

**ASSESSING THE CARE OF THE SURVIVING CLERGY WIDOWS
WITHIN THE PENTECOSTAL CHURCH**

By

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this is both my original and unaided work which has not been submitted to any other university for any degree

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Date

SUMMARY

The study was undertaken as a response to the need existing within the church. The author's observation of how one widow was going to board a taxi on a very cold day to attend the church service triggered the desire to research the care of the clergy widows within the Pentecostal Church.

The research is undertaken as follows:

- Chapter one:

This Chapter introduces the study and serves as a window into the research by providing a bird's eye view on what is fully entailed. It introduces the subject matter in the most probing and illuminating terms into the broader study which unfolds as alluded in the following subsequent chapters.

- Chapter two:

The Chapter provides the significant meaning of what is entailed in the concept of caring as an envisaged theological tool towards addressing the needs of the clergy widows in general and the said Pentecostal clergy widow in particular, hence submitting the theology of caring. Various theologies such as the theology of brokenness, the theology of comfort and the theology of anointing the wounded are discussed in minute detail. Widows constituting various categories are presented as widows caused by God, caused by others and those caused by self.

- Chapter three:

The methodology of caring is introduced with emphasis on how such a methodology can be practically employed as a way and means of averting the plight of the Pentecostal widows in particular. Gerkin's *Shepherding*

methodology is discussed in a scholastic dialogue with Wimberly, who introduces the notion of privileging conversations with God. These two authorities are presented in a discourse with Pollard who diagnoses a theology which he calls positive deconstruction.

- Chapter four:

Three clergy widows were drawn from the Pentecostal Church and two from the Mainline Church as samples of narrated stories. Their stories managed to open a new well of information which surfaced both in their story-telling as well as in their responses to the questionnaires. The data collected both through the questionnaires as well as the stories they shared was analyzed intensely.

- Chapter five:

The integration of the methodology of caring amongst other subjects unfolded matters related to the required healing of the surviving widow, dying patient's problems come to an end, family problems go on and the submission of a considerable theology for the care of widows. The Chapter is aimed at creating an integration of the methodology of pastoral caring.

- Chapter six:

The following theologies were submitted as proposals in developing the caring theology for the Pentecostal clergy widows:

1. The theology of social responsibility.
2. The theology of power.
3. The theology of proclamation.
4. The theology of tending the flock

- Chapter seven:

This last chapter provided findings and recommendations established throughout the entire research process. Findings discussed were as such

informed by tradition, observation, literature and interviews. Recommendations were provided as a foundational layer of the new tool for the care of clergy widows, and the Pentecostal widows in particular, hence the creation of a caring model.

Title:

Assessing the Care of the Surviving Clergy Widows within the Pentecostal Church.

Keywords:

African; Love; Pain; Pastoral; Shepherd; Widow.

Definition of terms:

In the introductory aspect of the work the critical keywords which will be the buzzwords throughout the theses are defined as follows:

African: 1 Native (esp. Dark-skinned) of Africa. 2 person of African descent (Allen 1969:14)

Love: 1 deep affection ...2 delight in; admire; greatly cherish (Allen 1969:526)

Mainline Church: The four major groups, the Roman Catholics, Anglicans, Methodists and the Dutch Reformed Church (*ed* Fraiser 1996:17)

Pain: 1 any unpleasant bodily sensation produced by illness, accident, etc, 2 mental suffering (Allen 1969:640)

Pastoral: 1 of shepherds, flocks, or herds...4 of a pastor (Allen 1969:652)

Pentecost: A term derived from the Greek *pentekostas*, meaning fiftieth, which was applied to the fiftieth day after the Passover. It was the culmination of the feast of weeks (Exod. 34:22; Deut. 16:10), which began on the third day after the Passover with the presentation of the first harvest sheaves to God and which concluded with the offering of two loaves of unleavened bread. In the Christian church Pentecost is the anniversary of the coming of the Holy Spirit (*ed* Elwell 1984:835)

Shepherd: 1-Person employed to tend sheep. 2- Member of the clergy in charge of a congregation (Allen 1969:839)

Widow: Woman who has lost her husband by death and not married again (Allen 1969:1051)

The author chose to use The Pocket Oxford Dictionary for the provision of the basic and elementary understanding of the words as they are understood in the English language. The more technical meaning applicable to the Pastoral Care discipline will surface as each concept is handled. Each word shall be defined either as the literary sources provide or as understood culturally and traditionally in the relevant sections of the thesis.

Abbreviations

The following are the author's own invented abbreviations:

M/LCW: (Mainline Church Widow).

PCW: (Pentecostal Clergy Widow).

Semawids: (Self Made Widows).

Vivemp Widows: Viper-Vempire Widows (noun denoting the nature of the widow).

Wimas: (Widow Makers).

The following are the existing abbreviations:

SACC: South African Council of Churches

WCC: World Council of Churches

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CHAPTER 1: Introduction to Study

1. Introduction and Background to the Study

It was a cold Sunday morning in April 2009 when the author's wife requested him to go and buy some vegetables to be able to prepare lunch. On his way to the shops, he met an old woman in her late seventies, going to board a taxi to go to church. He recalled how dearly she had contributed to his spiritual life in his youth. This was a surviving widow of a pastor who had just been buried a few weeks earlier.

To his surprise and wonder, he thought that she was either supposed to have been mourning her husband's death at home or someone at the church was supposed to have volunteered or been assigned to pick her up for regular Sunday services. The author remembered how he found the same mother alone with her family, and her husband's ex-classmate, who must have come to comfort or maybe related to them. During the week of mourning her husband, she was all by herself. There was not one mother colleague i.e. wives to ministers, let alone mothers from the congregation and the church.

The author immediately remembered the following:

- (i) I am celebrating my eighteenth year since I was last released from active ministry in 1991 by the same church she belongs to. (The thought that aggravated anger, discontentment and pain).
- (ii) In one of the District meetings, whilst pastoring a church, the author once asked about an instrument that would take care of retired ministers by a form of pension or any other recommendable scheme (An idea to which no response was provided until his release from the church shortly thereafter).

- (iii) The particular church she was attending had at least the minimum of a quarter of a dozen mobile people. Immediately, the love of God overshadowed the author with the “peace that surpasses all human understanding”. He drove her to the church and dropped her at the doorstep of the church against her will. She had actually requested him to turn at the corner and not drop her inside the church premises. Though that was a questionable request, he did not entertain it.
- (iv) During her mourning week (the week before the burial as it is traditionally known), she sobbed as she narrated to the author that her husband was given a gratuity of four thousand rand (R4000-00) for the more than thirty years he had been in the loyal service of the church. She was given a red toiletry bag for all the years she had been in the Lord’s service herself.

This scenario pre-empted the author to consider pursuing his study on the care of widows within the Pentecostal circles. The shame of the widows in the Pentecostal church, particularly the one the old mother in question came from is of a palindromes’ nature. It is read the same whether going forward or backward in an attempt to apprehend the notion of the care of widows within the particular church.

2. Problem Statement

The problem that arises from the background provided above highlights whether the widows are given the care, treatment and protection they should be enjoying from the ecclesiastical bodies in which they fellowship. Hightower entrusts the responsibility of the care upon every believer in the following way: “The ministry of the Church is shared by all who name Jesus as Lord. This doctrinal view is called the priesthood of all believers. We both have direct access to God and we are called to function as priests before God. A part of the priestly task is to care for

all persons. Pastoral ministry (caring for folks from birth to death) is more than a function for ordained clergy; it is every Christian's task" (Hightower 1999:177)

The central focus of the purpose for a Church is echoed by Hasel as follows: "Many Protestants and Catholic scholars recognize in Jesus Christ the centre of the NT" (Hasel 1978:155). In aligning himself with the above authorities, the author supports the doctrinal stance as espoused by Hasel which calls for the recognition of the Christocentric Theology. He believes it is this point of departure which will necessitate an even intense consideration for the widows as Hightower proposes that the ministry of caring is every believers' role.

It is in the light of the pastoral nature of theology advocated by Elford that the author would love to establish answers to the care provided to widows. Whether it is the care that satisfies the biblical imperatives Elford portrays as follows: "Pastoral actions, like moral ones, are expressions of human nature which arise spontaneously out of genuine concerns people have for the wellbeing of others individually and collectively" (Elford1999:1)

There is definitely no way the ministry of the Church can be complete without the morally acceptable demonstration of the care for the widows. In his treatment of the subject of morality and care, Elford supports the foregoing argument by the author as follows: "From the point of view of Christian pastoral theology the first account of moral goodness that comes to mind is that of love. Not love in general, but the love of God in Jesus which is referred to in the New Testament and throughout subsequent Christian history as agape" (1999:151)

The focal point which the author will attempt to address, therefore, addresses whether the widows are treated in the most divine way the biblical dictates so spell

out for the ecclesiastical institution. The delimiting scope will enable the author to focus on the clergy widows in particular.

First and foremost, the particular Pentecostal Church which will be considered is the movement whose primary belief evolves on the speaking in tongues as their foundational tenet of faith. The reason for choosing this particular denomination is that, this is the movement from which the widow who prompted the author to consider the topic comes from. Furthermore, the focus will be narrowed down to the Province of Gauteng in South Africa. Such widows will be drawn from the backgrounds of African descent.

It is important to indicate from the onset that the author intends to investigate the notion of care for the widows in the holistic approach. This suggests that, as it will appear in Chapter 5, caring will be interrogated in its various compartments such as the social, spiritual, financial, and emotional care. The approach will address such faculties of a human being to finally provide a holistic care of the widows.

3. Research Methodology

3.1. Empirical Study

The study will be conducted in and around the Gauteng Province. The clergy widows in the Pentecostal churches will be the co-researchers as well as interviewees. The reason the author chose to conduct a study on Pentecostal widows evolves on the rationale presented by Clark and Lederle as follows: “If the church of Christ is in truth a homogenous body, then one tradition cannot appropriate for itself the role of *primus inter pares*. Brotherhood must be accepted, and the various traditions must communicate with one another. The members of the body have no mandate to rend the body. It is time that other church traditions

offer a helping hand to Pentecostalism, and that they also learn at the same time from the energy and flexibility of the younger movement, so that their ancient bones can be revitalised” (Clark Lederle *et al* 1989:152).

The author is labouring under the conviction that there is no denomination which is the absolute custodian of the eternal and divine mysteries of God. It is for this same reason he makes a humble submission that reasons out that Pentecostalism does truly need a bit of input from men and women who studied the word with the intention to correctly divide the Word of truth, stemming from other schools of thoughts.

In an attempt to bring about the desired solution to what appears to be the neglect of widows within Pentecostalism, the author will interview three clergy widows from the Pentecostal movement and two from more advanced congregations in terms of the care of widows. The integral approach of the study will carry a qualitative approach which will be carried as follows:

- The author will interview the widows through questionnaires which they will complete and respond to (see Appendix B on page 299).
- The widows will engage in story-telling as a way of narrating their own encounters.

The technical methodology structure will take the following format:

- (i) Five widows will be interviewed through questionnaires.
- (ii) Three of the widows will be from the concerned Pentecostal churches.
- (iii) Two of the widows will be from the mainline churches. (The reason for this diversity is to be able to establish a sound comparison on how each of the churches carries their carrying method for the widows).

- (iv) The widows will also tell their stories both as a way of data collection as well as a way of allowing them to vent out their long time bottled emotions.

The data submitted through the questionnaires will serve the following purpose:

- To assist in terms of analysing the similarities and the differences in the caring systems of the involved churches.

- (v) Story-telling will help with the analysis and understanding of how individuals internalize and interpret their various encounters differently.

The emphasis will ultimately be to assist the ecclesiastical movement to refocus in terms of realigning its entire purpose which cannot be divorced from its responsibilities. In order to correct the fallacious practices and misconceptions, it must first be established where the people have gone wrong. Mayer provides the following proposition as a point of departure to the churches' shortfall: "Research reveals that there are two ways in which Christian communities over the centuries have forced Jesus Christ out of his central position. One way is by stressing his deity at the expense of his humanity; the other way is the reverse-stressing his humanity so strongly that his true deity is deemphasized or even lost altogether. In either case, the result is the same: the community loses its basic Christian character and ceases to perform a Christian service to the world" (Mayer 1979:302)

The author will use Gerkin's Shepherding model with Wimberly's Moving from Shame to Self-Worth. He will also employ Wimberly's Claiming God Reclaiming Dignity. The integration of these authorities in Pastoral Counselling and care giving is of paramount importance in that:

- Christ will be portrayed as the Chief Shepherd of the flock wherein, the widows are the sheep.

- The need to move from the sense of Shame to that of Self-Worth will be presented since this holistic restoration of the widow to the position of acceptable human dignity, is of pivotal importance.
- The affected personhood dignity will be healed and given its rightful position in the church, society, family and elsewhere by journeying with the widow through the journey of Claiming God and Reclaiming dignity.

The abovementioned movement is best summed up by Wimberly who presents it thus: “I defined shame as feeling unlovable, that one’s life has a basic flaw in it. ...The cure for shame, I insisted, is finding relationships with significant others in which we experience some resemblance of nurture and care without having to turn ourselves inside out, in ways that only increase our shame, in order to meet people’s expectation” (Wimberly 1999:11)

It is precisely the intention of the author to finally lead and guide the ecclesiastical gathering to allowing Christ to be in the centre of His mission. It is this repositioning of the Master in His rightful place that will be instrumental in instilling the conscience that will be sensitive to the care of widows.

Though the study is on widows, the *modus operandi* and the approach which the author will be pursuing is not confined to the person of the widow, but goes rather beyond the person to engage the diagnosis employed in the Pastoral Care, Pastoral Method, Pastoral Theology and the Proposal of the Methodology of the Care as well as the Theology of caring itself.

This, therefore, means that the analysis will not be on how widows mourn, how they dress and anything along the cultural widowhood practices, but rather on the Pastoral Care praxis itself.

All of the above reflections point to the envisaged integrated approach which will speak to the Theology of Caring. The intention of the author is to assess the truism of the care of the surviving widows whether it is done within the scope of the expected Biblical standards and the expected standards of love-which is a prerequisite for believers. Chapter 3 will reveal in detail the integration of the Theology of Caring as it is anticipated to be exercised to the widows. The submitted trends of thought will be converged to formulate the basis of the Theology of caring for the widows.

3.2. Literature Study

The study will engage an intensive analysis of widowhood from various perspectives and schools of thought. This will be undertaken through literature review.

In the final analysis, for the benefit of the study undertaken, literature review calls for the discovery of new life best explained by Clinebell as follows: “Only those who have discovered new life in their own depths can become spiritual obstetricians, aiding the birth of new life in individuals and in the church” (Clinebell 1966:15). The author agrees with Clinebell that only those who have discovered their own depths can be best instruments to benefit others. Literature is the best tool to lead us to this discovery, hence the need to interrogate various kinds of literature in order to come up with an informed conclusion.

Within the church circles, the study and focus of the desired and aspired solution should find its pathway in the literature that teaches on the whole purpose for the being of the church. The rationale backing this reasoning is best echoed by Carr as follows: “Finally, therefore, believers are invited both by God and by their neighbours to accept without being distressed the often strange roles which people assign them. But this gives the believer the opportunity to embody the presence of God, thus losing himself and to finding life” (Carr 1989:96)

The approach which the author will use to interrogate literature is finally aimed at eliciting the very conduct depicted by Carr that the ultimate purpose for the being of the church; namely, the embodiment of the presence of God in such a way that the recipient of the mercies of the Christian service can glorify God.

The literature will engage various theological trends of thinking ranging from the Black Theology, Liberation Theology, Contextual Theology, Pentecostal Theology and the wealth of cultural knowledge incumbent in the African Traditional Theology.

3.3. Epistemology

The epistemological position will be spelt out in the clearest terms. This will be of great value in providing the necessary apprehension of the subject in discussion. In the words of Scheurich, this rationale is provided as follows: “Epistemology is the study of how we know or of what the rules for knowing are. From my perspective how I see (my epistemology) must precede what I see (my ontology) because how I see shapes, frames, determines, and even creates what I see” (Scheurich 1997:29).

The author would love to align himself in no uncertain terms, with Scheurich's provision on his perception of epistemology. It is true that what one sees is preceded by how one sees the same concept. The author's own view or epistemological position of the care for the widows is that such care should be done in the most sensitive Biblical standards which fulfil the very purpose of the existence of the ecclesiastical body. What informs this epistemological stance which the author strongly advocates, are the following three basic principles:

3.3.1. Motives inducing change to us and others:

Speaking on this important subject Van Klinken states the following: "Important motives that can change the situation of others and have implications for the motivated are:

- Solidarity
- Justice and compassion for all mankind" (Van Klinken 1989:12).

The author agrees with Van Klinken that the important motives that induce change to us and to others that can change the situation of others and have implications for the motivated are solidarity and justice as well as compassion for all mankind. In his attempt to define and research the care of the Pentecostal clergy widows, the author immediately finds a pathway that delineates his intended subject matter as well as gives a distinct character of his position on the matter.

The above-mentioned principles clearly spell out the author's own way of seeing the subject in discussion as well as proposing the approach he will employ in his epistemological endeavour.

3.3.2. The care for the widows is accompanied by divine blessings:

Addressing such care on a sharp note is Strommen and Hardel is stated in the following way: “Congregations are blessed when they have members who invite others into their home” (Strommen & Hardel 1989:157). In the understating of Scheurich, who conceptualizes of epistemology as how one sees the matter in question, the author supports what Strommen and Hardel equally present, since their notion is agreeable to Scheurich’s. The author therefore sees such a care provided to the widows being accompanied by phenomenal blessings. This in itself necessitates the very undertaking the author has embarked upon, namely, research of the care of the clergy widows.

3.3.3. Caring for widows is a Biblical Imperative:

In his invitation to humanity to consider the care of widows, James proposes that: “Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress” (James 1:27).

The author immediately observes that there is some religion which God does not accept as pure and faultless. This is one which does not care for the widows and orphans. On this note, it becomes evident that the care for the widows constitutes God’s heartbeat and is as such a non negotiable requirement. This, therefore, serves as a base of justification for the author in his epistemological stance to aspire to create and road map as methodology which will ascertain that the clergy widows are taken care of henceforth.

3.4 Relationship between methodology and the epistemological position

The author will create as the basis of his argument, a strong relationship between the methodology and his epistemology. The basis of this relationship is centred on

the nature of the Shepherding methodology, which he will be employing in his research as a model of caring. Such a Shepherding method defines the inherent requirements indicated in the author's own epistemological position which suggests the following:

- (i) The data collection method indicates the qualitative nature of the research which seeks to unlock the need for the care of widows.
- (ii) The Shepherding model of caring addresses the unique pastoral counselling principles aspired to interrogate the subject i.e. the care for the clergy widows in the context of the author's research endeavour.

3.5 Research Gap

In his attempt to justify the uniqueness and originality of his work, the author went through the available work on the subject of widowhood only to discover the masterpiece of an MA thesis by Mnisi which addresses: "The African Process of Mourning for African Women- A Challenge to Pastoral Care." The author's angle is different though in that it seeks to assess the care of the surviving clergy widows within the Pentecostal circles.

Matsaneng benevolently treats the subject of: "The traumatic experience that causes women wearing black garments to be excluded from the body of Christ: a challenge to Pastoral Care." His view on how women in black are regarded is emphatically applaudable. He sees them as having no defender. They are not treated with the esteem and human dignity they apparently deserve. The gap which the author has identified though is on the extrapolation of both the methodology and theology of caring for those in pain. The author would therefore attempt to introduce a desired integrated methodology of caring.

3.6 Aims and Objectives of the Study

The aims and objectives of the study will be:

- To assess the care of widows within the Pentecostal Church.
- To investigate the adequacy of Caring Systems for widows that are in place.
- To identify the loopholes in the practice of care among the Pentecostal Churches.
- To propose a holistic methodology to the care of widows within the Pentecostal Churches.
- To create a mutually beneficial technique of care for the widows and the church.
- To create a conflict resolution tool that will address instances of differences between the church and the clergy widow.
- To provide a theology of praxis whose principles can be employable and applicable even in the secular systems of governance.

Literature will be highly engaged in an attempt to create a scholastic approach to the subject in discussion. This literature will serve as the source of justifying the validity of the arguments presented throughout the research processes. The ultimate qualification of the approach will rest on the dialogue of the trend of thought as presented by either agreeing or differing scholars.

4. Target Population

The widows will be co-researchers in this work. Three women will be drawn from three different Pentecostal churches in Gauteng (One of the nine Provinces of South Africa).

Two more widows will be drawn from the Main line churches to create an open dialogue in the approach of the two different Christian camps, with the intention to better inform the area of need. The contestation and the desire to create this platform rests on the reasoning by Mouton and Muller who state: “Since the inception in the early modern age, the epistemological and methodological status of the social sciences has been an issue on contestation. Questions about the moral and political role of the social sciences, as well as their status as “scientific disciplines”, were soon debated and continue to be a topic of debate” (Mouton & Muller 1997:1)

The author, therefore, intends exposing the importance of the social sciences and the role they can play in the political and other related disciplines in channelling change to the welfare of humanity.

5. Instrument of data collection

In order to qualify the work as following the scientific research requirements, the author will borrow from the notion of Mouton and Muller which states: “Three interlined thesis constitute the core idea of a positive science:

- The universalistic thesis (the ideal of universal theories)
- The formalistic thesis (the idea that theories are axiomatic, deductive propositional systems)
- The logistic thesis (the idea that the form of social explanation is identical to that of physical explanation)” (Mouton & Muller 1997:2)

It is on the basis of this reasoning that the author will employ the formal principle of a universal nature manifested through the instrument of a questionnaire prepared for the co-researchers.

The research will be of a qualitative sampling nature. This means that it will not be carried towards a large group of people. Better qualified in the words of Sarantakos this research methodology will reflect the following characteristics:

“Qualitative sampling is directed:

- not towards large numbers of respondents but rather towards typical cases
- not towards fixed samples but towards ones that are flexible in size, type or subjects
- not towards statistical or random sampling but towards purposive sampling
- not towards ‘mechanical’ sampling but towards theoretical sampling
- towards fewer global settings than quantitative sampling
- not towards choosing a sample before the study has started, but (often) while the study is in progress
- not towards a strictly defined size but a sample whose number will be adjusted while the study is in operation
- not towards representativeness but rather towards suitability”
(Sarantakos 1993:169)

Sarantakos further reinforces the point that: “It has quite often been argued that qualitative researchers do not use sampling procedures. This is not correct. It is more accurate to say that they employ sampling procedure that correspond to the philosophy of this type of research, and that are less structured, less quantitative and less strict than the techniques quantitative researchers employ” (Sarantakos 1993:168)

The author opted for the qualitative kind of research method because it allows what Sarantakos further buttresses as follows: “In any case, sampling procedures in qualitative research are inevitably related to a number of issues and choices, a few of which are listed below:

- Kind of people
- Time
- Kind of event
- Setting” (1993:168)

Since all the above mentioned points fulfil the nature of the method that qualify for this study method that the author would love to pursue, he will embark on such taking full cognisance of the fact that it will be a helpful method to assist him to finally engineer an instrument that will bring about a solution to the social plight of which Mouton and Muller quote Bellah as stating a conclusion that social science is inevitably and by definition a practical, moral science (Mouton & Muller 1997:3).

The technical mechanism of the instrument of data collection has been outlined in detail in point 3.1 above.

6. Classification of Chapters.

6.1. Chapter one: Introduction to the study: Proposal.

The introductory chapter of the thesis will be the proposal which will outline how the entire work is going to unfold. The compelling reasons that led to the writing of this thesis would be spelt out.

The problem statement will be articulated in explicit terms which will address the actual question that is meant to be answered and the problem which the author is

attempting to solve in his work. The research methodology which will be employed in an attempt to bring about the solution to the plight of the clergy widows will be displayed.

To establish the authenticity of the originality of his work, the author will justify that there is no other work of a likewise nature in existence which could be a duplication. Aims and objectives will be spelt out addressing the intention of the author with this work. An instrument of collecting data from the co-researchers will be explained.

The target population which will make the work distinct from any other work available on the same subject will be submitted in this chapter. The preliminary conclusion will be provided as a means of ushering in the next chapter.

6.2. Chapter two: The Theology of Caring.

Since this subject is treated within the discipline of Practical Theology, it becomes extremely imperative to attempt to create the mechanism that will be understood to be seeking practical means of engaging the subjects. The widows, being the subjects of focus, will be analysed from various milieus.

Practical theology is a very broad subject, let alone the theme of caring. Let alone the definition of theology and the various Theologies in existence. So to narrow the focus of the chapter, the author will consider what the Pastoral authorities consider to be the theology of caring.

Caring will be provided, first, in its general terms as it is understood within the Pastoral Care field. Then, the author will move to the more specific propositions

on the understanding of care as upheld in the discipline. This chapter will deliver a distinct understanding of the theology of caring as opposed to the general use of the term which could be derived from any other discipline.

6.3. Chapter three: Methodology of Caring.

This chapter will attempt to seek the most credible and reputable way in which caring can be provided. Solomon in Ecclesiastes states: “My heart has understood great wisdom and knowledge” (Eccl 1:16) This Scripture indicates that the greatest plight of human beings is in their ignorance, hence he continues by further stating that: “Counsel in the heart of man is like deep water” (Proverbs 20:5). These Scriptures expose the hidden truths that humankind should seek counsel and wisdom on in order to create new methods of survival for their own wellbeing.

Campbell reiterates the foregoing by stating that: “In Pastoral Care in Modern Hospital, Heije Faber suggests that we can compare the minister working in a hospital with the clown in the circus. ...What the minister has to offer is different in kind from the many professional skills encompassed by the health care professions” (Campbell 1986:58-59)

He defends his argument by further stating that: “The fool for Christ’s sake trusts in love and that must mean the love that lets go, not the over-protectiveness which denies reality and coddles the other person” (1986:62)

The author agrees with Campbell that the work of Pastoral Counselling should be viewed in the most serious terms. The practitioner of Pastoral Care should be confident of what s/he does. This is the same motivation that will be instrumental in helping the author to define the desired methodology of caring in this chapter.

Various authorities who argue and advocate for the methodology of caring will be presented. The preliminary conclusion will be submitted and the following chapter which deals with the samples of stories of five women, will be introduced.

6.4. Chapter four: Samples of stories of five women.

With the advent of the Western system from what was traditionally an undisturbed system of communalism among the aboriginal Africans, there has become an even greater need to redress the ills that have been created by colonialism. Rose views this situation as follows: “The post-colonial fragmentation of modern societies has given rise to diverse ‘ethnic’ communalities, based on ‘race’ religion, language, and gender constituencies” (Rose 1996:4)

The once strong traditional societies characterised by unity and oneness, have been fragmented, hence the author agrees with Rose that there is now existing diverse ethnic communalities. These apparently account for so much discord even in the care for widows in the Pentecostal Church.

The author will interview five women, three from the traditional Pentecostal churches and two from the more advanced churches in terms of their policies and practices of the care for widows. The questionnaires will be prepared to provide guiding questions and the sound direction in terms of focusing and concentration.

6.5. Chapter Five: Integration of Methodology of How to Care.

This chapter will categorically analyse the various methodologies provided in the foregoing chapters. It will create a synergy on a range of methods in an attempt to finally integrate the caring system currently available within the Pentecostal churches.

Each method of caring employed in the preceding chapters will be presented in this chapter as an independent tool which can possibly lead to the desired ultimate aim of the study, namely; to assist with the creation of a new methodology of caring for the widows within the Pentecostal circles.

One wonders why it is important to synergise the method of care for widows. The immediate response to this age old traditional question is provided by Magesa who reasons out that: “Every creature has been endowed by God with its own force of life, its own power to sustain life” (Magesa 1997:46)

The need to integrate the method of care as the author agrees with Magesa that everything revolves around the precious endowment of the force of life which humanity has been granted by God. Widows are therefore no different from any other human being; and as such deserve a just treatment from society let alone from the church.

6.6. Chapter 6: Proposal of the Theology of Caring.

This chapter will analyse various Theologies in as far as they relate to caring. The author believes that the pain, hurt, anguish and potential healing all start within the context of any given family. The much required healing of the surviving widow is depicted in this chapter as the absolute aim of the study.

The study unfolds to introduce the truism that: “The dying patient’s problems come to an end, but the family’s problems go on. Many of these problems can be decreased (by discussing them before the death of a family member)” (Kubler-Ross 1969:142)

It is this point which the author supports as it necessitates either the strength or the devastation the widow will have to live with if not properly handled. The need to encourage an early engagement between family members about death, is further attested by Solomon throughout his writings by encouraging the living to speak about death.

The author will then seek a baseline Theology which can be the model of care for the widows. It would seem that some of the conventional practices related to the care of widows need a serious ‘right-about-turn’ revolution. This chapter will categorically submit a considerable Theology for the care of widows.

6.7. Chapter 7: Findings and Recommendations.

Following the research conducted in the preceding chapters, this chapter will focus on enducing the findings categorically with the intention to submit sound recommendations. The findings will attempt to bring answers to questions such as those contained in the aims and objectives of the study. Findings will be categorized into general and specific findings. The general findings will be those informed by observation and tradition. The specific findings will be those informed by the literature content employed throughout the work.

The author believes that there is some reality that must, at some stage, surface among the African Pentecostal Christians, namely; that the deceased are part of the family. In the words of Mbiti this foregoing is portrayed as follows: “For some societies, the departed remain in the neighbourhood of their human homesteads. They are still part of the family, as we mentioned elsewhere. Their surviving relatives and friends feel that the departed are close to them, and that people may even walk on them since their graves are close at hand” (Mbiti 1975:117)

The findings of the nature displayed by Mbiti, will lead the author to propose a recommendation that speaks to the consideration to some of the basic facts of death, the process of mourning and the realities about the deceased. The argument of Mbiti is further elucidated by the scenario of the Disciples of Christ who were on their way to Emmaus, to whom He appeared (Luke 24:13-34). The author will recommend that such a presence be recognized in the light of the biblical provisions as well as the Afro-centric beliefs. This knowledge and information will be therapeutic to the surviving clergy widow, who is the subject of the research. She will live her life fully assured of the certainty of her deceased husband's presence through the spiritual connection.

Recommendations will serve as the foundational layer of the new tool the author will propose for the care of the Pentecostal clergy widows. The mechanism will be proposed on how the church can be instrumental in providing support systems that range from emotional, spiritual, social and psychological circles.

7. Recapitulation of Chapter Classification:

To recapitulate, the chapter classification is provided as follows:

- Chapter 1: Introduction to the study: Proposal.
- Chapter 2: The Theology of Caring.
- Chapter 3: Methodology of Caring.
- Chapter 4: Samples of stories of five women.
- Chapter 5: Integration of the Methodology of How to Care.
- Chapter 6: Proposal of Theology of Caring.
- Chapter 7: Findings and Recommendations.

8. Preliminary Conclusion.

Chapter one served as an introductory premise to the study undertaken by the author which attempts to address the subject of assessing the care of the surviving clergies' widows within the Pentecostal Church as a Pastoral Theology of Praxis.

The introduction and background to the study is provided. This introduction is in fact the precipitating factor that necessitated the undertaking of the study. It served as a motivation to the hunger that propelled the author desire to write about the care of the clergy widows. The problem statement is drawn and explicitly articulated whether the clergy widows are given the care, treatment and protection they should be actually enjoying in the church.

The author proposes the research methodology which he will employ to address the subject in question. This methodology will take both the empirical form as well as the literature review. The author discovered the grey area that spoke to the need for the care of the Pentecostal clergy widows since not much work has been done on the subject. The only identified work is the MA Theology Thesis by Mnisi which addressed the African process of mourning for African women as a challenge to Pastoral Care.

Following this work is the MA work by Matsaneng which addressed: "The traumatic experience that causes women wearing black garments to be excluded from the body of Christ: a challenge to Pastoral Care." Both works do not address the desired assessment methodology as well as the technical Theology of Care that such widows actually need. The author will therefore be assessing the available Caring mechanisms to the widows in his attempt to come up with a proposal for both the methodology and the theology of care for the widows.

