

## **CHAPTER 7: Findings and Recommendations**

### **1. Introduction**

The preceding Chapter analysed the Proposal of the Theology of Caring under the following headings:

- Analysis of Various Theologies As They Relate to Caring.
- The Commencement of a Potential Healing: Starting Within the Context of Any Given Family.
- Required Healing of the Surviving Widow.
- Dying Patient's Problems Come to an End.
- Family Problems Go On.
- Decreasing the Family Problems.
- Handling the Devastation of a Widow.
- Revolutionising Conventional Practices Related to Widows.
- Submission of a Considerable Theology for the Care of Widows.
- Preliminary Conclusion.

The proposal of the Theology of Caring was spelt out in minute detail in an attempt to ultimately provide a baseline caring mechanism which will address the care of widows in the most possible and sensitive manner. In this Chapter, various authorities were engaged in a dialogue and the author provided his own opinion in each instance where he engaged various schools of thought. The Chapter culminated with the introduction of the current chapter, which will be also the concluding chapter.

This current Chapter will submit the findings established throughout the research expedition. These findings will be finally accompanied by the recommendations which will take both the general and the specific forms under the following titles:

- Educating the Findings.
- General Findings.
  - Findings Informed by Tradition.
  - Findings Informed by Observation.
- Specific Findings.
  - Findings Informed by Literature.
  - Findings Informed by Interviews.
- The Presence of the Deceased
- Recommendations.
  - Basic Facts about Death.
  - The Process of Mourning.
  - Realities about the Deceased.
- Knowledge and Information Therapeutic to the Surviving Clergy Widow.
- Foundational Layer of the New Tool for the Care of the Clergy Widows.
- Proposed Mechanism (on how the church can be instrumental in providing the support system that ranges from emotional, spiritual, social, psychological circles).
- Conclusion.

The research was conducted under the following chapters:

### **Chapter1**

This chapter introduced the research which the author intended to undertake. It spelt out the methodology to be followed, declared on the research gap as well as gave an outline of all chapters to be treated.

## **Chapter 2**

The theology of caring was introduced in this chapter. It analyzed different kinds of widows from various milieus. The general understanding of caring as well the specific understanding of caring, was introduced. The author discussed in detail the distinct understanding of the theology of caring.

## **Chapter 3**

In this chapter the author introduced the methodology of caring extrapolating the nobility of Gerkin's immortal Shepherding model. This model was analyzed in conjunction with Pollard's positive deconstruction model. Wimberly's Claiming God Reclaiming dignity was also discussed as a methodology seeking a therapeutic way for the care of the clergy widows. The reputable way of caring was discussed and love was finally recommended as a vital force in the theology of caring.

## **Chapter 4**

The chapter treated the interviews with five clergy widows. Three were from the Pentecostal church and two from the Mainline church. The widows shared their ordeal stories which are filled with emotionalism and pain, at instances. The author established that the advent of the Western system has had an impact in the pastoral theology of the aboriginal Africans and further elucidate on the communalism which existed among the African people.

## **Chapter 5**

The chapter attempted to integrate the methodology of caring by bringing various authorities under dialogue. This endowment, with the power to sustain life, was discussed as an imperative element in handling the methodology of caring. An

integration of the caring system currently available within the Pentecostal church was also interrogated.

## **Chapter 6**

This chapter submitted the proposal of the theology of caring for the widows. The discussions inter alia included the analysis of various theologies of caring, submission of a considerable theology of caring as well as the required healing for the surviving clergy widow. The importance of handling the devastation of the clergy widow, was also discussed.

## **Chapter 7**

This is the current chapter whose intention is to provide the summary of the entire research work. This summary will serve to inform one who reads the work everything about the research, its intentions, results derived from the interviews as well as the findings achieved. It will further submit the recommendations with the hope that such will ultimately lead to the desired theology of caring for the Pentecostal clergy widows.

### **2. Educating the Findings**

It becomes apparent that the role of the widow is very critical though she is bereaved herself. Her contribution can change not only her situation alone, but that of the other members in the faith community. Speaking with authority on the subject is Oden in the following way: “Whosoever, then, understands that she is in this world bereaved and desolate as long as he (sic) is a pilgrim absent from his Lord, is careful to commit her widowhood, so to speak, to her God as her shield in continual and most fervent prayer” (Oden 1986:157). This statement by Oden indicates, in no uncertain terms, that the role of the widow is meant to be of

constant prayer life beneficial to all those she will be supporting through her prayers.

The author deduced that the stories of our lives, like the stories shared by the widows, have “the eschatological plot, through which God is working out healing, wholeness, and liberation on behalf of others” (Wimberly 1991:14). Wimberly further submits that: “God’s unfolding story is more than a good story with which to identify. It is an ongoing, unfolding story, even today... When people are linked to God’s unfolding story, their own lives become different. Significant changes take place. People find that life has direction for them, that they have value as human beings” (1991:15)

The author marvelled at this citation by Wimberly. The author established that what is of utmost importance is the fact that the dignity of a human being is restored by the knowledge that the unfolding story of God provides the hope of realistic reinstatement which is a kind that suggests that one is holistically reinstated to the purpose with a futuristic outlook. This knowledge automatically provides the widows with the sense of direction and purpose. Consequently, this hope becomes the voice of inner peace and a tool of encouragement to the widows. The importance of linking a people’s story to the unfolding story of God is essential and therapeutic to the wellbeing both to the care-giver as well as that to the counselee in that the care-giver will be better equipped to give a calculated and matured counselling whereas the counselee will be knowledgeable about the purpose and destiny of the counselling session. This will, therefore, lead to stability and trust in the counselee to care-giver relationship.

The author further established that widows are punished by patriarchal societal stereotypes echoed by Hamlin in the following way: “In patriarchal society, a widowed and childless woman was automatically marginalized by society” (Hamlin 1996:10). It is against this background the author embarked on a research aimed at establishing a theology of caring for the clergy Pentecostal widows. This marginalization was established throughout the research journey hence the author applauds Hamlin in reiterating the same.

