

**THE *IMAGO DEI WELTANSCHAUUNG* AS A NARRATIVE MOTIF IN  
NEW TESTAMENT ETHICS:  
A FOCUS ON PAULINE THEOLOGY.**

By

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Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree

**PHILOSOPHIAE DOCTOR – Ph.D.**

In

NEW TESTAMENT STUDIES

In

FACULTY OF THEOLOGY

Of the

**University of Pretoria**

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April 2015

## DECLARATION

I declare that “*The imago Dei weltanschauung as a narrative motif in New Testament ethics: a focus on Pauline theology*” dissertation is my own work and that all sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

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Signature: Walter P. Maqoma

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Date

Approved by: **Prof. Dr. Jacobus (Kobus) Kok**

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Signature

## DEDICATION

To “My Beautiful Angel”, “My Cheerleader”, my gorgeous wife, Lerato Motlounge-Maqoma, who always motivates me to live godly and to pursue an ethical approach in all my dealings. May the Lord grant us the grace that we, with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord’s glory, be transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit (2 Corinthians 3:18).

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My deepest gratitude goes to my promoter, Professor Jacobus (Kobus) Kok, who has shown a great dedication in assisting me to complete this thesis successfully; thank you Dr. Kok for introducing me to great literature which has shaped many of the ideas developed in my thesis. Many thanks to Professor Ernest van Eck, Prof. Danie Veldsman, and Prof. D. G. Van Der Merwe for insightful contributions to this thesis; your contributions have improved my thesis immensely. Many thanks also go to Professor Cornè Bekker for wise counsel and for important contributions to my thesis; thank you Dr. Cornè for also igniting a passion of the call to the likeness of Christ in my heart and mind.

I am also grateful for the few mentors who have guided my theological development. Professor Martin Pohlmann has continued to be a great model of a true theologian; thank you Prof. for your continued support and encouragement in my theological pursuits. Thank you also goes to Dr. Piff Pereira for being a source of inspiration in my quest for theological education; your love for the Bible has made an indelible mark in my life. Great thanks also to Dr. Sam Ndogo for all the theological discussions we had, which continue to help me keep focused on the African context, as I reflect theologically. Thanks to Professor Gerhard Walmsley for special philosophy lessons; your guidance in my philosophy studies has shaped my intellectual development.

Moreover, great thanks also go to Bishop Isaac Mthimkulu for being a great teacher of the Word of God; you have continued to be a great father, and your love for Jesus Christ and his work continues to inspire me to serve God wholeheartedly. Many thanks also to my great friend, Mr. Christian Mokoena, who has continued to pray for me from the beginning of my theological pursuits to the present day; thanks for being a great example of Christ-likeness – you “wear” Jesus well. I am “eternally” grateful to Jesus for bringing these men of God across my path; may God bless them and their families.

Great thanks also go my Mother, Mrs. Dorcas Maqoma, and my brother, Mr. Fezile Maqoma; one’s family continues to play a significant role in one’s development, hence, my immediate family has consistently been supportive throughout my studies.

I am eternally grateful for my extended family, Mr. William and Mrs. Mary Motloun, Mrs. Lerato Maqoma, and Mr. Katileho Motloun, for their unceasing commitment to my well-being. Friends are a great blessing from God, thus, Ms. Sue Snaddon, Mr. Richard and Mrs. Pippa McKechnie, Mr. Roger and Mrs. Bridget Wimpey, and Father John and Mama Jenny Anderson, have been truly amazing; your kindness and generosity is highly appreciated.

Last but not least, I express my heartfelt thanks to the staff of Metanoia Bible Institute: Ms. Zodwa Tshabalala, Ms. Tumi Hatla, Mr. Nico Matekane, Ms. Mosa Motlatla, Ms. Tumi Mokoena, Mr. Tsepo Gumbi, Mr. Vusi Khoza, and Ms. Keitumetsi Tsematse; this dissertation is the fruit of your sacrifices, as you have all done a sterling work to see this project successful. Many Thanks to the Faith communities of Koinonia Bible Church, Brackendowns Baptist Church, and Hillside Vineyard Fellowship, which have continued to give me a platform to reflect on the ideas discussed in my thesis. Grace to you all!

## ABSTRACT

God created humankind in his image and likeness, and this means that all human beings have an inherent capacity to know the difference between good and bad or right and wrong; thus, all human beings have an innate ability to be ethical, as the God who created them is good, and so becomes the source of their ethics. The writers of Scripture have drawn us to this insight of the ethical God in many different ways, as they encouraged their hearers to make reference to God in their attempt to be ethical. This research draws from the writings of Apostle Paul, particularly from his Corinthian Correspondence and the book of Philippians, as he instructed his hearers on how they ought to relate and what would be their roles within the broader scope of God's original intention for humanity. In this attempt, he made reference to the anthropological identity of the *imago Dei*, and he shows that the perfect expression of the *imago Dei* is Christ Jesus; thus, this is the image they ought to emulate. Therefore, the title of this research is: "*The imago Dei weltanschauung as a narrative motif in New Testament ethics: a focus on Pauline theology.*"

This notion of the *imago Dei* is presented in the New Testament as the framework of understanding how to form ethics, as it appears within the formation of an anthropological horizon; ethics is, in some way, an extension of who we are. Thus, the notion of the *imago Dei* is an adequate account of explaining the source of human dignity. In relation to accepting the message of the New Testament, this research shows how the *imago Dei* worldview underpins Pauline ethics and can serve as a framework of understanding the source of sustaining an ethical paradigm. This hypothesis attempts to prove that one's identity – which is underpinned by a worldview – affects one's ethics and conduct. The identity of New Testament believers must be understood in light of the framework of the *imago Dei*.

Therefore, this theological view, to some extent, seems to be providing an anthropological horizon that opposes most ethical theories that begin their investigation with human nature. So this research proposes that an ethical theory or worldview which has a universal character is a theistic worldview referred to as *imago Dei*, which draws its formulations and perspectives from a theological perspective, and Christ himself is the perfect representation of the *imago Dei*, and appears as the content and constant theme of Pauline ethics.

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## Summary

As long as humanity existed, human beings have been on a pursuit to understand who they are, where they come from and where they are going; in a sense, human beings have been on a quest to understand their origin and their destiny. Hence, it is impossible to exhaust the significance of the inquiry of human existence. Closely related to this inquiry has been the study to understand why human beings conduct themselves in a particular fashion. Moreover, many people have shown an interest in understanding what motivates an individual to act the way they do. This research suggests that one's identity influences one's ethics; who you think you are influences what you do. Moreover, this research also regards a theistic perspective on identity, that of the *imago Dei*, as necessary for the formation of ethical individuals and communities.

The notion of *imago Dei* plays a significant role in resolving human relations problems that have an ethical bearing. This thesis wants to investigate “*What is the contribution of the imago Dei worldview to New Testament ethics, and to what extent does it serve as a narrative motif and framework of New Testament ethics within Paul’s correspondence with the church at Corinth and in Philippians?*”

Therefore, this research will use a qualitative research methodology as it aims on developing the hypothesis that the *imago Dei* served as a narrative motif for Paul’s ethics in his correspondence with the church at Corinth and the church at Philippi.<sup>1</sup> The specific aim of this research is to prove that Paul’s understanding of the *imago Dei* biblical concept, as part of his Jewish heritage, was the notion he made reference to in the construction of his ethical framework, in particular within his correspondence with the Corinthian church and the believers in Philippi.

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<sup>1</sup> The mention of the use of the qualitative research methodology is an inference to the comparison in research between qualitative and quantitative research methodologies; Wyse (2011:n.p.) differentiates the two by noting that Qualitative Research is primarily exploratory research, which is used to gain an understanding of underlying reasons, opinions, and motivations and it provides insights into the problem or helps to develop ideas or hypotheses for potential quantitative research. On the other hand, Quantitative Research is used to quantify the problem by way of generating numerical data or data that can be transformed into useable statistics; it is used to quantify attitudes, opinions, behaviors, and other defined variables – and generalize results from a larger sample population.

This notion of the *imago Dei* will also help one to understand New Testament ethics within the framework of an anthropological horizon, and that the notion of the *imago Dei* is an adequate account of explaining the source of human dignity. In relation to accepting the message of the New Testament, this research attempts to show how the *imago Dei* worldview underpins Pauline ethics and can serve as a framework of understanding the source of sustaining an ethical paradigm.

This research will outline the various dimensions of the *imago Dei* concept and explain how all these influence the understanding of New Testament ethics, and show how this is a sufficient account for constructing an ethical paradigm; thus, this will enable one to answer some of the pressing contemporary ethical issues. One needs to understand the message of the *imago Dei* and its bearing on New Testament ethics, in order to recognize how Paul uses this notion to address some of the ethical matters within the Corinthian and Philippian churches.

This research will involve an interdisciplinary approach and draw on various disciplines from biblical theology to systematic theology, to philosophy, to anthropology, to history, to sociology, and to ethics. Therefore, it will firstly concern itself with exploring the theme of the *imago Dei* from its first mention in the biblical narrative of Genesis and find its relation with the whole Old Testament discourse, and its relevance to the New Testament, particularly New Testament ethics.

Considering that the study of the *imago Dei* encapsulates all matters relating to the origin and destiny of humankind, it is therefore, plausible to suggest that the *imago Dei* notion qualifies as a worldview; thus, the research will continue to discuss what a worldview concerns and what are the core characteristics of a worldview, and outline the dominant worldviews, both secular and religious or those that have a theistic and those that are atheistic. The discussion of the *imago Dei* as a worldview will lead to the conclusion that this phenomenon underpins New Testament ethics and it particularly guides Paul's reflections on humanity as the offspring of God.

As the study looks closely at the Genesis 1:26 – 28 narrative as the foundational text for exploring the concept of the *imago Dei* within the biblical narrative, the study will consider the different dimensions of the notion; beginning with the ontological dimension and moving on to constructing the epistemological, cosmological, teleological, and moral dimensions of the theme of the *imago Dei*. Being mindful that within the history of the existence of man definitions of humanity have evolved and others followed the religious stream of thinking whilst the others adopted a more secular definition of humanity.

