

CHAPTER 3: The Methodology of Caring.

1. Introduction

In the previous Chapter, the author delved rather very intensively into the Theology of Caring by providing a comprehensive synopsis on the following topics:

- Analysing widows from various milieus.
- General Understanding of Caring
- Specific Proposition of the Understanding of Caring.
- Distinct Understanding of the Theology of Caring.

The chapter investigated various kinds of widows as well as the causes thereof. It went on to dissect the Theology of Caring; and analysing it under the following headings:

- Theology of Brokenness.
- Theology of Comfort.
- Theology of Anointing the Wounds.

The investigation of the Theology of Caring in minute detail was helpful in order to provide the pastoral care-giver with the necessary ammunition to deal with the widow in question more effectively and efficiently.

In the current Chapter, the author will sketch a picture of the devastations caused by death as this ultimately impacts on the state of widowhood. In his subject of assessing the care of the clergy widows within the Pentecostal Church, he will start by indicating that there had to be death in a certain family, hence the surviving

spouse is called a widow. A methodology of caring is sought for this very surviving widow.

Attesting to the foregoing is Mnisi's acknowledgement that: "As a Pastoral Counsellor I know that anger is a signal of frustration and depression, and one worth listening to" (Mnisi 2005:39). The pain, anguish and frustration internalized by the widow manifests itself with a kind of a woe that cannot be extinguished by words only. The widows reiterate this pain by words spoken by one broken woman as follows: "The watchmen who went about the city found me, they struck me, and they wounded me; the keepers of the walls took my veil away from me" (Songs of Solomon 5:7)

There are a countless widows whose veils have been taken away from them. Such widows have been left naked and vulnerable because both the society and the church have undressed them, and left them shamelessly wondering for survival. The methodology to answer the cry of the hurting widows, will be provided in order to bring about the solution in their painful circumstances. This Chapter will discuss the methodology under the following headings:

- Epistemology.
- The Reputable Way to Provide Caring.
- Uniqueness of the Minister's offering.
- Love: The Pivotal Point of Departure.
- Preliminary Conclusion.

2. Epistemology

This is a scientific method that seeks to answer questions in a rational way. Mouton and Muller have this to say: “The “modernist” paradigm in the social sciences, as this shift from the philosophical to empirical inquiry in the area of the social has come to be called, soon became the accepted orthodoxy. Underlying the writings of the Enlightenment prophets of modernity as well as their twentieth-century followers – the logical positivists, rationalists and empiricists – are certain key epistemological and methodological assumptions about the nature of modern science. Two core sets of assumptions can be discerned: the first can be called the Enlightenment’s promise of a positive science; the second, the promise of an emancipatory science” (Mouton & Muller 1997:1)

On the promise of a positive science they state: “The promise of positivism was that scientific discipline which modelled themselves on this framework would achieve true scientific status. In the final analysis, to be scientific means to be able to formulate true, universal, lawlike statements that provide causal explanations of the world” (1997:3)

On the promise of emancipatory theories they mention: “Contrary to the claims and ideal of a value-free social science, it is quite clear that social theorising has always, from its first formulations, had a distinct moral and political dimension. Even though some of the prominent positivists might have denied this, many studies have shown (for example, Root 1993; Bellah 1983) that social theories have always been intricately linked to political and moral ideals” (1997:3)

The author supports the notions upheld by the two authorities that the field of knowledge demands a rather empirical methodology to support whatever thesis,

belief of idea which one upholds. To qualify a hypothesis as scientific, forms of a scientific methodology would need to be engaged. He further supports the conception that there is a link between social theories, political as well as moral ideals. This is highly evident in the kinds of widows discussed in Chapter two. For an example, a thorough investigation into the causes for widowhood shows a link between moral ideals as well as political and economical reasons which can only be discovered scientifically. It is for this reason that a scientific methodology will be employed with the intention to address the care of clergy widows within the Pentecostal Church.

It emerges from the argument by the two authorities that the science of reasoning has taken a differing form from the additional philosophic route and this requires that the scientific methodology to be engaged. This compelling reason to justify data in the scientific methodology will be helpful to qualify the research results and recommendations as quantifiable in the final analysis. The results will be credible to be measured on the scientific reasoning scale.

The delineating factor in as far as the sample of the research is concerned, will be taken from a specific group of people of which Sarantakos says: “Normally, qualitative studies employ a form of non-probability sampling, such as accidental or purposive sampling (Kuzel, 1992), as well as snowball sampling and theoretical sampling. Qualitative sampling is biased by nature of the underlying qualitative framework, which is perceived as an investigative process, not very different from detective work, where ‘one makes gradual sense of a social phenomenon, and does it in large part by contrasting, comparing, replicating, cataloguing and classifying the objects of one’s study’ (Miles and Huberman,1994)” (Sarantakos 1993:168). He further stated that: “Nevertheless, qualitative research has no strict, agreed rules

for sampling by all researchers. Sampling procedures employed by qualitative researchers include those mentioned above (accidental purposive, snowball sampling and so on) or a version or combination of quantitative sampling procedures. In all cases, sampling is closely associated with theory. It is therefore either theory-driven ‘up-front’ Miles and Huberman 1994:27), where subjects are chosen before data collection, guided by theory, or progressively, during data collection” (Sarantakos 1993:168)

The author supports the sampling method which he will employ in an attempt to choose the most probable subject. He will select the sample of clergy widows from a broad scope of widows. He will further narrow his subject by selecting them from the Pentecostal churches as opposed to any other church organization. To justify the method as scientific, he will compare these widows with the two sample subjects from the mainline churches.

This section addresses the process of how the author is going to use the methodology. Since a substantial amount of data is not documented, the author will dialogue the data in another chapter. It has been observed in the previous chapter how some causes of widowhood cannot be scientifically proven. The following chapter will, therefore, use resources and communicate or dialogue the process of responses of the victim survivors. Employing Gerkin’s Shepherding model, the widows will be counselled following such a caring method.

3. The Reputable Way to Provide Caring

The reputable way of providing caring for the widows will be ushered in a systematic fashion which observes the scientific principles of methodology. This methodology within the African theology is defined by Aka as follows: “We have

noted that theology is a methodical and systematic reflection of faith with the aim of presenting an intelligible and coherent system” (*ed* Aka 1991:162)

Clinebell equally indicates the importance of this endeavour by saying: “Educative counselling skills are valuable assets in the prophetic ministry. They are useful tools in implementing the Gandhi-King-Day-Lee principle by dealing constructively with community problems and issues of institutional injustice” (Clinebell 1966:340)

In creating a model where its function is to address and assess the care of widows within the Pentecostal Church, it is extremely important to note that issues of institutional injustice have to be dealt with very sensitively. Failure to handle such, will result not only with pandemonium, but an unequalled cacophony as well; the kind painted in Acts 6:1-7.