Narrowing the argumentation to the African context, Larsen and Treier support this proposition by Hamlin in the following way: “Conscious evangelical theologizing in Africa has now entered a very promising phase....African Christian theology is not about crafting new doctrines; it is rather about stating Christian teaching in language and thought forms understandable to Africans in their contemporary situations” (Larsen & Treier 2007:221). The author acknowledges Larsen and Treier’s position in that he was able to establish how Westernization has negatively impacted Afrocentricism. This was observed as one Pentecostal widow seemed to have not cared much about the process of grieving and mourning her husband’s death. This is the widow discussed in the introduction of the research work in Chapter one. **There is, therefore, a great need for African Pastoral Counsellors to assert themselves and educate the counselees in terms of Afro centric Pastoral values; a recommendation which the author strongly advocates for.**

We will now scrutinize various findings as they relate to the desired outcomes of the care for the clergy widows in the next session.

### 3. General Findings

There are numerous findings which the author established in his excavation. The author views his research journey to have been almost like a mining exercise which has produced new skills of listening, researching, communication and scientific investigation. In as far as listening is concerned, the author notes what Kraft proposes in the following way: “Listening in private and listening in ministry are crucial to working effectively with God” (Kraft 1989:135). The author agrees with Kraft that listening is an important tool towards the establishment of the healing required for the widows. He found out that each of the widows needed someone who could listen to her story. Above it all, the author established that:

- Not all assumptions are necessarily factual-the assumption that the widows were not taken care of by their churches proved to have not necessarily been correct when the actual interviews were conducted as the widows started telling their stories.
- There is a danger in creating a stereotype about certain issues before you could even test them e.g. the author laboured under the fallacy that all widows were not taken care of by their churches only to find that there were some positive responses of care in other areas of their lives as reflected by Mrs. Lesedi and Mrs. Mantoro. The former widow received moral and emotional support whereas the latter received financial support from their churches, respectively.
- Generalization is an unscientific way of viewing issues in life. It is always best to ascribe a methodology of research to an issue and only thereafter can one deduce conclusive facts on the subject in question.

These findings helped the author to address the aims and objectives set out in Chapter 1 of this research work. They brought a very distinct answer which echoed Dickson’s position who states that: “The Church is in the world, and

therefore theology must take account of the world” (Dickson 1984:222). The proposal becomes that if the Pentecostal Church is to offer an efficient and effective ministry to its widows, it has to be conscious that a ministry is not offered in isolation of the other spheres of human life, but take into account that widows are holistic human beings. These findings led the author to breaking them in minute detail for discussion as following hereunder.

### **3.1. Findings informed by tradition**

Some of the findings which were established evolve around the age old traditions which the church has formulated. These in the words of Castle *inter arlia* include the following constants:

- 2.1.1. “The first and most important constant is that the purpose of all ministry is to help others to live out the values of our Christian tradition.
- 2.1.2. Secondly, ministry in the Church has historically always diversified and has led to specialized services (e.g. caring for the poor, the sick, the uneducated) as the needs arose.
- 2.1.3. One ministry has always remained a constant whatever the circumstances of time and place. This is the overseeing ministry, the ministry of leading and unifying the Christian community.
- 2.1.4. A final constant in the history of ministry is that there has always been an intimate relationship between the role one exercises in daily life and the role one has in the liturgy” (*ed* Castle 1986:4-5)



These findings elucidated by Castle as findings informed by tradition play a critical role in explaining the importance of the stance which the Church entertains its care for the bereaved which also includes the widows. Presenting a very audible and plausible opinion on the role of tradition as a complement to Castle is Browning who argues that: “Historicists overlook the role of brute experience in the formation of our moral thinking. Yes, our narrative traditions form our moral thinking, but the thickness, resistance, and intractability of experience poke irresistibly into our linguistic forms and make their testimony” (Browning 1991:179)

The primary finding which the author established was that it is true that the purpose of ministry is to help individuals live out the Christian values and relate with the church liturgy requirements as portrayed by Castle. Yet, the author is more inclined to support in more emphatic terms the school of thought advocated by Browning which proposes that our moral thinking is grounded on the narrative traditions. This therefore suggests that **whatever new methodology of care we may propose for the clergy widows; have to be introduced first and foremost in the liturgy of the church.** This presupposes that the new language has to be developed and adopted so that the moral thinking of the ecclesiastical gathering can harmoniously move to the desired level of caring for its widows.

This means therefore that the traditional liturgies of the church and society have to be revisited and revamped. Some of these traditions only inject the widows with the perpetual sense of guilt. Some of these traditions which the author established as discussed in earlier chapters include the following facts:

- Widows should not shake hands with people.
- They should be back indoors before sunset.

- They should not visit people's houses lest they invoke the spirit of death in people's families.

The above represent a mysterious myriad of condemning mythical beliefs among the people. The author found out that such are hindrances towards establishing the required theology of care for the widows.

### **3.2. Findings informed by observation**

From the interviews conducted with the widows in Chapter four, it flies without wings that observation teaches us a rather acceptable educational lesson articulated by Castle as follows: "It follows that appropriate criteria are needed for selecting and training those who are to undertake the overseeing pastoral ministry" (*ed* Castle 1986:5). The author agrees with Castle that the importance of a sound pastoral care methodology and practice rests entirely upon the level of knowledge and training which the pastoral care-giver acquires in his/her pursuit of the counselling endeavour. This requires the kind of training which can be highly beneficial in equipping the pastoral care-giver.

The author observed that clergy widows were not as numerous as he had assumed and alleged before undertaking the study. There were a number of widows in the communities in which the study was undertaken, yet very few clergy widows. The following observations were made:

- Widows were rather conservative in as far as talking about their hurting past.
- Only the widows and not their whole families were attended to as though they were the only ones bereaved.
- Some offspring were disillusioned and perpetually blaming God and the church for the loss that has occurred in the family.