The research will explore the different dominant definitions as anthropological horizons and make a case for the biblical Christianity's definition as the most adequate in addressing all the basic matters of humanity.

In making a case for the sufficiency of biblical Christianity in ethical matters, that thought presupposes a debate between religious ethics versus secular ethics, as modern anthropology no longer considers the Christian tradition definition in its secular, religious indifference. Thus, as this research makes a case for biblical Christianity's definition of humanity, the *imago Dei*, by implication, will also involve a historical analysis through "walking" the different eras or epochs of the church as they reflected on the ethical paradigm.

To understand Paul one will have to understand his world: the Jewish, Greek, and Roman influences on his life. Part of the focus of this research is on the Corinthian correspondence, hence, this requires a study on Paul's relationship with the church of Corinth; moreover, Paul's use of the Hebrew notion of the *imago Dei* requires one to understand Paul's Jewish heritage. Therefore, the setting and sources of Paul's ethics will be explored extensively to lay a foundation for his use of the *imago Dei* in his letters.

The *imago Dei* is a biblical theme, so to understand it thoroughly one will have to do extensive exegesis for a guide to its socio-rhetorical interpretation. Therefore, the exegesis of the chosen passages will engage: exegetical criticism, literary criticism, social-scientific criticism, rhetorical criticism, postmodern criticism, and theological criticism (see Robbins 1996: 1).

A systematic thought – or rather a theology – will be constructed from the exegesis of these various passages, and in the process of linking them, it will create the ethical foundation and understanding of the New Testament from an exegesis of the relevant passages within the Corinthian correspondence (with the focus being on 2 Corinthians 4:1-15). Following that, there will be a study on the Christological hymn of Philippians 2:5 – 11, as Paul's example of Christ Jesus as the *imago Dei* for believers to emulate.

The conclusion will be a discussion of the relation between the understanding of the text and the communication of it. Therefore, the formation of the *imago Dei* is an important feature in the development of the ethical individual and society!

## Key Words

God

Christ

*Imago Dei*

Worldview

Theology

Ethics

Anthropology

Identity

Morality

Corinth

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The church at Corinth in relation to the New Testament discourse is regarded by many scholars as one of the churches that usually fell short of the ethical standards held by the followers of Jesus; it is suggested that the diversity within the congregation resulted in conflict situations within the congregation. Thus, “within the Corinthian congregational context there existed several conflict situations, and that much of it was a result of diversity within the congregation” (Kok 2012: 1). Perhaps, in them attempting to resolve some of the matters in the church they resorted to worldly standards instead of seeking guidance from the apostles’ doctrine, as according to the believers Luke makes reference to in Acts chapter 2, verse 42. Kok (2012: 3) also notes that “the Corinthian congregation formed as a newly created group, a collection of people from different socio-economic, religious and even ethnic contexts which resulted in the storming phase where conflict and schism became a reality that Paul ethically had to address at that stage.” In doing so, Kok (2012: 1-2)<sup>2</sup> also suggests that there was a dynamic between identity and ethos that occurred within this congregation, as the identity of the Christ-follower affects every day ethos.

Paul is convinced that Christians were different since they have a new identity that is reshaped by their faith. Their behaviour should reflect their new identity. Their new identity is primarily defined in terms of their new relations with God and Jesus. They are in Christ, in the Lord, and could now be called God’s friends and even God’s children. God’s Spirit now dwells in them, making authentic Christian living possible (Van Der Watt 2006: 619).<sup>3</sup>

In his correspondence with the Corinthian church, on how they ought to relate and what would be their roles within the broader scope of God’s original intention for humanity, Paul made reference to the anthropological identity of the *imago Dei*, and he shows that the perfect expression of the *imago Dei* is Jesus Christ.

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<sup>2</sup> Kok is making reference to Wolter’s (2006:203–215) article: ‘Pauline Ethics according to 1 Corinthians’, where he distinguishes between three different contexts in which the conflict occurred, which were: intra-congregational social life, extra-congregational social life and extra-congregational private life; see full article in: Wolter, M., 2006, ‘Pauline Ethics according to 1 Corinthians’, in J.G van der Watt (ed.), *Identity Ethics and Ethos in the New Testament*, pp. 199–218. Berlin: Walter De Gruyter. More references will be made from this article later on in the thesis.

<sup>3</sup> Van Der Watt (2006: 611 – 632), in his reflections of the articles of various New Testament scholars on the subject of Identity, ethics, and ethos in the New Testament proves that – despite the fact that the ethical judgments of the New Testament are shaped within the confines and determinants of particular situations of life in its brokenness as experienced in unique and specific contexts – the identity of Christ defines the moral space for New Testament believers; thus, Christian ethics are Christologically determined.



Therefore, according to Van der Watt (2006: 615), if God's will is expressed in Christ, "This makes Jesus the interpretive centre of conduct for believers. Their lives should be modelled on his. His words, actions, conduct, and attitudes form the matrix within which followers of Jesus find themselves, and according to which they determine and evaluate their attitudes and behaviour in light of Scripture." It is interesting to note how professor Steyn (2006: 135 – 161), in his reflections on the ethics of the Acts of the Apostles, also draws his readers to the significance of the identity of Jesus to be modelled by the first followers of Jesus; as he comments that the actions and behaviour of the apostles and the believers, as portrayed in Acts, are determined by their new identity in Christ, and the name of Jesus is the ground of identity for members of this new community. Therefore, their identity in Christ became the framework from which they formed their ethics. This identity was a recapitulation of the *imago Dei*.

## 1.1 Research Design

To provide evidence for this thesis, this research will follow a particular design. Chapter two is going to present the rationale and background of the thesis in briefly defining the three notions or studies that led to this investigation: the *imago Dei*, the worldview, and the New Testament, which will be categorized together as the initial thesis. Chapter two will also show how this is going to be achieved in this research, through presenting the six, generally accepted, approaches to New Testament ethics in academia, and with this background attempt to construct a hypothesis, or to be very ambitious, I will call this the seventh approach to do New Testament ethics; this hypothesis will be defined as "*The imago Dei weltanschauung as narrative motif in New Testament ethics: a focus on Pauline theology*". In its attempt it will prove that this ethical paradigm is an adequate framework for understanding Pauline ethics, and that it is relevant for all individuals and societies at large. Chapter three will firstly present the concept of a worldview through discussing its philological, philosophical, and disciplinary history. The second section of chapter three will briefly discuss the eight competing worldviews, begin with Christian theism which draws its revelation from the Bible, and then discuss deism which is also theistic, but its source of revelation is human reason. Following that, the discussion will start to introduce atheistic approaches in the formulation of a worldview, beginning with naturalism – which in a sense denies the existence of God.

Then I will discuss another atheistic approach called nihilism, which not only denies the value of anything, but to a greater extent even denies the value of existence. Nihilism easily develops into another worldview which is referred to as existentialism which considers the universe as existing in a closed system of cause and effect. Then I will discuss the worldview of Eastern Pantheistic Monism, a pantheistic approach, which is dominant in the Eastern world context; as most of the worldviews mentioned before it in this research are generally constructed in the Western world context. The seventh worldview discussed is the New Age which is syncretistic and eclectic in that it attempts to fuse both theistic and atheistic approaches to construct its worldview. The last worldview I discuss is postmodernism, which, in some sense transcends the boundaries of a singular worldview in that its construction is through a deconstruction of some of the modern ideas of the autonomy and sufficiency of human reason; it views human beings as beings who make themselves who they are through the languages they construct about themselves, so we are a result of our own linguistic construct.

The last section of chapter three will be a study in understanding the cognitive theme, the affective theme, and the evaluative theme which all form the core of a worldview; thus, they are the characteristics of a worldview. Therefore, because this *imago Dei* worldview encompasses all of life, as a worldview, it should be understood as a framework of understanding ethics. In chapter three, I will also explain the concept of a worldview: background and history of the concept. Then show how the *imago Dei* can serve as a worldview.

The fourth chapter will discuss the different anthropological horizons which have had a great impact in their definition of humanity; even though the others were movements, and others individuals, not all of them had a direct explanation or impact on humanity. These ten anthropological horizons are: Confucianism, Hinduism, Buddhism, Plato, Aristotle, Kant, Marx, Freud, Sartre, and Darwin. These will be discussed in contrast to the *imago Dei* anthropological horizon, in showing how these other descriptive images are reductive explanations of humanity, and don't have a sufficient, comprehensive ethical basis. In recognizing the contrasts between these different approaches, this research recognizes the two streams of constructing the ethical paradigm; the religious stream and the secular stream.

So, chapter five will discuss the foundation of religious ethics in comparison with secular ethics. Not only do these two seem to exist on the opposite ends of the spectrum but they could also be antithetical. As chapter five discusses this conflict it will do so with a presupposition that the anthropological horizon of Christianity is the best perspective – not only in religious circles but even in circles where the secular approaches are preferred.

Chapter six will discuss in detail the *imago Dei* anthropological horizon as a theological reflection through the discussion of its different dimensions under their two sources of evidence; which are: *a priori* and *a posteriori*. The first dimension which will be discussed is the ontological dimension, which is an attempt to prove the existence of God, as man is created in God's image; so to understand that image one must first establish the understanding of the existence of God. Hence, theistic metaphysics is essential for our inquiry of man's origin.

The second dimension which will be explored is the epistemological dimension, which deals with questions of knowing and knowledge; dealing with questions such as how do we come to a certain type of knowledge? Through what type of experience do we come to understanding? Thus, the epistemological investigation is the first method of inquiry of the knowledge of being.

So epistemology is intricately related to metaphysics. The third dimension I will discuss is the cosmological dimension, which draws from the ontological argument, but further on than the ontological argument, it proves the existence of a special being through providing certain attributes of that special being.

The fourth dimension I will discuss is the teleological dimension, which explores the design and order of the cosmos and aims on proving that whoever or whatever designed the universe is an intelligent being. The nature of this intelligent being presupposes that this being is also moral. Thus, this leads to the fifth dimension which is the moral dimension. This dimension brings into congruency the nature of the existence of God and the human nature. The notion of man being created in the image of God is in direct correlation with man created in the same likeness as God; thus, man can also attain the same moral standing as his creator, so he contains within him the capacity to be ethical.