In this portion of Scripture, the Greek speaking Jews complained that their widows were not taken care of as the Hebrew speaking Jews were. The hubbub erupted simply because the issues of institutional, organizational or church injustice were not handled constructively. The author will seek to create a method that will minimize if not obliterate, the injustice which is exercised in the broader society generally and the church in particular, in relation to the care of widows.

It surfaces therefore from the two authorities and the Scripture above that methodology is a scientific and systematic way that serves to inform the researcher of the way or manner in which a specific topic undertaken is to be approached. It further comes into view that the ultimate aim of the research undertaken should propose a probable solution which will serve as a tool to address the subject in

question. This methodology will empower the survivor to both cherish and embrace her state of affairs as well as the encounter itself. She will acknowledge that Christ, the Wounded Healer is by her side.

Having analyzed the Reputable Way of Providing Care for the widows, we will now journey through the Uniqueness of the Minister's offering. This Offering actually addresses the nobility and uniqueness of the gift and calling with which the Pastoral Care Giver has been entrusted. There are various authorities that account for the methodology of care within the Pastoral Care discipline. First in the list comes Gerkin, a renowned voice within the discipline who makes the following acknowledgement: "Our most reliable source regarding the beginnings of pastoral care is, of course, the Bible. Turning first to that source, we learn that the care of the community of people who worshiped the one God, Yahweh, required the assignment of leadership roles to certain individuals" (Gerkin 1997:23)

One immediately notices that Gerkin draws his wealth of the Shepherding conception from sources such as Psalm 23, where the Psalmist lived in full dependence on the care of the one and true God, Yahweh. Combining Gerkin's Shepherding Model with the Psalmist's, one immediately establishes an analysis that the Model is as applicable this day as it was then. It might only be a change of scenery and the times, yet the principles of care remain the same. This led the author to seeking to establish a Model that seeks an intense Hermeneutical scrutiny in order to be able to forge sound methodology for caring for the widows.

The author would hereby love to submit the Reputable Way of Caring which is centred on the Science established by hermeneutists. "These are the Biblical

scholars who devoted their time to the study of the word with the intention to be able to further develop principles and methods for interpreting written texts, particularly the Bible and other classical texts” (Capps 1984:15)

From the hermeneutical point of view Capps submits that: “Technically, hermeneutics is concerned with interpretation of texts. Yet in recent years, the principles of hermeneutics have been applied to phenomena other than texts, and there have been proposals for applying hermeneutics to the sphere of human action. The idea that certain human actions are like texts has caught on, and it has already been applied with notable success to social and political action” (1984:12)

The foregoing implies that the life of a widow is a vulnerable text that can be read by all, and as such deserves a decent handling by the church and its leadership. According to Capps: “Following Friedrich Schleiermacher, who has been called the father of modern hermeneutics, a major goal of those engaged in hermeneutics has been to develop a general science of interpretation, one whose principles and methods would be applicable to all written texts held to be meaningful” (1984:15)

Capps further reasons as follows: “Pastoral actions have been compared with other kinds of actions, such as parental, psychotherapeutic, political, and artistic actions. They have also been compared with other kinds of phenomena, such as the growth of an organism or the construction of an edifice. But viewing pastoral actions as tests necessarily focuses our attention on the task of understanding the meaning of pastoral actions, and it challenges us to discover how pastoral actions are world-disclosive for those they influence” (1984:35)

This Hermeneutical Model will provide a reputable way of caring for the widows and as such dictates to be analysed under the following headings:

3.1. The Hermeneutical Shepherding Model:

The concept of hermeneutics needs to be understood before we can even attempt to wrestle with its implications as it relates to caring. Capps submits it as follows: “What is hermeneutics? According to Norman Perrin, hermeneutics is “the methodology for reaching an understanding of written texts held to be meaningful...Understanding a text requires the use of methods and principles of interpretation” (Capps 1984:15)

Capps further suggests that the: “evidence that the individual has appropriated a given pastoral action will be reflected in some reorientation of their lives. This need not be highly dramatic, but it should be meaningful or significant. It may be reflected in various kinds of changes, including perceptual, behavioural, cognitive, and emotional changes. It may result in changes in values, personal commitment, life goals, and fundamental convictions” (1984:48)

Applying Freud on the hermeneutics of suspicion, Capps argues that: “Psychoanalysis entertains the suspicion that much of what we say is not what we mean and that even the speaker is unaware of the discrepancy” (Capps 1984:33)

Clinebell further states: “The methodology of effective social action must utilize but go beyond the educative counselling model to include political methods designed to influence the power structures of one’s community” (Clinebell 1966:340)

The author agrees with Clinebell that the methodology of effective social action must transcend beyond the confines of one circle of society. This became a propelling reason for the author to look at an instrument that will influence not only the ecclesiastical circles but the government as well. The methodology of the care for widows becomes as such a new avenue, a spring bolt into higher horizons.

Whilst it is an appropriate idea to think of an individual as an important member of a broader society; it is equally important to conceptualize an individual as a being vested with individualistic unshared attributes. This notion argues against what Rose regards as follows: “The plural but total way of conceiving power leaves the individual more not less exposed to the unmitigated power of state” (Rose 1996:21)

3.1.1. Appropriation of the Hermeneutical Model:

The true meaning of a totalitarian and holistic hermeneutical model among an African people is drawn by Healey and Sybertz as follows: “Africans emphasize harmony in the community rather than division... The importance of community in African society leads to a crucial distinction between the individual and the individual-in-community” (Healey & Sybertz 1999:116-117). The author believes that in order to create an informed methodology of caring for the surviving widows of the deceased clergies, there is a need to understand the communalistic context of which such a people are a part. This in turn will be helpful in apprehending the desired hermeneutical model.

Such a lifestyle is easily recognizable among African people. Widows will perform certain rituals to appease the ancestors as a way of seeking healing. As indicated in the Shepherding model of Gerkin, such a notion is never taken care of.

Yet Uka on the other hand deals sensitively with an African people in his attempt to appropriate the hermeneutical mode by stating the following: “This is another means by which the traditional African seeks to relate to God. It is a deeper level of prayer involving the offering of gifts to God or gods as a means of expressing the intensity of one’s desire to communicate with God or the invisible world” (*ed* Uka 1991:174)

The author will endeavour to encourage widows to consider appropriating the hermeneutical model by adopting the philosophy of allowing a reorientation of their lives by incorporating a therapeutic change as Uka proposes. He also agrees with the notion of encouraging them to be allowed to communicate with God at the level of their belief system. Homans demonstrates this proposition as follows: “Norms do not materialize out of nothing; they emerge from ongoing activities” (Homans 1951:127).