The aims and objectives were categorically spelt out with the ultimate aim of proposing a new Theology of Praxis that speaks to the care of the clergy widows within the Pentecostal Church. There seemed to be a gross neglect of the clergy widows, which in itself is not only shameful but an act that apparently denies the brotherly love which the scriptures speak about even as Christ states: “By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another” (John 13:35). These aims and objectives provide the roadmap which the whole academic study will focus on as well as seek answers for.

The target population is submitted as three clergy widows within the Pentecostal Church as well as two clergy widows from the Mainline Church. The method of data collection will be a questionnaire, which will serve as a guiding tool intended to help set the interviewees at ease throughout the process of the interview. This tool will help to alleviate any possible fears the interviewees might have. All the chapters of the entire work are classified in order to provide the roadmap of the whole study. They serve as a summary, right in the beginning, to indicate the potential content of the whole work.

The next chapter will analyse the Theology of Caring. The question of the sound Theology of caring is an indisputable and inseparable necessity when dealing with the widows, especially the clergy widows. Theology is indispensable in that the subject matter deals with the ecclesiastical concern. The author will engage Pastoral authorities through a broader literature dialogue of various experts.

Since caring is a very broad subject, the author will attempt to narrow it down by exploring the general meaning within the Pastoral care discipline and following this up with the more specific conceptualization of care. The whole purpose of the call for the care of widows will be systematically exposed through the stances

upheld by various authorities. Reasons for such advocacy will be given as motivation for the need to create a sound Theology which desires the good of the clergy widows.

CHAPTER 2: The Theology of Caring

1. Introduction

The previous chapter paved a way which the study will be pursuing. This way was paved by providing the outline as well as the content of the whole study. It was indicated from the outset that the care for the widows is a critical subject, a field with a phenomenally vast scope of research. The grey area identified proved that there cannot be any immediate solution in embarking on the care for the clergy widows, hence the need to create a platform of dialogue and discourse on the same subject. The author was therefore challenged to create a sound basis of the Theology of Caring for the clergy widows before even attempting to set up and formulate research methodology.

The previous chapter served as such as a window into the entire study, where the subject matter was systematically analyzed under the following headings:

- Introduction and Background to Study
- Problem Statement
- Research Methodology
 - Empirical Study
 - Literature Study
 - Epistemology
 - Research Gap
 - Aims and Objectives of Study

- Target Population
- Instrument of Data Collection
- Classification of Chapters
 - Chapter one: Introduction to the study: Proposal.
 - Chapter two: The Theology of Caring.
 - Chapter three: Methodology of Caring.
 - Chapter four: Samples of stories of five women.
 - Chapter five: Integration of Methodology of How to Care.
 - Chapter six: Proposal of the Theology of Caring.
 - Chapter seven: Findings and Recommendations.

The current chapter will therefore provide the basis of the desired Theology geared at the caring of the clergy widows.

1.1. The Theology of Caring

The Theology of Caring, as it relates to the widows, will be dealt with under the following headings:

- Analysing Widows from Various Milieus.
- General Understanding of Caring.
- Specific Propositions of the Understanding of Care.
- Distinct Understanding of the Theology of Caring.

It is however, important to lay the foundation for the entire work by giving the bird's eye view to the various kinds of widows who exist in various communities. The reason for this is uttered by Hiltner in the following way: "Healing means

becoming whole. It is a term not applicable to things or processes below the level of the organic” (Hiltner 1975:89). It becomes very evident that the primary requirement in setting up the Theology of Caring into motion, is the healing aspect thereof, especially because we are dealing with hurting, ailing and bleeding people.

1.2. The First Point of Theology

The point of departure in the theology of caring is the acknowledgement of its reason for being best put across by Elford as follows: “Theology begins with reflection on pastoral need under God in an ever developing tradition” (Elford 1999:46)

With an ever developing tradition expressed by Elford, it becomes necessary to establish means and mechanisms that are required to seek practical means of engaging the widows in matters that evolve around their own practical lives. This involvement takes various forms and states. The first point is helping the widowed woman come into grips with the realities so displayed by Hocking: “One woman wrote: “The point I want to make, which you may be able to use with many of the folk you have talked with, is that once we had both together faced the facts, we were so incredibly happy-which seems mad; but isn’t. During my husband’s last two months all the creases were ironed out and all the problems finally cleared up. What is more important, we actually said our prayers together. Once we had faced the truth we were happier than we had been for years, and I was able to see him go without bitterness but with thankfulness and great hope.” (Hocking 1977:94)

The author fully supports the philosophy of caring advanced by Hocking that the surviving widow should be given such kind of support that she can look back and utter victorious confessions such as uttered by the woman who wrote to him. This

Philosophy buttresses Elford's belief that Theology begins with the reflection of pastoral need under God.

The author agrees with Hocking who further argues that: "It is in ministering to the dying and to the bereaved that we who are priests have a tremendous pastoral opportunity. We can bring help and comfort and hope where these things are desperately needed" (Hocking 1977:95). This is precisely the message upon which the Theology of caring is centred, namely; being available to those who need such ministry desperately.

In an attempt to understand the reasons that necessitate both the imperative and obligatory care for widows, particularly by the church, it is important to anchor our Theology first and foremost on the cause of widowhood. This will serve as a tool to help analyse widows from various milieus, and ultimately enable the display of a sound Theology of the required care. If these causes were to be painted on the wall chart, or correctly put, on the wall of time; they would leave us with a phenomenal bleeding plethora of both possibilities and probabilities. The author would therefore prefer to limit himself to the following:

2. Analysing Widows from Various Milieus

Widows come from various backgrounds and milieus. The causes of their state of affairs differ by incredible margins, one from the other. It is important to know such causes and the kind of people for whom we are seeking to create a Theology of Caring. It is incumbent upon the Pastoral Care-giver to understand the basics upheld by White: "For his real ministry in the presence of death the pastor needs more than common sense, sympathy and foresight; he (sic) needs a clear and simple pastoral theology concerning death, not indeed for discussion when the end

is near, but to arm his (sic) own mind, inform his counsel, and inspire his prayers”
(White 1976:185)

In our attempt to analyse widows from various milieus as will be spelt out, it becomes necessary to position the role of the care-giver within our discipline since the ultimate aim of our exercise is to seek mean to offer healing to the widow. White collaborates with Hall in saying: “The steward in the biblical tradition is not first of all an individual but a community. This does not imply that individuals are excluded. But it means that our personal stewardship is a participation in the stewardship of a community-a community whose corporate stewardship is in turn its participation in the still greater and more expensive work of the chief steward, Jesus” (Hall 1990:132-133)

The author supports both White and Hall that the care-giver has to be mentally prepared and informed about the importance of the assignment at hand, as well as the fact that such an assignment needs to be handled with the greatest of the care. It obviously means that an uniformed care-giver will ferment the pain and set the whole desired healing ablaze, hence the need for a sound Theology of caring. The bleeding widow needs to be told the truth about her situation in love: “The very act of ministering the truth to one another should be an exercise of love: only when a church is functioning in this way can it be said that it is being edified” (Peterson 1992:213)

The edification of the broken widow is important; since to fellowship with a broken person might ultimately impede the growth of the entire church. She should be led to the point where she accepts that: “The integrity of the self, which is at the heart of the wholeness of humanity, individual and social, is a free gift of

God. But death and resurrection are the cost of receiving the gift, nothing less than the losing of life in order to save it” (Wilson 1988:48)

The author echoes the same cliché with Wilson and Peterson that the widowed woman, like any other person, will need to be treated with the caution that points at the importance of the truth which will ultimately produce healing, particularly in the knowledge that death and resurrection are the cost of receiving the gift of God. This hope will anchor her faith in the anticipation of the actual resurrection, the futuristic therapy that her husband is most probably going to reconcile with her at some point in time.

Wilson further indicates the importance of a neighbourhood for the safety of caring of those who are hurting thus: “A caring society is composed of good neighbours first” (Wilson 1988:104). The painful situation in which the widow finds herself calls for a good neighbour whom Christ teaches about in the book of Luke: So he answered and said, “You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind,” and ‘your neighbour as yourself” (Luke 10:27). Christ goes on to give an illustrious analogy of true neighbourhood in Luke 10:30-37. In support of both Christ’s and Wilson’s views of neighbourhood, the author strongly believes that widows should be treated as good neighbours in the midst of the churches they belong to. We will now look at the various causes of widowhood in order to be enabled to approach such with the deserved care.

Though the causes of widowhood are not the primary focus of the study, it is however foundationally critical to lay the platform that will lead to the better understanding of the various kinds of widows existing in families, societies and

churches. This premise will then better inform the required Theology of Care commensurate to the victim survivor.

2.1. Widowhood Caused by God

There is an age old adage that says: “Necessity knows no law.” This adage speaks of the pain that knows no endurance. This transcendental pain has an equivalent expression drawn by Campbell in him quoting Moltmann when speaking of the “human God, the ‘crucified God’ saying: “Anyone who suffers without cause first thinks that he has been forsaken by God. God seems to him to be the mysterious, incomprehensible God who destroys the good fortune that he gave. But anyone who cries out to God in his suffering echoes the death-cry of the dying Christ, the Son of God. In that case God is not just a hidden someone set over against him, to whom he cries, but in a profound sense the human God, who cries with him and intercedes for him with his cross, where man (sic) in his torment is dumb” (Campbell 1986:38)

Similarly, the Old Testament provides stories on the loss of husbands by some women as follows: “Then Elimelech, Naomi’s husband, died; and she was left, and her two sons. Now they took wives of the women of Moab: the name of the one was Orpah, and the name of other Ruth. And they dwelt there for about ten years. Then both Mahlon and Chilion also died; so the woman survived her two sons and her husband” (Ruth 1:3-5)

This tragedy has its replica in the New Testament portrayed by Luke as follows: “Now there was one, Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, and had lived with a husband seven years from her virginity; and this woman was a widow of about eighty-four, who did not depart

from the temple, but served God with fasting and prayers night and day” (Luke 2:36-37)

Both the stories in the Old and the New Testament reflect an indelible pain of dispossession of spouses by natural phenomena; the power beyond human control. The author calls this power, God. It is the power that calls for mutual discovery and mutual frustration between the one inflicted with pain and the one who has caused the infliction. The author agrees with Campbell that though one can feel left out by God, there is hope in the knowledge that He is interceding with His cross right in the middle of the pain similar to the one that must have been felt by Anna, Naomi, Orpah and Ruth.

In the narrative of Acts 3:1-10, Dittes states: “The first recorded moment of pastoral ministry in the Christian church is a moment of intense mutual frustration and a moment of joyful mutual discovery, in that frustration, of fulfilling ministry.” He further states that:

“Mutual frustration: The ministers and beggar said no to each other.

Mutual discovery: The apostles and the beggar took each other’s no seriously” (Dittes1979:70-71)

This narrative is a classical example of how the one who is the recipient of pain can internalize the pain, and yet still find the courage to live and go on in life. Life’s greatest power and force has stated its uncompromising ‘no’ by taking the loved one, and the surviving spouse lives with the pain of denial. It is this picture which illustrates that there are circumstances which have been caused by God; this no one can change except to accept and live with.

The care-giver, as such, has a phenomenal task to extricate the true meaning of religious meaning in such trying circumstances when the meaning of the pain inflicted by God is under scrutiny, best put by Graham thus: “Religion therefore carries implicit values and serves to prescribe, recreate and subvert many different aspects of our cultural practices concerning human nature, knowledge, values and meaning” (Graham 1996:111). The author views this reasoning by Graham as a challenge that calls for the subversion of a people’s beliefs to the ultimate authority of God who has either caused or allowed the death of the loved one to occur.

The ATR for example, has a view different from traditional, nominal or confessional Christianity. This difference is articulated as follows: “There is also a belief in the reality of spirits of people who died accidentally, far away from home, or harbouring grudges. Although they are not incorporated into the spiritual world, they exert a tremendous influence upon the living as legitimate or illegitimate socially approved beings. Below is a list of a few examples of such spirits as believed in among the *Shona*:

- Shavi* - Stranger/Alien spirit.
- Ngozi* - Spirit of vengeance
- Chikwambo* - Animal manifestation of the deceased’s spirit
- Madzimudzangara* - Mysterious autochthons.
- Njuru* - Mermaid/Water spirit
- Goritoto* - Ghost
- Chipoko* - Spook” (ter Haar, Moyo & Nondo 1992:8-9)

One may wonder why it is important to know such spirits by name. The author believes that it is extremely important to be exposed to these names since the ATR has a lot of common meanings and manifestations across various African ethnic groups. It is also very important to familiarize ourselves with such data to be

better enabled to deal with the pain the widow might be going through. Since African people are naturally born African before they are converted into Christianity, this information will empower the care-giver to assist the widow to assimilate the pain in the manner congruent to her traditional mannerism whilst aspiring to be a partaker in the gospel of Christ (1 Corinthians 9:23), as a religious commitment of her choice.

Whereas the study was undertaken in Zimbabwe, it is important to note the fundamental ATR tenants of faith as depicted: “Also important for ATRs in Zimbabwe are the beliefs and practices related to healing. The traditional healers are believed to work very closely with the ancestors and the other spirits. This makes the three themes of ancestors, spirit possession and healing closely related to one another. There are different ways in which healing takes place” (ter Haar, Moyo & Nondo 1992:72). When dealing with a widowed woman, it becomes necessary to note and know their rootedness to the ATR. Such knowledge helps in administering the desired care ultimately.

It becomes imperative that when opening up a process of applying the Theology of Care to the wounded or widowed, the care-giver has as his/her underlying background, the knowledge around which such theology evolves and is centred. This information will be helpful in addressing whatever questions that might be blaming:

<i>Musiki/uMdali</i>	- Creator
<i>Muvumbipasi</i>	- Moulder of the Earth
<i>Musikavanhu</i>	- Creator of Man
<i>Nyadenga</i>	- Owner of Heavens
<i>UMninimandla</i>	- Authority

UMvelingqangi

- The One whose origin is unknown (The First to be) (ter Haar, Moyo & Nondo 1992:7)

All these names of the Deity in the ATR reflect the abounding mercies inherent in each name. They represent an attribute equivalent to the expectations of the faith proponent. It, therefore, becomes necessary to understand these names to be better enabled to offer the Theology of Care which will be Afro centric where dealing with an Afrocentric widows without prejudicing them with foreign imported religious values.

2.2. **Widowhood Caused by Others**

There are people in life whose purpose is to ascertain that the day does not go down without causing a hurt to someone. Solomon describes them this way: “For they do not sleep unless they have done evil; and their sleep is taken away unless they make someone fall. For they eat the bread of wickedness, and drink the wine of violence” (Proverbs 4:16-17). The testimony to this effect is found in an account which declares: “In the morning it happened that David wrote a letter to Joab and sent it by the hand of Uriah. And he wrote in the letter, saying, “Set Uriah in the forefront of the hottest battle, and retreat from him, that he may be struck down and die” (2 Samuel 11:14-15).

This is a classical example of how someone was made a widow in an instant. As King David ordered the death of Uriah that he can take his wife for himself, we are introduced here to a Biblical instance of classical evil where widowhood was orchestrated with the intention to sabotage someone’s wife.

Here is a widow whose state of being has been caused by someone else; there is not much that she really needs theologically except the assurance that: “But I have to say that in all my experience bereaved people never raise points such as these. They long to be convinced, in general terms that we and the departed meet again. That is all they want to know” (Hocking 1977:95). The points Hocking is referring to stem from the following: “Paul Badham in his *Christian Belief in Life after Death* (Collins) raises such surprising questions as: At what age will the resurrected bodies be? Will they be the old bodies made new or new bodies which are exact replicas? Will they include our false teeth? Will they be in space? If so, is it perhaps another planet in another galaxy?” (Hocking 1977:95)

It is extremely important that these and many other questions of a likewise nature do not constitute anything closer to the theology needed by the widows. All they need is the Theology of assurance of meeting their loved ones after death in one way or the other. Whether it is Kings or ordinary citizens that have caused their beloved’s death, they need the assurance and comfort that there is hope and a possible theology of care in their circumstances.

The formation of the Theology of Practice plays a critical role in deviating the dependence syndrome from the widow. It is equally therapeutic to assist her to remove her energy from those who might have cost her such a dear loss of her spouse, and appropriate it to the rightful source on whom she can permanently depend. Dittes uses the following example: “A man say, “Get me a job. You know people in town and they’ll listen to you, if you’ll only try to help me.” “No,” a minister reply. “I am here to help you get Christ. Seek first the kingdom of heaven, and these things will be added unto you” (Dittes 1979:73)

The importance of not getting the man the job, but rather introducing him to the higher cause is of utmost therapeutic requirement. This illustration helps to indicate how a “no” can be helpful when the counselee starts to develop a sense of dependence. This becomes the point at which the Theology of Practice plays an important role. This Theology suggests that: “Practice thus emerges as the process by which social relations are generated. As a working definition, we might characterise practice as purposeful activity performed by embodied persons in time and space as both subjects of agency and the objects of history” (Graham 1996:110)

Graham further reasons that: “One of the key interpretive tasks of a pastoral theology as the study of Christian practice must be to exert close critical attention to those aspects of tradition, classic texts and contemporary social analysis which constitute the ‘sources and norms’ for authentic pastoral activity” (Graham 1996:111).

The author would love to align himself with the belief so advocated by Graham, that in the act of Practice there are processes which automatically unfold, and these are helpful in generating social relations. These can help interpret the Christian practice to ensure that a better understanding for the desired therapy of the widowed is derived. This can happen best within the context which the author supports, as purported by Dittes that encourages the desire to seek the kingdom of God first. The widow can, therefore, find solace in the knowledge that although human counsellors are around to encourage, there is an even better one who provides the ultimate healing, namely God whose kingdom we are encouraged to seek.

Affirming the rationale by Dittes is Perry who states that: “Sometimes, however things go wrong. At one end of the spectrum of attachment-separation, we encounter people who make ‘anxious attachments’ and in some cases feel that they do not exist when parted from other people. At the opposite end, we find people who seem cut-off, who seem to have severed their connections with their past, their family, and who seem unable to commit themselves to any person, group, cause denomination, etc” (Perry 1991:192)

The author would love to strongly align himself with Graham’s belief on the notion of practice and its importance, as well as Dittes’ promotion on the notion of seeking God’s kingdom first. Both these beliefs are grounded in the charge by Isaiah which stipulates: “Learn to do good, seek justice, rebuke the oppressor, defend the fatherless, plead for the widow” (Isaiah 1:17). The author also applauds the provision by Perry that sometimes things do go wrong, and people seem to be withdrawn and cut-off. It is at this point that the dependence syndrome, when dealing with the ailing widows, has to be dealt with very sensitively.

This person needs the message of hope which was spoken by Archbishop Romero, Easter Sunday, April 10, 1977: “The “kingdom of heaven” is not something that comes only after death. That will be its perfect fulfilment. But it has already been inaugurated in history, among men and women, by the Risen One, by his passage from death to resurrection” (Sobrino 1987:56)

2.3. Widowhood Caused by Self

The author has coined a terminology for this strange category of widows. He calls them the Vi-Vamp Widows, derived from both their viperfish and vampirish characteristics. In full, they would be called Viper-Vampire Widows. These self-

inflicted blood sucking widows do not mind the fact that there are beliefs such as the following in the African belief system: “Some people believe in spiritual relatives, heavenly twins of earthly souls, which guide and help their mortal counterparts. There are also tribal or clan spirits, totemic inheritances from the father or mother. These may best be understood in the setting of social relationships, without regarding them as separate souls” (Parrinder 1976:136)

This belief presupposes an intact dualistic life between the spiritual and physical which actually means that one shall bear the physical consequences of what they have done in the spiritual realm. Attesting to this, is Gehman who says: “Mystical powers, an impersonal power (*mana*) which permeates the universe, can be used for good or ill. Within ATR there is a delicate balance maintained” (Gehman 1989:78)

The author agrees with Parrinder to the effect that these widows must have missed the mark that the setting of relationships is not regarded as separate souls. He also agrees with Gehman that there is a delicate balance maintained within ATR the kind of which Uka, in his attempt to position the Theology of ATR says: “So the task of theology goes beyond the mere expression of a religious faith to that of finding explanations that really fit a phenomenon even if they are paradoxical” (*ed.* Uka 1991:155)

When dealing with an African widow, the understanding of this position of theology will be helpful to employ the frame of reference which will be understood within the value system, culture and healing processes of an African people. This will finally help the care-giver to engage in the therapeutic Theology of Care.

Stories such as the following are common in all forms of media including but not limited to the courts of law as well.

2.3.1. Killing husband as a result of jealousy

The author would love to submit a shortened version of the story of this self-made widow which was covered by the press. This one heartless woman went to the press and reported her husband to be promiscuous. Little did she realize that her prognostication would ultimately serve to inform the investigation with the basic information related to the husband's death. She is quoted, thus in the press: "A high-profile murder case shrouded in a web of alleged sex binges, infidelity, conspiracy, revenge and big money began in the Cape Town magistrate's court yesterday. Glamorous businesswoman Thandi Maqubela, 55, and medical doctor Vela Mabhena, 45, appeared in court with the murder of her husband, acting Judge Patrick Maqubela" (Sowetan Tuesday March 30, 2010, 5).

Speaking about this kind of blind love King Solomon says: "For love is as strong as death, jealousy as cruel as the grave; its flames are flames of fire, a most vehement flame. Many waters cannot quench love, nor can the floods drown it" (Songs of Solomon 8:6-7). Whilst the author apprehends Solomon's position, he takes a totally condemning stance to the brutality of the act committed by the woman who is reported to have killed her husband.

2.3.2. Killing husband as a result of greed

It seems like the popular upheld belief that women from economically deprived families are dangerous. They display this dangerous bestial character in various ways such as captured in the press medium in the following way: "Celiwe Mbokazi

was yesterday found guilty of killing her husband Franz Ritcher. Johannesburg high court Judge Piet Meyer convicted Mbokazi, 35, of murder and armed robbery after he found that the state had proved beyond a reasonable doubt that she was involved in the killing” (Sowetan Friday March 5,2010, 4).

This monstrous betrayer could at the least have left the old man alone than to entangle him in her deceptive hullabaloo. All in the name of making some quick cash as well as the false hope that she would acquire the estate, she orchestrated an evil plot which was to be exposed in due time. She hired the services of a hit-squad for someone who had apparently set his love aside to love the probable unlovable.

It appears from the motivation provided by the media that the causes for these brutal murders of spouses are almost the same. These heartless bestial women seem to have drunk from the same well of brutality only known to themselves and to what the author calls the daughters of sedition or women of darkness.

The author does however, admits straightaway, that there could even be worse horrendous activities carried by the male folk who are self-inflicted widowers. The apparent reason he will not disclose or even attempt to enter into such a territory is that such does not fall within the scope of this research work. The work is focussing on widows as opposed to widowers. This could be an avenue to be undertaken by someone else.

Whilst employed by the National Broadcasting Corporation as the producer of the African Traditional Religion, the author came across some shocking information during his programmes research. One Traditional Healer (*Inyanga uDlephu*), not a

real name for anonymity, shared with him some methods women employ to kill their husbands which include:

- *Ukucupha*: The woman intercourses with the *inyanga* or its agent and the poison will be automatically trans-imposed to the husband during the intercourse. The poor husband has the maximum of two days to live. This is also called '*Usuku mbili*' meaning (In two days)
- *Ukulumba*: The transport of the husband will be bewitched such that he will be involved in an accident in which he will most probably die on the spot.
- *Isibindi sengwenya*: This is the food poisoning method which will be used to kill the husband instantly, and no form of posthumous examination can trace the cause of death since the properties of the poison do not comply with the legitimate known scientific properties.
- Hit squads: There are countless stories of women who choose to employ a special task force of a hit squad to eliminate their husbands. They all belong to the category of self-inflicted widows.

Since most of these traditional methods do not have a known scientific base, it becomes almost impossible to trace causes of such deaths through known and existing scientific means and formulae.

The question then becomes: Do such widows deserve pastoral care whether they escaped incarceration or happened to be behind the bars. In quoting Campbell Graham, this is what he had to say: "Campbell thus echoes the concerns of writers such as Browning in identifying a breakdown of consensus and an alienation from the historical traditions, and searches for criteria by which reconstruction of identity and purpose may be forged" (Graham 1996:121)

Continuing to admire Campbell's echoing of concerns by Browning, Graham continues: "Contemporary understandings of human personality do not resonate with older doctrines of sin, virtue and human wholeness, upon which traditional models of care were founded. The contemporary task is therefore to refashion a 'language' of pastoral care that can communicate the essence of human nature and destiny by embodying them in images which are accessible and appropriate to the modern context" (Graham 1996:121)

Taking from Graham is Perry who articulates: "Sometimes, changes are negative. There is adaptation at the expense of loss of soul; personal loss does not lead to grief but to depression; defences collapse and result in personal breakdown; attitudes harden; the new is shunned with fear; a very one-sided approach suddenly swings into its opposite with little integration taking place (like a sudden conversion of a swing from depression into mania); a person gets caught up in meaningless changes of inner life. Bitterness sets in" (Perry 1991:72)

The author supports Graham that since depression has set in, a new language has to be established which will take care of the state of depression and the bitterness that has set in as portrayed by Perry. Even this self-inflicted widow will need someone to listen to her with empathy. She will need to be listened to in the Theology which Graham discusses as a Theology of Human Story-Telling (1996:120-121). In his attempt to describe this Theology he quotes (Selby, 1983; Pattison, 1989, 1994a; Reader, 1994) as saying: "Within the British context, the re-evaluation of the identity of pastoral theology is giving rise to a discipline that is multi-disciplinary, exercised by the whole Church, and relating to the churchly and the societal context" (Graham 1996:120)

3. General Understanding of Care

Care should be viewed in the light of what it is meant to achieve. Care is meant to achieve healing effects, particularly in our subject under discussion, namely; the care for widows. There is a special gift required to exercise and encapsulate care. Care can be better understood within the frame of reference of the primary requirements for its apprehension. One such a requirement is portrayed by Fenhagen: “Discernment is a prophetic gift to the church for its battle against evil. “We have the prophetic word made more sure,” writes the author of 2 Peter. “You will do well to pay attention to this as to a lamp shining in a dark place” (1:9; RSV)” (Fenhagen 1981:55)

Where both the gift and spirit of discernment exist, there is bound to be sensitivity to the state people are in, hence an even better understanding of handling them. Assuring this premise is Eims who states: “To explain, God is a God of variety and order, while people thrive on conformity and disorder. He goes on to say: How refreshing it is, by contrast, to see the Lord at work! He loves variety...Scientists tell us that no two snowflakes are alike” (Eims 1975:65)

It is in knowing that we are a different species in texture, height, weight and gender. That we will be able to treat; accept; respect and understand those who marginally differ from us. Care is as such calling for both mental and spiritual alertness. The care-giver has to arm him/herself with sound mental skills which Eims put thus: “If leaders train themselves to think ahead, it will have two positive effects on their work. First, it will help keep them out of trouble... Second, by thinking ahead leaders can set goals for themselves and their group” (Eims 1975:64)

The author agrees with Eims that since people differ in life, it is the leaders' prerogative to think ahead and develop mechanism that can help facilitate the theology of care with sound, unbiased, as well as an unprejudiced judgement.

3.1. The Theology of Brokenness

The Theology of Caring finds its pathway in the incarnate love of God made manifest in Christ of which Campbell states: "Christ, the Wounded Healer, restores the fractured relationship between God, man (sic) and the whole universe" (Campbell 1986:38)

It is important to note that the brokenness of Christ is best symbolized in the picture of the Eucharist where Matthew states: And as they were eating, "Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to the disciples and said, "Take, eat; this is My body" (Matthew 26:26).

Paul goes into even deeper detail to illustrate the meaning of the kind of brokenness inherent in the existence of Christ where he also says: "For in Him we live and move and have our being" (Acts 17:28). In so far as the brokenness is concerned, he articulates: "For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread; and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me" (1Corinthians 11:23-24). Widows are in the state of brokenness emotionally, spiritually, psychologically and other wise. It is for this reason that the state of Christ's brokenness has to be ministered to them as their first Caregiver.

Paul's detailed explanation of the brokenness of Christ's body provides a cushion even in the state of brokenness in which the widows find themselves. This clearly indicates that they belong to a bigger picture of brokenness equally portrayed by Doehring as follows: "Consider, for example, a sculpture entitled *Christa*, by Edwina Sandys, which drew public attention in the late 1980s. It is in the form of a naked woman whose arms are outstretched as if she were nailed to a cross. For many viewers, the sculpture represents the suffering of female victims of violence. Its resemblance to Jesus' death on the cross conveys the meanings of this death and brings them to bear upon the particular suffering of violence" (Doehring 2006:119) Doehring further quotes Neville in expressing the theology of brokenness through what he (Neville) puts across as broken symbols. He states that: "Religious symbols arise out of the contexts of people's cultures and lives ("the biological, cultural, semiotic, and purposive nature of interpreters")" (Doehring 2006:119)

The author supports the notion of brokenness displayed by Christ, Paul and Doehring. He believes that such brokenness represents the language entailed in the pain, namely the Kingdom language explicitly expressed by Christ: "Your kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven" (Matthew 6:10)

To the broken widow, the place of consolation is further articulated by Christ as follows: "But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you" (Matthew 6:33). Brokenness becomes, therefore, a mirror and a reflection of what really is metaphorically suggested by the actual encounter and cause of brokenness. Doehring quotes Neville on this theme by saying: "When symbols of a particular religious tradition are fresh and living, people, see through them to the divine. They do not notice the symbols as such any more than they notice the glass in a window or think about columns of

mercury when hearing the temperature from the TV weather announcer” (Doehring 2006:119). The position of the widow is no different from the picture drawn by Doehring’s citation of Neville. It is the position of broken hope which requires meticulous care as she attempts to purge together the fractured pieces of hope.

The symbolism of broken symbols leaves a heavy burden upon the believers and extends a call to practice the true and real religion which James describes in the following manner: “Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: “to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world” (James 1:27). Brokenness becomes, therefore, a passage to the will of God. This kind of theology defines God both as Sovereign and Caring. It surely does not define Him as the Being who does not identify with His creation but rather as the Creator who identifies with the brokenness of His creation, hence His instruction-to take care of orphans and widows in trouble. This theology suggests a system and level of operation far above what the current terrestrial ideologies can provide.

It becomes, therefore, incumbent upon the care-givers to embrace the task and responsibility of caring for brokenness as painted by Dittes: “To be a minister is to know the most searing grief and abandonment, daily and profoundly. To be a minister is to take as partners in solemn covenant those who are sure to renege. To be a minister is to commit, unavoidably, energy and passion, self and soul, to a people, to a vision of who they are born to be, to their readiness to share and live into that vision” (Dittes 1979:15)

The author has always opinionated that the selfless commitment encouraged by Dittes is a tool of healing for the broken widows, the notion further attested by

Hands and Fehr as follows: “It is crucial for clergy to develop and keep relationships that are personal, not professionally related. This means relationships in which they are not functioning in their role or professional responsibilities” (Hands and Fehr 1933:68). This practice best explains how the care-givers can enter the state of brokenness and identify with the wounded.

The author believes that if proper identification can be presented and demonstrated to the broken widows as Hands and Fehr propose, these women will be able to enter the annals of history with their testimonies and lifestyles; and be beneficial both to the society and the Kingdom of God. Their brokenness will be translated into an active and trans-generational energy that can impact countless generations just like the woman recorded here: “In the town of Bethany a woman anoints Jesus’ feet with her hair, an act of sacrifice, humility and humiliation. When the disciples criticize her for what they judge as extravagance and exhibitionism, Jesus responds with these memorable words: “I tell you the truth, wherever this gospel is preached throughout the world, what she has done will also be told, in memory of her” (Mt 26:13). This nameless woman of ill-repute becomes an example of devotion to Christ and a challenge to Jewish religious exclusivism” (Gibbs 1981:74)

There are many other women whose brokenness is yet to be translated into the source of life, namely; the necessary energy communicated by Doehring which state: “Postmodern approaches to theology incorporate a deep capacity for “theological empathy,” by which I mean the ability to stand in the shoes of someone theologically different from us and appreciate how, her theology can be a “home” for her in troubled, challenging times” (Doehring 2006:118). In an attempt to seek a Theology of Healing for the widow through identification with

her state of brokenness, it becomes obligatory to seek a deeper capacity of theological empathy. This Theology, the passion and the desire to work out, means to identify with the broken widow and become enough tools of healing her state of brokenness.

