressing the government on the despondent situation of the poor in South Africa, just before the ANC congress in Mangaung. The secretary general of the ANC reacted furiously, saying that if

they had anything to say to the government, they should come to the ANC congress and say it there [as ANC members].

- Churches no longer have any influence over the public sector. The impact of modernity has resulted in the privatisation of religion (cf. Brümmer 2001:55–72). Individuals make their own choices on religion and what to think of it. A further result of modernisation is secularisation, which is now also happening in South Africa (Heyns 2015:13; Scholtz 2015b:13). The views of church leaders do not have much of an effect on contemporary society. The possibility that our prophetic witness can make an impact on the public and the government is slim.

- The DRC is now again a member of the SACC together with the English-speaking, multi-racial mainline churches, but its voice is not taken seriously. The white church is still considered as separate from its black and coloured family member, the Uniting Reformed Church. The process of unifying the two churches has been going on for years. At its synod in 2012 the DRC decided to make room in article 1 of its *Kerkorde* (church law) for an eventual inclusion of the Confession of Belhar. A voting process is taking place in 2015 and two thirds of congregations and two thirds of regional synods have to vote for inclusion of Belhar. It is a difficult and complex process for the DRC.

- President Zuma visited the African Independent Churches at their worship services and received their support for him and his government's policies, and many of them blessed him before the last election. He has their support. They are the majority of Christians in the country, far more in numbers than the mainline churches which so effectively and prophetically witnessed against

apartheid. In this situation the president has no need to bother about what the mainline churches should critically say to the government.

◼ Summary of a problem situation which needs a prophetic witness

With all the positive aspects and the justice our liberal democracy has brought us, with a sound Constitution and a Bill of Rights, there are currently two problems which should be addressed – poverty and corruption.

☐ The current situation of the poor

- Statistics South Africa published the most recent poverty statistics on 03 February 2015 (Scholtz 2015a:11). The poorest of the poor (22% of the population, which is 1.7 million people) have only R335.00 per person per month to buy food. Eighteen point six million people have R501.00 per person per month for food, clothes and a shack. One category up, still classified as poor, are persons who have R779.00 per person per month to buy food, clothes and a roof over their heads, and travel possibilities.
- In total 54% (27 million people) are officially living below the poverty line. In 2001 it was just below 50% of the population, some 19 million out of a population of roughly 40 million (Pieterse 2001a:32). More people are getting poorer in spite of the government's social grants. The severity of the situation is compelling the Church to act.

☐ Corruption in South Africa

The other issue that is moving church leaders to act is the enduring corruption amongst officials in South Africa. The empirical research discussed in Chapters 1 and 2 has painted this acute picture.

■ Conclusion

In this chapter the authors investigate the possible reasons for the reluctance of government officials and church leaders to act against corruption. Reasons why leaders in a South African society should start to act against corruption were also provided. It is clear that if the leaders of any country are themselves engaged in unethical and corrupt practices, it is not possible to berate others who are doing the same. The prophetic voice in a problematic praxis of people who are getting poorer, and of people who are struggling because of the consequences of the acts of corrupt people, needs the urgent attention of church leaders. If the Church is not leading by example in acting against corruption, it will be a deed of unfaithfulness and also a deed in which corruption becomes part of a neglected society.

Managing corruption in South Africa: The ethical responsibility of churches

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▪ Introduction[10]

In spite of the emphasis in the South African Constitution (Government of South Africa 1996:107) on a high standard of professional ethics in Public Administration, the South African

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10. This research has been published in the scholarly journal *Scriptura* (see Vorster 2012:133–147). Revisions have been made in view of new research.

society is staggering under an immense wave of corruption in both the private and the public sector. Corruption is the misuse of public office or a position of authority for private material or social gain at the expense of other people. It represents a departure from ethics, morality, tradition, law and civic virtue (Dassah 2008:38; Mafunisa 2007:261). Corruption, we should say once more, manifests itself as bribery, embezzlement, fraud, extortion, abuse of power, nepotism, conflict of interests, insider trading or abuse of privileged information and favouritism (Webb 2009:9). However, corruption should not only be defined as those actions that are illegal in terms of the laws of a country, but also those deeds that are regarded by the public as immoral. An act regarded as immoral and illegal is an obvious case of corruption (Andersson 2008:198). However, a definition of corruption should not be used interchangeably with terms such as inefficiency and ineffectiveness (Webb 2005:153). Corruption takes place as an intentional illegal and immoral act of behaviour with the purpose of gaining some kind of advantage.

Corruption research has developed considerably in the last 15 years (Andersson 2008:193). New possibilities for empirical macro-oriented research came into being, and this resulted in the development of indices that enable studies on corruption, its causes and effects. The indices of corruption worldwide as provided by Transparency International every year, is especially helpful to these empirical studies. According to the 2015 report of Transparency International (2016:2) as indicated in Chapter 1, South Africa was rated 67th out of 179 countries on the

Corruptions Perceptions Index (CPI) with a count of 4.4 on a scale of 1 to 10. In comparison with the 2009 report the situation improved slightly when South Africa was the 55th position but with a count of 4.7 (Transparency International 2010:2). Corruption is costing South Africans billions of Rand a year. In the previous chapter we mentioned the Nkandla project. The spin-off of this issue is far-reaching. At the well-known Shaik trial an anti-corruption expert testified that about 5% of the country's gross domestic product is lost to corruption annually (Dassah 2008:53).[11]

Corruption has enormous negative consequences for the development of an orderly and peaceful society. Whilst South Africa is in the process of nation-building, the culture of corruption endangers the social fibre of society and inhibits moral renewal. Not only does corruption promote a general lack of trust in institutions and leadership, but it stimulates a perpetual culture of corruption that invades all spheres of life. Furthermore, empirical work confirmed that irrespective of the objective characteristics of a country's political and social system, subjective evaluations of corruption do themselves appear to influence investment decisions, growth and the political behaviour of citizens (Treisman 2000:400).

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11. The Shaik trial in South Africa was of public importance because the accused person S. Shaik was the personal financial advisor of the current President Jacob Zuma. The court found this person guilty of fraud and sentenced him to jail. As part of the judgement the judge described the relationship between this person and the president as 'corrupt'. This person has also been released on bail after a few months because of unproven 'medical reasons'.

A close scrutiny of indexes of Transparency International indicates that several factors can be associated with lower perceived corruption, and these are worthwhile to mention in order to assess the South African situation. These are:

- Countries with Protestant traditions have more developed economies and higher quality governments than Catholic and Muslim countries because of less interventionist policies. Evidence suggests that causation runs from economic development to lower corruption, as well as from corruption to slower development (Treisman 2000:401).
- Countries with a history of British rule can generally be rated as 'less corrupt' as a result of the common law legal system associated with superior government (La Porta *et al.* 1999:240).
- Ethnolinguistically homogeneous countries have better governments than heterogeneous countries, and common law countries have better governments than French civil law and socialist law countries (La Porta *et al.* 1999:258).
- Federal states are, according to many indices, more 'corrupt' than unitary ones. Treisman (2000:401) ascribes this fact to the competition between autonomous levels of governments to extract bribes.
- Less corruption is significant in a country with a long period of exposure to democracy, irrespective of its current democratic status.
- Corruption is higher in countries where domestic firms are sheltered from international competition by natural or policy-

induced barriers to trade. Economies dominated by a smaller number of firms or where antitrust regulations are not effective in preventing anticompetitive practices tend to have more corruption (Ades & Di Tella 1999:992). Openness to trade may reduce corruption.

This chapter is conducted within the conceptual framework of the empirical research. The aim of this investigation is to discuss the phenomenon from a moral point of view and to suggest moral directives and ways that can assist the churches to address corruption from a Christian ethical angle of approach. The concept 'church' will be used in this investigation to refer to the local congregation, in other words, to the teaching and ministry of believers and their vocation in society. Dassah (2008:38) reminds us that ethical behaviour and professionalism are hallmarks of good governance. With this statement as the angle of approach, the central theoretical argument of this chapter is that Christian ethics provide moral directives that can be utilised by churches to contribute to the development of a milieu where corruption can be trimmed down and where ethical leaders can be developed. The research will not engage in yet another empirical study, but will refer to the results of various valuable and credible empirical studies that have been conducted in the recent past. Firstly, the causes of corruption in South Africa will be analysed. Secondly, the underlying attitudes of corrupt officials will be investigated and, thirdly, ethical solutions applicable to a corrupt environment will be proposed, accompanied by suggestions regarding the way in which the churches can utilise these.

■ The causes of corruption

The theory of Treisman (2000:402) regarding the causes of corruption is worthwhile considering in order to establish whether this theory will also apply to the current South African situation. He contends that officials misuse public funds when they are satisfied that there is a low risk of getting caught and punished. The probability of getting caught depends in part on the effectiveness of the country's legal system. It also depends on the legal culture and the presence of effective anti-corruption mechanisms. In this respect, Treisman (2000:403) agrees with the viewpoint of La Porta *et al.* (1999), which holds that those countries with a common law system such as Britain and its former colonies have a better chance to expose corruption because of its almost obsessive focus on the procedural aspects of the law. Stiglitz (2002:185) proves the argument by referring to the corruption in the Czech Republic as an example of what can happen if the law and legal culture are not defended. A second cause of corruption, according to Treisman, is closed undemocratic political systems, because the risk of exposure is lower in these societies. He also stresses the role of religion. Where religions become 'state religions' the risk of nepotism and corruption is higher because these religions do not play the important monitoring role they should. His hypotheses are then that countries with an effective legal system and legal culture and countries with a Protestant tradition will have a lower incidence of corruption.

Treisman's theory is correct in the sense that a robust legal culture and uncompromised religions can reduce corruption. Why does this

theory not apply to the South African situation? The common law system did not prevent the corruption during the apartheid era and did not reduce corruption after the transition to a full democracy and the institution of a liberal democracy with a modern Constitution. South Africa has indeed an open and democratic system, and still corrupt officials do not fear exposure and punishment. Furthermore, Protestantism in South Africa, especially the influential Reformed tradition, played a minor role in monitoring the governments of both the pre- and the post-1994 dispensations. Here Protestantism did not inhibit the corruption pre-1994 or the contemporary levels of corruption.

To answer the above question other possible causes for corruption in South Africa should be investigated. In this respect, the unique situation in the country must be taken into consideration. The country is in the process of a transition after three centuries of colonial rule and the period of apartheid. The new Constitution opens up processes that aim to promote economic equality and accessibility of all to the economic resources of the country. The policy of affirmative action was planned and instituted to address the legacy of apartheid, namely the economic gap between white and black people and the absence of black people in all spheres of the labour market. This programme is founded in the Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act of 2000 (Act 4 of 2000), which required every minister and level of government to implement measures aimed at achieving equality (Terreblanche 2000:47). Another programme is the policy of the government to restructure the economy in such a way that the participation of black people in entrepreneurial and highly skilled jobs, as well as their

entitlement to property, will increase (Terreblanche 2000:437). Furthermore, many measures to promote social security were put in place such as big housing programmes, social grants and bursaries and loans for technical and academic training. These drastic and far-reaching programmes entailed an enormous flow of capital in the circles of the central government, regional governments and local municipalities.

These programmes are necessary for the promotion of human dignity and equality, but it also has a negative side. In 2004 R2 billion was lost in social grant scams and the state might have lost up to R10 billion in the first decade of majority rule (Dassah 2008:53). It seems that the legal systems were not effective in controlling the huge flow of capital, and this shortcoming and deficient legal culture contributed to corruption (cf. Mafunisa 2007:261). In spite of various court cases where corrupt officials were exposed and sentenced, the wave of corruption spread to all spheres of government. Bribery in the case of the allocations of tenders by government officials for the development of housing projects and the much-needed development of the infrastructure to create employment opportunities is the order of the day. Hence the expression 'tenderpreneurs' to describe people who enriched themselves by gaining contracts in an illegal way or as a result of nepotism, political loyalties and pro-struggle credentials.

The affirmative action programme has noble intentions and is a necessary component in the process of nation building and moral renewal. However, the execution of the programme also fuelled corruption. Terreblanche (2002:447) argues that the programme was perhaps driven too vigorously. The pool of black people to

replace white officials in the public sector was too small. He says (Terreblanche 2002):

> Consequently, many positions in the higher echelons of the bureaucracy – at all three administrative levels – were filled with black people who did not have the experience, professionalism, commitment, or culture of service needed to be productive and loyal civil servants. To complicate matters further, many of the new appointees are – like their white predecessors – indulging in nepotism, corruption and careerism. (p. 448)

He is of the opinion that it will be extremely difficult to purge the bureaucracy of incompetence so that a culture of service can take root (cf. Faull 2007:1). Terreblanche made these comments in 2002, but now, 14 years later, they are still valid and illustrative of the present state of affairs (cf. Van der Merwe 2006:33). This situation has not changed for the better and the growing number of public protests against maladministration suggests that the situation even worsened and is still worsening.

According to the *Country Corruption Assessment Report* (CCAR) of the United Nations (UN 2003:1), fraud, theft and bribery are amongst the most common forms of corruption in the public sector in South Africa. This corruption is more common in some sectors such as the South African Police Force (SAPF), and the departments of transport, housing, public works, education and health. It is more prevalent in the provinces of Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal, and is generally in the moderate to high category (Van der Merwe 2006:35). The report assumes that the corruption in the public sector has its source in the private sector. Public sector officials are corruptible and they actively create or supply opportunities for corrupt transactions. According to Van der

Merwe (2006:36) the causes in these cases have been identified as personal greed, poverty, poor checks and balances, poor salaries, a lack of ethics and the decay of moral societal values. Inefficient management is also a cause of corruption, and the affirmative action programme has been ranked as the fourth most significant cause of corruption by anti-corruption agents.

Of particular concern are the high levels of corruption in the SAPF. This phenomenon was researched, amongst others, by Faull (2007) and Basdeo (2010). Whilst some researchers contend that it is only the actions of a small number of individuals that tarnish the reputation of an organisation (the rotten apple theory), Faull (2007:7) referred to the fact that it is widely accepted within the organisation that SAPF corruption is widespread, but seldom acted upon. Basdeo (2010:385) states that policing and corruption in South Africa go hand in hand, and the fact that the two are inextricably linked is a grave matter as the police organisation is the prime agency of the state for law enforcement and social control. In spite of the fact that various mechanisms were developed since 1996 to curb the corruption in this public sector, police corruption is still pervasive. Basdeo (2010:386) refers to a survey of the Institute for Security Studies which indicated in 2003 that the SAPF was found to be the second most corrupt public sector organisation after traffic officials.

Various causes for police corruption have been identified. As early as 1982 Johnston (1982:82) blamed corruption in the SAPF on the type of person who becomes a police officer. The occupation tends to attract the lower class individuals who do not have the skills or means to equip themselves for future middle class

positions. As they develop a cynical authoritarian police personality, accepting graft seems to be an all-too-easy way of achieving financial security. Related to this phenomenon is the view that the wide discretion police officials enjoy makes them candidates for corruption (Basdeo 2010:392). Furthermore, Faull (2007:7) refers to the low managerial and public visibility of front-line members, the stress of the job, peer group secrecy and the engagement with criminality on a daily basis as causes for corruption. Both Basdeo (2010:393) and Faull (2007:8) deal with the possibility that low remuneration in the SAPF is a direct cause for corruption, and they conclude that this perception is not true because great improvements have been made in the salary levels of police officials that compare well with the remuneration of nurses and teachers. Increases in police salaries to eliminate police corruption do not necessarily solve the problem of corruption. The vigorous implementation of affirmative action without the necessary training as mentioned by Terreblanche (2002:447) is also a cause of corruption because untrained police officials were appointed and promoted at the cost of skilled, trained professionals. Many court cases dealing with promotions of unqualified officers at the expense of better qualified people, as a result of the policy of affirmative action, have taken place and in many cases the court resolved in favour of the maltreated.

All surveys carried out in this respect identify the same causes for corruption in the public sector, namely, greed, lack of moral values, insufficient mechanisms to deal with corruption, a lacking legal culture, unskilled and poorly trained officials, lack of control over the flow of capital in the processes of social security, poverty and the

absence of an adequate moral fibre in the society at large. However, very few officials will admit that they act immorally on purpose, and they will present certain values to justify their actions. Usually these actions will be justified by calling on a certain underlying attitude that is then presented to gloss over their deeds. Therefore a discussion of these projected attitudes is necessary when dealing with the problem of corruption. Taking the causes of corruption into account, the next section will investigate the attitudes presented by corrupt officials and promoters of the culture of corruption in the South African public sectors.

■ Underlying attitudes

Dealing with corruption entails amongst other things that the underlying attitudes should be addressed. These attitudes will be evaluated in the light of a Christian ethical perspective.

The misuse of public funds for the purpose of self-enrichment is generally rooted in a negative form of self-interest, which entices officials to greediness. Self-interest per se is not immoral and can be seen as an acceptable moral principle in business and in the administration of human rights. In the ethics of human rights every person can be seen as an end in itself, no person is a mere instrument to the convenience or welfare of any other human being. Whosoever denies this principle can also logically deny people's equal claims of access to the bounty of the earth (Ryan 1996:113). Furthermore, the argument of Childs (1995:14) about self-worth in the field of labour can also be applied to the concept of self-interest in general. Every person lives with a sense of being 'somebody' and a fear of being a 'nobody'. Self-interest as a goal in any form of negotiating a deal is

not necessarily negative and immoral. Any person has the right to act in his or her own interest in order to gain benefits or profits.

The problem with self-interest arises when it is based on an immoral motivation or purpose. When self-interest roots in the misuse of public funds it becomes theft, and when it leads to greediness and mere self-enrichment, it becomes selfishness. Furthermore, when self-interest is pursued to the detriment of other people, it becomes a morally negative attitude. Self-interest, therefore, becomes immoral when it leads to the exploitation of others. Abuse of public funds for own gains is immoral and illegal. It is more so when it concerns the needy. Corrupt officials can become so obsessed with the 'self' that they totally disregard the interest of others, especially the people with no voice such as the poor, the elderly, the sick, the disadvantaged and people in need. Their actions can develop into a violent way of behaving because greed is a form of violence (Premawardhana 2011:226). This exploitation is a prominent characteristic of the wave of corruption in South Africa today, because funds allocated for the improvement of the lives of the poorest of the poor are misused and stolen. It is incomprehensible that some public officials in South Africa, many of whom experienced the sufferings of apartheid and poverty first hand, become corrupt when they deal with programmes directed at promoting the interest of the people who suffered with them in the previous dispensation.

Low wages and unemployment are amongst the causes of corruption, especially in developing countries (Dassah 2008:43; Webb 2009:8). Such a predicament entices officials to an attitude of 'taking from the system what is rightfully mine'. A general cause of corruption in the public sector can thus be the attitude of 'self-

remuneration'. With such an attitude underpaid individuals develop the perception that they were, or still are, taken advantage of, even exploited, and that they do not receive the recognition they deserve. They then steal from their department with the argument that they just take what they in any case deserve. They defend their own corrupt actions with the argument that they have moral justification to enrich themselves at the expense of the exploitative system. The end justifies the means, and with such a moral theory they explain their actions away. Other forms of self-interest are nepotism, careerism and favouritism. Especially in African cultures strong attachments to the extended family and ethnic group and expectations of sharing benefits lead many civil servants to engage in corrupt acts to meet their social obligations. The attitude of allegiance to one's family, ethnic or religious group or socio-economic identity is another socially-embedded factor that drives public officials to corrupt practices (Dassah 2008:48).

Corrupt officials can also be driven in their actions by the idea that they serve a 'holy' purpose and that corruption can be justified when it serves this purpose. This 'purpose driven' attitude to corruption comes to the fore when officials appoint or promote certain individuals against the rules of the game because they are convinced that these appointments are in the best interest of the ideology of the government or of the policy of the department. Corrupt actions are thus also sanctified by the consequentialist moral theory, which entails that the end justifies the means (cf. Edwards 2008:81). Other examples of this attitude of purpose-driven corruption can be to misuse funds to benefit someone else who is in need. Hospitals are prone to this form of corruption

where medical material is stolen to give treatment to patients who cannot afford treatment in a hospital or other medical facilities. The offenders will justify their actions with the argument that they serve a good and a laudable cause.

A consequentialist approach may seem acceptable in these cases because the underlying attitude is perceived as morally good. 'I take what I deserve' and 'I steal to serve the needy or a bigger ideological purpose' are attitudes that have the ring of acceptable moral action in an emergency situation where the normal is not attainable. In the words of Douma (1992:126), such an attitude may be approved as a *mendacium officiosum* [a lie that render a service] Ethics in an emergency situation may apply a consequentialist theory (cf. Vorster 2004:105). However, this theory is questionable when the topic at hand is considered. In a normal situation these forms of corruption should not be tolerated because the end does not justify the means, but rather tarnishes it. The words of Gandhi (1997) are worthwhile to consider in this regard. He said:

> Means are after all means. I would say 'means are after all everything.' As the means so the end. There is no wall of separation between means and end. Indeed the Creator has given us control (and that too, very limited) over means, none over the end. Realisation of the goal is in exact proportion to that of the means. This is a proposition that admits no exception. (p. 354)

For churches to play a positive role in combating corruption in South Africa, a deeper understanding of these causes of corruption and the underlying attitudes of corrupt officials is necessary. The Church is in essence a moral agent in society and does not deal

with the legal structures necessary to control corruption. It should not interfere in the government's sphere of sovereignty. However, the Church can and should deal with the moral issues at hand when the causes and attitudes of corruption are investigated. The Church must act as the 'voice of the voiceless' when others remain silent.

◼ The role of the Church

In various studies and surveys, specific remedies for unethical conduct have been proposed, such as a free press, independent courts of law, and unscrupulous behaviour by political leaders, as well as government reform (Dassah 2008:65; Sindane 2007:218; Webb 2009:7). The United Nations (2003:126) provided an adequate anti-corruption strategy for combating corruption in South Africa. This report proposes steps that can be taken by the government to address the problem of corruption. These steps should be supported by churches. However, the question remains: 'What can be done by the Church in civil society in the process of combating and preventing corruption?' It goes without saying that the Church should support all legal measures taken by the authorities to prevent corruption and should fulfil the role of a 'watchdog' and a whistle blower in their monitoring role of public administration and the administration of justice. Although it is not the task of churches to interfere in the sphere of the authority of government, the churches have a public role to play. Christians and the Church are called as public witnesses (Smit 2007:153; cf. Koopman & Smit 2007:269). As the people of God's kingdom, the main task of the Church regarding social problems lies within the domain of ethics. I have explained the

ecclesiological model for the ministry of reconciliation in a socio-political context in recent articles (Vorster 2010:429, 2015).[12] The model I proposed can also be applied to the issue at hand. When dealing with the problem of corruption, churches, as the 'power station' of the kingdom of God, can apply three specific strategies to assist in combating this social problem in South Africa. I would like to focus on these practical guidelines which entail raising awareness of the problem, addressing the underlying attitude of self-interest, and calling for social justice.

Raising awareness of the problem and its effects

In his study about ethics in the public sector, Edwards (2008:77) says that the 'ethical repair task' in the public sector must begin with as many individuals as possible making their consciences heard through every available means. Furthermore, he argues that to instil an ethical culture in the public sector it is important that there should be a real paradigm shift from a neutral stance on ethical issues to a situation where ethical behaviour at all levels is practiced by management and

12. These research articles examine an ecclesiological model suitable for the promotion of socio-political reconciliation in the South African context from a Reformed theological and philosophical perspective as well as the way Christians can be involved in civil society. Its point of departure is that Reformational Theology is per definition a Public Theology, which is inter alia directed at the renewal of society, and that churches have a positive role to play in this regard. Firstly, the article investigates the historic contribution of the Kuyper ecclesiology and Dooyeweerd's perspective on social life and the Philosophy of the Idea of Law. Secondly, the article focuses on the biblical concept 'Kingdom of God' and its implications for an ecclesiological model. Taking into account the contributions of these two lines of thought, the article concludes that the Church should be seen as the 'power station' of society. The Church should equip believers to promote socio-political transformation in society. Furthermore, the Church should be actively engaged in socio-political transformation by preaching the reconciliation in Christ and its implications for society, and by being an example of reconciliation amidst a divided community by overcoming the divisions caused by racism, tribalism, sexism, xenophobia, homophobia and ethnocentrism in its own midst.

staff and becomes a way of life. What Edwards says about management and staff can be extended to everyone in society. It is important that the whole community should develop an awareness of the extent of corruption. The causes, attitudes and negative impact of this phenomenon on people, peace and prosperity should be identified. Awareness is the first step in dealing with corruption (cf. 2003:88; Van Rooyen 2008:400; Webb 2005:162). In this respect, churches have an important role. The Church is a community of moral discourse (Gustafson 1988:53) or, in the words of Hauerwas (1981:42), 'a community of character' that does not have a social ethic, but is a social ethic. The Church has, first of all the calling to be a 'prophet' who identifies the ills of society. Gustafson (1988:7) makes, with certain reservations, a case for rigorous prophetic discourse in the eyes of evil. But he also emphasises the value of moral discourse and policy discourse that is more than rearranging the deck chairs on a sinking Titanic (Gustafson 1988:44).

Churches are deeply involved at the grassroots level of society and can be seen as moral 'opinion makers' in communities. The Church functions amongst the rich, the poor and the poorest of the poor. Christians have first-hand knowledge of the social ills of societies. They function in all spheres of life – in government, civil society and informal societal structures. The churches are in an excellent position to raise awareness of the problem of corruption and its negative effects on society. In a recent publication with the title *Ethical leadership and the challenges of moral transformation*, Dames and other scholars (Dames 2009:1) discuss the quest for moral leadership in South Africa. In his article in this publication, Le Bruyns (2009:49) underlines the necessity of ethical leadership by religious traditions. In his view ethical leadership in this domain is capable of transforming

institutions, and envisions new possibilities for a more humane society and the foundation of 'common good life'. Such an involvement by Christians regarding the raising of awareness of corruption and its effects can bring about what Le Bruyns has in mind.

Of particular importance is the raising of *ethical* awareness (Dassah 2008:56; Sindane 2007:219; Webb 2009:9). The empirical study conducted by the United Nations disclosed a serious lack of ethical awareness in South African corporations because of the following state of affairs (United Nations 2003):

- Ethics training is too brief to be effective and is not focused on important groups of employees, such as new entrants and managers.
- Some 27% of the respondents indicated that new employees are trained in the application of the organisation's code of ethics.
- Some 13% said that new employees are taught ethical decision-making skills.
- Some 12% indicated that new employees are assisted in integrating ethics into their everyday activities.
- Many organisations have not assigned a senior manager to handle the ethics responsibility. (p. 130)

Van Rooyen (2008:400) found that, although ethics is generally acknowledged as an important factor in organisational activity, it does not achieve high-level priority status within the context of organisational decision-making strategic thrust (cf. Magahy & Pyman 2010:58). Managers in key strategic positions do not attribute enough value to entrenching active ethics practice within their organisations. The report of the United Nations (2003:129) is relevant with the following judgement: 'It cannot be expected of

public sector officials or others to be vigilant in combating corruption unless there is a commonly accepted set of ethics that serves as the ground rules. All sectors of society have a duty to ensure that children and adults alike know what is right and what is wrong. A national system of ethics must be clear on what constitutes corruption. An ethical framework is essential for social and economic development. It is common knowledge that corruption promotes the wrong developmental and investment choices. It encourages competition in bribery, rather than competition in quality and in the price of goods and services. It inhibits the development of a healthy marketplace and distorts economic and social development. Moreover, evidence shows that if corruption is not contained, it grows exponentially. As soon as a pattern of successful bribery is institutionalised, corrupt officials demand larger bribes, resulting in market inefficiency. These are all due to a low ethical awareness in society at large and within the sectors of public governance.'

Churches are by definition moral agents. With their strong influence in all spheres of the South African society, churches can use their prophetic calling through preaching and teaching and the involvement of Christians in society to enhance the alertness that corruption is wrong and that behaviours such as greed, nepotism, careerism, favouritism and exploitation are morally untenable and socially destructive. On the foundation of these well-developed biblical moral standards, Christians can promote ethics in the public sector and develop a public sector ethos and educate people regarding corruption control buttressed by an application of sound ethics (Van der Merwe 2006:41). In the execution of their calling in society to develop an anti-corruption moral ethos, they especially have to shed

light on the role of the attitude of self-interest. This task will subsequently be addressed.

Dealing with self-interest

The causes of corruption are rooted in certain attitudes (mindsets, ways of thinking). As explained above, the attitude of self-interest and what it entails is prominent in the culture of corruption. Churches have a tremendous influence on the formation of the attitudes of people and can thus play a highly important role in rectifying wrong attitudes that can have a bearing on corruption. In the development of morality Van der Ven (1998:382) developed the idea of character formation as an essential aspect of moral education. The concept 'virtue ethics' is currently a prominent topic in ethics (cf. Statman 1997:2; Swanton 2003). In the Christian ethical discourse Hauerwas (2009:227), especially, focusses attention on the essential role of good character and subsequently the development of character formation in Christian ethics. Virtues flow from a good character and the Church with its pneumatological foundation should be the foremost agent of the development of character and the proponent of good virtues in society. In this respect, churches can fulfil an important educational task by way of the formation of a moral sensitivity amongst believers of the detrimental effects of the pursuance of self-interest at all cost. In such a way churches can also nurture good virtues amongst Christians who should on their side influence and strengthen civil societies with applicable moral norms with the purpose of enabling them to deal effectively with corruption in the public and private sectors.

In this moral education the attitude of Christians should be addressed. Attitude is an important concept in any ethical reflection. Ethics do not only focus on human conduct and the prescriptive norms for that conduct, but also on human attitudes and the prescriptive norms for change of attitudes. Ethical conduct flows from a specific attitude that is determined by a certain world view. Attitude is also an important concept in Christian anthropology because of the call upon Christians to mirror the attitude of Christ in their pursuit of rights and responsibility to fulfil their obligations. This angle of approach will be pursued in this investigation. A Christian view on attitude according to the biblical text of Philippians 2:4 was dealt with in a recent book (Vorster 2007:17). The results of that research will be applied to the topic at hand.

Of particular importance is the evaluation of the attitude of self-interest from a Christian ethical perspective. Christian ethics have always been aware of the widespread human tendency of individuals to prefer their own interests to those of others. Humans tend to be biased towards members of their own groups, to steer away from outsiders and to rationalise self-serving behaviour through morality (Pope 2007:267). Self-interest is a positive attitude in the pursuit of human dignity and human rights, but it should be balanced with an attitude of self-denial when the pursuit of the human dignity and human rights of others, especially the poor and marginalised, are concerned.

Christ had an attitude of recognition and promotion of public interest, and this should be imitated by his followers in society (Phlp 2:4–11). Broadly speaking, the expression, 'but made himself nothing' in this passage indicates that Christ became human

(Ridderbos 1971:77). But there is even more involved in this act of becoming human. The verb *keno* has the meaning of 'to make oneself available for' (Floor & Viljoen 2002:99). In other words, Christ became humane. But, he did not come to earth as king in the power and splendour of a glorified human nature. He came as an ordinary man (Muller 1955:83). Whilst recognising his indissoluble divine nature, he became human to be amongst humans, to suffer with and for them, and he associated himself with the sinners and the marginalised of society. One can imitate Christ in his humaneness, his solidarity with the needy and people in social distress. He can be imitated in his attitude of caring, love, sacrificing of his own interests and general compassion. Compassion is *cumpatio,* which means to 'feel with' (Fedler 2006:178). As such his attitude must flow over to the attitude of Christians. This ethical principle, resulting from this part of the Christological hymn in Philippians 2, requires that Christians are called to 'agape', that is all inclusive love, which entails to be humane, compassionate and to make one available for people in their quest for comfort, justice, dignity and respect. This conclusion is strengthened by Christ's instruction to his disciples that they must wash one another's feet (Jn 13:12–17). Self-interest must be tempered by the attitude of self-denial, especially when it comes to the interest of the poor and the marginalized.

The positive attitude of people in interpersonal relations should take the form of servanthood. In Christian anthropology, the concept of servanthood is deeply embedded in the idea of the *imitatio Christi* (Phlp 2:7). In a culture of corruption, the promotion of servanthood is important. According to this passage in Phillippians, Christ took

on the nature of a servant as a result of his abasement. The word used for servant is the same word used for a slave (*doulos*). As in the Hebrew Bible, the idea of slavery is used here to illustrate the relationship between God and his people. This imagery is also found in the texts of Romans 1:1 and 1 Peter 2:16. The slave was full-time in the service of his owner and had limited freedom according to the will of the owner. What is the deeper meaning of this image?

Firstly, one can contend that Christ became an example of human beings' relation to God. People should be servants of God with the limited moral freedom permitted by God. Every action should be an expression of this image of Christ. In the whole scope of ethical conduct, people should be examples of the service Christ rendered to God. The service of God must not be narrowed down to worship. Christian life is more than worshipping in liturgical forms. This life entails a life in the service of God by promoting truth, justice, fairness and love. The true servants of God are those willing to struggle for a good cause (Bonhoeffer 1995:61). The ethical implications of Christ's act of servanthood are abundant. This act implies that human beings, as part of their servanthood, should imitate his truthfulness, love, and compassion in their struggle against unjust social structures, and in their promotion of peace and goodwill.

The churches should guide people to come to the conviction that self-interest has limits and that servanthood is the moral directive in inter-personal relations. The true servant will serve the community without the spirit of greed and self-enrichment. Churches as moral opinion makers should be potent advocates of compassion and true humaneness. These moral concepts will make people realise that corruption in South Africa is to steal from the poorest of the poor,

and that is not only illegal, but also one of the worst kinds of immorality. Flowing from the moral directive of humaneness is the responsibility of churches to call on the powers of the day and to society at large for social justice.

Calling for social justice

Although corruption is a reality in all societies, global surveys indicate clearly that corruption is higher and more destructive in developing countries and poor countries (Transparency International 2010; Treisman 2000:438). Where severe poverty prevails and officials with jobs are paid mediocre salaries, the possibility that they will be enticed into corruption is much higher than in affluent societies or even developing societies where the unemployment rate is low. A lowly paid official living amongst jobless people and in a poor extended family has no other choice than to provide for himself and his family by taking bribes, misusing funds and by exploiting the system (cf. Mafunisa 2007:260; Van der Merwe 2006:32). Corruption with the attitude of 'self-remuneration' or a 'holy purpose' comes to the fore in these kinds of conditions. Dassah (2008:55, 58) indicates that even the best reform measures are bound to fail in the absence of good salaries as incentives. A good case can be made for paying people in public service handsomely. There is a direct relation between high-level administrators and low corruption.