It becomes very evident from Homans’ proposition that the different norms followed by a people play an important role tantamount to the inherent therapeutic value embedded in them, hence these become important to consider as an ongoing activity that can be instrumental in the healing of the broken widow. This can also be used as a tool of appropriating the hermeneutical model of care.

3.1.2. Boosting Self-Awareness:

The desired hermeneutical model should lead one to “increase in self-awareness as an effect of disclosive power of a meaningful pastoral action” as Carr portrays (1989:51)

The author agrees with Carr that an increase in self-awareness is an effect of disclosive power of a meaningful pastoral action. This opinion is observed in the Mirth Vos's 'Letters to Myself on Dying' where amidst her state of anguish, pain and agony, she could still pronounce: "I know that grief is a psychological and physiological state with documented peculiarities. Its disorienting effect is as radical, although in a negative way, as the disorientation that occurs when one is falling in love" (Vos 1999:27). This state of hope is of paramount necessity if the hurting victim survivors are to establish some form of solace in an attempt to boost one-self and as such derive at the desired therapy.

One such effective way to assist the counselees to reach new heights of healing is drawn by Carr who states that: "Pastoral theologians have long recognized that reflection on pastoral actions involves identifying their dynamics and making a diagnostic assessment in terms of these dynamics" (1989:51)

In order to successfully reach the ailing widow, it becomes imperative to engage all necessary dynamics around her pain and state of being since this will be instrumental in creating the necessary tool to boost the aching self of the widow.

We will now look at how a Shepherd, as a guide, can be instrumental in facilitating the methodology of caring for the widows. As indicated above, Gerkin acknowledges that the primary source of Shepherding is the Bible. The author will as such employ Psalm 23 to address the various facets of the Hermeneutical Caring Model.

3.2. The Shepherd as a Guide:

“The LORD is my shepherd” (Psalm 23:1a). This part of the Psalm reflects the inherent virtue of caring that defines the relationship of God with His creation. God is portrayed as a Guide. One of the roles of the guide, amongst others, is to lead the flock to the transformative mode of which Browning states: “From a Christian theological perspective, God is always finally the agent of transformation. All other agents of transformation-community, minister, lay leader- are metaphors of God’s deeper transformative love” (1996:279)

The author agrees with the Psalmist who paints God as a guide as well as the picture drawn by Browning which demonstrates God as the final agent of transformation. The pastoral care-givers will have to disburse from their wells of kindness an abundance of mercies, God’s transformative love and healing grace to the widows.

3.3. The Shepherd as a Healer:

“You anoint my head with oil (Psalm 23:5b)”. There is so much bleeding that has occurred to the widow. There is still more that happens every day. For an example, the fact that she has to adjust to the reality of having lost a spouse and has to equally fend for the family, are reasons enough to depict the need for the Shepherd who can intervene with healing under these circumstances. The anointing with oil by the Great Shepherd is one primary therapeutic endeavour which Hulme describes in the light of the implicit functions of both priests and prophets as follows: “The two ways of caring-care for the individual person, marriage, family, and care for the corporate structures of society-can be compared to the roles of priest and prophets in the Old Testament” (Hulme 1973:35)

Aligning himself with the Psalmist and Hulme, Steinhoff Smith has this to say: “The ubiquitous and controllable character of suffering means that we often fail to fix it. One way to control something we can’t fix is to get rid of it. But suffering is unlike garbage (or seemingly unlike, but actually very like it; as ecologists point out, we never get rid of garbage); we can’t just throw suffering away- it does persist; and so the attempt to “get rid of” suffering is a denied denial of it. We deny it in thinking that it is something that can be got rid of, and then we deny it in thinking that we have got rid of it” (Steinhoff Smith 1999:104)

The author does attest to the acclamation by Steinhoff Smith that suffering is a reality that cannot be gotten rid of at the spell of a wish. It is, therefore, critically important for a Shepherd to expose some of the painful truths to the widow who should in turn accept such realities. Healing will then flow from the sense of acceptance of the pain and suffering resulting from the loss of a spouse. The caregiver would then have acted in his/her capacity as a healing shepherd.

3.4. The Shepherd as a Comforter:

“Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me” (Psalm 23:4). It should be noted that the widow, who is the subject of pastoral concern, is directly or indirectly a counselee of whom in his agreement with the Psalmist Stone states: “The way counselees are addressed and the types of questions they are asked can contribute to helping them envision a new future and develop workable counselling goals” (Stone 1994:26)

The author agrees with Stone even as proposed by the Psalmist that comfort is incumbent upon the nature and the kind of questions posed to victim survivors during the dialoguing with the Shepherd. The shepherd needs to develop the kind

of sensitivity drawn by Hexham in his research among an African people. He indicates the wealth of commitment to their unshakable belief from which they derive healing. Their comfort rests upon the knowledge such as: “*Unkulunkulu* gave men *Amatongo*; he gave them doctors for treating disease, and diviners; he gave them medicines to treat diseases occasioned by the *Itongo*...The old men say that *Unkulunkulu* is *Umvelinqangi*; for they say he came out first; they say he is the *Uthlanga* from which all men (sic) broke off” (Hexham 1987:187-188)

The author agrees in very strong terms with Hexham that an African people believe in God’s provision of the healing media. It is this age old traditional belief which would lead to the knowledge and sense of comfort for the widow. The practice of this belief system becomes a noble pastoral care model conceptualized by Carr as follows: “It means that we also need conceptual models for interpretation of pastoral actions” (1989:51)

3.5. The Shepherd as a Leader:

“He leads me beside the still waters” (Psalm 23:2b). “He leads me in paths of righteousness for His name name’s sake” (Psalm23:3b)

The shepherd as a leader plays a significant role that leads the sheep to still waters as well as in paths of righteousness. Considering the level of noise the widow finds herself engulfed with, it becomes therapeutic to receive the intervention of being led through the still waters of life which in the discipline of Practical Theology will represent the kind of tranquillity portrayed by Browning as follows: “Theology can be practical if we bring practical concerns to it from the beginning. The theologian does not stand before God, Scripture, and the historic witness of the

church like an empty slate or *Lockean tabula rasa* ready to be determined, filled up, and then plugged into a concrete practical situation” (Browning 1996:5)

The author agrees with the conceptualization by Browning which is actually a direct call to engage the victim survivor in a practical way that does not stand in the path of God or even Scripture. The kind of dependence which will develop in this commitment is spelt out by Gerkin where he states: “People have found the care of God and God’s people as communicated to them in richness of ritual practice as well as in wise guidance” (Gerkin 1997:24)

3.6. The Three Imperative P’s of Shepherding:

The author would love to submit this methodology as inherently entailed in the offices of prophets, providers and protectors as discussed in detail hereunder.