The author agrees with Doehring that there is an even greater need to cultivate the ability to identify with the broken empathically. This view presupposes that there is some form hurt incurred by the broken. This hurt can be equated to an ailment, as Power reasons: “The liturgical heritage relative to the meaning of the sacrament of the sick includes prayers for the blessing of oil, the ceremony of the anointing, the Masses appropriate to the occasion, and the ecclesiastical office *de infirmis*. In all these examples, there are some points which stand out and give an impression of what is expected in the sacrament of the sick.

8.1.1. Sickness is apparently experienced as a state of guilt and sinfulness.

8.1.2. One of the hardships of illness is that the sick person is withdrawn from the bosom of the community, and can longer take part in its worship.

8.1.3. The entire community is affected by the withdrawal of the sick person, must face this rupture and alienation, and take cognizance of the enigma of human infirmity and mortality.

8.1.4. The object of prayers, if not remission of sins, is often the request for health in mind and body, one being hardly envisaged without the other.

8.1.5. As indicated in number 2 above, what is expected from God as the culminating blessing, is that the person should be restored to the church and to participate in its worship.

8.1.6. The healing process is expressed in three ways:

- (a) The healing virtue of oil, and its power in the hands of God or of the church to cleanse from sin and to restore strength of mind and body.
- (b) The comfort which is guaranteed through the prayer of faith, and the forgiveness which goes with it;
- (c) The play the word “anointing” which takes in a relation to the prophets, priests, and kings of the Old Testament, to the baptism which the sick person has received earlier in life, and finally to the Anointed in the Spirit, which is Jesus Christ” (Power 1990:247-249)

The kind of guilt the widow will be injected with does require the liturgical form of healing to her brokenness. This uninvited guilt results from the shock and loss of a spouse. The wounds and the invisible scars left by the loss of the spouse so necessitate an even speedier means of comfort, and the assurance of the Anointed in the Spirit who is Christ Himself. In supporting this view which is upheld by Power, the author believes that this endeavour will bring about the desired theology of care equally drawn by Cusson in his treatment of Ignatius as follows: “Freely Christ laid down his life; freely he comes to take it up again. The one who has followed him through his Passion will have no trouble in grasping the significance of this immense joy of the Love who is “strong as death,” and who calls to life, in order to lose in himself and save in himself the soul desirous of the eternal Lord. That is the whole of the Christian life: “That I may know Christ and the power of his Resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, that if possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead” (Cusson 1990:307)

The author supports the notion that this theology of brokenness underpins the aspired wholeness as seen in the demonstration by Christ, who was broken first through laying His own life as demonstrated by Cusson. He also agrees with Power, who sees healing coming through the rituals such as prayer, that anointing with oil and full restoration from the brokenness through Christ Himself as an actual Anointing Spirit.

This section was addressing the Theology of Brokenness which is a prerequisite in the quest to heal the widow. The next section will analyze the other critical aspect of dealing with a hurt widow. This will be discussed under the phenomenon of the Theology of Comfort which in itself serves to mend the broken and torn hope of the widow.

3.2. The Theology of Comfort:

This is the Theology of hope, the kind expressed by Rose which states that: “We hope to solve the political problem; we hope for the New Jerusalem; we hope for a collective life without inner or outer boundaries, without obstacles or occlusions, within and between souls and within and between cities, without the perennial work which constantly legitimates and delegitimates the transformation of power into authority of different kinds” (Rose 1996:16)

Supporting Rose in propagating the Theology of Hope is Forman, Jones and Milner who reason that: “More than simply describing a set of truths, theology describes an activity: We do theology. To theologize is to think biblically and comprehensively about an issue” (Forman, Jones & Milner 2004:197). This Theology is anticipative in nature. It speaks the words which were echoed by Isaiah when he said: “Comfort, yes comfort My people! Says your God” (Isaiah

40:1). The Psalmist further endorses the same comfort by stating: “...Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me” (Psalm 23:4)

The author agrees with the Psalmist and Isaiah about the required comfort to the wounded and broken-hearted. He also supports the notion upheld by Forman, Jones and Milter that this kind of theology is action orientated. It is something people both confess and live out. This sentiment is buttressed by what they equally reason out that: “Good theology is not only solidly founded on God’s Word; it is also actively developed in the context of the church. It is ecclesial as well as biblical. The best theology is done in community with other believers, pursuing Christ’s mission to advance God’s kingdom” (2004:197)

This is a clear indication that this kind of theology is of a collective and corporate nature. No one person anoints their own wounds and pronounces healing upon themselves. It is a group activity. The theology of comfort does not see any member as an individual; instead it sees every member as part of the whole.

This Theology of Caring submits to the basic argument that calls for pastoral counselling. Comfort is, therefore, provided with the pretext that whereas counselling is sought by an individual, it is ultimately for the good of the whole. This counselling is viewed as such by Clinebell where he state: “Pastoral counselling is an essential means by which a church is helped to be a lifesaving station and not a club, a hospital and a garden of the spiritual life-not a museum” (Clinebell 1966:14)

It becomes very evident that the activity which defines the church as a caring entity finds its point of departure in its active engagement with the holistic persona of a

human being. This very activity distinguishes the church from any other social club with the motives and intentions of bringing people together. The ultimate aim of the church is to provide them with the necessary support. This very activity on its own becomes the defining pedicle for the theology of comfort.

In his treatment of the subject of Theology and Pastoral Care, Capps provides a hermeneutical model for pastoral care. He reasons out that: “The basic rationale for this model is the similarity between texts and human action, and the potential that this similarity has for helping us to understand that form of human action we call pastoral care” (Capps 1984:37)

The impressive synergy between Clinebell and Capps stems from the common understating of what the author calls the sound Theological basis. This Theological basis is sound as it yields to the meaningful life requirements which Clinebell further reasons out as follows: “Pastoral care and counselling contribute to the continuing renewal of a church’s vitality by providing instruments for the renewal of person’s, relationships, and groups....Thus, counselling is an instrument of continuing renewal through reconciliation” (Clinebell 1966:14)

The author will attempt to narrow the understanding of care to a specific field of Theology known as Practical Theology since he is undertaking his study within this discipline. In the broader sense of the application of the concept, the subject would be inexhaustible, hence the confinement of the subject matter to the specific discipline. It is at this point where some of the terminologies will be defined. Furthermore, a few schools of thoughts will be interrogated in an effort to research a few perspectives in dealing with the balanced care of the widows from what the author alluded as a sound Theological basis.

Though this is not the primary focus of the study, it is however foundationally critical to lay the platform that will lead to the better understanding of the various kinds of widows existing in families, societies and churches. This premise will then better inform the required Theology of Care commensurate to the victim survivor. Having analyzed the Theology of Comfort in this section, the author will move to the next critical section which will treat the subject of the Theology of Anointing the Wounded. All these Theologies are important to establish in order to be able to finally create both a reputable and credible tool of caring for the clergy widows.

3.3. The Theology of Anointing the Wounded.

The Psalmist demonstrates this Theology as one founded upon the ritual of anointing the head as follows: “...You anoint my head with oil” (Psalm 23:5).

Considering the state of woundedness, the widow finds herself in, James reinforces the Psalmist’s proposal by uttering: “Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord” (James 5:14)

As the Psalmist and James express the requirements of caring, the author strongly supports their understanding of caring, further articulated by Doehring when he says: “Postmodern approaches to theology incorporate a deep capacity for “theological empathy,” by which I mean the ability to stand in the shoes of someone theologically different from us and appreciate how her theology can be a “home” for her in troubled, challenging times (Doehring 2006:118). The state of widowhood calls for absolute identification, care and support from the care-givers, hence the need for a platform of empathy.

As portrayed by Doehring, care manifests itself with the appreciation of how a widowed person's Theology can be "home" for her during the hurting moments of her life. This qualifies the responsibility of caring and the anointing of the head to be every Christians': "The Christian fellowship is a caring community: the obligation to build one another up in the faith is laid upon all Christians" (White 1976:1)

White further attests that: "The Christian cure of souls is simply the application of Christian theology to pastoral situations, bringing the gospel to bear upon individual needs and circumstances" (White 1976:1)

The theology of the anointing, especially when dealing with the womenfolk; widows on the subject under discussion, takes cognisance of the following: "Christian pastoral care is understood to be informed by prescriptions of pastoral need and by models of human development which do not reflect women's lives. This is identified in two ways: first, in terms of their contribution to pastoral ministry as agents of care; and second, out of changing priorities in terms of women's pastoral needs, hitherto obscured by androcentric practices and institutions" (Graham 1996:124)

The author then agrees with White that it is imperative to apply Christian Theology in order to finally bring about a sound cure for souls. He supports Graham too in his belief that women's contribution to pastoral ministry as agents of care is of paramount importance, hence the need to anoint their hurting wounded heads with oil when faced with widowhood.

Since the wounds spoken of here are not physically visible, it becomes a prerequisite to utilize the gift of faith in order to touch such invisible wounds. Gibbs quotes Donald Bridge and David Phipers thus: “The gift of faith is the outstanding faith given to some Christians enabling them to rely on God in a special way for the accomplishment of some specific task, or for the provision of their daily needs, or for some special demonstration of his nature and power” (Gibbs 1981:402)

This anointing takes the form which it is stated that: “It is far healthier and more promising strategy to seek to motivate people by raising their expectations rather than by imposing a sense of guilt” (Gibbs 1981:402). This is, therefore, both a call and an outcry to endeavour to offer pastoral care service of anointing the heads of the wounded widows with the care they deserve and taking into account the indelible pain of loss they are going through, at any given stage.

4. Specific Proposition of the Understanding of Care:

The author will unfold this subject matter in a nutshell under the notion of the state of widowhood as following hereunder.

4.1. The State of Widowhood:

In order to facilitate and administer pastoral care, both meaningfully and purposely, it is important to understand the state in which a widow finds herself. This exercise in itself calls for the specific understanding of the theology of care embedded in the proclamation by Doehring that: “As a pastoral caregiver listens to a careseeker articulate the values by which she is trying to live her life, he can take note of whether her embedded theology is congruent with her worldview but at odds with the theology of her religious tradition” (Doehring 2006:113). Doehring

suggests in very direct terms that the consistency of the theological base between an individual's upbringing and the acquired religious values should be noted if a sound theology is to be created in an attempt to seek both the counselling and caring approaches for the counselee.

George is the protagonist in favour of the proclamation by Doehring. He puts his own argument as follows: "Pastoral care displays the common tendency of disciplines to advance through a pattern of countervailing excess. Like a pendulum, the discipline's emphasis goes from one extreme to the other. The perspective of pastoral care, like all cultures and subcultures, has three types of orientation, one of which may be emphasized more than the others; cognitive orientations (What is reality? What is knowledge?), cathectic orientations (What feels good or bad?), and evaluative orientations (What is right? What is moral?)" (Furniss 1994:1)

In the light of the rationale provided by the two authorities, the author would align himself more with the proposal by Doehring that seeks to establish the congruency of the theology upheld by the survivor. It is important to ascertain such rationale since failure to come into grips with the frame of theology within which the survivor operates might be detrimental to the whole exercise of attempting to assist her. It is also very critical to establish the apprehension of the survivor's own orientations as spelt out by Furniss.

The specific proposition of the understanding of the care, therefore, dictates that the care-giver should understand that this person (the widow in this instance) is going through unequalled pain resulting from the terrestrially permanent loss of a spouse. This is permanent in that it is irreplaceable.

The loss has left numerous and varying kinds of wounds. These wounds are best portrayed by Campbell as follows: “A wound is an opening in the walls of our body, a breaking of the barrier between us and the world around us. James Hillman points that that such an opening is ‘a passage through which we may become infected and also through which we affect others’” (Campbell 1986:39). The specific proposition of the understanding of the theology of care, therefore, requires knowledge about the hurting survivor should be always at the consciousness of the care-giver.

Since widowhood results from the death of a spouse, the pain that goes along with that equals that of death itself. In the words of Kubler-Ross, this state is viewed as follows: “In contrast to the stage of denial, this stage of anger is very difficult to cope with from the point of view of family and staff. The reason for this is the fact that this anger is displaced in all direction and projected onto the environment at times almost at random” (Kubler-Ross 1969:44)

The author agrees with Kubler-Ross that when dealing with the widow, it becomes important to understand the emotional dynamics that can lead to displaced aggression. This understanding underpins the concept and practice of the Theology of care especially for widows. The Theology of care for the widows requires the practitioners’ sensitivity and the in-depth knowledge of where they actually stand insofar as pain, wounds and hurting are concerned. Pretence that all is normal and well when dealing with a widow, will be an abominable act.

An engagement with this kind of person seeks true understanding and commitment, the kind declared by Campbell as follows: “Yet paradoxically our fear and nausea would be much greater if we encountered a body which could not

bleed, could not be wounded. Blood is a sign of life for us and the softness of skin and flesh reveals humanity. (Hence the poignancy of Shylock the Jew's question: 'If you prick us, do we not bleed...If you poison us, do we not die?')" (Campbell 1986:40-41)

Campbell further reasons out that: "Death is not only the token of our humanity. It is also an affront to our humanity, bringing fear, anger and loneliness in its wake. Wounds, and the vulnerability which they represent, lead to healing only when they have been uncovered and dealt with; otherwise they are festering sores which destroy our health and the health of those with whom we deal" (Campbell 1986:41)

In supporting the foregoing, the author believes that it is for that reason it has to be understood that death of a spouse precedes, necessitate and causes the label of widowhood, hence the need to uncover and deal with the wounds in order to lead the whole process of relating with the widow and to ensure healing.

5. Distinct Understanding of the Theology of Caring:

In the formulation of the Theology of Caring as well as in the attempt to create a functional distinct understanding of the Theology of Caring, it becomes necessary to listen to some of the most audible and reputable voices within the same discipline such as White who states: "The pastor's purpose is larger and deeper than physical or mental health or social rehabilitation. He (sic) seeks besides these the reconciliation of individuals to God, to each other, and to love, which not only establishes the individual in peace and lays the foundation for abiding joy, but releases within the soul such faith, hope and love as enable it to meet all demands with equanimity and resource" (White 1976:2)

Furniss is one other such important player in the creation of the sociological pastoral care model of which he says: “Pastoral care as an emergent social process can be represented by a simple five-stage model depicted as follows:

- In first stage, *defining pastoral identity*, pastoral caregivers create a set of expectations among potential care seekers and institutional co-workers about the perspective and goals of pastoral care.
- In the second stage, *pastoral assessment*, the care-giver listens carefully as the care seeker explains the problem.
- The third stage, *formulation of a pastoral plan*, involves determining a strategy for work with the care seeker or group that will be discussed with the individuals involved and revised as seems appropriate.
- In the fourth stage, *pastoral interventions*, the pastoral plan is implemented through interactions with the care seeker and significant others (Furniss 1994:144)

The brilliant presentation by Furniss indicates that ultimately, the counsellor and the care seeker have to come to the amicable understanding of the roles they each have to undertake with maximum transparency in order to enable an informed worthwhile intervention process. This becomes, therefore, pivotal in the distinct understanding of the Theology of Care.

The greatest care that can ever happen to the hurting widows requires the form of service that can only be presented by a servant leader. Distinct understanding is underpinned in Easum confession: “Before a second resurrection can occur leaders must die to themselves. That’s right. Every leader needs to put Christ first and their pretty desires second” (Easum 2007:39). The author agrees with the view upheld by Easum that there is a vital need to put Christ first in the caring work if it

has to be efficient. It is only in this context that widows can be healed with both the precise and distinct understanding of the Theology of Caring.

Easum further states: “Leaders must out aside their cultural prejudices and tastes and see the bigger picture. They must fall in love with the Kingdom movement of God in the world rather than work for the survival of their church. That’s right. The second resurrection begins when all of the leaders are willing to let their church die and trust God to resurrect it” (Easum 2007:39). This is a genuine call that appeals to the care-givers to be sure of their role and have unambiguous intentions of serving the widowed. In this service, the primary calling becomes the service first, to God through those who are hurting before anyone who considers himself or herself as of importance.

This distinct understanding of the Theology of care happens when the ecclesiastical body acknowledges the truism attested by Fenhagen in his confirming the notion of God’s kingdom propagated by Easum as: “When a man or women prays, “Thy kingdom come, thy will be done,” he or she is presupposing the direct action of God in our day-to-day experience. God does not predetermine the outcome of our lives, but he does act in the world, wooing us into relationship with him. To say that God is love is to affirm that there is “a purposeful quality running through the whole creation” seeking by the persuasive energy of love to establish that kingdom on earth in which God’s purpose for the world is fulfilled” (Fenhagen 1981:50)

The author agrees with both Easum and Fenhagen that there is a need to die to self; and that though God does not predetermine the outcome of our lives, He does anyway act to persuade us into a relationship with him. This forms the basis of the

distinct understanding of the theology of care and it is in such knowledge and acknowledgement that complete dependence in God is born.

5.1. Care for Individuals:

Group life starts with an individual. Many individuals form a sum total of the group. Therefore, a healthy individual will contribute to the healthy group life. Equally so, an unhealthy individual will be the cause of unpleasantness in the group. In his treatment of the subject of the Pastoral nature of Theology, Elford, put emphasis on the importance of an individual and the compelling need to focus on the individual as follows: “ The study and practice of care of individuals has been prominent in the Protestant tradition, so much so that this is the traditional domain of pastoral theology. However, the concept of the individual has a history. It derives from the attention the Reformers gave to the notion of individual salvation” (Elford 1999:105)

It becomes evident from this wealth of precedence left by the Church fathers that the point of departure in addressing the pain starts with the care for the individual. Some of the compelling reasons which necessitate this kind of an approach rest upon the guilt which an individual suffers, especially among those who seek counselling. The author does support this kind of rationale as it talks to the need to take care of the individuals than to treat people as a collective body with the same feelings. With this individualistic approach, the care for widows becomes a subject of personal concern.

It seems widowhood is accompanied by a sense of guilt, the indefinable kind without base, form or root of which Clinebell explains as: “Certainly guilt is the crucial factor in the problems of many of those who seek pastoral help. A pastor

encounters six types of conscience problems-conscience with appropriate guilt; conscience troubled by neurotic guilt; self-righteous conscience; underdeveloped or crippled consciences lacking appropriate guilt; underdeveloped consciences lacking in an appropriate sense of social responsibility and guilt; and consciences with value and meaning emptiness” (Clinebell 1966:141)

In considering that guilt has indelible effects, Clinebell further provides the following: “Objectively, appropriate guilt stems from any behaviour that actually damages or diminishes the wholeness of persons-oneself or others” (1966:141). The author agrees with Clinebell that the wholeness of a person will be affected by the sense of guilt and that in an attempt to create a theology of care such a sense of guilt will need to be attended through wise counsel. Since widows are heavily laden by the loss of a spouse, it is incumbent upon the care-giver to treat them with dignity and personal attention, each as an individual separate and different from the rest.

5.2. Love: The Indispensible Ingredient of the Theology.

Love is the most fundamental and critical ingredient in the Theology of Care. This is indispensable and inevitable if care, is to be exercised through the Biblical way- especially when dealing with widows. Elford supports this statement as follows: “From the point of view of Christian pastoral theology the first account of moral goodness that comes to mind is that of love. Not love in general, but the love of God in Jesus which is referred to in the New Testament and throughout subsequent Christian history as agape. This is the unstinting love of God for creation. It is virtually un-self-regarding and seeks only the total well-being of its object. The only knowledge we have of it is in the ministry of Jesus” (1999:151)

This view by Elford tallies with Aka's pronouncement that states: "The traditional African is known to be *deifocal*" that is he believes everything comes from God and all happenings and events are ultimately traceable to God. He thinks of God as the power that creates and controls all natural processes and all human destinies. God is believed to be a Supreme Being, pre-eminent in all things, the giver of life, light and sufficiency" (ed. Uka 1991:169)

The author agrees with Elford that this love of God, which is not self seeking, is made manifest in the person of Christ. This illustration is best expressed by the belief upheld by the ATR. The ATR view is inherent with the healing hope which believes the Supremacy of God. This automatically suggests that God has the best interests of His creation, and as such, healing is derived from the same knowledge.

6. Preliminary Conclusion.

In this Chapter the author analyzed the Theology of Caring with particular focus on widows. He analyzed the widows from various milieus. He looked at the general understanding of caring, the specific proposition of the understanding of care as well as the distinct understanding of the Theology of Caring. The author enlisted a few categories of widows ranging from the widows made by God, the widows made by other people as well as the widows made by self. Though the cause factor of widowhood was demonstrated as differing from one category to the other, the Theology required and necessary for the understanding of the desired care, apparently takes the same form.

The author delved intensely in the analysis of a few Theologies of Caring which took the following forms:

- The Theology of Comfort.

- The Theology of Brokenness.
- The Theology of Anointing the Wounded.

The specific proposition of the understanding the Theology of care was treated at length with the emphasis on understanding the state of widowhood. The author handled the importance of the care for individuals.

The author strongly subscribes to the notion that though He is Orderly, God is not controlled by Order. He orders it into being and reigns over it. It is for this reason He has entrusted the responsibility of care upon human beings to enact His Divine Order on earth by taking care of each other to create and recreate His desired ultimate care on earth. These words are evidenced in the Lord's Prayer where Christ teaches that: Your kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven (Matthew 6:10)

In this drive to espouse the manifestation of God's kingdom on earth, widows will be taken care of as an Orderly Divine Mandate. This very mandate becomes the definition of what true religion is, as articulated by James: "Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit the orphans and widows in their trouble" (James 1:17)

In the next Chapter, the author will analyze the methodology of caring. The author will engage the methodology that will be employed in the care of widows since the Theology of Care has been established in the current Chapter. This Chapter will propose a few premises that can be employed to anchor the reasoning that seeks to enhance the wellbeing of the widow in an informed manner. The chapter will be analyzed 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.

The synopsis into the chapter will address the reasons for the need for the methodology which will provide care for the widows by offering an epistemological position on the subject. The reputable way to provide care for the widows will be interrogated. The minister or the care-giver has to follow a certain procedure as well as certain ethics; and these will be spelt out. Love will be provided as the medicinal ingredient to the whole subject of caring and a preliminary conclusion will be given.

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.

CHAPTER 4: Samples of stories of five women

1. Introduction

The previous Chapter analysed the Methodology of Caring for the widows under the following headings:

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

Notions such as the following were employed in an attempt to expatiate the methodology of caring for the widows:

Gerkin's Shepherding Model

Hermeneutical Model of Shepherding

- Boosting Self-Awareness
- Various Facets of a Shepherd such as:
 - Leader
 - Guide
 - Provider
 - Protector.

This current chapter will concentrate on the Stories of women. Five women will be interviewed as co-researchers. Three will be drawn from the Pentecostal Church, which is the primary focus of the study. The study intends to assess the care of the clergy widows with the intention to establish an informed analysis which can better support the care of widows within such circles. The other two women will be drawn from the Mainline Church. The author assumed that these churches are rather better organised and as such can be informative with the required information which can ultimately help the Pentecostal Church with an

illuminated tool of care for their own widows. The interviews will assist in validating the assumed premises and, as such, qualify assumptions as scientific.

Providing an introduction to the Stories of Diakonia in Europe, the General Secretary of the Conference of European Churches, Jean Fischer states the following: “Telling stories about diakonia or Christian service- the “cup of cold water” offered in the name of the Lord- gives a face of both pain and hope. ...The All-European Consultation on Diaconia, held in Bratislava, Slovak Republic, in October 1994, used the methodology of story-telling as the basis of its work. ...Diaconia has a solid biblical basis. The choice of the seven who were “known to be full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom” to carry out the diaconal work of the early church (Acts 6) resulted from noticing an injustice within the community: some of the widows “were being overlooked in the daily distribution”” (Gurney 1995: ix).

The author aligns his rationale with Fischer’s, who indicates categorically that the methodology which was applied to solve the plight of the potential schism resultant from the unfair treatment of some widows was purely an engagement of wisdom through telling and listening to stories of the widows in a diaconal way. Attesting to the same is Gurney in the following way: “The art of story-telling predates that of the written word. Since those long gone days when the aural message was the principal means of communications, something of the art of story-telling has been lost. A good story-teller keeps the audience enthralled, and what is told has a lasting effect. That supreme teller of stories, Jesus, lived in an age when, although history was being written down, ordinary folk knew how to listen and how to tell and retell stories both historical and contemporary. It has been said that “at no point are the vitality, relevance and appropriateness of his profundity so clear as they are in his parables”” (Gurney 1995: xi). The author is in support of

what Gurney mentions about the effect of the art of story-telling which is even evident in Christ's own ministry.

It is for the same reason that he will be equally applying this age old powerful methodology of seeking for holistic healing. This method of research will help the clergy widows develop rapport as well as a sense of security through telling their own ordeal encounters of being neglected like the widows in Acts 6. This chapter will unfold the deliberations 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.
- An Analysis of the Stories
- Preliminary Conclusion.

2. The Advent of the Western System

Stories are both an inevitable as well as an inseparable part of an African people. They create a base of unity amongst a people as well as give a sense of belonging to a group. Stories come a very long way amongst an African people. They are actually as old as humanity. The author will, as such, hide the identities of the widows not only by using fictitious names, but by distorting the geographic

location as well as utilizing not real figures and numbers where these people are employed.

As it relates directly to storytelling, in the words of the World Council of Churches: “Healing and care become more possible as one “shares the story” within an atmosphere of acceptance, love and continuing concern” (A WCC Study Document 1997:80)

It becomes palpable from rationale provided by the WCC Study Document that stories are an integral therapeutic part of any given society through which they could create, generate as well as draw required pictures of value systems amongst a people. Mnisi reiterates the same fact as follows: “African concept makes sense of their lives through storytelling, it does not matter how painful that story is. Stories are part and parcel of their lives. People make sense of their lives through stories, especially cultural narratives which are born into our lives as they shape our values, and the personal narratives construct in relations to the cultural narratives” (Mnisi 2005:24)

Mnisi buttresses the WCC Document’s opinion on the essence of storytelling, especially that story-telling helps shape the values of a society and create a platform of healing and care. The author agrees with this notion and would further endorse the same with the fact that stories help hand down the cultural heritage of a people in the most secured way and system. This reasoning will, therefore, serve as an instrument which the author will employ in order to establish a ventilation platform for the co-researchers.

It also becomes very evident that there was an even better way for an African people to vent out their conceived ideas and ideals through the medium of story-telling which has ever since been tempered with by the advent of the Western systems of doing and conducting business. Stories are a helpful and therapeutic way through which one finds a way to vent out their hurts and frustrations since “we can never fully enter into the pain of another person, whether or not we have experienced something similar in our own lives” (Campbell 1986:42)

Considering the reality that “of all human experiences, the experience of loss is the most pervasive and potentially the most crippling” (Campbell 1986:42), it is incumbent therefore upon the caregiver to employ what Campbell further conceptualizes as follows: “The wounded healer heals, because he or she is able to convey, as much by presence as by the words used, both an awareness and a transcendence of loss” (1986:42).

The author supports the notion upheld by Campbell that the wounded healer heals not only by words but even by his/her mere presence. This was a prevalent practice amongst an African people before the advent of the Western systems. Hence during the period of grieving and mourning, the widow would not be allowed to be all by herself, but would be in the presence of a company helping her to communicate her story through her feelings of hurt and crying.

On the contrary, in terms of the Western system “as recently as the 1950’s a suicide was not allowed a Christian burial” (Watts, Nye and Savage 2002:158). This shows the extent in which the Advent of such a system was harmful to an otherwise accommodative African system whose primary consideration evolved around what Watts, Nye and Savage considered as follows: “The termination of a

difficult relationship through death tends not to bring a blessed release, as one might wish for, but rather a legacy of unresolved anguish, anger and guilt” (2002:158).

The author agrees with what Watts, Nye and Savage are proposing with regard to the pain and legacy of unresolved anger left by the termination of a difficult relationship. They further attest to the same ideal by an indication of the state of trauma created by such loss as follows: “Survivors of profound trauma may be so wounded that they need to be accepted in their limited ‘ungenerous’ state; to require impossible feats for forgiveness from them may only cause further damage” (Watts, Nye and Savage 2002:30)

A picture is immediately drawn which calls for intense scrutiny to the beauty which the Advent of the Western system brought to Africa in the form of Christianity and its related Western Religions thoughts. Such beauty is painted by Cueni as follows: “We are called to be instruments of healing, not warriors on the ecclesiastical battlefield. Assume pastoral ministry means loving people into wholeness, not winning battles” (Cueni 1988:43).

The author agrees that the fundamental and most immediate duty of the pastoral care-giver is the knowledge that the calling is an instrument of healing and not of boastful warriors in the battlefield. This is the beauty of the analogy depicted by the Western System which is further attested by Pappas in his treatment of the Stress-Transforming Tools where he states the following: “Stress can be an angel, a messenger from God. Stress can be the pinch that wakes you up, the call that alerts you to something worth knowing, the push that gets you started in God’s direction. Stress can be all of those things and more” (Pappas 1995:11)

Whereas Cueni encourages that the pastoral care-giver should not play the role of the warrior, Pappas on the other hand allows the importance of allowing a dialogue with an acceptance of the situation in which the hurting finds herself (sic). This position communicates the deeper need to listen to the story of the widow which is told both in words as well as through emotions and actions.

Whilst the aesthetic position of the Advent of the Western System is appreciated, the authenticity of the undisturbed Traditional System of Communalism among Aboriginal Africans is equally applauded as will be evidenced hereunder. This system and methodology was medicinal when approaching the healing of the widow and the hurt in general in an African society. The framework for this conviction is articulated by Pappas as follows: “So God made us, God made us like divinity itself, and God made us in such a way that we are the locus of God’s activity” (Pappas 1995:13). This proposition by Pappas immediately qualifies the inherent penchant that speaks to the importance of story-telling in the African context.

One can unequivocally bear testimony to the importance of story-telling as reflected in the narrative by one widow interviewed by the author. In compliance with the ethical code of conduct her name will be known as Mrs. Khambule (not real name), for anonymity purposes. It is important to highlight straightaway that this and all other stories were told in African languages and the author translated the content to the nearest most possible equivalent meaning of what was said and intended by the co-researchers. Mrs Khambule started by gawking on the floor for a considerably longer time in her sitting room where the author was interviewing her before she could be relaxed to tell her story. She almost burst into tears like a

baby. After an act similar to wiping her tears gently in her face and a gulp of air, she recounted her story in the following way:

“My husband served the church for thirty five years dedicating his whole life to serving the church he loved until death. I was always supportive to him, his calling and the Lord’s work.

What disappointed and disturbed me most was the following:

- There was and there is still no form of spiritual support I am getting from the church. By this I mean at my age (eighty nine years), there is no one in the church who could volunteer to come and fetch me to the fellowship on Sunday, even if it could be four people in turns, each on their allocated day.
- There is no form of emotional support from the church. I am not the only one hurting; the entire family is bleeding considering my late husband’s commitment to the church and the rejection we are experiencing in turn.
- The church does not have any form of pension scheme or assistance to the widows.
- I have not been given any form of financial assistance. On my birthday recently the church only bought me the grocery. I do not think that the grocery is all I deserved after co-serving the church with my late husband for such a long period of time.
- I have actually never received a R20-00 note from the church.

I believe that there is a better way to show love and live up to such a confession. I would love not to be seen as fighting the church. I would rather limit my story to

what I have mentioned, than to elongate it to the detriment of my emotions and my family's happiness.

This narrative bore testimony to the question posed by McIntyre as follows: "Why does the buried stuff of the heart sometimes burst back up?" (McIntyre 1996:65). The author instantly traces a response to the question in Brenner's dealing of the young widow called Ruth as follows: "Sasson points out in his commentary that Ruth binds herself to Naomi by verbal contract (1.16-17). The concept of 'love' that is applicable here, as in the slave's love for his master in Exod.21.2-6(5), is a legal rather than an emotional concept: it indicates intent as well as consent" (Brenner 1999:159). It becomes apparent that the African story was told by a deeper commitment which transcended even the written contract. The narrated story equalled the innocent content of the heart which uttered it.