The implementation of legal instruments to curb corruption is important and many such instruments exist in the South African public administration (Edwards 2008:80). In addition to this, it is crucial to raise ethical awareness through moral agents. However, even the best instruments, programmes and education are bound to

fail when a community is the victim of poverty and joblessness. The high and the low of corruption is directly linked to the socio-economic standing of a community. Therefore, social and economic development can be seen as the most important remedy for corruption, with the condition that the other instruments, programmes and education to curb corruption are also in place.

The imitation of Christ also means to cry out for justice to all people. In modern contextual theologies a clear case is made for churches to be the voice of the poor and to be the watchdog of governments and corporations when it comes to socio-economic justice. The Church exists vicariously in the world, which is for the sake of the 'other', says De Gruchy (2002:94). The Church should stand up for a caring economy that addresses the plight of the poor (Goudzwaard & De Lange 1995:72). In different situations this responsibility of the Church may take different shapes. In the developed countries the role of the Church could be to raise an ethical awareness regarding people's responsibility in a consumerist culture and the neo-liberal economic philosophy. However, in South Africa the Church should also take the plight of the poor to heart by raising questions constantly and keeping the debate about the alleviation of poverty alive. A church that exists 'for the other' should raise issues in the public domain, such as:

- Are wages fair and sufficient for people to live a decent life?
- Is job creation the priority in the public and the private sectors?
- Is the extension and implementation of socio-economic rights one of the national priorities?
- Is the economic policy of the government of the day conducive for the alleviation of poverty?

- Are labour laws and practices fair?

Because of the Reformational principle of sovereignty in own sphere it is not the task of the churches to take over the responsibilities of other social spheres such as civil societies, trade unions, political parties or the government. However, they should be active as a watchdog, taking care of the plight of the poor and the marginalised and being the custodian of truth, honesty, fairness and compassion. In this way churches can be deeply involved in combating corruption because they are then dealing with the root causes of the problem.

Conclusion

All the surveys referred to in this investigation indicate how wide-ranging, far-reaching and destructive the current wave of corruption in South Africa is. As a complicated problem with many causes and many-sided manifestations it needs a multifaceted answer. The answer that the churches can provide is only one of these solutions. However, it is important because of the fact that the churches can, according to their primary vocation, penetrate to the centre of the problem, namely moral decay and poverty. The churches cannot promulgate laws and devise legal instruments. Those are the tasks of the government and corporations and people with expertise in the field of law and economics. The Church lives by its testimony (Bright 1977:164) and by its ministry. On the foundation of this vocation the churches should enter the struggle against corruption, especially by raising ethical awareness and constantly reminding society at large of the plight of the poor. Pointing to Christ as the model of human conduct and attitude the churches should enhance the deeper meaning of honesty, fairness,

responsibility, compassion, love and accountability. Of special value in this raising of ethical awareness is the development of the attitude of servanthood and stewardship according to the attitude of Christ. These values are much needed in a culture of corruption driven by self-interest and greed. And last but not least, the churches must never refrain from reminding the prosperity-driven part of the South African society that as long as the current large-scale poverty prevails, corruption will be difficult to curtail.

Part 3

Exegetical and theological normative perspectives

Pastoral perspectives from Ezekiel 34 to restore the Christian mandate and equip Christians to counteract corruption

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■ Introduction

Corruption is not a problem distinctive to South Africa, but it is one of the country's major challenges. According to the 2015 *Global Corruption Barometer* of Transparency International, South Africa is at the top of

the list of countries where 83% of the people surveyed believe corruption has increased and amplified, not merely amongst government officials but likewise amongst its citizens (Areff & McDonald 2015). Corruption can widely be defined to include public and private sectors which can cover a broad range of activities (cf. The World Bank 1997; Williams-Elegbe 2012:1). Vorster (2012:1) defined corruption as '… the misuse of a public office or a position of authority for private material or social gain at the expense of other people'.

The focus of corruption includes organised criminal syndicates, abuse of office, extortion, theft, fraud, bribery, money laundering, biased favoured awards of contracts, nepotism, kick-backs, 'gifts' and illicit payments in order to achieve a definite goal through favouritism (cf. The World Bank 1997). Corruption slows down and holds back the progression of social and economic growth in developed, emerging and developing countries. The president of the World Bank Group, Robert B. Zoellick, described corruption by saying (cf. The World Bank 2011), 'Corruption steals from the poor, undermines fair competition, distorts resource allocation, destroys public trust, and undermines the rule of law'.

This chapter looks at normative indicators needed by Christian leaders for their God-given calling to address the far-reaching effects of corruption with regard to the South African liberal democratic environment. Ezekiel 34's 'good shepherd' metaphor is examined (cf. Van de Beek 2012:15) in light of the bad shepherds and leaders who have served their own interests at the expense of the people of the covenant. The metaphor shows that corruption is viewed to contain unhealthy configurations of power and greed

and Christian leaders should be adequately equipped in countering the serious threat posed by corruption in the South African democratic environment.

The chapter describes the normative task and includes the question, 'What ought to be going on?' The empirical information and codes that follow from the interviews with Christian leaders will be utilised in the chapter. Osmer (2008:29) described the normative task as a '… form of prophetic discernment, grounded in a spirituality of discernment: helping others hear and heed God's Word in the particular circumstances of their lives and world'. The prophetic discernment of God's Word to the covenant people is the activity of seeking God's guidance amidst the circumstances, events and decisions of life and of sifting through, sorting out and weighing the evidence before reaching a decision in a particular time and place (cf. Osmer 2008:133). A consciousness of normative indicators will be revealed that essentially involves, according to God's will, the communication of God's view on corruption to Christians towards equipping them for their responsibility in counteracting corruption.

■ Corruption in the South African liberal democratic environment

Corruption is a complex phenomenon. Williams-Elegbe (2012:2) described corruption by saying that the prevalent view 'is that corruption undermines democratisation, the rule of law, the consolidation of market economies; and is a threat to the international economy'. However, South Africa has a well-

developed programme in place to combat corruption, but the country's deficiency of enforcement jeopardises the programme (cf. Business Anti-Corruption Portal n.d.; NACF 2011; Theron & Lotter 2012:96). Despite all the legislative efforts to counteract corruption, intentions of co-operation and commitments to anti-corruption conventions, corruption is continuing without accountability within various public and private sectors where there is a diminutive chance of getting caught (cf. Bull & Newell 2003:244–245). The Transparency International's 2015 *Global Corruption Barometer* survey established that more than four out of five South Africans believe there has been an increase in corruption in the country (Areff & McDonald 2015). In general, the government has been 'tardy, at best, and insincere, at worst, in investigating and pursuing corruption' (Singh 1999:188).

The extraordinarily high number of South Africans who perceive corruption to have increased reflects everyday experiences. The deterioration of corruption usually begins with leaders of a nation and then filters through to the people. It has always been a great privilege to be a leader, but definitely also a huge responsibility. In South Africa, a deficiency of accountability, responsibility and transparency – within several government departments, officials and public leaders – serves as a contributing feature to the inefficiency of corruptive legislation. The Institute for Security Studies (2013) stated:

> A good example of this is the Minister of Intelligence [*Siyabonga Cwele and recently from the Minister of State Security, David Mahlobo*] classifying the report into the more than R200 million spent on President Jacob Zuma's private home as 'top secret'. This implies that those with the most political responsibility will not be held accountable for an

unacceptable waste of public money. However, scandals linked to the president, such as Nkandla and Guptagate, are certain to affect public attitudes. (n.p.)

Corruption and lack of effective legislation cause huge challenges and obstacles which inevitably lead to political influence and favouritism (Oluwatuyi 2004:2). According to Newham (2014), Jacob Zuma is not exclusively accountable for all of the corruption in the public sector, but 'he certainly has stymied any progress that could have been made in this regard'. In addition to his personal suspicious businesses, he has continually selected individuals of low ethical principles to key positions in government and the criminal justice system (Newham 2014).

Presenting his audit report on provincial and national departments, Auditor-General (AG) Kimi Makwetu, said that wasteful expenditure and the exploitation processes in government as well as public entities will continue because there are no consequences for errant officials who abuse systems and who have become accustomed to acquiring transactions in a manner that is not transparent (Corruption Watch 2015). The AG established that a total amount of irregular expenditure for 2014 to 2015 was R25.7 billion (cf. Corruption Watch 2015), and the absence of consequences and the follow-up of irregular expenditure creates more opportunities to take advantage of the current situation. According to Corruption Watch (2013):

> One of the reasons for ongoing corruption is that the existing laws have not been adhered to or implemented to their fullest extent, although the framework is strong, with several pieces of domestic legislation already in place. This indicates some degree of political will to clean up corruption, though not enough will to ensure that intention is translated into action. In

the meantime, wrongdoers can carry on without being called to account. (n.p.)

■ God's view on corrupt leadership (Ezk 34:1–31)

The prophetic preaching of Ezekiel is conveyed by God himself through the prophet, in human words and deeds, to the people to proclaim warning and judgement to unbelievers and to rescue the faithful covenant nation (cf. Van Rooy 2015:5). These words came specifically to the nation scattered in exile and Ezekiel's main task was to establish and maintain a clear understanding of God's judgement and salvation to the covenant people in exile.

■ Overview of the context of Ezekiel 34 in the book Ezekiel

At the beginning of the exile, Ezekiel, one of the important and significant people of Zadokite priestly descent (cf. Blenkinsopp 2012:16; Smith 2008:14), was taken during the first invasion of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar to Babylon, 'the land of the Chaldeans' (cf. 2 Ki 24:14–16; Smith 2008:10). The time spent in exile was sad and humiliating for the Jews who became foreigners in a foreign land with an authoritarian government. Ezekiel was an exile prophet who acted in the early years of the exile over a period of about 12 years that took place from the first capture of Jerusalem under Jehoiachin 598 BC and the second and final invasion under Zedekiah 586 BC (2 Ki 25; Ezk 33:21; cf. Smith 2008:12; Von Rad 1965:231). Ezekiel stayed with the exiles in

Tel-Abib by the river Chebar in Babylonia and longed for Jerusalem (cf. Ezk 1:1).

During the forced migration Ezekiel was called by God to act as a prophet. The Lord introduced himself to make his will known and sent Ezekiel to convey God's message to his people (Smith 2008:13). Ezekiel's call occurred in the fifth year of the exile, about 593 BC (Blenkinsopp 2012:16). As a servant, he had to convey the prophetic message of God to the Israelites to alert and rescue the people of the covenant (cf. Von Rad 1965:234–235). Ezekiel had to call the people to repentance, to turn away from idolatry and false prophets who have mislead the people (Bowen 2010:207; Cafferky 2014:26). Therefore, he was appointed as (צֹפֶה) 'watchman for Israel' (Blenkinsopp 2012:28; Von Rad 1965:230) to warn the people on behalf of God (cf. Ezk 3:17; 33:7) and to proclaim redemption and salvation (Ezk 34:23–31). The description of Ezekiel as God's appointed watchman on the walls indicates the personal nature of his ministry and pastoral responsibility (cf. Blenkinsopp 2012:30; Deeley 1997:254).

All that was important to Israel collapsed during the forced migration and exile and it was entirely their own fault (Ezk 2:3; 5:11). The temple in Jerusalem was destroyed, the Promised Land was lost to them and they were in exile in a foreign country under the leadership of a foreign king. During their exile the dislocated people of Israel thought that God was far from them; not present anymore in the temple in Jerusalem and that he had even abandoned them (Ezk 33:17) (Blenkinsopp 2012:17; Wevers 1982:185). Through prophecies and symbolic acts (Ezk 4:4–6)

Ezekiel preached God's omnipotence, all-powerfulness and sovereignty as God's transcendent traits cannot be limited to a specific place, city or country.

The dislocated nation was assured of the omnipresence of the sovereign God who is never apathetically unresponsive to his people (Smith 2008:21). According to Van Rooy (2015:5) and Von Rad (1965:234), God emphasised that the covenant people will realise that he is the Lord their God and they are his people (Ezk 34:30; cf. Wevers 1982:185). This characteristic expression in Ezekiel 34:30 and variations of וְיָדְעוּ כִּי אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיהֶם [they will know that I am the Lord their God] (cf. Smith 2008:17) are used 65 times in the book of Ezekiel to emphasise that God will be known and recognised as the covenant God.

The placement of Ezekiel 34 in the book Ezekiel

Unlike the books of Isaiah and Jeremiah, the book of Ezekiel is conspicuously one of the clearest structured books in the Old Testament that is arranged in the order of chronological events (cf. Joyce 2009:42; Van Rooy 2012:2). The literary character trait of the book of Ezekiel begins with judgement prophecies against Israel and the nations and concludes with prophecies for Israel. Van Rooy (2012:3, 2015:1) refers to the tripartition which most researchers agree with (cf. Allen 1994:xxv; Sedlmeier 2002:49; Smith 2008:34). The tripartition looks as follows:

- Chapters 1 to 24 describes Ezekiel's call (Ch. 1 to 3) and the judgement prophecies delivered to the people before the fall of

Jerusalem for their atrocities committed as a result of (Ch. 4 to 24). God revealed himself in the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple.

- Chapters 25 to 32 describe the prophecies and God's judgement against the nations.
- Chapters 33 to 48 form a sharp contrast to the first two parts and these chapters describe the prophecies of hope for the future, the promise of salvation and a renewal of the covenant. God will be known for recovering and spiritual renewal.

The distinctive feature of this book is the dating of stages that often appears and the providing of the specific historicity of events. In several places the chronological date and place of divine messages, revelations and prophecies are indicated, and the situation of deportation and exile is described (Ezk 1:1–2; 8:1; 20:1–2; 24:1; 26:1; 29:1,17; 30:20; 31:1; 32:1,21; 40:1). Ezekiel's prophetic proclamations of judgement and salvation stem from two main moments that can be distinguished, namely the 'present' and 'future'. The past can be seen as the foundation on which the 'present' is built leading to the 'future' which can be expected (cf. Van Rooy 2015:2). Ezekiel proclaimed the will of God in the 'present' and demanded that the people must be obedient, so that real faith in God and true compassion will be the only prominent features of their time.

When the messenger arrived in Ezekiel 33 with the message that Jerusalem was destroyed, Ezekiel changed his prophetic preaching of judgement to hope and redemption (cf. Clements 1996:151; Van Rooy 2012:2). Whilst Ezekiel 33 provides the transition from the oracles and judgement of doom, involving Israel and the foreign

nations, the visions of restoration and the beginning of the prophecies of hope and comfort are expressed in Chapter 34 (Van Rooy 2015:2).

Ezekiel compared and characterised the exiled Israelites' situation to that of scattered sheep because their shepherds had been careless and had exploited the sheep and neglected their duties and responsibilities to the people (Cafferky 2014:24; Deeley 1997:254). They have not looked after the well-being of their sheep. One of Ezekiel's tasks was to unmask the falseness of the leaders and רֹעֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל [shepherds of Israel] (Cafferky 2014:25). Shepherding was a well-established metaphor (cf. Jr 23:1–8) for governing and leadership (cf. Blenkinsopp 2012:156; Deeley 1997:253). In Ezekiel 34:23–24 the earthly failure of leadership, which was failing to ensure that the will of God in Israel is carried out, was transcended by the expectation of a future leader and a shepherd that will be more than an ordinary king (cf. Helberg 1992:246). The Lord himself will come like a good shepherd to gather his scattered flock, because he is faithful to his covenant and a loving God of salvation (cf. Van de Beek 2012:15; Van Rooy 2015:5). Ezekiel's prophetic 'future' preaching of salvation and redemption tells of an assured future (Van Rooy 2015:5) where people will stand in a renewed covenant relationship with God (cf. Ezk 34:25; 36:28).

Structure and content of Ezekiel 34:1–31

Ezekiel 34 can be seen as a continuation of the previous chapter and deals with good and bad shepherds (Table 7). The tragic fall of Jerusalem is attributed to the actions of the leaders who pursued their own benefit and put their own interests ahead of the nation. In

TABLE 7: Structure of Ezekiel 34:1–31.

Theme	Verse	Sub-verse	Interpretation
Prophecies to the shepherds	Verses 1–10 describe the failure and judgement of Israel's shepherds (prophecy of punishment proclaimed to the shepherds).	-	Verses 1–10 talk about the unfaithful 'shepherds' of Israel, who God will replace.
	Verses 11–24 describe God as shepherd par excellence.	Verses 11–22: The Lord himself will take care of his flock. Verses 11–16: Prophecy of salvation proclaimed to the shepherds.	Verses 11–16 show that God Himself will act as Shepherd.
Prophecies to the flock	Verses 23–24: The Lord will appoint another shepherd for this task (prophecy of salvation proclaimed to the flock).	Verses 17–22: Prophecy of punishment addressed to the flock.	Verses 17–24 show that God will also remove unruly sheep who oppress others.
	Verses 25–31 describe God's covenant of peace (prophecy of salvation proclaimed to the flock)	-	Verses 25–31 show a picture of a new arrangement for the flock. There will be no dangerous beasts but plenty of rain and food graced by God's presence.

Ezekiel 34, God's people are described as a herd of sheep with God as chief shepherd and the leaders of the people as רֹעֵי [shepherds] to הַצֹּאן [care on behalf of Him for the herd]. Ezekiel 34 expresses God's action against false shepherds and how he will be the chief shepherd (cf. Cafferky 2014:26; Van Rooy 2015:5). Ezekiel 34 can be divided into two main parts based primarily on the addressees: the shepherds (Ezk 34:10–16) and the flock (Ezk 34:17–31), with four subsections, namely verses 1–10; 11–22; 23–24 and 25–31 (cf. Bowen 2010:210–211; Keil 1976:80).

☐ The failure and judgement of Israel's shepherds (Ezk 34:1–10)

The address to the shepherds (Ezk 1–10) was in the form of a typical prophecy of punishment (Bowen 2010:211). Rulers and leaders were often named 'shepherds' in the Old Testament (cf. Deeley 1997:253) and elders in the New Testament were called by the same title 'pastors' (cf. Eph 4:11) and were told to feed the sheep (Ac 20:28–31; 1 Pt 5:1–4). The shepherds, who acted during Ezekiel's time in Jerusalem, all strayed from the Lord, and this accelerated the judgement of the people (Wevers 1982:182). Israel's unfaithful leadership [shepherds] were responsible for the exile and they were held accountable (Blenkinsopp 2012:156; Bowen 2010:211; Wright 2009:38) because the people of Israel were supposed to be able to enjoy guidance, protection and peace from their leaders. The dynamics that existed in Ezekiel 34 consisted of Israel's shepherds who had failed because they did not live for the sake of the flock, but for themselves (Bowen 2010:211):

- They were self-interested and self-focused and, therefore, they only cared for themselves (Ezk 34:2).
- They were apathetic and indolent (Ezk 34:3).
- They were heartless (Ezk 34:4).
- They were helpless and without direction and the flock was scattered due to the נָפֹצוּ [bad shepherds] (Ezk 34:5–6).
- The Lord, therefore, condemned the shepherds (Ezk 34:7–10).

The fall of Judah and Jerusalem was the result of the actions of the bad shepherds and leaders who had served their own interests at the

expense of the people of the covenant (Keil 1976:85). It is in the midst of this situation that Ezekiel brought words of judgement and hope (Van Rooy 2015:5). In Ezekiel 34:1–10 God demanded accountability for, and responsibility of, integrity and righteousness with regard to the liability of the bad shepherds and leaders (Blenkinsopp 2012:156). The first 10 verses contain harsh words of judgement addressed to the shepherds of Israel, because they did not carry out their duty as shepherds properly (cf. Deeley 1997:254). Leaders have the responsibility to serve their people and to care for them, but these leaders have not carried out their calling to care for the flock of the Lord (cf. Blenkinsopp 2012:156; Wright 2009:38).

The shepherds pretended to be concerned about God's people [the sheep], but they selfishly only took care of themselves with their own motives. They did not care for the weak and ill. They neither fed those who were hungry nor returned those who were lost and went astray. Instead of caring properly for their sheep, the shepherds abused and exploited the flock (Wevers 1982:182). Wright (2009:180–181) stated that leadership involves the use of authority to serve the people, but the Israelite leaders had grown fat off the flock: 'They had not used their power and authority to feed the flock, to care for and nurture the people for whom they were responsible'.

Ezekiel described the people as lost sheep – scattered, directionless and confused (Ezk 34:7–8). Ezekiel was ordered on behalf of God to rebuke the shepherds because they enriched themselves by putting their own interests above those of the flock. It is God's sovereign prerogative to judge and, therefore, the Lord rebukes the shepherds and he himself will be shepherd

of the flock (Van de Beek 2012:15). He will seek his flock in love and he will be righteous to them so they may experience peace and tranquillity.

God as shepherd par excellence (Ezk 34:11–24)

Verses 11–24 describe the way the Lord shall be a dedicated and compassionate shepherd for his people. The unfaithful shepherds failed to look after their sheep and God himself will step in to do it. He will judge shepherds and he will hold them responsible for their failure to care for his sheep (cf. Blenkinsopp 2012:156; Cafferky 2014:22).

The Lord himself will take care of his flock (Ezk 34:11–22)

Verses 11–16: Prophecy of salvation proclaimed to the shepherds

The proclamation to the shepherds (Ezk 34:1–10) is followed by a prophecy of salvation (Ezk 34:11–22; Bowen 2010:211). God punishes his people for their injustice, but rescues them by his life-giving power (cf. Helberg 1992:257). Consistent to the image of God as shepherd, Ezekiel observed that a remnant would become the covenant people of God in the new period of salvation (cf. Blenkinsopp 2012:158; Van Rooy 2015:5). Whilst the people were under God's judgement – disrupted and scattered – his covenant of grace stood firm and he will save a remnant for himself (Ezk 34:11–16). Blenkinsopp (2012:158) provides the following insights regarding the character of true pastoring of the Lord to his people, namely:

• The Lord himself is the perfect shepherd.

- He knows his sheep intimately (Ezk 34:11,12,15,17,19; cf. Jn 10:3, 14–15).
- He gathers his scattered sheep (Ezk 34:12b,16).
- He cares for his sheep (Ezk 34:11–12).
  - He feeds them (Ezk 34:13–14).
  - He looks after them (Ezk 34:15a).
  - He bandages their wounds and heals them (Ezk 34:16).
- He leads his sheep (Ezk 34:13a).

- The compassionate care of the divine shepherd is evident. There is a certain intimacy and tenderness contained in these verses (cf. Van Rooy 2015:5). This intimacy and tenderness are highlighted in the repetition of the first-person pronoun:
  - 'I myself will search for my sheep …' (Ezk 34:11)
  - '… so will I look after my sheep …' (Ezk 34:12)
  - 'I will bring them out from the nations and gather them from the countries, and I will bring them into their own land …' (Ezk 34:13)
  - 'I will tend them in a good pasture …' (Ezk 34:14)
  - 'I myself will tend my sheep and have them lie down …' (Ezk 34:15)
  - 'I will search for the lost and bring back the strays …' (Ezk 34:16)
- In 34:17–22 the shepherds were reminded that they were sheep themselves, but they were 'fat sheep' who trampled the other sheep and, therefore, the Lord will righteously וְשָׁפַטְתִּי [judge] them (Exk 34:17,20,22).

God will carry out the duties of a shepherd to the flock who have been neglected by their leaders (Cafferky 2014:22; Van Rooy 2015:5). God will provide a model for future shepherds to follow, and he will expose the injustices of bad shepherds. Klein (1988:122) described God's actions as follows: 'The effects of Yahweh seeking the flock in

TABLE 8: Comparison of Ezekiel 34:4, 16 (cf. Bowen 2010:211).

Comparisons	Ezekiel 34:4		Ezekiel 34:16	
	Verse 4	Shepherds	Verse 16	God
1	the weak	you have not strengthened	-	-
2	the sick	you have not healed	the sick	I will strengthen
3	the injured	you have not cared	the injured	I will care
4	the strayed	you have not brought back	the strayed	I will bring back
5	the lost	you have not sought	the lost	I will seek

this way are three-fold: he will remove the bad shepherds; he will free the sheep from control of the shepherds; he will liberate the sheep from exile'.

The dedicated care of the shepherd of his flock serves as an example of God's promise to his people in the midst of exile and their alienation in a foreign country (Smith 2008:342). For the scattered people, it is a traumatic time in which they were deprived of their land and Jerusalem was destroyed (cf. Keil 1976:87). According to Eichrodt (1970:472), 'Yahweh's endeavour to build up a people of God has broken down through human failure'. In the foreign country their despair and oppression was threatening their identity and their calling as a covenant people could be destroyed by what they experienced daily (Wevers 1982:183). In this difficult time there was a lack in responsible leadership (cf. Smith 2008:330), but God guided, protected, saved, gathered, nourished and led his flock (Cafferky 2014:24).

In Ezekiel 34:11–16 the Lord promised to show his righteousness by providing and taking care of his people (Sweeney 2013:17). Ezekiel

had a vision of God helping his deprived people in their traumatic circumstances through his promises and compassion. God, as the ultimate shepherd, is different from the people's shepherds (cf. Keil 1976:93). By being a dedicated shepherd, by caring for his flock, he not only saved his herd from exploitation, but also rescued them from alienation in a foreign country. The scattered sheep were returned to their country and recovered from their trauma (Bowen 2010:211; Keil 1976:93) and grazed in peace and security (Ezk 34:11–16; cf. Ps 23).

☐ Verses 17–22: Prophecy of punishment proclaimed to the flock

Ezekiel 34:17-22 contains a prophecy of punishment (Bowen 2010:211). There is a close relationship between the unfair treatment of the flock and the covenant relationship with God (Helberg 1992:245). The herd is cared for with compassion and dedication, but God also expected justice to be served (Ezk 34:17–22) so that the strong within the flock would not exploit the weak again (cf. Van Rooy 2015:5). The Lord will also judge the flock (Ezk 34:17–22), turning from the leaders to the people in general who should also be responsible for their own actions (Bowen 2010:214). These verses highlight leadership within the flock and God 'will judge between one sheep and another, and between rams and goats' (Ezk 34:17; cf. Keil 1976:88; Wevers 1982:183).

There were sheep in Israel's flock (powerful people in communities) (Wevers 1982:184), who fed on the good pasture but trampled the rest of the pasture with their feet; they drank clear water but contaminated the rest of their own drinking water with their feet

(Ezk 34:18). 'God's judgement will fall on those sheep that harm the weaker sheep' (Sharp 2008) and it is never God's purpose that his people oppress and harm one another or take advantage of resources that should be available to all. Oppressors damage the covenant relationship between God and his people and they will be punished (Helberg 1992:245; Wevers 1982:184). Judgement rests on them who bully smaller sheep, exploit the weak and abandon their pastoral responsibility to care for the weak (cf. Blenkinsopp 2012:155; Keil 1976:88; Mt 25:31–46). Ezekiel 34 refers:

> Therefore this is what the Sovereign Lord says to them: See, I myself will judge between the fat sheep and the lean sheep. Because you shove with flank and shoulder, butting all the weak sheep with your horns until you have driven them away, I will save my flock, and they will no longer be plundered. I will judge between one sheep and another. (vv. 20–22)

The message is especially applicable to the strong sheep within Israel's flock that were driven by their own interests and vicious aggression to enrich and care for themselves and manipulate and exploit the weak to guarantee their own success. God will save his flock and judge the bad animals amongst the flock. God's salvation and judgement (punishment) in Ezekiel 34:17-22 were focused on defeating the enemies present in the remaining covenant people of God (cf. Bowen 2010:214).

☐ The Lord will appoint another shepherd for this task (Ezk 34:23–24)

Ezekiel 34:23-24 contains a prophecy of salvation (Bowen 2010:211). In Ezekiel 34, the need for a superior shepherd is predicted and this prediction can be viewed as a warning for Israel because they were like scattered sheep. The Lord will appoint his servant, עַבְדִּי דָוִיד

[David], as a great shepherd to gather his scattered flock and care for them (Ezk 34:23–24). This section is the clearest messianic passage in the book of Ezekiel, referring to וְעַבְדִּי דָוִד נָשִׂיא בְתוֹכָם [God's servant, a Prince] (cf. Blenkinsopp 2012:85, 160; Keil 1976:80) in their midst (cf. Ezk 37:24–25; Jr 23:5–6; 30:9). According to Smith (2008:22), Ezekiel stated that, 'The messianic David will be a faithful prince amongst God's restored people. He will perform all the functions of a true and faithful Shepherd'.

The messianic hope of the pre-exilic prophets are described here, yet depicted in a peculiar way (Deeley 1997:253; Eichrodt 1970:475; Von Rad 1965:236). There is a promise of restoration involving a descendant of David who will reign over a united Israel (Blenkinsopp 2012:156; Cafferky 2014:25; Keil 1976:91). According to Ezekiel (34:23–24), God will send them a 'prince of peace' from the house of David to be a good shepherd for the people of Israel (cf. Blenkinsopp 2012:156; Eichrodt 1970:475). These are words of hope that will recover life (cf. Van Rooy 2015:2).

Besides Ezekiel's judgement on the bad shepherds who escalated the people's despair, he pointed to the future when a leader will rule in a trustworthy and honourable manner (cf. Smith 2008:22). At the time of the exile, the renowned Davidic Kingdom was the basis of Israel's eschatological expectation (cf. Bullock 2005:178; Von Rad 1965:236). Longing for a glorious future, David's kingdom became the symbol of an ideal king for the people of the covenant (De Boer 1991:1; cf. Van Rooy 2015:5). In Ezekiel 34:23–24, the yearning for a future leader like David who will rule wisely is articulated (cf. Blenkinsopp 2012:160; Eichrodt 1970:476). Leadership or kingship (in particular the type of

kingdom associated with David's dynasty) has always been important to the people of Israel for their sense of identity and calling (Blenkinsopp 2012:156).

Ezekiel 34:23–24 described the desire for a shepherd-king who will rule fairly with compassion for the weak and defenceless. There is a clear reference to the servant David as a shepherd-king who will be appointed by the Lord (cf. Blenkinsopp 2012:156). This passage shows something of the hope for a leader who will connect them to the greatness of David's dynasty (cf. Albertz 2003:145). Ezekiel brought a message of hope in the midst of the pain and disappointments of the past (Deeley 1997:253). This new leader will not be called king, priest or prophet, but נָשִׂיא [prince] (cf. Keil 1976:80). Ezekiel referred to someone other than a typical Near Eastern monarch who will rule as God's servant or representative with responsibility and subordination to the Lord (cf. Blenkinsopp 2012:85; Eichrodt 1970:476).

The prophecies of Ezekiel promised the coming of a shepherd who would lead God's people far better than corrupt shepherds. Text passages like John 10:1–18 and Psalm 23:1–6 reinforce the prophecies in Ezekiel 34 (cf. Van de Beek 2012:15). The shepherd-king par excellence metaphor continues into the New Testament from human leaders to Jesus, the Good Shepherd (Cafferky 2014:25). Jesus fulfilled the Old Testament metaphor of God as the reliable and faithful shepherd of his people (cf. Blenkinsopp 2012:158; Cafferky 2014:25). Deeley (1997) commented:

> Ezekiel's text speaks of faithless shepherds as well as the One who is faithful, points to John's purposeful selection of this text as one which helped to articulate his own understanding of the significance of Jesus in the world. (p. 253)

Ezekiel portrayed God doing everything that the unfaithful shepherds did not do. The comparison between Jesus and the leaders portrayed in Ezekiel and John is evident: the leaders came to steal and kill and destroy (Ezk 34:23–29), but Jesus came so that the flock may have life (Jn 10:10). Jesus declared that he is not only the true shepherd, but also the promised shepherd in Ezekiel 34 (Eichrodt 1970):

> Jesus himself recognised this passage as furnishing him with a model of his own task. The great shepherd discourse in John 10 undoubtedly regards him as the fulfiller of this prophecy, and invests him with the office which Ezekiel sees being assumed and exercised by God. (p. 472)

In the fulfilment of the shepherd motif (Van de Beek 2012:15), Jesus identifies himself as the Good Shepherd who calls his sheep by name, leads them out to pasture and protects them from wolves and false leaders (Cafferky 2014:24). When Jesus saw the battered people centuries later, he had compassion for them because they were like sheep without a shepherd (Bowen 2010:214; cf. Mt 9:36; Ezk 34:4–5). This spiritual feeding culminated in the physical feeding of the people (Cafferky 2014:24). Jesus, the shepherd-king par excellence, committed himself to his flock. He gave them food, taught and healed them (cf. Mk 6:30–44). He is the shepherd-king, the Good Shepherd who came to search for those who were lost; who knows his sheep by name; who gave his life for his sheep; who lives and gives life in abundance to the wounded and the weak (cf. Jn 10). McCann described Jesus's compassion in a pastoral setting according to Mark 6:30–44 as follows (McCann 1993):

> The crowd is to 'sit down … on the green grass' (vs. 39), a detail that recalls Psalm 23:2. That the allusion is not coincidental is suggested by Mark's

> description of Jesus' motivation for having compassion on the crowd – 'they were like sheep without a shepherd' (v. 34). Jesus acts as both host and shepherd. (p. 135)

In John 10:11 (cf. Ezk 34:14), Jesus refers to himself as the Good Shepherd who lays down his life for his sheep (Cafferky 2014:25); the one who is willing to sacrifice everything for his sheep so that peace and rest can be a reality to them (cf. Ps 23:2). In contrast to Israel's past leaders, Jesus' pastoral care is discernible not by corruption, but by compassion and self-sacrifice to save those who are lost.

God's covenant of peace (Ezekiel 34:25–31)

Ezekiel 34:25–31 also contain a prophecy of salvation (Bowen 2010:211). The book of Ezekiel wants to call the reader into a deeper and active relationship with God grounded in the concrete reality of everyday life. Presently, many people advance their own interests and consequently practise social injustices, corruption, exploitation and violence. The chief shepherd will bring a time of peace and make a בְּרִית שָׁלוֹם [covenant of peace] (Ezk 34:25) with his people (cf. Blenkinsopp 2012:160; Egger-Wenzel 2010:47–49). The Hebrew word שָׁלוֹם [shalom] is embedded in the concepts of righteousness, steadfast love and faithfulness to the covenant (Cafferky 2013:48). The covenant relationship between God and his people is described in special eschatological expectations such as harmony in the future (cf. Batto 1987:18; Van Rooy 2015:4):

- There will be peace and security (Ezk 34:25,27b,28).
- The Lord's blessings and prosperity will rain on his flock (Ezk 34:26).

- There will be an abundance and prosperity (Ezk 34:27a,29).
- There will be no oppression anymore, but freedom (Ezk 34:28).
- The Lord's flock as a covenant people will live in communion with him and they will realise that He אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיהֶם is [the Lord their God] (Ezk 34:30–31).