3.6.1. The Shepherd as a Prophet:

“He leads me in the paths of righteousness (Psalm 23:3b)”. The prophets were advocates of God’s righteousness. Equally so in this era, the widows need to be led through the period of God’s righteousness albeit they are going through the pain. The prophets as Shepherds of God’s people played an important role portrayed as follows by Gerkin: “The prophets, among them Amos, Jeremiah, and the authors of the book of Isaiah, were in their times dominant voices in giving moral guidance to the community” (Gerkin 1997:23-24)

He continues to provide a sterling argument about the conception of the shepherd as a prophet in the following way: “Why, you may ask then, have pastoral care givers recently focused primarily on individual guidance grounded in the Wisdom tradition, as the principal mode of pastoral care? Why have the ancestral claims of

the priestly and prophetic roles been relegated to a secondary place or given over to other functions of ministry? Has the practice of pastoral care been impoverished by its appropriation of its history as predominantly the domain of guidance? The answers to this question are, to be sure, complex. Indeed, the question itself needs to be modified somewhat by the recognition that the term guidance has been supplemented by some pastoral care historians with the addition of other metaphorical terms such as healing, reconciling, and sustaining” (1997:25)

To this end Gillespie attests the following: “If we have experienced God- and have grown and have been motivated by the presence of God in our faith experience- then our life will nurture growth” (Gillespie 1988:84-85). While the author agrees with Gerkin that the prophetic role of the prophet does not have to be relegated to an insignificant position, he further applauds the proposal by Gillespie that our lives will nurture growth if we have been motivated by the presence of God in our faith experience. This spontaneously suggests that there is a need to be therapeutically prophetic to those we minister to in such a way that they will be healed in the process. In this regard, this focus being to the widowed women.

The profound hermeneutical methodology requires that the pastoral care-giver reclaim the proper positioning of his/her office if we are to efficiently and effectively render authentic prophetic care service. The author agrees with Gerkin that the prophetic office of the pastoral care-giver, as a shepherd has to be reinstated to its rightful position so that the pastoral care-giver will be seen as prophetic in his/her shepherding.

3.6.2. The Shepherd as a Provider:

The Psalmist states: “The LORD is my Shepherd; I shall not want” (Psalm 23:1). He further states: “You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies” (Psalm 23:5a). This preparation of the table indicates the kind of explicit care which God provides to His people. The same kind of care is expected of the Pastoral Care Giver. This has to do with the broader understanding of caring portrayed thus by Gerkin: “A more holistic understanding of ministry, grounded in a narrative, hermeneutical approach to pastoral care theory, requires that we lay a broader ancestral claim than simply that of Wisdom tradition and its earliest practitioners” (1997:24)

The widow will then rest in the knowledge that she shall not want because God is her provider. The author agrees with the Psalmist that the Lord prepares a table of care publicly for the hurting. He also agrees with Gerkin that the fact that God is a Provider is best exemplified in the holistic understanding of ministry which is grounded in the hermeneutical approach of pastoral care theory. In this understanding comes the appreciation of the inherent anticipated care even for the widows.

3.6.3. The Shepherd as a Protector:

“Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me” (Psalm 23:4)

The subjects of the research, namely, the widows, are living under both the fear and uncertainty of the future. To this end, the need for fearing no evil needs an even more intense execution that claims: “Practitioners of spiritual direction have suggested that pastoral care offers merely temporary solutions to immediate

problems, whereas spiritual guidance offers “more positive guidance aimed at the development of creative gifts of the spirit” (Gerkin 1997:86)

The kind of protection needed by widows is likely to leave one with feelings that were felt by Clifford; a character of which Wimberly writes: “All families, no matter how religious, have difficulties. As mentioned earlier, Clifford felt branded by his family as an outsider. These negative feelings were further reinforced by the rejection he felt by the family member with whom he most closely identified-his father” (Wimberly 2003:21)

The author acknowledges the analogy by Wimberly which draws a painful picture of what normally happens when people feel rejected and unwanted. He supports Gerkin’s notion that spiritual guidance should offer more concrete solutions than temporary ones if the full picture of a shepherd is to be realized.

The Hermeneutical Model of Shepherding provided the baseline for the methodology for the care for widows, in particular. In the next session, we will explore the uniqueness of the minister’s offering. A minister or a Pastoral Care giver has an absolutely unique role to play. This is a defining role that makes him/her different from any other practitioner in other fields. It is important to know, define and internalise the responsibility that goes along with this vocation. The author will examine this unique offering from a few schools of thought in order to allow objectivity and input from various sources that advocate for an informed methodology of caring.

4. The Uniqueness of the Minister's Offering

The minister or the counsellor has a responsibility to assist the victim survivor to accept the realities of his/her situation. In the case of the widows under discussion, the author will endeavour to create a mechanism which will enable them to mourn and go through the full grief session. Failure to allow such results with what Herman states as follows: "Finally, the survivor needs help from others to mourn her losses...Failure to complete the normal process of grieving perpetuates the traumatic reaction" (Herman 1992:69)

The author supports Herman that if the minister is to impact lives, he/she should be willing to allow the hurting widow time to grieve and observe the entire mourning process without short-circuiting it. This is one most ideal offering which the minister can present both as a service and compassionate ministry to the hurting widows. This Shepherding methodology of care will be analyzed under some schools of thought, namely; the Traditional Israelites and the Afrocentric Models.