Confirming the beauty of story-telling as a therapeutic method of validating the proposed point of conviction, is Musa Dube in her discussion of the unpublished letters of Orpah to Ruth. In her treatment of this subject, she draws this picture: "We were sitting outside, around the fire, during the night" (Brenner 1999:145). As her mother communicated the story to her daughter she indicated the following: "Long before the white people sold us their dresses, their schools and their religions, we wore short skirts and plenty of jewels. Young men wore very short, tight leather shorts around their loins; yet rape, incest, sex outside marriage, teenage pregnancy and divorce were very rare, if not unheard of....Now that we are all Western dressed, Christianized and educated, sexual and sins of all kinds have befallen us" (Brenner 1999:145). This narrative gives legitimacy to the age old practice of story-telling among an African people, the wealth which existed long before the Advent of the Western system.

Mrs Khambule's narrative explicitly indicated that the true wealth of an African people was inherent in the stories they told. This form of telling the story seems to no longer matter much according to her own perception that even if she could wail and cry no one from the church circles seem to care. This could apparently be as a result of the Western System with its limited focus on those who are only alive, here and now. In the same breath, the second voice of a widow that we will name Mrs. Mantoro, (not real name), also had her side of the story to tell which unfolded as follows:

“I tend to think that my story is different. Paul (*not real name-referring to her deceased husband*), passed on still working for the church very faithfully. He was seconded by the church to Chaplaincy, and passed on while in that employment. My greatest pain is that my husband was no ordinary citizen in South Africa. He contributed to the struggle of his people and fought his whole life until the grave; fighting for justice and truth. You are one of his products in your own capacity; (She referred to the author). He did request that I should not allow speeches during his funeral. This was one of his prominent characteristics; he did not want to attract the attention to himself but submit all the glory to the one who called him.

The one thing which became a true thorn in my flesh was the manner in which the Bishop conducted the funeral. I unambiguously deduced the following:

- The Bishop did not know who Paul was.
- He did not know who I was or Paul's family for that matter.
- The sermon and his comments were not speaking about Paul (my husband).
- It was a completely strange person who was being spoken of.

At that point all the friends of Paul were sitting in a corner listening to the cold sermon from the Bishop who did not know him. These are the people who could have enlivened the memories of my husband. This Bishop was only two months in the area when my husband passed on. He did not bother to inquire who he actually was. My true pain started on the Bishop not knowing my husband. He did not even take the trouble to know about us. My husband passed on in ICU and the Rector referred the burial matters to the Bishop, yet he himself knew him better since he was his server in *Polokwane* (one of the South African provinces).

The pain of a widow is that the policy he had taken needed proof from the church that he was a member for tax clearance purposes. The diocese secretary said Paul had left the church: ‘He did not work for me’- he said. He refused altogether with the proof letter which was required. I was appalled by his comment because Paul was truly not working for him but the church. After a week I went back. The lady working in the office was very kind and told me of the widow’s form which I had to complete in order to lodge the necessary claim assistance.

The good side is that the church does have the welfare ministry for the widows. In December they send parcels for widows. In the past three years they have been sending cheques. They do send a word of invitation in a year showing that they have not forgotten me. During Christmas they do send R450-00 (four hundred and fifty rand.) The most exciting part is that during the delivery of the parcels the team will sit down and listen to your story.

The pain of widowhood is felt right through until the grave, especially when you are doing grocery alone. Sitting at the mall one Christmas, a woman of a different race group just decided to talk to me. She said she had been a widow for twelve

years. I was only one for three years. This was comforting because it was right at the point I was imagining how we used to shop for Christmas with my late husband at the same mall. (*At this stage the author thought to himself: 'There was no better way the Lord God Almighty could have sent an angel to comfort Mrs. Mantoro other than this.'*)

I concluded that our dead loved ones are irreplaceable, the real one, the one you lost through death. Money, no matter how much does not replace a person. The value of the person is irreplaceable. I strongly do recommend that those who support the mourners should not only surround or support the widow alone, but the entire bereaved family as well.”

The pride, pain and anguish with which this story was told finds its best reflection in the account narrated by Dube’s mother as follows: “All my life, insisted Grandmother, ‘I have not ceased to tell the beautiful stories of our people. I have recited all the poems of our heroes and heroines, poems of our origin, of our brave battles of survival in drought and in good rains. I have told stories of the intelligent Sechele, Semane, Kgama and Kgamane, Mantatis, Lobengula, Shaka, Nandi, Mbuya Nehanda, Joshua Nkomo, Seretse Kgama, Bessie Head, Kenneth Kaunda, Nelson Mandela and the like. I have written these stories in your ears and hearts” (Brenner 1999:146).

The author echoes the sentiments portrayed by the Grandmother in the foregoing narrative in that this was and still is the way an African people tell their stories. Such stories are not necessarily written with an ink on a paper but in the inextinguishable hearts of a people, so that they can bear testimony to endless generations. This is what necessitates the importance of understanding story-

telling within an African perspective. It eventually becomes the whole purpose and reason of story-telling which will be essential in creating a healing mechanism for the widows in discussion. This will be evident in the next section which deals with an undisturbed traditional system of communalism among aboriginal African people.

Though taken from the British perspective, it seems that the trend of the widow to widower ratio is really appalling as demonstrated by Castle in the following way: “There are many more widows (3 million in Britain) than widowers, and many of the most serious consequences of losing a marriage partner apply more to women than to men. The widow is likely to suffer a severe drop in income and to have less experience and knowledge in running the affairs of the family” (*ed* Castle 1986:196-197). This picture immediately draws the devastating pain which equals the global trend in which the widows find themselves in.

A call is then extended for the pastoral caregivers to be sensitively committed to the need of the widows when dealing with the envisaged care for this group of people. We will now focus on the value which has always been attributed to an undisturbed traditional system of communalism among aboriginal Africans.

3. An Undisturbed Traditional System of Communalism among Aboriginal Africans

Magesa presents a painful argument advocating for the need to preserve the tradition of a people as follows: “The fundamental element, or foundational “principle,” so to speak, of African religious life and thought centres on the fact of creation. Created reality, including humanity, exists on account of the will of God. To continue to live peacefully, therefore, created reality must organize itself

according to that will which God established for it from the very beginning. God's will for creation is preserved in the traditions of the people and is transmitted from generation to generation through the instruction of the elders and mystical actions of ancestors" (Magesa 1969:285).

This notion of transmitting the instructions of the elders from generation to generation is attested by Brenner on Dube's conversations in the following way: "I do not like to write, since in my culture, we do not write. We speak, listen and hear. In my culture some write, but they have no publisher. I do not know from where Lesedi picked these letters. Yet the fact that these letters are among her collections attest to the fact that Orpah is one of us: most of her stories have been written for her, and the stories she writes end up in the 'No Publisher' box. I believe, therefore, that these attached four letters are signed with Orature-the culture of speaking, hearing, re/writing and finding no publisher" (Brenner 1999:147).

The sad picture provided by Dube in Brenner indicates that the traditional system of communalism among the aboriginal Africans is never swayed by circumstances regardless of its publishing shortfall and misfortune. It could be bankrupt of publishing deals, yet it is ironically wealthy with the history of stories such as those narrated by Mrs. Lesedi (not real name), in the following manner:

"The sad part of my story is that the loss of a spouse is irreplaceable. I had a fair share of a pleasant life being married to a well known and respected clergy in the church as well as in the political world. He made a very great contribution to the wellbeing of many lives. His passing on will be the only haunting life time encounter I am compelled to live with.

In as far as the support from the church is concerned I must truly admit that I have both observed and experienced what an African people are capable of doing. During the week of mourning, the house was flooded with a countless number of my husband's co-workers from all walks of life. These people ranged from prominent politicians to outspoken clergies who all came to comfort the family. I was impressed that some of my late husband's acquaintances were Pastoral Counsellors who knew that I was not the only one hurting but the entire family as well. The ministers from all walks of life came and provided support at home, at the church and at the graveyard. I felt secured and covered. The local church came after the funeral to provide emotional and spiritual support. They provided such support to everybody in the family.

What surprises are the peace and the presence of God which made it seem as if nothing had actually happened? This was experienced before and after the funeral. This is amazing that I also had peaceful sleep as if there was no death in the family. I can attest this to the overwhelming support we experienced as a family. I am convinced that I have tasted the meaning of a true religion which is defined by James in the following manner: "Pure, unstained religion, according to God our Father is to take care of orphans and widows when they suffer" (James 1:27). Now the only question I have is: 'Whose responsibility is it to take care of the orphans and widows?' It is truly the role of the church."

This story depicts the reality of the inherent wealth of knowledge and wisdom among the aboriginal Africans. This is a practical helpful way which can finally help the widows to arrive at a therapeutic yet cost effective state of desired healing.

The unity and the undisturbed system of communalism among aboriginal Africans displayed to Mrs. Lesedi is best reiterated by Magesa who construes of such as the orderliness brought by cooperating with the Divine Order in following way: “The interaction between the visible and invisible spheres of the universe and human responsibility for them is not simply random. It is controlled by a moral order instituted and sanctioned by God and channelled through the ancestors of any given community. This order is reserved by tradition and, if followed, has the power or force to sustain the existence and operation of the universe, ensuring a bountiful life for humanity” (Magesa 1969:72).

The methodology of reaching healing through story-telling is seen as a means and method which is as old as an aboriginal African people themselves. The author supports the reasoning of sustenance which is inherently built into such a system. Such reasoning finds a parallel existence in what Oden states as: “and I hope that you may, serve the Lord in the holy temple, that is, in His church with a new upright conscience, with prayer and fasting, night and day serving the needy saints, which the virtuous widow of Sarepta in Sidon did for faithful Elijah in the time of drought and scarcity when she received him in her hospitality and fed him with her tiny bit of meal and oil” (Oden 1986:157).

The reasoning of sustenance, coupled with the commitment and the duty of the widow proposed by Oden, become necessary tools which serve as a motivation and encouragement to an African widow. Such reasoning constantly resonate the sentiment echoed by Castle as follows: “Giving ourselves to the poor is the most marvellous work on earth, for there we can be truly ourselves-rid of pretensions and notions of superiority, helpless in the face of the immensity of the problem being alive to new possibilities” (*ed* Castle 1986:191). The author agrees with the

concept of taking care of the poor and is further articulated by Castle as follows: “a moment when the ‘do-gooder’ attitude is found wanting, and the Beatitude ‘Blessed are the poor in spirit’ explodes into meaning” (*ed* Castle 1986:190)

This position of being committed to the broken-hearted, who represent the poor in heart, is exactly what defined the undisturbed traditional system of communalism among aboriginal Africans. They had always been bound by an unbreakable bond of unity and care put by Oates as follows: “The business of “letting loose. Letting go, and letting be” has a stern note to it. It is tough loving care” (Oates 1980:36). It was in these formidable bonds of unity that the care of the widowed could be mapped in a more meaningful manner and is articulated as follows: “Mood refers to our feeling tone. In this sense we are always “in” some sort of mood” (Ciarrochi 1993:69).

The author agrees that humanity is in some kind of mood which at all instances dictate to the requirements of caring at any given moment. He further agrees with Oates that such mood is affected by the attitude that calls for acceptance of the state of affairs and as such demands the recipients of the situation to get into that mood that will let loose of those circumstances we have no control over as best illustrated in the Prayer of Saint Francis of Assisi which states: “God grant me serenity, to overcome the things I cannot change; Wisdom to change those I can; and courage to know the difference.”

This popular prayer of St Francis reflects in no uncertain terms the care inherent in the undisturbed system of the aboriginal African people. This outlook is equally encapsulated by an African people even in their religious systems. The African Traditional Religion views the person of a widow in a holistic manner. This is

attested by Magesa in a narrative of the Luo people, where a young widow was taken care of by the surviving brother of the deceased. He presents the pastoral consideration as follows: “On account of pastoral considerations (the widow was still young, and Luo custom not only allows but insists on the need for him to “take care of her” for his brother)” (Magesa 1969:141).

This argument presents the genius Afro centric manner which was both a lifestyle and method of communicating the holistic approach into the care of the widows. The author calls this: The African story fully lived out, enacted and told by an African people.

Attesting to the opinion that calls for the Imperative to maintain tradition, Uka states: “Other beliefs, practices and institutions that call for a serious theological rethinking are issues connected with authority, death, life after death, the living-dead (Ancestors, widowhood, mourning and funeral rites” (*ed* Uka 1991:162). The author agrees with the content of the African Theology presented by Uka which indicates the necessary imperative to maintain the African Traditional values, which will finally be instrumental if the care for the widows is to be exercised both effectively and holistically.

This undisturbed traditional system of the aboriginals in which the widows had a special role in society and could tell their stories in an empathetic, manner is equivalent to what Oden portrays in the following way: “From the earliest decades of Christian pastoral care, widows have given much to the Christian community, and have been perceived as a central concern of Christian social service. The directions for care of widows given in 1Tim. 5:3-16 indicate that widows had a well-defined social role in early Christianity” (Oden 1986:156)

This is the story of an African people prior to the advent of the Western system and colonization. A people had a way of narrating and living their lives in a manner that communicated their value systems; a system commensurate to their anticipated healing. It was an undisturbed way of collective communalism of an aboriginal people which knew no boundaries of discriminating those hurting. This way was rooted on the knowledge, hope and belief of the deceased's destiny portrayed by Mbiti as follows: "When a person dies, he (sic) (now as a living-dead) goes to the land of the departed which is on this world and next to that of human beings but invisible to men." (Mbiti 1971:86)

The author supports the attestation by Mbiti that a core to the system of caring among an African people, is the knowledge that their deceased are a continuous sleeping part of them.

This very knowledge serves as the breeding ground of the strength of an undisturbed system of communalism among an aboriginal Africans. It is in this system that the pivotal healing and caring is derived. It is in the uncompromised unity and homogeneity of this people that communalism is an obligatory imperative defined by Mugambi as follows: "One way by which the homogeneity of Africa has been described is the identification of certain sociological and cultural factors peculiar to Africa" (Mugambi 1989:5). The author agrees with Mugambi that such sociological and cultural factors that are unique to Africa serve as her defining attributes in the manner she conducts and carries on her healing and caring business. It is the very notion that informs the collective society that when one member is ailing, the whole community is equally ailing.

Shelp and Sunderland view this system of communalism as follows: “In its communitarian mode, justice is envisioned in its positive rather than its defensive aspect. In this mode, justice is seen to be not only as protective, but also as joyful. It is revealed to be not merely the absence of injustice, but the abundance of life in harmony” (Shelp & Sunderland 1986:53-54). This is the critical knowledge which constitutes the basis upon which a people find solace in telling their stories with the full assurance of confidentiality.

It is important at this stage to engage deliberations aimed at redressing the ills created by colonialism. This will be helpful to reposition the desired pastoral care for the widows. In the stories told by form of the interviews conducted, there seemed to have been breakthroughs which can be instrumental in assisting to readjust the care for the widows in an acceptable manner both for the widows and the ecclesiastical gatherings they belong to.

4. Redressing the Ills Created by Colonialism

In order to realign the destabilized and affected Afro centric system of caring, the stories told by women will be viewed with the right spectacles. This suggests that in order to create a model of healing proportionate to the ideals of an African people, the elementary requirement is the redress mechanism to that effect. This redress demands the motion which suggests, first and foremost, that the purpose of the cross and the central message of the Great Shepherd, Jesus Christ Himself be put in the correct perspective as suggested by Mugambi in the following mode: “Though the cross is a symbol of death, at the same time, the cross is a symbol of new life: it is the symbol of new creation for Christian. The cross may be seen to declare: even though death has been imposed on the innocent in his (sic) struggle for salvation, this death is the proclamation of new life, of a new creation. God

will raise life out of death, and the powerless will become powerful again through God's will" (Mugambi 1989:115).

In the stories of pain and anguish, loss and grief, hopelessness and despair, narrated by the widows, one such widow started by looking out through the window in utter defencelessness and powerlessness as she prepared to tell her story. Her face was amazingly sparkling with exuberance though.

The author could immediately tell that she was most probably looking at the direction her deceased husband could miraculously emerge from. The author could as such identify with the utterance by Mugambi that God could raise the powerless to be powerful again as indicated above. This substantiation in itself becomes the pillar of hope in an attempt to redress the ills created by colonialism. It serves as a cornerstone of hope to the hurting widows. This one in particular, whom we will name Mrs. Madonsela, (not real name), unfolded her story as follows:

"When my husband passed on, I knew for a fact that there was an inescapable unpardonable plight ahead of the family. How did I know that? It was a very obvious given reality which the entire family was going through, namely; a time of serious financial constraints. The only money which was available in the house was R1600-00 (one thousand six hundred rand only). I knew for a fact that there was nothing I could do to increase the value of the available currency. I had but one option, namely; to do as the book of Hebrews advises: "Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith" (Hebrews 12:2).

This knowledge immediately gave me succour and reminded me of the prominent maxim in Matthew which reasons out that: “But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well” (Matthew 6:33). This once upon a life time encounter: the loss of my husband immediately propelled me to devising a new survival strategy. I converted the mourning place into an alter of worship and brokenness to the Lord. Little did I know that such an application of faith and defenceless brokenness to the Lord will sooner than later result with what was to turn my life for the best.

The age old traditional education and belief about widows is that they are considered to be objects of scorn and ridicule. On the contrary I felt that I should break the cycle of fallacious customary beliefs by applying for a tender. As it is at the moment, I own a very big shop. I was awarded a tender in the state institution. This beautiful expensive car which I am driving is paid up. In fact, I bought it for cash.

I was truly privileged to belong to the kind of church in which I am fellowshiping. The church is extremely supportive. During the week of mourning, the Pastor, his assistants, the elders, various committees and the whole congregation provided an incredible support. This support was holistic in that it was extended to all family members. There was one elder in particular who owned a shop, who provided me with airtime, bread and food throughout the period of mourning in the afternoons and beyond that period. He would provide transport not only during the bereavement period but even when I started the business still struggling with transport.

The congregation so arranged that they should provide me with transport in turns so as to assist me to be established in the business. During the time I had a burglary at home, my Pastor bought me a Television set and a decoder. What a measure of love was this which I received from the church? Words cannot start to explain what I would genuinely love to sincerely express. As it is currently, my daughter is getting married and the church is behind it all. We truly suffer the feeling of the loss of my husband which is an irreplaceable reality, yet we are comforted to be in the midst of such a supportive people.

This narrative clearly indicates what Mugambi further construes as follows: “Traditional religions are not universal: they are tribal or national. Each religion is bound and limited to the people among whom it has evolved. One traditional religion cannot be propagated in another tribal group” (Mugambi 1989:4-5). In the pursuit to redress the ills imposed by colonialism with its foreign imported religious systems, the author cherishes Mugambi’s rationalization and conceptualization of the locality of the religious belief.

The interviewed widows seemed to have had this very religious inclination albeit that it was suppressed by the adoption and internalization of the newly adopted religious beliefs. This was evident in the following utterance by Mrs. Madonsela: “I do not only feel belonging to a religious organization, but above it all, I feel an important part of a local assembly which has my best interests at heart and concern about the wellbeing of my family. This as such makes me realize that true religion transcends individual personal interests.”

As the widows were telling their stories, the author came to the conclusion that, in order to redress the ills which were caused by colonialism: “The Church has a mission to be a visible sign of Christ’s presence in the world. The vitality of the Church depends to some extent on the health and integral well-being of the society and the culture within which the people of God live” (Waruta & Kinoti 2005:133). The vitality of the church within the context in which it is operating, plays a vital role in creating a sound redress mechanism required to be able to explore the Theology of Caring for widows.

The church has to redefine its understanding of caring and check if it comes anywhere closer to what Switzer considers as: “What is caring, anyway? It’s obviously not just a Christian word. One person who has sought to elaborate a definition of human caring and its meaning of human life from a purely secular point of view is Mayeroff (1971)” (Switzer 1989:12). In expatiating on the meaning of caring, Switzer quotes Mayeroff stating: “To care for another person, in the most significant sense, is to help (that person) grow and actualize himself (sic).... (It) is the antithesis of simply using the other person to satisfy one’s own needs. The meaning of caring...is not to be confused with such meaning as wishing (another person) well, liking...or simply having an interest in what happens to another. Also, it is not an isolated feeling or a momentary relationship, nor is it simply a matter of wanting to care for some person. Caring, as helping another grow and actualize himself (sic), is a process, a way of relating to someone that involves development ...” (Switzer 1989:13).

The author supports this copious and elaborate definition of caring espoused by Switzer. It serves as a functional rehabilitative tool to the loss an African people suffered in the hands of colonization. It is imperative to seek the Theology and

Methodology of a people even in the stories they tell as a means of seeking personal and collective healing.

In listening to the narratives of the widows, it was very important to note that there is a need to redress the colonialisation discord so portrayed by Oduyoye: “The theology of mission was, especially in the Roman Catholic enterprise, ecclesiocentric. All that obtained in the Latin countries of the West was to be duplicated in Africa. Western structures and Western standards of living were paid for by the West, so Africa, puzzled awed, accepted them as necessary to the religion. But are they essential to Christianity? The close association of colonial power and particular denominations gave mission the appearance of an arm of colonialism” (Oduyoye 1986:41)

The stories narrated by widows no longer carry the originality of the holistic Africanism until such a period that these virtues are redressed. To this end, Oduyoye states: “The traditional ordering of society placed its own burdens on the African people....it was an oppressive system to the extent that to opt out was to be cast out....The colonial period was not much different” (Oduyoye 1986:81). The author agrees unequivocally with Oduyoye that the subtle requirements of the colonial system did more harm to an otherwise Afrocentric system of a people which had definable terms of reference rooted in a peoples’ culture and traditions.

Buttressing Oduyoye’s sentiment is Dickson who reasons as follows: “To speak of the process of doing Christian theology in Africa as indigenising or translating Christian theology is to misunderstand the nature of the theological task facing the Church in Africa: this task consists not primarily in thinking through the theological deposit from the West, it consists in thinking through faith in Christ” (Dickson 1984:7-8). This notion indicates that the point of departure towards

setting up a healing platform congruent to the healing of the widows within the African context, calls for the maximum knowledge of the context within which such a Theology has to be exercised.

In redressing the ills of colonialism, a conducive platform has to be created in which the widows will feel at ease to tell their stories as it was the case with the interviewed widows. This opinion requires an absolute embodiment of Jesus' compassion uttered thus: "Whether one's exercise of "Christian presence" is in the form of verbal proclamation or is expressed in the form of loving concern that embodies Jesus' compassion for a broken humanity, the intention is to serve by announcing that love" (Shelp & Sunderland 1986:40).

This is the kind of admission which led the widows to feel belonging to a broader forum of people queuing for their ultimate healing as they narrated their stories. Anchoring this position in the most benevolent words is Rottenberg in the following way: "The God of the Bible hears the cries of his people and comes to liberate" (Rottenberg 1980:25). The author supports the proposition by Rottenberg that God does hear the cries of His people as they tell their stories and does eventually descend to liberate them. This becomes the vital tool in an attempt to redress the ills of colonialism.

5. Interviews

The interviews which were conducted with the widows formed an important part of this research work. They afforded the author an ample opportunity to observe what is construed by Healey and Sybertz as follows: "One important dimension of Story Theology or Narrative Theology is the double experience of telling the story of healing and the healing power of telling the story" (Healey & Sybertz

1996:324). The author agrees with the two authorities that story-telling is not only for the sake of telling but it is an exercise inherent with healing.

In an attempt to forge a way commensurate with both the healing grace and the holistic therapy, the author noticed that story-telling is the best way to the ultimate healing. Such a premise is backed-up by the utterance which was made by the Bishop Desmond Tutu. He provides the message of hope in the following manner: “There is no such thing as a totally hopeless case. Our God is an expert in dealing with chaos, with brokenness, with all the worst that we can imagine” (Tutu 2004: vii-viii). The author would love to unequivocally align his opinion with Tutu that God is an expert in dealing with chaos and brokenness. God’s such inherent expertise is best experienced in the healing grace flowing from the stories and interviews in which the author engaged the core researchers as will be established hereunder.

5.1. Interviews with Three Women from Pentecostal Church

By telling the stories among the Pentecostals, there is a wealth of educational information that can be elicited drawn by Healey and Sybertz in the following manner: “...the Catholic and mainline Protestant Churches can learn from the experience of the new Pentecostal Churches in Africa. The double experience of telling the story of healing and the healing power of telling the story come together in this description of the manner of worship in these Pentecostal groups: *The service is also characterized by testimonies, miracle stories, tales of divine encounter, prophecies. Often the stories are told by ordinary members. This is significant; people who in the larger world count for nothing here have the chance to express themselves, to tell others of their lives. This procedure is vitally*

important for people in oral cultures; the story, rather than theory or ideas, is their normal way of communicating” (Healey & Sybertz 1999:326).

The author supports the foregoing rationale by Healey and Sybertz in that it confirms the findings of the research he was conducting. The three succinctly conducted interviews with widows from the Pentecostal church revealed the following critical trends about the manner in which they thought of the virtue and value inherent in story-telling:

5.1.1. Story-Telling is an Art of Empathy

Stories are an integral part of an African community: “Stories become part of life for Africans because they shape their lives. This leads to people understanding pains and joys that are expressed through story telling” (Mnisi 2005:24)

In an attempt to search for the element of therapy through story telling as portrayed by Mnisi that story telling shapes the values of a people, the author will employ, among others, the following questions to help give direction to the discourse as well as help set the interviewees at ease:

- Did the church provide a comforting base and support since the death of your husband?
- If it did, how was such a support given?
- How have you best understood the message of Caring as portrayed in the Bible?
- What meaningful lesson(s) have you learnt from your own encounters with the church which you can utilize to minister to others?

As the author was interviewing the widows, he immediately observed that their stories were told in a manner which intensely expressed a deep-rooted

maternalistic approach articulated thus by Johnson: “In texts widely scattered throughout the Hebrew Scriptures different aspects of being a mother-conceiving, being pregnant, going into labor, delivering, midwifing, nursing, carrying, rearing-become metaphors pointing to God’s ways of relating to the world” (Johnson 1992:100). This apprehension of God as possibly feminine as well, becomes the healing method as women tell their stories. Another bird of the same feather that is flocking together with Johnson, is Fiorenza who states: “Not “biological” sex differences, but patriarchal household and marriage relationships generate the social-political inferiority and oppression of women” (Fiorenza 1998:86).

This depiction by Johnson clearly reinforces Fiorenza’s opinion that the inferiority of women in the narratives of Biblical stories has been buttressed by patriarchal undertones in the recording of Bible history. Hence, the author supports the notion that calls for the medium of story-telling to consider such to be told within the open gender confines. In this way story-telling becomes an empathy mode to the hurts and wounds of women. This was evident as the widows were telling their stories with the kind of openness which allowed them to empathize unapologetically.

Story-telling as an art of empathy uncovers and unravels the hidden truths the validity of which can only be confirmed when taken from the horse’s mouth. In the stories narrated by the widows, the author discovered some form of coldness and latent damnation similar to the one Queen Michal felt and expressed in the following way. “The Michal of the first meeting with David was not the same woman who was returned to him several years later. She had undergone not so much a personality change as a kind of death. The heart, the emotion, the excitement had gone out of the woman, and what remained was the shell: an

aristocrat, and nothing more” (Clines & Eskenazi 1991:283). The author sympathizes with the situation of women who would love to use story-telling as an art of empathy, yet being heavily laden by the brutality of patriarchy which overloads them with the sense of inferiority.

This art of empathizing proves to be true in substantiating what Gregory the Great in Culbertson and Shippe conceptualizes in the following way: “For who does not realize that the wounds of the mind are more hidden than the internal wounds of the body?” (Culbertson & Shippe 1990:197). It is these hidden wounds which the art of story-telling is attempting to address by allowing the widows to tell their undiluted stories in an attempt to seek personal healing. Another dimension of equal importance which was noted during the interviews addresses the notion of the meanings of the words in story-telling will be handled hereunder.

5.1.2 Meaning of Words in Story-Telling

Words utilized to tell the story do not always mean what they are articulated to mean. This causes an even deeper understanding beyond the spoken words, in order to hear the pain conveyed in words that are not spoken i.e. in implied, obscured and hidden words. In this subject Capps says: “The very survival of human society requires the masking of our real desires. If we were to say what our real desires are, especially our erotic and aggressive desires, and this means learning to speak in ways that conceal or only indirectly reveal our desires. This process of revealing through concealment is one reason our language is polysemic, meaning more than one thing at a time” (Capps 1984:33)

Fiorenza represents the same notion in a rather very strong manner in her treatment of destabilizing linguistic frames of meaning as follows: “The androcentric

linguistic sex/gender system that uses gender classifications rooted in biological sex cannot but reify and naturalize socio-political gender constructs. In such a linguistic system, masculine terms function as “generic” language in which man/male/masculine/he stands for human and male, whereas woman/female/feminine/she only connotes femaleness. Grammatically androcentric “generic” Western languages that are based on the classical grammatical systems of Greek and Latin explicitly mention women only as exception to the rule, as problematic, or specifically as particular individuals” (Fiorenza 1998 :xix).

The author agrees with Capps that true human stories cannot be effectively told due to the fact that there is a traditionally adopted concealment which results with ambiguity in the interpretation of the narrated meaning. He equally agrees with the eye opening presentation by Fiorenza which speaks about the customary and very notorious gender insensitive daily usage of the language.

The author discovered the importance of the true meaning of words and that if such communication is taken into heart, there is bound to be a sound model of caring for the widows as they tell their stories with the texture of their desired languages. This reasoning gives rise to the whole new notion in the understanding of words. It suggests that words should be used and allowed to minister, with the full knowledge that the ministry is meant to serve the church and not *visa versa*. The same argument is put by Oden as follows: “Ministry is, therefore, classically thought to be necessary to God’s purpose in ordering the church for the salvation of humankind (Calvin, 1559, 4.1)” (Oden 1983:14). Only when the stories are told from the heart, can healing be derived.

The manner in which the widows were communicating their stories bore witness to the fact that spoken words carry another meaning which cannot be verbalized. The author views this as the most critical part of pastoral care, namely; to listen to the untold words which may be calling for deeper attention. Oduyoye in Fiorenza's "The Power of Naming" indicates that the failure by women to tell their stories in the most explicit terms results with their impoverishment in the following way: "The impoverishment of women in Africa is an aspect of the impoverishment of the third world which has remained undisclosed or ignored until women themselves made their voices heard" (Fiorenza 1996:127).

The author views this impoverishment not only as material, but spiritual and otherwise. This was proven by the wealth of information which was both shared and acquired in the engagement with the widows whom the author interviewed.

Wimberly attests to the importance of conversation as: "Persons, including practitioners, who come to therapy bring with them problem-laden issues related to certain truths about themselves, their character, their nature, and purposes that dominate their lives. Thus, they have internalized conversations that do not facilitate growth and that prevent them from becoming a fully authentic self" (Wimberly 2003:99). This is an indication which the author alluded to earlier that there are some hidden words which the counselee cannot articulate as Wimberly points out, and this becomes the source of the poverty as indicated by Fiorenza.

It is vital though to share stories since they present an opportunity for rapport. To this effect, the Wimberlys point out that: "For some, story-sharing may not come easily. It will mean shedding inhibitions or fears of self-disclosure. For others, it will mean creating a time-enough time-for stories to unfold. For all who embark upon the experience of shared story, it will mean making sense of the stories and

envisioning not only what facing forward means, but also what must be done to move forward with purpose and hope” (Wimberly & Wimberly 2007:37)

The Wimbelys indicate an intricate side of story-telling which, in the case of the author and the co-researchers, was able to assist with the technical movement towards moving forward as well as map out the purpose and hope of the envisaged pastoral care. As indicated, this story-telling mechanism becomes a pillar of healing portrayed by the Wimberlys in the following way: “The mutual support that emerges from empathic connectedness also creates the ground for the tough work of unpacking our stories” (2007:44).

The author supports the proposal by the Wimberlys that in unpacking our stories there is an empathic connectedness. It is this kind of connectedness which serves as a bridge towards formulating a sound pastoral theology of caring for the widows as they develop trust and rapport which enable them to tell their stories without fears or reservations.