The Lord will restore his kingdom on earth (a covenant of peace) and live 'among them forever' (cf. Ezk 43:1–9; Von Rad 1965:235). Ezekiel 34:25–31 shows the far-reaching implications of God's care. The בְּרִית שָׁלוֹם [covenant of peace] describes the establishment of a relationship of well-being which entails more than the absence of hostility between partners of the covenant; it involves the fullness of life enjoyed in complete security (cf. Keil 1976:93; Zimmerli 1983:220). The promise of salvation to the people of the covenant will be fulfilled with the announcement that the Lord will save Israel from the hand of evil shepherds who only took care of themselves and neglected the people of his flock (cf. Egger-Wenzel 2010:52–54). Through his servant David, he will bring protection and blessing to the whole flock (cf. Deeley 1997:253; Van Rooy 2015:5; Von Rad 1965:236). In Chapters 34–37 and 40–48 Ezekiel spoke of a new future that God will provide despite the ruins of Jerusalem (Van Zyl & Müller 2002:362).

◼ Equipping Christians to counteract corruption

The love of money is a weakness in human nature that results in bribery and corruption (cf. Singh 1999:119). The problem is that 'whoever loves money never has money enough; whoever loves wealth is never satisfied with his income' (Ec 5:10). In our present

society it seems as if the love of money prevails over biblical guidelines such as acts of promoting social justice. Manala (2010:524) stated that 'corrupt behaviour perpetuates poverty which undoubtedly undermines human dignity and leads to increased criminal activity in our cities, townships, villages and suburbs'. Bauer (2000:219) as well as Blundo and De Sardan (2006:70) assumed that society's values, cultural norms and practices are significantly defining corruption. Some officials and public leaders may believe they are entitled to accept favours whilst colleagues from other socio-cultural backgrounds might believe that such deeds are bribery (cf. Theron 2013:4). According to Breed and Semenya (2015):

> The perpetrators of corruption are the only ones who survive, have compassion only for their fellow corruptors and unite in solidarity to perpetuate the act of corruption, and thereby endeavour to earn respect and dignity from those who do not benefit from their corrupt activities. (p. 4)

Unrighteousness through the misuse of power

In Ezekiel 34, the prophet disclosed the condemnation of Israel's leaders who have ruled harshly by enriching themselves at the expense of the people and failing to protect the well-being of those who depended on them (Sharp 2008). Leaders took office 'chiefly with a design of filling their pockets, and advancing their families and friends' (Singh 1999:119). God's rule over corrupt leaders, however, is filled with restorative healing and righteousness (Sharp 2008). God's nurturing care consists of ending the exploitation and corruption of his people by protecting them from the 'fat and the strong' immoral leaders and to nourish

them with justice, mercy and loving-kindness (Ezk 34:16). Manala (2010) stated that:

> There are basically two things that the Lord opposes in the conduct of the shepherds of Israel namely, the corruption of self-enrichment at the expense of the flock and their autocratic rule over the people. These two sins refer to economic and political injustices against which God passed judgment. (p. 526)

Whilst several supporters of the current economic and political leadership may not be that anxious in terminating corruption – given the benefits and remunerations corruption brings – the South African community is gradually realising that corruption is an ongoing obstacle and challenge. Lack of accountability within various public and private sectors serves as a contributing reason for ongoing corruption where there is a diminutive chance of getting caught (Institute for Security Studies 2013). An unacceptable waste and theft of public money ended up in the back pockets of corrupt individual's – money that should have enhanced the lives of people – and consequently sustainable service deliveries are obstructed (cf. ISS 2013).

Corruption must be addressed

Ezekiel spoke openly about leaders who took advantage of people for personal gain. Ezekiel 34 challenged corrupt leaders to exercise a faithful self-examination of their leadership. Christ, too, cautions his followers: 'Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves' (Mt 7:15). Ezekiel prophesised against those kinds of corrupt leaders of Israel and compared them with wolves tearing apart the animals they

have killed and committed murder in order to become rich (Ezk 22:27). Oluwatuyi (2004) insisted that corruption is a problem that must be addressed:

> … not only by legal measures but also by the inculcation of a culture of personal moral responsibility that recognises the damage done to the common good by corrupt exchanges. (p. 2)

Government and leaders are called upon to ensure that morality, justice, righteousness, honesty, trustworthiness, reliability, integrity, truthfulness, credibility and faithfulness become a reality. Leonard McCarthy, World Bank Group's Integrity Vice President, stated that the counter-corruption approach against crime and corruption '… depends upon strong leadership, innovation and perseverance by leading enforcement bodies around the world, both in countries and international organizations' (cf. The World Bank 2011).

Christian leadership

Corruption is a multifaced and complex phenomenon which demands interventions on many fronts and the collaborative efforts of many people to control it. The objective should be to motivate Christian leaders to commit themselves to a set of practices, disciplines and values which can create an environment that is more feasible to counteract corruption. A holistic understanding of Christian leadership encompasses the communication of biblical principles of servant leadership and committing in a united ecumenical voice to equip Christians to counteract corruption. Theron described life under the lordship of Christ that is directed towards the socio-political transformation and the renewal of societies by saying (Theron 2013):

Christians are not supposed to withdraw from the world, but are responsible for their world and the transformation of that which is wrong. Christians need to address issues such as caring for the poor, protection of the weak, suppression of evil, punishment of the oppressor and just distribution of wealth, power, privileges and responsibilities. (p. 3)

The motif of 'shepherd' as a form of leadership appears to run through the biblical narratives and plays a significant role (Deeley 1997:253). When Ezekiel's prophecies rebuked Israel's leadership, their shepherding skills were confronted. Ezekiel denounced leaders who cared and fed only themselves and never tended their sheep. Wright (2009:3) stated that, 'Leadership for Christians start with a vital relationship between the leader and God. Leadership begins by following. This is the essence of biblical servanthood, of servant leadership'.

Christian leadership could have a significant impact on corruption. Strong Christian leadership and a united ecumenical voice in communicating biblical principles to churches and societies against corruption may be more effective than criminal prosecution and prolonged court cases.

Christian leaders need to secure their leadership positions by good governance and by being exemplary leaders without immoral or corrupt behaviour (cf. Theron 2013:4). Stark (1996:164) assumed that religious individuals 'will be less likely to commit delinquent acts than those who are not religious, but only in communities where the majority of people are actively religious'.

When God created the world (Gn 1:28–30), God introduced the concept of *stewardship* to humankind and assigned them the responsibility of caring for and managing the earth (cf. Grudem

2003:25–26). Stewardship glorifies God and illustrates 'the wonder of God in creation, and services other people more effectively' (Cafferky 2013:52). According to Cafferky (2013:52), 'Stewardship is not merely conservation and prevention from loss (static efficiency), but also active production as a way to serve God by contributing towards the sustenance needs of creatures'.

Christian mandate to counteract corruption according to God's will

Counteracting corruption calls for initiatives and co-operative determinations by numerous organised role-players and organisations that will reinforce each other. The Bible reveals God's will on the subject of Christians' standard of living, illustrating the overall well-being of societies and people's assertiveness to values and accountable justice, love and peace (cf. Theron 2013:3; Vorster 2010:432). The Church has a role to play in conveying extensive changes needed to counteract corruption. Christian leadership cannot tolerate the occurrence of corruption. Transparency International's Chair, José Ugaz, said in a statement (cf. Areff & McDonald 2015):

> Corruption creates and increases poverty and exclusion. Whilst corrupt individuals with political power enjoy a lavish life, millions of Africans are deprived of their basic needs like food, health, education, housing, access to clean water and sanitation. (n.p.)

Corruption should be counteracted by biblical guidelines for everyday living and these guidelines should promote social justice. Community leaders have an opportunity to influence servant leadership, but strong Christian leadership could eradicate

corruption. Wright (2009:24) confirmed that '… shepherds are there for the sheep! Shepherds by definition are servants entrusted with the care of the flock'. Shepherds are hired to look after a flock of sheep (cf. Ezk 34) and Christian leaders should provide and protect those entrusted to their care. Once Christian leaders decide to obey the instructions of Jesus Christ, reliability, integrity and loyalty will become part of their way of life (Van der Walt 2003: 411–412). Jesus Christ, the chief shepherd, commissions Christians (Jn 21:15–27) to fulfil the shepherding functions on his behalf (Prime & Begg 2004:32). To imitate God (*Imitatio Dei*) runs throughout scripture (Lv 11:45; 19:2; 20:7; Mt 5:48; Lk 6:36; Jn 13:15; Eph 4:23–24; 5:1; Phlp 2:2–11; Desilva 2001:41–51). Cafferky provided a description of imitating God and stated that (Cafferky 2013):

> One can argue that imitating God involves being as productive as possible but in ways that are consistent with covenantal living. In other words, imitation is not limited to private spiritual experience but can be applied to all dimensions of human experience, all moral actions in a social context. (p. 54)

The Church is, therefore, called to be faithful by taking up this responsibility. Christians should not keep silent about political, social and economic evils 'but be prepared to shoulder the responsibility to address these problems by applying biblical, moral and ethical principles' (Theron & Lotter 2012:98). This prophetic role of the Church should empower its pastors and/or ministers and church members to act in society by restoring the dignity of people and being educated in servant leadership. Manala (2010:524) stated that the Church as God's messenger in the world 'needs to bring God's will to bear in the world, the church has to warn the authorities and government officials against corruption'.

Christians should be committed to participate and influence society. They should make important contributions to local governance by being whistle-blowers in cases of corruption and hold local government authorities accountable (cf. Manala 2010:529). In this regard, Christian leadership will have to encourage and model commitment to ensure collaboration and transparency to deal effectively with corruption. Wright (2009) assumed that:

> … if by leader we mean a person who enters into a relationship with another person to influence behaviour, values, or attitudes, then I would suggest that all Christians should be leaders. Or perhaps more accurately, all Christians should exercise leadership, attempting to make a difference in the lives of those around them. (p. 8)

According to Ezekiel 34, Christian leadership should be educated in servant leadership to counteract immoral or corrupt activities and contribute to restore the dignity of people. According to Motlanthe, the previous deputy president of South Africa, equipping Christians to see their counter-corruption role '… does not only depend on the laws of the country, but also on the individual's sense of right and wrong' (cf. as cited by Modjadji 2011:10; Theron 2013:6). Driscoll and Breshears (2008:64) concluded that '… church leaders must first be good sheep who follow their Chief Shepherd Jesus well before they are fit to be shepherds leading any of His sheep'. Newham (2014) proposed the following:

> In order to truly honour Mandela, it is now up to those men and women of principle in the ANC and the broader alliance to step forward and start taking to task those who besmirch his proud legacy. There is no moral justification for the spending on Nkandla and the unethical behaviour of some of our cabinet ministers. Rather than trying to justify the indefensible or attacking important institutions such as the public protector, the ANC now needs to be at the forefront of holding its leaders to account for corruption and

maladministration. Failing to do so will not only undermine Mandela's proud legacy, but will also further damage South Africa's prospects of solving its most pressing problems of poverty, unemployment and inequality. (n.p.)

Corruption is analogised to a practice of delinquency where civil servants are corrupt on their own or acting as accomplices, conduits or agents for corrupt leaders. The result of this has damaged the public services' morale, motivation and efficiency immensely.

Corruption is, however, not confined to the government, but is also entrenched in the general public and is making the prevention and control of corruption much more difficult (Singh 1999:188). In situations where corrupt leadership colludes with one another, the problem of tackling corruption becomes much more intractable.

Corruption should be eradicated to protect the poor and weak as much as possible in our society in order for humanity, justice and equity to prevail. As Beets (2007:81) explained: 'Since world religions consistently condemn theft and dishonesty, one might expect that, if citizens consider religion important, they would be less likely to engage in corruption'.

◼ Conclusion

The normative framework helped to highlight the strong need for confronting the society prophetically with God's righteousness and the need to equip Christian leadership for their uniting and ecumenical role, as well as their task of providing Christian citizens with effective guidance regarding their role in society to counteract corruption. The more we face and counteract corrupt leaders – who abuse their power to enrich themselves – the more Christian leaders will be appreciated with qualities such as humility, integrity, justice, equity and reliability.

Christian leadership encompasses communicating biblical principles of servant leadership and committing to a united ecumenical voice to equip Christians to counteract corruption.

The book of Ezekiel wants us to think about responsible leadership. The Lord intervened in a critical stage of Israel's history and showed them what Godly leadership should look like. The description of the leaders of Israel – a few thousand years ago – is not strange to our world. The situation in which the first listeners of Ezekiel 34 found themselves is not extraordinary and many people today can identify with it. We could testify with examples from our own experiences of corruption or exploitation. We are expert witnesses of corruption, poor leadership and the power abuse of leaders who are supposed to protect and care for the people, but instead they choose to enrich themselves and to focus on their own interests. In these circumstances, there is a need for direction and strong leadership:

- God is the perfect shepherd, and he commands the shepherds in his service to care on behalf of him for the flock of sheep.
- God judges bad shepherds who are responsible for a scattered flock, helpless and without direction. God will expel these shepherds.
- God's judgement will also fall on sheep that harm weaker sheep, and it is never God's will that his people oppress and harm one another or when advantage is taken of resources meant for all.

Governments should not only rule as organisations but with compassion to further the interests and well-being of people and to triumph in righteousness for all people. The oppression and exploitation of the poor by the rich is a disgrace to the God of Israel

(Helberg 1992:254). Although the present-day situation of readers differs from Ezekiel's situation of Israel in exile, it is the same God who wants to ensure his people through his word of his omnipresence and compassionate care. The prophetic ministry of Ezekiel brings hope where there is hopelessness (cf. Van Zyl & Müller 2002:361). We do not have a shepherd who is absent and leaves us to our own fate. We see the divine shepherd amidst our experiences of loss and he does not leave us directionless.

The promise of the Lord's care and future expectations should also serve as a warning that the oppressed themselves should not live dishonestly to exploit others. In the midst of the reality of corruption, believers should strive to experience the deeper reality of God's care and protection.

What can we do to stem corruption? Ethical guidelines from John 15

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◼ Introduction

Vorster (2014:xiii) is of the opinion that Christian ethics and secularism are two opposite poles. Christian ethics are imbedded in the Christian religion, whilst secularism is a process in which religion and religious norms are earnestly and actively questioned. Vorster (2014:xiii) also postulates that Christian ethics can make a relevant and substantial contribution to the moral development of communities in South Africa.

Van der Watt (2009) gives a historical description of the ethical teachings of the New Testament writings and describes the work of different writers and their approaches to establish the norms that dictated the way people, which is described in the New Testament, lived. Mackie describes ethics in the preface of his book as (Mackie 1990):

> A moral or ethical statement may assert some particular action is right or wrong; or that actions of certain kind are so; it may offer a distinction between good and bad characters or dispositions; or it may propound some broad principle from which many more detailed judgements of these sort might be inferred. (n.p.)

When this principle of ethics is not adhered to, there will be consequences. The correct ethical behaviour for somebody with the task to care for the plants would be to water the plants on time. Christians believe that God who created the universe provided principles for ethical judgements according to his Word. The basis for Christian ethical judgements should come from understanding the Bible correctly and applying the Word correctly to practical situations. In this regard, God's answer to Moses' objection that he is 'slow of speech and of tongue' is enlightening. God asked this question: 'Who has made man's mouth? Who makes him mute, or deaf, or seeing, or blind?' God created these senses in the first place – this principle is applicable to every human being. In his Word (Christ) gives the principles needed for human beings to live a life of abundance (Jn 10:10). In disagreement with Mackie, the presupposition of this research chapter is that there are inherent truths in every phenomenon and that principles for optimal functioning exist objectively. The principles for human beings to live their lives on earth optimally can be gleaned from the Bible. All

scientific research is about discovering from creation, or another source like the Bible, these inherent principles of phenomena and applying them correctly. The clearer one can understand these principles, the better they can be built into the praxis of the application, and the better these principles are adhered to, the better the working of applications will be. We will later come back to this. When Jesus, according to John 15, described the principles of human beings' relationship to God, he gave the following reason for his teaching: 'These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full' (Jn 15:11). When human beings live according to the principles of the Word (Jesus Christ), they can function optimally. Vorster summarised this truth as follows (Vorster 2014):

> Volgens die openbaring in die geskrewe Woord was die doel van die koms van Christus om die gebroke en korrupte wêreld volgens God se verlossingsplan radikaal te verander en dit te stuur na die finale vernuwing van die hemel en die aarde met die wederkoms van Christus. (p. 93)

This chapter forms part of a project in which qualitative empirical research was carried out by way of interviews with Christian leaders in South African communities.[13] The following research questions will be answered by making use of different viewpoints: What insight can be gained from a practical-theological study regarding the deeply rooted causes and far-reaching effects of corruption in the South African liberal democratic environment? What strategic elements are needed by Christian leaders to address this problem faithfully according to their God-given calling?

13. Compare Chapters 1 and 2 for a description of the methodology of this research project.

According to the method of Osmer (2008:n.p.), the research question, 'What ought to be going on?' will be answered. The unique research question of this chapter can be formulated as follows: What ethical guidelines can be deducted from John 15 to equip Christian leaders in South Africa in the fight against corruption?

John 15 will now be analised and guidelines will be formulated out of the exegesis.

Analysis of John 15

The place of John 15 in the Gospel of John

Scannell (1998:160–174) discussed the structure of the Gospel of John. He provided the opinions of major researchers on John who see two parts in the Gospel of John. The first part describes the public ministry of Jesus and is mostly called the book of signs. The second part describes Jesus' teaching to his disciples and his passion as his hour of glory. This part is sometimes called the book of glory. Scannell (1998:n.p.) opposed this theory of two separate books and demonstrated the unity of the Gospel. The first part also shows the glory of Jesus in his works and words, and the most important signs – the signs of the cross and the resurrection – occur in the second part of the Gospel. In this chapter, both the unity of the Gospel and the uniqueness of each part will be considered. In agreement with Scannell (1998), it can be said that although passages in John focus on a specific theme and there is a clear development of the narrative, themes are repeated and visited again from another angle.

John 13–17 is part of the second half of the Gospel (Du Rand 1991:311–313). From John 13 it is clear that Jesus distanced himself from the crowds and focused on teaching his disciples. John 13–17 relates how Jesus prepared his disciples for the time after his ascension (Estrada 2013:80). 'Here Jesus sought to strengthen and confirm the belief of His disciples, teaching them about service, love, heaven, prayer, persecution, the Holy Spirit, joy, victory, and unity' (Laney 1989:55).

John 15, as part of this preparation of the disciples for their lives without the physical presence of Jesus (Borchert 2002:137), will now be discussed in greater detail.

The structure of John 15

John 15 describes the involvement of the triune God with the disciples and with those who reject Jesus. The narrative structure of John 15 is presented in Figure 7-1.

The identity of the Father and the Son in relation to the disciples

My Father, the vinedresser

Three times in this chapter the involvement of the Father with the disciples is described. In John 15:1–2 the Father is described as the vinedresser. Verse 9, as a transition verse, relates the love of the Father for Jesus and Jesus' love for his disciples closely. At the end of the chapter the Father is described as the one who sends the Holy Spirit to witness to the disciples. The involvement of the Father,
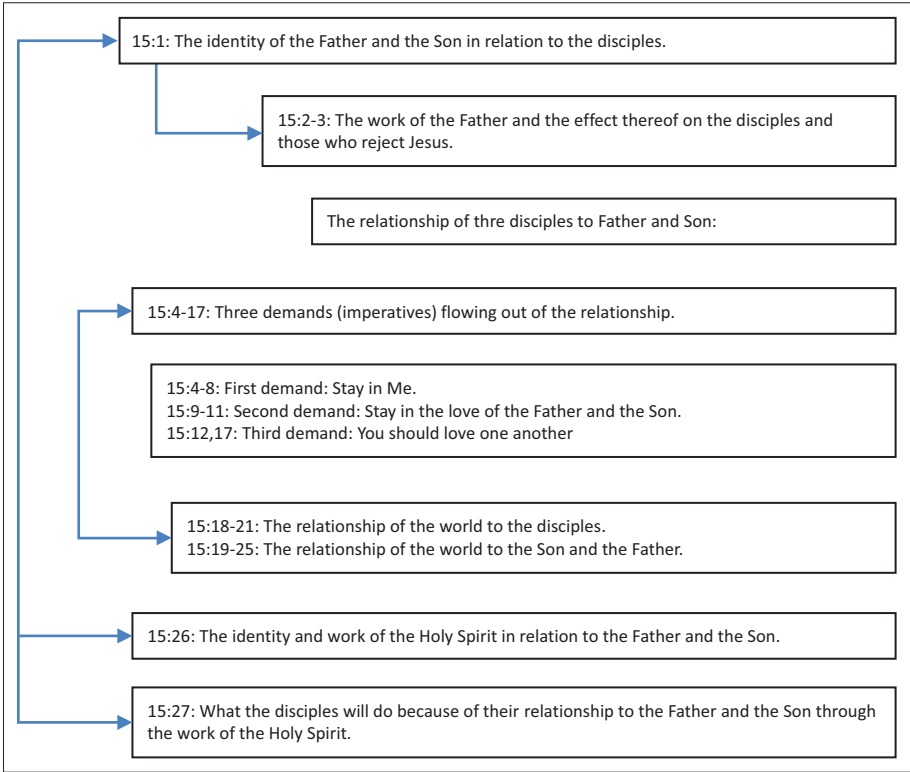
FIGURE 11: Synopsis of the narrative structure of John 15.

therefore, forms an inclusion of the chapter. The Father's involvement is placed in light of his love for the Son (Peterson 2013:23).

To understand the work of the Father as the vinedresser, it is important to first look at the contribution of Caragounis (2000, 2004:247–258, 2012:250–263). He (Caragounis 2012:250) argues that 'semasiological shifts' had been at work for several centuries before the fourth Gospel was written and that the meaning of the words ἄμπελος and κλῆμα changed in that time. He (Caragounis

2012:250) then says in reference to verse 1: 'In other words, to do justice to the meaning and significance of this saying we must view it in its literary-semantic, temporal and theological settings'. In the above-mentioned research, Caragounis made a detail analysis of the cultural historical situation of the text as well as the semantic development of the two words ἄμπελος and κλῆμα. He convincingly illustrated the development in meaning of these two words, that ἄμπελος was more and more used in the sense of 'vineyard' and κλῆμα in the sense of 'vine'. The literary evidence of this shift is presented in his first two works (Caragounis 2000, 2004). In the 2012 chapter, he investigated the text of John 15 and indicated that it makes far better sense if Jesus is understood by the word ἄμπελος as a vineyard and that κλῆμα indicates vines in the vineyard. When understood in this way, the Father is not pruning Jesus as a vine when he prunes the branches, but he is pruning the vines which are part of Jesus the vineyard. The vines that are producing fruit are pruned to produce more fruit.

The vines that do not produce fruit because they do not have their roots in the vineyard are taken away and burnt. This can be compared to John 1:11: 'He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him'. In his exegesis of John 1, Breed (1989:81–84, 1994:321) explained that Jesus was the light for the world, his words and deeds shone on all who heard and saw it (Jn 1:9). In that way the people had part in Jesus, they stood in his light. The Jews had part in him also because they were part of his covenant people, they were his own people in contrast to the rest of the world (Jn 1:5). If this is applied to John 15:1–5, it can be said that some vines were part of the vineyard, but by not accepting Jesus and by not producing fruit, they showed

that their roots were never part of the live-giving soil of the vineyard. These are the vines that the Father removes from the vineyard. Of some of the followers of Jesus it is said that they believed in him (Jn 8:30,31) but later on they opposed Jesus in his teachings (Jn 8:33) and, at the end, Jesus told them that they have Satan as father (Jn 8:42–47; cf. Mt 15:8–13). Judas Iscariot had part in all of Jesus' teachings and saw his works. Jesus even washed his feet (Jn 13), but he did not believe in Jesus and worked with Satan and was, therefore, taken out of the vineyard (Jn 13:27,30; cf. Ac 5:1–10; Peterson 2013:23).

The Father's pruning of the vines can thus be seen as loving care of his Son, the vineyard, as well as of those who accept Jesus' words (the fruitful vines). These vines are already cleaned by the Word (Jn 15:3; cf. Jn 13:10,11; Bolt 1992:11) and thus prepared to bear fruit (Lange & Schaff 2008:462).

The spirit that Jesus sent to his disciples is the spirit of the Father and proceeds from the Father. In John 15 the Father's intense involvement with the vineyard and the vines is revealed. When the structure of verse 26 is analysed, the similarity with verses 1 and 2 comes to the fore.

From this analysis it can be deduced that the emphasis is on the work of the Holy Spirit in his relationship with the disciples. Both verses 1 and 2 and verse 26 describe God's involvement with the disciples. The spirit ἔλθη [shall come] out of his own volition and he ἐκπορεύεται [goes out] from the Father. But the Father and the Son are also instrumental in the coming of the Holy Spirit to the disciples πέμψω παρὰ τοῦ πατρός [will send to you from the Father]. In verses 1 and 2 the Word is the pruning instrument in the hands of the

Father. In verse 26 the Spirit goes out from the Father and is called the Spirit of truth. Jesus who is the Word sends the spirit of truth (Estrada 2013:90). In verses 1 and 2 Jesus is called the true vineyard. The spirit will witness to the disciples about Jesus, the Word and the true vineyard. They will also witness from the knowledge they gathered as ear and eye witnesses of Jesus' life. The Holy Spirit empowers the disciples by his work to willingly bear abundant fruit to the honour of Jesus and the Father (Lange & Schaff 2008:470). Discipleship is, therefore, established on a Trinitarian basis (Du Rand 1991:313).

☐ Jesus, the true vineyard

Jesus is the true vineyard ἄμπελος ἡ ἀληθινή[14] [the essential vine] in contrast to Israel who did not respond to the care of God and was left by God to become a wilderness (Peterson 2013:23).[15] What does ἀληθινή [real] mean in this context? Truth in John is 'inextricably related to God, and to Jesus' relationship to God' (Köstenberger 2004:34). Truth in John says that someone is dependable and genuine, according to the will of God (Van der Watt 2009:150). Jesus is the

14. Lange and Schaff (2008:461) translate these words as 'the essential vine', making the point that nothing can happen without Jesus.

15. See Isiah 5:1–6 where Israel is compared to God's precious vineyard: (1) Let me sing for my beloved my love song concerning his vineyard: My beloved had a vineyard on a very fertile hill. (2) He dug it and cleared it of stones, and planted it with choice vines; he built a watchtower in the midst of it, and hewed out a wine vat in it; and he looked for it to yield grapes, but it yielded wild grapes. (3) And now, inhabitants of Jerusalem and men of Judah, judge between me and my vineyard. (4) What more was there to do for my vineyard that I have not done in it? When I looked for it to yield grapes, why did it yield wild grapes? (5) And now I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard. I will remove its hedge, and it shall be devoured; I will break down its wall, and it shall be trampled down. (6) I will make it a waste; it shall not be pruned or hoed, and briers and thorns shall grow up; I will also command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it.
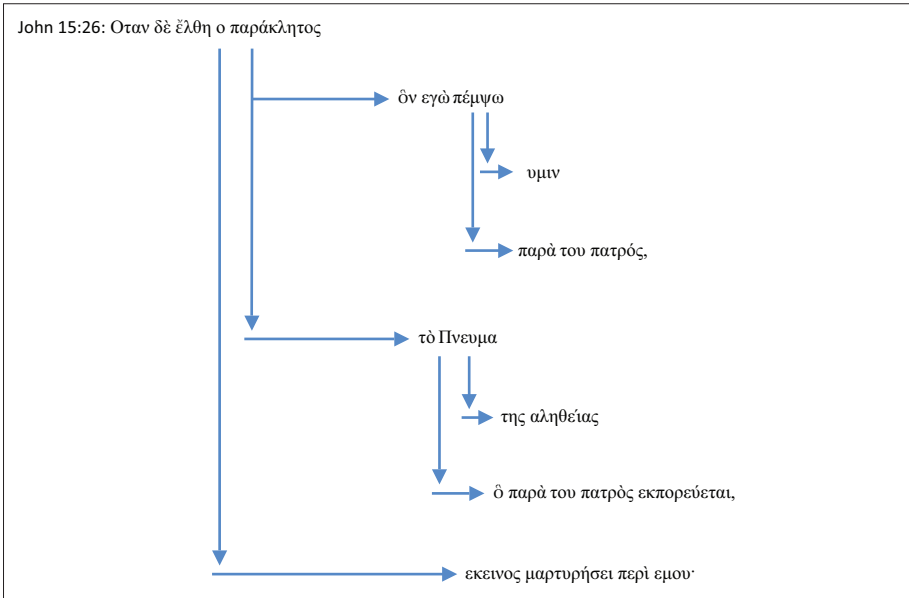
FIGURE 12: Structure of John 15.

vineyard, the true one, because in contrast with Israel he answered to the loving care of God by doing what God had sent him to do. The vineyard answers to the will of God. There is no possibility that God will again reject this vineyard as he did with Israel. This is the true vineyard of God (Is 5:1).

The proof that Jesus is the true vineyard lies in the fact that he stayed in the love of the Father and kept his Father's commandments (Jn 15:10). As the Father loves Jesus so he loved his disciples (Jn 15:9), He chose them to be his disciples and told them all that he has heard from the Father. Because they know what he is going to do, they are not his slaves but his friends and in the end he gave his life for them as his friends (Jn 15:13–16; Du Rand 1991:316). They were

cleaned by his words and they were accepted. He taught them so that the purpose of the Father with his vineyard would be fulfilled. He taught them how they could bear abundant fruit to the honour of the Father. Because he did the works of the Father and spoke the words of the Father, he is now the fertile soil in which the vines can grow and produce more fruit. Without him they can do nothing. Therefore, he urges them to stay in him. He remains in them (Jn 15:4) because of the cleansing work of his Word (Bolt 1992:12) and thereby they are prepared to bear fruit continuously.

☐ The vines in the vineyard
☐ The relationship of the vines with Father and Son

Although the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit play an essential role in this chapter, the main focus is not on them. It is the vines in the vineyard about which John is writing and Jesus is teaching. There are two types of vines: fruit-bearing and non-fruit-bearing vines. The non-fruit bearing vines are in the vineyard but not part of the vineyard. Throughout the Gospel Jesus is pictured talking to them, urging them to become part of him, to eat his flesh and drink his blood and not to follow him only because he gave them bread to still their physical need (Jn 6:25–71; Breed 2015b). These vines will be taken away by the Father. The fruit-bearing vines are already clean.[16] Their purpose is to bear abundant fruit to the honour of the Father. The Father will, therefore, take care of them. He will prune them so that they will bear more fruit. On the one hand, the dependency of the vines and/or disciples

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16. The fact that the work in them is permanent is reinforced by ἤδη [already], the present indicative of ἐστε [you are] and the perfect of λελάληκα.

is emphasised. They can do nothing without being in Jesus, and they need the Holy Spirit to teach them (Carson 1991:516). On the other hand, their responsibility is made clear. Jesus gives them three commands and one of them he repeats. The commands are: 'Remain in Me' (Jn 15:4), 'remain in My love' (Jn 15:9) and 'love one another' (Jn 15:12, 17). Notice should be taken that there is no command to bear fruit. Bearing fruit is the result of staying in Jesus. 'The emphasis is not upon what you do, it's upon where you are' (Paterson 2010:130). 'As they fulfil the imperative to "remain", the disciples will fulfil the purpose for which they were cleansed, bearing "much fruit"' (Bolt 1992:12). Jesus speaks of the regeneration which the Holy Spirit works through the Word, uniting believers to Jesus (Lange & Schaff 2008:461).

One can maybe see an implicit command in the propositional sentence of John 15:7: ἐὰν μείνητε ἐν ἐμοὶ καὶ τὰ ῥήματά μου ἐν ὑμῖν μείνῃ [If you remain in me, that is (epexegetical καὶ) if my words remain in you] (Peterson 2013:24). In this sentence two things are equated: 'staying in Jesus' and 'the words of Jesus staying in you'. Jesus comes to his disciples in his words, in his words he reveals himself (and the Father). When the words of Jesus (his whole teaching – indicative and imperative) determine somebody's life, that person stays in Jesus' words and, therefore, in Jesus. John connects verses 7 and 8 closely to each other by repeating the word γίνομαι [become]. In verse 7, ὃ ἐὰν θέλητε αἰτήσασθε, καὶ γενήσεται ὑμῖν [whatever if you wish, you shall ask, and it will come to pass to you] and in verse 8c καὶ γένησθε ἐμοὶ μαθηταί [and you shall be to me disciples]. When they stay in Jesus, if his words stay in them, they can ask whatever they want and it will happen. This promise

is closely linked to honouring the Father by bearing abundant fruit and by being a disciple of Jesus (Jn 15:8). When they stay in Jesus, when his words determine their lives, they will ask those things that a disciple of Jesus will ask, the things they need to bear much fruit, and they will receive it. Discipleship and bearing abundant fruit is inseparable.

In verses 9 and 10 Jesus describes the way they should be his disciples. They should stay in Jesus' love by being obedient to his commands. The adverbial comparative conjunction καθώς [as] is used twice to link the Father's love for Jesus with Jesus' love for his disciples and to link Jesus' obedience with that of the disciples. The same relationship that exists between Father and Son should be established and grown between Jesus and his disciples. The use of the verbs μένω [abide] and τηρέω [keeps] points to a stable long-term relationship (Louw & Nida 1996:728; Thomas 1998). You stay in such a relationship by keeping and/or treasuring this bond. John exploited the metaphorical dimension of the word μένω 'to describe the relationship of the believer to Christ' in John 15:4–7.

It is also important to understand the logic of verses 9 and 10. In verse 9 Jesus gives the ultimate foundation of the whole Gospel. The Father loves Jesus and Jesus loves his people. Without this love there could not have been a Gospel, no vineyard and no vines. The command to the disciples is that they should stay in Jesus' love as Jesus stays in the love of the Father. The way to stay in the love is to obey the Father's commands. Jesus stays in his Father's love by his perfect obedience. Disciples should do the same. The commandments of the Father drew the borders of love for Jesus. When he was tempted to go outside those

borders (Jn 12:27),[17] he decided to do the will of his Father and he received the glory of the cross. In the same way Jesus' disciples should see his commandments as the borders which he drew for them out of his love. As long as they obey his commandments, they will be within his loving reign. Another way for disciples to stay in the love of Christ is to love one another as Jesus loves them.

John 15:11 concludes the first half of this chapter. Jesus looks back at the things he told them according to verses 1–10 and states the goal of his words to them. He wants all those things to happen so that (ἵνα) his joy (ἡ χαρὰ ἡ ἐμὴ) would stay (μείνῃ) in them (ἐν ὑμῖν). The word (μείνῃ) binds verses 1–11 together and characterises the relationship between Father, Son and disciples; they all have part in one another. The joy will also grow, his joy will become full (πληρόω). Jordaan (2015:5) pointed out through his exegesis that the joy flows from their unity with Christ and their obedience to the Father. This is an important verse in the whole of John 15. In the next part Jesus is talking about his own death and their possible death for their friends. An important emphasis is placed on verse 11 because their relationship with the Father and the Son, as described in verses 1–10, should bring the full (perfect) joy of Jesus in their hearts. Only if that is the case, will they be able to do and endure what is described in verses 12–25 (Borchert 2002:147).