4.1. The Traditional Israelites Shepherding Model

The primary source of the Shepherding model is grounded in the Bible. This notion is backed by Gerkin in the following way: "Our earliest pastoral ancestors are to be among the leaders of the ancient people of Israel. From very early in recorded biblical history the custom was established of designating three classes of such leaders: the priests, a hereditary class that had particular responsibility for worship and ceremonial life; the prophets, who spoke for Yahweh in relation to moral issues, sometimes rebuking the community and its stated political leaders; and the wise men and women, who offered counsel of all sorts concerning issues of the food life and personal conduct" (Gerkin 1997:23)

This Shepherding model was never without its shortfalls though. The author does credit the analysis provided by Gerkin. Yet on the contrary, there sounds to be more credible an argument especially if the Theology of caring for the womenfolk is in discussion. This argument is presented by Fiorenza as follows: “A theoretical model for the reconstruction of women’s early Christian history, therefore must do justice to the fact that early Christian women as women were part of a submerged group, and as Christians they were part of an emergent group that was not yet recognized by the dominant patriarchal society and culture” (Fiorenza 1998:84)

The author applauds the rationale presented by Fiorenza which suggests that the Theology of caring must recognize the early historic patriarchy which overrode the existence of possibilities of a feministic consciousness in society. On that note, the responsibility to create a therapeutic healing model is incumbent upon the revamping of an all encapsulating model of care which will recognize the suppressive ills of the past and incorporate the widows as worthwhile of influencing the creation of their own model of caring.

In this early biblical model of caring, Gerkin further indicates that: “From the early Christian times to the present the image of the pastoral leader as the “shepherd of the flock” has persisted as a prototypical image applied to both pastors and ecclesiastical leaders of the institutional church. The shepherding motif appears again and again in the writings of the early church fathers as the organizing metaphor par excellence for the work of the pastoral leader” (1997:27)

The author supports the opinion by Gerkin that the pastoral leader has been considered as the “shepherd of the flock” and that this tradition requires refurbishment so that the same conception can be utilized to create an efficient model for the care of the widows in the modern era.

4.2. The Afrocentric Shepherding Model

It is important to note that the minister's offering of his/her services in the Afrocentric Shepherding Model depends on numerous factors portrayed as follows by Waruta and Kinoti: "In all societies counselling goes on all the time informally, through family relationships, friends, peers, neighbours, elders, religious leaders and teachers. This is especially so in contemporary Africa, where professional counselling has not yet been established. In those countries where professional counselling is practised widely, the help of counsellors is often sought when one's problems become overwhelming. In traditional African society this role is filled by the medicine-men, mediums, seers and religious specialists" (Waruta & Kinoti 2005:2)

The presentation by Waruta and Kinoti is very critical to the Pastoral Care Giver. It requires maturity from the side of the Minister. The author agrees with their detailed exposition of the African Traditional circumstances which require that the offering of the Minister should take into account other factors such as the holistic background of the victim survivor's circumstances.

Stemming from almost the same school of thought is Uka who confesses: "Given the fact that the traditional African seeks to live in harmony with his God and the other deities and ancestors from where he derives peace, prosperity, procreation, protection from danger, healing, justice and the like, it follows that as of necessity he develops ways and means by which he continually experiences and expresses them" (*ed* Uka 1991:171)

The author notes Uka's take with respect on his holistic approach in analyzing the African conception of a complete rootedness in terms of his/her religion. It is of

vital importance to be mindful of this fundamental Afrocentric position if an efficient model of caring for the widows is to be established and employed. More particularly, this approach will help the minister with a unique opportunity to offer Counselling and Pastoral Care without displaying any form of contempt to the background of the counselee.

4.3. Where Does Gerkin Fit In?

Gerkin speaks about Shepherding; however, he is not able to finish the model story in fullness, for example. He traces the Shepherding in the New Testament under the following headings:

4.3.1. Priestly

On this subject he says: “Pastoral leaders who see themselves primarily as leaders of worship have identified the Israelite priests as their spiritual ancestors” (Gerkin 1997:24). Hulme presents a different opinion that: “The result of this clericalizing of the church is a tragic waste of lay power” (Hulme 1973:49). He further reasons out that: “A well known example of lay priestly power is Alcoholics Anonymous. It is significant that while AA originated outside the organized church, in spite of the need for it within the church, its orientation and practice are implicitly Christian. Its therapeutic foundation is the grace of God” (1973:49)

The author agrees with Gerkin that the priestly function of pastoral care claims its ancestry in Israelite priests and as such has the mandate to provide pastoral care as it originally was offered. He also agrees with Hulme that the priestly ecclesiastic function should be open to all, an exercise which will allow even the lay person in the church to effectively minister to the hurting widow. This suggests that an appreciation of the organizations such as AA can be utilized to benchmark the

creation of formidable widows' organizations as the legitimate duty of the ecclesiastical entities.

4.3.2. Prophetic:

One prominent feminine voice echoes: “Why does the premise that women as well as men have contributed to and shaped culture, society, and religion seem so unlikely and extreme? A major reason can be found in an androcentric linguistic system and cultural mind-set that marginalizes women of all walks of life as well as disenfranchised men. Androcentrism, and phallogentrism in the critical discourses of French feminism, connotes an asymmetric symbolic dualistic system that constructs masculine/feminine gender norms and places men at the centre and women at the periphery of our attention or does not mention them at all (Fiorenza 1998:xviii)

The author agrees with Fiorenza that women have been traditionally marginalized even in matters related to their own destinies. He then believes that the care-giver, as a prophet, should be instrumental in sustaining the fading memories of some most splendid moments the clergy widow once enjoyed in the church whilst her husband was alive. These memories are portrayed by Gerkin as follows: “Even if we have long since left a particular congregation, or even a denomination, our memories lie deep in our consciousness” (1997:236-237).

The author believes that Gerkin has golden advice in encouraging that the memories that lie deep in our consciousness be sustained. The clergy widow in the introduction of the thesis must be surely having a bleeding picture of the memories in the church as well as a distorted concept of healing. Her trust for the ecclesiastical members, both those she was in fellowship with as well as those in

the neighbouring denominations must be truly negatively affected as a result of how she was treated during her mourning week. This experience must be deeply seated in her unconscious mind. The methodology which the author is, therefore, seeking to create is meant to restore and reinstate the affected hope of the widows like her.

4.4. Where Does the Author Fit In?

The author views Shepherding as important especially when viewed within the New Testament's portrayal of Christ as the Great Shepherd. "Most assuredly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door, but climbs up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. But he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep" (John 10:1-2). Christ immediately qualifies Himself as the true Shepherd with the following assertion: "Most assuredly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep" (John 10:7).

The author believes that the most authentic stance of a Shepherd is the very foregoing declaration by Christ Himself. This becomes the pivotal point which complies with the requirements so outlined in Gerkin's reasoning of his Shepherding model outlined above.

Gerkin's method should be noted as coming from the Western perspective though, especially because he does not address the most pivotal element, namely; the relationship with the dead. This is fundamentally important in the African context as demonstrated by Healey and Sybertz in the following way: "In traditional African society remembrance and respect for the living dead are intimately connected with ancestor veneration. Everything in life is linked to the ancestors, who do not take the place of the "Supreme God," but are mediators. There is a live

communion with the dead, an interdependence between the living and the dead” (Healey & Sybertz 1996:214). The author applauds the reasoning by Healey and Sybertz as more complete when dealing with an African widow as compared to Gerkin’s position. The hurting clergy widows will be provided with the methodology of caring which suggests the continuous living presence of their deceased spouses among them.