- There is no institution established in the widows' own communities and churches to provide pastoral support and care.

In his findings by observation the author further established that the naming of widows in the African context invokes feelings of poverty and dejection. In *Sesotho* a widow is named *Mohlolohadi* which means a great miracle. In *IsiZulu* she is named *Umfelokazi* which means one who has lost a great deal. These are two of the eleven South African official languages. The author totally rejects such naming with the contempt they deserve since they leave widows with feelings of uneasiness, anger, rejection and self condemnation.

Speaking on the same subject from the perspective of the power of naming Fiorenza states the following: “Often, when a Puerto Rican woman is asked how she is, how things are going, she will respond with “*Pues, ahi, en la lucha*” (“well struggling” or “in the struggle”). This phrase, therefore, represents a statement about survival, a comment on economic and social circumstances, a comment on coping and perseverance, and contains seeds of a commitment to be engaged, to be in struggle” (Fiorenza 1996:339). The author observed a very equivalent and unacceptable behaviour resulting from the power of naming, as portrayed by Fiorenza, **hence his recommendation that such names should be revisited, obliterated and replaced with new pastorally caring vocabulary.**

The author believes that by confronting this erroneous belief the pastoral caregivers will be able to fulfil the envisaged model of the theology of caring for the clergy women entailed in the desire for change envisaged thus by Hulme: “It has been said repeatedly that “the only way to change society is to change the hearts of individual” (Hulme1973:101). He continues to say: “A day of change is also a day

of opportunity to influence change-to manage it. For the church, this means the opportunity to change rather than to repeat its ecclesiastical history” (1973:92). The author strongly supports this view since it speaks to individuals and then to the church. In his observation he discovered the need to cease the opportunity to influence change as imperative. We will now in the next section, analyze the specific findings which the author encountered.

#### **4. Specific Findings**

The author discovered that healing is a prerequisite when handling the pain of the hurting widow. Oliver provides that “The healing process is not something tangible, nor can we examine it under a microscope. People throughout the centuries have trusted the healing process even though it remains a mystery” (Oliver 1998:105). In support of Oliver, the author views a holistic healing programme for widows as an obligatory requirement. The author also established that besides widows made by natural phenomena, the following widows exist in our midst:

##### **4.1. Widows made by others**

These kinds of widows are made by the group whom the author calls the *Wimas* (Widow Makers). These are a heartless people whose sole reason for existence is to make widows. Wherever they lay their foot, that place is cursed. Women are left without husbands, children are left without fathers, parents and relatives are left without their children, siblings and family members.

The Lord Jesus has this to say about such a people: “It would have been better for that man if he had never been born!” (Matthew 26:24). The author found out that the widows would not have been where they are had it not been as a result of these

cursed people; however they accepted their fate as though it was a divine establishment.

#### **4.2. Self made widows**

The author discovered that there exists in our midst yet another category of widows whom he coined as Self Made Widows (*Semawids*). He also called this group the Viper Vampire Widows. These are real bloodsuckers, more parasitical than the etymological and original meaning of the word parasite itself. They thrive on the blood of those who had married them with the intention to establish a family. See the story which was covered on Tuesday March 30, 2010 Sowetan, 5 of a woman who conspired with a doctor to kill her husband, as discussed in Chapter 2 of this dissertation in order to better apprehend the nature of this category of widows.

There is no one who said they do not exist in the church. In fact, the author strongly believes that some of these women dressed in white wedding robes have got more darkness hidden in the intents of their hearts than the reflection of purity they display with the white wedding regalia. From the outset, the author views them as the harlot painted in the book of Proverbs 7 who went out to fish for lovers. It is said about her schemes: “If you go to her house, you are on the way to the world of the dead. It is a shortcut to death” (Proverbs 7:27). Entering her house is tantamount to entering the grave yard itself.

This observation left the author **with the desire to establish a strong investigating team to the suspicious and unqualified deaths of the male seed.** This becomes a strong issue of **contention** which someone could research further. We will now analyse the specific findings as outlined hereunder.

### **4.3. Findings informed by literature**

Literature teaches us that: “An additional factor contributing to the power of grief to disrupt our lives is that feelings other than anxiety, guilt, and sorrow are stimulated. In varying degrees, depending upon the circumstances of the death, the age of the person, our own personalities, and the particular relationship we’ve had with a person, there can be anger, overt and realistic fears, relief, and the sense of loss of control as the feelings and others arise, conflict with one another, reinforce one another, and seem to have a life of their own which right at the moment we are not able to control” (Switzer 1989:113)

Findings which were established in the lives of the widows could be traced to a certain literary influence. One can appreciate the fact that the evolution of church history originates from biblical history of which Van Dyk reasons: “An interesting aspect of traditions and their appearance in the Bible is the light they cast on the development of Israel’s theology. Sometimes a tradition appears only in certain sections of the Bible, while in other parts it is markedly absent” (Van Dyk 1987:36). Van Dyk illustrates that the influence of current literature has its source on early biblical origins which were in themselves delving on the Israelites’ history. It is for this reason that the author employed the Gerkin’s model of caring which equally draws its existence from biblical literature.

The author also acknowledges Switzer’s contribution which helps in interpreting the various behavioural patterns of emotions displayed by an aggrieved and hurt person. This revelation by literary sources was equally helpful to the author in assisting him to interpret various emotional demonstrations by widows during the research process.