☐ The relationship of disciples and/or vines with each other and the world

Jesus' commands to love one another (Jn 15:12,17) form an inclusion for verses 13–16. The theme that was addressed in verses 2–5 and 8

17. John 12:27: 'Now is my soul troubled. And what shall I say? "Father, save me from this hour"? But for this purpose I have come to this hour.'

about Jesus and the Father's purpose with the disciples – that they should bear abundant fruit – is again highlighted here. Jesus introduces a new goal (friendship) and links this goal directly to four things:

- Jesus' sacrifice of his life for them as his friends.
- The evidence of them being his friends: they do what he commands.
- The way they became his friends: the knowledge of the things Jesus made known to them, the things of the Father.
- The fact that they did not choose him but he had chosen them first.

In verses 7–10 these four things also feature: Jesus's love (Jn 15:9, ἠγάπησα ὑμᾶς [have loved abide]; pointing to his death and his election of the disciples); his teachings (Jn 15:7, ῥήματά μου [words of me]) and his commands (Jn 15:10, ἐντολάς μου [commandments of me]). Emphasis is placed on the development that took place in their relationship with Jesus. They were friends, not servants anymore. In the Jewish culture, disciples choose their teachers (Du Rand 1991:216). Jesus pointed out that he changed this custom. He chose them and they did not choose him from the start (Peterson 2013:25). Jesus has given four reasons for the existence of his relationship with the disciples. The first is grounded in the identity of the Father and the Son. Because they are the vinedresser and the vineyard the disciples can be the vines in the vineyard. The second reason is the love of the Father for Jesus and Jesus' love for the disciples. The third reason is Jesus' election and appointment of the disciples. The fourth reason is the request that they should bear abundant fruit is again highlighted (Du Rand 1991:217–219).

Jesus' sacrifice for them as his friends and his election and appointment of them to bear abundant fruit, are enclosed by two commands to love each other and this points to a suggestion of Jesus that part of their calling and appointment is that they also should be ready to give their lives for their friends (Du Rand 1991:223). In stark contrast to the command to love each other, Jesus, right in the next sentence, speaks about the hate of the world for them. They will be persecuted because of their association with Jesus, because of his name. They will share in Jesus' relationship with the Father and they will experience his joy, but they will also be persecuted as their master was persecuted. Here they are called servants. The other side of this coin is, however, that because people have kept Jesus' word, they will also keep the disciple's word – because they are bringing Jesus' word. In John 15:22 it becomes clearer who the world is – those who have heard Jesus' words but did not come to know the Father through those words as the disciples did. Because they have heard his words they will have no excuse. In the case of these persecutors the same is true, their relationship with the disciples and Jesus reflects also on their relationship with the Father. If they hate Jesus, they also hate the Father.[18] These people are the fruitless vines (Estrada 2013:82).

In verses 25 and 26, the role of the Holy Spirit in the disciples' purpose to bear abundant fruit is described. This description of the task can be seen as a summary of what is meant by bearing fruit. To bear fruit is to bear witness about Jesus (Estrada 2013:81). They can bear witness because they were with him from the beginning, seeing

18. See Estrada (2013:82, 83) for an application to the first readers of John.

and hearing. In short, Laney (1989) described this relationship as follows:

> With Christ, there is a relationship of abiding (15:1–11); with other disciples, a relationship of love (15:12–17); with the unbelieving world, a relationship of hostility (15:18–25); and with the Holy Spirit, a relationship as co-witnesses (15:26–27). (p. 56)

It can be added that their relationship with the Father is a relationship of loving care. Bolt (1992) asked the important question: 'What fruit does the vine bear?' In the previous section it was pointed out that the bearing of fruit is closely related to the witness of the spirit and the disciples. Bolt (1992:16–18) pointed out the similarities between John 15 and John 12–14. If John 12 is compared to John 15, the following can be deduced. In John 12 Jesus' words about the goal of his coming to earth and the way he is going to fulfil this goal is stated. It was in the time of the Passover that Mary anointed Jesus before his death, and John portrays Judas and the Pharisees as hard-hearted (Jn 12:1–7). John highlighted the prophetic words of the Pharisees: 'Look, the world has gone after him' (Jn 12:19). Greeks asked to talk to Jesus. When Jesus heard this, he realised that the time of his crucifixion had come. He calls this time of passion the hour of his glorification. Then he said these words: 'Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit' (Jn 12:25). 'It bears much fruit' corresponds with the task that Jesus has set out for the disciples as vines of the vineyard, according to John 15:8 and 16. Breed (2014a) showed through an in-depth exegesis of John 12:26 that Jesus taught his disciples that they were part of this hour of glorification that had now arrived for him. He told them that they

should also be willing to lose their lives for him and his Gospel. The suggestion was that they were also grain that must die to bear fruit. According to John 12:36, Jesus said that when he is lifted up he will draw all people to him. He will not be on earth anymore, therefore it will be the task of the disciples to lead the people to Jesus after his ascension. This corresponds with Jesus' words in John 15:19 and 20 where Jesus linked their persecution and the hatred of the world to the Gospel that they will bring. That is the witness they will bear through the witness of the Holy Spirit in their hearts (Jn 15:26,27). The Holy Spirit will bear witness about Jesus to them and through their witness to other people. Some of the people who hear this witness will hate and persecute them and some will accept their words (Jn 15:19,20; Estrada 2013:87–90).

▉ Ethical guidelines

The research question of this chapter is: 'What ethical guidelines can be deducted from John 15 to equip Christian leaders in South Africa in the fight against corruption?' We have looked at Jesus' teachings to his disciples in preparation for their lives as leaders in the Church as it is recorded in John 15. Jesus prepared his disciples for the crucial time following his ascension. This preparation of his disciples is also valid for disciples today. The only difference here is that current disciples cannot act as ear and eye witnesses as the first disciples did. Current disciples are witnesses from the revelations in the Bible. The relationship of disciples of Jesus with the triune God as a realisation of ethics with regard to a new life will now be discussed from the results of the exegesis of John 15.
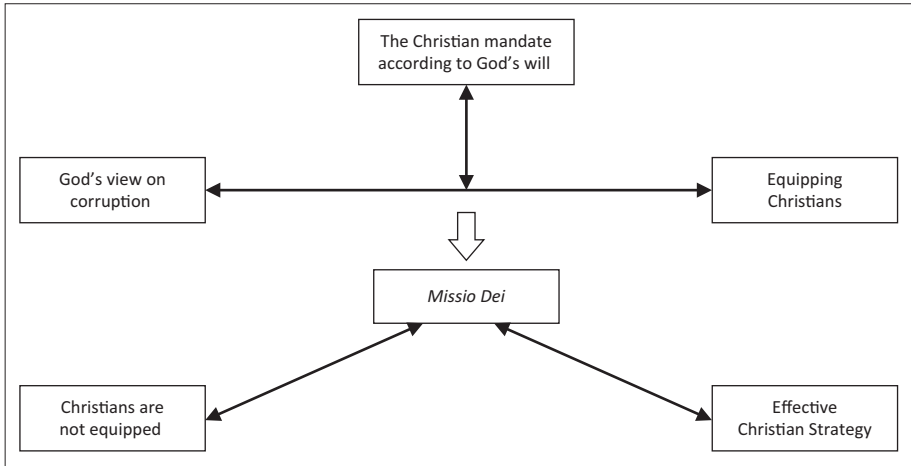
FIGURE 13: Ethical guidelines will spell out God's will in the here and now of life.

From the empirical study, the following presentation of the needs of Christian leaders in South Africa, because of the effects of corruption, was compiled (Figure 13).

Security in the reign of God

According to Jesus' teachings in John 15, those who display corrupt behaviour are vines that are not (yet) part of the vineyard, Jesus Christ. Those who have knowledge about Jesus and who do not remain in Jesus and do not bear fruit will be cut off and destroyed by God. Those who do not have knowledge should be witnessed to by the disciples of Jesus. Those who do not accept the witness of the disciples will have no excuse when the vinedresser comes looking for fruit. God's view on corruption, according to John 15, is that corruption should not be feared by his disciples because the vinedresser is in control and corrupt

individuals will only exist as long as it is God's will. What happens to these individuals because of their corrupt behaviour can even be used by the vinedresser to prune them so that they can bear fruit.

The first ethical principle that Christians and Christian leaders should be equipped with is that of security in the reign of God over everything.

Christian ethics are ethics of absolute security.

The comfort of the love of God

It has been pointed out in a previous section that the love of the Father for his Son and the love of Jesus for his disciples is the source of the relationship of believers with the vinedresser and the vineyard. Out of love for them, the vineyard (Jesus) became the source for everything that the vines (disciples) needed. The Father sent his Son for this purpose out of love. The pruning by the vinedresser is, therefore, a work of love so that vines can bear fruit. This love shown by the vineyard evokes love in the hearts of disciples for one another and also love for other vines who belong in the vineyard but are not there yet. This love comforts disciples so that they are able to bring the words of Jesus to the world, even if these words are often rejected whilst they are being persecuted. However, there will also be those who accept the words of disciples and succumb to the comfort of God's love in Jesus.

The second ethical principle Christians and Christian leaders should be equipped with is that of the comfort of God and other disciples' love. The Church should be the place

where this love can be experienced within the harsh reality of everyday life.

Christian ethics are ethics of experienced love (cf. Vorster 2013).

Cleansed by means of regeneration, justification and sanctification

Because of the work of the Holy Spirit through the Word of God, believers are cleansed by means of regeneration, justification and sanctification. This means that somebody can be made free of the shame and guilt of past sins. In a country where so many people, even leaders, are involved in corruption, there should be a path provided for somebody to be able to break loose from a wrong lifestyle and start over. This should not make Christians tolerant towards corruption, but forgiveness and giving people a second change should be part of their attitude. This kind of attitude can contribute to the rehabilitation of people coming out of jail, or who were caught transgressing.

The third ethical principle that Christians and Christian leaders should be equipped with is that of the act of forgiveness so that undeserving people could be cleansed. This asks for a growth process in wisdom that only the Holy Spirit can give and is obtained by prayer and obedience. Wisdom is needed to determine how to help transgressors to live this ethical principal of undeserved forgiveness in order to be cleansed, and how Christians themselves can live this principle. This principle also addresses the past sins during apartheid and the armed struggle, answering the difficult

question regarding what we should remember, and what we should (try to) forget.

Christian ethics are ethics of undeserved forgiveness in order to be cleansed.

Relationship of unity

The ethical life of believers is determined by their unity with God and one another. This principle was illustrated by Jesus using the parable of the vineyard and the vines and his application thereof. Jesus and the Father are one and the disciples were one with Jesus. Through their unity with Jesus the disciples became part of the relationship between Father and Son. The Holy Spirit witnessed in the disciples empowered them to witness. The disciples were Jesus' friends and not servants anymore. Disciples should, therefore, live in a close and loving relationship with one another. Individualism that is advanced by capitalism should be replaced amongst the followers of Jesus by koinonia.[19]

Christian churches should, therefore, be led to develop real biblical koinonia where everyone feels save to belong, confess sins, receive assurance of forgiveness, ask for help and be helped to bear the fruit of holiness. This is the environment where leaders can come home to be built up so that they can live with energy out of this unity.

19. The koin-word group is translated in the New Testament as 'fellowship, sharing, partnership, participation and communion'. 'Koinonia in the New Testament, therefore, describes not only a sociological unity, but a theological and ontological unity' (Breed & Semenya 2015, cf. Also Kariatlis 2012:53).

The fourth ethical principle Christians and Christian leaders should be equipped with is the principle of relational unity.

Christian ethics are ethics built on relational unity.

◾ Living within the borders of love's commands

The disciples were commanded to stay in Jesus' love as Jesus stayed in the love of the Father. The way to stay in the love is to obey the commandments. Jesus stayed in his Father's love by his perfect obedience. Disciples should do the same. Jesus' disciples should see his commandments as the borders which he drew for them out of his love. As long as they obey his commandments, they will be within his loving reign. There is a difference between Jesus' commandments and his words. Jesus came to his disciples through his words and his words revealed himself (and the Father). When the words of Jesus (his whole teaching) determine somebody's life, that person stays in Jesus' words and, therefore, in Jesus.

Christians are not obedient slaves or terrified children. They are not obedient to laws that are forced upon them. It is obedience to the commandments of a Father given in love and understood by disciples as such. It is the obedience of people convinced of the goodness of these commandments and the knowledge that, by staying within these borders of the commandments, ensures life and freedom.

Christian ethics ensure obedience out of the certainty that the commandments were given in love that lead to freedom and life. Christians and Christian leaders should be helped to understand, embrace and live out this principle.

Christian ethics flow from obedience to loving commandments.

Full joy

In the above-mentioned section, we have pointed out that Jesus says the goal of the believers' unity with Jesus and the Father, as described in John 15:1–10, is that his joy would remain in the disciples and grow to fullness (Jn 15:11). This growing joy in God motivated them in the hardships that followed.

The ethical conduct of disciples of Jesus flows out of the joy they experience in their unity with the Father and the Son.

Christians and Christian leaders should be guided to experience the joy of the unity with the Father and the Son.

Christian ethical conduct is an answer to the growing joy of experienced unity with the Father and the Son.

Missio Dei

Breed (2014a) pointed out that the *Missio Dei* should be understood as the eternal plan of God to bring together all things in harmony under the reign of Jesus Christ (Eph 1). Each Christian as a church and all Christians together as the Church – as the body of Christ – have a part to play in this plan of God. The involvement of the triune God with the disciples is highlighted in John 15. The goal of this involvement is that disciples should bear more fruit. It has been pointed out in the previous passages that this fruit can be seen as people who come to Jesus through the witnessing of disciples. The witness is the words of Jesus.

The objective of Christian ethical conduct is the coming of the kingdom of God, fulfilling his eternal plan (*Missio Dei*), gathering all things under the reign off Christ.

■ Conclusion

It is the contention of the researcher that if leaders in South Africa can be lead to live according to these ethical guidelines, corruption would be stemmed.

Normative perspectives from Romans on the Christian mandate to counter corruption

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◼ Introduction

In Chapter 1 the following overarching research question is formulated:

> What insight can be gained from a practical-theological study regarding the deeply rooted causes and far-reaching effects of corruption in the South African liberal democratic environment and the strategic elements Christian leaders need to address this problem faithfully according to the normative indicators for their God-given calling?

This chapter focuses on the last important part of the question, '… the normative indicators for their God-given calling'.

Dealing with corruption implies replacing corrupt leaders, but also renewing culture, public life, and individuals (cf. De Wet & Kruger 2013). Practical theology is not only a *descriptive* science that explores empirical matters (discerning the 'is'); it is also a *normative* science that offers a vision for how the world should be and suggestions to make it so (prescribing the 'ought'). Osmer (2008) has said that:

> the *normative task* (using theological concepts to interpret particular episodes, situations, or contexts, constructing ethical norms to guide responses, and learning from 'good practice'), is asking the question: What ought to be going on? (p. 4)

This task must be taken on with prophetic discernment in the sense that the prophetic attitude to listen carefully to God must also aim to understand the meaning and seek to bring the meaning into coherence with all other knowledge available. 'The prophetic office is the discernment of God's Word to the covenant people in a particular time and place' (Osmer 2008:133).

Practical-theological research finds its measuring rod in normative compliance to God`s standard as it is revealed in scripture (Wolters 2005:7). Scripture is seen as God's revelation regarding the renewal of human life and all creation by reconciliation to him through Jesus Christ (see Ch. 1). In this chapter the letter to the Romans is investigated to find norms for the renewal of the mind and actions of people as part of the research on corruption in South Africa's liberal democratic context.

It is helpful to think of practical-theological interpretation as a spiral, because the descriptive, interpretive, normative and strategic tasks constantly circle back to tasks that have already been explored. In the empirical research, the respondents focussed on the normative responsibilities of people in the South African society. The following four codes were formulated from their contributions:

- Code 1: God's view on corruption.
- Code 2: The role of Christian leaders in addressing corruption.
- Code 3: Empowering Christian leaders to influence society.
- Code 4: Christians have a mandate to speak about corruption.

From these codes the following categories were deduced: Category 1: The Christian mandate according to God's will (see Code 4); Category 2: God's view on corruption (see Code 1), and category 3: Christian leaders empower Christians to influence society (see Codes 2 and 3).

The structure of this chapter is determined by the link that Romans has to these three categories. The first part of Romans (Rm 1:18–3:20) is connected to Category 2: God's view on corruption. The first part of Romans, as a sort of court hearing, states God's indictment of the corrupt society. The revelation of this part concerns God's view on a corrupt society. The second part of Romans (Rm 3:21–11:36) describes how, by the saving grace of God, Christians are empowered to act and have a mandate according to God's will. This part is connected to Category 1. In Romans 12–15, guidelines are given how to influence society to combat evil, also the evil of corruption. This part is connected to Category 3, the way in which society may be influenced.

The method used in this chapter is an exegetical research by using mainly literary sources on Romans, and from the perspectives gained norms are formulated regarding the Christian mandate to counter corruption.

God's view on corruption (Rm 1:18–3:20)

The court case of God – the structure of Romans

Romans 1:16 and 17 introduce the theme of the argument that follows in the book and are therefore important in understanding the letter as a whole (Moo 2002:44). The gospel is a power of God because it reveals the righteousness of God. By using the concept of righteousness, Paul places the letter in the context of a court case. Romans 1:18–3:20 presents, the charge sheet, in Romans 3:21–11:36 the acquittal and in Romans 12:1 onwards the consequences of the acquittal, namely commands for a new life. The phrase 'righteousness of God' could have three meanings: the attribute of righteousness that characterises God, the saving activity of God, and the status of right relationship with God that he grants us (Talbert 2002:39). Stott (1994) explained it as follows:

> The righteousness of God is God's just justification of the unjust, in which he both demonstrates his righteousness and gives righteousness to us. He has done it through Christ, the righteous one, who died for the unrighteous. He does it by faith when we put our trust in him, and cry to him for mercy. (p. 64)

The righteousness revealed by the gospel that makes it a 'power of God leading to salvation', is a righteousness entirely discerned and appropriated through faith. It is faith through and through, from beginning to end (Talbert 2007:54). Moo (2002) agrees:

Paul makes clear that it is only those who believe – and all those who believe – who will experience God's righteousness. Life, eternal life, is granted to the person who has been declared righteous before God through his or her faith. (p. 47)

God's view – his wrath (Rm 1:18–32)

Romans 1:18–32 deals with a corrupt pagan society; Romans 2:1–16 describes the trespassing of God's norms either by heathen or by Jew; Romans 2:17–3:8 states the falseness of the Jews, having the law, but not obeying it; and Romans 3:9–20 reveals the total corruptness of every human being (see Viljoen 2003:645). In the first section of Romans (Rm 1:18–3:20) Paul describes the totally corrupted state of human beings and God's reaction to it. He uses the word *ajdikiva* [unrighteousness] to reveal the corrupt state of human beings (Rm 1:18,29; Rm 2:8; Rm 3:5). The final conclusion in the charge sheet is 'there is no one righteous, not even one' (Rm 3:10).

God's view of, and actions towards, the corrupt society can be seen from his wrath. The opening statement about the 'revelation of God's wrath' is thematic for the entire section down to Romans 3:20 (Byrne 2007:65). Verse 18 stands as the heading for the entire argument of Romans 1:18–3:20. In the rest of this section, Paul details the ways in which God's wrath is inflicted and, especially, the reason why he inflicts that wrath (Moo 2002:56). Stott (1994) has defined God's wrath by saying:

The wrath of God is God's settled and perfectly righteous antagonism to evil. It is directed against people who have some knowledge of God's truth through the created order, but deliberately suppress it in order to pursue their own self-centred path. (p. 75)

God will inflict his will on sinners in a climactic way on the last day. But even now, in ways that verses 19–32 make clear, God is punishing human sin with his wrath (Moo 2002:56). The overarching thematic statement of Romans 1:18–32 is the revelation of God's wrath in the face of human wickedness that 'suppresses the truth' (about God) (Byrne 2007:64). The term 'suppressing' refers to preventing, restraining, or hindering someone from doing something, and in this passage, to keep the truth from being known (Abernathy 2006:71). The truth is knowledge of God, his majesty and glory, as well as human beings' obedience and responsibility towards God. The truth prevents humans from giving free rein to their own lawlessness.

The knowledge mentioned in verses 19 and 20 is available to all people at all times and all places. God's attributes, although invisible, are revealed through creation on account of the fact that humans may focus their mind on it. The nous (mind) of humans makes this possible. From what God has revealed in nature, people can know that God exists and that he is powerful. God's aim is that people should be without excuse. They cannot claim ignorance when God visits his wrath upon them, for people actually 'knew God' (Moo 2002:57). One of God's purposes in providing this revelation is to make all people responsible for their own condemnation (Abernathy 2006:82).

God's wrath is personal, but not emotional. The content of the present aspect of eschatological wrath in Romans 1:18–32 is given in verses 24, 26 and 28: 'and God gave them up' (Talbert 2002:57). Byrne (2007:64) has confirmed that, 'Preceding each instance of the phrase, "God gave them up" ' is a statement describing the

fundamental refusal on the part of human beings to acknowledge God as Creator (Rm 1:24b, 26b-27, 28c–31). Following each instance is an account of consequences in human life and society of that 'giving up' on the part of God (Rm 1:24b, 26b-27, 28c–31). In this way, a highly artificial structure emerges revolving around the constant refrain, 'God gave them up'. God sentences people to the very sins they have chosen for themselves. God 'has given them up' to the power of their own desires (Byrne 2007:68). Barth (1977) has declared:

> They changed the glory of the incorruptible for an image of the corruptible. The difference between the incorruptible, the pre-eminence and originality of God, and the corruption, the boundedness and relativity of men had been confused. (p. 49)

Moo (2002:58) has described the tragic consequences: 'In each case human beings put aside the truth God has revealed in nature and put in its place their own perverted notions and activities'.

The divine response (Rm 12:28b) to their refusal to hold God in knowledge is 'to give them up to a "worthless mind"'. The human mind, having probed the divine reality and finding it wanting, is no longer able to function as an instrument of discrimination in religious and moral affairs (cf. Rm 12:21b). It is significant, but not altogether surprising, that the ethical instruction (*parenesis*) given in the letter (Rm 12:2) begins by calling for a 'renewal of mind' that will give believers the capacity 'to discern (*dokimazein*) what is the will of God – what is good, acceptable and perfect' (Rm 12:2; Byrne 2007:71).

Paul implies that people who label sin as good or natural or noble are doing great damage to the morals of a society, for eventually it becomes an acceptable behaviour and people are no longer conscious

of their sin (Moo 2002:62). God gave them over to the sinful desires of their hearts and let them stay therein. They are caught in a vicious circle. Because they do not acknowledge God as God and glorified him, he gave them over to their perverse and non-human desires. In doing this they are found guilty in the court case led by the righteous God and they deserve the everlasting death penalty (Rm 12:32; Viljoen 2003:662).

Two of the respondents (Resp. 1 and 3) state that God is offended by corruption: 'God is offended, hurt and disappointed. It breaks God's heart'.Respondent 1 says: 'Jesus was weeping for Jerusalem when he saw the corruption especially in the temple'. He reacts to the fact that he is hurt with his holy wrath.

God's view on a corrupt society is revealed in his wrath. His wrath is his holy hostility to evil. He shows that suppression of the truth is inexcusable. God's view of, and acts against, evil and suppression of his truth is to 'give them up' to the captivity of viciousness.

◼ God's view – his righteous judgement (Romans 2:1–3:8)

After revealing God's wrath, especially to the pagan society, Paul turns to the Jews. He utilises the language use of personification by allowing the Jews speaking in a personal, singular way. God is still busy with his court case, and therefore the term *krima* ('judgement') plays an important role in Romans 2:1–3:8. The word *krima* means the judicial verdict of condemnation, and in this case refers to the judgement rendered by God on those who are guilty (Abernathy 2006:130).

In his righteous judgement God is impartial. He judges heathen and Jew, irrespective of persons. He judges those who judge others because by judging others they are condemning themselves. The judgement on the heathens is to give them up to their sinful desires. Those who are sinning themselves, and yet are condemning others for these same sins, are even more deserving of condemnation than those of Romans 1:32 who simply sin and commend it to others (Abernathy 2006:125). The judgement on the Jews is not yet realised because the law prevents them from giving rein to their own lawlessness. But they must not be mistaken, because it is only because of God's kindness, tolerance and patience that the judgement does not strike them now. God is giving them the opportunity to repent.

Paul hopes that a special position as God's favoured people will result in favourable treatment at the time of eschatological judgement (Byrne 2007:81). Abernathy (2006) said:

> Paul wants to press upon the hard-hearted Jew that he is actually guilty of impiety and perversity. God's delay in punishing sin ought to lead one to repentance, but to make light of it is not simply delusion but is actually contempt and culpable negligence. What distinguishes Israel from the rest is not the prospect of milder judgement, but the fact that God keeps his hand over them to provide opportunity for conversion (Byrne 2007:82). Presuming God's kindness, as if its purpose were to encourage license, not penitence, is a sure sign of stubbornness and of an unrepentant heart. Stott (1994:83) has agreed: Such obstinacy can have only one end. It means that we are storing up for ourselves not some precious treasure, but the awful experience of divine wrath on the day of God's wrath, when his righteous judgment will be revealed (2:5). (p. 133)

Two of the respondents (Resp. 1 and 4) explain the heart of God's righteous judgement. God's will and his law are very clear (Resp. 4) and he does not desire that any society should fall apart (Resp. 1).

God's view on corruption is his wrath, but also his righteous judgement. In his judgement he shows his impartiality, his patience to judge, his grace in giving people space for repentance. But he is also storing up some of his wrath.

◼ God's view – his verdict: '… there is no one righteous' (Rm 3:9–20)

The apostle approaches the end of his lengthy argument and asks himself how to wrap it all up, how to rest his case: What shall we conclude then? (Rm 3:9). He has exposed in succession the blatant unrighteousness of the ancient Gentile world (Rm 1:18–32), the hypocritical righteousness of moralisers (Rm 2:1–16), and the confident self-righteousness of the Jewish people (Rm 2:17–3:8). So now he arraigns and condemns the whole human race (Stott 1994:99, cf. Abernathy 2006:240). The opening line (Rm 3:10b) introduces the key idea: '… there is no one righteous, not even one'. Verses 11–12 develop the theme of the opening line. They echo the 'there is no one' language of verse 10b, restating the truth of universal human sinfulness (Moo 2002:75).

Paul grounds this charge in a catena of scriptural texts. The Old Testament quotations in Roman 3:10–11 teach the universality of sin. There is no one, not even one, no one that understands and no one that seeks God (Stott 1994:101). Paul reinforces his point that all are sinners and shows that scripture consistently stresses this fact.

The central theme of these quotes is sin's universal hold on men, as expressed by the repetition 'there is not' six times and 'all' twice (Abernathy 2006:244). Barth (1977:85) has stressed this point: 'All human beings, without exception, are in subjection to the foreign power of sin'.

Stott (1994:102) has commented on the next part by saying, 'The words in verse 19 evoke the picture of the defendant in court who, given the opportunity to speak in his own defence, is speechless because of the weight of the evidence which has been brought against him. There is nothing to wait for but the pronouncement and execution of the sentence'. God's view on the human race is that they are totally corrupt. No one is righteous in an ethical-religious sense, no one lets themselves be guided by honouring God, no one is seeking God and no one is concerned about God's view (Ridderbos 1959:77).

In the court case, every mouth is silenced. The accused at trial has exhausted all possibility of refuting charges against himself, having no evidence left to plead in his defence, indicating that the whole world is liable to God's judgement and deserving condemnation (Abernathy 2006:257). The overall effect is to convey scripture's – and therefore God's – incontestable verdict that no righteousness is to be found on the human side (Talbert 2002:117).

Two respondents gave the input that God's view leads to the final verdict. Respondent 4 stated that God will judge every sin and that he will fight it with his verdict. Respondent 2 added that God's verdict about a corrupt society is that there is no one righteous.

God's view on the corrupt society is evident from his wrath, seen in his righteous judgement and finalised in his verdict. The verdict is incontestable because God viewed them as totally corrupt.

☐ Normative perspectives based on God's view of a corrupt society

- God views the societies throughout the ages as if in a court hearing.
- God's view of, and actions with, the corrupt society can be seen from his wrath, his holy hostility to evil and the fact that he acts by giving them up to the captivity of viciousness.
- God's view of the corrupt society brings him to righteous, impartial, graceful (in giving space for repentance) judgement, but also lets him store up his judgement of the unrepentant heart.
- God's view of the corrupt society is experienced in his final incontestable verdict that there is no one righteous, not even one.

⬚ God empowers Christians to combat corruption in society (Rm 3:21–11, 36)

In this part, the focus is on the acts of God: in Romans 3:21–26 on God's acts in Christ; in Romans 5 and 7 on Christ's acts, and in Romans 8 on the acts of the spirit. God triune empowers Christians to act in a corrupt society.

Humanity, in God's view, is powerless to avoid or combat the power of sin, because no one is righteous, not even one (Rm 3:10). All are trapped in the web of sin and have therefore no power to act against the corrupt society in which they live. The righteous God reveals his wrath against the ungodliness and wickedness of men.

The understanding of God's wrath (Rm 1:18–3:20) is essential, as it forms the wider context of the key passage (Rm 3:21–26).

God's righteousness and justification in Christ through faith (Rm 3:21–26)

Romans 3:21–26 is one of the most theologically important passages in scripture. Stott (1994:109) has put it in these words: 'This paragraph may be possibly the most important single paragraph ever written'. The passage should inspire us to think deeply about the way God has arranged the salvation of his rebellious creatures (Moo 2002:82). The good news is that the righteous God took the initiative to empower Christians in a gracious way.

Paul's presentation of God's righteousness in Christ in Romans 3:21–26 is the introduction and heart of the part on empowering Christians. If we subscribe to the reality and seriousness of the wrath of God, then we can say that the death of Christ in some way helps to turn away the wrath of God. Otherwise, how would we account for the fact of the wrath of God and its removal? The problem of sin is a moral issue involving human beings and their relationship with God. Sin alienates us from God, and the death of Christ overcomes this alienation between God and men (Kalengyo 2008:161).

God's righteousness opens a new era

Over and against the sad image of the totally corrupt human beings, Paul places the 'but now'. It is not only a formula to show that a new part has begun, but it is the breakthrough of a new era, the fullness of time that Paul indicates with 'now'. 'But now' God himself has intervened (cf. Ridderbos 1959:82). Just at this point, when terror

and despair might appear to be the only foreseeable reaction, Paul triumphantly sounds once again the opening thematic assurance concerning the righteousness of God (cf. Rm 1:17). Byrne (2007) has confirmed:

'Now', at this 'eleventh hour' on the apocalyptic time-scale when all is rushing to destruction and ruin, God has intervened to convert the situation of unrighteousness and 'wrath' into one of righteousness and hope. (p. 122)

This has transformed the prospect of universal condemnation ('wrath') on the grounds of total human unrighteousness (Rm 3:9, 19–20) into the hope of salvation on the basis of the 'righteousness of God' (cf. Rm 1:17; Byrne 2007:123).

'But now' denotes a transition in Paul's exposition of the gospel and of the revelation history as he shifts the focus from the old covenant era of sin's domination to the new covenant era of salvation, from those justly condemned, helpless under the power of sin, and powerless to escape God's wrath, to the new era for all those who respond in faith to God's intervention through the cross of Christ (Abernathy 2006:265). Barth has declared (Barth 1977):

But 'now' directs our attention to time which is beyond time, to space which has no locality, to impossible possibility, to the gospel of transformation, to the immanent Coming of the Kingdom, to affirmation in negation, to salvation in the world, to acquittal in condemnation, to eternity in time, to life in death. (p. 92)

Righteousness refers to the eschatological justifying activity of God, both in intervening to deliver his people in fulfilment of his promises and giving to man the status of acquittal, declaring him just. This denotes the saving righteousness of God. But it also

means both God's attribute of righteousness, as well as his activity of saving righteousness. Abernathy (2006) has agreed:

> As can be seen in combination with 3:24 where God's righteousness is identified with justification, this is a combination of God's righteous character, his saving initiative, and his gift to sinners of a righteous standing before him. (p. 268)

Righteousness and justification are indeed two sides of the same coin (Moo 2002:82). Byrne (2007) has stated that:

> God has granted unrighteous, sinful human beings access to the righteousness required for salvation by making a share in the divine righteousness available to them in the person of God's Son, Jesus Christ. (p. 124)

God's grace in Christ by justifying sinners

Fundamental to the gospel of salvation is the truth that the saving initiative from beginning to end belongs to God the Father. Christ came voluntarily and gave himself freely. Yet he did it in submissive response to the Father's initiative (Stott 1994:111). God acts in Christ to put people in the right relationship with himself. People must believe in Christ to experience for themselves God's righteousness (Moo 2002:83). For Paul, one is not saved by faith. God saves. We are saved by grace (God's initiative). Faith is the human reception of salvation (Talbert 2002:125). The righteousness that God provides comes by means of faith in Christ, and is received and appropriated through the faith of which Christ alone is the object.

God's justification is without any condition because his righteousness comes through faith to all who believe. God's grace is not only his attitude towards sinners, but especially his manifestation of grace in Christ. Grace is God's free, unmerited

favour and goodness towards people. God comes in love to our rescue, giving himself generously in and through Jesus Christ (Abernathy 2006:278).

God justifies us through an act of redemption. The root of this term is 'a price paid for release'. In Christ, God paid a price to secure our release from the ultimate slavery: slavery to sin (Moo 2002:83). It was through Christ's sacrificial death on the cross in our place, and through his blood shed there that he brought us out of captivity to sin, ransoming us and making it possible for God to justify us. Paul is referring to the decisive act of Christ's death and resurrection by which the new epoch of salvation was introduced, but also to the fact that those who are in Christ are participating in his death and new life, experiencing a power that effects a death of sin and a rise of new life in the believer (Abernathy 2006:280).

Justification is a legal or forensic term, belonging to the law and the courts. Its opposite is condemnation. Both are the pronouncements of a judge. Abernathy (2006:277) has stated: 'The phrase "being justified" indicates that one receives a judicial verdict of acquittal by God from all charges that might be brought against someone due to their sin'. Justification is both pardon, the remission of a penalty or debt, and the bestowal of a righteous status. The sinner is reinstated in the favour and fellowship of God (Stott 1994:110). In a Christian context they are the alternative eschatological verdicts which God the judge may pass on judgement day. So when God justifies sinners today, he anticipates his own final judgement by bringing into the present what belongs properly to the last day (Stott 1994:110).