Therefore, through the explanation of these five different dimensions of understanding the notion of man as being created in the image of God, and God's original intention of creating man in His image to also be in his likeness (Gen.1:26-28), I attempt to show that it is still His goal in forming man after his image, in the likeness of Christ according to the New Testament narrative (e.g. Rom. 8:29; Gal. 4:19; 1 John 4:17).

In chapter seven I will start zooming into Pauline ethics in an attempt to glean Paul's reflections on the notion of the *imago Dei*. I will do this by firstly looking at Paul's three great influences that shaped his world: the Jewish heritage, the Greek Hellenism, and Roman citizenship; these three shaped both the teaching and lifestyle of Paul. Secondly I will investigate Paul's sources of ethics; beginning with the Old Testament which is significant for his understanding and use of the *imago Dei*, then investigate the influence of the Greek culture on his life which is organized under Hellenism, and thirdly investigate Paul's reliance on the teachings of Jesus in his ethical formulation. I will conclude chapter seven by reflecting on Paul's reference to the doctrine of *pneumatology* and the ministry of the Holy Spirit as the very substratum from which his ethics grows and thrives.

Chapter eight further on narrows this study in directly focussing on Paul's ethical use of the notion of the *imago Dei* within the Corinthian correspondence. Firstly, I will explore what kind of a city was Corinth and how was Paul's relationship with the church. Secondly, I will expound on this context in relation to Paul's use of the concept of the word image throughout the correspondence with the church of Corinth.

This study will also be very exegetical, as the chosen passages, which have a bearing on the *imago Dei*, will be studied through employing part of Gorman's (2009)<sup>4</sup> seven elements of biblical exegesis:

- 1) the survey (first impressions); 2) contextual analysis (historical, socio-political, cultural, literary, rhetorical, and canonical contexts); 3) formal analysis (form, structure, and movement of the text); 4) detailed analysis of the text (careful scrutiny of every word, phrase, allusion, grammar point, and syntactical feature); 5) synthesis (determining the main point[s] of the text); 6) reflection: theological interpretation (determining the meaning of the text for readers other than the original ones); and 7) expansion and refinement of the exegesis (using the tools and work of biblical scholars for further clarification).

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<sup>4</sup> These seven elements will be used in "the background", in juxtaposition with Du Toit's (2009) exegetical program; for clarity on the use of both these programs in juxtaposition, see the section on research methodology below, in this chapter.

Chapter nine will attempt to prove how Paul's correspondence with the church at Philippi provides a great example of how the character of the *imago Dei*, as fully embodied by Jesus Christ can be translated into the same character of the followers of Jesus Christ in their quest to imitate him. This process of the formation into the likeness of Christ is tantamount to being in the image and likeness of God.

Chapter 10 will be the final chapter, which will be my conclusion, where I will show how this desire, or perhaps the shaping of one's identity, to be formed into the image of God or into the likeness of Christ is innate and can be attained by all humanity, as the lives of the disciples of Jesus become an example of this phenomenon. I will also reiterate the relevance of the *imago Dei* ethical paradigm as essential for New Testament believers or followers of Christ and all of humanity. For instance, I will reflect on the relevance of this thesis for the South African context. Therefore, this ethical paradigm will be expedient for the contemporary and future society. The research design discussed above guides me in the formulation of the contents of this research.

## 1.2 Research Methodology

The research design above made reference to Gorman's (2009) guide to biblical exegesis because part of the basic guide he presents contributes to the methodology this research adopts for its exegetical process. Gorman's guide to biblical exegesis is juxtaposed with the exegetical process drawn from Du Toit's (2009) work on *New Testament Exegesis in Theory and Practice*. Du Toit's work provide the methodological framework for the exegetical work undertaken in this research.

In the article, *New Testament Exegesis in Theory and Practice*, Du Toit proposes a twelve step exegetical program which incorporates insights from linguistic and literary studies; which are necessary to help one to do responsible exegesis and be effective in their exegetical work. Du Toit (2009: 120) divides this process into three phases; the first phase is the Preparatory phase, the second phase is the Main phase, and the last phase is the concluding phase (see Figure 1, pg.9). The first four steps in the process of exegesis make up the preparatory phase of the process.

The first step is the preliminary selection of the passage. Considering that the focus of this research is Paul's correspondence with the Corinthian church, so the passage which would be the centre of the exegetical work will be 2 Corinthians 4:1-15, with a special emphasis on 4:4 which makes reference to the notion of the *imago Dei* in its mention of Χριστοῦ as the εἰκὼν τοῦ θεοῦ.

What is also significant about this passage is that this passage exists within a section of the letter – 2 Cor. 3:1 – 7:16 – where Paul particularly deals with the aspect of the character of Christian ministry. In this section, there are other references made to the notion of the *imago Dei*, in relation to Christ-followers growing into that identity of Christlikeness (see 2 Cor.3:18; 4:10-15).

The second step is first reading, which Du Toit (2009: 124) remarks that it should not be taken absolutely, as the exegete would have been to that particular text before, so it will not be the first time they are reading that text. In my engagement with the text I selected, I was not reading it for the first time; rather, I read that text with new insights drawn from the discipline of textual criticism, as that enriches one's understanding of that text.<sup>5</sup> The third step is the demarcation of the text, where one may demarcate a text according to a chapter or a pericope; since these distinctions are relative and pericopes may coincide.

Du Toit (2009: 126-135) also provides the criteria for demarcating the passage, as he gives three steps to do this; these are: Lexico-grammatical criteria, literary criteria, and Semantic criteria.<sup>6</sup> The passage which this research demarcated is 2 Corinthians chapter 4, from verse 1 to verse 15, with elaboration on the notion of the *imago Dei* as referenced both directly and indirectly. In my exegetical work I will show how different commentators use these three steps to formulate their different pericopes within this chapter (2 Corinthians 4:1-15). The fourth step introduces textual criticism, which is a process that considers the text-critical status of a passage under investigation, and this process requires proficiency in working with New Testament Greek.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Greenlee (1964), in his book: "*Introduction to New Testament Textual Criticism*," defines the study of Textual Criticism and outlines the principles and practices of Textual Criticism, and its priority in New Testament Studies.

<sup>6</sup> For a thorough explanation of this criteria please see Du Toit's text (2009: 126-135).

<sup>7</sup> See Jordaan (2009) who explains the process of Textual Criticism extensively in chapter 5 in the same book.

From that step, one is now ready to start the main phase of exegesis, which introduces the five following steps of the process of exegesis, which build on the previous four steps. So step five is about determining the socio-historical setting of the passage; part of this step looks at the “intratextual” and “extratextual” context. The sixth step will be determining the literary type of the text, where one considers the genre of the text. The seventh step is about determining the place of the micro text within its literary macro structure.

The eighth step will be about analysing the structure of the text, as Du Toit (2009: 141) remarks that “this is necessary in order to determine how the different pieces on the mini chessboard of the paragraph or pericope are related to each other, how the argument flows and what the main theme and possible themes are.” Then, step nine, which is also explained in detail by Gorman (2009: 101-125), is detailed analysis where word-by-word and verse by verse analysis of the text is undertaken (Du Toit 2009: 141).

The last three steps are the concluding phase where one moves to interpretation, for both the immediate recipients and the contemporary reader. So step ten is about formulating the message for the first readers; what the text under investigation meant for the first readers/hearers of that text.

Perhaps, we must also ask, as Du Toit (2009: 146-147) asks, “How would the message touch their lives, challenge their complacency, open their eyes, broaden their perspectives, change their attitudes, guide them towards a decision, bring them to a re-appraisal of their priorities, nurture their spiritual lives?” This step helps one to appropriate the text for today’s hearers; hence, step eleven provides suggestions for actualizing the text for today. Du Toit (2009: 147) remarks that this step may prepare the exegete to cross the hermeneutical bridge and transform the message to the first addressees into a relevant message for today’s readers/hearers. The last step, which is the twelfth step, will be translation. Thus, “At this stage, the exegete should be in a good position to attempt a translation that would be, at least to some degree, the semantic equivalent of the original text” (Du Toit 2009: 148).

Therefore, this research appropriated Du Toit’s exegetical process; even though it did not follow the process in the above given consecutive order, it has drawn insights from all the steps. As Du Toit (2009: 121), in his introduction of these three phases of the process commented that, though the sequence of the various phases in this program makes good sense, other options could be chosen and the exegete may start with another step, instead of step one.



<b>Du Toit's Exegetical Program</b>		
<b>Preparatory Phase</b>	<b>Main Phase</b>	<b>Concluding Phase</b>
1. Preliminary selection of passage 2. First reading 3. Demarcation of the text 4. Textual criticism	5. Determining the socio-historical setting of the passage 6. Determining the literary type of the text 7. Determining the place of the micro text within its literary macro structure 8. Analysing the structure of the text 9. Detailed analysis	10. Formulating the message for the first readers 11. Suggestions for actualizing the text today 12. translation
<b>Gorman's Elements of Exegesis</b>		
<b>Preparatory Phase</b>	<b>Main Phase</b>	<b>Concluding Phase</b>
1. Survey 2. Contextual analysis	3. Formal analysis 4. Detailed analysis of the text 5. Synthesis	6. Reflection: Theological interpretation 7. Expansion and refinement of the exegesis

Figure 1: Summary of the research methodology employed in this research

### 1.3 Research Survey

This research undertakes an interdisciplinary study with its particular focus being on the analysis of the *imago Dei* as a worldview that serves as framework of New Testament ethics, specifically within Paul's letters. Paul's letters where he corresponds with the church in Corinth will narrow our study of Paul's use of the notion of the *imago Dei*. Therefore, the survey below will follow the format of this research rationale which is discussed in chapter two under the headings of: the *imago Dei* inquiry, the worldview analysis, and the New Testament Examination; with two additions of the literature review of commentaries and articles on the ethics of Paul, the *imago Dei*, and the use of the *imago Dei* within the Corinthian correspondence.



### 1.3.1 The *imago Dei* Inquiry

Berg, J. 1999. *Changed into His Image*. Greenville: BJU Press.