Pollard is also addressing the caring methodology in a manner rather more agreeable to the author’s own belief. He addresses the notion of positive deconstruction as follows: “The process of positive deconstruction recognizes and affirms the elements of truth to which individuals already hold, but also helps them to discover for themselves the inadequacies of the underlying worldviews they have absorbed” (Pollard 1997:44).

The author views his suggestion of taking people as they are being credible. This unique methodology came out of the experience of purchasing the parts of a car which was written off in order to positively perform the deconstruction of a mechanic, by replacing these new parts in his old car (1997:44-45). In so doing, he managed to get his old car in a much better condition. This approach of positive deconstruction will be helpful to restructure and reconstruct the broken widows’ hopes by reconstructing their otherwise affected states of wellbeing.

This method of deconstruction depicts and positively challenges the state of humiliation the womenfolk have suffered in the history of religion which has deprived them the joy of free and indiscriminate participation in religion. Fiorenza has this to say: “Much of the information and traditions about the agency of women in the beginnings of Christianity are irretrievable because the patriarchal

transmission and redaction process considered such stories and information either as insignificant or as a threat to the gradual patriarchalization of the Christian movement.” (Fiorenza 1998:52)

The patriarchalization displayed by Fiorenza has emerged to be a deterrent in as far as the desired healing of the womenfolk is concerned; hence the author agrees with her position that women’s stories must have been considered as insignificant or a threat. To remedy this already existing harm, the author will apply the methodology of caring which is dialoguing the aspirations of the widows not only as recipients of the therapy but as active participants in the formulation and proposal of such therapy themselves.

The author is of the opinion that God’s divine and mysterious revelations to us do not exonerate us into spirit beings, but rather bring to the fore the reflection of how human we are in the light of His adorable and Divine Majesty. This very proposition leaves us with the burden to attempt to interpret the Pastoral Care demands within their rightful context. This in essence propels us to seek for a medium of a sound care methodology which finds its pathway in love as spelt out hereunder.

5. Love the Pivotal Point of Departure

The perfect picture of the care of the widows finds its completion in the driving force which necessitates the care for such a people. This driving and necessary force is by virtue of its definition: love. Love becomes equally, the pivotal point of departure in addressing the methodology of the care for widows albeit that: “Many sources of authority are used in providing pastoral care” (Doehring 2006:8). Doehring further indicates that these “sources can be likened to diamonds that lay

embedded in the earth. The norms used to interpret them are like the methods used to mine and cut diamond. One source of authority is religious: the Hebrew Scriptures, the New Testament, liturgy, doctrines, and religious practices, including spiritual practices” (2006:8).

The author agrees with the analogy used by Doehring which likens the methodology of care to diamonds especially in that such are amongst the world’s rare treasures. In the same breath, the analogy gives credit to the rare human yet equally divine virtue, namely; love.

This is the unique virtue which will survive when all others are gone, as Paul states it: “And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love” (1 Corinthians 13:13). The author agrees with Paul that love is an eternal virtue. It is the only virtue that can solidify the methodology of the care for the widows and give the care givers an even deeper commitment as Hands and Fehr state that: “the love and care of the community reveals and makes plausible the love that God is” (Hands and Fehr 1933:25). They further state: “a yielding to the mystery of God, an act of unqualified dependence on the Love from which one’s life springs” (1933:25). The methodology which the author is seeking to employ will be grounded on this ultimate eternal value: Love.

This virtue calls for an attentive and empathic listening to the hurting of the counselee portrayed by Dittes in the following way: “The minister gives ear and gives voice, a discerning and a compassionate voice, to these complaints-become-confessions, in a way that is both like a member of the family and like a skilled professional” (Dittes 1979:65). The author supports the notion upheld by Dittes that the minister needs to give a compassionate voice to the pain in which the

widow finds herself. This should be done as a both a way and methodology of providing healing to the hurting widow.

Elford further reasons out that: “Justice in Christian theology has been seen as (in the Old Testament) the exercise of compassion and mercy to the poor; as a cardinal virtue along with prudence, temperance, and fortitude; and as a means whereby the requirements of love are distributed equally to all” (1999:153) This notion is immediately backed by Gerkin as follows: “Care for the people of God involves care that confronts issues of justice and moral integrity in the life of the people” (1997:25)

The author agrees with both Elford and Gerkin that the totality of the practice of care rests on the concern to issues related to justice. Justice is in itself a virtue of love. In order to synergize an empathetic methodology of care for the widows, a bird’s eye view on the widow will be analyzed. This analysis equally result from the tradition of poverty that widows find themselves in, such as the widow on the introduction of the thesis and the widow which the Scriptures state: “The widow of a member of a group of prophets went to Elisha and said, “Sir, my husband has died! As you know, he was a God fearing man, but now a man he owed money to has come to take away my two sons as slaves in payment for my husband’s debt” (2 Kings 4:1).

The primary reason that necessitated the author to seek for this method of caring is the need to avert the perpetual cycle of poverty which is prevalent among the clergy widows like the one who confronted Elisha. Some of these widows do have the courage to vent out their frustrations like she did when expressing hers to

Elisha. There are a countless of widows who do not have the courage to speak their hurts out.

In order to create a meaningful tool of caring for the clergy widows, an analysis of the kind of people who are known as widows will be submitted. The envisaged methodology of care will attempt to address the plight of both the introvert and the extrovert widows, equally. Furthermore, this subject will reveal the nature of the care methodology required for them.

5.1. Understanding the Care for Widows

It is important to note that understanding the person being counselled plays a critical role for desired healing is to be provided uncompromisingly. By doing so, the widow will be treated with the love she deserves. This calls for a multifaceted approach which will leave no stone unturned in an attempt to create a methodology of care. Doehring reasons it this way: “A cross-disciplinary approach, called a critical correlational method, brings these sources and norms of authority into dialogue (Polling and Miller 1985; Browning 1991; Doehring 1999; Ramsay 1998). The postmodern purpose of such cross-disciplinary critical dialogue is not to generate universal knowledge and theories, but develop contextual understandings of persons in crisis and formulate strategies for seeking their well-being and justice” (Doehring 2006:9).