Literature was accountable to assist the author to identify with the extent of the hurt the widows had encountered. **The importance of literature as such will, further, be instrumental to help the church to formulate informed and well learned mechanisms of caring for the surviving clergy widows.** This is evident in the foregoing reasoning by Van Dyk who indicated the importance of literature from Biblical times. This is equally observed in the portrayal of Proverbs 7. Smalley on the other hand demonstrates that the hurt of the people is not meant to deter anyone from the correct cause to be pursued as follows: “In the Old Testament the ‘glory’ of God refers to a visible disclosure of the divine presence and nature in significant actions. For example, the Israelites were promised a vision of God’s ‘glory’ by Moses when the manna was about to fall from heaven, and they were made aware of God’s presence and guidance when his *shekinah* ‘glory’ was disclosed in both cloud and fire during their wilderness wanderings” (Smalley 1978:220)

The author agrees with Smalley that the encounter which the one hurting finds herself (sic) in should not serve as a deterrent but should rather help both the individual and the church to see the glory of God amidst the unfortunate circumstances. This **methodology and discovery derive their origin from literary sources.** It is through scholastic engagements that the church can be able to observe the *shekinah* glory of God in the person of the widow and her ailing circumstances. This suggests that the whole bereaved family will not blame God for the death in the family but will instead see the glory of God amidst the pain of the loss of the family member.

#### 4.4. Findings informed by interviews

The author established the wealth of information and possible avenues which can be explored for future research work whilst interviewing the widows. He saw this as an endless subject which can yield many benefits, not only for the widows, but for the church, families, and the governments as well. **Educational projects and caring workshops can be facilitated on the basis of training the trainer in order to enlarge the chain of involvement.**

In the noble words of Willimon, the findings from the interviews revealed that: “Certainly, ministers need to be schooled for what they do” (Willimon 2000:43). The author supports the position by Willimon that ministers need to be schooled for what they do. The interaction with Mrs. Mantoro, as she cried out, revealed that the Bishop did not know her husband, and this was a serious offense for dear life to her. The pain incurred was as if it only happened yesterday. In this instance, the author strongly believes that the behaviour of the Bishop was as a result of not being adequately schooled in the execution of his duties.

The interviews further revealed that the care provided is only done during the traditional week of mourning until the burial. There does not seem to be any vehicle or instrument of care in place after the burial. This was one **critical grey area which could yield a further area for academic exploration.** The widows seemed to have been more loyal to their various churches more than to the reality of the pain they were left with. They spoke in apologetic protective terms about the areas in which the church failed, and would not budge to discredit the church. This observation was worrying to the author as one indicated that she did not want to be seen as fighting with the church. **Her contentment in that unpleasant situation left much to be desired for further academic investigation.**



The interviews brought a lot of hidden information about the feelings of the widows to the fore. They also revealed that: “The principal part of our pastoral care is unseen by those who benefit from it, since it is exercised in secret. Called to be shepherds, as well as teachers, we must be intercessors for the members of Christ’s flock entrusted to us” (Prime 1989:57). The candour of Prime’s proposition which some shepherds do not perform, was brought under scrutiny when Mrs. Mahalane was so furious that she addressed the shepherd as “that boy.” This reflection could as well justify the allegation that such a shepherd was not interceding for the members entrusted to him, let alone the bereaved widow.

The author would now discuss the importance of the presence of the deceased in the family as observed by the surviving family and indicate how this is pivotal in forging a theology of praxis for the widows.

### **5. The presence of the deceased**

The author further observed the inherent traditional belief which is part of a people’s belief system. There was an almost amicable consensus among the widows with regards to the belief of the presence of the deceased. It was almost like all widows had agreed to indirectly disclose that their loved ones were still in their midst in spirit though they were physically no more. Mrs. Lesedi alluded that she was in fact “sleeping like an innocent baby at night as if nothing had actually happened.” This implied that it was as normal as though her deceased husband was still physically living with the family.

Though the author was agreeable to these strong confessions by the widows, he was also worried by the possible hurtful emotional breakdown which could occur once the reality that their husbands were truly no more could surface at any stage

of their lives. On the contrary, they all seemed to have yielded to the fact that though their loved ones were no more physically yet they lived in their presence, an acknowledgement pronounced by Kirwen who treats this subject as death and immortality. In this subject he submits that: “The living-dead is a person who is physically dead but alive in the memory of those who knew him in his life as well as being alive in the world of the spirits. So long as the living-dead is thus remembered, he is in the stage of *personal immortality*...From the point of view of the survivors, personal immortality is expressed or externalized in acts like respecting the departed, giving bits of food to them, pouring out libation and carrying out instructions given them either while they lived or when they appear” (Kirwen 1979:217)

The author’s support of Kirwen’s submission on the presence of the deceased in the midst of those who knew him, is best illustrated in the story narrated by Mrs. Mantoro who indicated that during the one festive season holiday she missed her deceased husband that she almost felt his presence when she sat and waited for her son to come and take her home. She was at the shopping mall they used to frequent together during his lifetime.

Supporting Kirwen on the subject of the presence of the deceased within the living community is Bujo who reasons out as follows: “Africans also know that they will remain linked with the community of those they are living behind” (Bujo 1992:125). The author observed that this knowledge was a source of strength whenever the widow felt aggrieved by the loss of her husband. Bujo continues to reinforce the inherent therapeutic relief embedded in this African belief by stating that: “Because the living and the dead form one community” (1992:127).

The author found out that what Bujo states is true among an African people as this presence is taught and lived out in every sphere of society. The presence of the deceased is conceptualized as attached to the presence of “Life-force” presented by Healey and Sybertz as: “‘Vitality’ or ‘Life-force’ is the power which is present in everything, a dynamic divine presence in every being for the good of humankind” (Healey & Sybertz 1999:324). This suggests that the presence of the deceased is manifested through the very presence of the ‘Life-force’ even though he is physically absent.

The ultimate educational lesson which the author realized was that this presence of the deceased teaches humanity that: “The experience of moving from death and mourning back to life and vitality is one that most of us will repeat several times in our lives” (Kates & Reimer (*ed*) 1994:125). In so doing, the presence of the deceased is constantly observed in the midst of his surviving family. The author realized that this observation is therapeutic in creating the theology of the care for the widow since such presence provides hope to the otherwise hurting widow.

## **6. Recommendations**

The author is of the opinion that before any form of expectation can be entertained about what other organizations, particularly of a secular nature, including the organs of state can contribute; the ecumenical entity has to first register its distinct audible voice. This registration has to take both the written and spoken forms with the intention to:

- Conscientize.
- Educate.
- Inform.
- Actuate.