Developing ethically is preceded by growing spiritually. Hence, “Trying to grow spiritually without understanding God’s plan for transforming your life is like trying to put together a jigsaw puzzle without looking at the picture on the box. Many believers experience this kind of frustration in their Christian walk because they do not understand the “big picture” of how God intends for them to change and grow. Consequently, their lives are unstable, their growth sporadic, and their attempts to help others ineffective.” These words, written at the back of the book as part of a summary of the contents of this book, greatly concern the “heart” of the research of this thesis. Therefore, because it has as its basis a biblical emphasis, it will be used in the construction of the structure of the argument of this research.

Boa, K. 2001. *Conformed to His Image*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan.

This is a book on biblical and practical approaches to spiritual formation. *Conformed to His Image* deals with most, about all, aspects of discipleship; thus, it is a comprehensive volume in the field of spiritual formation. The author explains the nature and effect of spiritual formation, and he does this by dividing the theology of spiritual formation into twelve facets and he discusses them separately; but he does this by also showing how they all fit together. *Conformed to His Image* takes a broader, more synthetic approach by looking at all of these facets and seeing how each can contribute to the whole.

In the third facet he discusses disciplined spirituality, where he talks about topics that have a bearing on the topic of this research paper. He explains why there is a resurgence of interest in the classical disciplines of the spiritual life; further on, he looks at the reasons for this trend and discusses the benefits of the various disciplines. What distinguishes his work from the others is that he focuses on the needed balance between radical dependence on God and personal discipline. He does this to help us grasp our true identity in Christ; thus, begin to cultivate a growing intimacy with Him [Christ].

Cairns, D. 1973. *The Image of God in Man*. London: Collins.

This brilliant work on *The Image of God in Man* gives us an account of man's quest of his origins and destiny; Cairns proves how man throughout his existence has been asking: what is man? This has been the central question in all his different pursuits. The key idea in his comprehensive survey is that there is in man the image of his creator. His main aim is giving some account of the Christian doctrine of the image of God in man; starting with the biblical sources, and further on traces some of the historic Christian and secular interpretations of the image of God in man, from early times to the present day. The author comments that, "The subject of the image of God in man covers really the wide field of the whole Christian doctrine of man, for there is no part of man's nature which was not created to serve that image." For us to be able to understand ethics we must have an understanding of the image of God, which we were originally created in. Cairns help us greatly in his thorough study.

Elmore, V. 1986. *Man as God's Creation*. Nashville: Broadman Press.

*Man as God's creation* gives us an understanding of how man was created in the image of God; however, because of the fall of man, the image was perverted. Elmore shows us how this image is renewed by and through Christ.

The author speaks to the fact that human beings were created special by God. He covers the doctrine of man in terms of the image of God, and of Christ renewing the image of God in man.

The author suggests that the image of God in man is really the subject matter of the entire Bible; the discussion of that fact is one of the main aims of my research. Moreover, the author, by making us aware that man is created in God's image, and yet being impotent in his efforts to live according to God's image, calls us to look at Christ, who is a perfect reflection of the image of God in man; thus, he comments that, "We see in Jesus Christ the kind of person God wants us to be. He is the ideal and the goal of human destiny."

Hoekema, A. 1986. *Created in God's Image*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.

*Created in God's image* reappraises anthropology in the light of Scripture and Christian tradition; this study, as the author explains, "Concern itself with theological anthropology, or the Christian doctrine of man."

One focus of my research is on the doctrine of the image of God in man, so central to its discussion is the biblical understanding of man, which Hoekema's study provides. The author thoroughly considers the importance of the doctrine of man; showing how man, as a created person, is created in the image of God. The author, in his discussion, also gives us: the biblical teaching, a historical survey, and a theological summary of the image of God in man. He also, with using relevant Scriptural references, suggests that the image of God in man has both a structural and a functional aspect, as involving man in his threefold relationship – to God, to others, and to nature; moreover, he discusses the image as going through four stages: the original image, the perverted image, the renewed image, and the perfected image. This work, by Hoekema, will help in my analysis of the theological and historical basis of the creation of man in the image of God.

Kinlaw, D. 2001. *We Live As Christ*. Greenwood: OMS.

The author gets to the heart of the identity of the Christian, that Christ and the believer are so closely identified that when one receives a believer, one receives Christ; because, as the apostle John explains, as Christ is, so are we in this world (1 John 4:17). The author expounds this theme as it is revealed in the New Testament; therefore, this work discusses the main subject of the research of this thesis.

McFarland, I. 2005. *The Divine Image: Envisioning the invisible God*. Minneapolis: Fortress press.

God is transcendent and His understanding is beyond man's understanding; unless God chooses to reveal himself, man is not able to know Him. McFarland communicates in this book how God reveals himself to man and also discusses some of the characteristics of God. What's most important in this work for this research is the discourse of the place of the *imago Dei* in theology.

Ulmer, K. 2005. *In His Image*. New Kensington: Whitaker House.

Ulmer shares with his readers the path God takes to remake us into His image. He does this by exploring how God looks – by sharing His character which we are to imitate. This work is important for this research because if this thesis claims that man is made in the image of God it is, therefore, important to explore in what way is God's image reflected, and how much of that can we grasp to understand that image.

Willard, D. 2002. *Renovation of the Heart: Putting on the Character of Christ*. Colorado Springs: NavPress.

Willard calls us to take on the character of Christ through the transformation of our spirits. Here he tackles the central Christian question of how to be more like Christ, and this is the main objective for my research paper. The author shows us that being born again is being called to change our character; to change it so that our character can conform to the image of Christ. Every believer can experience significant growth in his/her Christian walk, and increasingly take on the character of Christ. Discipleship is a call to be apprentices of Jesus Christ. This book is critical for engaging the given objectives of this research and for developing the key themes of this research.

Willard, D. & Simpson, D. 2005. *Revolution of Character: Discovering Christ's Pattern for Spiritual Transformation*. Colorado Springs: NavPress.

Willard, with his co-author, as in other previous books, focuses on the theme of transformation; in this book he does a follow-up on his work: *Renovation of the heart*. He once again focuses on the New Testament subject of being transformed into the image of Christ. He shows us that we are created for a divine life; thus, when we open the writings of the New Testament, we discover that we are called to live in the awareness of another world, to join in “the kingdom of the heavens” and to “participate in the divine nature.” When we participate in the divine nature then we treat every individual “fairly” and with justice, which is the goal of ethics, to act for the greater good of everyone involved. Thus, this work will be important for this research.

## 1.3.2 The Worldview Analysis

### 1.3.2.1 The framework of a biblical worldview

Hoffecker, A. W. (ed.) 2007. *Revolutions in Worldview*. Phillipsburg: P&R Publishing.

Here is a presentation of essays that attest to the credibility and vitality of the Christian faith. The strength of this work is that these essays are presented by different experts – respected scholars – each focusing on a different era of human history. Particular focus is given to the development of a biblical/Christian worldview in ten eras; beginning with early Greeks to postmodernist thinkers. This is a thorough account of the historical development of western thought and its impact on worldview formation. What is of significance is how the editor shows how the *Weltanschauung* concept expanded from one's sensory apprehension of the natural order to the categorization of the moral experience. Hence, "worldview encompassed how one experienced the phenomenal and moral aspects of reality" (Hoffecker 2007: xi). Since the concern of this research is the formation of a biblical worldview, this work contributes to that vision immensely because its scholarship is practiced within a reformed tradition; which views "all reality in terms of the majesty and lordship of God and his redemptive purposes. Reformed thinkers believe that all of life and thinking should be shaped or reformed according to the Word of God" (Hoffecker 2007: xiii).

Moreland, J. P. & Craig W. L. 2003. *Philosophical Foundations for a Christian Worldview*. Downers Grove: IVP. Press.

Moreland and Craig give an invitation to Christian philosophy, and they introduce it as a foundation of a Christian worldview. In their comprehensive introduction to Christian philosophy they outline how Christianity answers the fundamental questions of life like: Is there a God? Can we know Him? What is real? What is truth? What can we know? What should we believe? What should we do and why?

Thus, they show how a Christian worldview provides an adequate framework from which one can answer these questions. My research concurs with the premise of their work, when they state that the “Christian faith can be regarded as an intellectually credible option” (2003: 3), and that it is a coherent account that explains all reality.

Nash, R. H. 1992. *Worldviews in Conflict*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan.

Nash looks at the world as a battlefield of ideas, thus, the necessity of understanding the concept of a worldview; so the author invites the reader to raise their level of consciousness about worldviews because it is an essential part of intellectual maturity. The author focuses on an intellectual side of the conflict of worldviews, in support of the Christian worldview. Hence, he remarks that: “From its inception, the Christian church has been involved in battles involving ideas, theories, systems of thought, presuppositions, and arguments” (Nash 1992: 12). Therefore, he further on suggests that, “The most important step for Christians is to become informed about the Christian worldview, a comprehensive, systematic view of life and of the world as a whole” (Nash 1992: 14). So the author here provides the tools that are important for one to think in terms of worldview, and subsequently make a case for a Christian worldview.

Naugle, D. K. 2002. *Worldview: The History of a Concept*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.

Naugle presents a thorough study of the concept of worldview by making an interdisciplinary study of the concept, beginning with the first proponents of this concepts and traces its historical development in various contexts; focusing on its philological history, philosophical history, disciplinary history, and theological history. Moreover, he makes reflections on these perspectives of history, particularly theologically and philosophically.

What makes his work important for my research is that he also holds to a biblical worldview as his premise for his argument, and this is necessary for me because I also argue from the same vantage point; his work is indispensable for my research because he guides one in the process of the formation of a biblical worldview. Hence, Holmes in the foreword of the book comments that, “what Christian academics have long asserted is that biblical religion is not inimical to serious scholarship but motivates it, illumines the mind, opens new avenues for inquiry, and draws things together in a meaningful whole. All truth in the final analysis is about the ways and works of God” (Naugle 2002: xiii). Naugle (2002: xix) makes an interesting comment which has a bearing on this research of understanding the *imago Dei*; he notes: “Overall... a worldview is an inescapable function of the human heart and is central to the identity of human beings as *imago Dei*.”