If the fruitful ultimate care of the widows is to be exercised with the desired healing in mind, it is noteworthy to consider the necessary ingredients such as those portrayed by Hands and Fehr which states: “It is important to note the indispensable function of community in enabling and sustaining the individual’s movement of recovery. In the community of recovering persons the individual can

come to admit the full extent of his or her unmanageable behaviour and powerlessness (Step One), come to believe that a Higher Power can restore him or her to sanity (Step Two), and entrust his or her will and life utterly to the care of God (Step Three)” (1933:25).

The author agrees with Hands and Fehr that if the desired care is to be achieved optimally, there is an even greater need to lead the counselee, to the state of ultimate surrender to the care of the Higher Power, where she will not only feel safe but restored to full sanity as well. Understanding this fundamental requirement is of critical importance if an effective methodology of care is to be submitted as the author espouses.

I would love to analyse the care for widows from two religious or Theological groupings. This approach will enable me to set up a systematic base in order to be able to create an informed model of care for the widows.

The desired systematic approach will assist with a synoptic comparable study from which a scientific tool of caring can be better forged. The author must acknowledge at this point that there were no compelling reasons that provided preference for the one Theology over the other. The only patent reason is that the merit of the chosen Theology lies entirely on the soundness of the theological philosophy which the author established in his comparative study of various schools of thought.

Carr provides three other Theologies as follows: “fundamental, systematic and practical. Fundamental Theology...addresses the academy; systematic theology

operates with the community of moral and religious discourse, the Church; practical theology is concerned with society at large” (Carr 1989:13)

Let us hear the voices of some Theologies on the perspectives of the care of widows in order to be better equipped with the understanding of the depth of the hurt as well as the background of the victim survivor.

5.2. The Reformation Theology

This particular Theology addresses the fundamentals of pasturing, rituals and playfulness in an attempt to seek the methodology of caring by drawing us to the foundations as follows: “One thing for which people legitimately look to the Church is ritual. A church that does not worship is as contradiction in terms, and one that does not handle people’s feelings and expectations through ritual is no longer distinctively a church” (Carr 1989:203). The author agrees with Carr’s reasoning that this traditional method of exercising and observing liturgy for the care of individuals is of paramount importance. Carr further states that: “This is as true of requests for formal liturgical acts as it is of the approach of an individual to a minister for help” (1989:203). The author believes that the basic knowledge of this particular Theology in particular will be helpful to elicit the kind of love expected when dealing with the widows.

This Theology provides cherishable and inevitable truths that have stood the test of time. Its presentation, as it was exported to Africa, was never without mistakes which are found both in the presentation, the method and system of communication as well as in its delivery. Arguing against the damage done by the descendants of Reformation Theology, Masango argues as follows: “The time has come in South

Africa and the rest of the continent to challenge this western Pentecostal Theology which is infiltrating the continent” (Verbum et Ecclesia Volume 29 (1) 2008:132).

The author agrees with Carr that in employing the liturgical rites in dealing with the individuals, maximum healing is likely to be achieved. He further agrees with Masango that the western Pentecostal Theology needs to be challenged. There are numerous areas in which this Theology, which descends from the traditional Reformation Theology, that need to be addressed. This is the very reason which led the author to contemplate pursuing a study on the Care of the Clergy widows within the Pentecostal Church. The study will attempt to reveal lack of care with the intention to propose sound methodology of caring for the widows within the Pentecostal circles.

5.3. The African Traditional Theology

Since religion in Africanism is an integral part of the day to day life, this notion has propelled the author to seek the care for the widows’ methodology in this holistic religious belief. Furthermore, the author’s focus is on the African clergy widows. In seeking an informed methodology of caring for the clergy widows, the author believes that it is important to have an understanding of the African Traditional Theology, since this understanding will be helpful in generating the passion to serve the victim survivors with love.

In understanding the African Religion Magesa announces: “In the words of Jacques Maquet, who emphasized the unity of African culture (and religion) south of the Sahara, Africanity, like every broad cultural synthesis,... is based on a similar experience of the world shared by various societies and on the dissemination of several culture traits among these societies” (Magesa 1997:17)

In his attempt to explain the authenticity of the ATR Uka states: “When we speak of the Traditional African Religion we mean the indigenous religion of the Africans. It is the religion that has been handed down from generation to generation by the forbear of the present generation of Africans. It is not a fossil religion (a thing of the past) but a religion that Africans today have made theirs by living it and practicing it” (*ed Uka 1991:27*)

The basic knowledge of the ATR is helpful when dealing with an African widow as it can serve as a base of encouragement which speaks to the origin of the pain. This assures to the widow that she stems from a belief that is not founded but handed down from generation to generation and in that sense one can benevolently yield to its therapeutic effects: “In speaking of African Traditional Religion therefore, the following points should be made clear. First, African Traditional Religion is a revealed religion, but it has no historical founder like Christianity, Islam, Buddhism and Confucianism. The religion is revealed in the sense that it came into existence, like any other religion, as a result of human experience of the mystery of the universe” (*ed Uka 1991:21*)

Due to the existing problem of placing the African Traditional Religion in its proper universal position: “The tendency of some philosophers, theologians, and students of comparative religion is still to regards African Religion as a “primal” or “ethnic” religion, thus robbing it of its universal character. (In some people’s minds, it is still identified pejoratively with “tribal” practices of fetishism and magic). This attitude also reduces the capacity of the African Religion to interact with other religions and to influence and change the world and minimizes its role in conversation with other religions. It becomes a subordinate partner rather than an equal” (*Magesa 1997:19*)

In the presentation by Magesa and Uka it becomes evident that the ATR is rooted in the peoples' history and heritage, the force which render the religion as a tool of therapy in itself. From this conception emerges the African confidence that speaks of its inherent healing grace; the kind anticipated by every widow.

An equivalent confidence to this inherent healing grace is demonstrated in the ministry of Father Ritsi who left his comfort in the USA to go and minister in Albania. He ministered to an atheist neighbour called Tatiana who made the following confession: "The problem is I have this black hole in my soul. I'm empty, and I need it to be filled" (Gurney 1995:3). There are so many people who are being ministered to who have a circumstantial black hole in their souls. In an attempt to address the methodology of healing in the ATR route, the engagement becomes holistic in dealing with people. In the case of the Ritsis, the beauty is that such an engagement produced the following results: "...Renee Ritsi started a women's group in the apartment blocks of the neighbourhood. The group began discussing the Bible, Christianity and the foundations of their lives. In a short time, half the members came to believe, including finally Tatiana herself" (1995:3)

The author fully supports the holistic approach of identifying and treating the people indiscriminately as Father Ritsi and family indicated. Such an involvement is characteristic of the Afrocentric holistic methodology to seek care and healing; the very method which the author will employ is his attempted and desired methodology of caring for the widows.

