

**RELATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND THE  
CHALLENGES FACED BY THE MISSIONAL  
CHURCH**

**by**

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## THANK YOU

- Thank you Lord for your grace poured out upon us
- For the privilege of being part of your Church
- For the help and guidance of the Holy Spirit
- Thy will be done with this study, may it benefit and glorify your Name and your Church
- Thank you for a wonderful wife who is always ready to assist and encourage me in my dreams
- Thank you for true friends who stood by me through this process

Amen

## ABSTRACT

The global realities regarding the cultural shifts and the transition between the traditional, modern and postmodern world perspectives have particular implications for leadership in general. In several institutions, including commercial, educational, medical and religious circles, leaders face the challenges of the constant change in lifestyles, relational intelligence and responsibility. The combined impact of these changes in thought and culture, information technology, globalisation and racial, ethnic and religious pluralism, "has displaced the historic role the church has traditionally played" (Gibbs & Coffey 2006:19).

In this study it is argued that the Church will have to take a hard look at relationships in the world they find themselves in, in order to be the successful Missional Church which was demonstrated by Jesus their Master. The researcher wishes to show that the Church needs to change, evolve and advance in their relational intelligence and leadership and the leaders should set the pace. This implies a paradigm shift which is necessary and it is believed that with the proposed relational leadership style and the help of the Holy Spirit, this can be achieved as it is clearly demonstrated in the Trinity.

The discussion of the Trinity, especially a relational Trinity, reveals the core understanding of the researcher's viewpoint of missional ecclesiology and leadership. This study shows that the Triune God of love is a relational and missional God. It also shows that as a result of the total "oneness" of God, there is no hierarchical order in the Godhead and as such the Church should function and operate with the Trinity as their model and example.

The submission of the researcher is that missionality starts with a relationship. “God is love” (1 John 4:8) is the core and essence of God. It is because of this *ἀγάπη* that is shared within the Trinity and with His creation that God sent His Son as redeemer to a lost world to restore the broken relationship.

Because of the relational importance in missionality, Saccone is correct when he says: “God will continue to push humanity towards the transformation of our relational worlds, toward expanding our capacity to internalize His love so that we can externalize it to others” (Saccone 2009:19). God’s relationship with the world belongs to his eternal being (Flett 2010:34) and that relationship finds its expression constantly through the workings of the Holy Spirit, encouraging, helping and leading, supporting and teaching His church. The Christian community should therefore be a relational and missional community, or it cannot be seen as a community that lives in fellowship with the triune God that gave His life to save the world.

There is an urgent and unceasing peremptory and unconditional demand made on the ability of the Church to re-think their leadership role in their community and in the world. The demands of the current era Church have to be accommodated and the much needed assistance of the Holy Spirit is indispensable.

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