Noebel, D. 2001. *The Battle for Truth: Defending the Christian Worldview in the Marketplace of Ideas*. Eugene: Harvest House.

Noebel also introduces the subject of worldviews as a battle of ideas and presents the strengths and weaknesses of dominant worldviews; there are four dominant worldviews, which are: the Christian worldview, and the Humanist worldview divided into three definable worldviews: Secular Humanism, Marxism, and Cosmic Humanism (the new Age movement). The author comments that even though Humanist worldviews don't agree in every detail, there is, however, one point on which they unanimously concur, and that is their opposition to Biblical Christianity.

Then he presents all four worldviews as they impact on different disciplines that affect humanity and present the Biblical Christian worldview as an intelligent account. Thus he concludes his work by noting that: “Christian must shore up our worldview and teach it to young people. We must immerse ourselves and our children in Christian theology, Christian philosophy, Christian ethics, Christian politics, Christian economics, Christian psychology, Christian sociology, Christian biology, Christian law, and Christian history” (2001: 365).

Pearcy, N. 2004. *Total Truth: Liberating Christianity from its Cultural Captivity*. Wheaton: Crossway Books.

Here is a work that presents the Christian worldview as encompassing all of reality; that Christianity is not just religious truth but truth about total reality – it is total truth. The author suggests that Christians must redeem entire cultures that Christianity is meant to move beyond a purely privatized faith, rather, it is applicable to other aspects of life; so we must learn how to apply biblical principles to areas such as work, business, politics, etc. Therefore, “To say that Christianity is the truth about total reality means that it is a full-orbed worldview. The term means literally a *view* of the *world*, a biblically informed perspective on all reality” (Pearcy 2004: 23). The work is important because it gives practical steps of worldview training.

Phillips, W. G. & Brown W. E. 1996. *Making Sense of Your World: A Biblical Worldview*. Salem: Sheffield.

Since my research argues for the relevance of a biblical worldview, Phillips and Brown illumine the subject at-hand by giving a biblical perspective of the world and all of life. They, however, make readers aware that developing a biblical perspective is hard because there are other competing worldviews that seek the attention of many people; hence, “Developing a biblical worldview is no easy task – but it is a necessary one. Christians are called ‘to mature thinking,’ which means we must lay aside an immature simplicity in our approach to life (1 Cor. 14:20). If we are to take captive every thought to the obedience of Christ (2 Cor. 10:5), we must allow the Lord through His Word to set the agenda for our views and values” (Phillips & Brown 1996: 14). This is an excellent resource for understanding a biblical worldview.



Sire, J. W. 2004a. *The Universe Next Door: A Basic Worldview Catalog*. Downers Grove: IVP. Press.

Although Sire is explicitly biased towards the biblical worldview he also introduces the reader to the other worldviews that compete against it, and have created an environment of pluralism and relativism; he shows how most of these brought significant intellectual shifts. He presents the Christian worldview as Christian theism, with its competing worldviews: Deism, Naturalism, Nihilism, Existentialism, Eastern Pantheistic Monism, The New Age, and Postmodernism. An excellent presentation of worldviews.

Sire, J. W. 2004b. *Naming the Elephant: Worldview as a Concept*. Downers Grove: IVP. Press.

In this work as well Sire continues to discuss the history of the concept of worldview, building on his previous work: *The Universe Next Door*. Here he makes a new analysis of the concept of worldview and rectifies his previous analysis, and thus broadens the scope of understanding worldviews.

Smart, N. 2000. *Worldviews: Crosscultural Explorations of Human Beliefs*. Upper Saddle River: Prentice-Hall.

Smart shows how both religions and ideologies form a worldview and discusses the different dimensions of the concept of worldview: the experiential dimension, the mythic dimension, the doctrinal dimension, the ethical dimension, the ritual dimension, and the social dimension. Moreover he makes a reflection of the use of the concept of worldview in the twentieth century.

Sproul, R. C. 2006. *Lifeviews: Make a Christian Impact on Culture and Society*. Grand Rapids: Revell.

Since all Christians have been called to be missionaries, Sproul suggests that to be effective in that we need to understand worldviews and how they impact on culture; hence, he discusses the importance of cultural awareness.

He also discusses some of the worldviews which he considers as dominant in our age: secularism, pessimistic existentialism, sentimental humanism, pragmatism, positivism, pluralism and relativism, and hedonism. Most importantly, he discusses how all these worldviews impact on world economics, science, art, and literature. This work will be very useful for this research.

Sproul, R. C. 2000. *The Consequences of Ideas*. Wheaton: Crossway Books.

Established worldviews are orientations of societies, and they become cultural systems; however, Sproul – in his discussion of worldview – goes a step further by discussing some of the philosophers behind the ideas of the well accepted worldviews. This is important because it shows the relevance of a worldview as an individual orientation.

### 1.3.2.2 The formation of a biblical worldview

Blamires, H. 2005. *The Christian Mind*. Vancouver: Regent College.

It is discussed above that a biblical worldview is important, but we also saw that we are now living in a pluralistic environment where there are other dominant worldviews that compete with a biblical worldview; so Blamires in his challenge to Christians to develop a worldview, discusses the sad state of how Christianity has succumbed to secularism, hence the lack of a Christian mind.

This seems to have been characteristic in the development of ethics, were slowly the Christian mind has been disappearing in that discipline. So, to counter this, Blamires provides suggestions of how to form a Christian worldview by teaching the ways Christians should think.

Coles, R. 1999. *The Secular Mind*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

A worldview notion presents an all-encompassing approach to all-of-life, so secularism as a worldview presents humanity with a culture that is different from the biblical culture, and has also been the accepted custom in most societies; hence impacts on ethics. Coles describes this culture ambiguously as existing with the sacred mind in one body; that having a sacred mind does not mean you no longer have a secular mind. This essay becomes important because it broadens our discussion of the *imago Dei* as to what constitutes it; thus, Coles will definitely be introducing a different understanding to our worldview formation.

Guinness, O. 1994. *Fit Bodies, Fat Minds*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books.

The Christian ethos has been pushed to the periphery of public discourse, to a point where it is considered as irrelevant to public discussions; Guinness suggests that one of the reasons for this general evangelical failure is a lack of a distinctive Christian mind. This is the result of a growing anti-intellectualism that has come to be identified with many Christian circles; thus, he suggests that this is a scandal and a sin, because anti-intellectualism is a disposition to discount the importance of truth and the life of the mind. Therefore, Guinness gives important suggestions for the formation of the Christian mind; and these suggestions will be helpful for this research.

MacArthur, J. (ed.) 2003. *Think Biblically!* Wheaton: Crossway Books.

My research discusses basic disciplines that are impacted by worldviews. It seeks to show how the biblical worldview speaks intelligently to these disciplines. Thus, MacArthur and his team aid this research significantly in showing how the biblical worldview speaks coherently to all these basic disciplines: like gender, science, psychology, education, history, economics, art, and literature.

Moreland, J. P. 1997. *Love Your God With All Your Mind*. Colorado Springs: NavPress.

Moreland shows how the mind plays an important role in the formation of a worldview. Here he discusses the importance of developing an integrated Christian Worldview; what is useful about his work for this research is the models he provides for this integration. A worldview is a function of the heart, so its formation is articulated here as vocation.

Noll, M. 1994. *The Scandal of the Evangelical Mind*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.

Worldview formation is a faculty of the cognition, so it is a process of the operations of the mind; so Noll helps us by defining this life of the mind – which is useful for worldview formation. Here he describes the landmarks that led to the pluralism that we are facing today, which has caused the Christian worldview to be sidetracked in most public discourses; hence, *The Scandal of the Christian Mind*. He also discusses the possibility of a Christian intellectual renaissance, which will assist in ushering in a Christian worldview in public circles; especially for the ethics debate, which is central for this research.

Sire, J. 1990. *Discipleship of the Mind*. Downers Grove: IVP Books.

This research discusses ethics within a context of human nature, and here the view of human nature that is espoused is the *imago Dei*. Sire in his analysis of worldview adopts the framework of the *imago Dei* in resolving the riddle of human nature. He makes a case for the *imago Dei* and he discusses how “disciplining” the mind plays a central role for the formation of a Christian worldview.

### 1.3.3 The New Testament Examination

#### 1.3.3.1 New Testament Ethics

Hays, R. 1996. *The Moral Vision of the New Testament*. New York: HarperCollins.

If the call to follow Christ is to live faithfully before God in all things, then, this call is a call to live with an ethical vision in all of life; hence, the author helps us to discover in the biblical witness – particularly the New Testament – a unified ethical vision that has profound relevance in today's world. Thus, this work, as the author explains, seeks to describe the synthetic, hermeneutical, and pragmatic tasks of the moral visions of the major New Testament witnesses. This work will help in our attempt to describe the chasm within Christendom that is created by the disparity between Christian profession and Christian practice.

Hughes, P. E. 1983. *Christian Ethics in Secular Society*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House.

Secularism in itself is a worldview and every worldview has an ethos that defines it; knowing inevitably impacts on doing, so secularism has imposed a certain behaviour pattern that has become acceptable in society. The Christian ethics, which is underpinned by the *imago Dei* worldview, prescribes a different behaviour pattern that is distinct from that of secularism. Hughes helps us in his work in proving the distinction of Christian ethics from secular ethics. He does this by showing us that, even though there may be similarities in the concern for decency between secular ethics and Christian ethics, nevertheless the primary concern of Christian ethics is not with the organization and improvement of society but with the relationship of man to his Creator; the love of God comes first, and then the love of the fellow man results as a consequence. Therefore, Hughes helps us in this regard.

Lehmann, P. 1963. *Ethics in a Christian Context*. New York: Harper & Row.

Lehmann describes here what the method of a Christian ethic as a theological discipline involves; he describes how Christian thinking affects Christian ethics and how the church should serve as the context of ethical reflection. This work, as introduced in the preface, seeks to show how Christian ethics are prescriptive of the work of God in the world of how to keep human life human. It shows how Christian faith affects the behaviour of those who accept it and the New Testament present us with the full stature of that life that one undertakes to live in this faith.

Lillie, W. 1961. *Studies in New Testament Ethics*. London: Oliver and Boyd.