The **Written Form** of performing all of the above should pursue the following formats:

- Local Church Pamphlets.
- Local Church Newsletter.
- Church Bulletins.
- Local Community Newspaper.
- Joint Local Churches' Written Newsletter.
- SMS Communication.
- Internet Communication.

The **Spoken Form (Declarative Form)** in performing the same service should pursue the following methods:

- Teaching and Preaching.
- Radio Teachings.
- Television Teachings.

Whereas the study is meant to empower the Church and its leadership- the clergy- about the care of the widows, the author deems it an equally important endeavour though to mobilize the widows themselves as a self empowerment tool; the principles of which are espoused by Kraft who spells out that: "We may even make a distinction between God's loving us and the possibility that he likes us" (Kraft 1989:119). In support of Kraft, the author would love to recommend that the widows be encouraged by their respective churches to each conscientize other widows about their role in the:

- Church
- Society

- Country
- Entire World.

This conscientization process has the potential to impact not only their lives, but to change the cause of global affairs to the benefit of humanity as well. This exercise will minimize the scourge of poverty and the countless pandemics resultant from uncared for orphans. The widows will be able to pronounce with confidence the Women's Prayer which all of the womenfolk are declaring the whole world over, see Addendum C on page 303. The widows will, furthermore, appreciate Kraft's submission that God loves them more than He likes them. This appreciation will ultimately assist in the development of the caring method and the sound theology for the care of the widows.

### **6.1. Basic facts about death**

The author would love to **recommend that the basic facts about death** be:

- Taught.
- Debated.
- Discussed.
- Interrogated both by individuals, their families, churches and communities.

This engagement will be instrumental in ascertaining that the people are better prepared to accept the death of their loved ones than to be in perpetual mourning, unpardonable sorrow and grief. This very subject is best addressed by Oden in the following manner: "Like any other form of pain, death teaches us the view upheld by pastoral writers that: "the sufferer has something important to learn from his (sic) her suffering. Although there are different interpretations of what is to be

learned, there is greater agreement that suffering is not in itself meaningless, but that it has a pedagogical function. There is nothing about pain that automatically increases virtue, although pain may become the occasion for excellent behaviours to be challenged and tested” (Oden 1986:68-69)

Witnessing to Oden is Castle who demonstrates one of the basic facts about death that: “Often a widow ‘blossoms’ some time after her husband’s death into a much more positive character and finds skills she was unaware of” (*ed* Castle 1986:198). The author supports Oden’s position and view about death that the pain incurred by the sufferer is an educational tool in many respects. This is also true as echoed by Castle who indicates that humanity can learn from the blossoming of the widow after her husband’s death which reflects and illicit some hidden potential she was not aware of.

Moreover some basic facts about death present the following confrontations: “Now, a person has died. We are truly looking death right in the face. How do we feel now? What do we say and do?” (Switzer 1989:109). This inevitable realistic question finds an answer in the recommendation which the author would love to submit, namely; **let the bereaved accept the reality since this acceptance is inherent with a therapeutic anecdote which emerged throughout the story-telling exercise, the widows embarked upon.** The author would now submit recommendations related to the process of mourning.

## **6.2. The process of mourning**

The author **recommends that mourning should be encouraged by the pastoral care-givers.** He further views mourning and the process of grief as almost synonymous; and these take the following manifestations: “The most useful set of

stages of grief in helping men (sic) understand where a person might be in the grief process is that of Parkes (1970a, 1970b):

1. Numbness and denial. A sense of shock; sometimes seeming to have no feeling at all, as if the loss hadn't occurred.
2. Yearning: Waves of pain, consciously experienced sorrow and often other feelings.
3. Disorganization and despair. A much longer period beginning as the intensity of the feelings and severity of the symptoms at Stage 2 diminish considerably, although many or most of them may still be experience.
4. Reorganization of behaviour. Greatly diminished feelings of the grief, the ability to look at one's future with greater optimism and with concrete planning" (Switzer 1989:113-114)

In the light of the foregoing feelings presented by Switzer, which the author supports as realistic, he would love to present an even deeper version of the same position championed by Wilson who argues that: "At the heart of our search for health by scientific methods the limits of the new value system have been exposed: its methods can cure and prevent disease (a great blessing cannot imbue people with a sense of reverence, purpose or relatedness" (Wilson 1988:46). Wilson continues to indicate that: "Our health, perhaps our sanity, depends upon others carrying the burden we refuse to carry" (1988:47)

One way of refusing to carry one's own burden is the deprivation of the opportunity to mourn; hence the author is vocal in advocating for this opportunity to be allowed the widows. Once the widow mourns, this becomes a healthy endeavour displayed by both Switzer and Wilson. Ultimately the envisaged theology for the care of the widows will be attained. In our zest to create the

theology of care for the widow, it is imperative to diagnose the realities about the deceased as it will be done hereunder.

### 6.3. Realities about the deceased

The age old epigram suggests that: “Tell the truth in love.” This sounds rather weird and insensitive, yet the author considers this position as a necessary inevitable truth if the desired holistic healing of the widows is to be achieved. The author submits an **uncompromising rendition that regardless of the extent of the pain which the widow might endure let the truth about the deceased be told once and for all though**. This painful truth will be like “When salt gets into an open wound, it bites” (Kuiper 1966:261).

The effects of salt will leave the widow with the pain; yet the author conceptualizes of this as a redeeming pain. The assurance that the spouse is asleep or dead is better told in realistic terms which do not create any false hope and this is the pivotal recommendation by the author. This recommendation calls for a scientific method of presentation which requires sensitivity on the manner of delivery. About this manner of delivery Black quotes Dr. Guthrie of Edinburgh suggesting: “The manner is to the matter as powder is to the ball...To know what we should say, and to know how we must say it, is a thing of much greater importance; but to know *how* we must say it, is a thing of much greater importance” (Black 1924:59)

In support of the call made both by Kuiper and Black, the author would love to submit a recommendation that it is worthwhile listening to the stories narrated by the hurting widows, however; what is of more importance is the manner in which the care-giver will respond to such stories and the methodology of presenting the



realities that the spouses are truly no more. The ability to convey such in a healing way is a desirable presentation of the theology of care for the clergy widows in this context.