5.2. Interviews with Two Women from Mainline Church

The interviews with the widows from the Mainline Churches revealed a deeper understanding of the role of the widow and their significant contribution to the entire ecclesiastical gathering in the following manner:

5.2.1. Understanding the role of the widow

This understanding is reflected by Oden as follows: “Pray, therefore, as a widow of Christ, not yet seeing Him whose hope you implore” (Oden 1986:157). From the very first interview, the author could deduce that the stories were not only told as part of the research engagement, but that there was an even deeper yearning from the hearts of each of the participating widows. They had a zest which displayed

itself with the willingness to serve. This was an equal outcry enquiring into the role which the widows can play in the ecclesiastical gathering as a way and form of seeking personal healing hence the author's agreement with the proposition by Oden.

Widows need to be advised of the importance of their role to pray since this can be a highly beneficial endeavour to both themselves and the church at large. The proposition by Oden clearly indicates that there is a special anointing bestowed upon the widows. This, therefore, suggests that a prayer of faith made by the widow prevails much as James states: "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man (sic) availeth much" (James 5:16).

This indispensable role which the widows can benefit the ecclesiastical body with, finds its pathway in the pillars of how their own families were structured. This is a suggestion that calls for the formulation of what the Wimberlys view as follows: "The beliefs and convictions of clergy family members form a mythology that cannot be ignored in the story-telling process. Indeed, the mythology may be a key factor in developing individual and family resilience in the face of challenge" (Wimberly & Wimberly 2007:41). As the author was listening to the stories told by the widowed women, he was deeply impressed by the courage of their presentation as well as the richness of their own family mythologies.

These mythologies empower the widows to be better care-givers themselves whilst receiving therapy. They constitute a healing methodology depicted by Healey and Sybertz in the following way: "Telling stories and sharing stories in community is very important for African people" (Healey & Sybertz 1996:325). As the widows were narrating their stories, the author could perceive a sense of relief they

displayed as a way of confirming an African way of creating a platform of healing through story-telling.

5.2.2. Emotional Upliftment in the Narrative

From the stories narrated by the widows, the one which sounded the most emotional was narrated by one person who seemed to have fought her way out of the deepest abyss of despondency and loneliness. It is the one which was delivered by Mrs. Mahalane (not real name). Her story raised apprehensions that proved to have been well founded on pain, distress and disappointment as the narrative progressed. She spoke like a person without any hope for emotional survival. She presented it in the following manner:

“*Moruti* (meaning Pastor in *Sesotho*-one of the eleven South African official languages), who gave you my cellular phone numbers that you should request for an appointment with me?” Since this question was directed to the author, he immediately indicated that he got them from the new Reverend who had occupied the manse. After a pause of surprise she continued her narrative. “I do not understand how that young boy could give you my cellular phone numbers. He approached me in a very insensitive manner and said to me: ‘Your husband is dead.’”

This is how it actually started. I phoned the district President telling him I am coming to the conference. He asked me where I belonged. I told him that I belonged to the Umtata region. He asked if I am still cared for. I was given the new Reverend’s telephone numbers. He was apparently given my numbers as well. He said we did not care for certain supernumeraries (pensioners in the Morning Star Church). I told him they were not under our jurisdiction but

Umndeni's. They resided in Umtata but fellowshipped in Umndeni. He insisted that we were supposed to have cared for them. Some leaders are not called but break the church. That boy wants to destroy my Samuel (the late husband-not real name) or take over his reign.

He said we were supposed to have cared for them, we did something wrong. He said I want to be taken care of though I did not care for the supernumeraries. He further said I am not any different. He said Samuel is gone, now I want to be taken care of. He indicated that he had spoken with the Umtata people who said they only take care of an active wife to the Reverend, who is his wife in this instance and not me. This was first telephonic discussion I had with him.

In our second telephonic discussion the Reverend called me and said he spoke with the Umtata people who said I am no longer a member. This boy is not the church. While my husband was in a mortuary the Umtata people spoke before his corpse and said that they will not throw away his children and family. The Reverend fought and said I was actually saying he was lying. He treated me arrogantly. The women executive informed me that he would be apparently inviting me to the formal farewell bidding function. Up to now the church did not come, call or do anything.

My late husband's people served him very well. I must acknowledge though that I cannot punish the whole church because of this one young minister. We do get allowances from my husband's pension fund and the kids get an allowance of R475-00 (four hundred and seventy five rand). Other senior ministers are not happy about what happened between me and that young minister."

This story revealed the truth espoused by Healey and Sybertz that: “Telling stories frees, reveals, opens up and empowers-both in relation to the narrator and the hearers. There is a grace of naming, a journey of self-understanding and self-discovery and a healing of memories. There is a healing power for the individual who lets out his or her deep feelings and emotions and shares them in a larger support group. Often there is affirmation and support in telling the story in a community setting. In fact, the whole community is strengthened as wounded healers journey together. One hand washes the other” (Healey & Sybertz 1999:325). The author supports the strong notion upheld by Healey and Sybertz that story-telling has a strong healing power. He observed this truism as the widows were sharing their stories and being emotionally uplifted in so doing. The importance of the naming aspect featured where Mrs. Mahalane called the Reverend a boy, and this was healing to her as she told her story.

Whilst there is an element of emotional upliftment, there is yet another dimension of a stern calling incumbent upon the person of a widow. This is demonstrated thus: “In a “Comforting Letter to a Widow,” Menno Simons viewed widowhood as a calling to benefit others through hospitality, holy living, and prayer” (Oden 1986:156). It is upon the acceptance of the state of widowhood that the person of a widow can unashamedly confess that such a calling is both painful yet noble in the sight of the Lord. This very knowledge in itself will serve as an all-time motivator to the widow.

Further attesting to this noble and high calling, the widow has is Oden as follows: “The vocation of the widow, accordingly, may not fit neatly into modern expectations, but there can be no doubt that in the early church the widow was regarded as having a distinctive, purposeful, significant vocation. Widows are especially called to a ministry of intercession for the whole community. Augustine

in his poignant letter to the widow Proba, sought to understand and describe the special ministry of intercession that may be given to the widow: Pray in hope, pray in faith, pray in love, pray earnestly and patiently, pray as a widow belonging to Christ” (Oden 1986:157). This is yet another reflection to the fact that the story-telling mechanism of the widows should equally present them before God as intercessors for both themselves and the ecclesiastical body.

6. An analysis of the research data

All five widows had a story to tell about their pains, especially the irreplaceable loss of their loved ones. This unbearable common pain resulted with punitive feelings as if they were completely rejected by the churches which their husbands once faithfully served. Their stories indicate a cry and yearning which holds subtle grudges. This is evidence in one common articulation in *SeSotho* (One of the South African official languages) which says: “*Ho baneng re geswa renyefolwa?*” This means, why are we ridiculed and scorned?

The author used a research method of both the interviews and the questionnaires considered to be the method that “entails the use of different methods to collect information. All methods have their limitations, their own validity threats and distortions. A danger of using only one method is that the findings may merely be an artefact of method.” (Banister, Burman, Parker, Taylor and Tindall 1994:23). This method is known as triangulation. Some other kinds or categories of this method are: data, investigator and theoretical triangulation.

The author will love to point out that: “Data elements represent facts. These facts concern people, objects, events, products and so on. Information comes from selecting this data and presenting it in such a way that is meaningful and useful to

the users. Information needs to be accurate, relevant, complete, timely and to the correct level of detail” (Avison and Cuthbertson 2002:14). The author supports the view upheld by Avison and Cuthbertson that the collected information should be accurate. This notion immediately qualifies what Banister *et al* propose on the employment of a combination of methods if the research conducted is to be both credible and valid. In the following section the author will present the field research results.

6.1. Analysing the clergy widows’ responses

PART A:

1. How did the Church display the care since the passing on of your spouse?
 - Through regular prayer support.
 - Through pastoral visits.
 - Through continuous counselling sessions.

Responses:

PCW: 2 said all of the above and 1 said none of the above.

M/LCW: 1 said it was provided only until burial and 1 said none of the above.

Similarities: In both churches there seemed to exist a poor care for the widows.

Differences: There seemed to have existed better care in the PC as opposed to the MLC in as far as counselling is concerned.

Author’s Comment: It is evident that in the PC 2 out of 3 widows did receive the pastoral care and that in the MLC 1 did receive pastoral care only until the burial whereas 1 did not receive it at all.

2. How frequently was the above care demonstrated?

- At regular intervals.
- At random.
- At scheduled and coordinated intervals.

Responses:

PCW: 2 said at regular intervals and 1 said at random.

M/LCW: 1 said at regular intervals and 1 said not at all.

Similarities: The frequency of the care was at regular intervals with 1 case where it was not done at all.

Differences: There was no instance in the PC where such care was not provided.

Author's Comment: There seems to be an acute concern for widows to a certain degree within the PC.

3. What kind of team was conducting the counselling sessions?

- The Pastor and spouse.
- The Church deacons/board.
- Delegated Supportive women.

Responses:

PCW: 2 said it was the pastor and spouse and 1 included the delegated supportive women. The other woman said it was all of the above including the youth.

M/LCW: 1 said it was the Reverends and 1 said it was all of the above.

Similarities: The clergy and their church teams were supportive.

Differences: In the PC the youth has been to sensitized on the role of Pastoral Counselling.

Author's Comment: The clergy recognized the importance of Pastoral Counselling together with their respective congregations.

4. What kind of training did the counselling team have?

- Formal.
- Informal.
- No training.

Responses:

PCW: 1 said people who came only brought prayer support with no training, 1 said people who came had formal training whereas 1 said they had a combination of training.

M/LCW: 1 said the counselling team had formal training whereas 1 said there was no formal counselling but only mourning with the family.

Similarities: There is a credible formal training among those who managed to offer counselling to the widows.

Differences: There seems to be no clear understanding of the concept of counselling in both churches.

Author's Comment: Consistentization of the churches about Pastoral Counselling is an imperative.

5. Who was/were the recipient(s) of the counselling?

- The whole bereaved family.
- Only the clergy widow.
- Some members of the family.

Responses:

PCW: 1 said only the clergy widow (indirectly though) and 2 said the whole bereaved family.

M/LCW: 1 said the whole bereaved family and 1 said no one.

Similarities: Counselling the whole bereaved family seemed to have been understood by the churches.

Differences: The PC did provide pastoral counselling as opposed to an instance of no counselling at all in the MLC.

Author's Comment: There is a need to educate the church about counselling bereaved families.

PART B:

Please tick a Yes or a No.

1. My own Church is supportive to widows in general.

- Yes.
- No.

Responses:

PCW: 1 marked Yes and 2 No.

M/LCW: 1 marked Yes and 1 No.

Similarities: There is a sound understanding of the churches' role towards widows.

Differences: Observed differences are mostly on a personal vendetta basis as qualified by the interviews above.

Author's Comment: No cohesion can be enforced for the care of widows where people have their own agenda against the surviving clergy widow.

2. My Church is supportive to clergy widows in particular.

- Yes.
- No.

Responses:

PCW: 2 said No and 1 said Yes.

M/LCW: 1 said Yes and 1 said No.

Similarities: There is a particular care provided to widows in both organizations.

Differences: The PC cares on the social status of deceased whereas in the MLC such status creates hatred to the surviving clergy family.

Author's Comment: The surviving clergy widow is respected based on the role the deceased husband played in life.

3. I can use my church as a Biblical model for the required care of widows.

- Yes.
- No.

Responses:

PCW: 2 said Yes and 1 said No.

M/LCW: 2 said Yes.

Similarities: Both groups credited their churches to a large degree.

Differences: The PC has got some doubts on using their church as a Biblical model whereas the MLC is certain on the matter.

Author's Comment: This validates the intended research that the MLC is more certain about their care for widows.

4. I am not ashamed to quote instances where care was shown to me and other widows in the church.

- Yes.
- No.

Responses:

PCW: 1 marked No and 2 marked Yes.

M/LCW: Both marked Yes.

Similarities: All the widows felt they could quote instances where care was shown with the exception of 1.

Differences: The sampled care evidenced works in the favour of the widows from the MLC who have got tangible instances for example, of financial support which they could quote.

Author's Comment: MLC have fixed benefits for the widows.

5. My church has an outreach programme for widows.

- Yes.
- No.

Responses:

PCW: 1 marked No and 2 marked Yes.

M/LCW: Both marked Yes.

Similarities: All widows acknowledged an outreach programme does exist with the exception of 1 PCW.

Differences: The MLC has fixed programmes whereas the PC still needs to organize themselves in this regard.

Author's Comment: The PC can learn from the MLC about the Widows' Outreach Programmes.

PART C:

1. Did the church provide a comforting base and support since the death of your husband?

Responses:

PCW: 2 said Yes and 1 said not at all.

M/LCW: 1 said they do not communicate anymore and 1 said they do allow widows to approach the welfare unit.

Similarities: Widows can approach the relevant church structure for help.

Differences: The MLC has got a defined platform of addressing material needs of the widow whereas the PC does not have.

Author's Comment: The PC can engage with the MLC to learn about their defined care schemes.

2. If it did, how was such a support provided?

Responses:

PCW: 1 said it was not provided at all. 1 said people of all social statuses came to comfort them inclusive of lawyers, doctors, politicians and the like. 1 said they by her grocery.

M/LCW: 1 said they did not provide it at all and 1 said such support is provided through the welfare organization of the church.

Similarities: Such support is provided depending on the social status of the deceased spouse.

Differences: The PC did not seem to have a definable welfare unit.

Author's Comment: Support should not be provided based on the status of the deceased clergy but to all widow equally.

3. How have you best understood the message of Caring as portrayed in the Bible?

Responses:

PCW: All three alluded to the fact that it is a Biblical obligation to take care of the widows.

M/LCW: 1 said it is the mission of their church to care for the bereaved family. 1 said the church does follow the Bible principles.

Similarities: All 5 widows agreed that the care of widows is a Biblical necessity.

Differences: This is one area in which there was no contrary opinion on the understanding of the Biblical message on caring for the widows.

Author's Comment: The Bible should be followed as the guideline for the care of the widows.

4. What meaningful lesson(s) have you learnt from your own encounters with the church which you can utilize to minister to others?

Responses:

PCW: 1 said hurting widows and their families need to be taken care of; 1 said “things we took for granted matter much” and the other said: “The love and the care I was given, I will pass on to others. Even though my husband is gone but the Lord is there.”

M/LCW: 1 commented that the church belongs to God and not the Reverend whereas the other commented that she could recommend her church's caring model for widows to other churches.

Similarities: Positive encounters gave birth to the desire to plough the same back to humanity.

Differences: Whereas all widows had a positive self esteem resultant from both their encounters and understanding of the Biblical message, 1 PW was devastated by the kind of rejection she suffered.

Author's Comment: Each of the 5 widows did learn something positive out of their painful encounter which they would individually love to utilize to benefit others.

6.2. Conclusive evidence drawn

This section seeks to provide the broader scope of the results derived from the widows from both the Pentecostal and the Mainline Churches in the following manner:

PART A:

1. How did the Church display the care since the passing on of your spouse?

- Through regular prayer support.
- Through pastoral visits.
- Through continuous counselling sessions.

There is therefore conclusive evidence that Pastoral Counselling does exist to a certain degree in the PC.

5. How frequently was the above care demonstrated?

- At regular intervals.
- At random.
- At scheduled and coordinated intervals.

The frequency of the pastoral care seems to be reasonably practiced in the PC as opposed to the MLC.

6. What kind of team was conducting the counselling sessions?

- The Pastor and spouse.
- The Church deacons/board.
- Delegated Supportive women.

In both church organizations there seemed to be an understanding of the role of the clergy and his team in terms of pastoral counselling support, so much so that in the PC there youth was also involved.

7. What kind of training did the counselling team have?

- Formal.
- Informal.
- No training.

There is a great need for a formal pastoral counselling campaign to inform the clergy and the churches about its importance.

8. Who was/were the recipient(s) of the counselling?

- The whole bereaved family.
- Only the clergy widow.
- Some members of the family.

Both organizations do understand the importance of counselling the whole bereaved family and there is yet a greater need to advocate an education for the same.

PART B:

Please tick a Yes or a No.

1. My own Church is supportive to widows in general.

- Yes.
- No.

Both organizations seem to have a sound functional pastoral care for widows.

2. My Church is supportive to clergy widows in particular.

- Yes.
- No.

Both organizations do understand such a support but the victimization of the clergy widow is more of revenge for some discontentment held by the congregation against the bereaved family.

3. I can use my church as a Biblical model for the required care of widows.

- Yes.
- No.

Four of the five widows were confident to use their churches as a model of care which is indeed a credible fact about what the church should be seen as.

4. I am not ashamed to quote instances where care was shown to me and other widows in the church.

- Yes.
- No.

Four of the widows were once confident to quote the care shown which proves that the church is seen as a shelter for the broken.

5. My church has an outreach programme for widows.

- Yes.

- No.

Four of the widows were appreciative of the outreach programme their churches have with an exception of a PC widow. This shows the extent of brokenness in the PC organization.

PART C:

1. Did the church provide a comforting base and support since the death of your husband?

It is evident from the responses that the MLC is does allow widows to approach them. Anything to the contrary is of a personal revenge. In the PC such comforting base does exist except in instances of personal revenge.

2. If it did, how was such a support provided?

In the PC such support is provided on the strength of status and fame and in the ML they allow widows to follow the procedures of approaching the welfare unit. Care is therefore earned and not granted as a deserved merit in both organizations.

3. How have you best understood the message of Caring as portrayed in the Bible?

The PCW emphatically saw such a care as a Biblical imperative even quoting James 1:27. The MLC see the church as following such principles as well in line with the Biblical requirements.

4. What meaningful lesson(s) have you learnt from your own encounters with the church which you can utilize to minister to others?

All widows narrowed their reasoning and arguments to but one point, namely; that if one could find in her heart to forgive any differences by the church, she should do that and continue serving other people for the sake of Christ.

Having presented the research results the author would love to submit a preliminary conclusion in preparation of the following chapter.

7 Preliminary Conclusion

The author learned from the interviews that it is important to allow people to speak out and tell their stories as a way of emotional catharsis. This is viewed by Oden as follows: “Theodicy means to speak justly of God amid the awesome fact of suffering. Its task is to vindicate the divine attributes, especially justice, mercy, and love, in relation to the continuing existence of evil. It wishes to speak about God (*theos*) with justice (*dike*) precisely at those points at which the divine purpose seems most implausible and questionable, namely, amid suffering” (Oden 1983:223). It is the author’s submission that, as Oden puts it, God is the God of justice always willing to identify with the hurting especially when this divine virtue is under scrutiny. This will be at instances the widows ask themselves: “Why me in particular.”

This chapter dealt with the sample stories of five widows, three from the Pentecostal Church and two from the Mainline Church. The chapter addressed these topics 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.
- An Analysis of the Stories.
- Preliminary Conclusion.

The author touched on the impact of the Advent of the Western System as it relates to the Afro centric Pastoral Caring. He went on to indicate how pastoral caring was conceptualized by an African people in an undisturbed system of communalism among the aboriginal Africans. An attempt to redress the ills created by colonialism was entertained whilst pursuing the cause of storytelling by the widows.

The author views this current chapter as the most critical and that he almost considers it the climax of the research journey. It is the climax in that it created a base of emotional ventilation by the widows who had a platform to speak out their hurts without any threat or potential prejudice. It is in this chapter where the importance of the family movement appeared to be a critical necessity as displayed by Nolan in the following way: “A family movement would not alone deal adequately with the rights of women and other gender issues. We need a strong and well organized women’s movement in the churches in South Africa” (Pityana & Villa-Vicencio 1995:155).

The author supports this proposed stance by Pityana and Villa-Vicencio in that it draws women into the centre of the ecclesiastical movement. This in itself will be a healthy endeavour to challenge women to take their destinies into their own hands.

The next chapter will handle the integration of the methodology of how to care under the following headings:

- Analysis of Various Methodologies of Caring
- Creating a Synergy of a Range of Methods.
- Integration of the Caring System Currently Available within the Pentecostal Churches.
- Natural Endowment with Force and Power to Sustain Life
- Preliminary Conclusion.

In the next chapter, the overall intention of the author's presentation will be to seek the recommendable method which can finally integrate and synergize the required pastoral care practice. In order to enliven the methodology of the care of widows, the pastoral ministry needs to be exercised beyond margins as resonated by Carr in the following way: "Whereas, however, worship is central to the Church's life, pastoral ministry is exercised at its margins, where belief coincides with unbelief and half-belief, and where the gospel's adequacy is constantly tested" (Carr 1989:11-12).

The author agrees with Carr that pastoral ministry needs to be exercised beyond margins and this could in itself lead to the creation of an authentic synthetic method of caring for the widows. Consequently, the clergy widows will benefit from by the caring system which regards and recognizes them as a worthy people.

CHAPTER 5: Integration of Methodology of How to Care

1. Introduction

The previous Chapter explored the emotional stories which were narrated by co-researchers. This chapter served as a platform to create an avenue of emotional ventilation. The co-researchers managed to tell their stories while achieving healing for themselves at the same time. It emerged that they had arrived at the moment they had been longing for. The subject matter was 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.
- An Analysis of the Stories
- Preliminary Conclusion.

The meaning of story-telling, as it relates to widows, was discussed at length. A much more contextual implication of the stories and their significance to an aboriginal African people was considered. The subject further elucidated the jeopardy of the imported Western system and its detrimental results to the supposed meaning which an African people attribute to words and symbols.

The present chapter will embark on the integration of the methodology of how to care, which will be analysed under the following titles:

- Analysis of Various Methodologies of Caring
- Creating a Synergy of a Range of Methods.
- Integration of the Caring System Currently Available within the Pentecostal Churches.
- Natural Endowment with Force and Power to Sustain Life
- Preliminary Conclusion.

Knowledge should be sought and regarded as power. Anything to the contrary amounts to what Rose declares as: “But by renouncing knowledge as power, we are then only able to demand expiation for total domination, for we have disqualified by possible investigation into the dynamics of the configuration and reconfiguration of power-which is our endless predicament” (Rose 1996:21)

Rose clearly indicates that knowledge should be sought as the base of justification for any situation we intend to configure. In this particular chapter, we will attempt to configure the integration of the methodology of how to care. This is a critical step if the healing that encompasses the whole being is sort for. In so doing, it will be ascertained beyond measure that the clergy widows’ desired healing is derived at in a much more holistic and most scientific manner. This is the manner that provides a measurable system of investigation and finally leads to a conclusion which can be qualified and quantified.

2. Analysis of Various Methodologies of Caring:

In an attempt to analyse various methodologies of caring, it becomes important to outline a few methods presently applicable in the discipline. These are credible methods which will be used to finally assist in the creation of a synergy of

methods. It appears that the basis to assist in dealing with an acceptable methodology has to address the fundamental issues such as the culture and surrounding of the intended recipients of the desired care displayed Nolan in the following way: “The issue of culture is raised with reference to Western individualism, African *ubuntu* and so forth...Culture is not simply a theological debate about how to develop a more truly African expression of our faith, but it is also an issue of values-learning values, living values and celebrating values. If the church is called upon to influence the values of people in South Africa today, then it will have to do so in and through the language of culture” (ed Pityana & Villa-Vicencio 1995:154).

The authorities, here, present a pragmatic route into the core of the whole exercise of caring. The author agrees that if this practice is to be credible and goal-oriented, it has to address elementary issues related to the culture of a people and the wealth inherent in their own indigenous languages.

The author equally observed that some of the widows, especially those from the Pentecostal churches, felt important and better relieved when one threw a word or two in English. He strongly felt at this stage that there is a strong liberation exercise required to be embarked upon within this sector. Finally, the author succumbed to the proposal elucidated by Biko implying that: “The potent weapon in the hands of the oppressed is the mind of the oppressed himself (sic)” (Biko 1978)

The author could not agree any further with Biko. It emerged without any qualms that the methodology of care for the widows should start first in their own self acceptance of who they are as well as the aching realities in which they exist.

They should adjust to the truthfulness of their immutable circumstances. This is the widow's desired consciousness which will finally lead to the aspired synergized methodology of caring. Professor Moutlana, the Principal and Vice-Chancellor of the Vaal University of Technology quoted Michiavelle during the launch of the institution's Healing, Reconciliation and Transformation Advisory Forum of which the author is Acting Chairman, in "The Prince" (1961:27) asserting the following: "It must be realized that there is nothing more difficult to plan, more uncertain of success, or more dangerous to manage than the establishment of a new order of things or events): for he who introduces (change) (transformation) makes enemies of all those who derived advantage from the old order, and finds but lukewarm defenders among those who stand to gain from the new one" (Moutlana's Launch Speech on the 26 August 2010). This heavily loaded statement suggests the following premises:

1. The first group resists change because it threatens their state of enjoying the current benefits.
2. The second group resists change because it will deprive them future benefits.

The author agrees with Michiavelle as quoted by Moutlana in that the first group symbolizes the ecumenical beneficiaries who derive maximum benefits out of the state of the widows' ignorance of their rights, benefits and privileges in the body of Christ, like any ignorant people would forfeit their due rights and benefits.

The second group equally has vested interests in the ignorance of the widows in that they enjoy the freedom of monopolizing them, hence the outcry which was displayed by the widows during the interviews. There seems to be a rather clear indication that there is an inherent resistance by the ecclesiastical body to be

transformed towards the wellbeing of the widows; hence the clergy widows' fate is defined by the death of their spouses.

The currently haphazard as well as an indefinable caring system existing within Pentecostalism evident in the interviews of the clergy widows, stands at the brink of a great challenge which calls for serious improvement in the care of this unfortunate group. The author qualifies his argument by noting with great emphasis that there is an even greater need to liberate the people's mindsets if the methodology of care is to be attained. This paradigm shift portrays the aspirations of a conscientization escapade viewed by Paulo Freire in his treatment of "conscientizing as a Way of Liberating" in the following way: "A discussion of conscientization calls for a number of preliminary remarks, and I would like to begin today by telling where that great mouthful of a word 'conscientization' came from. Many people, especially in Latin America and the United States, insist that I invented that strange word, because it is a central idea in my thoughts on education. But I didn't. The word was born during a series of round table meetings of professors at the Brazilian Institute of Higher Studies (ISEB), which was created after the "liberating" revolution of 1964, under the wing of the Ministry of Education" (Hennely 1990:5).

The author would love to pledge his uncompromised camaraderie with the utterances by Freire in Hennely, Michiaville as quoted by Moutlana and Biko. He argues that in order to establish an effective base of analysing the care of the widows, it should be equally noted that such should be done with the view to liberate the mindset of all the role players in the enterprise geared at creating a methodology of the care for the widows.

The challenge is therefore that there is a requirement to revisit the way caring is presently generally conducted within the church and the Pentecostal movement with emphasis on the clergy widows in particular.

2.1. Caring within the Pentecostals Church

It is extremely important to note from the outset that the Pentecostal Church is characterized by the distinct methodology of caring subscribing to what Houten conceptualizes in the following way: “To experience the power of God working in us is something longed for by Christians since our Lord promised it to us as he left this world” (Papers of the Res Conferences Harare, Zimbabwe 1988:3). The author notes with great interest that the underlying principle of ultimate healing and hope in this school of thought finds its trail in nothing else but the power of God.

Providing an almost equivalent expression of assurance to this notion is Gilbert and Brock who uttered it thus: “How to communicate adequately, and, as a result, to know that what has been perceived, sensed, or felt is genuinely the Spirit of God, depends on another factor: personal commitment to and communication with God. True, the Spirit of God may utilize those who are not spiritually sensitized to accomplish His purposes, but consistent demonstration of the Spirit in one’s life depends upon a continual association with Him and a willingness to be used by Him within the process of discovery and healing” (*ed* Gilbert & Brock 1985:262-263).

It is almost like a rule of thumb among the Pentecostals that the relationship of an individual with God is characterized by the demonstrations of the Spirit in one's life which in themselves find existence in a continual association with Him.

This aforementioned relationship becomes the defining methodology among the Pentecostals which is treated by Gilbert and Brock as an integration of theory with the Holy Spirit. Fundamental to the belief of the Pentecostals is this requirement of the relationship with the Holy Spirit is further motivated by Gilbert and Brock as follows: "The Holy Spirit establishes potential in others by inspiring them to wholeness in spite of their condition. The therapist merely becomes an observer of the living documentation of the Spirit's movement" (*ed* Gilbert & Brock 1985:265).

The author agrees with Gilbert and Brock that the therapist in this Pentecostal methodology of care becomes a mere observer of the performance of the Holy Spirit. Confirming the same belief is Neuger who portrays it as follows: "One of the mandates the prophetic tradition puts upon those of us who offer pastoral care to those who have been oppressed and abused is to bear witness" (Neuger 2001: 103)

Neuger clearly indicates that the role of the pastoral care-giver entails the primary requirement of being a prophetic voice for the marginalized, which will be a helpful tool when synergizing the theology of caring. Very close to this provision is the prerequisite for the person interested in the counselling ministry. Such a person should note the importance of how others do their work since this will help him/her to "firstly learn something from what others do...and that all good counsellors share some knowledge and some method and some approach" (Hiltner 1949:171). This becomes an important avenue which crystallizes the importance of how pastoral care can be ideally practiced. The author does agree with Hiltner

that it is in learning how others operate as well as in the standardization of the methods and approaches that the efficiency of the synergy of caring can be employed efficiently.

It is important to note that this movement which was initially not recognized, became the point of conviction for the healing inherent in it as it emerged and grew sporadically. In the words of Houten it is portrayed thus: “In the first decade of this century, the Pentecostal movement as we know it was founded. Led by a black Los Angeles preacher, William Seymour, the Azusa street revival from 1906-1909 proved to be the galvanizing force that led to Pentecostal movements around the world in the second decade of our century. Although not at first accepted by other evangelicals, the Pentecostal denominations were finally given grudging acceptance after World War II” (Papers of the Res Conferences Harare, Zimbabwe 1988:9).

The author acknowledges the importance of collective caring which characterised the new Pentecostal movement and displayed the capability to usher in a new galvanizing force. This force is the very driving vehicle which vehemently distinguishes the Pentecostal movement from other groupings. It is endowed with the caring methodology in the conduct of its fellowship.

In order to create a base to analyse the various caring methodologies, the author will engage a dialogue which gives a bird’s eye view into the existing caring methodologies within both the Pentecostal as well as the Mainline Churches. This will finally serve as a window into the current systems, while providing advice in terms of the envisaged new way of caring for the clergy widows. As evident in the interviews and the stories which were narrated in Chapter 4, there is a phenomenal

assignment of education to the church, the widows themselves as well as the government about the need to take care of these unfortunate women who live in our midst.

One of the virtues of the Pentecostal Churches is the concern about the understanding of various concepts such as those echoed in the following way: “The first thing that needs to be said is that “contextualizing the faith” has been a part of the mission of the church from the beginning. If we take Pentecost, as reported in Acts 2 as the birthday of the church, we will have to note that the disciples were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to preach in such a way that “each one heard them speaking in his own language.” The faith was being contextualized” (*ed* Costa 1988:4).

It is in the contextualization of the faith that the widows in discussion can be considered as not only belonging to the church and the broader society but as legitimate human beings deserving respect as suggested by Costa: “And finally, the contextualization of the faith has always involved a vision of common humanity” (1988:5)

Caring within the Pentecostal Church finds its pathway in the power of the Holy Spirit presented by Costa as follows: “The most beautiful thing about the Pentecostals was their ability to pour themselves into the power of the Holy Spirit” (1988:138). This pivotal discovery by Pentecostals empowers them to align Theology with their aspirations especially if a methodology of caring for the widows is sought for.

2.2. Caring within the Mainline Church

The Mainline Churches are more organized in the way they conduct their business. They seem to have a structured document oriented approach to matters that require the display of accountability and care. This is evident in the way they carry their administrative affairs. The simplicity of the nature of caring provided in these institutions is observed through the existence of the documents such as the one quoted in this section. The name of this particular church shall be called the Missions Association (not real name for anonymity purposes).

2.2.1. The name of the document displaying caring

The author will extract the information related to the caring as provided in the Constitution of one of the Mainline Churches. Such organizations are better organized in terms of their provisions and pecuniary care for their widows.

2.2.2. How are contributions collected?

Though care is not distinctly spelt out as the care for the widows, the intention attributed to the collection of the funds is however supplied. Under the discussion of the duties and functions of the Poor Fund Steward such a commitment is provided in the following way:

“Section 8.11 (a) To provide for the administration of the Lord’s Supper and Love Feasts, and to make the collections on those occasions for the poor of the church.