This research will discuss the implications of the *imago Dei* worldview as how it influences New Testament ethics; therefore, it is important to consider its Old Testament heritage, thus, Lillie employs some attention to this notion. Further on he looks at the distinction between the natural law and the New Testament. Then he thoroughly explains the New Testament attitude to Law and justice, to wealth, and to work, which will be part of the focus of this research. What's also of interest in this work is the discussion of eschatology and ethics in the New Testament which will also have a bearing on my research.

Marshall, H. I. 1950. *The Challenge of New Testament Ethics*. London: Macmillan and Co.

Marshall here seeks to relate the ethical message of the New Testament to the dominant problems and the needs of the present day; now since my research seeks to be contextual to its contemporary setting, Marshall's work helps to achieve this goal. New Testament theology teaches us that if Jesus is the substratum that encapsulates the message of the New Testament, then his teachings have ethical prescriptions; thus, Marshall aided my research by presenting the nature of the ethics of Jesus. Therefore, this important work will be referenced significantly throughout the research.

### 1.3.3.2 New Testament Theology

Guthrie, D. 1981. *New Testament Theology*. Leicester: IVP.

This study concerns itself with the discipline of New Testament theology, therefore, a discussion of this discipline will be essential in the process of unravelling the theme of transformation into the image of Christ. Thus, this source by Guthrie will be helpful in our discussion. His historical discussion of this discipline is vital for our study because he discusses the early construction of it by the reformers through creating an orderly account of biblical teaching in evaluating the ecclesiastical tradition. This source is valuable for our study, because a part of our study will be evaluating the contemporary church tradition by the biblical text.

Moreover, this source will aid us in defining the diversity and unity of the teaching of our discussed theme within the New Testament; as Guthrie discusses the relation of the two (diversity and unity) in New Testament studies.

Grenz, S. 1998. *Created For Community: Connecting Christian Belief With Christian Living*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic.

Our study at first glance seems to mostly concern itself with practical Christian living, rather than theology; therefore, it may seem not to fit the study of New Testament theology. Grenz, however, helps us to realize that Christian living or behaviour is not separated from theology; thus, he contends that theology provides the link, helping us to: (1) differentiate true belief from false teaching, (2) gain a firm grounding in the Christian faith, and (3) apply what the Bible teaches about God and the world to our lives. Thus, this source summarizes some of the goals of this research.

Ladd, G. 1993. *A Theology of the New Testament*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.

Ladd is one of the great scholars of the theology of the New Testament; so his scholarly findings will enrich the discussion of our topic. He not only defines the discipline, but he also discusses different themes in the different parts of the New Testament; hence, his thematic constructions will help one to develop their own structure of the desired theme. This is an excellent source to refer to.

Marshall, H. 2004. *New Testament Theology: Many Witnesses, One Gospel*. Downers Grove: IVP.

Marshall presents New Testament theology systematically having his source in thorough exegesis and proves the unity and the diversity of the New Testament. His work will be a great contribution to this research because it offers insights that make one understand the New Testament clearly. Moreover, his work is worth referencing because he makes person of Jesus, his practice, and his place in the New Testament the most important feature of the New Testament.

Ryrie, C. 1959. *Biblical Theology of the New Testament*. Chicago: Moody Press.

As one exegetes a passage, one is endeavouring to find the purpose why something was written, thus, the author here defines biblical theology as something that concerns itself with the reason why something was written as well as with the content of what was written.

The author discusses this discipline in the context of things that are related to it, like: apologetics, New Testament introduction, Exegesis, the history of Christian doctrine, systematic theology, etc. In discussing the progressive revelation of our topic in the New Testament, this source will assist one greatly as we will use the definition of the author regarding Biblical Theology of the New Testament; as he suggests that it is to systematize the truth revealed during a given period or through a given author. It is to systematize the truth as it was progressively revealed through the various writers of the New Testament.



### 1.3.3.3 Pauline Studies

#### 1.3.3.3.1 Paul's theology

Dunn, J. D. G. 1998. *The Theology of Paul the Apostle*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.

This work by Dunn is quite comprehensive in its treatment of Paul's theology and ethics; as in chapter two he does extensive work on theme of God and humankind in Paul's theology. This is very helpful in this research as it introduces Paul's understanding of the God, whose image, humanity is created after/like. In this very chapter Paul's understanding of humanity is introduced, and this is followed by chapter three which treats humankind under indictment. Chapter four is about the Gospel of Jesus Christ which introduces Paul's understanding of the man Jesus Christ and the Lord Christ Jesus, who is the full embodiment of God's image – whom humanity is created like. What is also helpful in this book is chapter eight, which is an extensive treatment of Paul's ethics – both the principles and the practices thereof.

Fee, G. D. 2007. *Pauline Christology: An Exegetical-Theological Study*. Peabody: Hendrickson.

If Paul's understanding of Christ is the image of God, then a study of Pauline Christology is essential in helping us to understand humanity as created after that image; thus, in Paul one finds a clear model of the image of God in Pauline Christology. Therefore, this work by Gordon Fee provides a particular focus of Christ's image as the very image of God; moreover, it also provides a clear "picture" of the image of God in Christ which humanity can imitate.

Kim, S. 2002. *Paul and the New Perspective: Second Thoughts on the Origin of Paul's Gospel*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.

Paul already knew about God before his conversion to Christ, however, his encounters with Christ served as a basis for his revelation of God which he shares in his letters. Thus, this work explains Paul's Gospel as the revelation of Christ, who is the very image of God. Therefore, this work shows us how the mind of Paul was fashioned after that of Christ, as he continually sought to imitate Christ. So, we can also imitate Christ, who is the image of God, to live ethically.

Machen, J. G. 1925. *The Origin of Paul's Religion*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.

Jesus Christ did not write any of the books found within the New Testament, however most the New Testament is about him. Hence, what is evident in Paul's letters is the presuppositions, principles, priorities, perspectives, and practices found in the teachings of Jesus. Machen, in his lectures where he was defending Paul's testimony of Christ Jesus, shows us how the origin of Paul's religion is to be found in the teachings of Jesus. Therefore, this work will contribute in my attempt to construct Paul's theology which underpins his ethics.

Ridderbos, H. N. 1997. *Paul: An Outline of His Theology*. Trans. J. R. De Witt. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans

Ridderbos, in his chapter where he discusses the fundamental structures of Paul's theology, explains the revelation of God in Christ Jesus as the model to imitate for humanity. What is significant for this research in this chapter is the discussion of the "Adam-categories" where Paul gives expression to the redemptive significance of Christ's death.

Ridderbos (1997: 64) concludes this section by noting that the corporate idea of the all-in-One derived from the significance of Adam works itself out in all sorts of ways in the Pauline explication of the redemptive event that made its appearance in Christ. It also teaches us to understand the redemptive-historical character, not only of that which has once occurred in Christ, but also of the way in which those who belong to Christ participate once and continuously in the salvation wrought in Christ.

Wright, N. T. 2013. *Paul and the Faithfulness of God, V.4*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press.

Wright's volume, which is divided into four parts, is, perhaps, the most recent comprehensive work on Paul. Part 1 discusses Paul and his world; Part 2 explains the mindset of the apostle, which shows his worldview. Then Part 3 focuses on Paul's theology with the underpinnings of the context created by part 1 & 2. Part 4 discusses Paul in history which presents signs of the new creation which are fundamental to the construction of Paul's ethics.

Moreover, what makes this work significant for this research is that it extensively treats the three worlds of Paul – his Jewish, Greek, and Roman worlds – which construct for us a context for understanding Paul’s theology and ethics.

\_\_\_\_\_ 2009. *Paul: In Fresh Perspective*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press.

In chapter two of this work, entitled: Creation and Covenant in the Old Testament, Wright discusses three central passages in Paul’s letters – Colossians 1:15-20, 1 Corinthians 15, and Romans 1 – 11 – which are regarded as part of the fundamental structure of his thought.<sup>8</sup>

Wright considers these three passages as offering strong prima facie evidence that we are indeed right to read Paul in terms of the theology of creation and covenant we find in the Old Testament. Therefore, this work is important for this research in that it helps us to understand the creation theme in Pauline studies as finding its foundation in the Old Testament.

#### 1.3.3.3.2 Paul’s Ethics

Furnish, V. P. 2009a. *Theology and Ethics in Paul*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press.

Although furnish entitled his book: *Theology and ethics in Paul*, he deals primarily with the subject of ethics in Paul; so, as in this research, he finds Paul’s theology as forming the basis of Paul’s ethics. Hence, the four sections, which make-up this book, are entitled: i) The Sources of Paul’s ethical teaching; ii) The Pauline exhortations; iii) The Themes of Paul’s preaching; iv) The Character of The Pauline Ethic. Therefore, extensive use of the contents of this book forms a major part of the ethical reflection of my research; particularly, the titles of the sub-sections of the first section: The Sources of Paul’s ethical teachings, are adopted as they are in chapter seven of this research, where I discuss the model of Pauline ethics.

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<sup>8</sup> In this discussion I have not dealt with matters regarding the authorship matters of the three central passages, according to Wright, which form part of the fundamental structure of Paul’s thought; particularly the authorship of Colossians.

Meeks, W. 1986. *The Moral World of the First Christians*. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press.

To understand Paul's moral world one has to understand the moral world of the Early Christians. So Meeks introduces us to this world in this book. Since this research deals with the identity of Christians as a recapitulation of the *imago Dei*, this work looks at ethics from an identity perspectives, which Meeks (1986: 11-12) defines it as looking at ethics from the bottom up, as he notes that the rules that were formed by the Early Church to live by were formed under the context where the participants in the new movement we call Christianity were discovering a new identity.

Thus, practice or custom was not something added to that process of developing identity, but an integral part of it. Therefore, this work will make a substantial contribution to the development of this thesis.

\_\_\_\_\_ 1993. *The Origins of Christian Morality*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Meeks (1993:1) begins this book, in chapter one, by a statement which summarizes the essence of this research, which says that: "God became a human person, in order that humanity should become as God always willed." Thus, as God initially created man in his own image, Meeks shows us how the first followers of Jesus perceived their conversion as the beginning of the recapitulation of the *imago Dei*. Hence, he (Meeks 1993: 18) notes that early Christianity was a movement of converts. That is, the Christians thought of themselves as people who had turned their lives around, from one state to another profoundly better. This turning around is a metaphor that could have broad and multiple consequences for the way the early Christians perceived their moral possibilities and obligations.