### **7. Knowledge and information therapeutic to the surviving clergy widow**

It should be noted that the surviving widow is at the nadir of her despondency where one might even be tempted to venture into foreign rituals and practices unacceptable to the family and other faith members. At this point, the author recommends without any form of question or qualm, that the surviving clergy widow be empowered with the knowledge and information commensurate with the gravity to withstand any adversity she might be faced with. This empowerment is painted in no uncertain terms by Castle who presents one of the most fundamental strategies to address the needs of the widow in the following manner: “Finally, encourage prayer and growth in the Spirit” (*ed* Castle 1986:198)

The author congratulates the proposition by Castle. He believes that the surviving widow should be empowered with the encouragement to pray and grow in the Spirit. This exercise in itself will provide the knowledge and information which will help the widow face the immediate future and the unpredictable distant future with courage and; hence fulfil the desired ideals of the theology of caring for the clergy widows discussed in Chapter 6.

Further attesting to Castle is Waruta and Kinoti who notice that this empowerment should engage not only the widow alone but the Church as well. Their rationale is premised on the fact that the Church is a healing community presented in the following manner: “The Church as a healing community should reach out...The

Church should bring God's compassionate and healing presence to such families”  
(Waruta & Kinoti 2005:132)

The author's own recommendations in this regard are that:

- The widows should be empowered with knowledge and information concerning their state of affairs. This could help the widow to know where to go and make claims of certain accrued revenue, the knowledge on whom to consult concerning the estate, insurances, wills and mortgage issues.
- The Church should equally be empowered with the necessary healing acumen in order to be enabled to handle the state of the both the widow and her family.

With these recommendations rests the responsibility of a paramount nature to further research the submitted topics in order to contribute holistically in the fund of knowledge. These could be pursued by other scholars and to see if no viable instrument can be developed, packaged and even marketed both to the public and private sector. The author opines that with legitimate research and quality packaging of the research data, **such an enterprise can generate revenue on its own and hence fund the Educational Trust Fund created with a specific objective of pastorally improving the conditions of the widows in general and the clergy widows in particular.**

#### **8. Foundational layer of the new tool for the care of the clergy widows**

The author considers it extremely important to understand the underlying principles that can serve as a foundational layer towards the creation of the new tool of care for the clergy widows. This layer finds its existence in the understanding of the kind of state the widow finds herself in. This state of

defencelessness portrayed by the various degrees of depression is drawn by Neuger in the following way:

“For our purposes here I will list several kinds of depressions usually delineated when categories of depression are used.

1. MAJOR DEPRESSION. These are often called “clinical depressions.” They are unipolar and are characterized by significant physical, emotional and relational symptoms.
2. DYSTHYMIA. This is a more mild and chronic form of depression. Many of the same symptoms are present but they are not as incapacitating or intense as in major depression.
3. BIPOLAR DEPRESSION. This variety comes in two forms. One is commonly called manic depression and it is the major form of this depression....A milder and more chronic form of bipolar depression is cyclothymia, which, again, can be so chronic in a person’s life that it is hard to distinguish it from a personality trait.
4. MINOR DEPRESSION. There are also milder and less chronic forms of unipolar depression labelled in a variety of ways.
5. SEASONAL AFFECTIVE DISORDER. This category of depression is defined by the experience of being recurrently depressed at a specific time of year, usually in the fall or winter.
6. HORMONAL DEPRESSIONS. There is significant debate surrounding these depressions, which are categorized hormonally for women. The first is premenstrual dysphoric disorder and the second is postpartum depression” (Neuger 2001:151-152). Neuger provides an earlier premise that: “The depressed person often talks about ‘not caring any more’ and shows decreased interest in the activities she used to enjoy” (2001:151).

With the foregoing information about the state in which women find themselves, the author respects Neuger's treatment on the subject of counselling women. This whole presentation on the kinds of depression women undergo, a care-giver will be better empowered to engage a methodology which speaks to an old age adage which states: Prevention is better than cure. This suggests that when one enters into a counselling session with the counselee, he/she already must anticipate some kind of reaction or conduct related to one or the other enlisted depressions. The author **recommends that the caregiver should be equipped with such knowledge and in so doing, one will be able to provide an informed counselling as the caregiver enters into the space of the widow which is tainted with various kinds of depression.**

Once such an awareness of the kind of person we are dealing with has emerged, it becomes important to note that: "Counselling is an activity, not a profession. It is a process of relationships between the one who seeks and the one who gives help, carried out as a more or less prominent, more or less time-consuming, aspect of the professional activities of the helper" (Hiltner 1949:95). The author agrees that such an activity which is observed as a chain of a relationship process is an invaluable one, if the necessary care is to be ultimately achieved.

**9. Proposed mechanism: (on how the church can be instrumental in providing the support system that ranges from emotional, spiritual, social, psychological circles).**

This proposed mechanism attempts to create a multifaceted vehicle which will engage an analysis of how the church can best be instrumental in providing the support system in addressing the following aspects of a human being: Emotional, spiritual, social, and the psychological. This support system is necessary because

by virtue of their own being: “all people have an emotional-physical magnetic attraction to other people” (LaHaye 1990:36). This emotional-physical magnetic attraction necessitates the need to create the kind of support system which will be helpful in caring for the clergy widows in a professional and decent manner. These avenues are discussed under the following headings:

- Emotional.
- Spiritual.
- Social.
- Psychological.