(b) ...pay such sums as the meeting may vote for the relief of the poor or sick and keep a proper account” (Constitution of the Missions Association-not real name for the sake of anonymity, 2005:64)

The manner in which these funds are collected is provided as follows:

“Section 8.12 (a) The chief sources of the quarterly meeting income are:

1. Contributions in classes
2. The weekly effortry
3. Monthly or quarterly subscription
4. Rent collections
5. Sunday collections
6. Poor Fund collections (Constitution of the Missions Association-not real name for the sake of anonymity, 2005:65)

Though these funds are not exclusively geared at the care of the widows, the intention of the collection of such funds is equally meant for the widows who are seen as those in need and the poor in our midst. The author understands the intentions of the collection of such funds as well as its noble administrative collection method as worthwhile and educational to any ecclesiastical structure which desires to adopt a method of collection towards establishing its caring projects for the widows. Pieterse becomes an opinion in portraying the meaning of the poor of which widows are a part in the following way: “Liberation theologians believe that we should read the Bible with the bias that God opts for the poor, for whom he has special concern and compassion” (Pieterse 2001:82). The author agrees with Pieterse that God opts for the poor, hence his appreciation of the collection method of the funds by the church in discussion.

2.2.3. How are contributions disbursed?

The disbursement of the funds is presented as follows:

“Section 8.12 (b) The conference approves of the practice largely prevailing among our people of making collections in our churches every Lord’s Day on behalf of the Funds for the support of the ministry...

Section 8.14 (a) Income of this fund is derived from a levy made by conference on the circuits, stations and institution of the connexion, which levy shall be equally distributed among them and each of them

(d) The General Finance Committee shall prepare the schedules of requirements of the fund, which may be discussed by the conference and the grants shall be determined by vote of the conference itself’ (Constitution of the Missions Association-not real name for the sake of anonymity, 2005:65). The author recognizes the provisions of this meticulously submitted document as administratively viable. This furthermore provides a well thought off as well as potentially functional methodology of caring for the needy and the poor.

In the light of the plight indicated by some of the widows interviewed in Chapter 4 in as far as the lack of care within the church circles is concerned, the author does applaud the methodology practiced by the Missions Association. He further believes that if such a method could be duplicated in all relief structures of the church, the needy, poor, orphans and widows in our midst can greatly benefit.

The author would also love to note that this comprehensive document provides the all inclusive methodology in the decision-making processes of the organization. The decision to disburse the funds allocation is vested within the General Finance Committee. This, therefore, suggests that one can safely trust the corporate decision of the entity as well as its authenticity. In this methodology, there does not seem to be room for mismanagement, misappropriation and unfair distribution of funds. The methodology, therefore, seem to be providing the desired integrated methodology of care which can be recommended without any qualms.

From the above submission it is palpable that caring within the Mainline Church fulfils the requirements espoused by Glancy who cites Paul speaking to the Thessalonians as follows: “Introducing his advice in 4:3-8, Paul reminds his readers that “you have learned from us how you ought to live.... you know what instructions we gave you (4:1-2)”” (Glancy 2002:59). The picture of discipline and orderliness is clearly painted from what Glancy indicates. It is one picture which communicates volumes about the expectations of subservience to instructions and the regulations from those in authority. This becomes the point of departure if the methodology of care for the widows is to be established. This fundamental Biblical principle was observed in the documentation of the Missions Association.

Glancy’s proposition needs to be considered with an uncompromising vigour: “The figure of the Christian as a slave of Christ or of God is inchoate in a number of Jesus’ parables and familiar from the writings of Paul. Christian discourse figuratively plays on moments of reduction to and release from bondage” (Glancy 2002:97).

The author views what Glancy states as deserving of challenge if a sound method of caring for widows is to be set up. Such an orchestration of a new method should commence with positivism and the challenge to the slavery in which the widows find themselves entangled. It is rather unacceptable that the widows should continue inhaling the oppressive atmosphere which undermines their value and sense of self-worth.

This therefore suggests that a new paradigm shift is required as a matter of urgency to be able to redress the ill-mannered stereotypes of the past which have treated the

widows with contempt and indignation. Though some widows are silent, voices such as Lerner's argue that: "Some folks have bodies that won't let them lie. Or perhaps, more correctly, some folks are bodies that won't lie" (Lerner 1993:174). The author conceptualizes the current dispensation as one of unravelling the truth and bringing to the fore and exposure all fallacious misconceptions which have always discriminated against the clergy widows, hence creating a people who are not true to their honest feelings of shame and humiliation.

According to the author, this will be the only method to mobilize women, particularly the clergy widows, to lobby as an advocacy group for their legitimate rights. Such lobbying can be directed both to the church and the state whenever they feel violated against.

In order to set the new trend in motion, it is only advisable to consider the care observed from the practice of the Mainline Churches. This care fulfils what Lerner presents as an unfair indoctrination against women in the following way: "As women, we are taught to hate our bodies and to disconnect from them" (1993:195). The author envisions self-love by women, widows in particular as an important new move to be embarked upon through a form of a global campaign.

Contrary to the perceived fear by Lerner that women are indoctrinated to disconnect from their bodies, it is worth noting that the Mainline Church is a more organized entity believing that: "...the Church needs the corporate witness of such orders as groups within the ecclesial body politic at least as much as it needs their day-to-day services" (Kavanagh 1991:113). The author supports such a therapeutic stance which advocates for the corporate engagement of the church which in itself is instrumental in the display of the care exercised in such an entity.

3. Creating a synergy of a range of methods

A synergy of a range of methods finds its pathway in the provisions provided by Gilbert and Brock as follows: “When Christ gave His last discourse before His sufferings upon the Cross, He promised His disciples that He would send the “*paraclete*,” commonly translated as “the Comforter” (John14:16) (Gilbert & Brock 1985:266).

This message did not go out as a directionless innuendo. Its meaning was unambiguous and had only one meaning which was in itself helpful in the creation of the synergy of a range of methods. The explicit suggestion in this message is that the counsellor should acknowledge that the ultimate healing and acumen rests with the Holy Spirit. This is further demonstrated by Gilbert and Brock as follows: “It is important to contrast the inner strength of the Spirit operative within the counsellor with the external influences of the Spirit. We can recognize that the Holy Spirit is demonstrating His power through events apart from the individual (*deus ex machina*), but we must also remember that the Spirit of God is a necessary factor in ministry” (Gilbert & Brock 1985:267).

It is important to note that the Spirit of God does not consider people on the strength of their gender as indicated by Fiorenza who supports Gilbert and Brock in the following way: “The trajectory of the Pauline tradition, which demands that submission of women on theological grounds, reflects this reactionary, patriarchal evolution of the Christian church. ... Certainly, however, the theological justification of the elimination of Christian women from the leadership of the church was able to claim the authority of Paul without being challenged” (Fiorenza 1993:87).

The author supports Fiorenza who buttresses the position presented by Gilbert and Brock. He believes that if the synergy of the methodology of caring is to be achieved; the order of the dignity of people's relationship with creation has to be considered. People should be seen as equal before God, both male and female; and furthermore, the function of the Holy Spirit as an enabling principal factor has to be borne in mind at all times.

Gilbert and Brock further argue that: "The first, or primary, assumption of CT argues that our cognitions (inner thoughts) are the key to our emotions. What could be more scriptural than this? The writer of Proverbs knew the importance of our cognitions. He exhorted: "Keep thy heart (or mind) with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life" (Prov. 4:23)...In Philippians 4:4-13, Paul clearly enunciated cognitive concepts. He said:

1 "Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say rejoice". He did not say we should deny the existence of problems and unpleasant circumstances.

2. Be careful for nothing," really means "don't get all uptight" or "don't work yourself up into a frenzy by spending all of your time worrying about problems; think of the solutions."

3. Then Paul related the rewards which follow this behaviour: "the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep (guard or protect) your hearts and minds."

4. Paul then exhorted that we always keep our attention centered on those things which are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, and praiseworthy" (Gilbert & Brock 1985:197).

The above citation reiterates what Gilbert; in his reasoning on the integration theory conceptualizes as follows: "Many Christians have a difficulty relating their

religious views to secular theories. To me, it is very simple. As a Christian, I start with my belief in God as Creator of the universe and Man; this is my foundation. I then examine any theory as to whether it will fit on this foundation. If it does, I consider it. If it does not, I reject it” (Gilbert & Brock 1985:196)

The ability to create a sound synergy of the methodology of caring is therefore incumbent upon the care-giver primarily. His or her knowledge as well as conviction of the notion proposed by Gilbert will be essential to ultimately create an informed methodological synergy of caring for the widows. The author would love to further indicate that the need to create a synergy of a methodology of caring for widows will never be complete whilst women are eager to establish their own ‘Women Church’ bursting loudly in tears, wailing as follows: “We pray for the women who stand face to face with a life of poverty and undernourishment, that power be given them to hold fast and open possibilities for all women” (Schillebeeckx 1985:239).

In this list of the weeping womenfolk, the author sees the widows right on top with no one to speak for them, defend them or even attempt to influence the governments of the world on their account. This position in itself becomes the driving force which propels the author to desire to expedite the methodology of caring for the clergy widows, hence this research. Such an influence should be the priority of the church organs, structures and other related organizations.

Schillebeeckx further quotes Fiorenza stating that: “For the first time in Christian history we women no longer seek to express our experience of God’s Spirit within the frameworks of an androcentric spirituality but to attempt to articulate that we have found God in our souls in such a way that this experience of her presence can

transform and break through the traditional framework of androcentric theology and patriarchal church” (Schillebeeckx 1985:239).

The author scrutinizes this view with a serious consideration that speaks to the hurt which the women feel having been the subject of scorn and ridicule in theological circles; hence the need to create an all encompassing methodology of caring for clergy widows which will affirm and acknowledge their status as well.

It was observed from the pain of the lack of care which the widows suffered that: “Each woman internalized voices of contempt or blame and now can voice them herself, unprompted” (Glaz & Moessner 1991:113). The author realized that the machinery which would better inform the church about the care of widows, particularly in an attempt to create a synergy on a range of methods, is in demand now than ever as a requirement to help them out of the plight identified by Glaz and Moessner. It also became evident that this kind of plight does not only leave them possessed with indefinable rages of anger but with the burning desire to avenge, which results from the internalization of the contempt, rejection and the scorn they endured.

Articulating in affirmation to Glaz and Moessner is Boenhoeffer, who introduces the subject of costly grace in this matter. He sees the only way in which the desired healing and care could occur as operational within the ambit of grace. He conceptualizes of such grace in the following way:

- “Costly grace is the treasure hidden in the field; for the sake of it a man will gladly go and sell all that he has. It is the pearl of great price to buy which the merchant will sell all his goods.....

- Costly grace is the gospel which must be sought again and again; the gift which must be asked for, the door at which a man must knock...
- Costly grace is the sanctuary of God; it has to be protected from the world, and not thrown to the dogs” (Bonhoeffer 1937:38-39)

The author sees the need for creating a synergy on a range of methods as very much dependent on the highlights drawn by Bonhoeffer. In order for the approach and synergized caring method to exist and function effectively, the virtue of grace as a treasure, as a door to be persistently and patiently knocked at and as a sanctuary of God, do certainly require to be considered very seriously. It is in these attributes of grace that such care for the wounded clergy widow could be lived to represent the message and the grace derived at the cross where Jesus died for humanity. The author will now analyze the methodology proposed by the South African Council of Churches in its endeavour to establish an integrated methodology of caring for the clergy widows.

3.1. Methodology proposed by the South African Council of Churches

Speaking about the “Becoming the Ecumenical Church,” de Gruchy has this to say: “The SACC obviously has a key role to fulfil....But if we are serious about the fact that the ecumenical church has to be reborn for this new day, then it is equally true that the SACC has to be reborn... The SACC can only fulfil its role if it is an ecumenical council of churches” (*ed* Pityana & Villa-Vicencio 1995:18). De Gruchy clearly indicates that there is an even greater responsibility incumbent upon the church in as far as its role is concerned. It is only when the SACC gets to the position of being revamped in its collective thinking and performance that it can address the methodology of caring in unison whilst cherishing unity in diversity.

De Gruchy's presentation on the need for the church to define its role is attested by Rubingh who states: "And what is the focus of that kingdom encounter? On what issue do these kingdoms more and more collide? I want to posit that more and more we are realizing that the issue is power. This conflict is one of God's power meeting alien power in a very real struggle. The meeting is taking on a focus we have not known before" (Papers of the Res Conferences Harare, Zimbabwe 1988:43)

The author understands the proposition by Rubingh to mean that the baseline requirement for both efficiency and fruitfulness in the ecclesiastical delivery of its services is dependent on the endowment with power. This very power suffices to enable the kingdom bearers to attain the desired objectives thereof.

Reverberating the inherent power of the kingdom and helping in synergizing the methodology of care is Gilbert and Brock on treating the subject of integration of theory with the Holy Spirit in the following way: "Our central integration thesis is that perfect love casts out fear (1 John 4:18), RSV). This healing love causes the joyful expansion rather than the fearful constriction of the human personality" (Gilbert & Brock 1985:261). The author emphatically supports what Gilbert and Brock propose in relation to the healing love. This healing love becomes the pivotal point to consider, especially, in our subject of dealing with the widows, where the joyful expansion of the self is reinstated. The healing process exercised nullifies the incurred constriction of the human personality.

Wimberly expresses this notion in his 'Claiming God Reclaiming Dignity' in the following way: "What does it mean to be persons of worth and value in our contemporary culture? Whatever the answers; the fact that we perennially raise

questions such as these suggest that we humans are always interested in constructing meaning. But meaning comes into being through the mediation of particular communities. That is to say, through our living together, through socially constructed categories, we each, both individually and communally, construct our definition of what it means to be worthy and valued” (Wimberly 2003:15).

The author agrees that in an attempt to create a synergy of a methodology of caring, there is a collective responsibility in any given community. Once a person’s sense of self-worth is positively attended to, there is bound to be healing in the methodology of caring. Put differently, the author employs the same with the following maxim: Healthy individuals, healthy communities, hence an acceptable synergized methodology of caring.

The practical engagement of the envisaged synergy in the methodology of caring finds its pathway in what Wimberly further conceptualizes as follows: “From my African American Christian upbringing, I was taught to privilege conversations with God as the ultimate granter and guarantor of human worth and value. I was taught by my parents and my church community that God had a purpose for my life, and that life consisted of finding out what that purpose was. My task was to carry it out” (2003:18). This phenomenal conceptualization of the importance of a total self and community engagement serves as a breeding ground in an attempt to create a synergy in the methodology of caring.

Speaking on the importance of the role of the church and also exposing the uncompromising position of the SACC, Mgojo puts it this way: “First it must formulate its identity anew. Second, it must re-assess and re-define its ministry for

the current regional and global context. The church is a community of believers in Christ, bound together by his saving work on the Cross, It is also a community of solidarity for guidance, care, and loyal criticism- for the edification of the body of Christ” (ed Pityana & Villa-Vicencio 1995:9). Mgojo indicates the importance of the need to care by a way of redefining its ministry and identity.

The author views this position of the SACC as critical in that if the church can fully establish its distinct position as well as define its identity in the most clear and unambiguous terms, it will be able to deliver an enviable model of synergized caring method for widows, which the whole world can look upon as a solution to the current plight of the widows, the clergy widows in particular.

This desired synergized methodology of caring requires that the church should assert itself to correct the apprehension of the human status in society as proposed by Fraser in the following way: “Moreover the poor are not simply those robbed of their share of material resources which God has given for all to enjoy. They are denied voice, status, opportunities for growth and the means for creative participation in society- features of the abundant life which Jesus Christ came to give to all” (ed Pityana & Villa-Vicencio 1995:82). This deprivation results in various misconceptions such as those observed in other spheres of life where some people are regarded as inanimate objects because of their status. To this effect, Magesa warns strongly in the following way: “Once again sociability with all people and harmony with the universe is the guiding ethical principle” (Magesa 1997:72). The author admires the proposition by Magesa as plausible in that it acknowledges and affirms the importance of the sociability. This principle, in our context, suggests that the widows be equally treated with the respect they deserve;

and this becomes the underpinning thumb rule if the effective methodology of care for the clergy widows is to be observed.

Confirming the importance of taking care of the widows as a methodology which the church can adopt, is Job in the following way: “and I helped widows find security” (Job 29:13). These noble words by Job have to find room during the modern era somewhere in the church. The Council of Churches has, as one of its obligatory uncompromising imperatives, the desire and an urge to be the spokesperson of the voiceless as alluded to in the foregoing argument. This desire will ultimately manifest itself in the will and responsibility of protecting the widows, and their surviving families.

The notion of caring for the clergy widows seems to be supported fully by the ecumenical body represented by the South African Council of Churches. This raises a concern to the author on the phrase once uttered by the Master Christ Jesus Himself where He was quoting the Pentateuch: “You will always have the poor people with you, but you will not always have me” (Mat 26:11)

The author challenges this phrase on the following grounds:

1. The poor are with us due to our orchestration:

The poor are always with us because this state of affairs benefits the power that be as well as those that are economically capable. Some derive leverage from the poverty of widows since they raise vulnerable children who can be cheap labour in the market place.

2. Paul says that “the Kingdom of God is a matter of peace and joy.”

If these are the virtues of God's Kingdom, there is no way such a Kingdom could be permeated by poverty. If the Kingdom of God is here on earth even as Christ taught in the Lord's Prayer: "Thy Kingdom come" (Mat 6:10), poverty should, in essence, be nonexistent.

This poverty is symbolic of the plight orchestrated by human systems to derive benefits out of the poor; hence widowhood from time immemorial is almost synonymous to poverty. It is this position which the author challenges that to create a worthwhile, and worth living climate for widows' rights in this very earth in which they are living is obligatory. The SACC has as such proposed a potentially viable concept which could be a helpful methodology of caring for the widows, once nurtured and further enhanced.

The voice of the church was further heard very clearly where she stood as the voice for the voiceless during the rife Apartheid era in South Africa. This was represented by documents such as the Kairos Document which articulated truisms such as: "The concern of Christians is that we should have in our country a just law and right order" (The Kairos Document 1986:6)

The author aligns himself with the voice which once represented the oppressed South African masses and sees a great need for the same Kairos to resurface in the favour of the widows, the sentiment which the Kairos Theologians mention as: "...these activities must be re-shaped to be more fully consistent with a prophetic faith related to the KAIROS that God is offering us today" (The Kairos Document 1986:6). It is only in the light of the need for the resurgence of a 'once-upon-a-time' revolutionary of Kairos' time that the same or new voice can represent the

widows so that they should be both empowered and benefited in the resources available in the country.

This exercise will be instrumental in setting the methodology of caring for the widows as articulated by Gerkin in the following way: “Pastors needed to become more proficient interpreters: interpreters of the Christian language and its ways of seeing and evaluating the world of human affairs, and interpreters of cultural languages that shape much of everyday life” (Gerkin 1997:76). The author agrees with Gerkin’s proposal which suggests that the effectiveness and efficiency of reaching out, as a church, rests on the church being able to interpret the world of human affairs.

In our given context, the world in discussion constitutes womenfolk, the clergy widows whom the methodology of caring is sought for. We will now consider the methodology of caring for the widows as submitted by the South African government. It is important to look into this avenue since all citizens are the subjects of the state, the clergy widows, in particular, and all other widows in general are but no exception to such citizenship and all it entails, be it liabilities and or benefits.

3.2. Methodology Proposed by the South African Government

The South African government proposes a certain approach to the care of widows as enshrined in some pieces of legislation. The two documents which the author will analyse in an attempt to create an informed synergy of the methodology of caring will be the provisions of the Department of Social Development (which disburses its services through the South African Security Services Agency known as SASSA), and the South African Constitution itself.

Widowhood does impact on the well-being of the state. Though the subject is treated within the ecclesiastical settings, its demise and effects cannot be divorced from the realities of its relationship with the other circles of the society such as the state. The author would love to take a synoptic view into how widowhood has evolved in South Africa in order to create a better base that will enable an effective recommendation, finally. Such an evolution will focus on the two already mentioned legislations.

Speaking on the subject of importance of domains and their effects in real life, Van Der Ven has the following to say: “Alongside the economic domain with its code of ‘money,’ the political domain with its code of ‘power,’ the medical domain with its code of ‘health’, the scientific domain with its code of ‘truth’, and the educational domain with its code of ‘learning’, the religious domain has developed with its code of transcendence” (Van Der Ven 1998:90-91)

The picture drawn by Van Der Ven is that of the interwoven relationship within the spheres and circles of society. This out rightly indicates that in order to create an integration of the methodology of a sound caring system, it is important to recognize the interdependence of the various societal domains of which he further states: “Two aspects of this interdependence must be distinguished; influence and relevance” (1998:91). He argues that “the term ‘influence’ means, for example, that a colonializing effect can be and is exerted by the economic domain.....The term ‘relevance’ can be understood within the context of culturalization” (1998:91). The author applauds such an informed as well as illuminating analysis of the societal domains which finally impact on the synchronization of the legislations that affect the widows in our midst.

This presentation by Van Der Ven hinges with the author's belief that although there is no distinct provision by government to dictate how widows should be cared for, the government can learn from borrowed wisdom which was exercised in Rome as spelt out by Eisen in the following way: "a Church order from the first third of the third century that is frequently cited to describe conditions at Rome, that widows were enrolled in the Church to pray for the community" (Eisen 2000:144).

Eisen further states: "Widows appear in the *Traditio Apostolica* in a twofold sense: on the one hand as widowed women enrolled by the community for Church duties (*TA 10*), and on the other hand as widows needing community support (*TA 20, 24, 30*)... It is said that they are enrolled exclusively for the purpose of prayer ...which at the same time is said to be the duty of the entire community" (2000:144). The author agrees with Eisen's submission which indicates that the responsibility of the widows' commitment to prayer was not a punitive endeavour or even an embargo from living a healthy normal life. It was rather a practice adopted by the Roman government and encouraged to be practiced by the Church.

The author notices this move as an extremely important practice if the widows are to be taken care of with the seriousness such a care deserves. The author commends what the Roman government had introduced, that the church and community should assign the primary responsibility of prayer to widows. However, he disagrees with the discriminatory practices which suggested that the hands should not be laid on them; the practice which is portrayed by Eisen as: "The directions for widows contain the reason why they are not ordained: the widows are not to receive the imposition of hands ...because they are entrusted with neither sacrament nor liturgical service" (ibid).

The author would love to spell out a sharp argument against such a prejudicial treatment of the widows by presenting the need for every person who needed to be laid hands on and would like to inquire that what would happen in case a widow needed the ministry of the laying of hands as presented by Jesus who states: “They shall lay the hands on the sick, and they shall recover” (Mark 16:18)

This discrimination against widows and the womenfolk in general was almost institutionalized. This is echoed in voices such as: “The most charitable assessment of patristic attitudes to women is that they were ambivalent. The Fathers recognized that women are capable of receiving salvation. They acknowledged that they could be endowed with spiritual gifts, including theological understanding and –exceptionally-Biblical expertise” (Edwards 1989:90)

The South African government shows a rather tolerant and accommodative viewpoint as opposed to the view which was exercised by the Fathers. The author views this as an important step towards the establishment of a methodology of caring by government which could ultimately impact on the church’s own care for the widows, the clergy widows in particular.

3.2.1. The South African Legislation

The Department of Social Development stands out as one important vehicle to inform the desired methodology of care for the widows. The primary reason such an organ of state is a helpful tool is presented by Gerkin who reasons out that the engagement of care should extend its impact on to the political spheres. It is at this platform that the care-givers can be seen both as priests and prophets. They will be priests through anointing the wounds of the hurting widows as further attested by

Gerkin with the following propositions: “We need to mark for further reflection the importance of liturgy and ritual practices for the care and healing of the people of God....

...the effects of that radical shift remain active in the relationship between church and society on our own time....

...care also always involves giving attention to the issues and concerns of the contemporary cultural context” (Gerkin 1997:35)

The author realizes the importance of the priests who can influence the organs of the law by introducing the liturgy and ritual that can be adopted in state legislation. These care-givers would have introduced a new methodology for the care of the widows, which they will be impacting even as prophets.

They will be prophets by advocating for the cause of the defenceless through direct engagement with this living human document of which Gerkin states: “...I sought to develop what I called a narrative, hermeneutical methodology for doing practical theology in pastoral care and counselling with individuals (*The Living Human Document*) and in pastoral leadership of a community of Christian people (*Widening the Horizons and Prophetic Pastoral Practice*).” The author supports Gerkin in the most unequivocal terms in his conceptualization of the notion of widening the horizons and prophetic pastoral practice. He believes that the methodology of creating a synergy for the care of the widows can be attained through involving all role players in the affairs of the widows inclusive of the governments. This is by definition the much desired widening of the horizons and the prophetic pastoral practice which will ultimately enable the pastoral care-givers to be modern prophets in the real sense of the word.

Elford reinforces Gerkin's opinion by reasoning out that the issue of care for individuals and families should be taken outside the scope of the immediate ecclesiastical and family milieu by stating that: "Social responsibility is that responsibility incumbent upon the church as evidenced in the Early Church....The everyday transition from caring for individuals to caring about their social conditions is so commonplace that it can be taken for granted. There are, however, five stages of it which are worth noting. They commonly occur in case work and all follow from initial one-to-one contact with the cared for.

- They begin when the pastors seek help and counsel with those who may be as described as 'significant other person'.
- This is taken further when it becomes necessary to mobilize voluntary or statutory assistance such as in domiciliary care where the needs of the cared-for and immediate family are complemented by help from outside the home.
- Pressure, or self-help, groups are a further stage in the migration of pastoral care from the individual to the social sphere.
- A significantly progressive political step is next taken whenever the relief of need is seen to require a change of public attitude.
- Finally, the relief of pastoral need may well require overt social change which can only be brought about by direct political action" (Elford 1999:126-127)

The author supports the opinions by both Gerkin and Elford that the political sphere of the society has an influential role to play in as far as the care of individuals is concerned. He sees this avenue as a potentially capable wing to employ, and the attempt to attract it closer to the church as the ideal mechanism towards fulfilling the aspirations of creating a methodology of caring for the

widows. By so doing, the ecclesiastical entities can have access to even better amenities which can ameliorate the process of caring for their widows in an amenable and cost effective manner. To this end, Pieterse, has the opinion that: “If we want to communicate God’s love, grace and liberation to the poor in our country, we will have to do so by way of physical acts of upliftment. The church has to minister to the poor in deed and word” (Pieterse 2001:111)

The provision by Pieterse comes at the point where he drew a picture of a poor 80-year-old widow who “could get a government pension of R500 per month (since March 2000 R520)” (2001:110). Whilst appreciating the provision of the social grant by the government, Pieterse also believes that the church has a role of physical upliftment of the poor in the country. The author realizes a credible synergy of the care which the state provides through the instrument of social grant. This instrument presents a challenge to the church to follow suit. It is also evident that even the agents of the state have shortfalls in as far as the caring for the widows is concerned.

This coalition purports the ideal envisaged state of synergizing the methodology of caring. The commitment of the government, in an attempt to create a platform of caring for the widows, should equally take into account the primary need to define the scope of its mandate, functionality, efficiency and the acumen by its structures to deliver a reputable service. It should do this by attempting to answer what Gerkin asks in the following manner: “Where are the boundaries that govern what should and should not be done in the national interest? Are there norms for behaviour of governments that differ from norms for individuals and private groups?” (Gerkin 1991:27)

The author views Gerkin's submission as pivotal if an intelligible method of caring for the widows is to be set in place. This can only find its pathway in the government that is taking a sound stance to support such a notion of a methodology of caring for the widows. The governmental documents though (the Department of Social Development and the disbursing agency-SASSA, in particular) do not have an explicit provision which deals with the widows' social grant. The intentions of the government's goodwill to provide such grants are implied through indirect pieces of legislative provisions spelt out for children and the aged. According to the author, this assumption justifies the intention to equally care for the widows; an endeavour which can be adopted by the church in its zest to create a methodology of caring for the widows. The particular groups which the Department of Social Development spell out explicitly are the following:

- Older persons
- War veterans
- Disability
- Grant-in-aid
- Foster child
- Care dependency
- Child support grant.

The widows' pension is not explicitly mentioned except in another piece of legislation called the Income Tax Act No 21 of 1995. This Act does make mention of clauses considering the welfare of widows such as:

Section 1 (a) (c) any fund...or mainly for such a purpose and also for the purpose of providing benefits for the ****widows, children**** dependants or nominees of deceased members.

Section 1 (c) (a) a superannuation, pension, provident ****widows' or orphans' **** <<or dependants'>> fund or pension scheme established by law or any such fund
Section 1 (d) (i) ...from employment or for ****widows, children**** <<the>> dependants or nominees of deceased employees.

The author would love to point out that it was not his intention to discuss the Act; however, it is of paramount importance to indicate the South African government's goodwill, and good faith to its citizen by referring to this proximate legislation addressing issues related to widows. Through this engagement, the author would love to indisputably propose that such a position is the ideal which the church can adopt in order to create a methodology of care for its widows in general and the clergy widows in particular. The formula applied in the Act could serve as a guideline towards the creation of this envisaged instrument of care for the clergy widows. We will now interrogate the South African Constitution and find out its position with regard to caring for the widows and attempt to establish how this can be beneficial to influence the care of the widows by the church.

3.2.2. The South African Constitution

Enshrined in the South African Constitution in the most exclusive terms is the provision which states that:

“1. The Republic of South Africa is one, sovereign, democratic state founded on the following values: (a) Human dignity, the achievement of equality and the advancement of human rights and freedoms” (The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa 1996:1). The importance of these virtues is confirmed by Paul in the book of Romans who suggests that the people should respect the authority in the following manner: “Everyone must obey state authorities, because no authority

exists without God's permission, and the existing authorities have been put there by God" (Rom 13:1)

This is an indication that the authorities have an obligation to protect the wellbeing of their subjects, hence such a distinct positive portrayal in the South African Constitution. It becomes incumbent, therefore, that the subjects of the state be equally submissive since it has an obligation to their wellbeing. The constitution presents the South African government as transparent and willing to engage in dialogue with its subjects through the following provision: "People's needs must be responded to, and the public must be encouraged to participate in policy-making" (The constitution of the Republic of South Africa 1996: Chapter 10, section 195. (1) (e)).

The author views the importance of this invitation by the government to the public opinions in terms of influencing their wellbeing by participating in public policy-making. This participation presents an opportunity to lobby for the rights of the widows as well and the impact the sound integration of the methodology of caring exercised by the government towards the wellbeing of the widows.

The proposition in the constitutional provision is indicative of the need for caregivers to instil a sense of accountability portrayed by Bauckham in his quotation of the Psalms of Thomas 16 as follows: "Salome built a tower upon the rock of truth and mercy. The builders that built it are the righteous; the masons that hew stones for it are the angels. The floor (?) of the house is Truth; the beams of the roof are alms" (Bauckham 2002:255). In most certain terms the author views the need to conscientize the widows with the assurance and confidence to build their faith upon the Truth of which Christ said: "I am the way, the Truth and the life" (John

14:6), as pivotal and necessary in order to create the obligatory synthesis for the methodology of caring for the widows.

Whilst encouraging the widows to build their towers upon the rock of truth and mercy, the care-giver has a more serious task to educate and sensitize the government about its responsibility as a steward of God. A steward practices the wisdom that the Reverend John Wesley articulates as: “We are indebted to Him for all we have: But although a debtor is obliged to return what he has received, yet until the time of payment comes, he is at liberty to use it as he pleases. It is not so with a steward; he is not at liberty to use what is lodged in his hands as *he* pleases, but as his Master pleases” (Wesley 1703-1791:137).

It is evident that the government has a duty of serious care and stewardship towards its widowed citizens even as it is entrusted with such by the Scripture which proposes that: “the existing authorities have been put there by God” (Romans 13:1).

The author advocates strongly for the perception that the constitution was supposed to have made an explicit caring provision for the widows. He believes that as much as the constitution is meant to service the entire citizenship of the country, the widows have a privileged position of protection from the Almighty God portrayed in the following way by the Psalmist: “God, who lives in his sacred Temple, cares for orphans and protects widows” (Psalm 68:5)

The author opines that the legislation should enforce the distinct care of widows in the most explicit manner. He does, however, applaud overt provisions such as the following: “27. (1) Everyone has the right to have access to- (c) social security, including, if they are unable to support themselves and their dependents, appropriate social assistance.