My research draws great insights from Meeks work here, in this book, where he explains how conversion into Christianity by the first followers of Jesus was part of the formation of their identity, which is continually formed by the transformation which takes place in their lives as they grow in this identity. Therefore, this work by Meeks also contributes important ideas which inform this thesis.

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2003. *The First Urban Christians: The Social World of the Apostle Paul*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Paul, in his attempts to formulate Christian ethics from his “new found faith”, engaged extensively with his social world as he also sought to help the churches he planted to live out their faith. So Wayne Meeks introduces the social world of the apostle Paul, which created the context in which he applied his Christian ethics. As my thesis focuses on Paul, this work helps to create the environment in which the identity of the first followers of Christ was formed.

Wright, N. T. 2010. *After You Believe: Why Christians Character Matters*. New York: Harper One.

As the focus of my research is on investigating the formation of an ethical paradigm from the perspectives of an identity instead of rules.

Wright contributes to this understanding in presenting insights of the process of the development of this identity as towards a certain goal; this goal is the transformation of our character into the image of Christ. Hence, in discussing the notion of Christian character, Wright (2010: ix) notes that the Christian life in the present is to be understood and shaped in relation to the final goal for which we have been made and redeemed.

The better we understand that goal, the better we shall understand the path toward it. As my thesis suggests that the primary calling of every follower of Christ is transformation into the image of Christ – which is the image of God, which every person is called to conform into – Wrights work provides the process by which one can get to this goal. Therefore, this book will be of utmost help in outlining some of the practices of this new found identity – which is the recapitulation of the *imago Dei*!

## 1.4 Commentaries

As this thesis extensively involves exegetical work, with the focus on second Corinthians, the use of commentaries becomes indispensable towards reaching the objectives of this research. So I have made use of different types of commentaries, ranging from Critical Commentaries, which includes treatment of historical, literary, and textual issues which may appear controversial; Exegetical Commentaries, which analyzes the Hebrew or Greek text in detail; Expository Commentaries, which provides a verse by verse commentary – some dealing with the full pericope – on what that verse or passage meant in its original setting, and what does it mean for us today; Devotional Commentaries, which generally focusses on the application of Scripture to daily living; and Homiletical Commentaries, which incorporates the aims of a devotional commentary – and others may also include expository insights – through providing sermon outlines to assist the reader or preacher to explain the pericope.<sup>9</sup>

Barnett, P. 1997. *The New International Commentary on the New Testament: The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.

This commentary is regarded by most scholars as critical yet orthodox, and marked by solid biblical scholarship within the evangelical Protestant tradition. Thus, it will be very useful for this thesis, as the theological orientation or position of this dissertation is evangelical.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Be mindful that most commentaries are a combination of two or three types of commentaries; for instance, a critical commentary will also be exegetical and expository in its reflection of a particular passage (see Christofides 2005: 4-11).

<sup>10</sup> For a thorough definition of this theological orientation and ramifications see the following article: “Evangelical Theology” by Adrio König, in *Initiation into Theology* (1998), edited by Maimela and König.

Hafemann, S. J. 2000. *The NIV Application Commentary: 2 Corinthians*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan.

This commentary is helpful in that it assists the reader in three significant ways in understanding a biblical text. Firstly, it introduces the text in an attempt to give it its *Original Meaning*, where the original meaning of a biblical text is extrapolated. Elements of historical, literary, and cultural context – which are necessary for proper exegesis – are employed in this first section. Secondly, the commentary builds a bridge between the world of the Bible and the world of today – between the original context and the contemporary context; the heading of this sub-section is *Bridging Contexts*. The last section of this commentary introduces insights for *Contemporary Significance*, where the reader is assisted in finding applications of the text under discussion. Therefore, this research will use this commentary extensively as it will enlighten the exegesis undertaken.

Harris, M. J. 2013. *The New International Greek Testament Commentary: The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.

As the focus of this thesis is on the New Testament, scholarly work on the New Testament must engage work that has involved the Greek text in its analysis; in doing thorough work on the chosen passage I will depend on this commentary as it analyzes the Greek text verse by verse. The text demarcation criteria which will be employed in chapter eight – where I do extensive work on the foundational passage of this research: 2 Corinthians 4:1-15 – will be adopted from this commentary, as it treats the chosen passage in three pericopes (vv.1-6; vv.7-15; vv.16-18).<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> See more discussion of this criterion for text demarcation in chapter 8.

Hodge, C. 1859. *Geneva Series of commentaries: 1&2 Corinthians*. London: The Banner of Truth Trust.

Although this commentary is the Oldest in comparison with the other commentaries made use of in this research, it will, however, provide certain insights on the foundational text which will throw a light on the timeless and universal truths found in this passage. As this research makes a case for the *imago Dei* as prescriptive for normative ethics, it is important to balance insights of the scholars of the present generation and those of the previous generations.

Hughes, R. K. 2006. *2 Corinthians: Power in Weakness*. Wheaton: Crossway.

Christian are called to live countercultural lives, as their message – drawn from the New Testament canon – challenges them to take on the values that are regarded by many as inferior or weak; thus, Hughes, in this commentary shows how the power of Christianity or Christians is displayed in weakness. This commentary presents its exposition in a Homiletical framework.

Kruse, C. 1987. *Tyndale New Testament Commentaries: 2 Corinthians*. Nottingham: IVP.

This commentary is clearly devotional in that – although the author may have done spadework on the chosen passage – the presentation of this commentary quickly moves to the application of the verses under discussion. Nevertheless, it is helpful for assisting in creating a balanced exposition of the text.



MacArthur, J. 2003. *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary: 2 Corinthians*. Chicago: Moody.

As one engages different commentaries one is exposed to the different reflections different types of commentaries make; hence, one's exegesis will have a comparative element, and different opinions in the same passage – which needs to be critiqued by the reader – are evident. Thus, one has to show even the deficiencies which arise in a commentary because of the evidence of the absence of certain biblical disciplines, such as biblical criticisms. Therefore, MacArthur does not include insights drawn from these perspectives and, thus reaches different conclusions – which this paper will compare with other conclusions from other commentators.

Nevertheless, his commentary will be helpful in that it contributes to the framework of text demarcation criteria adopted from this passage – through the use of Harris' work on: *The New International Greek Testament Commentary: The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, as he also treat the chosen passage in three pericopes (vv.1-6; vv.7-15; vv.16-18).

Martin, R. P. 1986. *Word Biblical Commentary: 2 Corinthians*. Waco: Word Books.

Even though Martin's commentary may have been written nearly 30 years ago to the first publication of this thesis, it is, nevertheless, one of the best commentaries for 2 Corinthians in that its exposition is developed from the Greek text and it makes reference to the grammatical matters in the text which have a bearing on one's interpretation of the chosen passage.

Its outline in the introduction was helpful in the process of demarcating the first pericope I chose to exegete. Its section on the form, structure, and setting introduce the reader to important factors "behind the text".<sup>12</sup> What has also been helpful is the translation that is provided by the author of the commentary in that it is useful to compare with the different Bible translations.

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<sup>12</sup> Behind the text is a reference to the diachronic approach of studying the text, which focuses on the historical-critical method.

Sampley, P. 2000. "The Second Letter to the Corinthians." In *The New Interpreter's Bible*. Ed. Leander Keck. Nashville: Abingdon Press.

Although this commentary takes on an evangelical position in its theological orientation, it is very helpful in that it is still very critical and puts to the fore the controversial issues that are observed in one's study. This commentary is very useful in exegesis in that it acquaints the reader with the essential historical, sociocultural, literary, and theological issues necessary to understand the book under discussion. Therefore, even this commentary will be used extensively in reflecting on the truths presented in the foundational text.

Seifrid, M. A. 2014. *The Pillar New Testament Commentary: The Second Letter to the Corinthians*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.

Under the assumption that this commentator has made use of many other commentaries on second Corinthians which were written before its publication, one supposes that this commentary will make important contributions to this research in that of all the commentaries made reference to in this research – regarding the exegesis of 2 Corinthians 4:1-15 – it is the most recent publication. Hence, the Pillar New Testament Commentaries are introduced as volumes which with the most important and informed contemporary debate; their ideal is to blend rigorous exegesis and exposition, with an eye alert both to biblical theology and to the contemporary relevance of the Bible.

## 1.5 Articles

In this section of the literature review I introduce articles with a specific focus on the *imago Dei*, and the selection is informed by the quest to find different perspectives of the different theological positions within Christendom. These different theological positions tend to focus on the different aspects of the notion under discussion. Thus, one is able to reach a comprehensive viewpoint of the topic under discussion.

Dennison, W. D. 1979. Indicative and imperative: the basic structure of Pauline ethics. *Calvin Theological Journal* 14 no 1, 55-78

In drawing from the words of the author of the article, Dennison in his abstract introduces his paper by noting that the purpose of this article is to have the evangelical community reflect fruitfully upon the balanced structure of Paul's ethics - the indicative and the imperative. The author, in some sense, mourns the fact that there has been a failure by evangelicals to grasp this fundamental structure in dealing with ethical issues as he notes the evangelical community is experiencing concern over the discipline of ethics. This concern is justified because it is becoming apparent that the ethical problems which have permeated secular society are also increasingly becoming the ethical problems of the evangelical community.

Therefore, the evangelical community, especially those within it who labour in the areas of theology, philosophy, psychology, and sociology have found themselves struggling to answer the ethical problems which confront us.

This work gives a historical survey of the study of Pauline ethics, and traces how recent New Testament scholarship has indeed discovered that the indicative and the imperative are the structure of Paul's ethics, and also shows how the structure of the indicative and imperative comes to expression in the writings of Paul. This work has been of great help in formulating the place of identity in Pauline ethics in that in most modern scholarship a discussion of the relationship of the indicative and the imperative has become a focal point for most serious deliberations concerning Pauline ethics.