The author must out rightly make an admission that these elements relate with Maslow’s submission in his immortal treatment of the hierarchy of needs. Though his list entails more than the foregoing aspects, the author has chosen to narrow his subject to those he has extracted with the intention of providing the recommendations as they relate to the stated avenues. In support of LaHaye, Morris and Maisto have this to say about Maslow’s hierarchy of needs: “According to Maslow’s theory, higher motives emerge only after basic ones have been largely satisfied....Someone who is starving doesn’t care what people think of her table manners” (Morris & Maisto 1999:366). The author supports this conception by Maslow quoted by Morris and Maisto that the starving person cares less about table manners. The age old axiom attesting to the same suggests that ‘necessity know no law.’

In the light of this rationale it is only **befitting to recommend that the church should and the pastoral care-givers should know how to prioritize the need structure of the hurting clergy widow**, for example, it will not be advantageous to organize a course on mourning when the widow is fainting with the basic need

for the food for the day. The next section will address the need to consider the emotional position in an attempt to support the surviving clergy widows.

### **9.1. Emotional support**

In an attempt to create an informed model of care, emotional support is amongst the most important. This support is demonstrated by the welcoming attitude displayed by Castle in the following way: “I believe that our first response must be one of welcome and openness” (*ed* Castle1986:189). This aspect of support as a proposed mechanism is essential in the desired care of the widows. In this regard LaHaye buttresses Castle’s notion of welcome and openness by stating that: “all people have an emotional-physical magnetic attraction to other people” (LaHaye 1990:36).

The author is in agreement with such a proposition since it clearly indicates that human beings have the virtue of attracting others to themselves. This very virtue becomes the instrument of soliciting for emotional assistance especially when the widow goes through challenges of loneliness. The author therefore **recommends that the emotional state of the widow should not only be taken for granted but be studied intensely if an informed mechanism of the care for the clergy widows is to be attained.**

#### **9.1.1. Exercising pastoral ministry beyond margins**

The author views this kind of emotional support as exercising pastoral ministry beyond margins. It means that the individual pastoral practitioners and the collective church have designed an instrument of caring beyond the normal and conventional. The author further views this as going an extra mile displayed in the following way: “Like Christ the Good Shepherd the Church should bring Christ’s

healing ministry to these families. Jesus in his life here restored many people to wholeness” (Waruta & Kinoti 2005:132)

This avenue also calls for the need for love to be expressed as best portrayed by Martin who states: “The gospel tells of a God whose love can be experienced. It promises a transformation of the relationships between human beings who accept Jesus. Through love, the reality of the gospel message can be experienced now” (Richards & Martin 1981:189). This is the very **recommendation** which the author would love to reiterate and support very audibly; namely, **that the reality of the gospel message can be experienced through love and as such the church can adopt this virtue as an essential necessity.**

## **9.2. Spiritual support**

The author is of the opinion that people need not pontificate their belief systems at the expense of other systems existing within the broader Christendom. It means that, in order to provide an efficient system and synergized methodology of caring, the care-giver has to be tolerant with other beliefs widely held and accepted in society and religiosity. Through this exercise an effective way of spiritual support will be reached amicably with all active and passive participants in the process of caring. The author acknowledges the need for the rebirth of Christ in the hearts of both those who profess as well as those who confess His name as portrayed by Biko who states: “May Christ be born in your heart anew” (Biko 1978:244). The author believes and **recommends that the significant and meaningful rebirth of Christ in the heart of the care-givers be entertained since this will usher in a new dispensation of love, holistic caring, and commitment to the spiritual wellbeing of the counselees** and above it all, identification with the hurting clergy widows.

This will be a new well altogether, which will indicate the value attributed to the spiritual wellbeing of the hurting clergy widows. Such a concern and measure of care fulfils the requirements of pastoral care which presuppose the position of God in relation to His creation as a parental one stated thus by McFague: “Finally, God as parent wants *all* to flourish. Divine agapic love is inclusive and hence a model of impartial justice... God as mother is parent to *all* species and wishes all to flourish” (McFague 2000:108).

The author endorses this analogy presenting God as mother as a therapeutic metaphor of conceptualizing God in a healthy way in an attempt to birth a theology of pastoral care for the clergy widows. Hence, the author’s recommendation in all simplicity supplements McFague’s proposal of God as mother. This position reinforces and justifies the **drive to establish a motherly theology presented in the prayer of the women in Addendum C on page 303. The author recommends the adoption of this kind of a mechanism as an imperative in the ecclesiastical circles** since it will enhance the desired pastoral theology for the care of the widows. We will now analyze how the social aspect of life impacts on the pastoral care for the widows.

### **9.3. Social support**

Social support is necessary if the Theology of Care is to be exercised. This Theology should not be viewed as only limited to a certain people as Dickson indicates: “It would seem, then, that theology is done by a particular people: those who have received special training. However, it needs to be recognized that it is not only those who have undergone special training who do theology or may theologise. Every Christian theologises, and the justification for this assertion is that, though ultimately the question raised by theology...are about God, essentially



theology has to do with the meaning of human existence (Dickson 1984:13). The author views this social support, which revolves around the knowledge of the importance of Theology, as pivotal. It is in this understanding that the widows will be cared for by literally everyone in the ecclesiastical gathering without shifting such responsibility to a learned few.

Furthermore Strommen and Hardel supplement Dickson's reasoning as follows: "Many people are hindered from developing close, long-lasting relationships because of unhealed, wounded memories. That is why a ministry that enables people to uncover such memories and become free of them is so releasing and redeeming. (Strommen & Hardel 2000:41). It is for such reasons the author believes that the care of widows is a holistic responsibility which invites everyone's engagement. These widows have apparently suffered an unfathomable rejection which has served as a deterrent hindering them from any form of harmonious social relationship, with people both in their immediate surrounding as well as those in other spheres of relationships.