(2) The state must take reasonable legislative and other measures, within its available resources, to achieve the progressive realisation of these rights” (The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996:13). The author notes with appreciation the provision of the Constitution which embodies the caring methodology of its citizens as emulated by the South African government. It is this kind of caring that the synergy of caring for the widows between the Church, state and other role players such as the Council of Churches can be appreciated. The author views the system of care which is inclusive of all participants as ideal and almost an envisaged utopia if the synergy of caring for the widows is to be attained.

4. Integration of the caring system currently available within the Pentecostal Churches

The Pentecostal movement does not have distinct policy documents like the standard catechisms utilized in the Mainline churches as well as the beautiful constitutions they utilize. This movement however, relies entirely on: “The Holy Spirit as the Bearer of truth is able to “teach us all things and bring all things to our remembrance” (John 14:26). The counsellor is then freed from the need to play God and is able to love as He does. At the same time, the counsellor recognizes personal limitations and intensifies his or her reliance upon the Holy Spirit” (Gilbert & Brock 1985:266).

Whilst depending on the work of the Holy Spirit, the care-giver is “cognizant of the fact that he (sic) is, first and foremost, an ambassador of Christ, in whose name he ministers. He (sic) is not only the servant-bearer of the pastoral concern of the Christian community, but also the harbinger of the comfort and healing of the

church's ministry to sick and suffering" (*ed* Rodd 1985:135). The author cherishes the position of comfort and healing to the heavy laden espoused by Rodd who advocates for such virtues in the strongest terms possible.

An equal concern to the one presented by Rodd in his support of Gilbert and Brock is resonated by Hickey in the following way: "The mission of the Church is also one of love, because it is an extension of the same mission of the Son. "As the Father has sent me, even so I send you" (John 20:21) (Hickey 1982:21). This position reinforces the condition under which the Church has to render its service of care. Such commitment and care becomes instrumental in displaying the required integration of the caring system within the Church.

This integration of the care in the Church which was born in Pentecost finds its origin in the acknowledgement that: "The church belongs to God. ...The true church exists wherever Jesus Christ is present in the world, wherever God calls peoples to be his body, and wherever men and women respond in faith and obedience" (Alston 2002:53). The author views the situation of responding in faith and obedience as important and a primary requirement enabling the church to fulfil its caring mission.

This point has been handled at length in point 1.1 above, where the actual operation of the Pentecostal Church has been observed. This system which has a wealth of its operation from the Scriptures can be a helpful modern day tool as it is observed in Acts 6 where there was a contention between the Greek speaking and the Hebrew speaking widows.

5. **Natural Endowment with Force and Power to Sustain Life**

Gilbert and Brock demonstrate this point with maximum confidence by stating: “The life force in the counselee should not be attributed to the counsellor, but rather to the activity of the Holy Spirit” (Gilbert & Brock 1985:261). This statement may come as a challenge to those who feel that they bear the responsibility to take care of other people’s lives. This force is worth noting in that it reflects the grace bestowed upon the care-givers and yet they can have no absolute claim to its functioning. The performance of the final process of caring as displayed by the method of caring inherent in the working of the Holy Spirit, is therefore, the sole function of the Holy Spirit.

It is critical to be endowed with the force and the power to sustain life. This endowment helps the care-giver to be instrumental in synergizing the legitimate and contextual method, befitting the situation at hand. The author believes that the contextual method which addresses the need of the hurting in a more personal and contextual way is the desired ideal.

This finds both its roots and origin in what Gilbert and Brock state in the following way: “Scripture abounds with examples of the Holy Spirit at work in revealing truth and assisting those who are sensitive to the truth. Solomon asked for and received an understanding heart to judge, to be able to discern between good and evil (1Kings 4:29). Elisha was observed by the Shunammite woman to be a holy man of God (2 Kings 4:9). Nehemiah discerned a false prophet (Neh. 6:12). Jesus sensed the criticism of the scribes and Pharisees (Luke 5:22), and the woman of Samaria perceived Christ to a prophet (John 4:19)...These illustrations represent the potential interaction of the Holy Spirit with Spirit-directed counsellors who,

because of faith and counsellor-training, are set apart to utilize the intuitive function of the Holy Spirit in helping others” (Gilbert & Brock 1985:267).

The author agrees with this copious citation which gives a deeper picture of the kind of counsellor/care-giver who can be instrumental to effect change in the methodology of caring. This methodology requires a complete and defenceless dependence on the works of the Holy Spirit. It suggests that to be an agent of change, in a manner which will transform the recipients of counselling, one needs this indispensable endowment with the grace and gifts of the Holy Spirit.

These gifts will enable one to discern even the hidden and obscured secrets which the counselee cannot easily articulate in words. Sometimes the counselee does the following: “It was necessary for Mrs. B to be led into the grieving process. She had avoided grieving because of a need to maintain her composure, “to be strong when everyone else needed her.” She ministered to others but suffered alone because her own wound had not been healed” (Gilbert & Brock 1985:267)

The importance of the need to be endowed with the power and force to sustain life, is evidenced in the foregoing presentation by Gilbert and Brock. This practice to allow the hurting to be truly herself and stop playing a character of a strong person is important in that the widow will display her true feelings. The real strength of character will be displayed in accepting her humanity with all its anthropological limitations, best put by Paul as follows: “For when I am weak, then I am strong” (2 Corinthians 12:10). The author indisputably agrees with the notion upheld by Paul that it is in our weaknesses that the strength of God is made manifest. The woman, Mrs. B, presented by Gilbert and Brock has to be allowed to display the extent of her hurt; and by so doing, and not bottling her feelings, she will derive at the

synergized methodology of healing resulting from the sound methodology of caring.

The author agrees that the counsellor must have his/her own wounds first attended to if the counselling session is to be effective, fruitful and meaningful. He does not conceptualize that the wounded counsellor will provide an efficient service to the counselee, hence an imperative need to be endowed with the force and power that sustains life.

To better empower the care-givers in an attempt to create a synergy of the methodology of caring the: “Counsellors must permit the Spirit to deal with the “self” which God imparted through creation. Counsellors are resource persons, not slaves or magicians” (Gilbert & Brock 1985:266). It should be noted that: “If our fundamental premise is correct that women and men are equal before God, it follows that both may represent their fellow human beings liturgically and pastorally” (Edwards 1989:194). Both the understanding and acceptance of this notion will enhance an unprejudicial delivery of the care of widows in our attempt to forge a synthesized methodology of care.

Furthermore, Edward reinforces the role of endowment with the power to sustain as: “To those who understand ministry in this way we would reply that a woman can ‘represent’ both Christ and God just as adequately (or inadequately) as a man. For Christ in his role as Redeemer represent all humanity and not just its male part.” (Edward 1989:195)

In support of what Edward proposes, the author would love to refer to Eisen who indicates in very distinct terms that the methodology of caring for the widows has

its origin from the earlier church sources by stating thus: “In general we may say that the widow’s field of activity was broad according to *TD*. They were entrusted (a) with the instruction and teaching of women and (b) with testing the deaconesses.... In addition to these duties of instruction, teaching, and testing, they were commissioned to (c) pray and (d) care for the sick, a duty performed with the help of one or two deacons. In addition, (e) they had duties at baptism, namely anointing the women (*TD* 2.8). The widows’ closeness to the bishop is indicated especially by the order of seating during the Eucharistic celebration (*TD* 1.19)” (Eisen 2000:150).

It is this empowerment which will enrich the performance of the caring ministry for the widows without undermining both their gender as well as state of being; hence the author believes that the need to be endowed with the power to sustain life is fundamental in the application of an effective ministry of caring for the widows. The above picture clearly draws the importance, esteem and value which were attributed to the sanctity that accompanied widowhood.

An effective natural endowment with force and power to sustain life is perfectly illustrated in Schillebeeckx’s presentation about the women in North America who organized their discontent “into a deliberative ‘Women’s Church’, a movement which intentionally accuses the patriarchal, masculine character of the church and its leaders, as, indeed, the society. This Women’s Church seeks to ‘weave’ sisterhood between all the women in the world who are oppressed in one way or another by society and the church. ...It is not so much a matter of men oppressing women; the problem is structural violence, which moreover is given an ideological legitimation by philosophy and theology. Women and slaves, the old Roman Hellenistic house code had it, are possessions of males, and therefore they are

subject to them and less than them ‘in all things’. ...Christianity took over this pagan house code, brought it within the church and, moreover, gave it theological legitimation” (Schillebeeckx 1985:236-237).

The author perceives this to be a discriminatory age old practice which has given rise to all the ills of the society; hence the public exposure of this patriarchal chauvinistic practice by feminist theologians plays a critical role in forcing it to give way to an equalitarian system of caring for the womenfolk. This exposure is in itself the natural endowment with force and power to sustain life; the voice which gives women hope; and the clergy widows the assurance that there is an advocacy sisterhood group somewhere in the world that is fighting for their legitimate right to a sound pastoral care.

The entire lament of the womenfolk is attached as Addendum C in page 303. The author would love to explicitly indicate that though he sympathizes as well as acknowledges the aesthetic poetic sentiments presented by the global womenfolk in their lament, he does have an area in which he differs with them by far greater margins, *viz*: Praying for power. The womenfolk seem to be yearning more for power than other virtues which make power a valuable and manageable asset.

The author argues that with power comes the responsibility to manage it. If the widows were to be given power to run their own distinct affairs, the question becomes: Who will lead who? The same question is buttressed by one similar to it, namely: Will such power have measurable units that have accountable mechanisms in place. Notwithstanding the acumen of women, the author is only concerned that the yearning should have been rather for grace as compared or opposed to power. Power seems to imply the desire to avenge to the opposing gender.

Arguing into the author's favour is Harnack who clearly indicates that: "As a true "people of God" the church was a "theocracy," though it is a very remarkable fact that it almost entirely rejected the theocratic forms of ancient Israel, expecting, indeed, that this form of government would be restored in the future, but living in the present almost entirely by the Spirit, by faith, and hope, and love" (Harnack 1910:142).

If widows and the entire womenfolk aspire to be endowed with force and the power that sustains life, they would need to look at it as Harnack portrays, that: 'the theocratic endowment which does not entangle itself with the worldly power, but with faith, hope, love and the Spirit.' The author views these virtues as fundamental requirements in the zest to forge and create a methodology which will endow the widows with the force that sustains life towards their care.

Whilst arguing against the conception of power in the Women's Prayer, the author does, however cherish the beauty which is inherent in this prayer represented by their acknowledgement to hand down cultural heritage of the womenfolk from their grandmothers to their own daughters. This is a magnificent achievement which the author views as true empowerment. If the care of the widows is to be exercised efficiently, the elder widows will have to teach the younger ones and encourage the tradition and practice to be handed down with caution. It will be as such ascertained that the wealth of the cultural values which has been traditionally handed down orally, can still survive modernism. The nation without such a system of caring for its own values is pathetic, hence an even in greater need to thrive for the natural endowment with the force and power to sustain life in an attempt to create a system of a sound integration methodology of caring.

6. Preliminary Conclusion:

The author analyzed the integration of the methodology of caring under the following titles:

- Analysis of Various Methodologies of Caring
- Creating a Synergy of a Range of Methods.
- Integration of the Caring System Currently Available within the Pentecostal Churches.
- Natural Endowment with Force and Power to Sustain Life
- Preliminary Conclusion.

The overall engagement created a need which inquires deeply into the wellbeing of the care for widows, the clergy widows in particular, as to whether they are given a care commensurate to the services which the particular congregation received from their deceased husbands who were their clergy, pastor, minister or priest; depending on how each church viewed or addressed this deceased shepherd.

The methods of care provided by the Mainline Churches were approached in contrast to the caring methods currently available within the Pentecostal Churches. The author provided a synergy on a range of methods where he deduced the notion of the requirement to endow all sectors involved with the force and power to sustain life, particularly the direct sector of the study being the widows themselves. This empowerment was extracted from the global sisterhood movement constituting itself as a Women Church, whose aim is to lament and solicit for women power (Schillenbeeckx 1985).

The following chapter will embark on the proposal of the Theology of Caring. This is the roadmap which both justifies as well as qualifies the study undertaken.

The author will provide a Theology as a researched proposal which should be employed within the Pentecostal circles when dealing with the surviving clergy widows. The whole purpose of the study will culminate with the recommendations in the last chapter. However, the following chapter will further serve as a hinge and bedrock for the concluding chapter.

This means that subsequent to all the preceding chapters, the study will not be substantiated if no form of Theology is proposed as a way forward, hence the value attributed to this following chapter which will be treated under the following topics:

- 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.

CHAPTER 6: Proposal of the Theology of caring

1. Introduction

The previous chapter examined the Integration of the Methodology of How to Care under the following headings:

- Analysis of Various Methodologies of Caring.
- Creating a Synergy of a Range of Methods.
- Integration of the Caring System Currently Available within the Pentecostal Churches.
- Natural Endowment with Force and Power to Sustain Life.
- Preliminary Conclusion.

The present Chapter will analyze the Proposal of the Theology of Caring. Before we even move to the last chapter, where recommendations will be submitted, a bird's eye-view will be presented in this particular chapter. This will deal with a topic related to the new territory of proposing a Specific Theology of Caring which will be meaningful and caring to the widows, the clergy widows within the Pentecostal Church, in particular.

The chapter will disclose the following topics:

- 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.

2. Analysis of various Theologies as they relate to caring:

The author would love to make a submission which analyzes various theologies as they relate to caring. The ultimate aim of this endeavour is to be able to come up with the theology of care for the widows and the clergy widows in particular. It will be evidenced in this submission how widows are not only ignored, but are completely left in oblivion to be marooned in the chart of time, life and reality.

The intended theology will be analyzed under the following titles:

- The theology of social responsibility.
- The theology of power.
- The theology of proclamation.
- The theology of tending the flock.

1.1. The Theology of Social Responsibility

The author considers the theology of social responsibility as an important subject in an undertaking to address the imperatives of instituting the theology of care, hence the discourse on this very theology. It is noteworthy to mention at this stage that ignoring the society in which the gospel is being preached will be suicidal to the intended purpose thereof. This will be a self defeating exercise to the aims of serving humanity with the Christocentric message of care. Campbell likens this

attitude to the one “who destroys the good fortune that he gave” (Campbell 1986:38). The author understands this underpinning principle to suggest that after the church had given the message of Christ to the people, in a contrary manner, the care is being destroyed by the carelessness of not caring for those who are hurting such as the widows after the death of their husbands. This becomes the very exercise of destroying the fortune already given to the people of God earlier on.

The first question to ask when interrogating the subject of proposing the theology of caring as a vehicle of the theology of social responsibility, is why is it necessary to establish such a theology? In an attempt to answer the foregoing question, the author immediately points to one authority that provides the following response: “One answer to that question may be found in what came to be called the Social Gospel movement, whose development closely paralleled that of the Emmanuel movement. Both movements had their origins in the rise of the social sciences during the latter half of the nineteenth century and the accompanying developments in theological liberalism. There was one primary difference between the two movements, which caused them to go in quite different directions.

Whereas the Emmanuel movement, along with the psychologists of religion, found its primary social scientific partnership with psychology, the Social Gospel movement was prompted by a developing dialogue with sociology. One might even say that, whereas the Emmanuel movement psychologized the gospel to the end of transforming the cure of souls into a scientific pastoral therapy, the Social Gospel movement sociologized the gospel to the end of transforming Christian social ethics into a scientific cure for society’s ills” (Gerkin 1997:57)

The transformation of Christian social ethics into a scientific cure for the society's ills is the exact focal point which the author is addressing in this subject. He is attempting to propose a theology which will look at the care of widows in a rather more sensitive approach. There is a voice which speaks to the same aspiration in the following way: "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" (Elford 1999:153)

The opinion of social justice, especially in view of the oppressed, the orphans and the widows, is of paramount importance especially in Practical Theology. Hulme indicates in no uncertain terms that: "The church today has a two-pronged task: to minister to society in terms of social justice and to individuals in terms of their specific needs" (Hulme 1973:27). This submission by Hulme buttresses Elford's position. The two authorities do have a common understanding of the theology of caring. This common understanding serves as a hinge to bolster the desired theology for the care of the clergy widows. It is evident that social justice is a point of departure if the theology of care is to be credible both to the pastoral care practitioners and the recipients of the same service.

Finding parallel reinforcement in the above submissions is Murray who almost chastises the care-givers and the church at large as he cries out: "Too many Christians are not taking their faith out of the pew and putting it into practice in the daily lives" (Murray 1987:121). The author views this motion to take the faith out of the pew and putting it into practice in the daily lives as the very definition of the theology of social responsibility capable to help in the formulation of the desired theology of care for the widows. The author will now analyze the theology of

power and attempt to extrapolate how it can be instrumental as a tool to create a considerable theology of care for the clergy widows.

1.2. The Theology of power

In order to establish any form of doctrine, teaching, methodology and or the theology for that matter, the author considers it extremely imperative to, first and foremost, apprehend the technical implications of the desired underpinning virtues. Such virtues manifest themselves in what the author views as an issue of power portrayed by Oates & Oates in the following manner: “We are creatures, but divine Providence has given us the privilege and responsibility of continually re-creating our lives. Thus God’s strength is perfected in our limitations and weaknesses” (Oates & Oates 1985:18).”

Oates and Oates apparently surrender to the reality that humanity has weaknesses and limitations. This indicates that there is a need incumbent upon humanity to solicit for a power base superior to theirs. In this way, there is a call which is spelt out in clear terms that speaks of the concept of powerlessness as articulated in the terms that indicate its inherent shortfall thus: “Why should this happen to me? Why now? What have I done to deserve this-it doesn’t seem fair” (Speck 1988:30)

This notion appears to present a systematic way of enquiring into the state of powerlessness and as such advocating for the theology of power. The author applauds the presentation by Speck which addresses the basis of the theology of power. Speaking of this theology in a manner which will be helpful in establishing the theology of care envisaged by the author, Pasewark reinforces Speck’s position by stating that: “The power of God is the power of God because it is used for us” (Pasewark 1993:197). Speck further indicates the damage of disempowerment in

the following manner: “Some people hate being dependent and will fight vigorously against it- sometimes to their detriment” (1988:13).

This shows that the helpful and therapeutic way in which the hurting can be best helped is by being empowered with the knowledge that would allow dependence at times. This becomes the automatic power base to heal the bleeding widows. What Pasewark suggests about the power of God being the power of God because it is used for us, is critically important because it serves as the foundational layer for the institution of the theology of care for the widows.

Having looked at the discourses by authorities on the theology of power and how this can present a new proposal of the theology of care, the author would love to agree with Speck that he seems to advocate for the same notion which he supports. He does, however, appreciate what Howe equally portrays as: “Certainly, pastoral counsellors must commit themselves to accept all counselees as persons of intrinsic worth and dignity. They cannot require as a condition for a counselling relationship that a counselee affiliate with any such community” (Howe 1995:13)

Empowerment is evident here in that the pastoral counsellors are encouraged to accept counselees as people of worth and dignity. This becomes the breeding ground for the submission of the theology of care for the widows.

Howe further explicates the theology of power by indicating that: “Being created in the image and shadow of God is a mixed blessing. ...the image of God is a representation of God’s nature by which God fashions us and by which we continue to fashion ourselves” (1995:33). The very knowledge that the image of God in us is the nature by which God fashions us and by which we continue to

fashion ourselves is empowerment enough to justify the theology of power which is capable of creating the desired model of care for the clergy widows. This ultimately serves as the basis of establishing the theology of caring especially for the widows.

This theology will help us enter into the space of the hurting widows, and to better understand their plight. In this way, a new theology of caring assuming power as the primary premise of reasoning, will be forged. Having dwelt in the theology of caring by form of the theology of power, the author will now move to the theology of proclamation.

1.3. The Theology of proclamation

The author views the theology of proclamation as fundamental in as far as the submission of the proposal of the theology of caring is concerned. Proclamation is pronounced by Bartow through a fictitious character called Wilhelmina whose house is said to be clean. In this clean house of Wilhelmina, God's human speech is very vocal and clear as the lonely widow keeps herself busy in order to engage herself with only one voice, and that is the voice of God. This theology requires that there should be recognition of the emptiness within the widows as portrayed thus by Bartow: "Wilhelmina's house is clean and empty. Her husband is gone from it. Her children are gone from it. Wilhelmina has it all to herself. Her parties hold no joy for her. Wilhelmina's work holds no meaning. Wilhelmina's sleep, what she gets of it, is dreamless as the sleep of death. Wilhelmina's life seems hardly worth the living. Sometimes Wilhelmina wishes she could die. Pray for Wilhelmina. Wilhelmina needs your prayers" (Bartow 1997:163)

This gloomy picture of a lonely widow indicates that the proclamation of the prayers by the pastoral care-givers is an essential necessity. This exercise is the very proclamation which the author is addressing. It constitutes the very elementary basis of the theology which seeks to bring about healing to the widows through preaching or proclamation which Bartow further presents as: “Preaching, then, is first of all narrative discourse. It is performance of story” (1997:100)

The author views this proclamation theology as therapeutic as it gives a chance of a narrative discourse which is helpful to both the recipient of therapy as well as the one proclaiming it. This is further attested in the theological context submission by Murray who reasons in unambiguous terms that such a proclamation should happen in a conducive and hospitable context which he draws as follows: “The church is a place which brings many people from varied backgrounds and economic statuses together under one roof. Each of us must guard against the “keep-up-with-the-Joneses” nature of mankind” (Murray 1987:121)

The responsibility incumbent upon each pastoral care-giver is to submit a healing proclamation within the church environment which does not discriminate against the status of a person. From the interviews and the story shared by the co-researchers in Chapter 4, the author established a weakness that the care for the widows and the required proclamation was given on the strength and basis of the widows’ own statuses.

In the same breath, the discriminatory practice which the author strongly condemns with the contempt it deserves, is echoed by Howe in the following immortal utterance: “pastoral counsellors must commit themselves to accept all counselees as persons of intrinsic worth and dignity” (Howe 1995:13). Howe continues to

indicate that such a proclamation should take into account the state in which the broken counseles find themselves in as follows: “On behalf of the misled faithful today, pastoral counsellors can make available the towels needed by the few who may be ready to wipe clean their own abused foreheads” (1995:35). These abused foreheads resonate in all distinctness in the narratives which the widows shared with the author in Chapter 4. As each cried out, one could easily pick up the importance of the theology of proclamation both from the story-teller and the author who was availing a towel to wipe the abused foreheads of the widows through his listening skills.

In the light of the foregoing argument, the author cannot agree any further with Winter’s findings that portray conceptions of proclamation as a consequence of the widow’s own responsibility. He almost suggests that the respect attributed to the widow depends on her own lifestyle. This is a proclamation commensurate with the teachings derived from the early Pauline proposals provided as follows: “The ‘real’ Christian widow had an age qualification and was known for her faithfulness in marriage. She distinguished herself in her service as a Christian; she was ‘well attested for her good deeds, as one who has brought up children, shown hospitality, washed the feet of the saints, relieved the afflicted, and devoted herself to doing good in every way’” (Winter 2003:123).”

The author’s own opinion on this subject states, categorically, the view that proclamation is a viable tool which is very essential for the establishment of the theology that speaks to the care of the widows in a most efficient and sensitive way. In so doing, the widows will equally be assured that they are cared for both by the pastoral care practitioners and the ecclesiastical gathering at large. They are equally charged with the responsibility to be hospitable, raise children and doing

good deeds in every way. The author admires this theology and views it as pursuing the sound intentions of recognizing the dignity of the widows.

This theology suggests as well as bring closure to the wound, pain and hurts of the widow through the ritual of proclamation. This is the system of caring which will help to demystify the demeaning attitude which sees the widows as carriers of misfortune. A proclamation which discredits such a fallacy is more required now than ever. The author will now move to discuss the theology of tending the flock and how this theology impacts on the desired proposal for the care of the clergy widows.

1.4. The Theology of tending the flock

This kind of theology requires as well as inquires how someone who is a pastoral care practitioner could enter into the space of the widow, the clergy widow in particular, who has suffered rejection. The desire to enter into such a space calls for the application of the therapeutic model spelt out by Lyon and Smith who state that: “The conviction that persons who are weak in faith should be welcomed but not subjected to controversial disputation undergirds an inclusive theology and biblical hermeneutics” (Lyon & Smith 1998:98). The underpinning principle requires that both the theology of care and biblical hermeneutics be inclusive. This suggests therefore that the widow who regards herself as weak as a result of the loss of her loved one be provided with an environment of care and love.

Lyon and Smith further indicate that: “Mourners may feel empty, yet fantasize a new freedom and novel adventures. In thinking of the dead, they may also recall fragment of a love-hate relationship with the beloved.... The mourner is enduring a double distress-the hurt of loss, and the pain of being mystified by an irrational

ambivalence. It hurts when he (sic) confronts the loss” (1998:61). The author views the thought of the loss displayed by the authorities as appalling yet so truthful. Understanding this feeling of the being mystified by an irrational ambivalence of the hesitation, pain and continued anguish, immediately necessitates a desire to search for the theology of care; the very endeavour which the author is presenting in this chapter even as espoused by Gerkin. The author applied Gerkin’s methodology of care in chapter 3. This subject addresses the very fundamentals of the theology of care presented by Gerkin whose view of tendering takes into account the role and importance of both the individual and the society in the following way: “At first glance the nexus of care for the individual and care for the community seem easily defined. Everyone knows what it means to be an individual or a family of individuals in this society” (Gerkin 1997:229-230).

The author agrees with Gerkin that the knowledge of an individual’s position in the broader society becomes like the spike of a bicycle wheel which revolves around a central nexus. This knowledge, therefore, assists the individual who is hurt to better tolerate and internalize the pain of the loss of the loved one without blaming other people for such a loss. In this way, the widow will be deriving the optimum healing anticipated. In this way, the theology of caring for the widow is also achieved in a remarkable way pronounced by Kirwen who states: “A widow (*nchilwa*) must choose the man who is to inherit her from among the brothers of her deceased husband if there are any.....The new option for the care of widows introduced by the *Sukuma* places the widow in a situation where she is neither considered a legal wife nor is she seen as free to remarry” (Kirwen 1979:116).

Whilst appreciating the beauty of communalism displayed as a caring theology presented by both Gerkin and Kirwen, the author is more comfortable with the

picture drawn by Gerkin since this does not disinherit the individual of the freedom of individualistic decision making. The individual is part of the whole community yet very autonomous.

On the contrary, the Afrocentric system drawn by Kirwen dispossesses the widow of her individualistic sense of independence. The author views this, therefore, as the violent force against the freedom of widows, hence a violation to the principles of caring portrayed by Gerkin.

There is yet another vocal voice on this subject which cries out with considerate concern as follows: “Family ministry focuses not simply on strong religious education, but on connecting the generations....Family life is the *raison d’être* of everything we do; it is absolutely fundamental to my conception of what a congregation is to be.... This theology leads to a family ministry that celebrates transitions of those in the community as places of encounter with the holy” (Lyon & Smith 1998:59). It is evident from the presentation by Lyon and Smith that tending should be viewed holistically and should be regarded as the model for a family environment. It means that the climate under which such a theology should be exercised should entertain the educational virtues which the family setting provides.

There does not seem to be a difference in the way Gerkin, Lyon and Smith conceptualize the theology of tending the flock. This reasoning presents the consistency which suggests that tending should be regarded as a holistic endeavour if the theology of caring for the widows is to be proposed and exercised efficiently. The holistic virtues are observed through the involvement of the individual, ecclesiastical body and the family.

Having analyzed the various theologies as they relate to the caring of the widows, the author will now move to present the commencement of a potential healing, starting within the family context.

2. The commencement of a potential healing: Starting within the context of any given family

The initial stage in the required process of healing the surviving clergy widow is best illustrated in the encouragement to mourn. This in itself becomes the most difficult yet very necessary part of the minister which Oden puts as follow: “The pastor’s care for the dying begins not merely when serious illness occurs, but long before then, in assisting persons to reflect and meditate on their own vulnerability” (Oden 1986:164)

Like an old proverb which suggests that “charity begins at home,” the author equally conceptualizes that healing is intended to commence close within the family before it can spill off to other avenues of society. The widow has to be firstly healed together with her immediate milieu before she can even start thinking of touching other lives herself. She has to accept her vulnerability as well as that of her family. The stated proverb is further backed up by the provision of the principles outlined by Cueni, which suggest that the care-giver should attempt to observe such in the following way:

- *“Assume that members of the congregation are fellow strugglers in the Christian way.*
- *Assume people have progressed in their Christian journey.*
- *Assume people are more likely Christians who are hurting and in need of a healing word rather than pagans in need of punishment- We are called to be instruments of healing, not warriors on the ecclesiastical battlefield.*

- *Assume pastoral ministry means loving people into wholeness, not wining battles- Congregations in which people do not feel loved and appreciated are troubled” (Cueni 1988:42-43).*

Cueni’s principles of caring tally in harmony with Oden’s proposition in his submitted address on the kind of care which should be given to the ailing and hurting. It should be noted that the widow has a wound deeper than the visible scars and physical wounds in the body. Her family equally carries the scars and burdens of inexplicable inner wounds.

The loss of a spouse could even be interpreted as a curse or a punishment of some kind. In an attempt to submit a proposal for the care of the widows, it is relatable to echo Seibert’s position as he disputes the foregoing fallacy in the following way: “Jesus suggests that neither historical disasters nor physical infirmities should necessarily be interpreted as signs of God’s judgement” (Seibert 2009:200). The author agrees with Seibert’s proposition that this assurance submitted by Jesus argues in favour of the principles submitted by Cueni through his assumptions, which call for an acceptance of the holistic approach in considering the environment of the hurting. Such an acceptance will lead to the understanding of the theology which is required for the care of the widows as it seeks to obliterate fallacious beliefs which could otherwise devastate both the widow and her family by suggesting that the loss was as a result of a curse.

There stands, therefore, a requirement of healing this surviving widow presented in the following item of discourse.

3. Required healing of the surviving widow

The required healing of the surviving widow is of paramount importance in the understanding of the theology of caring. In an attempt to present a proposal to influence such a theology, Wimberly is very vocal in elucidating the analogy of hospitality. It is in this kind of hospitality that the required healing of the surviving widow can be experienced. She uses the analogy of a ‘Welcome Table’ as follows: “...the sacrament of Holy Communion, also called the Lord’s Supper or Eucharist, is a highly revered ritual in the life of a black worshiping congregation because of its nurturing effects. Historically, the meaning of this liturgical event for black Christians lay in these persons’ discovery of the welcome of God through Jesus Christ that countered the repulsion and maltreatment they experienced in society. The event became known as the Welcome Table where no one is turned away and where the meal becomes the bread and substance of life or the spiritual food for the journey ahead” (Wimberly 2004:117)

In the world so full of pains, tortures and rejections of all sorts-both in the families and in the ecclesiastical settings, the analogy drawn by Wimberly becomes a beckon of hope. It becomes the lighthouse which provides courage where the widow feels dejected. Like in the picture of the ‘Welcome Table’ where no one is rejected, so is the need to welcome these widows in the society where such people feel rejected. They feel rejected through the traditional rituals, customs and beliefs. They live in the midst of a society which renders them vulnerable. There is new hope when she thinks that amidst it all, there is at least a place where everyone is welcome without prejudice. This knowledge becomes the cornerstone in articulating the healing required for the bereaved widow.

One would ask why healing is required for the surviving clergy widow. Providing an immediate response to the question at hand is Sinclair in the following way: “Pain is pain regardless of its source” (Sinclair 1979:68). It is in the light of the incurred pain that the widow needs this long awaited healing. The author views the need for this kind of healing as almost an immediate one which transcends the requirement to fulfil any other need. This state is essential as it constantly reminds the surviving widow that the deceased’s husband problems have come to an end, as observed hereunder.

This healing is further required in order to ascertain that the theology employed for the care of the widow was indeed a viable instrument of healing. It is the kind of healing which takes its roots from the Wounded Healer, Christ Jesus Himself, whose preaching was not divorced from His provision of care. Gnilka best puts this argument in the following way: “His help and healing are placed alongside his preaching, his offer of forgiveness, his liberating fellowship with humans” (Gnilka 1997:112). The author cherishes this presentation by Gnilka which recognizes that it is through the presentation of the healing message and the execution of the same that the care-giver’s own lifestyle and support can be instrumental towards the attainment of the theology of caring for the widows.