God's righteousness reveals that he is just and that he justifies sinners

God's righteousness in Romans 3:25 refers to God's activity both in view of his judging as well as his saving righteousness, although it also includes his being righteous. The meaning of this term must include God's judging righteousness, as there is a close connection between God's righteousness and his wrath, and his justice is specifically mentioned in Romans 3:5,26; in the death of Jesus, the saving and judging righteousness of God meet (Abernathy 2006:286).

God's own great love propitiated his holy wrath, although the gift of his dear Son, who took our place, bore our sin and died our death. Through the sin-bearing, substitutionary death of his Son, God has propitiated his wrath in such a way as to redeem and justify us, and at the same time to demonstrate his justice (Stott 1994:117). In Romans 3:25, God has put forward Christ as a sacrifice of atonement 'by his blood'. That Paul is here using sacrificial imagery to explain the significance of the death of Christ is very clear from the use of words like a *hilasterion* and the phrase 'in his blood' (Barth 1977:28). Paul is using 'blood' here to refer to the life of Christ given up in death as a sacrifice. Paul is here grounding our justification in the sacrificial death of Christ. Justification is by means of Christ's death (Kalengyo 2008:163).

In his court God's righteousness includes his being righteous through his activity, both in view of his judging and his saving righteousness. God empowers everyone that believes in Christ by his saving grace. The powerless sinner receives saving power in the new era that was introduced by the sacrifice of Christ, and this power

makes it possible to act as a newly saved person through faith in Christ.

☐ Christ's death and resurrection bring reconciliation and life (Rm 5:6–10; 6:6–8, 11 and 18)

The focus in the above-mentioned verses of Romans 5 and 6 is on the importance of Christ's death and resurrection and their effects on reconciliation (Rm 5:6–10) and on the life of Christians (Rm 6:6–14). In this way God triune further empowers Christians to act in their societies.

⬚ Christ's death and resurrection bring reconciliation

Romans 5:6–10 speaks regarding reconciliation. Byrne (2007) has mentioned that:

> If, when, we were God's enemies (the much harder or 'heavier' case), God loved us to the extent of giving the Son to die for us, how much more, it is certain that, now we are 'friends' (reconciled in Christ with God), God will see us through to final salvation (the 'lighter' case). (p. 167)

Paul uses a rabbinic interpretive principle called *kal wahomer* (light and heavy). It is essentially an argument from minor to major, reflected by the English 'how much more' (Talbert 2002:137). Paul says that Christ died for the ungodly (Rm 5:6) and that 'God proves His love for us in that while we still were sinners Christ died for us'. If God has done the unthinkable in Christ's death, how much more, then, 'now that we have been justified by his blood, will we be saved through him from the wrath of God' (Rm 5:9). The reference is, of course, to the Last Judgement. On the basis of what God has done in and through Christ in the present, Christians can have hope for their future (Talbert 2002:138).

Previously Paul has written that God demonstrated his justice on the cross (Rm 3:25). Now he sees the cross as a demonstration of God's love (Moo 2002:103). Indeed 'demonstrate' is really too weak a word; 'prove' would be better. In sending his Son to die for sinners, he was giving everything, his very self, to those who deserved nothing from him except judgement (Stott 1994:144). God, however, reveals his love not only on the cross, but also through his spirit, making us deeply aware of that love (Rm 5:5b). Byrne (2007) has stated powerfully:

> For Paul (and the early Christian tradition generally) the presence of the Spirit is the sure index that, whatever the outward circumstances, as far as relations with God are concerned, the community is already living the life of the new age (as reconciled people), enjoying a filial status in which they cry out to God *Abba* Father. (p. 167)

Christ's death and resurrection bring life

Romans 6:6–7 constitute an exposition of Romans 6:3–4a, which refer to death and burial. Verses 8–9 offer an explanation of Romans 6:4b–5, which focus on resurrection and new life (Talbert 2002:163). In this context, having been justified refers to us having been set free from the bondage that has enslaved us. People are not just guilty, they are enslaved and they need to escape. Thus in Chapter 4, justification means 'forgiveness' and in Romans 5:12–21 'being made righteous/faithful', but in this context it means deliverance from 'bondage' or 'being set free from the power of sin' (Talbert 2002:162). This creates a whole new possibility (Byrne 2007:191).

We are sure that we are risen with Christ, and therefore the new life has started already (Ridderbos 1959:131). As Christ is

'dead to sin' and now 'lives to God', the same mindset must characterise those who share his new existence, those who are in 'Christ Jesus'. They can no longer live 'in' (the power of) sin because they live 'in (the sphere and power of) Christ Jesus'. Although they do not enjoy full bodily conformity to the risen life of Christ, though they 'await' in this sense 'the redemption of their bodies', they are to 'recon' themselves as 'dead to sin' and 'alive to God in Christ Jesus' (Byrne 2007:193). Being dead to sin and alive to God means that one obeys God in the concrete decisions of everyday existence.

In Romans 6:17–18, Paul reminds us that the life of obedience that he calls for is both mandated and made possible by our transfer from the old realm of death into the new realm of righteousness and life (Moo 2002:117). For believers, to be 'slaves of righteousness' means not only entrusting their hopes for salvation to the righteousness that comes as God's gift in Christ, but also surrendering their lives to the obedience that that gift entails if it is to be preserved until the day of judgement. Believers must 'live out' the righteousness that they have received. Moreover, they must allow God's righteousness, originally 'embodied' in Christ, to be 'embodied' in them also in the concrete situations of their daily lives (Rm 6:12–13; Byrne 2007:202).

By breaking the power of sin, which makes human beings powerless to act in society, God, through the death and resurrection of Christ, empowers Christians with new life in a new era, not only to overthrow their enslavement to sin, but to become slaves of Christ and therefore able to act in his power against sin in society.

The spirit creates freedom for sinners (Rm 8:1–4)

In this paragraph the focus is on the empowering work of the spirit. It is part of the work of the Trinity as a whole: God the Father sends his Son, whose work is applied to our lives by the Holy Spirit.

The spirit creates new freedom (Rm 8:1,2)

There is a palpable change of tone at this point in the letter. Against the dark background of slavery to sin under the regime of the law (Rm 7:7–25), Paul invites his audience to rejoice in the new era of freedom and ethical 'possibility' brought by the spirit (Byrne 2007:234). The two opening verses introduce the main theme: the freedom ('possibility') created by the spirit. Verses 3–4 trace this freedom back to God's sending of his Son (Byrne 2007:235; cf. Talbert 2002:202). The word 'now' (Rm 8:1) emphasises that this salvation is already ours if we are in Christ, as opposed to being in Adam (Rm 8:5; 12ff. Stott 1994:217).

'Liberation' (Rm 8:2) joins 'no condemnation' as the two great blessings that are ours if we are 'in Christ Jesus'. Being liberated from the law of sin and death through Christ is to no longer be 'under the law', that is, to give up looking to the law for either justification or sanctification (Stott 1994:218). The prospect of condemnation that would arise from a lack of righteousness (sin) has been removed because a new moral force (the spirit), available in Christ Jesus, has brought release from the ethical 'impossibility' created by the dominance of sin. Byrne (2007:236) states: 'Paul traces this liberating gift of the Spirit right back to its ultimate

source: God's sending of "his own Son" to break the fatal grip of sin on human affairs'.

The spirit enables believers to fulfil the law's requirement (Rm 8:3, 4)

The first and fundamental truth that Paul declares in verses 3 and 4 is that God has taken the initiative to do what the law (although it was his own law) was not able to do. The law could neither justify nor sanctify, because human weakness robbed it of all potency. Stott (1994) has argued that:

> What the sin-weakened law could not do, God did. He sent his Son, whose incarnation and atonement are alluded to in verse 3, and then he gave us his Spirit through whose indwelling power we are enabled to fulfil the law's requirement, which is mentioned in verse 4. (p. 219)

Those who are in Christ Jesus, who live within the spirit's sphere of authority (Rm 8:2), no longer experience or expect condemnation (Rm 8:1), as they are no longer subjects of sin (and death) (Venter 2014:3). The positive factor excluding condemnation is the 'liberation' brought by the spirit (Rm 8:2). The liberating 'law of the spirit of life' in Jesus Christ is not a law in the strict sense of a moral code, but the spirit itself in so far as, in the new age, it constitutes a new norm and possibility of life (Byrne 2007:235). Stott (1994) has stated:

> The Christian life is essentially a life in the Spirit, that is to say, a life which is animated, sustained, directed and enriched by the Holy Spirit. Without the Holy Spirit true Christian discipleship would be inconceivable, indeed impossible. (p. 216)

The work of Christ by conquering sin and its power is applied by the spirit, who frees us from the law of sin and empowers us to live a new life under his guidance.

The respondents reacted on the fact that Christians are empowered with the following comments: Christians are powerless and must be empowered by God to be effective (Resp. 3). Christians who have encountered God in Christ have been transformed to realise something of God's just and equitable and graceful will for the world, called the Kingdom of God (Resp. 1).

☐ Normative perspectives on combating corruption in society gained from the fact that Christians are empowered

- In his court case God's righteousness brings saving righteousness to believers and therefore empowers them to combat corruption in society
- God's righteousness includes his being righteous through his actions, both in view of his judgement and his saving righteousness.
- By breaking the power of sin through the death and resurrection of Christ, God empowers Christians with new life in a new era, not only to overthrow their enslavement to sin, but to become slaves of Christ and therefore able to act in his power against corruption in society.
- The work of Christ, conquering sin and its power is applied by the spirit in freeing us from the law of sin and empowering us to live a new life under the spirit's guidance.

■ Christians are called to influence society to combat corruption

God's view of the corrupt society is evident from his wrath, seen in his righteous judgement and finalised in his verdict. God views the

unrighteous as totally corrupt, and therefore the verdict is incontestable. God's righteousness includes his being righteous and his actions of judging and saving. The work of Christ, namely conquering sin and its power, is applied by the spirit, who frees us from the law of sin and empowers us to live a new life under his guidance. Therefore, God calls Christians to influence society to combat corruption.

☐ God calls for a transformed life as an example for society (Rm 12:1–2, 9, 21)

Christians are empowered by the 'mercies' of God. The word 'mercy' is plural in Greek and is used to emphasise the many aspects of God's mercy that he has highlighted in Romans. All these blessings should stimulate believers to give themselves to God and to his will in dedicated service (worship) (Moo 2002:176; cf. Stott 1994:320). Talbert (2002:285) has agreed that, 'Christians are to present their bodies (selves) as a sacrifice – one that is living, holy, and pleasing to God – which is our rational (*logiken*) worship (*latreian*)'.

Moo (2002) explained the important meaning of 'body':

> 'Body' in Paul's teaching does not refer to a part of the human being, but to the whole person in relationship to the world. It includes our thoughts, our emotions, and our wills. (p. 176)

Hence 'bodily life' embraces the entire existence of believers, with particular emphasis on interrelatedness with the surrounding external world (Byrne 2007:363). Such an offering is our spiritual act of worship (Stott 1994):

> 'Spiritual' translates *logikos*, which could mean either 'reasonable' or 'rational'. If the former is correct, then the offering of ourselves to God is seen as the

only sensible, logical and appropriate response to him in view of his self-giving mercy. (p. 321)

Paul completes the picture of Christian life as lived in sacrificial consecration to God by indicating how believers should know what it requires in practice (Rm 12:2). Negatively (Rm 12:2a), it means not conforming to the pattern of this world (Byrne 2007:364). We do it by avoiding the pattern of thinking and behaviour characteristic of this world and aligning ourselves with the values of the world to come (Moo 2002:177). More positively (Rm 12:2b), believers must allow their 'minds' to undergo the renewal of existence that this new era involves. Byrne (2007) has commented:

'Mind' (*nous*) for Paul denotes the thinking, discerning aspect of the human person. The *nous* is something that is to precede from the inner moral core of the person, now capable of discerning (*dokimazein*) the 'will of God'. (p. 364)

We are called to engage in the lifelong process of changing the way we think, and by changing the way we think, we change the way we live (Moo 2002:178).

Now that they have received the Holy Spirit, Christians possess an enabling power that makes righteousness (faithfulness) possible. Only because of this deliverance and enabling power is an exhortation possible. Those who have been set free and granted God's own enabling presence, however, are capable of a response to 'not be conformed' and 'be transformed'. Stott (1994) has declared:

As for the change which takes place in the people of God, which is envisaged in Romans 12:2 and 2 Corinthians 3:18 (the only other verses in which metamorphoo occurs), it is fundamental transformation of character and

conduct, away from the standards of the world and into the image of Christ himself. (p. 323)

With a transformed mind one is able to discern God's will, recognising it as good, acceptable, and perfect. Only such a transformed mind has the capacity to form the correct Christian ethical judgement at each given moment (Talbert 2002:285). Paul's fundamental principle of moral discernment, laid down here prior to any concrete norms or maxims, is that Christian obedience involves a constant quest for God's will in the confusing and difficult circumstances of the present, 'overlap' time (Byrne 2007:364).

Love is the main essence of a transformed life. The transformed mind seeks the will of God and that, in essence, is love to God and the neighbour. We determine to love, and true love is directed to the good and shuns evil (Moo 2002:180). Byrne (2007) has expanded on sincere love in Romans 12:9 by saying:

> When Paul requires not simply 'love' but 'sincere' love he is demanding a love that, like the love that inspired God's actions in Christ, goes beyond mere words and protestations to embrace the alien and the enemy (v. 14, v. 17, v. 20), that seeks to 'overcome evil with good' (v. 21). (p. 376)

The words 'sincere love' function as the heading of what follows (Moo 2002:180). Without doubt *agape* love now dominates the scene. So far in Romans all references to agape have been to the love of God, but now Paul focuses on agape as the essence of Christian discipleship. Romans 12–15 are a sustained exhortation to let love govern and shape all our relationships. Shortly after, Paul writes about love for our enemies (Rm 12:17–21), but first he portrays it as something that pervades the Christian community (Rm 12:9–16; Stott 1994:330). Verse 21 is

the summary and climax of Chapter 12 (Stott 1994:337). The agape asked of Christians, becomes a true reflection and extension of the divine agape, which meets the evil and hostility of the world with love and, in the shape of Christ's resurrection, triumphs over that evil.

☐ God calls for obedience to governing authorities (Rm 13:1, 2)

The influencing of society to combat corruption is closely connected to the role of governing authorities. Paul bases obedience to governing authorities on the fact that God himself ordained them and that authorities are working to the benefit of the subordinates (Ridderbos 1959:289). In all of Paul's hierarchical structures, the uppermost authority is God. What that means is that we must always submit to those over us in light of our ultimate submission to God (Moo 2002:186).

There is another reason why we should submit. God has appointed rulers to carry out a definite purpose. They have to reward people who do well and punish people who do wrong. God uses governing authorities as 'agents of wrath' to visit his judgement on people who rebel against him and do evil (Moo 2002:187). In the present evil age, the authorities are God's servants to administer wrath on wrongdoers (Talbert 2002:294). Jesus' followers are called upon to subject to the governing authorities who restrain evil behaviour and reward good behaviour (Talbert 2002:294).

For these reasons Christians and other citizens must submit themselves to the governing authorities. 'Be subject' means primarily to recognise that one is in a subordinate position to those (the

governing authorities) who are 'placed over' and to be ready to act in accordance with this recognition (Byrne 2007:387). All that is asked from the readers is that they 'do well', 'pay taxes', and 'honour and respect those in power'. All that is legitimately ascribed to the authorities is punishing the evil and rewarding the good (Talbert 2002:296). Authorities have limited power and they are ultimately responsible to God, the one who ordained them. Obedience is necessary also in case of a hostile authority. Stott (1994) has explained that:

> The authorities in Paul's time were Roman or Jewish, and were therefore largely unfriendly and even hostile to the church. Yet Paul regarded them as having been established by God, who required Christians to submit to them and cooperate with them. (p. 340)

Governing authorities are ordained by, and therefore responsible to, God. Thus, Christians as instruments of God have the calling to make sure that the corruption of governing authorities is brought before the correct judicial institution. In that way, Christians are playing their role to influence society to combat corruption in the state's machinery.

God calls for love that does not harm the neighbour (Rm 13:8–10)

In these verses of Romans 13, Paul continues the theme of combating evil, this time not only through the calling of the governing authorities, but through the influence of Christians themselves. Byrne (2007) has described Romans 13:8–10 as follows:

> The passage itself shows a neatly 'inclusive' structure. The dominant theme of love as the 'fulfilment of the law' occurs at the beginning (v. 8b) and end

(v. 10b), 'framing' the intervening scriptural argument in v. 9, which supports it. (p. 394)

Three times in these three verses the apostle writes of the need to love our neighbour (Stott 1994:348).

Paul skilfully ties the section to what has gone before by picking up the note of 'payment of debt' upon which the preceding section has ended (Byrne 2007:394). No debt must remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another (Moo 2002:188; Stott 1994:348). Love (agape) is an inexhaustible debt because it is one created directly by the infinite love, which believers have themselves received from God in Christ. All believers – even the most difficult and unlovable – owe a debt of love flowing from the love with which God loved them as unreconciled and 'enemies' (Byrne 2007:194).

Whatever commandments of the law one might want to name, they all are 'summed up' in the command to 'love thy neighbour as thyself' (Rm 13:9; cf. Lv 19:18). When we 'love thy neighbour', we do no harm to him or her, and so love fulfils the law (Rm 13:10; Moo 2002:188). Talbert (2002) has said:

> The content of love is spelled out. It does not do wrong to a neighbour (v. 10). Wrong is spelled out as well. It involves adultery, murder, stealing, coveting, and any other commandment. Love, then, is not a sentimental feeling for another; it is action that does not harm the other. (p. 299)

If we truly love our neighbours, then murdering them, stealing from them, committing adultery with their spouses, and so on, is unthinkable. It can take the place of all the other commandments in the law about our relationships with other human beings (Moo 2002:189). Byrne (2007) has rightly stated:

> The commandments cited are prohibitions; they all proscribe things that would harm the neighbour. Together they suggest that this is the law's way: negatively to restrain harmful action (cf. 7:7). Whereas love, picking up the essence of the law as defined in Lev. 19:18, is a positive thing that catches up and goes beyond the prohibition. (p. 395)

If we love our neighbour, at least in the sense of not doing him or her any harm, we may say that we have fulfilled the law although we have not fully paid our debt (Stott 1994:349). Paul wrote not that 'love is the end of the law', but that 'love is the fulfillment of the law'. For love and law need each other. Love needs law for its direction, whilst law needs love for its inspiration (Stott 1994:350).

We can refrain from stealing from someone, but our attitude towards that person might still be far from what God would want it to be. As Jesus reminded us, we must go beyond the outward act and deal with the inner attitude (Moo 2002:188). Love as the fulfilment of the law is not possible through the power of the law, but only in Christ and through the work of the spirit. If Jesus' disciples love one another, it is only because they are enabled by the spirit to do what they are told to do here (Talbert 2002:300).

The respondents gave the following guidelines for Christians to influence and act in society to combat corruption. Some of these guidelines are also revealed in the study on Romans 12 and 13:

• Christian leaders must be shameless examples in avoiding participation in corrupt activities (Resp. 4).

- We need a strong, united ecumenical voice that offers both prophetic and pastoral council to members who are in places of service (Resp. 1).
- Christian leaders must communicate Christian principles and ethics wherever they are placed in society (Resp. 2).
- The Church has a critical role in helping people to understand what the intention of the government is and to testify where there are signs of corruption (Resp. 1).
- Instruments given by the Constitution must be exploited to protest against corruption (Resp. 4).

Normative perspectives from the calling of Christians to influence society to combat corruption

- Christians should influence society through a transformed life by giving instead of taking and offering oneself as a sacrifice to God and thereby to the neighbour and society as a whole.
- Christians should influence society through testifying what a transformed view on life is by not conforming to the corrupted pattern of the world, but approving what God's will is: love also for the enemies to triumph over the evil of corruption.
- God established governing authorities, and Christians should obey them so that they can inflict punishment upon wrongdoers. Christians must testify against corruption in governing authorities and report it to the correct judicial institutions.
- Christians should proclaim the important command to love your neighbour because this love will not harm anybody and, in this way, corruption will be combatted.
- The Church should use a strong, united, ecumenical and prophetical voice to negatively point out corruption and positively give ethical direction to become a more just society.

◼ Conclusion

This chapter investigated the letter to the Romans to find norms for the renewal of the mind and people's actions as part of the research on corruption in South Africa's liberal democratic context. The chapter utilised exegetical research by using mainly literary sources on Romans. The norms formulated for our Christian mandate to counter corruption follow from the perspectives gained during exegesis.

The structure of this chapter was determined by the link between Romans and the three categories gained from the responses of the four participants in the empirical research. The chapter is therefore divided into three parts, namely, God's view on corruption, God empowers Christians to combat corruption in society, and Christians are called upon to influence society to combat corruption.

In summary, the following normative perspectives from Romans regarding the Christian mandate to counter corruption follow from the exegesis:

- God's view on societies is presented in the form of a court hearing, and because of human beings' corrupted nature and actions, he reveals his wrath and gives them up to captivity. He brings them to righteous judgement by giving space for repentance, but storing up his final verdict for those who do not repent.
- God empowers Christians by giving them redemptive righteousness through the death and resurrection of Christ. He furthermore empowers them to live a new life under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

- Christians are called to influence society through the example of a transformed life of offering and love to all people to triumph over corruption. They must influence society further by obeying governing authorities and testifying against the corruption of governing societies through an ecumenical and prophetical voice. In the final instance, Christians must influence societies by proclaiming and exercising the love commandment by not harming the neighbour by doing any injustice to him or her.

Part 4

Strategising perspectives

Changing the lifestyle of corruption by altering people's attitudes according to the perspective of the *Missio Dei*

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◼ Introduction

Within Codes 1.4, 2.1 and 4.3 (see Ch. 2), it became evident that Christians realise that people in general are struggling to change the problematic praxis of corruption in society because of a lack of ability.

The worrying factor is that the presence of elements of greed and personal gain is overwhelming. Although the responses indicate a certain kind of inability to create change, there is also recognition of the fact that the *Missio Dei* of God – as the breaking through of God in this world and the responsibility of Christians joining this mission (Resp. 1, 2, 3, 4) – should receive a prominent reference in addressing the problematic praxis of corruption. The author wants to link two focal points emanating from the interviews, namely the role of attitudes as part of the roots of corruption, and the participation of believers in God's mission through various manifestations of persuasive communication.

To proclaim not only means to communicate the good message of scripture through words, but it also entails to live out the content of proclamation (Chung-Chong 1999:20). Mission is therefore also an action of sending for the purpose of proclamation. The Church as a community of believers mediates Christ to the world (Heitink 2007:294). *Missio Dei* is a concept that denotes the fact that God is involved with the world. The Church is privileged to participate in this involvement of God in his Church and in this world. The concept can also be viewed from another perspective. Mission from a human viewpoint consists of two acts, namely the act of the proclamation of God's kingdom and also the act of living according to the value of this kingdom (Homrichhausen 1999:22). God's mission has everything to do with personal salvation, but his kingdom also embraces justice, peace and freedom (Immink 1999:10). *Missio Dei* implies communication about a renewal in humanity – for people to turn to God and to act accordingly to his will. God is concerned about the entire world and, therefore, God's followers should also

make the world their concern (Pieterse 2001a:120). Our concern for the world should be visible in an attitude of earnestness and willingness to take care of the world; in speaking about the reality of life. Our words are supposed to contribute towards a new focus in people's minds on corruption.

Van der Merwe (2006:33) is concerned about the emphasis on this renewal and turning to God because it is hampered by corruption in South Africa that is sustained by values and attitudes. Dealing with this issue of corruption does not only imply the replacement of corrupt leaders, but also the renewal of culture, public life and hearts. Dealing with corruption involves communicating a new way of looking at life (*Missio Dei*) and creating a consciousness of the hunger and thirst for righteousness that cannot burn in the hearts of humans if not touched by God`s grace (De Wet & Kruger 2013:6).

Corruption entails more than statistics and numbers. Corruption has to do with people and how it affects them. Statistics and articles on corruption are not the only solutions to this problematic praxis. Without the cognisance of the Church as a community of believers who are called to be the salt and light in the world – a world gripped in pain because of the results of corruption – this chapter will end in a one sided discussion of the theory of corruption and the changing of attitudes. Believers should do something concrete, and one of the most important ways to do this is to tell people about God's return to earth and to equip people through proclamation so that they can apply the Word of God in their daily lives. Communication of the hunger and thirst for God's righteousness in a problematic praxis of corruption requires an understanding of

the fact that God's children are part of his mission and, therefore, they need to be witnesses of his presence in this world through their words and deeds (Pieterse 2001b:119). Words and deeds should complement each other.

It is important to realise that attitudes form the centre point of the framework of people who are committed to root out corruption. Attitudes also play an important role in the lives of people who are experiencing pain emanating from corruption. People who are observing the effects of corruption are also trying to make sense of what they observe.

Swartz and De La Rey (2007:225) made an interesting comment by indicating that the language (choice of words) people use is a powerful representation of their thoughts (cognition). Language influences people's understanding of reality and is a powerful mechanism in reframing people's attitudes. Fiske (2004:237) indicates that attitude change via the understanding of persuasive communication is possible. Kruger (2002:198) explains the complexity of attitudes. Attitudes are responsible for organising and interpreting information in people's lives. People tend to be selective about information and this can create a problem when information is asking questions about the essence of attitudes, especially during sermons or persuasive messages.

Previous chapters highlighted the fact that South Africa is experiencing a crisis as a result of a lack of action against corruption. Mle and Maclean (2011:1374) express, therefore, their delight about small signs of change and refer to the fact that President Jacob Zuma admitted during his State of the Nation address that

communities are experiencing frustrations with regard to governance on a local level. He said: 'We have instituted a turnaround strategy for local government, focusing on, amongst others, the strengthening of basic administrative systems, financial management and customer care'. The president further confirmed the building of a responsive, accountable, effective and efficient local government. It can be deduced that in an attempt to enhance and to promote ethical conduct, integrity and good governance, government has introduced a turnaround strategy. Even local churches are starting to discuss the importance of turnaround strategies. What are the perimeters of a real turnaround strategy? Will more regulations, more promises and more legislation be enough to create a change in a corruptive society? The author intends to show that a real turnaround strategy should be aligned with the *Missio Dei* in order to spur attitude change in people's lives.

The research question for this chapter is, therefore: 'Is it possible that the persuasive message of the *Missio Dei* can inspire people to change their lives by altering their attitudes about corruption?'

This book states at the beginning that the methodological insights of Osmer (2008:32) will be utilised. In this chapter, our response to a problematic praxis will be investigated. Practical-theological perspectives will be used regarding strategic elements needed by Christian leaders to address corruption faithfully according to their God-given calling. Christians are facing challenges in the execution of their responsibilities. Workplaces in South Arica are a complex territory. This territory consists of a mixture of good and evil motives

(attitudes) and actions that need to be discerned. Different understandings of the past, perceptions of the present and scenarios for the future compete with one another in public spaces (Kretzschmar 2014:2). Despite the fact that communication of God's kingdom (during worship services and also in witnessing in daily life) should give direction to hearers and help them to realise that God is the only God of their lives and of their workplaces, there is an appreciable difference between the thought patterns that shape today's world and communication about God's kingdom (Dingemans 2005:24–25).

■ The cognisance of attitudes as underlying propellant in the functioning of corruption

■ What is an attitude?

It is first of all important to explain what the author understands about the concept of attitude. Scholars are all of the opinion that an attitude has to do with the specific feeling people harbour for someone or something that makes them react in a particular way (Barker & Angelopolu 2010:272). Attitudes are learned. Attitudes have to do with the evaluation of people, objects and events in society (Fiske 2004:216). In the triangular visualisation of an attitude, three components can be distinguished, namely:

- Beliefs and thoughts.
- The evaluation of feelings and emotions.
- The behavioural aspect, which refers to the way in which attitudes are expressed or the motives and intentions of people.

Firet (1978:266) postulates that the concept of attitude can be linked to practical theology by highlighting the 'agogisch moment' in pastoral care. Firet (1978:264) regards attitude change as something that should lead to a spiritual and/or faith change. In order for this change to take place, people should be helped through ministry to develop a deeper vision of aspects that can initiate change. He also distinguishes between two sub-moments, namely a moment of understanding (cognition) and also a moment of change. People should be guided to understand their own attitudes towards corruption in order for change to occur. Bergh and Theron (2008:173) underline the importance of understanding and distinguishing between two kinds of attitudes, namely, central and peripheral attitudes. Central attitudes are relatively stable (part of someone's personality) and, therefore, difficult to change, whilst peripheral attitudes are temporary and susceptible to change. The changeability of attitudes depends on factors like origin, intensity and duration (Fiske 2004:217). What makes the above-mentioned statement significant is that attitudes develop during interactions between parents and their children, during critical periods in people's development, during ways of learning that also include social media and advertisements, during social, cultural and theological influences (Bergh & Theron 2008:174). The changing of attitudes concerning corruption, especially in the lives of people who have persevered in corruption for a long period, and also people who have been exposed to corruption from an early stage in life, will present a real challenge. Practical theologians should take note of the fact that if people's opinions about corruption are based on facts, the more easily their opinions will change if the facts are changed (Schwartz & De La Rey

2007:276). If opinions are based on attitudes, opinions will offer more resistance to change. In other words, the emotional nature of a negative attitude may persist although negative facts are changed to positive ones (Bergh &Theron 2008:175).

Kruger (2015:1383) highlights the fact that attitudes are formed by selecting facts. Persons tend to select facts that confirm their attitudes. People also tend to protect their own attitudes by rationalising facts that are in conflict with their attitudes. They tend to provide motivations why corruptive actions can be tolerated. If this argument is applied to corruption within a liberal democratic society, it means that people will always try to rationalise why they are committing corruption. Behind this phenomenon lies the battlefield of attitudes. People, even Christians, have attitudes that lean towards corruption. Christians also have blind spots in their workplaces with regard to their attitudes. It is always easier to point the finger to other people's mistakes and sins but very difficult to understand your own attitudes.

The influence of attitudes in all spheres of life

Vorster reasons that the main task of the Church regarding social problems lies within the domain of ethics and, when dealing with the problem of corruption, the Church (a community of believers) can apply three specific strategies to assist in combating this social problem of corruption in South Africa:

- Raise awareness of the problem. With its strong influence in most spheres of the South African society, the Church can emphasise

the fact that corruption is wrong. Attitudes based on negative aspects such as greed, nepotism, careerism, favouritism and exploitation can then be shown as morally untenable and as socially destructive.

- Address the underlying attitude of self-interest. In a culture of corruption the promotion of servanthood, imbedded in the imitation of Christ (Phlp 2:7), is important. The Church should teach people that self-interest has limits and that servanthood is the moral directive in interpersonal relations. A true servant will serve the community without attitudes of greed and self-enrichment.

- A call for an attitude of social justice. Though it is not the task of the Church to accept responsibility for other social spheres such as civil societies, trade unions, political parties or the government, it should act as a watchdog – taking care of the poor and the marginalised and being the custodian of truth, honesty, fairness and compassion. By doing this, the Church can be deeply involved in combating corruption because they are dealing with the root causes of the problem when focussing on underlying attitudes (Vorster 2011:13–19).

Ballard and Pritchard add that at least six modes or spheres are directly influenced by attitudes, namely:

- The cognitive sphere. People are constantly receiving information that influences their lives. Attitudes are strengthened by information they receive on a daily basis (cf. Kruger 2002:115). Communication via preaching, catechetics, pastoral care, liturgy and mission are, therefore, important building blocks in the forming of attitudes by providing information about God's plan

for this world and the importance of the workplace. It is important to understand that attitudes are learned. People have to, therefore, learn the right attitudes regarding corruption.

- The affective sphere. People have emotions (attitudes) based on their daily experiences. Exposure to corruption or to the effects of corruption can influence someone's emotions. Persons are emotionally involved in what is happening in society and at their workplaces. People tend to have a specific (positive or negative) feeling for someone or towards something that makes them react in a certain way.

- The behavioural sphere. When people are exposed to individuals who suffer because of the effects of corruption, exposure can lead to a change in behaviour. People's attitudes normally lead to intentions, or even resolutions, on how to handle certain situations. When people are exposed to the fact that corruption is the easiest way to enrich yourself and that there is no commitment from government to combat corruption, this attitude can lead to doing what others do.

- The interpersonal sphere. People are exposed to other people. They should learn on a daily basis how to handle themselves in their workplaces, in society or in corruptive situations. Christians are often challenged with difficult choices. They have to choose between the options of being a whistle-blower against corrupt actions or turning their heads away from corruption and concentrating on their own responsibilities. Christians can become escapists of reality or can even become cynical because of their daily interactions with corrupt people. They can even withdraw from society. This withdrawal from society can create an even deeper chasm between the world and the Church of today.

Realisation of the importance of the *Missio Dei* can prevent believers from becoming escapists in the midst of corruption. Christians proclaiming the message of God are moving on in this world and are taking care of this world by proclaiming that corrupt people must keep the presence of God in mind. Language like 'they' against 'us' cannot be part of the communication used by Christians. To act as a whistle-blower against corruption is part of witnessing. People should be aware of God's kingdom and his values.

- The social and political sphere. People often tend to regard themselves as mere observers of societal and political tendencies. The realisation that they are part of a community with societal and political responsibilities can lead to a change in attitude. Christians often tend to withdraw themselves from societal and political issues. Stott (1999:4) expresses his concern about the possibility that even believers dare to wonder whether they have a social responsibility or not. On the contrary, in all aspects of ministry that include the prophetic voice of the Church, there should always be a clear vision of what to do in social and political spheres. Believers should spread the message of the *Missio Dei,* and they should do it with their words (witnessing) and also with their deeds (service). The *Missio Dei* must be heard within social and political spheres. If God is moving in this world, his children must join him.

- The spiritual sphere. Spiritual maturity empowers people to live with vision and propels them towards reformation of all things that contaminate human life. Spiritual maturity helps people to engage in human lives to fulfil the mission of God in this world and believers should actively participate. The other side of the

coin could also be stated. Corrupt practices can lead to serious questions about faith and justice in this world. This approach can be viewed as a process in which people are trying to figure out why people are doing what they do while trying to make sense of it all (Fiske 2004:79). The implication of this process, especially when it derails, is that it can lead to hopelessness and even to a critical self-reflection about the essence of faith and preaching. Attitudes towards corruption are definitely asking serious questions about faith in the lives of people. People want to understand the purpose of life (Ballard & Pritchard 2006: 166–167).