Buttressing the same notion Gerkin has this to say about the social sphere of human beings: "As the social historian Russel Jacoby has rightly phrased it, "The social does not 'influence' the private; it dwells within it. Furthermore, it is at this level of the details of private life and decision-making that the social problems become visible to pastoral and lay church leaders in ways that can prompt fresh inquiry concerning cultural norms" (Gerkin 1991:31). The author would love to differ with Gerkin in his support of Jacoby. He feels rather strongly that though the social dwells within, it certainly does have an inconspicuous significance and influence to the private space of people. This means that though the spheres are

interrelated, each is influenced by factors primarily within its nexus more than by mutual interdependence.

This observation propelled the author into discovering yet another avenue of research which can be entertained as a way of attempting to solve the riddle of the aspired care for the widows in general, but the clergy widows in particular. The recommendation resulting from this argumentation as a research topic could be phrased as follows: **The extent to which the interdependence of the hierarchal needs of a human being have an influence on the totality of the clergy widows-a pastoral theology of praxis.** This can be an avenue of research by other scholars.

The psychological support is an equally important avenue in the spheres of human. The author would love to analyze such and extrapolate the data which can assist in an attempt to chart the methodology and theology commensurate with the care of the clergy widows in general, but the Pentecostal widows in particular.

#### **9.4. Psychological support**

The author's own mantra in as far as the care of the widows is concerned is grounded on the words of James where he extends the invitation of compassion pronouncing: "What God the Father considers to be pure and genuine religion is this: to take care of orphans and widows in their suffering" (James 1:27). The author must acknowledge at this point that this utterance was also echoed by Mrs. Lesedi when she was narrating her story during the interview. The author, therefore, submits a recommendation that this authoritative stripe line **can be adopted by a group of widowed women who can start up their own widows'**

**support group, club, association or even a Non Governmental Organization whose primary aim is to offer a pastoral care service to the widows.**

This mantra interconnects the operation of the human being's totality on the proposition presented by Olsen that: "All societies must first of all provide some organized means whereby their members can obtain food, shelter, clothing, and other necessities for physical survival...In all these cases, the individual normally turns to his (sic) fellow creatures either as sources of need fulfilment or as companions in his (sic) efforts to achieve gratification" (Olsen 1970:24). The author bears with the acclamation by Olsen in that it draws a picture of mutual psychological interdependence between the earthlings, which are obligatory for survival and an even greater requirement, if the sound theology of care is to be established for the surviving clergy widows.

If the foregoing assumption is true, it therefore suggests that taking the extent of this interdependence into cognisance becomes extremely important in terms of creating a mechanism necessary to care for the widows. The author, therefore, further submits yet another **recommendation that the church, society at large and the families of the widows should not ignore the essence of the ideal desired symbiotic relationship which can be helpful in providing an effective care for the widows.** This means that all structures of human society are psychologically interconnected and as such need one another for an efficient service of caring for the widows.

## **10. Conclusion**

The author would love to submit his concluding convictions that he was content with the findings established through:

- Literature
- Interviews
- Observation
- Tradition

All these led him to arriving at the scientifically calculated research which has yielded numerous possibilities of further research avenues. In his employment of Gerkin's shepherding method, the author was able to extract traces of commonalities between this and the positive deconstruction method espoused by Pollard.

As the author was forging the healing methodology through Wimberly's Claiming God-Reclaiming dignity, he was able to ultimately establish a theology of caring for the clergy widows as his desired end-product. This theology was premised on the narrative theology which allowed the widows to tell their stories as they actually encountered them. These emotional stories conveyed the altruism resident within these unfortunate individuals. Much as their circumstances were unfortunate, the author observed an even greater need by both the individual care-givers and the broader ecclesiastical entity to rally around the clergy widows.

In the context of the Pentecostal clergy widows, the author realized that they need to be empowered with the knowledge about the reality related to the death of their spouses. Such information is equally vital to the congregations where such women happen to be. There is a need to understand that: "A vital element in healing relationships is feelings....Feelings help us connect with each other in a way that would not otherwise be possible" (Oliver 1998:111).

The author supports Oliver's position as he managed to observe how crucial the feelings played a vital role during the interviews. His identifying with the feeling of the hurting widows managed to assist him with the instrument which will finally help the entire church, namely; the methodology and theology of caring for the clergy widows which he has submitted through a form of recommendations in this very chapter. This process of identification with the feelings of the widows calls for yet another virtue inherent in all of humanity best portrayed by Mugambi in the following manner: "Not all are prophets and not all are teachers. But whatever talents we may have, we are under obligation to utilize them righteously, for the sake of the kingdom of God" (Mugambi 1989:102). The author views Mugambi's submission as invaluable in the context of the research undertaken since it encourages every role player to expose maximum delivery of their talents in offering the desired pastoral care for the clergy widows.

In this study, widows from both the Pentecostal Church and the Mainline Church were interviewed with the aim to establish commonalities and differences in as far as the care for the widows is handled in each of the organizations. The results were rather surprising in that whereas the author initially laboured under the assumption that the Pentecostal widows were in a worse state, he established that their state was not necessarily as it appeared to have been. However the methodology for the care of the clergy widows in general and the Pentecostal widows in particular was created.

A new submission of the desired theology for the care of the widows was equally proposed. The research work supplemented the findings with the recommendations which are the most possible areas for further research. Throughout the research journey, the author was aware of the reality that: "This is not only an age of protest

but also of pressure groups, organised marches and demonstrations...but for followers of Christ protest must be without ill-will and malice” (Appleton 1988:23). The author deliberately chose not to advance the democratic method of protestation but rather the educational route as observed through the submission of recommendations. This route required the methodology and theology of conscientization.

Widowhood was almost observed as synonymous to both poverty and the state of curse as a result of the fallacious old age traditional beliefs. The mechanism created through this research work managed to position widowhood as a state of an inevitable journey which every human being has to undergo through death; as such, this ultimate state must be accepted with appreciation. The author, therefore, recommends that incumbent upon both the individual pastoral care practitioners and the church at large is to the need to adopt the proposed model by a form of various recommendations he has submitted. After adopting such they will need to be contextualized to meet the requirements of a specific situation.