Augmenting this argumentation is Stienstra who portrays God as a husband. This portrayal of God as a husband suggests that: “the relationship between God and man (sic) is pictured as a marriage” (Stienstra 1993:97). This metaphor finds an equivalent maxim in the *SeSotho* (one of the official languages of South Africa) proverb which advocates that “*Modimo ke monna wabahlolohadi.*” The author supports both the *SeSotho* proverb and Stienstra who view God as a husband. It is

in this viewpoint a therapeutic model and theology of caring for the widows can be accomplished.

This very understanding of God as a husband was observed during the interviews as each of the co-researchers showed a sense of relief every time they mentioned the continues presence of God in their lives. The author could immediately tell that they found solace in the knowledge that God was their husband, and this knowledge becomes fundamental in enhancing the theology of care for the widows. The author would now discuss how the dying patient's problems come to an end as well as the relief such an end brings. Ultimately, this impacts on the theology of caring, especially for the widows.

4. Dying patient's problems come to an end

Whether the death of the spouse has happened as a result of sickness, natural causes or even an accident, the one point against which no legislation or force can argue is that, the deceased's problems have ultimately come to an end. This process has an educational lesson which the living can learn from. In the immortal enquiry by Oliver, the questions to consider are: "Does faith play a vital role in the alleviation of pain in the medical setting? Does faith bring a sense of healing to people in pain? Does faith have a practical role in the health care profession? (Oliver 1998:105). Whilst there does not seem to be an immediate answer to the questions posed, the author is of the opinion that the bottom line answer to all these questions rests in the very pillar interrogated by Oliver, namely; faith. Faith, here, becomes the element of healing which provides hope that the dead is no more and the only requirement is acceptance of the reality.

In the proposed acceptance of the reality of death, the widow will further find solace in knowing that: “The wounded heart is healed through relationships of trust with significant others, and through learning to trust God as Jesus did” (Hollins & Grinner 1988:26). Hollins and Grinner further indicate that: “All human beings erect barricades” (1988:26). The proposed theology of caring for the widows recommends that the widows should be encouraged to participate in trust relationships without the creation of barricades or even attempt to demolish such. One way of demolishing the barricades is by accepting that the death of their spouses has brought their problems to an end. In this acceptance one is empowered with the knowledge that: “We always need help- from God, from friends and family, from colleagues, and from others...The sum of all of us is more magnificent, more wonderful, than any of the individual parts” (Farrington 1999 :70)

The author agrees with Farrington is his view of collective collegiality which is instrumental in creating a theology of care and assists in the acceptance of the fact that the problems of the deceased have come to an end. This knowledge buttresses the proposition by Hollins and Grinner that all human beings have barricades. In accepting the reality about the death of the spouse, the theology of caring will be experienced first by the accepting widow, her family and the rest of the society which is out to provide such care.

An even better hope can be provided to the hurting widow by assuring her that beyond the problems of the dying which have come to an end is the transcendence which has occurred to the deceased as depicted by Badcock in the following way: “There is little talk of heaven in modern theology. In fact, the whole concept of transcendence has become something foreign to our intellectual culture; our

philosophy, our literature, and even much of our theology have been emptied of it” (Badcock 1998:84). The author applauds the call by Badcock as obligatory to the widow if a theology of caring is to be proposed. The author supports Badcock’s call to revisit the theology of transcendence as a proposal for the theology of caring and encouragement to the widows through encouragement and ascertainment that the problems of the dying patient or of their loved ones have come to an end. Though this knowledge is fundamentally therapeutic, the unfortunate reality which remains is that the deceased is no more, yet the family problems go on. The author will interrogate this subject in the next section and attempt to indicate how it contributes to the proposed theology of the care for the widows.

5. Family problems go on

When all is said and done, the bereaved widow is left with an inexplicable and inescapable ordeal of reality. This situation confronts her with a painstaking reality such as that portrayed by Castle in the following way: “Grief’s intensity will lessen, but the widow will often feel vulnerable and overpowered by waves of emotion: sorrow, remorse, fear, anger, loneliness and pointlessness. Those who supported her will drift away” (*ed* Castle 1986:98). As mentioned by Mrs. Khambule, who had hoped to be supported both by the church and the relatives, it was noted that such a support did not happen, and as such she was overpowered by waves of emotion.

The truth emerged as; she realized that there was no more hope as she indicated in her story. There are various kinds of ceremonies intended at assisting the widow to forget her plight. Some take place before the funeral, others immediately after the funeral, whereas others happen throughout the mourning period. These ceremonies vary in forms, practices, rites, and complexity. Some are called ‘after

tears,' others are called, *ukuxhumanisa* (Zulu word for match-making). The latter is neither customary nor traditional but a rather fast growing notorious practice entertained by young urban, civilized, sophisticated and modernized widows.

This refusal to mourn is done either in the name of mockery, modern religious commitment such as *ubuzalwane* (a notorious religious practice masquerading under the cloak of Christianity) or under the contempt to avenge her pain to her in-laws. The situation presented here, immediately creates dissensions in the family and the problems go on instead of creating a healing platform.

When all these strange, yet, acceptable rituals and ceremonies in various communities are practised to the very end, the widow's problems go on. The family problems go on. Some of these problems actually complicate the situation and exacerbate the pain even further. One such a rite is the popular *ukungenela* (literally translated it means to enter), practice among the *Nguni* tribe of the South African people. In this practice the surviving brother of the deceased husband has a legitimate customary prerogative to take the late brother's widow as wife.

The complicating factor to the widow's plight resides in the reality that: "In some cases, culture demands that the widow should be the vulnerable mourner. In addition culture demands that she should remain silent and refrain from asserting her rights" (White; Kamanga; Kachika; Chiweza; Ohidyaonga 2002:28). This is unquestionably noticed in the traditional practices already discussed, a full picture of which is provided by the fallacious beliefs in Chapter 3 in point 4.4 which addresses the stigmatization accompanying widowhood.

The author would love to point out that the reflection presented by White *et al* is a painful reality in which the widows find themselves. This serves as a breeding ground for pain, anguish and sorrow. Whereas the church is expected to be an instrument of healing, it is equally found not empowered and without sufficient resources to provide a solution. It is also found to be without the necessary machinery in place to bring the family problems to an end as observed in Chapter 4 earlier. This situation, therefore, deserves to be unlocked in order to bring the family problems to an end. The author will discuss the importance of decreasing the family problems as a way of forging out the proposal for the theology of caring for the widows in the following item.

6. Decreasing the family problems

One very important way to support the desired Theology of Caring for the ailing, heartbroken and devastated widows, is to assist her by minimizing the extent and impact of the family problems. How so? This can best be done by discussing such family problems way before the death, if the situation so warranties, especially when death was anticipated. The discussion on how to anticipate such a death and to discuss the potential problems as well as attempting to decrease such problems long before-hand is best illustrated by Kubler-Ross (1969:142) in her submission on decreasing the family problems.

Linking with Kubler-Ross is Switzer who states the following: “...the purpose of the family is to provide self-defining experiences” (Switzer 1979:35). The author is of an equal opinion that the first place to provide a platform of healing is the family environment. The most effective way to reduce the family problems is to provide the most conducive atmosphere which will enable the hurting widow an opportunity which provides self-defining experiences. This arrangement will

further enable the widow to speedily healing of the wounds caused by the loss of the husband.

Switzer further articulates that: “Studies of families demonstrate that the family is a system, a single organism in a sense, just as each one of us is a single organism” (1979:35). It becomes evidently convincing that the wholeness of the family structure rests upon the wholeness of the most hurting member; the widowed women who has lost her husband, in this instance. Her wholeness automatically reduces the family problems. It is in the reduction of the family problems that the sound Theology of Caring for the widows can be realizable.

This process which attempts to reduce the family problems commences with discussing their actuality before death. This finally becomes helpful in terms of mapping a way for the Theology of Caring. This proposed Theology revolves around what Stairs conceptualizes as soulful pastoral care in the following way: “Soulful pastoral care becomes visible as ordinary people seek together to be in full companionship with God Soulful pastoral care will:

- make soul-listening the primary agenda and initiating action of pastoral care
- attend to children as fully as adults and respect everyone’s innate spiritual potential
- listen skilfully, evocatively, and hospitably for the soul in all sorts and conditions of people and in all circumstances of life
- foster the spirituality of the faith community as well as individual development” (Stairs 2000:197)

It should be noted that there is no short-circuiting process that can address the problems of the widow. The clergy widow, in these circumstances, should be

treated not in isolation. If an effective Theology of Care is to be attained, she should be treated jointly with the family members. This should be done through the application of what Stairs alludes to as moving toward soulfulness in the following way: “The movement toward complementarity will keep us accountable, faithful, and in solidarity with our common quest to deepen our connection with God that manifests in a spirit-filled life and compassionate commitment to others” (Stairs 2000:196).

The author views this movement towards soulfulness as pivotal in that it demands that the care-giver should consider all family members with equal importance, including the children, in the counselling session. This very exercise will be instrumental in providing an appreciable Theology of Caring for the clergy widows, for whom such care is sought and as such assist in decreasing the family problems. The commitment to this bereaved family is a required act of compassion which defines the value attributed by the care-giver or pastoral counsellor to his/her work.

This caring practice is best portrayed by Miller-McLemore and Gill-Austern who see it not only as an individualistic endeavour but an activity that requires the whole community to be involved. They present this view thus: “When we turn to the notion of care by communities, we must immediately clarify that caring communities are not new-...they have been a hallmark of Christian values and identity” (Miller-McLemore & Gill-Austern 1999:46). In this way, the entire community takes the ownership of helping to decrease the family problems of the widow who happened to be in their midst. The engagement of the whole community is a helpful tool which automatically assists in handling the devastation of a widow treated hereunder.

7. Handling the devastation of a widow

There are various factors which are causal to the devastation of a widow, best presented in the following way: “The individuals, organizations and courts together construct widowhood and enhance the widow’s vulnerability so that she can be economically exploited. In this regard, the links between property dispossession, widowhood, poverty and legal pluralism constitute a synergy of causes for the poor enjoyment of the rights of women who are widowed (White; Kamanga; Kachika; Chiweza; Ohidyaonga 2002:28).

The author opines that it is extremely important to both understand as well as identify with the widow’s state of devastation as a care-giver if an effective Theology of Caring is to be proposed for the wellbeing of this broken woman. White *et al*, further propose that: “The solution to this problem may lie in such laws, institutions, cultural factors, gender equality and justice” (2002:29). These authorities present a reputable method suggesting an effective way of handling the devastation of the widow as: “However, perceptions and actions pertaining to these factors have to be examined from a feminist perspective” (2002:29).

The author would love to align himself with the rationale by the authorities in that the above suggest the requirement of a sensitive feministic approach which will serve the best interests of the widows from an informed feminine position. This will also be instrumental to assist in a more gender balanced philosophy created by the women for the women towards mapping a Theology of Care commensurate with the needs and requirements of the widows.

Almost in line with White *et al* Hakala presents an effective system of handling the devastation as founded and grounded upon empathetic listening of which he

reasons out: “Empathetic listening is one of the basic communication skills required in pastoral care. Its importance is stressed in most textbooks on pastoral care and counselling. Empathetic listening can be divided in to attending, listening and empathy. Egan defines attending as a means of being actively present with clients and expressing this verbally or nonverbally. Similarly, active listening involves listening to both the nonverbal and verbal messages of the client, as well as listening to oneself. Empathy includes attending, listening, and understanding the clients and expressing this understanding to them. Massey defines empathy as ‘an ability to identify with and experience another person’s experiences’” (Hakala 2001:95)

The author acknowledges that the reasoning by Hakala which invites a deep rooted attitude of listening towards solving the plight of the devastated widow, even more so through identifying with another person’s experiences. LaHaye reinforces the same notion in the following way: “One must simply ‘weep with those who weep’ (LaHaye 1990:18). The author agrees with both Hakala and LaHaye in that such care, identification and weeping with those who weep is an illustrious required practice which can enrich the desired theology of caring for the widows.

These approaches by Hakala and LaHaye indicate the importance for the task ahead of the pastoral care-givers who should constantly reaffirm the devastated widows with the exhortation that: “The possibility of being human- of being restored in God’s image as free, communal, and creative- is not just *a* possibility for our lives, but *the* possibility for our lives” (Stone 1994:97). It is the realization of this possibility which will always serve as a fuel to kindle the, otherwise, broken hopes of the hurting widows. At this point, the author would love to submit that in

the process of both acceptance and realization that one is being restored in God's image, the devastation of the widow will be ultimately annihilated.

The suggestion and submission here is, therefore, introducing a new theology of caring for the widows whose primary focus amongst others is to assist in handling the devastation of this unfortunate group of which Janzen spells out that: "In the Old Testament the movement from lamentation over the dead to cursing of the guilty appears also.... Johannes von Tepl lost his wife Margaretha, lamented her passing, and then turned against the last enemy, Death" (Janzen 1972:32)

The author supports Janzen by believing that widows should be encouraged to mourn even as it is illustrated in the Old Testament's mourning rituals as portrayed in Janzen's submission. This kind of a ritual is therapeutic in that it accords the bereaved widow an avenue to vent out her hurt thus creating a platform to handle her devastation. It is in handling this kind of ordeal and devastation that an informed theology of caring for the bleeding widow can be realized.

Having diagnosed the devastation related to the care of the widows, the author would love to develop the argument further by opening a territory which addresses the revolutionising of the conventional practices related to widows. All this is done with the intention to finally map out a new proposal for the care of the widows, the Pentecostal Clergy Widows, in particular, within which the research is undertaken. It is, therefore, very important to both understand and apply the principles of a sound pastoral care on the basis of handling the devastation of the widows, if a theology of caring is to be established effectively.

8. Revolutionising conventional practices related to widows

The author would love to submit that in order to efficiently challenge the conventional practices related to widows, it becomes necessary to uproot even those beliefs enshrined in a people's belief systems, such as those mentioned in section 4.4 of chapter 3, dealing with the stigmatization accompanying widows.

The question to ask is why should conventional practices related to widows be revolutionized? As his point of departure in an attempt to answer the foregoing question, the author reasons out that the new proposal for the theology of caring proposes that the state of depression and the entire state of well being in which the widow finds herself have to be understood in minute detail. About this depression Gilbert says: "Depression is a very treatable illness, and we benefit from knowing as much about it as possible" (Gilbert 1998:33).

In order to create an informed theological proposal of pastoral care, Gilbert continues to advise as follows: "Most depressed persons develop sleep disorders. They previously may have been sound sleepers, but now experience difficulties in getting a good night's sleep....Sleep disorders (*insomnia*) of the depressed are usually one of three major kinds. The first is difficulty in falling asleep...The second form of sleep disorder is called *intermittent insomnia*. The person falls asleep, but awakens one or more times during the night, and may remain awake from thirty minutes to two or three hours each time. The third form is terminal *insomnia*. This is manifest through early morning waking and the inability to return to sleep, remaining awake until it is time to get up and prepare for work or school" (1998:11).

It is evident from Gilbert's advice that depressed people develop some unhealthy sleeping disorders. In the African context, particularly among the *Sotho* speaking people, this disorder is called *borokwana* (an equivalent to *somnambulism*). A person who has developed this behaviour is said to be under the curse of the ancestors; hence the saying: "*o foraletswe kebadimo*" (meaning the ancestors have turned their backs against her).

Some of these conventional practices related to widows require traditional means of providing care that she should entertain spending more time in bed resting than mingling with people, hence the development of *somnambular* to a larger extent. It is this very kind of practice which the author states that it should be challenged in an attempt to forge a new theology of caring. In order to heal this fallacious belief in an attempt to create a sound theology of care, it is important to consider the notion of challenging certain conventional terminologies such as those portrayed in the *Sotho* culture through intensive studies in a manner proposed as follows: "the study questions certain conventional terminology" (White; Kamanga; Kachika; Chiweza; Ohidyaonga 2002:29).

The author agrees that the conventional terminology should be questioned in the form of a theology which asserts that: "Doing theology of pastoral care can be understood either as applying theology to pastoral situations and developing theories of pastoral care or as doing theology pastorally, developing it out of the pastoral situation" (Hakala 2001:153). This system of caring is bound to be a desired instrument worthy of addressing the needs of the widows, especially in as far as handling their devastations are concerned. To this extent Stone presents the church as representative of the models and metaphors of "how we understand and do ministry" (Stone 1996:97). He further provides that: "Models and metaphors of

the church can be effective in keeping the church turned in on itself, focused on self-preservation and self-righteousness. Models and metaphors of the church can also be effective in liberating the church from itself and for God and the world” (1996:98)

Since the church is normally conceptualized as a bride, metaphorically, the author will love to entertain the metaphor of the church as a widow. If it is true that: “God who lives in his sacred temple cares for the orphans and protects the widows,” (Psalm 68:5), then it is only befitting to entertain the fact that his care for the widows is applied without prejudice, and any form of discrimination. Therefore, it is equally appropriate to consider the church as a loved and cared for widow by God. This conclusively endorses the revolutionary move and approach to the subject which requires that the stereotypes against the widows be obliterated; particularly within the church circles in an attempt to submit a new proposal for the care of the widows. Such a theology can be achieved if both the society and the church reject discriminatory practices against the widows with the contempt they deserve.

It is important to note at this stage that there is an inherent anger internalized by the widow resulting from the loss of a loved one. This anger needs to be tolerated if the practice of accepting the widows in their totality is to be entertained. By so doing, the forgiving attitude to the mood swings of the widows will be justified. Watts, Nye and Savage present this notion in the following way: “Working through the various stages of anger and guilt may require the help of a trained counsellor. At the same time the church has much to offer in helping a person work towards forgiveness of self and others, but this must not be rushed, lest it serve as a bandage over a festering wound” (Watts, Nye & Savage 2002:158). This support

mechanism ultimately fulfils what Costa conceptualizes as: “Change can occur, not simply by manipulation but from interaction” (*ed* Costa 1988:59)

The author observes a synthesis presented by Watts, Nye and Savage, and Costa. He agrees with this synthesis which speaks to the forgiveness of self and others, hence its potential to bring about an interactive change which is not manipulated. This state is exactly the position which defines the desired proposed Theology of Caring envisaged by the author for the clergy widows. This desired theology will automatically revolutionize conventional practices and biases relating to the treatment of widows. This stance is further supported by Rodd who sees the following need: “The other pressing need seems to be for some system of pastoral care to be organized ...” (*ed* Rodd 1985:173)

On this note, the author agrees with Rodd in that an effective and efficient Theology of Caring for the clergy widows can only emerge in fullness once the overhaul of the current system is entertained, exercised, introduced and uncompromisingly practiced. This system becomes the pivotal point which introduces what the author considers to be the move which will revolutionise conventional practices related to the care of widows.

At this stage the author will move to present a considerable theology for the care of widows. This theology is informed by both sensitivity and consideration of the person of a widow as discussed in the following section. It is worth noting that the execution of the envisaged theology of the care for the widows will not happen in a vacuum. It should find willing practitioners endowed with boldness and passion to champion the cause of the hurting widows in order to ultimately map a new theology which will care for the clergy widows holistically.

9. Submission of a considerable Theology for the care of widows

The author would love to make a submission that in order to create a considerable theology for the care of the widows; such a theology should take the following into account:

9.1. Application of balm

“You are applying balm to the broken hearts, so be tender” (Sugden and Wiersbe 1973:104)

9.2. Comforting truth

“Your message should focus on one comforting truth” (Sugden and Wiersbe 1973:104)

9.3. Do not open old wounds

“Bereavement has a way of opening up old wounds, or making people feel guilty” (Sugden and Wiersbe 1973:104)

9.4. Prepare people for the hour of sorrow

“Your whole pastoral ministry is helping to prepare people for the hour of sorrow” (Sugden and Wiersbe 1973:104)

The author agrees with the submission of a considerable theology for the care of the widows which speaks to the deep rooted need espoused by Sugden and Wiersbe in their indication that the care-giver or pastoral counsellor should take into account the truism related to notions of the application of a balm, focussing on the comforting truth, sensitivity not to open old wounds as well as the ability to prepare the people for the hour of sorrow. The author does note with great care and consideration, though, that much as it is desired not to open old wounds, such is but an ideal envisaged utopia. In the practical sense of the word, it is inevitable not to directly or indirectly open a wound regardless of the measure of care and caution which was applied.

In addition to such a proposal presented by Sugden and Wiersbe come Strommen and Hardel with a perception which the author views as critical in his submission of the proposal of the Theology of Caring. They present it as a requirement to set up new rituals in the following manner: “Ritual gives them a sense of permanence amid a life that is often chaotic” (Strommen and Hardel 2000:142). The author believes that the ritualistic stereotypes and labels attached to widows, as proposed and discussed in earlier Chapters, need to be challenged by new rituals which will obliterate the age old ills of the past and the unbecoming discriminatory practices against widows.

Speaking on the subject of Theology for Liberation in an attempt to create a liberating vehicle for the downtrodden, Masango has the opinion that: “In order to understand liberation theology and the problems of the oppressed, we need to be able to hear the cries, stories, and voices of oppressed people” (Masango 1993:70). The author views this proposal by Masango as an equivalent expression to the need presented by Strommen and Hardel. This need for the ritual, which gives a sense of permanence, is very similar to the need for a theology which liberates the discriminated widows whose voices are almost unheard in the market and elsewhere. It is, therefore, very obligatory to establish a liberating theology which takes into account the cries, stories, and voices of the oppressed widows as evidenced in Chapter 4 which dealt with the stories of widowed women. By so doing, a new theology for the care of the clergy widows will be achieved.

Through the introduction of the plethora of new rituals the clergy widows, widows in general, the church and widows’ families will all be benefited by the new system of caring. This will be a relief to the heavy laden widows who live their lives with a pandemonium of new challenges since the death of their husbands. The author

further believes that in order to create the Theology of Caring for the clergy widows, the rituals should be contextual and not standard so as to be sensitive to the individual's own plight and chaotic circumstances she finds herself in. Rituals should include listening sessions to the cry of the widows. The following Chapter will delve much into the details of this subject by form of recommendations.

The submission of a new theology of caring for the widows takes into account the fact that: "The definitions of pastoral care have changed and developed along with the changing cultural and ecclesiastical contexts" (Hakala 2001:135). It is in understanding the dynamics involved, which have evolved within the ecclesiastical context that the proposal of the theology of caring, for the widows can be put into perspective and be submitted as credible. Such an understanding further requires that the pastoral care-givers should take into account the fact that: "Pastoral care can be given almost anytime and anywhere, whereas pastoral counselling occurs at a specific time in a designated place" (2001:135)

The author does agree with Hakala that pastoral care can be given almost anytime and anywhere, he does however disagree with the notion of a designated place for offering pastoral counselling. This is where the author strongly believes that an accommodative shift of mind and practice needs to be condoned. In the African context, a widow has to be in mourning for a certain period of time, a period in which she is not allowed to leave her location.

It is in this period that the rule of thumb in pastoral counselling related to the designated place has to be violated. By so doing the new proposal of the theology of caring which accommodates the Afro centric mourning beliefs will be credited. This in itself fulfils yet another premise by Hakala which suggests: "Generally,

pastoral care and counselling are considered to be conversational help given by trained professionals” (2001:36). The author, therefore, opines that if such practices are conversational, conversations both for the care and counselling can be held anywhere and anytime.

With the foregoing argument in mind, it is equally important to note that the submission of a considerable theology for the care of the widows recognizes that: “The Holy Spirit will magnify Christ. He will become central. This is what I call a theology of displacement. The difficulty of following Christ centers in a theology which demands that Christocentricity replace egocentricity” (Salter 1990:105). The author views this motive as essential to the delivery of the pastoral care service, namely; the motive of making Christ the focal point of the pastoral care service delivery.

In further augmenting the argument, the author views egocentricity as a way that hinders efficiency of the considerable theology of the care for the widows. In supporting what Salter proposes as a critical need of focusing on Christ as the centre of such a service, the author would love to draw on the proposition by Wilson, Poerwowidagdo, Mofokeng, & Evans where they categorically state: “Human dignity often depends on a relationship between communities and individuals” (Wilson, Poerwowidagdo, Mofokeng, Evans, 1996:24). The author agrees in no uncertain terms that in the submission of a considerable theology for the care of widows, it should be constantly noted that the widows exist within an ecclesiastical community which has an obligation to relate to them in such a way that their dignity shall be enhanced.

This attitude, acceptance and treatment towards widows will fulfil the requirements of an ideal desired considerable Christocentric theology for the care of the widows. In this theology, egocentricity has no room of existence, hence the sound pastoral care of the widows by the collective ecclesiastical community.

The submission of the theology of caring for the widows narrows to one focal point namely; caring itself of which Switzer cries out: “Caring and being cared for is essential for truly human in the world and our own caring for others has the impact of helping us find our place in the world’s scheme of things” (Switzer 1989:13). He continues to mention that: “Caring is both an organizing and unifying force in the life of the person who is caring, thus a contribution to the growth and actualization of the one who cares as well as to that of the one being care for” (1989:13)

This caring stems from the premise that: “All people have an operational theology that guides the formation of their value systems and their sense of purpose in life. For some, these theological groundings are hidden and unavailable to them. For others, they are very conscious and dynamic. Pastoral counsellors need to be conscious of the theological commitments that guide them in their ministries” (Neuger 2001:51).

The author sees caring as both a pastoral and theological tool necessary to bring about the desired new theology of care for the widows, if it is exercised with the consciousness of the operational individual’s theology as proposed by Neuger. The author equally endorses Switzer’s belief that caring is a two-pronged endeavour which empowers both the care-giver as well as the one cared for. The care-giver is empowered by the service which s/he is providing to those who dearly

need such service. The very knowledge that one is being of valuable service to the unfortunate widows, is an element of empowerment itself. The one cared for is empowered by the diligent service rendered to him/her. In this context the clergy widow is empowered by the committed service received from the care-giver.

The author will submit a preliminary conclusion hereunder, which is a way of recapitulating the content of the current chapter as a new chapter is introduced.

10. Preliminary conclusion

In this chapter the author analysed the Proposal of 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 author provided in detail the concept of a theology of caring as a proposal if the care of the widows, in general, and the clergy widows, in particular, were to be observed and exercised with the dignity attributed to the concerned widows. He

expatiated on the proposal which spoke to the need of recognizing the position of the hurting in order to be enabled to apply the balm in the wounds. It was highlighted that the care givers and pastoral counsellors should consider not opening the old wounds, though this practice was found to be an inevitable endeavour.

The considerable theology of care for the widows further requires that the recipients of pain be told the truth about their circumstances and the realities around such. This truth should however be the comforting truth, in other words, it should be told with much consideration of the pain they had already encountered. The theology, furthermore, seeks to prepare people for the hour of sorrow. This is an inevitable hour of loneliness in which every widow needs a pillow to lean on. The theology of care becomes, therefore, this very required cushion.

In the next chapter, which is a concluding chapter, the author will present the findings and recommendations which he discovered throughout the research journey. He would love to point out that some of the discoveries were alarming, such as the observation of how some widows would refuse to be interviewed. He established that the fear to speak out resulted primarily from the loyalty the individuals attributed to their organizations more than to their own personal wellbeing. Some widows were willing to clothe the church with the false sanctity as though it was a perfect entity.

The findings to be presented are divided into findings resulting from observation as well as findings resulting from literature interrogations. Then the author would move on to submit various recommendations informed by the discoveries in the

form of findings. This chapter will address the presented items under the following headings:

- 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.

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.

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The informed letter of consent. (Addendum A)

University of Pretoria

Faculty of Theology

Lynnwood Road

Hatfield

0083

Researcher's name : Mr. Kubeka M.J.

Contact Details : 073 478 1899.

Student Number : 27585639.

Title of the Study : ASSESSING THE CARE OF THE SURVIVING CLERGY WIDOWS WITHIN THE PENTECOSTAL CHURCH.

This serves to confirm that I agree to be interviewed by the researcher for the purpose of the study he is conducting. The purpose of the study was explained to me thoroughly. I am aware that my participation is voluntary and I am assured anonymity and confidentiality.

The researcher will use a fictitious name when referring to me and the information will be treated as confidential, unless where I personally consented to the use of my name.

Signed at.....on this.....day of2011.

Subject's Signature:

Researcher's Signature:

Research Questionnaire (Addendum B)

University of Pretoria
Faculty of Theology
Lynnwood Road
Hatfield
0083

Researcher's name : Mr. Kubeka M.J.

Contact Details : 073 478 1899.

Student Number : 27585639.

Title of the Study : Assessing the Care of the Surviving Clergy Widows within the Pentecostal Church.

PART A:

9. How did the Church display the care since the passing on of your spouse?

- Through regular prayer support.
- Through pastoral visits.
- Through continuous counselling sessions.

10. How frequently was the above care demonstrated?

- At regular intervals.

- At random.
- At scheduled and coordinated intervals.

11. What kind of team was conducting the counselling sessions?

- The Pastor and spouse.
- The Church deacons/board.
- Delegated Supportive women.

12. What kind of training did the counselling team have?

- Formal.
- Informal.
- No training.

13. Who was/were the recipient(s) of the counselling?

- The whole bereaved family.
- Only the clergy widow.
- Some members of the family.

PART B:

Please tick a Yes or a No.

14. My own Church is supportive to widows in general.

- Yes.

- No.

15. My Church is supportive to clergy widows in particular.

- Yes.
- No.

16. I can use my church as a Biblical model for the required care of widows.

- Yes.
- No.

17. I am not ashamed to quote instances where care was shown to me and other widows in the church.

- Yes.
- No.

18. My church has an outreach programme for widows.

- Yes.
- No.

PART C:

19. Did the church provide a comforting base and support since the death of your husband?

20.If it did, how was such a support provided?

21.How have you best understood the message of Caring as portrayed in the Bible?

22.What meaningful lesson(s) have you learnt from your own encounters with the church which you can utilize to minister to others?

Signed aton this.....day of2011.

Subject's Signature:

Researcher's Signature:

Women's Prayer (Addendum C)

“The suppressed complaint of women-finding expression in the consciousness, in faith, that they too are subjects of faith and being-the-church. This consciousness emerges in a liturgical prayer written by women and for women (it is a modest manifesto expressed in prayer):

Spirit of Life, we remember today the women, named and nameless, who through the ages have used the power and the gifts which you gave them to change the world.

We refer to these mothers who went before us to help us discover in ourselves this power, and how to use it in such a way that we help to advance a kingdom of justice and peace.

We remember Sarah, who with Abraham responded to God's call to leave the land in which she was born and to put her trust in a covenant with God.

We pray for her strength in faith.

We remember Esther and Deborah, who saved their people through acts of personal courage.

We pray for their strength to be bold, to act in the interest of the greatest good.

We remember Mary Magdalene and the other women who followed Jesus and were not believed when they proclaimed the resurrection.

We pray for their strength to believe against the temptation to doubt.

We remember Phoebe, Priscilla and the other feminine leaders of the early church.

We pray for their strength to spread the gospel and inspire communities.

We remember the abbesses of the Middle Ages who kept faith and knowledge alive.

We pray for their strength of leadership.

We remember Teresa of Avila and Catherine of Siena, who strongly opposed the corruption of the church at the time of the Renaissance.

We pray for their power of insight and bravery.

We remember our own mothers and grandmothers, whose lives shaped us.

We pray for the special power with which they try to hand things on to us.

We remember for the women who are victims of violence in their own homes,
That power will be given them to overcome their anxiety and look for solutions.

We pray for the women who stand face to face with a life of poverty and undernourishment,

That power be given them to hold fast and open possibilities for all women.

We pray for our daughters and granddaughters, that power may be given them to seek their own lives.

(Add here any woman whom you want to remember and for whom you want to pray.)

We have stood silently in the power of many women from the past and present.
Now it is time to stand by ourselves. In each of us there is the same life, light and

love, and within us lie the seeds of power and glory. Our bodies can feel love, our hearts can heal, our spirits can go in search of faith, truth and justice.

Spirit of life, be with us in our quest.

Amen” (Schillebeeckx 1985:237-238)