Persuasive communication can alter people's lives by changing their attitudes

Attitudes can be changed, either affectively or cognitively (Fiske 2004:230). Bergh and Theron (2008:175) highlight the fact that attitude change can be the result of changes in individuals' cognitive processes or in their behaviour. This means that individuals can become active agents in attitude change. Change can also be induced by external factors when people are the recipients of messages via persuasive communication that can change their attitudes (Schwartz & De La Rey 2007:277).

Cognitive dissonance as an imbalance between two or more types of cognition in people's lives

Cognition constitutes the process by which people think about and make sense of themselves, other people and social situations (Fiske 2004:122). People are constantly forming impressions about other

people's personalities, emotions, roles and identities on the basis of what they observe. Kruger (2015:15) indicates that cognition determines the way in which hearers listen to messages and influences their participation during worship services. Experiences with corrupt colleagues, relationships with neighbours, circumstances and events in civil society can all contribute to the reforming, or toleration, of existing attitudes. Cognitive dissonance occurs when tension manifests because there is an imbalance between cognition and actions (Bergh & Theron 2008:175). An imbalance results in disappointment because there is no harmony between the beliefs (attitudes) and the behaviour of people. When applied to the research focus of this chapter, it means that people are trying to make sense of other people and their actions. Cognitive dissonance occurs when people are meeting other people where corruption is evident, for example in a boardroom or in their workplaces. Believers are faced with ethical and/or moral choices with regard to their actions because corruption is sinful and wrong. Should they become voiceless as the majority of people (perhaps the easiest path to follow) or should they become whistle-blowers who can lose their jobs because of the fact that they do not tolerate corruptive practices?

Receivers of messages during worship services and witnessing conversations are often in the midst of their cognition clashing with corruption, and they experience dissonance in their lives. Some people tend to reduce dissonance and others not (Schwartz & De La Rey 2007:276). Why? This process has to do with rewards in the midst of dissonance. If rewards are high enough or important enough, individuals might decide to tolerate dissonance by committing corruption, or they may decide to reduce dissonance

(Woolfolk 2007:41). No one can live unchanged or without cognitive dissonance when listening to the message of the Word.

When applied to a South African context with immense problems– crime, corruption, poverty, poor service delivery and moral decline – it is often easier for preachers to act like the prophet Jonah with his adversarial approach towards engaging culture (Buchanan 2012:20). If truth is not spoken in the right tone, like the prophet Daniel does for instance, it can become a falsehood (Buchanan 2012:26). Barrera (2011:17) is correct when stating that persons who speak about the message of God's presence in this world must recognise the fact that the world of work and business and the sphere of worship must never be torn apart. Religion and work should form a seamless unity. Proclaiming the Word (preaching, witnessing and communication) should appeal to the correct kind of cognitive dissonance, namely, that no work position or business is just a job. God has a plan with our work. He can even reach other people by using his children in their workplaces. We are not working because of benefits or pay cheques (Sherman & Hendricks 1987:42). Our attitude towards work and maintaining good ethics in our workplace is meaningful to God, and it also contributes to a kind of cognition that is meaningful to society. Both believers and non-believers are experiencing cognition of each other. Corrupt practices of persons who are calling themselves Christians are creating a distortion in the cognition of the world towards Christianity.

The act of persuasive communication

Cleary (2010:164) regards persuasive communication as an effective manner to change attitudes. The process in which an

attitude is influenced (change) is called persuasion (Tubbs & Moss 2008:29). Persuasive communication is highly effective when relationships between people are in good order (Bergh & Theron 2008:180). The Church should use opportunities to build good relationships with all people in society. That will be a real turnaround strategy, namely to realise that each local congregation is not just a mere address in the community but a power station of communication. To be part of a local community and to live amongst people in a community entails sharing in the reality, but it also entails being distributors of the message of healing communities that must endure the pain that corruption causes. Local congregations of all denominations should demonstrate their unity by being satellites of these power stations. In order to persuade people through persuasive communication, preachers have to arouse emotions that will motivate hearers to do what the Word of God says.

The essence of persuasive messages is a definite attempt to not evoke negative emotions regarding the content of the message, but to evoke positive emotions towards God that are breaking through in this world (Tubbs & Moss 2008:480). The goal of persuasive messages is to equip hearers to act the message of hope in their daily lives and to convey this message to others. De Wet and Kruger (2013:13) indicate that persuasion and manipulation should not be intertwined. Cilliers (2000:17) is correct in indicating that it is not just mere proclaiming of the Word of God that can contribute towards an attitude change with regard to corruption. Any proclaimer or preacher who does not believe that the Word of God came to change people's lives (*sermo Dei venit*

mutaturus), will experience trouble with his or her own attitudes. To proclaim in a persuasive manner within the South African context entails an awareness that attitude change with regard to corruption will not necessarily happen overnight. To preach within local churches and to witness in local communities is part of a bigger task of reconstructing civil society and equipping hearers to act against corruption. To speak in a persuasive manner is to proclaim God's voice on immorality and corruption in society and is an attempt to take the first step in the reconstruction of attitudes in South Africa regarding corruption. The challenge to all preachers and proclaimers is to do it with a positive attitude and according to the attitude (mind) of Christ (Cilliers 2000:17–18).

Normative perspectives on persuasive communication

In this subsection the author will provide research on the following three aspects that will contribute to a normative overview on the problematic praxis before practical-theological perspectives will be provided:

- Perspectives on the shalom of the city (Jr 29:7).
- Perspectives on the attitude of Christ (Phlp 2:5–11).
- Perspectives on the *Missio Dei*.

Perspectives on the shalom of the city (Jr 29:7)

Bakke (1997:85) highlights the fact that the message of Jeremiah 29:7 stands in sharp contrast to the opinion that was evident during the time of Jeremiah. The exile of Judah was not the end but the beginning

of a new era. Manser (2010:1142) indicates that God demanded, therefore, that the people have to make a new home in exile, they should marry their loved ones and also raise their children. The people should act the same way they would have acted in their own homeland. Gornik (2002:101) describes the command of Jeremiah 29:7 and states the importance of not withdrawing from society. The concept of shalom is used to denote a normal and peaceful life in society (Barton 2002:450). Keller also underlines the fact that the people received a demand, namely to promote the interests of the city. Greenway and Mashau (2007:42) further express the idea that shalom should be guarded so that nothing would endanger the wholeness of the city. The community of believers (church) exert themselves to tell other people of this wholeness (shalom) and also to live according to the joy of this wholeness (Greenway & Mashau 2007:43).

The importance of prayer is evident in this passage (Jenni & Westermann 1984:459). To ask or to request for the shalom of the city also means that the wholeness of the city should be portrayed by a deep and wholehearted attitude. Barton (2002:447) highlights the promise that believers will find peace in the shalom of the city. The concept of shalom is comprehensive. It indicates the importance of health, solid relationships and good order displayed in society (Pop 1964:547). Shalom manifests itself in the manner in which people are interacting (Kruger 2015:14). Believers must pray for the shalom of the city to be able to worship God within an atmosphere of wholeness because then our relationship with God is in order according to his Word. To pray for the shalom of the city is also to pray that God's kingdom should

come to South Africa in workplaces and our society so that corruption can be rooted out. Preaching has to illustrate this perspective to people in South Africa: There can be no real shalom without a reconciled relationship with God and also amongst people in our country.

Buys (2013:78) highlights an important aspect, namely, that only justice can produce real shalom. The Church as a community of believers should reach out to those that are victims of injustice. As long as there is no justice because of corruption, there cannot be wholeness (shalom) in any country (Buys 2013:79). Shalom entails peace where everyone and everything are operating in sound relationships under the authority of God and where people are living peace in their relationships, their work and how they use money (Cassidy 2006:157). To witness in society is to give voice to God's plan for wholeness and, therefore, preaching should also provide perspectives on the responsibility people have for establishing wholeness in societies.

Action against corruption should start with a change of attitude. A change in attitude would open our eyes to the injustice of corruption and we would appreciate the importance of what wholeness entails. What kind of attitude is God expecting from his children in society? Corrupt people profit from corruption, whilst other people are disadvantaged in the process. By seeking the wholeness of the city is to speak and testify about God's concern for this world (*Missio Dei*). The attitude of believers should become evident in their words and deeds of prophetic discernment. To seek peace for the city should be the driving force behind speaking openly and wholeheartedly against the destruction that corruption brings. Corruption is the manifestation of attitudes that endangers the wholeness of society.

▌Perspectives on the attitude of Christ (Phlp 2:5–11)

Botha (1991:48) indicates that this hymn about the attitude of Christ (Phlp 2:5–11) is structurally placed within the context of liturgy and worship because it was originally part of the liturgy of believers. To act according to the attitude (mind) of Christ is something that should be practiced during worship services in order to participate in daily life. In Philippians 1:29, the expression το ὑπὲρ χριϲτοῦ [on behalf of Christ] further underlines the importance of the liturgical functioning of this hymn. This expression, on behalf of Christ, is an indication that nobody is living for themselves. The lives of God's children should be characterised by having communion with the Holy Spirit, and their lives should be devoted to God (Botha 1991:48). It is, therefore, important that God's children should be aware of the presence of greed and ambitious attitudes that can bring about the promotion of the self. Humbleness stands in direct contrast to an attitude of greed.

In Philippians 2:5–6a a demand is found. The same mind set (attitude) should be present in the followers of Christ because we are made in the form of God. Janson (2003:96–97) finds the choice of the concept of μορφῇ [form] very interesting. This concept refers to the fact that Christ was really God. Although he was truly God, he took the form of a bond servant and became a man. The concept of μορφῇ is used once again. Jesus fully embraced being a man. In becoming a man, he literally emptied himself. He came to serve as man and not God (Phlp 2:6). The concept of ἁρπαγμὸν is striking in this context. This concept denotes something of a predator stalking its prey. Jesus does not act like a predator (Janson 2003:99).

The same mind set (attitude) of Christ should be part of the lives of believers. People should learn to be followers and not predators. This mind set or attitude is the result of a life in communion with Christ (Botha 1991:49). God bestows his children with wonderful gifts and in turn they worship and glorify God in this hymn. His grace and love for us should be clear in liturgy and, through our participation, the same mind set (attitude) as Christ should be visible. Participation in liturgy during worship services should move believers to make the mind set (attitude) of Christ part of their lives. This is the true essence of transformation and reconstruction. Believers should become more and more like Christ in their deeds and actions.

The *Missio Dei* as dynamo in persuasive communication

God's mission has its origin in the heart of God because God is the fountain who pours out love (Ott & Strauss 2010:61). This mission is God's own undertaking and the mission of the Church is to participate in God's mission (Ott & Strauss 2010:62). The concept of mission is first of all something that has to be understood in the light of the triune God. The Father sent his Son to this world, the Father and the Son sent the Holy Spirit to dwell and live in people, and the spirit is now making our mission in this world possible. Achtemeier (2007:207) compares the joining of Christians in God's mission to a colony of heaven. God has a kingdom and he wants this kingdom to come to earth. God is sending his small colony of believers to live and proclaim the life of the kingdom of God in their current lives. Proclaimers of the Word are mere forerunners of the message of the

kingdom of God that is still coming. Reeder (2008:128) warns local churches that without a clearly defined mission and vision about God's kingdom, churches will surely decline and neglect their responsibilities to society.

The fact that God is allowing his children to participate in his mission illustrates the importance of the position God gave to his Church. The need for proclaiming and ministry stays the same through the centuries, but what is God expecting from ministers and local churches within their communities? To speak persuasively with the concept of *Missio Dei* as driving thrust, to proclaim the truth of the Word and to create opportunities to listen in a priestly manner (attitude) to people in the community to hear their stories (Reeder 2008:129). Pieterse (2001a:93) adds that it is important for all preachers to develop solidarity with their hearers. The first important step is to embrace all forms of media. Christians should read their newspapers with the intention to come into closer contact with people around them and their circumstances to convey messages that are understood by hearers. Purposeful liturgy and purposeful preaching is a dynamic interchange between text and context, and should always be contextualised to daily life (Ott & Strauss 2010:284). If preachers and Christians speak about issues that people do not find significant, or if questions and problems in society such as corruption are ignored, people will start to question the relevance of these messages.

The values of God's kingdom should be proclaimed and where this happens, human kingdoms and practises, such as corruption, will be challenged (Stott 1999:73). The gospel should be preached

not only during worship services but also in wider circles to create an antiseptic atmosphere in which selfishness, injustice, greed and corruption find it hard to flourish (Stott 1999:80). The gospel, through the powerful work of the Spirit, can change the minds, hearts and attitudes of people. The living proclamation of the gospel can change cultures. Our participation in God's mission is to convey this message of God to all people. Social and economic programmes depend on good values and sound attitudes to sustain the right ethics. Long and Tubbs-Tisdale (2008:90) indicate that no local church can function in complete isolation of society. Local congregations should function within local communities. Herrington, Greech and Taylor (2003:30) describe this reality as 'our wired togetherness'. To proclaim with the driving thrust of the *Missio Dei* is also to realise the importance of what it means to be the body of Christ within your community. Greenway and Mashau (2007:2) are correct in assuming that churches should learn to focus on all available opportunities to proclaim and to live the Word of God and to utilise these opportunities to become witnesses of the reality of God's kingdom within their immediate communities. God is sending his Church through his spirit to the world to announce that he is really the Lord. He provided his children with his Word and its truth should be shared in the midst of corruption in workplaces and in society.

■ Practical-theological perspectives

The following practical-theological perspectives can be derived from the discussion above:

- God is the main reality in the universe, the sustaining power of everything that is (Piper 2012:15). If the phenomenon of corruption is treated without any relation to God all attempts are superficial. The mission of God (*Missio Dei*) should be of the utmost importance when proclaiming the Word of God for people to realise God's plan for their lives and their work. This means that persuasive communication can help people to change their interior maps and not just their behaviour. Hearers should understand that they are participating in God's mission in this world. Ministering should edify hearers to retell this message to become aware of the essence of liturgy in life. They should come to a new understanding of themselves in this world and especially of what God is doing through them in people's lives. Through persuasive communication hearers should realise that the question is not why corruption is taking place, but rather what is God's purpose with Christians in South Africa.

- Mission is work that belongs to God (Ott & Strauss 2010:75). This fact opens the realisation that the Church is part of something bigger. The Church is actually God's instrument in the salvation of history. Through our existence and proclamation of the Word we are called to become participants in God's mission: we must speak and act against corruption. Christians do not have to be ashamed of the gospel. Salvation is for everyone who believes. Doxology is, therefore, the highest purpose of the church mission and eschatology is the hope for fulfilling this mission. To communicate, witness and proclaim entails being part of God's mission.

- Spreading the gospel to all nations is the assignment to be fulfilled in anticipation of Christ's return and should provide meaning in the time between the first and last coming of Christ. People should be invited to enter the kingdom of God by proclaiming the Word of God and through manifestations of ministry. We have to act as prophets. Pieterse formulates the following guidelines for prophetic preaching that edifies people to communicate persuasively in the midst of corruption:
  - During prophetic preaching, preachers become mouthpieces of the dynamic acting and moving of God.
  - During prophetic preaching, preachers interpret the crisis in society with a critical but creative touch in view of the promises in God's Word in order to open new and inventive options to hearers.
  - Prophetic preaching demands a prophetic style with a close relation between courage and compassion for the world. Prophetic preaching is not an attempt to make believers afraid of the reality to send hearers back to the reality with a new perspective on how to act (Pieterse 2001b:95).
- Prophetic preaching critically proclaims the biblical message in a society that tends to deviate from its God-given form and destiny. Prophetic preaching equips Christians to radiate the light of the kingdom of heaven and its righteousness to reveal and energise with the aim of refocusing the world to a restored relationship with God (De Wet & Kruger 2013:17). Christians should communicate in a persuasive manner to convey the message of prophetic preaching in their workplaces and in all spheres of society. To speak in a persuasive manner is also to join in this movement of God that is moving through this world.

- Persuasive communication entails that proclaimers should explore their own attitudes and also the attitudes of the hearers living in society. It is important that hearers understand the importance of changing their own attitudes in the light of the living proclamation of the Word of God. It is true that people can change their lives by faithfully (through the powerful work of the spirit) altering their attitudes. This will also contribute to the willingness to proclaim God's Word in their workplaces and in the communities they are living in.

- *Societas* or true *communitas* with people in society is needed. Hearers have to realise that it is not 'us' against 'the world' but rather 'us in the world'. Stott (2008:68) accentuates the importance of showing the world that the proclamation of the Word changes the lives of believers. Confession should not be contradicted by wrong attitudes and habits. Without showing the world that believers are caring for them, the testimony of believers will become irrelevant. In any testimony a pastoral attitude of 'I really care' should be evident. This also includes the awareness of being present in a diaconal attitude, in other words consciously practicing *diakonia*.

- People have to understand that their attitudes in their workplaces matter. This includes their conduct and how they view their work. To work and to work faithfully implies that the biggest motivation of work should be to serve God (Cassidy 2006:169). Work is also worship and, therefore, a liturgy for workplaces is needed by everyone. In order to do that, Godly attitudes are needed (Cassidy 2006:173). We should become more and more like Christ. This attitude should be applied in our workplaces to help society to glorify God and their understanding of Christianity.

- Christians are obliged to realise their responsibility to pray and work for the shalom of the city. To experience real peace, it is important to have a good relationship with God and people.
- All believers should start to change their attitudes to act against corruption. The Word of God is powerful and it is our responsibility to convey this powerful message to the people in our workplaces and to people in society. Everyone should know that God is the God of gods and the king of kings. Without understanding the urgency of the concept of the *Missio Dei*, persuasive messages can become one-sided and manipulative in essence.

◼ Conclusion

Right at the beginning of this chapter it was mentioned that people often spoke of turnaround strategies. During this discussion, it became clear that no turnaround strategy implemented by the government or in the Church will ever be effective enough if it does not address the attitudes of people with regard to societal issues. There cannot be any turnaround strategies without changing people's attitude concerning the *Missio Dei*. God is already achieving wonderful things in South Africa, and his plan involves placing his followers as proclaimers in their workplaces. By making use of persuasive communication as part of God's mission and by implementing tools, such as ministry, people will be equipped to become more and more like Christ. Now is the time to act. Attitudes should change, and the voice of God's followers has to be heard in the anticipation of the Lord's final coming. That is the essence of a real turnaround strategy.

A social movement against corruption in the footsteps of Jesus' *diakonia* according to Matthew

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Introduction

From the empirical research it became clear that the interviewees were of the opinion that nothing less than a social movement is necessary to stem corruption (Ch. 7). Jesus Christ started a social movement with his teachings and with what he did (Hamd 2013).

Cities and countries were changed for the good by his followers who walked in his footsteps (the footsteps of his teachings and the example he set) (Ac 1–7,19). Whilst the Holy Spirit regenerates hearts and brings people to serve God so that his kingdom comes into their hearts and lives, their conduct can also change society. The main purpose of Jesus' coming to earth was the coming of God's kingdom. As the Church grew out of his work the believers also became the salt and light that had an enormous impact on society. In Ephesians 1 it is stated that God wants to bring all things together under the reign of Jesus Christ. Vorster (2015) is of the opinion that:

> … a theology of the kingdom of God and the reign of Christ can lay the foundation for sound and effective civil action by churches and Christians in cooperation with secular civil societies and other religions. (p. 2)

Welker (2013:209) says that God reveals his loving, preserving and salvific presence through Jesus, through the work of the Holy Spirit and also in and through the church. The church should, therefore, in the first instance proclaim the redemption of sin, repentance and the renewal of life and not only attend to the needs of the world. This stands over and above the theology that declares that the church should only act as a moral agent and proclaims only peace, reconciliation and righteousness (Vorster 2014:15).

The purpose of this chapter is to trace the footsteps and teachings of Jesus as it is recorded in the Gospel of Matthew. The focus will be on Jesus' *diakonia* as it is described in Matthew 20:28. This verse will be analysed in its immediate context as well as in the context of the whole Gospel of Matthew. The research question is, therefore,

'What would a social movement against corruption involve if it is to follow in the footsteps of Jesus' *diakonia* according to Matthew?'

To answer this question, answers to the following questions should be found:

- What is Jesus's *diakonia* in light of the 'I have (not) come to' sayings in Matthew?
- What should the the *diakonia* of Jesus' disciples be in light of Matthew 19 and 20?
- How can a social movement against corruption in the footsteps of Jesus' *diakonia* be started in South Africa?

This chapter wants to examine the meaning of the word group as used by Matthew, especially in Matthew 20. The exegesis of this pericope will transpire taking into account the context of Chapter 20 and the specific verses within this Gospel. The results of the exegesis will be used to try and contribute to the search for a solution for corruption in South Africa.

What is Jesus's *diakonia* in light of the 'I have (not) come to' sayings in Matthew?

All four of the Gospels use the *diakon* word group – Matthew 20:26–28; Mark 10:43–45; Luke 22:26,27; John 12:26 – at the turning point in their respective narratives where Jesus had just finished his public ministry and his death on the cross became inevitable (Mt 20; Mk 10; Lk 22:1–46; Jn 12). According to all four Gospels, Jesus used the *diakon* word group to teach the disciples what their ministry should be like, and Jesus described his own ministry with the aid of the *diakon* word group (Breed 2014a; 2015b). He also urged his disciples

to follow him in his way of ministry. In all four Gospels the *daikon* saying is surrounded by Jesus' predictions of his coming suffering, death and resurrection. Breed has already investigated the meaning of the *diakon* word group in the Gospels of Mark and John. In both these Gospels the authors each emphasised a unique part of Jesus' and the disciples' *diakonia*.

Matthew is called the ecclesiastical Gospel (Viljoen 2009:651) and the Gospel of the Church (Gundry 2000:153, 154). The Gospel of Matthew is shaped with the church in mind and exercised a normative influence on the development of the church specifically in that point of time (Sundquist 1983:336–342). Viljoen (2009:652) described the relationship between the Gospel of Matthew and the people for whom it was written by saying that the story of Jesus and his disciples includes the story of the faith community from where the Gospel originated.

The statement in Matthew 20:28 where the purpose of Jesus' coming to earth is described with the *diakon* word group, is one of seven similar statements in Matthew. In all seven statements the word ερχομαι [come] is used. In each of the seven Jesus himself is speaking in the narrative and he is expressing the purpose of his coming to earth.

Based on his research on these seven statements, Carter (1998:47) concluded that these statements are closely related to the initial statement in Matthew 1:21–23 regarding the objectives of Jesus' coming to earth (cf. Van Aarde 2003:454). From this original statement it is clear that Jesus was sent by the Father with two objectives, namely to bring salvation (as verbalised by the name

TABLE 9: Themes in the context of the 'I came [not] to' statements.

Theme	Matthew 5	Matthew 9	Matthew 10	Matthew 20
Kingdom	5:17–21	9:8, 35	10:7	20:1–16, 21–28
Mercy	5:7, 41–48	9:13, 36	10:5–8	20:1–15, 30–34
Proclaiming/ Confessing	5:10–16	9:37, 38	10:1–11	
Sacrifice	5:28–30, 38–44	9:15b	10:37–42	20:22–28
Judgement/ Accountability	5:13, 19, 20, 30	9:2, 5–6	10:12–1, 32–42	20:16
Persecution	5:10–12	9:3, 11, 34	10:16–19, 21–26	20:18, 19

Jesus) and to realise the presence of God (as expressed by the name Immanuel) (Carter 1998:48).

From an initial survey it became clear that certain themes are repeated in the contexts within which these seven statements stand. These themes are summed up in the following way:

Anderson showed how Matthew used many doublet and triplet stories in his plot (see also Anderson 1994:43–45), and she came to the following conclusion (Anderson 1985):

> We have seen that double and triple stories play an integral role in the development of plot and character in the Gospel of Matthew. The repetition of a similar episode is not merely an additional episode. It has a powerful rhetorical effect in which anticipation and retrospection and repetition with variation are involved. There is a complex texture of interlocking echoes forcing the implied reader to read one episode in the light of the other. The contexts in which the stories reverberate contribute to their effect. (p. 82)

Burnett wrote about the 'redundancy' in Matthew. He said (Burnett 1985):

> 'Redundancy' refers to the probability of occurrence for a signal or group of signals. The Matthean text is redundant on both the story and discourse levels … The overall effect of redundancies on the implied reader, though, is to create a narrative world in which stability is primary. Everything in Matthew's narrative world occurs as the unfolding of the plan of God … (p. 91)

In light of the repetition of themes in the context of these seven 'I came (not) to' sayings (see Figure 9), both Anderson's and Burnett's conclusions can be applied to Matthew's use of the 'I came (not) to' sayings. It can then be deduced that the final statement in Matthew 20:28 can be seen as the converging point of the six preceding objectives and as the summation of the objective of his coming to earth. By investigating Matthew 20:28 in light of the foregoing 'I came (not) to' sayings a contribution can be made to the understanding of what the *diakonia* of Jesus entails.

The passages where the first six 'I came (not) to' sayings are found will now be investigated, and we will try to determine how these sayings contribute to the understanding of Matthew 20:28.

☐ Matthew 5:17

We find the first two 'I came (not) to' statements in Matthew 5:17:

5:17a: Μη νομίσητε οτι ήλθον καταλϋσαι τον νόμον ή τους προφήτας.
[Do not think I have come to destroy the law and the prophets]
5:17b: Ουκ ήλθον καταλϋσαι άλλα πληρώσαι.
[I have not come to destroy but to fulfil]

What Jesus teaches may sound like he wanted to destroy the law because it radically differed from what the Pharisees taught out of the law (cf. Van Aarde 2003:457). With what he said here he brought out the radical and true meaning of the law of God. In contrast to the

teachings of the Pharisees, he pointed out that they were the ones who were destroying the law by their teachings and the way they lived their lives (Evans 2012:106). Davies and Allison (2004:481) are of the opinion that the purpose of μὴ νομίσητε [not think] is 'to counter false assumptions or misunderstandings about Jesus' coming'.

Jesus rather affirmed his agreement with the law but (Bonhoeffer 2015):

> he makes it perfectly clear that he, the Son of God, is the Author and Giver of the law. Only those who apprehend the law as the word of Christ, are in a position to fulfil it. (p. 79)

The opposite of 'destroy' is, therefore, not 'confirm' or 'enforce', but 'fulfil' because he is the Messiah fulfilling the Old Testament's expectations (Viljoen 2005:6,7). Matthew, by setting this teaching of Jesus on the mountain, also challenged Israel to see in Jesus' teaching 'the authentic interpretation of God's will, revealed in the Torah' (Harrington 1991:82; cf. Volschenk 2003:1015). With this action, Matthew affirmed an organic relation between Jesus' teachings and the Torah. This relation can be expressed as fulfilment (Mt 5:17; Harrington 1991:83). Seen in the context of Matthew 20:28, fulfilling the law was, therefore, part of Jesus' *diakonia*. He came not to be served but to serve. By fulfilling the law, he did what no other man could do – he was obedient to God in every aspect of the law. Every single person who believes in him has part in his obedience and can stand without blame before God. Moreover, they can be sure that every promise of God in his Word is true and certain. Every single person who believes in him will be saved (cf. Van Aarde 2009:7,8). Jesus' *diakonia*, in fulfilling the law, opened the way for 'a new Israel

coming to head in the new Moses who teaches a new Torah for the new Israel' (France 2007:11–14, 182–184).

After each of the 'I have come' statements, Matthew provided an application of that particular purpose of Jesus' coming to earth (cf. Van Aarde 2009:4). With the aid of these applications, Jesus told his disciples what this new teaching would mean for their way of living (Troftgruben 2013:389). In this instance (Mt 5), the implications of these applications with regard to the disciples are given in five so-called antitheses. These five prescriptions for practical lives led by the disciples were introduced by the following words: 'For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven' (Mt 5:20).

Viljoen (2009:664) pointed out that the δικαιοσύνη [righteousness] in Matthew was the result of obedience to God's will as revealed in his law. This righteousness was then described by Jesus in his five antitheses. These antitheses cannot, however, be discussed here but what is important for this book is that Jesus challenged the accepted interpretation and practical applications of the law (cf. Meiring 2012). Jesus came to earth to interpret and live the law so that the wrong way should be clear to his disciples, and that they would be able to understand the real meaning of the law which differed radically from the interpretation of the law by the Pharisees. Viljoen (2011:404) summed it up by saying that individuals are brought before a decision to continue with the way the law was observed as described via the traditions, 'thereby ignoring the fulfilment of the law and the prophets', or individuals can accept the interpretation of Jesus as the true intention of the law and submit themselves to his authority.

All the antitheses are about the disciples' relationships with other people and especially their relationships with people from 'outside' and end with these two questions (Mt 5):

> For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? And if you greet only your brothers, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? (vv. 46–47)

These two questions appear between the two statements (Mt 5:45,48) about their Father who 'makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust' (Mt 5:45) 'and who is perfect as they should be perfect' (Mt 5:48). In Jesus' disciples there was a new openness towards other people and especially towards outsiders. They were looking at other people through the eyes of the Father who gives his love even to the evil and the unjust. This new attitude towards people prompted the disciples to be good to other people when no one was expecting this behaviour. The Father became the standard to strive for. In the parable of the workers (Mt 20:1–15), the landowner who displayed generosity towards those who did not deserve it also became the one to follow, and in 20:28 Jesus becomes the one to follow because of his *diakonia* (cf. Keener 2009:205).

Volschenk (2003:1014) indicated the theme of Matthew 5 as teaching about righteousness.

☐ Matthew 9:13

The third 'I came (not) to' statement is found in Matthew 9:13 and can be divided into three parts (Ottenheijm 2011:1):

πορευθέντες δὲ μάθετε

[having gone however learned]

τί ἐστιν ἔλεον θέλω καὶ οὐ θυσίαν.

[what is Mercy I desire and not sacrifice]

οὐ γὰρ ἦλθον καλέσαι δικαίους, ἀλλὰ ἁμαρτωλοὺς εἰς μετάνοιαν.

[not for I came to call (the) righteous but sinners]

This specific verse can be seen as the summary of all that is described in this chapter. Jesus healed and Jesus called. He healed and called to people who were despised by the Pharisees. Nolland (2005:387) is of the opinion that the calling of sinners in Matthew 9:13 echoes the call of Matthew in verse 9. He fulfilled the law (Mt 5:17) not by isolating himself from sinners but by reaching out to them. 'In his concern with the restoration of Israel Jesus will focus on where there is an obvious need for restoration' (Nolland 2005:387).

In this chapter, five healings performed by Jesus are recorded. He was twice accused by the Pharisees and twice he had to answer questions about the way he and his disciples conducted themselves. Jesus' answers to these two questions form the central pillar of the chapter. The one answer points to the objective of Jesus' coming to earth: to help people in need and not as the Pharisees thought he should act by shunning them (Keener 2009:296–297). The answer to the second question points to the impossibility for Jesus' disciples living as if he, the bridegroom, was not with them anymore. For them it was impossible to try and fit this new era that started with the coming of Jesus into the old moulds of the Pharisees' explanation of the law of God (Keener 2009:300–301).

Jesus' authority was questioned twice at the end of the chapter and affirmed by his deeds. In both these instances, the faith of the people

that came to him is stressed (Thompson 1971:375; Van Zyl 2012:1). The chapter ends with the recording of Jesus' compassion for the helpless crowds. His answer to their need was the command that the disciples should pray to the Lord of the harvest to send labourers into the harvest because the harvest is plentiful and the labourers few.

It can be deduced from the above-mentioned summary of the chapter that the sentence that can be the closest linked to the 'I came to' sayings should be taken into account when explaining the meaning of these sayings. Because Jesus came to call (invite) (Hare 2009:101) sinners and to heal the sick, he expected from his disciples to show mercy and not just to bring sacrifices without love. This command of Jesus to go and learn what it means to show mercy to people is closely related to the one other command (in this pericope) to his disciples to pray for labourers in the harvest (Evans 2012:203).

The second 'I came to' saying is closely related to the first one. In the second one, Jesus was doing exactly what the law demanded (fulfilling the law), that is to love your neighbour (in need) as you love yourself (Hare 2009:102) and to have compassion for those in need (Keener 2009:308,309).

☐ Matthew 10:34–35

The next three 'I came (not) to' statements are found in Matthew 10:34–35:

10:34a: Μη νομίσητε ὅτι ἦλθον βαλεῖν εἰρήνην ἐπί τήν γήν.

[not Think that I came to bring peace to the earth]

10:34b: Ουκ ἦλθον βαλεῖν εἰρήνην ἀλλά μάχαιραν.

[not I came to bring peace but a sword]

10:35: Ἦλθον γαρ διχάσαι άνθρωπον κατά του πατρός αυτού και θυγατέρα κατά της μητρός αυτής και νύμφην κατά της πενθερας αυτής.

[I came for to set at variance a man against the Father of him and a daughter against the mother of her and a daughter-in-law against the mother-in-law of her]

'The ties that bind are relativized in favour of a newly found, more fundamental tie' (Nolland 2005:441). Chapter 10 starts where Chapter 9 ended, that is with the labourers in the harvest (Charette 1990:31). In Chapter 10, the disciples were identified as the labourers and Jesus taught them how they should go about their task. He also prepared them for the reaction of people when delivering their message and what the fate of those who rejected the message (rejecting Jesus and his Father) will be. He also comforted them with the knowledge of the companionship of the Holy Spirit and the fact that they did not have to fear because nothing could have happened to them without the will of their Father in heaven. But Jesus told them that he did not come to bring peace on earth. He brought the sword. The sword is the words of Jesus that the disciples had to convey to people, the content of the words was the confession of Jesus as Lord and Saviour. This sword can divide people in the closest relationships (Nolland 2005:441; cf. Hare 2009:117; Keener 2009:330). These words bring people before a choice. They have to choose Jesus as their highest price for who they should be prepared to sacrifice everything else (Lange & Schaff 2008:198). If they are not prepared to choose Jesus, and are ashamed of Jesus, Jesus will also deny them before his Father. Whoever is prepared to let go of self-interest and the drive to provide for

themselves will find new life in Jesus. People who lose their lives to live in Jesus will be one with him so that people who receive individuals who come in the name of Jesus will receive the reward of the righteous, and those who care for the little ones because they are disciples of Jesus will not lose their reward. The little ones are 'those who became like children – the epitome of dependence and powerlessness in antiquity' (Keener 2009:331). The emphasis in this chapter is on the disciples as labourers in the harvest, the dividing effect of the message, the persecution that the labourers could expect, the care and companionship of the Father and the Holy Spirit and of being one with Christ and receiving respect as representatives of Jesus. In the previous chapters where the 'I came (not) to' sayings are recorded, this chapter also places emphasis on mercy to the undeserving and giving water to the little ones (Hare 2009:119). Nolland (2005:446) mentioned that Matthew combined 'authentic Christian discipleship' with a spirit of generosity and forgiveness in Matthew 10:42.