The same reasoning is presented by Magesa in an attempt to indicate the damage Christianity has done to an African peoples' sense of self-worth and identity, by quoting Boulaga as saying: "The missionary discourse has a habit of propounding

God, or the content of the faith, as the irruption into one's world of the purest Strangeness, and conversion as the snatching of the candidate for Christianity from the jaws of perdition, which is confused with one's traditional mode of living and being human" (Magesa 1997:21)

Such damage apparently rests on the use of the language. If the language with which the message is relayed carries only one direct meaning, there can be no misrepresentation of the intended message and such can in itself serve as a base for healing the wounded widow. The notion of language especially in the ATR, is portrayed thus by Kraft: "Actually, in the study of meaning one must combine both psychological and anthropological-linguistic orientations to meaning, for language has a double purpose. It not only symbolizes concepts but it is also used for the proportion of purposes; that is to say, it has not only psychological but also cultural and behavioural functions" (Kraft 1989:90)

Magesa further indicates that: "A leader must be a person with "a cool heart," as the Dinka say, and not "a hot-head." Leadership requires maturity, thoughtfulness, patience, understanding, and wisdom" (Magesa 1997:67)

The author supports Kraft that it is important to note the value inherent in the language, since this medium plays a critical role in the African Traditional Religion. In an attempt to construct a methodology of caring for the widows, it becomes essential to take into account the extent in which language can influence the intended healing medium. This in itself calls for a matured, yet very humble, attitude. Practically speaking, this methodology calls for maturity from the leadership as Magesa distinguishes by stating: "Authority does not mean that the "leader could order people around" (Magesa 1997:67)

5.4. The Stigmatization Accompanying Widowhood

The author would love to analyze the stigmatization-which is clothing the widows, especially in the Pentecostal Churches. It is in understanding this painful, yet realistic ordeal, that the methodology of caring for such a people can be created with the ultimate aim to bring healing through loving these seemingly unlovable people. These are the unfortunate people labelled with all sorts of mocking names.

There are various items that distinguish widows from all other people in society and these include their sexual status and orientation. After the death of a spouse widows are considered “hot,” the position that needs thorough pastoral care. In the words of Magesa this position is spelt out thus: “Widows and widowers are also “hot” for about a year after their bereavement” (Magesa 1997:150)

This societal stereotype used to label the widowed, immediately proposes and inflicts the victim survivor with a stigma of misfortune. There is a looming ironic sense of self piety and self degradation hanging over the widow. This is evident through the selfless courage demonstrated by the old clergy widow who decided to go to the taxi rank singlehandedly without asking for assistance on a cold day. This is the widow in the introduction of the thesis.

Resulting from tradition, widowhood is tantamount to a state of curse. Some of the age old traditional beliefs about widowhood, which are handed down orally inter alia, entail the following:

- Married women should cut friendship ties with a widow.
- A widow does not sit in the midst of peoples except at the far end of the group or at the back pew in the church, because people fear to have bad luck, especially if she is wearing black clothes.

- She should not handshake people when greeting them.
- The visit by a widow into one's house is regarded as a bad omen.
- A widow should be in the house before sunset lest she invoke cursing spirits upon her family and the entire neighbouring community.

This sense of self worthlessness breeds a skew ego demotion of the entire wellbeing of a person. The self and the world view become instantly disarrayed. Nick Pollard addresses this whole paradigm in the most benevolent manner by introducing this notion as follows: “The process is ‘deconstruction’ because I am helping people to deconstruct (that is, take apart) what they believe in order to look carefully at the belief and analyse it” (Pollard 1997:44).

He instils this through the methodology of what he calls positive deconstruction as treated above. This positive deconstruction theory is therapeutic in that it realigns the value system of the person with the desired ideal character and objectives of a person's wholeness. This in itself suggests a totally healed self, especially as it relates to the hurting widows.

The sense of self-worth derived from being deconstructed from the oppressive self, to being constructed to one ideal self, is the desired ideal state in which the stigmatized widow will love to find herself in. This constructionist theory upheld by Pollard is buttressed by Wimberly who provides a methodology that seeks to restore the affected dignity of the person clothed with shame as follows: “The self-sabotaging dimension that seeks to derail us is called resistance. This is the name that behavioural science gives to such forces. It refers to holding on to the shame-based past and its accompanying aspects because of our anxiety about the unknown future” (Wimberly 1999:28). The author considers it extremely

important for the care-giver to familiarize themselves with the extent of the shame the widows endure through a brutal self-sabotaging attitude they incur in order to be enabled with efficient skills in dealing with the care of the widows.

6. Preliminary Conclusion

It might be that there is a missing link in the current practice of the care for widows by Christians, especially the care of clergy widows. This thesis should not be misconstrued as proposing privileged preference for the clergy widows over other widows in the church and in the broader community. It should be understood from the perspective of the author's proposal that his concepts are meant to be forceps in the discipline dealing with the care of the clergy widows. The chapter proposed the methodology which will be employed in addressing the care of the clergy widows under the following headings:

- Epistemology.
- The Reputable Way to Provide Caring.
- Uniqueness of the Minister's offering.
- Love: The Pivotal Point of Departure.
- Preliminary Conclusion.

In this chapter, a synopsis of the epistemological position with regard to widowhood was provided. The author provided a recommendable way of caring for the widows. This recommendable way rests, to a large degree, on the acumen and expertise of the care-giver which will determine the efficiency of the service rendered. This way was discussed as integral to the uniqueness of the minister's

offering. The most critical aspect of the methodology of caring for the widows is the virtue known as love, which was equally handled in minute detail.

The author views the following chapter as the climax of the thesis since it will be addressing the real stories of the widowed clergy women. The chapter will be treated under the following headings:

- The Advent of the Western System.
- An Undisturbed Traditional System of Communalism among Aboriginal Africans.
- Redressing the Ills Created by Colonialism.
- Interviews:
 - Interviews with Three Women from Pentecostal Church.
 - Interviews with Two Women from Mainline Church.
- Preliminary Conclusion

The chapter will discuss the actual real encounters of the clergy widows by way of enlisting their stories as they really happened to them. This will be carried in such a way that the stories will communicate the intended objectives of the study and by so doing, assist in mapping out the most valuable and recommendable way in which the care of the widows can be finally practiced in the Pentecostal church. Maximum confidentiality will be assured as compliant with the ethical requirements of an academic research work. At the end of the chapter a preliminary conclusion will be provided. This conclusion will usher in the new chapter, which will address the integration of the methodology of caring.