Bringing the Word that can divide people in their closest relationships does not hinder the basic attitude of mercy from the disciple of Jesus (Lange & Schaff 2008:200). In this chapter, Matthew already points forward to the parable of the workers (Mt 20:1–15) with Jesus' command to pray for more workers in the harvest. In this parable, the reader will meet a landowner who is hiring workers throughout the day even during the last working hour. He wanted more and more workers. The landowner whose harvest it was plays a major role in this parable, and in Chapter 10 Jesus also places emphasis on the Lord of the harvest.

In all three chapters where the 'I came (not) to' sayings occur the followers of Jesus are described as workers in the harvest (Mt 5:13,14; Mt 9:37,38; Mt 10:16; Mt 20:1–17[20]).

To understand the meaning of the word group as used in 20:27, 28, the immediate context should also be taken into consideration.

☐ Matthew 20:27, 28 in the context of Matthew 19, 20

It can be deduced that the final 'I have (not) come' statement in Matthew 20:28 can be viewed as the converging point of the six previous objectives and as the summation of the objective of Jesus' coming to earth.

To fully understand the meaning of Jesus' and his disciples' service (*diakonia*), it must be understood within the structure of Matthew 8–9 (Judge 2011:499). Judge (2011:500) said that this whole passage is bound together by 'the attention to the economy of household life but redefined for Jesus' disciples who are preparing to enter a new kind of household, that of the kingdom of heaven'.

⬚ The parable in Matthew 20:1–15

The parable in Matthew 20:1–15 throws important light on the meaning of Jesus' teaching in Matthew 20:27–28. Judge (2011:499) showed the importance of the fact that Matthew put this parable into a sequence of pericopes where he had followed the Gospel of Mark closely. It can, therefore, be deduced that Matthew used this parable deliberately to make a strong statement.

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20. See exegesis of Matthew 19 and 20 below.

A landowner goes out in the early morning to hire workers to work in his vineyard. He agrees with them on a denarius as payment for a day's work. At about the third hour (09:00) he again goes to the marketplace and hires more workers, saying to them that he will pay them ὃ ἐὰν ᾖ δίκαιον δώσω ὑμῖν [what is right]. At about the sixth hour (12:00) he again goes out to hire more workers. At about the eleventh hour (17:00) he does so again. He asks the workers why they are standing idle. The workers reply that no one hired them that day. He sends them into his vineyard also telling them that they will receive what is right (Lange & Schaff 2008:354). When evening (18:00) comes, he tells his manager to pay the workers, beginning with those who were hired last. All the workers are paid the same amount – a denarius as was agreed with the workers hired first. The workers who worked all day then murmur about the fact that the workers hired last receive the same payment as them. Their words were, 'These last have performed one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden and the heat of the day'. The landowner replied three things in answer to their murmurings:

- He first evaluated his own conduct. He did not do them any wrong, because he paid them the amount they had agreed upon.
- He then affirmed that he did what he did because he is free to do with his things as he likes.
- He then evaluated the attitude of the murmurers asking them the question if their eye was evil because he was good. He sent them away with only the agreed upon payment (Evans 2012:350–351).

The parable starts with the words: Ομοία γάρ ἐστιν ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν – [Because the kingdom of heaven is like …]. The sentence starts with the word, Ομοία, [as, like] placing emphasis on the relationship between the kingdom of heaven and the parable. The second word, γάρ, [because] refers back to what was said in Chapter 19. The unity of the parable with what is recorded in Chapter 19 is confirmed by the repetition of the phrase Πολλοὶ δὲ ἔσονται πρῶτοι ἔσχατοι καὶ ἔσχατοι πρῶτοι (Mt 19:30) [many however will be first last and last first] in reverse order Οὕτως ἔσονται οἱ ἔσχατοι πρῶτοι καὶ οἱ πρῶτοι ἔσχατοι (Mt 20:16) [Thus will be the last first, and the first, last] forming an inclusion of the parable. Matthew 19:30 interprets what Jesus said in the previous verses – the parable is an illustration of what is said in Matthew 19:30 and Matthew 20:16 and confirms that the parable illustrates the concept 'the last will be first, and the first last'.

What comes before Matthew 19:30 that seems to be connected to this concept is the description of Jesus receiving the children and blessing them, whilst his disciples tried to prevent them from approaching Jesus. According to the disciples' opinion, children should be last in line and they did not even have the right to spend time with Jesus. Jesus, however, made them first: 'Let the little children come to me and do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven' (Mt 19:14). Then Matthew described the event of a rich young man who came to Jesus, very certain of his own righteousness and asking Jesus what good deed he must do to live eternally. Jesus' answer to him was that he should do what is written in the law. The rich young man was of the conviction that he had done all that the law required of him and asked Jesus what he

still lacked. Then Jesus told him to give up all that he has and to come and follow him. The rich young man should value the opportunity to be a disciple of Jesus above all that was most precious to him. The young man who thought that he was one of the first then proved that he was actually last because he went away in sorrow (Mt 19:16–22).

Jesus then commented on how difficult it is for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God. When the disciples then came to the conclusion that it is nearly impossible to be saved, Jesus answered, 'With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible'. Not by your own strength or your own good deeds can you go into the kingdom of God but only because God makes it possible for people.

Peter then showed that he did not understand what Jesus was teaching them. He asked about the reward they can expect as disciples for leaving 'everything' to follow Jesus. The answer Jesus gave is significant. He answered that the reward will be bounteous (Mt 19:28–29) but then added: 'But many who are first will be last, and the last first'. This sentence leaves the reader with a question: What does it really mean? It can mean that although the disciples will receive the reward Jesus mentioned, it does not necessarily mean that they will be first. Or it can mean that people (many) who will receive a reward and think that they will be first, will actually be last. Lange and Schaff (2008:351) say the following about this verse: '… the kingdom of heaven is within, it is not a system of merit and reward, but the sway and rule of free love'.

Jesus goes on to explain by telling the parable (Mt 20:1–16; Blomberg 1992:302). 'Many who are first will be last, and the last will

be first because the kingdom of heaven is compared with a landowner …'. Jesus then told the parable and concluded: 'So [Οὕτως – *as in the parable*] the last shall be first, and the first last' (Judge 2011:500–501)

In light of this context, what is the meaning of the parable? The emphasis and core meaning of the parable should be sought in Matthew 20:8–15. Who is Jesus addressing in this parable? It is clear that the people who were hired first were the object of his interest.[21] In the parable, the landowner deliberately arranged the payment with the goal that those who were hired first should see that the people who were hired last also received the same amount as them. The parable wanted to reveal the innermost attitude of the people who murmured against the landowner. They murmured, not because their agreement with the landowner was breached but because 'you have made them equal to us'. The same payment was given to the workers who arrived last although the workers who arrived first had worked much longer and had to endure much more than the last. The landowner asked them about their attitude with these words: 'Or is your eye evil because I am good?' It is important to mention the research of Judge (2011:502–504) on the concept of an 'evil eye' as used in the Bible. He explained the meaning of many passages and came to the conclusion that an 'evil eye' pointed to stinginess and when the good fortune of others is begrudged (cf. Dt 15:9). Davies and Allison (2004:99) are of the opinion that an 'evil eye' expresses the antithesis of generosity. The 'evil eye' stands in contrast to the landowner who is good. This recalls Matthew 19:17 where Jesus said that there is only one that is good and that is God.

21. For an alternative opinion that the landowner is the main role player, see Harrington (1991:284).

Jesus is addressing the attitude of his disciples by using a parable. This attitude is highlighted with Peter's question (Mt 19:17), when the disciples were favourably compared with the rich young man, asking about the reward for what they have done (Davies & Allison 2004:331). With this question Peter exhibited the same mindset as the rich young man and the persons in the parable who were hired first, looking for a reward for what he has done whilst comparing himself with others (Lange & Schaff 2008:354).

After the parable, Matthew places Jesus' third passion prediction (Mt 20:17–19). The mother of Zebedee's children and her sons showed the same attitude as Peter and the workers hired first. They were all looking for places of honour.

The disciples reacted with indignation when they heard about the request of the mother and her sons. Their reaction showed that they were also playing in the same team with the people in the parable who were hired first, begrudging the two brothers' possible honour (Turner 2008:487–488). They displayed an evil eye.

What then is the meaning of the parable?

With the first 'I came (not) to' saying, Matthew explained to his readers that Jesus came to fulfil the law and that the implication for his followers is that their righteousness should exceed that of the Pharisees. In Matthew 5:19 and Matthew 20:27, Jesus spoke about how one can be great in the kingdom of heaven by teaching the commandments of God and adhering to them. Jesus then went on and taught his disciples the implications of the law of God (Mt 5:21–48) in contrast to what the Pharisees taught (using the words,

'You have heard that it was said to those of old …', and, 'But I say to you …'). His whole teaching can be summed up in the last verses of the chapter: 'To be sons of the Father one should love those who do not love you and grow towards perfection'. The second passage where the 'I came (not) to' sayings are used by Matthew (Mt 9) can be summed up by Jesus' words that he came for those in need and not for those who do not need him, and he gave his command that the people who listened to him should go and learn what it means that he desires mercy not sacrifice. 'Now mercy is the form that sacrifice must take, and mercy constitutes the holiness that separates those called from the world to follow Jesus' (Hauerwas 2007:101). The third passage (Mt 10) also touches on the subject of mercy at the beginning and in the end, but the main emphasis is on the labourers who were sent into the harvest and what they could expect whilst harvesting. They should expect that their words and deeds of mercy (Mt 10:1) will bring radical divisions between those who choose to follow Jesus and others who do not accept their words.

It was pointed out above that Jesus was addressing the attitude of the disciples with the aid of the parable. The people who were hired first thought only about themselves and they could not rejoice in the grace that those who were hired last received from the landowner.

Their reaction is understandable from a humanistic point of view. The day labourers were not in a good position. Slaves were the property of their owners and their owners payed a price for them and they would, therefore, protect their investment by caring for them. Day labourers, were, however, either landless people or people with such a small portion of land that they could not make a living

out of it. The payment for a day's work was enough for only a single day and no more. Day labourers were poor and vulnerable. The practice of the day was, therefore, for landowners to give as much work as possible to day labourers. Strict rules were in place that determined when, and how much, day labourers could eat from the harvest. How the landowner treated his day labourers (especially the workers who came last) in the parable was unheard of. It totally went against the existing order. The economic guidelines of the day prescribed as little payment as possible for as much work as possible. Day labourers received what they deserved and nothing more. Mercy was not part of their world view. If latecomers received a denarius for an hour's work, early birds should also receive a denarius for each hour's work. The same break with common viewpoints of that time can be found in Matthew 5, 9 and 10 (Nolland 2005:440).

Jesus thus illustrated the total divergence of the way things work in the kingdom of heaven. This divergence connects with the antitheses in the previous 'I have (not) come' sayings. Jesus came to change existing perspectives on many things, also the way the poor and the vulnerable should be treated and how one should look at the good fortune of others.

Jesus taught his disciples that they should be glad when others receive grace even if they do not share their grace at that point in time. They can be glad with others because they know that they will also receive what is right out of God's hand.

In the parable, the good deed of the landowner caused a division and also revealed the evil eye of some of the labourers.

⬚ *Diakonia* according to Matthew 20:27–28

When the disciples displayed the same attitude as the labourers who were hired first (Mt 20:20–24), Jesus called them to him. He taught them to not begrudge one another. They should not act the same way as the rulers of the Gentiles who exploited their people to their own advantage. No, the way to greatness amongst themselves should be service; to become servants and slaves of fellow believers. Not to be first, but to experience contentment when ending last and to wait for God to make the last first. That is the way Jesus became first; by being last, by serving and giving his life as ransom for many. His Father made him first by resurrecting him and giving him all authority in heaven and on earth.

When *diakonia* in Matthew is understood in the context of the 'I came (not) to' sayings and in the immediate context of Matthew 20:27–28, it is clear that diakonia has to do with:

- Living as someone who is called to follow Jesus.
- Living as someone who is called to represent Jesus.
- Participating in Jesus' passion as well as in his power and authority.
- Living according to the law as it is fulfilled in Jesus (Matthew 5).
- Having mercy for those who are in need of healing and restoration.
- Bringing the good news to people and being involved with the harvest of the Lord (praying and reaping).
- Associating with the disciples of Jesus.
- Being assured that the Lord of the harvest will provide you with what is right and, therefore, to be able to rejoice in the grace others receive.

☐ Conclusion in connection with the *diakon* word group

- The meaning of the *diakon* word group, as used in Matthew 20, has to be understood in relation to the seven 'I have (not) come to' sayings of Jesus and in the context of Matthew 19–20.
- Jesus was sent by the Father to do his will (to fulfil the law of God). When followers of Jesus do the will of God, according to Jesus' practical application of the law (see Mt 5–7), they become more and more like their Father in heaven. *Diakonia* and the fulfilling of the law of God is inseparable.
- In order to perform your *diakonia*, it is necessary to become the servant of all people, which includes sinners and the marginalised.
- *Diakonia* includes the proclamation of the Gospel, which will separate people from one another because of the radical commitment *daikonia* demands from those who want to follow Jesus.
- *Diakonia* highlights an attitude of mercy in the hearts of followers and not just physical services and sacrifices. This attitude does not begrudge the grace that others receive. This attitude does not seek its own honour or places others before them. This attitude is not in need of rewards to spread the word of God's kingdom.
- Followers of Jesus are sent into the harvest when doing *diakonia*. God sends labourers into the harvest because he has compassion for the people who do not know and follow the shepherd, Jesus Christ.
- It becomes, therefore, clear that *diakonia* is an essential part of the *Missio Dei*. God sent his Son to serve and not to be served so that the harvest could be gathered by him, but also that he could send

more labourers into the harvest; labourers who serve people and who are not looking to be served.

- It is possible for God (for whom everything is possible) to start a social movement in South Africa. To do this, labourers should go out into the harvest, following Jesus in his mission to serve God and those in need. The labourers should look to God to reward them with what is right in his eyes.
- The Church should pray that the owner of the harvest will call these labourers. The Church should equip their members to be labourers, *diakonia*, because they should believe the owner of the harvest that the harvest is plentiful. They should believe that the harvest in South Africa is so plentiful that a social movement can indeed be started and stem corruption in South Africa.

How did Jesus start the social movement called Christianity?[22]

He came to earth with a purpose and served his people by:

- Fulfilling the law of God and persuading people to follow him by becoming servants and slaves of others.
- Calling people to be his disciples (to follow him).
- Focusing his attention on those in the margins who are in need of help and persuading his followers to worship him with a life of mercy and not only bringing sacrifices.

....

22. Christianity is much more than only a social movement, but it can be described as a social movement. The church is the creation of God the Father in Jesus Christ through the work of the Holy Spirit, who works through God's Word and the disciples of Jesus as his messengers.

- Bringing the Word to people, putting people before the radical choice to follow Jesus even if it means leaving all that was precious up to now behind.
- Teaching his disciples what it means to be a son of the Father in heaven and part of the kingdom of heaven. To be certain that he will give you what is right so that you can rejoice in his gifts to people who do not deserve it.
- Giving his life – his whole life – so that the law could be fulfilled as a ransom for many. He did this so that those who believe this good news can become children of his Father and his disciples. His disciples love him and his Father who sent him, and they follow in his footsteps, seeking those sinners who belong to the Father.
- Sending his Holy Spirit to comfort, remind, teach, empower, equip and cleanse his disciples, giving them the wisdom to understand the times they live in and to put new wine in new wineskins and discard the old wineskins.
- Sending labourers into the harvest, promising them that he shall be with them always.

A social movement against corruption in the footsteps of Jesus' *diakonia*

Should the church as an institution become involved in initiating a social movement against corruption? And what is the definition of a social movement? These are questions that have been addressed by various researchers with different viewpoints (M'mworia 1998; Mouw 2010; Smith 2002; Williams 2015). Vorster (2012) mentioned in this regard:

> Due to the Reformational principle of sovereignty in own sphere it is not the task of the churches to take over the responsibilities of other social spheres such as civil societies, trade unions, political parties or the government. However, they should be active as a watchdog, taking care of the plight of the poor and the marginalised and being the custodian of truth, honesty, fairness and compassion. (p.144)

The researcher sees the following as a definition of a social movement: A social movement is formed through actions taken by a substantial group of people in society, flowing from specific convictions and an attitude with a common goal, convincing more and more people to follow suit. The researcher's conviction is that it is the task of special services (ministers, elders, deacons) to equip believers for their service work. It is, therefore, the task of each believer to carry Jesus' message and his lifestyle into his or her society.

It is also important that believers work together. Out of this co-operation can flow a movement. Firstly, amongst believers, but these believers should be able to influence non-believers to form a social movement with them.

In the book of Acts it is described how the church was scattered by persecution, 'And they went about preaching the word' (Ac 8:4). But Acts 2–6 also makes it clear that the way the believers lived together contributed to the flow of people into the church. In Acts 19 it is recorded how Paul's work also influenced the economy of a city (Lange & Schaff 2008:360; Polhill 1992:409):

> For a man named Demetrius, a silversmith, who made silver shrines of Artemis, brought no little business to the craftsmen. 25. These he gathered together, with the workmen in similar trades, and said, 'Men, you know that from this business

we have our wealth. 26. And you see and hear that not only in Ephesus but in almost all of Asia this Paul has persuaded and turned away a great many people, saying that gods made with hands are not gods. 27. And there is danger not only that this trade of ours may come into disrepute but also that the temple of the great goddess Artemis may be counted as nothing, and that she may even be deposed from her magnificence, she whom all Asia and the world worship'. (vv. 24–27)

Hare (2009) recorded the impact of the deeds of some women in the 18th century:

The explosion of Methodism in the eighteen-century Britain resulted to no small degree from the fact that cultured women opened their homes to the 'riffraff' of the lower classes. (p. 103)

Hofmann (2015:222) described the impact of diaconic organisations on the leadership of Christians in Germany. From these examples it is clear that walking in the footsteps of Jesus can become a social movement and can have a huge impact on society.

Starting a social movement should never become the main focus of the church. The main focus should always be to worship God and to equip the saints to serve God and other people. But when believers live according to the Word of God, God can use their lives to influence society significantly.

It became clear during the research that the identified themes (Figure 9) can serve as a structure for answering the research question: What would a social movement against corruption involve if it is to follow in the footsteps of Jesus' *diakonia* according to Matthew?

☐ The kingdom of God (cf. Mt 5:17–21; 9:8, 35; 10:7; 20:1–16, 21–28)

Matthew used the word 'came' repeatedly to describe the goal of Jesus' work on earth. This highlights Jesus' willingness to come to

earth when his Father asked him. God reigns over the whole universe, but his kingship is not recognised by all, and there are people who are living under the dominion of Satan (demon possession) and the consequences of sin (sickness, selfishness, hatred, greed, envy, etc.). Jesus came to destroy the power of Satan and sin by giving his life as ransom for many (Mt 20:28). He gave his life not only on the cross, but his whole life on earth as ransom. He fulfilled the law, and thereby lived under the kingship of his Father so that his perfect life could belong to believers and free them from the shame and guilt and the punishment of their own sins. All that Jesus had said and done, as recorded by Matthew and others, are descriptions and examples of a life under the reign of God. Jesus baptised his followers with the Holy Spirit to teach them and equip them so that they can live in the kingdom of God and witness about the kingdom.

Those who are part of the kingdom of God are led by the Holy Spirit to apply the will of God to situations occurring throughout life. This is done from the perspective of God's law that was fulfilled and applied anew by Jesus. Those who live according to the wisdom of the kingdom are also able to discern the times they live in. Is it a time for feasting or a time for fasting, a time for encouragement of others or a time for giving critique? They have the ability to think outside of the box, not encapsulated by common opinions, traditions or economic patterns (see Lee 2011:279).

When the church equips its members, the kingdom of God will be the main focus. No social movement can last if it does not flow from changed hearts and minds that have been subjected to the reign of God. Every congregation and every believer should constantly do

introspection, asking the question whether my (our) main goal is the coming of the kingdom of God in people's hearts and in society?

To start a social movement in the steps of Jesus, the church needs to focus on the kingdom of God. From this focus, the other themes can flow as indicated in Figure 9. These themes will now receive attention.

☐ Mercy (Mt 5:7, 41–48; 9:13, 36; 10:5–8; 20:1–15, 30–34)

Mercy includes an open eye to the needs of other people even when these needs of people force you to do things you do not want to do (Vorster 2012:140). Mercy is present when your love shines on good and bad people as your Father in heaven is doing. It means not to treat people the way they deserved to be treated, but to do more for them than they ask of you. Mercy is to be there for the sick and the unrighteous, to seek their healing and their salvation, to associate with the outcasts even if you yourself are ostracised by doing these things (Phiri & Dongsung 2014:264). Mercy is to bring the message of the kingdom even if it angers people; others are saved. Mercy is to receive the prophets and the small ones because they are followers of Jesus. Mercy is to give to workers more than they deserve. Mercy is not envious of the mercy shown to others but rather to rejoice with them. Mercy is to serve and not be served, to become the last and everyone's servant. Mercy is to follow Jesus in giving your life as ransom for many (De Gruchy 2002:94). Only Jesus could give his life as the final ransom to free all God's children. They who live in the footsteps of Jesus will, however, sacrifice their lives so that many can be saved by their words and examples because then they are led to the Saviour, Jesus and his Father.

The church should be a place of mercy where sinners are welcomed. A place where the congregation is equipped and motivated to be merciful in everything they do. Members of the church should not only be motivated to do something but to have a new world view and a new attitude – the attitude of Jesus, the attitude of mercy (Hauerwas 1981:42).

Vorster (2012:11) formulated this truth as follows: 'The churches should guide people to come to the conviction that self-interest has limits and that servanthood is the moral directive in inter-personal relations'.

☐ Proclaiming and/or confessing (Mt 5:10–16; 9:37, 38; 10:1–11)

The church is the light and the salt of the earth. This is the church's identity, it is not something they should become. The church should only live according to their identity. The church should give light and taste to society (Mt 5:10–16). By proclaiming and living the good news, the harvest should be gathered and there should be prayed for still more workers harvesting (Mt 9:27,38). These workers should go out with the authority of Christ and proclaim the kingdom of God, separating those who believe from the unbelievers who cause division in societies; but they should also bring together those who belong together in Christ (Mt 10:1–11).

Vorster (2012) practically expressed this truth as follows:

> The imitation of Christ also means to cry out for justice to all people. In modern contextual theologies a clear case is made for churches to be the voice of the poor and to be the watchdog of governments and corporations when it comes to socio-economic justice. (p. 144)

To keep quiet about evil because you fear the consequences is to try and preserve your life. Then you will lose your life in the kingdom of God (Mt 10:39; Garner 2015).

To be able to start a social movement in the footsteps of Jesus, the church needs people who can distribute the gifts of the kingdom of heaven and proclaim the Gospel fearlessly even when in danger of losing loved ones, their status, position or lives (Koopman & Smit 2007:269; Smit 2007:153).

☐ Sacrifice (Mt 5:28–30, 38–44; 9:15b; 10:37–42; 20:22–28)

Jesus asks of you to be prepared to sacrifice everything in order to persevere when living in the kingdom of heaven. The fact that living in Jesus' footsteps will inevitable bring persecution in one way or another is very real in a country where corruption flourishes. If you cannot obtain a tender without a bribe, it entails the sacrificing of many opportunities. You have to deal with the very real possibility of sacrificing your job without the assurance that your sacrifice will make any difference when you blow the whistle on corruption in the firm for which you work. Sacrifice is far more important than prosperity. Some churches even proclaim a prosperity gospel – God wants you to be wealthy, healthy and happy. 'Name it and claim it' are the code words to use when you want something from God. Then God becomes your servant, the place where you can order anything. You feel that you are entitled to these things and if you cannot obtain something in a legal way, it is your right to obtain it illegally. Vorster (2010) said:

> Self-interest becomes thus immoral when it leads to the exploitation of others. Misuses of public funds for own gain, are immoral and illegal. It is more so when it concerns the needy. (p. 10)

The preparedness to sacrifice stands in direct contrast to the obsession with the 'self' and also opposes the kind of attitude that leads persons to disregard the interest of others taking as much as they can. It is the task of Christians to follow Jesus in giving their lives for people who reject and crucify him. The church is the place where people give themselves as living and holy sacrifices to God and, therefore, also to their neighbours.

To be able to start a social movement in the footsteps of Jesus, the church needs to grow its members in their preparedness to sacrifice greed and selfishness.

☐ Judgement and/or accountability (Mt 5:13, 19, 20, 30; 9:2, 5–6; 10:12–15, 32–42; 20:16)

You will be held accountable for what you did or did not do by God. Christians live before the eyes of God who sees and knows all. In contrast to the relativism of the day, Christians believe that there are absolute truths. These truths will set them free from the slavery of sin – the words of life, the words of God. Because Christians are convicted of these truths, they live according to these truths. Their motivation is not fear of punishment but their reverence for God and the knowledge that they will have to give account of their answer to his love for them.

To be able to start a social movement, the church needs people who live before the face of the loving God. In the church's liturgy, preaching and teaching, they should enable believers to lift up their hearts (*sursum corda*) and stand before the face of God (*coram Deo*) so that they can live in a close relationship with the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

☐ Persecution (Mt 5:10–12; 9:3, 11, 34; 10:16–19, 21–26; 20:18, 19)

The followers of Jesus are blessed when they are persecuted '"for righteousness" sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven' (Mt 5:10). Their reward is waiting in heaven. In this world followers of Jesus will be called names (Mt 9:34), they will be as sheep between wolves (Mt 10:16), but they can know that the spirit of their Father will tell them what to say during persecution. They will also have to drink from the cup of suffering just as Jesus did.

To be able to start a social movement in the footsteps of Jesus, the Church should lead their members to the point where they will gladly endure suffering for the sake of Jesus.

Practical-theological guidelines for Christian leaders on corruption through hermeneutical interaction between the descriptive-interpretative, normative and strategic findings

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▪ Introduction

In this concluding chapter, the aim is to provide a short overview of the findings of the preceding chapters to generate

practical-theological guidelines for Christian leaders on how to counteract corruption. These guidelines were formed through a hermeneutical interaction between the findings in the descriptive-interpretive and normative divisions and by incorporating the findings into the strategic section.

The findings of the different chapters are briefly described so that a summary of the descriptive-imperative, normative and strategic sections can be provided. This summary sheds light on the way the hermeneutical interaction comes into play. In the final stage the hermeneutical interaction between the descriptive-interpretive and normative sections culminates in guidelines on how Christian leaders can counteract corruption.

Findings from the descriptive section (Ch. 1 and 2)

In **Chapter 1, a** practical-theological design for research on corruption in South Africa's liberal democratic context was developed. The book is the result of a research project with empirical results compiled from interviews with two Christian leaders, one business leader and one political leader, who find themselves in the heart of the field of tension as a result of the effects caused by corruption. This was the point of departure for connecting our theological theory with the challenges faced in real world conditions on ground level. In the consecutive chapters, the tools of practical-theological research were deployed in analysing and interpreting the instances of corruption in our society. Normative and strategic theories were developed with constant reference to, and in interaction with, our interpretation of above-mentioned interviews and the contexts in which they arose.

By utilising the research methodology of practical theology, the project explored:

- The nature of corruption.
- Some of its major root causes in an African context.
- The contributions Christian traditions can make to address corruption.
- Possible strategic approaches that Christian leaders can consider to combat this problem.

Liberal democracy manifests in a constitutional environment under the rule of law. Liberal democracy can be described as a political system that allows political liberties and a democratic rule. Although the concept of liberal democracy aims at providing justice and equal opportunities for all people in a particular society, it is apparent that even this refined form of a political system cannot guarantee a better life for all. The impact of deeply rooted corruption on the current state of South African societies cannot be denied. Widespread corruption involves diverting public resources to obtain personal financial gain by corrupt administrators, and corruption also promotes distrust in the current leadership.

A view on the causes of corruption that lie beneath the surface level of the problem field is needed, and practical theology can make a contribution towards an in-depth exploration of this problem field. Dealing with corruption implies not only the replacement of corrupt leaders but also the renewal of an anti-corrupt culture, public life and individuals. Christian practical theology provides a unique opportunity to plumb the depths of the prevalence of corruption and can, therefore, make a valuable contribution towards explaining,

understanding and responding to the problem during interaction and interdisciplinary dialogue with other human sciences. Practical-theological research is an activity that views the reality observed in the research field from a theological perspective and connecting human reality with divine reality. Practical-theological research finds its measuring rod in normative compliance to God`s standard as it is revealed in scripture. Deploying this particular practical-theological approach in research dealing with corruption in a liberal democratic context provides a means of gaining insight into the way deeply rooted religious factors may influence human attitudes and behaviour.

The following overarching research question was formulated: 'What insight can be gained from a practical-theological study regarding the deeply rooted causes and far-reaching effects of corruption in a South African liberal democratic environment and what strategic elements are needed by Christian leaders to address this problem faithfully according to the normative indicators linked to their God-given calling?'

With the purpose of putting our research question into hermeneutical interaction with the real world situation of the challenges faced by Christian leaders in their attempt to deal with corruption – according to their Christian calling – a qualitative empirical study was undertaken with prominent Christian leaders as our respondents. By utilising Osmer's four-fold task for practical-theological research, the following questions were formulated for the semi-structured interviews that pivoted around the following loci:

- The interviewees' description of the situation with 'What is going on?' as the key question.
- The interviewees' interpretation of the situation with 'Why is this going on?' as the key question.
- The interviewees' normative view on the situation with 'What ought to be going on?' as the key question.
- The interviewees' strategic consideration in the situation with 'How might we respond?' as the key question.

In **Chapter 2,** the results of the interviews with Christian leaders in South African societies were provided. Interviews were conducted with two church leaders, one business leader and one political leader. The interviews were initially coded during the first lumping coding run with a content analysis. The initial coded data were analysed as information emerged from the interviewees' answers regarding the four practical-theological dimensions. In addition, a second coding run was used which focused on the findings that emerged from the determined categories. From the categories the underlying concepts could be determined that frame the dynamics of the situation that Christian leaders are facing in the contemporary iteration of the influence of corruption on our society. The conceptual framework that emerged from the empirical data played an important role in the rest of our research project. The framework functioned as a point of correlation as our theological reflections on corruption materialised in the consecutive chapters of this book. Therefore the conceptual framework incorporates the final results of our analysis of the interview data.

This conceptual framework showed that corruption is viewed as containing unhealthy configurations of power and greed at its core

and that Christian leaders are not adequately equipped in countering the serious threat posed by corruption to our democratic environment. The conceptual framework also revealed a consciousness of the Christian mandate according to God's will, meaning that God's view with regard to corruption should be communicated to Christians with the aim of equipping them for their responsibility in counteracting corruption.

The conceptual framework described in the first chapters pointed in the direction of focusing effective strategic efforts on equipping Christians to see their role in countering corruption as an integral part of the *Missio Dei.*

Findings from the interpretive section

The aim of **Chapter 3** was to discover the challenges posed to Christian leaders regarding complex manifestations of corruption in a post-apartheid South Africa. In this chapter, the focus fell on the part of the conceptual framework that reflects how the interviewed Christian leaders interpreted the presence of corruption in our societies and its impact on the future of democracy. The following categories emerged from the coded data: greed for wealth, the misuse of political power, and the ineffectiveness of Christian leaders in addressing corruption in the government. On the surface, it seems as if democratic governments are aware of the fact that corruption is viewed as one of the most serious issues that threatens the stability of democracies. Despite this apparent commitment to anti-corruption measures on the surface level of societies, corruption continues to be a significant problem in South Africa.

Culture is either seen as the ultimate cause of corruption or as the victim of an external force by which it has been perverted. From the one end of the spectrum, the modern state is seen to be subjected to a corruptive influence by traditional cultures (Africa's view on the embeddedness of life in community in process). On the other end of the spectrum, traditional cultures are seen to be subjected to corruption by the advent of the modern state (corruption is, therefore, caused by the self-enriching behaviour of the privileged and the harmful effects of Western exploitation).

An important observation regarding the field of tension created by corruption in Africa, and specifically in South Africa, is that societies have to deal with the seemingly ineffectiveness of anti-corruption dialogue and protests in the public sphere of the civil society. Citizens feel that they have to take drastic measures in order to be heard.

Christian leaders are conscious of the fact that focused attention needs to be given in equipping believers for the task at hand in the face of corruption and its threat to a democracy. Moreover, the approach that maintains that the Church should not shy away from its calling to minister the corruption-disclosing light of the gospel at an in-depth level of the problem field also needs attention. Corruption is a sin that manifests itself in various ways: human greed for wealth, selfishness and lack of sympathy for others, injustice and oppression in public and private life, ethnocentrism, pride, and power-drunkenness. All these problems create tension which cannot be tolerated indefinitely.

Chapter 4 addressed the problematic nature of why insufficient action from government leaders, and also from church leaders, is taken against corruption.

Corruption in governments can be ascribed to the industrial wave that influenced the world for a long period. The current praxis of corruption in South Africa has historically led to favourable soil that stimulates corrupt attitudes. Africa, like the rest of the world in the age of globalisation, is being confronted with diverse issues of an ethical nature. The problem of leadership and corruption within African governments is a known fact and of monumental proportions.

The difficulty in dealing with governmental perpetrators is mainly that most of them belong either to the political elite or are highly related or connected to the political elite; hence interferences and interventions in both the departmental disciplinary and legal processes are in order to save the skins of those involved. What makes this issue more difficult is that the effectiveness of most of the South African oversight institutions, such as the Public Service Commission and the Auditor-General, are limited by their advisory and recommendatory role rather than as institutions with the power to enforce implementation. There is evidence that one reason for the reluctance to act against corruption is the fact that leaders and officials are often busy with their own interests and the interest of the ruling party and, therefore, the interests of societies are not a priority.

This voicelessness of leaders can be the result of:

- Guilt, because they feel ashamed of their former actions.
- Apathy, because they do not want their comfort zones to be disturbed.
- Friendship, because the people committing corruption (or their superiors who are responsible for corruption) are their friends or relatives.

- A specific world view.
- Inferiority, because they do not want to make fools of themselves amongst people who they regard as more informed or more powerful.
- Nepotistic voicelessness caused by a hesitation to publicly criticise leaders who are members of their families or congregations. Dishonest and voiceless leaders are compromising their integrity and cannot discipline others.

Church leaders are ineffective in their calling for prophetic action and do not equip Christians to act likewise in our society. The reasons for this state of affairs are, amongst others:

- The goal of prophetic witness during apartheid, namely by changing the country's injustices to justice and equality for all its people in one united South Africa, had been reached in 1990 to 1994.
- The need to witness prophetically in public is not present anymore, because the view is now that witnessing should be brought personally to the government.
- The ANC government does not tolerate any interference by church leaders in politics.
- Churches have no longer influence in the public sector. The possibility that prophetic witnessing by church leaders can have an impact on the public and the government is slim.
- President Zuma has a close connection with the African Independent Churches and obtained their support for his government's policies and, therefore, the president has no concern about the critique of mainline churches.

Chapter 5 provided an overview of the causes of corruption and the way to manage corruption in South Africa through the ethical responsibility of churches.

The following causes of corruption can be noted: officials misuse public funds when they are satisfied that there is a low risk of being caught and punished, and the probability of being caught depends in part on the effectiveness of the country's legal system. It also depends on the legal culture and the presence of effective anti-corruption mechanisms. According to the *Country Corruption Assessment Report* (CCAR) of the United Nations (UN 2003:1), fraud, theft and bribery are amongst the most common forms of corruption in the public sector of South Africa. The causes for corruption in the public sector in general are greed, lack of moral values, insufficient mechanisms to deal with corruption, a poor legal culture, unskilled and poorly trained officials, lack of control over the flow of capital in the processes of social security, poverty and the absence of an adequate moral fibre in the society at large. The misuse of public funds for the purpose of self-enrichment is generally rooted in a negative form of self-interest, which entices officials to embrace greediness.

Low wages and unemployment are amongst the causes of corruption, especially in developing countries. Self-interest in a negative sense are nepotism, careerism and favouritism. Especially in African cultures, strong attachments to extended families and ethnic groups as well as expectations of shared benefits lead many civil servants astray to engage in corrupt acts to meet their social obligations. The attitude of allegiance to one's family, ethnic or religious group or socio-economic identity is another socially embedded factor that drives public officials to corrupt practices.

Protestantism in South Africa, especially the influential Reformed tradition, played a minor role in monitoring the governments of both the pre-1994 and the post-1994 dispensations. Protestantism did not inhibit corruption during the pre-1994 dispensation or the contemporary levels of corruption.

Important guidelines for especially churches are the following:

- Churches should support all legal measures taken by authorities to prevent corruption and should fulfil the role of watchdogs and whistle- blowers in their monitoring role of the public administration and the administration of justice.
- The 'ethical repair task' in the public sector should start with as many individuals as possible making their message heard by every available means.
- It is important that the whole community should develop an awareness of the extent of corruption. The causes, attitudes and negative impact of this phenomenon on people, peace and prosperity should be identified. Awareness is the first step in dealing with corruption.
- Churches function in all spheres of life – in government, the civil society and informal societal structures. They are in an excellent position to raise awareness of the problem of corruption and its negative effects on society.
- Churches can use their prophetic calling through preaching and teaching and the involvement of Christians in societies to enhance the alertness that corruption is wrong and that behaviours such as greed, nepotism, careerism, favouritism and exploitation are morally untenable and socially destructive.
- On the foundation of these well-developed biblical moral standards, Christians can promote ethics in the public sector and

develop a public sector ethos and educate people regarding corruption control buttressed by an application of sound ethics.

- Churches have a tremendous influence on the formation of attitudes of people and can thus play an important role in rectifying wrong attitudes that can have a positive bearing on corruption.
- Churches can also nurture good virtues amongst Christians who could influence and strengthen civil societies with applicable moral norms with the purpose of enabling them to deal effectively with corruption in the public and private sectors.

One can imitate Christ in his humaneness, his solidarity with the needy and people in social distress. He can be imitated in his attitude of care and love, in sacrificing his own interests and his general compassion for all. Compassion is *cum-patio,* which means to 'feel with'. As such, his attitude must flow over to the attitude of Christians.

The imitation of Christ also means to cry out for justice for all people. Churches should stand up for a caring economy that addresses the plight of the poor.

Findings from the normative section

Because practical-theological research is an activity that views the reality observed in the research field from a theological perspective, connecting human reality with divine reality, this research finds its measuring rod in normative compliance to God`s standard as it is revealed in scripture. Three representing sections of scripture were taken to act as norms for examining the descriptive and interpretative sections of this research, namely Ezekiel 34 from the Old Testament, John 15 from the Gospels and from Romans in the New Testament.

In **Chapter 6** – pastoral perspectives from Ezekiel 34 – the aim was to find normative indicators needed by Christian leaders for their God-given calling to address the far-reaching effects of corruption. The chapter examined Ezekiel 34's 'good shepherd' metaphor with regard to the bad shepherds and leaders who have served their own interests at the expense of the people of the covenant. God's people were described in Ezekiel 34 as a herd of sheep with God as chief shepherd and the leaders of the people as shepherds who have to care for the sheep on his behalf. Chapter 34 expresses God's action against the false shepherds of Israel who have failed because they did not live for the sake of the flock, but only for themselves. They were heartless and, because of bad shepherding, the flock was scattered, helpless and without direction. These false shepherds did not care for the weak and ill nor did they feed those who were hungry or returned those who were lost and astray. The Lord, therefore, condemned these false shepherds.

The Lord is a perfect example of the perfect shepherd. The effects of Yahweh seeking his flock in this way are three-fold: he will remove bad shepherds; he will free the sheep from the control of the shepherds; he will liberate the sheep from exile. God's judgement also fell on those sheep that harmed the weaker sheep. It is never God's purpose that his people oppress and harm one another or take advantage of resources that should be available to all. Oppressors damage the covenant relationship between God and his people and they will be punished.

In addition to Ezekiel's judgement of the bad shepherds, he pointed to the future when a leader will rule in a trustworthy and honourable manner. In the fulfilment of the shepherd motif, Jesus identified

himself as the good shepherd who calls his sheep by their names, who leads them out to pasture and who protects them from the wolves and false leaders. The prophetic ministry of Ezekiel brings hope where there is hopelessness. The people of God do not have a shepherd who is absent and leaves them to their fate. They see the divine shepherd amidst their experiences of loss and he does not leave them directionless.

Shepherds are hired because of sheep (cf. Ezk 34) and Christian leaders should provide and protect those entrusted to their care. Ezekiel wanted us to think about responsible leadership. The description of the untruthful leaders of Israel a few thousand years ago is not strange to our world.

In **Chapter 7,** ethical guidelines were developed based on the Gospel of John 15. Christian ethics can make a relevant and substantial contribution to the moral development of communities in South Africa. The research question was formulated as follows: 'What ethical guidelines can be deducted from John 15 to equip Christian leaders in South Africa in the fight against corruption?'

God's view on corruption, according to John 15, is that corruption should not be feared by his disciples because the vinedresser is in control and corruption will only exist as long as it is God's will. The first ethical principle that Christians and Christian leaders should be equipped with is that of security in the reign of God over everything. Christian ethics are ethics of absolute security.

The love of the Father for his Son and the love of Jesus for his disciples are the sources for the relationship of believers with the vinedresser and the vineyard. The second ethical principle is that

Christians and Christian leaders should be trained in the comfort of God's and other disciples' love. Christian ethics are ethics of experiencing love.

Because of the work of the Holy Spirit through the Word of God, believers are cleansed through regeneration, justification and sanctification. This means that believers can get rid of the shame and guilt of past sins. The third ethical principle Christians and Christian leaders should be trained in is that of undeservedly received cleanness. Wisdom is, however, needed to determine how to help transgressors to live the ethical principal of undeservedly received cleanness. Christian ethics are ethics of undeservedly received cleanness.

The ethical life of believers is determined by their unity with God and one another. This principle was illustrated by Jesus with the parable of the vineyard and the vines and his application thereof. Jesus and the Father are one and the disciples are one with Jesus. The fourth ethical principle Christians and Christian leaders should be trained in is the principle of relational unity. Christian ethics are ethics build on relational unity.

The command to the disciples was to stay in Jesus' love as Jesus stayed in the love of the Father. The way to stay in the love of Jesus is to obey his commandments. The fifth ethical principle is obedience born from the certainty that the commandments were given in love in order to gain freedom and life. Christian ethics are ethics built on obedience to loving commandments.

The ethical conduct of disciples of Jesus, Christian leaders and Christians should flow from the joy they experience from their unity with the Father and the Son. Christian ethical conduct is, therefore,

an answer to the growing joy of experiencing unity with the Father and his Son.

In **Chapter 8**, the letter to Romans was investigated to establish norms for the renewal of the mind of human beings and the actions of people as part of the research on corruption in a South African liberal democratic context. Dealing with corruption implies replacing corrupt leaders, and also the renewing of an anti-corrupt culture, public life and individuals

The structure of this chapter was determined by the link that the letter of Romans has to the three categories extracted from the empirical research: God's view on corruption (Rm 1:1–3,20); Christians are empowered to act on corruption and they have a mandate, according to God's will, to act against corruption (Rm 3:21–11); the way in which society can be influenced (Rm 12–16).

The following normative perspectives were deduced from a study of the letter of Romans:

- Normative perspectives based on God's view of corrupt societies: God views societies throughout the ages as if court hearings are taking place; God's view of corrupt societies and their actions can be seen from his wrath, his holy hostility to evil and the fact that he acts by giving these societies up to the captivity of viciousness; God's view of corrupt societies is righteous and impartial. His judgement is graceful (in providing room for repentance), but also lets him store up his judgement for unrepentant hearts; and God's view of corrupt societies is clearly shown in his final and incontestable verdict that no one is righteous, not even one.

- Normative perspectives on combating corruption in societies based on the fact that Christians are empowered: In his court cases, God's righteousness brings redemptive righteousness to believers and, therefore, empowers them to combat corruption in societies; God's righteousness includes his being righteous and his actions, both in view of his judgement and his saving righteousness; because God broke the power of sin through the death and resurrection of Christ, God empowered Christians with new life in a new era, not only to end their enslavement to sin, but to become slaves of Christ and to act, therefore, in his power against corruption present in societies; and the work of Christ – conquering sin – is applied by the spirit in freeing us from the law of sin and empowering us to live a new life under the Spirit's guidance.

- Normative perspectives based on the calling of Christians to influence societies in combatting corruption: Christians should influence societies by living transformed lives, by giving instead of taking and by offering themselves as sacrifices to God, to their neighbours and societies; Christians should influence societies by testifying that a transformed view on life does not mean conformity to the corrupted patterns of the world, but accepting God's will, to love your enemies and to triumph over the evil of corruption; God established governing authorities, and Christians should obey these authorities so that punishment can be inflicted upon wrongdoers. Christians should testify against corruption taking place in governing authorities and report corruption to the correct judicial institutions; Christians should proclaim the important command to love your neighbours because this love will not harm human beings and, in this way,

corruption will be combatted; the Church should make use of a strong, united, ecumenical and prophetical voice to negatively point out corruption, and positively give ethical direction to become a more just society.

Findings from the strategic section

The pragmatic venture in this research asked the following question: 'How might we respond?' The fourth question is related to the role of Christian leaders in the combatting of corruption, especially in South African societies: how might Christian leaders be empowered to influence society to combat corruption? Osmer (2008:176) referred to this task as forming and enacting strategies of action that influence events in ways that are desirable. Practical theology often provides assistance by offering models of practices and rules of art. Models of practice offer leaders a general picture of the field in which they are acting and ways they might shape this field to achieve desired goals. Rules of art are more specific guidelines for carrying out particular actions or practices. The focus in this pragmatic venture was how to instigate change. Osmer (2008:183) described the spirituality of leaders who influence change as a spirituality of servant leadership.

In **Chapter 9,** the focus was on changing the lifestyle of corruption by altering people's attitudes according to the perspective of the *Missio Dei.*

The *Missio Dei* of God – viewed as the breaking through of God in this world and the responsibility of Christians to join this mission – must receive a prominent reference in addressing the problematic praxis of corruption. Two focal points that emanated from the interviews are linked, namely, the role of attitudes as part of the

roots of corruption, and the participation of believers in God's mission through various manifestations of persuasive communication.

It is important to realise that attitudes form the centre point of the framework of people who are committed to root out corruption. Attitudes also play an important role in the lives of people who are experiencing pain caused by corruption. In the triangular visualisation of attitudes, three components can be distinguished, namely, beliefs and thoughts, the evaluation of feelings and emotions, and the behavioural aspect which refers to the way in which attitudes are expressed or the motives and intentions of people.

Attitudes are usually formed by selecting facts. People tend to select facts that confirm their attitudes. They tend to provide motivations why corruptive actions should be tolerated. People will always try to rationalise why they are committing corruption. The process in which attitudes are influenced (changed) is called persuasion. Persuasive communication is highly effective when relationships between people are in good order. God expects Christian leaders to communicate persuasively with the concept of *Missio Dei* as the driving thrust within their communities. The gospel, through the powerful work of the spirit, can change minds, hearts and the attitudes of people. The living proclamation of the gospel can change cultures.

The following practical-theological strategic perspectives could be derived:

- If the phenomenon of corruption is treated without any relation to God, all attempts will be superficial.
- Persuasive communication can help people to change their interior maps and not just their behaviour.

- Christians should come to a new understanding of themselves in this world and especially of what God is doing through them in people's lives.
- Missionary work belongs to God. Churches are actually God's instrument in combatting corruption. Without an understanding of the urgency of the concept of *Missio Dei*, persuasive messages can become one-sided and manipulative in essence.
- People should be invited to enter the kingdom of God by proclaiming the Word of God and through manifestations of ministry.
- Prophetic preaching equips Christians to radiate the light of the kingdom of heaven and its righteousness to reveal and energise with the aim of refocusing the world to seek a restored relationship with God.
- Christians should communicate persuasively to convey the message of prophetic preaching in their workplace and in all spheres of society.
- *Societas* or true *communitas* with people in societies is needed. Without showing the world that believers care for them, the testimony of believers will become irrelevant.
- People should understand that their attitude in their workplace matters. Work is a form of worship and, therefore, a liturgy is needed at workplaces.
- All believers should start to change their attitudes to act against corruption.

Chapter 10 described a social movement against corruption in the footsteps of Jesus' *diakonia* according to the Gospel of Matthew. The

purpose of the chapter was to trace the footsteps and teachings of Jesus as recorded in the Gospel of Matthew, especially his *diakonia* described in Matthew 20:28.

When *diakonia* is understood with regard to the 'I came (not) to' sayings in Matthew and the immediate context of Matthew 20:27–28, it is clear that *diakonia* has to do with:

- Living as people called to follow Jesus.
- Living as people called to represent Jesus.
- Participating in the passion of Jesus as well as his power and authority.
- Living according to the law as fulfilled by Jesus (Mt 5).
- Showing mercy to those who are in need of healing and restoration.
- Bringing the good news to people and being involved with the harvest of the Lord (praying and reaping).
- Associating with disciples of Jesus.
- Being assured that the Lord of the harvest will provide us with what is right and to be, therefore, able to rejoice in the grace others receive.

The task of churches is, therefore, to be active watchdogs, to take care of the plight of the poor and the marginalised and to be custodians of truth, honesty, fairness and compassion. It is the calling of ministers, elders and deacons to equip believers for their service work so that they can carry Jesus' message and his lifestyle into societies. It is also important that believers work together and from this cooperation a movement can flow, firstly, amongst believers,

but then also amongst non-believers to become a social movement. The main focus of churches is to worship God and equip saints to serve God and other people, but when believers live according to the Word of God, God can use a social movement to influence societies significantly.

The main focus of churches is the kingdom of God. To be able to start a social movement according to the footsteps of Jesus:

- Churches need people who distribute the gifts of the kingdom of heaven and proclaim the gospel fearlessly even when in danger of losing loved ones, status, position or their lives.
- Churches need to nurture their members in their preparedness to sacrifice and break with greed and selfishness.
- Churches need people who live before the face of the loving God. Despite the liturgy, preaching and teaching of churches, people's hearts should be lifted up (*sursum corda*) so that they can stand before the face of God (*coram Deo*) to live in a close relationship with their Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.
- Churches should lead their members to the point where they will gladly endure suffering for the sake of Jesus.

Those who follow Jesus (*diakonia*) are sent by God as labourers into the harvest because he has compassion with people who do not know and follow the shepherd Jesus Christ. *Diakonia* forms an essential part of the *Missio Dei*. God sent his Son to serve and not to be served so that the harvest could be gathered by him, but also so that he can send more labourers to harvest.

■ Hermeneutical interaction between findings in the descriptive-interpretative sections and the normative-strategic sections

☐ Summary of the findings in the descriptive-interpretative sections

- In the interviews with Christian leaders, the researchers identified the following main reason for the phenomenon of corruption in the South African society: unhealthy configurations of **power and greed** are responsible for corruption on various levels of government, in the private sector and in the ordinary lives of people. Furthermore, Christian leaders are not viewed to be adequately equipped in countering the serious threat posed by corruption in our democratic environment (see Figure 4-2B).

- **Culture** may be an important cause of corruption on the one hand, in the sense that traditional African cultures may have corruptive influences. On the other hand, traditional cultures may be the subject of corruption because of the harmful effects of Western exploitation. Problems with leadership and corruption within African continental governments are known facts and are of monumental proportions.

- Especially in **African cultures**, strong attachments to extended families and ethnic groups as well as expectations of sharing benefits may lead many civil servants to engage in corrupt acts to meet their social obligations.

- The problem of **leadership** and corruption within African continental governments is a known fact and of substantial proportions.

- One reason for reluctance to act against corruption, is the fact that leaders and officials are often busy with furthering their **own interests** and the interests of the ruling party and, therefore, the interests of societies are not a priority.
- The seemingly ineffectiveness of anti-corruption dialogue and protests in the public sphere of civil society have a negative effect on Christians' voices. The goal of **prophetic witnessing** during the abolishment of apartheid, namely changing the country's injustices to justice and ensuring the equality of all its people in one united South Africa, has been reached. Churches have no longer an influence in the public sector. The possibility that their prophetic witnessing can have an impact on the public sphere and the government is slim.
- In general, causes for corruption in the **public sector** are greed, lack of moral values, insufficient mechanisms to deal with corruption, a flawed legal culture, unskilled and poorly trained officials, lack of control over the flow of capital in the processes of social security, poverty and the absence of an adequate moral fibre in the society at large.
- Low wages, unemployment and **poverty** are amongst the causes of corruption, especially in developing countries.

☐ Summary of the findings in the normative sections

The following norms could be derived from the above-mentioned sections.

In the interviews with Christian leaders, the researchers identified the consciousness of a Christian mandate that God's view on

corruption should be communicated, according to God's will, to equip Christians in countering corruption (see Figure 6-2C).

God's view on corruption

- God views societies throughout the ages as if court hearings are taking place. His view of corrupt societies and their actions is clearly visible in his wrath, his holy hostility to evil and by his actions of giving them up to the captivity of viciousness. Despite his view of corrupt societies, God's judgement is always righteous, impartial and full of grace (in providing room for repentance), but allows him to save his judgement for unrepentant hearts. His view of corrupt societies stands firm in his final incontestable verdict that there is not a single righteous person on earth.

- Because God is the perfect shepherd, he commands the shepherds in his service to care on behalf of him for his flock of sheep. God judges the bad shepherds who are responsible for a scattered and helpless flock without direction. He expels such shepherds. God's judgement will also fall on those sheep that harm weaker sheep. It is never God's will that his people are oppressed or harm one another or when advantage is taken of resources that should be available to all.

Christians are empowered to combat corruption

- Christians and Christian leaders should be equipped with the absolute security that God reigns over everything and with the comfort of God's love for his people and disciples' love for one another.

- Christians are empowered because God's righteousness brings saving righteousness to believers and, therefore, Christians are

empowered to combat corruption in society by breaking the power of sin through the death and resurrection of Christ.

- God empowers Christians with a new life in a new era, not only to end their enslavement to sin, but to become slaves of Christ and to be able to act in his power against corruption in society.
- Christians and Christian leaders should know that they receive undeserved cleanness to help transgressors to embrace the certainty of undeserved received cleanness.
- Christians and Christian leaders should be trained in the knowledge of relational unity.
- Jesus identified himself as the good shepherd who calls his sheep by their names, leads them out to pasture and protects them. Christian leaders can act during their prophetic witnessing with hope where there is hopelessness.
- The work of Christ – conquering sin and its power – is applied by the spirit in freeing us from the law of sin and empowering us to live a new life under the spirit's guidance.

Christians are able to influence societies

- Christians are able to influence societies through living a transformed life. Christians should give instead of take and they should offer themselves as a sacrifice to God and also to their neighbours and societies by testifying of their transformed life by not conforming to the corrupted patterns of the world and also by illustrating God's will: love your enemies to triumph over the evil of corruption.
- Christians and Christian leaders should act in obedience with the sure knowledge that the commandments were given in love in order to receive freedom and life.

- Christians should obey governing authorities so that the authorities can punish the wrongdoers.
- Christians should testify against corruption present in governing authorities and report corruption to the correct judicial institutions.
- Christians should proclaim the important commandment of loving one's neighbours because this love never harms and will refrain from corrupt actions. In this way, corruption can be combatted.
- Churches should make use of a strong, united, ecumenical and prophetical voice to point out corruption and to provide direction for societies to become more just.

☐ Summary of the findings in the strategic sections

In the interviews with Christian leaders, the researchers identified effective strategic efforts to equip Christians to value their counter-corruption role as an integral part of the *Missio Dei* (See Figure 8-2D).

- The *Missio Dei* of God – the breaking through of God in this world and the responsibility of Christians in joining this mission – should receive a prominent reference in addressing the problematic praxis of corruption.
- If the phenomenon of corruption is treated without any relation to God, all future attempts will be superficial. Christians should come to a new understanding of themselves in this world and especially of what God is doing through them in people's lives.
- Without fully understanding the urgency of the concept of the *Missio Dei*, persuasive messages can become one-sided and

manipulative in essence. Those who follow Jesus (*diakonia*), are sent by God as labourers because he shows compassion to people who do not know and follow the shepherd Jesus Christ. *Diakonia* forms an essential part of the *Missio Dei,* and God sent his Son to serve so that he can send more labourers to harvest.

- All believers should change their attitudes to act against corruption. People should understand that their attitudes at their workplace matter. Work is a form of worship and, therefore, a liturgy is needed by everyone at their workplace.

- The church needs to nurture its members in its preparedness to sacrifice and break with greed and selfishness so that its members will gladly endure suffering for the sake of Jesus.

- Prophetic preaching equips Christians to radiate the light of the kingdom of heaven and its righteousness to reveal and energise the aim of refocusing the world to a restored relationship with God. It is the calling of ministers, elders and deacons to equip believers for their service work to carry Jesus' message and his lifestyle to societies.

- Christians should communicate persuasively to convey the message of prophetic preaching in their workplace and in all spheres of society. Without showing the world that believers care, the testimony of believers will become irrelevant. The task of churches is to be active as watchdogs, to take care of the plight of the poor and the marginalised and to be the custodians of truth, honesty, fairness and compassion.

- It is also important that believers work together, and out of this action a movement can flow, firstly, amongst believers, but also

to persuade non-believers in becoming a social movement with them. To be able to start a social movement according to the footsteps of Jesus, churches need people who distribute their gifts of the kingdom of heaven and who proclaim the gospel fearlessly even when in danger of losing loved ones, status, position or their lives.

Guidelines to make people aware of God's view on corruption

The principle: God's judgement of corruption

Practical-theological guidelines:

- Christian leaders (individually and through churches) should openly proclaim in public spheres that God's judgement of corruption is righteous, full of grace (provides room for repentance) and that there will be a final incontestable verdict.
- Churches should testify against the misuse of power and the sin of greed to their members and through believers in their workplace, in society and through social media.
- Churches should confess their absence of inner motivation to combat corruption as well as the absence of a strong prophetic voice regarding the phenomenon of corrupt actions.

The principle: God's commandment to care and protect

Practical-theological guidelines:

- Churches should proclaim that God is the perfect shepherd, the ultimate example to Christians of caring for and protecting neighbours.

- Christian leaders should join the *Missio Dei* (mission of God) in corrupt societies by caring for the poor and testifying against governing powers who do not protect the poor.
- Churches should, through their words and actions, care for their neighbours, especially when weaker persons are exploited by those in power.
- Christian leaders should protect their neighbours by taking measures to bring perpetrators before the law.
- Caring and protecting should be performed in a spirit of *diakonia* (as servants) because church leaders are sent by God as labourers into the harvest.

Guidelines to apply actions as empowered Christian leaders

The principle: Empowered through saving grace to receive Christ's righteousness

Practical-theological guidelines:

- Christian leaders should come to a new understanding that they are righteous in Christ and that he can perform miracles through them in corrupt societies.
- Christian leaders should, because they are saved by grace, bestow grace by addressing corruption that causes poverty and unemployment.
- Because Christian leaders receive the righteousness of Christ, they should imitate Christ in his solidarity with the needy and people in social distress. They should, therefore, also cry out for justice to all people.

- Christian leaders should imitate Christ's attitude of caring for and loving people by sacrificing their own interests.

The principle: Empowered through conquering sin and by sharing in the victory of Christ

Practical-theological guidelines:

- Christian leaders should proclaim that Christ conquered sin and that believers, therefore, receive undeserved cleanness to help transgressors.
- Christian leaders should constantly exercise self-examinations of their attitudes and leadership roles as believers who conquered sin. Believers should continually share in the victory of Christ.
- Christian leaders should obey the instructions of Christ so that reliability, integrity and loyalty become part of their daily lives.

The principle: Empowered through the calling of Christ

Practical-theological guidelines:

- Because churches are called by Christ, believers should bring a prophetic voice of hope to hopeless people.
- Churches are called to testify against greed and the misuse of power.
- Although the voice of churches seems to have a small impact on governing bodies, churches are called to ceaselessly give prophetic witnessing. Witnessing should be performed openly.
- Called as followers of the great leader, Christian leaders should lead in combatting corruption by providing a credible example and words of inspiration to act according to Christian ethics.

☐ The principle: Empowered by receiving a new life under guidance of the spirit

Practical-theological guidelines:

- Because Christian leaders receive a new life and new eyes to view people, they should continuously reform their own cultures and lead others to reform theirs.
- Because Christian leaders receive a new life, they should imitate Christ in their attitudes towards possessions.
- Because Christian leaders receive a new life, they should form a united stand against corruption.
- Christian leaders should steadfastly act against corruption in the absolute certainty that they will be guided by God's spirit.
- As new creatures, Christian leaders should start by changing their attitudes and break with greediness and selfishness.

■ Guidelines for Christian leaders to influence societies

☐ The principle: Influence by using a transformed heart as example

Practical-theological guidelines:

- Christian leaders, as transformed people, should exercise self-examinations of their leadership to ensure that morality, justice, righteousness, honesty, trustworthiness, reliability, integrity, credibility and faithfulness are core characteristics of their leadership.
- Christian leaders should influence others by being an example of a transformed life with humility and servanthood care as core principles.

- Churches should lead by example to show that they discipline believers who do not abide by rules.
- Christian leaders should promote ethics in the public sector and develop a public sector ethos.
- A transformed life should lead to a transformed culture, and Christian leaders should each influence their own culture to eliminate elements in their culture that may open the door to corruption.
- Christian leaders should approach the reforming of cultures with regard to corruption with a sensitivity towards differences in cultures.
- Christian leaders should address the attitude of self-interest and teach people that servanthood is the moral directive in interpersonal relations.
- Churches should influence the formation of attitudes to rectify wrong attitudes and strengthen civil societies with applicable moral norms.

☐ The principle: Influence by loving God and neighbours (even enemies) through doing God's will

Practical-theological guidelines:

- Church leaders should follow the commandments of the chief shepherd Jesus Christ by shepherding the flock in such a manner that reliability, integrity and loyalty become part of their way of life.
- Churches should use their unique position in society to raise awareness of the problems caused by corruption.
- Christian leaders should influence Christians and non-Christians to overcome greed and self-interest and to enhance the interests of others, especially those of the needy.

- Churches should proclaim God's will to love their neighbours and not to harm people by stealing from them.
- The special services in churches should equip believers to carry Jesus' message and lifestyle into their workplace and society in general.
- Churches should take care of the poor and the marginalised in corrupt societies.
- Christian leaders should stand up for a caring economy that addresses the plight of the poor.

☐ The principle: Influence by obeying governing authorities

Practical-theological guidelines:

- Christian leaders should obey the laws of the country and influence governing authorities to inflict punishment upon wrongdoers.
- Christian leaders should not only work towards the replacement of corrupt leaders but also for a renewal in public life and individuals.
- Churches should seize every opportunity to reveal corruption where tax money is misused.
- Churches should act as watchdogs in dealing with the root causes of corruption when focusing on underlying attitudes.
- Churches should support all the legal measures taken by authorities to prevent corruption and should fulfil the role of whistle-blowers in monitoring the administration of justice.
- Christian leaders should make their conscience heard by every available means to begin an 'ethical repair task' in the public sector.

☐ The principle: Influence through testifying against corruption by using a united prophetical voice

Practical-theological guidelines:

- Christian leaders should find a way of ministering the heart of the Christian gospel by disclosing trust in a way that will open up a new life for all.
- Churches from all denominations should raise awareness of the problem of corruption through a united prophetic voice.
- Christian leaders should overcome the silence of their prophetic voice by regular united testimonies against corrupt actions and corrupt officials.
- Christian leaders should personally testify and equip Christians to testify against greed and the misuse of power.
- Christian leaders should openly address causes of corruption in the public sector, like a lack in moral values, unskilled and poorly trained officials, as well as poverty.
- Churches should identify the causes, attitudes and the negative impact of corruption on people, peace and prosperity.
- In standing together, Christian leaders should work to enable a social movement that includes non-believers to testify against corrupt leaders and practices.
- The united prophetical voice of Christian leaders should be heard in a problematic praxis of people becoming poorer and struggling because of the consequences of the acts of corrupt people.
- Churches should use their prophetic calling by preaching and teaching, and their involvement in societies to enhance alertness that behaviours such as greed, nepotism and exploitation are morally untenable and socially destructive.

■ Conclusion

The God-given responsibility of Christian leaders and their churches in a South African liberal democratic environment that is influenced by corruption, is a serious calling. Because of their knowledge of God's view on the sin of corruption and because they are empowered by God through the work of Christ, they can and should influence societies. At a time when it seems that the prophetic voice of Christian leaders is silenced, a new willingness in churches should evolve to let the voice of the gospel be heard. Through the calling of the king, Jesus Christ, and through the immense power of the Holy Spirit and guided by the Word, Christian leaders can fulfil the task to proclaim a united prophetic voice not only against corruption, but also to educate societies in developing a sound ethical conscience.

Appendix 1

■ Questionnaire for semi-structured interviews

1. **What is going on? (Descriptive task of practical theology)**

    1.1 Briefly describe the extent and characteristics of corruption in the democratic society of your country?

    1.2 How long have you been conscious of the presence of corruption in your society and what is the current impact of this consciousness on your Christian mind?

    1.3 Using the following scale, how would you classify the possible threat posed by corruption to the democratic environment in your society?

No threat at all	Minor compared to other issues	Not sure	Poses a relatively significant challenge	Poses an overwhelming threat

    1.4 Briefly comment on your selected answer:

    1.5 How do you rate your government`s political will in addressing the issues involved in corruption?

Totally lack of political will to address the issue	Marginally committed, but hampered by own involvement in corruption	Neutral stance	Committed to a large extent but focus lies with other crises	Completely committed to addressing the issue

    1.6 Briefly comment on your selected answer:

1.7 How do Christians in your country view corruption?

Totally apathetic	Concerned to a certain degree, but feel overwhelmed by apparent inability to make a change	Neutral	Concerned to a large degree, but feel that there are other burning issues in need of immediate attention	Totally motivated to address an issue that should be eradicated at all cost

1.8 Briefly comment on your selected answer:

1.9 Are there any other vital elements that should be taken into account in an attempt to determine what is going on regarding corruption in your society?

2. Why is this going on? (Interpretative task of practical theology)

2.1 What – in your view – are the major causes of the presence of corruption in your society?

2.2 What theoretical framework (political, sociological and theological) do you utilise in order to interpret and explain the instance of corruption?

2.3 Briefly give a definition of corruption incorporating its causes and effects as it plays out in your country.

2.4 Why do government leaders and officials act the way they do concerning instances of corruption in your democratic environment?

2.5 Why do Christian leaders act the way they do concerning instances of corruption in your democratic environment?

2.6 Why do Christians in general act the way they do concerning instances of corruption in your democratic environment?

3. What ought to happen? (Normative task of practical theology)

3.1 How – do you think – does God view instances of corruption in your society?

3.2 What – in your view – ought to be the role of Christian leaders in addressing the instance of corruption in your society?

3.3 What ought to be the role of Christians in society regarding corruption?

3.4 What – to your mind – ought to be communicated to leaders in the socio-political sphere regarding their responsibility in addressing instances of corruption?

3.5 To what extent do Christians have a normative mandate to act critically against corruption in society?

4. How might we respond? (Strategic task of practical theology)

4.1 To what extent are Christians equipped for the role regarding corruption in your society?

4.2 How do you see your role as a Christian leader regarding instances of corruption in your democratic environment?

4.3 What would be an effective Christian strategy for dealing with corruption in a responsible and effective way?

4.4 How do you see the relationship between God`s actions and human actions in getting to terms with corruption in a democratic environment?

- Follow-up questions like: 'Why did you say that?'; 'What did you mean by that?'; 'Are there any other factors that you think are important?', can be asked during the interviews in view of the semi-structured communicative environment of these interviews.
- All of the interviews should be audio recorded.
- Two researchers should be present during the interviews: whilst one researcher conducts the interview, the other researcher can focus on making a live and clear recording of the interview on a laptop computer with the eye on transcribing it in written text.

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The book will stimulate on-going transdisciplinary research focusing on unethical lifestyles and it will also encourage church leaders to engage with managers in other spheres of society, such as politics and economics, in order to counter the evil of corrupt practices. It focuses on the negative consequences of corruption: it does not respect human dignity; the 'otherness' of others; it exacerbates poverty; it weakens religious values and norms; it is not conducive to social cohesion in the country. The authors share the theological premise that God is present in this world. In the kingdom of God believers are encouraged to participate in the 'clean-up' process, which includes combating the phenomenon of corruption. This book roots theological research and reflection in the real life of both believers and non-believers who consider a 'clean' world without corruption as an absolute necessity for a country characterised by the ideals of liberal democracy.

This book contains valuable biblical exegetical insights. Whoever reads it from, and with, an attitude of being a transformed being through God's grace, and being set free to participate in the new life initiated by God will not, after reading it, set the book aside without a deep and serious self-reflection of their own behaviour in society.

Professor Andries van Aarde, Faculty of Theology, University of Pretoria, South Africa

This book calls upon the Church as the body of Christ to reflect on unity of action as opposed to a kind of isolationist and deceitful exclusivity in society. The Missio Dei is the Church's driving force.

P.L. Steenkamp (BD, PhD), author of *A Meaningful Workplace*