Dunavant, D. 2009. Man ~ Made in the Image of God: [Online] Available from: <http://www.sbclife.net/Articles/2009/10/sla6> Accessed 7 April 2015

This work focuses on two aspects of the study of the *imago Dei*; the first being the theological aspects of the image of God and the second being the practical applications of the image of God. In the discussion of the first aspect, the author answers the questions: What does it mean that man and woman have been created in the image of God? How was the image of God in man marred or affected by the Fall? How is the image of God in man restored in salvation? Then, in the discussion of the second aspect of the practical applications of the image of God, he answers that question: How is this truth significant to us today?

What I found very helpful in this article is the outline of the seven characteristics which reflect the *imago Dei*: 1) We are spiritual beings; 2) We are personal beings; 3) We are moral beings; 4) We are relational beings; 5) We are rational beings; 6) We are emotional beings; 7) We are creative beings. As this thesis makes a case for a biblical worldview, this article will be useful because it also shares a robust view of the *imago Dei* as an essential component of a biblical worldview, which informs one's understanding of both the purposes of God for humanity and what it truly means to be human.

Grenz, S. J. 2002. Christian spirituality and the quest for identity: toward a spiritual-theological understanding of life in Christ. *Baptist History and Heritage* 37 no 2, 87-105.

Grenz's article is very significant for this research in that it treats the central theme of this thesis, which is understanding humanity from a Christian anthropology; as the anthropological component of the theology of Christian spirituality provides a link to the quest for the spiritual so readily evident in contemporary society. It connects the specifically Christian understanding of spirituality with the search for true humanness. Thus, true humanness is an important concern for Christians; as Christian spirituality and discipleship are important for spiritual growth. So Grenz attempts to set forth the central aspects endemic to a specifically Christian theological understanding of what stands as the meaning and *telos* of the spiritual quest so readily evident among people today. He considers Christian spirituality as "a participation in the mystery of Christ through the interior life of grace," is "actuated" by the Christian virtues.

Therefore, from the perspective of Christian theology, the contemporary quest for spirituality, reflecting as it does the desire for personal identity within the context of relationships, is ultimately the search for God. People long for an identity that only God can give through a relationality that only God can fulfil. We might suggest that the goal of the spiritual search is a "homecoming," a coming home to God, wherein lies our true personal identity or selfhood, and hence true humanness. Hence, God desires that in and by our relationships with each other we reflect God's own character and thus shine as the *imago Dei*.

Klassen, R. 2004. As The Image: A Functional Understanding of the Imago Dei.  
[Online] Available from: <http://www.quodlibet.net/articles/klassen-imago.shtml>  
Accessed 7 April 2015

This article suggests various views regarding the structural views of the *imago Dei*, and highlights the contrast between the structural and the functional understandings of the *imago Dei*. This research goes to great lengths in defining the *imago Dei* in a functional sense and examines the implications for the fall and the incarnation. This article also defines the *imago Dei* within the culture of the ancient Near East and the context of the Old Testament as a whole.

It also suggests that the key to the promotion of a functional understanding of the *imago* in light of the New Testament witness is to define the functional *imago Dei* as representation rather than simply as dominion. This broader definition encompasses the meaning and implications given in the Old Testament and the New Testament.

McDonald, J. I. H. 1997. The Crucible of Pauline Ethics: A cross-cultural approach to Christian ethics-in-the-making. *Studies in World Christianity* 3 no 1, 1-21.

This article explores the two fundamental areas of Paul's moral teaching where attention to cultural context is essential to the interpretation, let alone the application, of the relevant texts. These two areas are the question of virtue or moral excellence and the question of community. The first area of virtue and moral excellence requires one to examine what we mean when we speak of a moral person or a moral action, and Paul makes reference to this in Philippians 4:8, where he speaks of the concept of *arete*.

For him *arete* was not a philosophical abstraction but a relational term, informed - like *dikaiosyne* - by the grammar of the covenant. It assumed response to God's *arete*, as did *epainos*, 'praise', with which he linked it. In the grammar of covenant, not only is virtue a response to God's virtue but human action is empowered by God's Spirit. He could therefore speak of the 'fruit of the Spirit', which are essential components for the development of the *imago Dei* in mankind. The second area is the question of community, and community ethics expresses the core of Paul's moral teaching. In this regard individuals are shaped and nurtured by the community they are a part of; as in the process of participation they internalise its ethos and story. Thus, for Paul, according to the author of the article, the concepts of virtue or moral excellence and community emerge from this study as having a focal position in any estimate of Christian ethics-in-the-making. They give an indication of the direction New Testament ethics must take if it is to overcome its relative isolation and fragmentation.

Middleton, R. 1994. The Liberating Image. *Christian Scholars Review* 24.1, 8-25

In this article, Middleton presents a "Royal" interpretation which is based on a "virtual consensus among Old Testament scholars concerning the meaning of the *imago Dei* in Genesis", and he also deals with contemporary theological objections to such an interpretation. The author warns against the use of extra-biblical, usually philosophical, sources to interpret the image which is introduced in Genesis 1:26-27; for this results in people reading contemporaneous conceptions of being human back into the Genesis text.

The article is very informative in that it works through church history: from the church Fathers through the Reformers into the modern theologians in evaluating the different interpretations of the *imago Dei*. In making a case for the polemical intent of Genesis 1, the author notes that if Genesis 1:26-27 is read contextually, *vis a vis* its historical background, in terms of its polemical intent against ancient Near Eastern notions of humanity and kingship, Genesis 1:26-27 turns out to be not oppressive, but liberating and empowering. At least, that is how the text would have functioned for its original hearers.

Therefore, this paper aims at stimulating theologians and others to take seriously the work of biblical scholars on the *imago Dei* and to assist them to engage in biblically informed reflection on the subject of the *imago Dei*.

Piper, J. 1971. The Image of God: An Approach from Biblical and Systematic. *Theology Studia Biblica et Theologica*, [Online] Available from: <http://www.desiringgod.org/articles/the-image-of-god> Accessed 7 April 2015

In forming a biblical worldview one needs to build the structure of the argument from a biblical theology. Piper's article is most helpful in this in that he builds his systematic theology on biblical theology. Therefore, his primary aim in this paper is to determine a Christian belief, in firstly examining the Old Testament teaching on the image of God; then, secondly in examining the New Testament teaching about the image; and thirdly, through an interaction with several contemporary scholars, he formulates a systematic, theological definition of the *imago Dei*. This article is essential for the research of this thesis because Piper is exegetically sound and excellent, and systematic in his argument. In discussing the word image in the New Testament, Piper also gives the related Greek words in the New Testament and makes important contributions to one's understanding of the *imago Dei*.

Samples, K. R. 2011. Imago Dei: What Does It Mean? [Online] Available from: <http://www.reasons.org/articles/imago-dei-what-does-it-mean> Accessed 7 April 2015

Samples' article shows how, from a biblical perspective, human beings are in some sense both like and unlike the God who made them. The author does this by briefly explaining the three views of the *imago Dei*. The first one is the **Representative View**, and this position asserts that humankind possesses a formal nature that serves to represent God. This nature then possesses certain qualities, characteristics, or endowments (spiritual, rational, volitional, etc.) that make humankind like God. The second one is the **Relational View**, and this position insists that humans are most like God when it comes to their unique relational qualities. Thus it is man's ability to engage in complex interpersonal relationships that best reflects the divine. Then, the third view is the **Functional View** which insists that being made in the image of God is more about what a person does than what a person is. Thus when human beings perform certain functions (take dominion over nature or appropriately represent God on Earth) then the divine image is most deeply reflected. All three views have their biblical strengths and weaknesses. However, rightly formulated and integrated, all three positions could reflect the different ways that human beings reflect the image of their Creator.



Stewart, A. The Image of God in Man: A Reformed Reassessment. [Online] Available from: <http://www.cprf.co.uk/articles/imageofgod.htm#relate> Accessed 7 April 2015

This article presents the different views of the *imago Dei*: *Anthropomorphic View*, *Socinian View*, *Roman Catholic View*, *Eastern Orthodox View*, *Broader and Narrower View*, and the last view being the *Spiritual/Ethical View*, but on the other hand it refutes all these views – except that in relation to the *Broader and Narrower View*, and the *Spiritual/Ethical View* these are regarded as helpful to be contributing to the reformed view which is conceptualised as: *the Confessional View*. The author, therefore, makes an argument for the correct view through discussing the Image of God in Its Theological Relationships; here he gives a biblical and systematic explanation of the correct view of the *imago Dei*.

Williams, M. D. 2013. First Calling: the *imago Dei* and the Order of Creation—part 1. *Presbyterion* 39/1, 30-44

Williams' article discusses the theme of the *imago Dei* from the perspective of the church as it is a supernatural reality, the product of God's redemptive work and invitation in the world. The church, has ethical responsibilities, as, according to the author, it is not meant to see itself as only spiritual in a sense that it escapes the physical realities of this earth, and does not see the body and human culture as entities which also need to be redeemed. As a matter of fact, redemption does not entail a negation of the material world around us, quite the reverse, actually. The calling to the gospel, the calling to be God's redeemed people, is not the first calling within the biblical story.

As we will see, the gospel call is a redemptive return to a lost and forfeited calling: the calling to creaturehood, to bearing God's image in the world, a calling that has never had anything less than the entirety of God's original good creation in view. Therefore, according to Williams, the first calling of human beings is the calling to see themselves as part of the creation; hence, the calling to creaturehood. I disagree with Williams in this regard in that he ignores the fact that the creation of human beings was different from the creation of other creatures and animals. So, according to Genesis 1, humankind is the pinnacle of creation, and was originally created to be the epitome of the *imago Dei*!



## 2. RESEARCH RATIONALE

### 2.1 The initial thesis

#### 2.1.1 The *imago Dei* inquiry

The Judeo-Christian tradition is known to claim that God created man in His own image and that, God, through this event, made him superior over all of creation, as Genesis 1:26-28 declares:

Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.” So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. God blessed them and said to them, “Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground.”<sup>13</sup>

Genesis 1:26-28 is expanded in Genesis 2:7 which tells us of the origin of human nature, in saying that, “the LORD God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being.” The author of the Genesis account revisits this affirmation later in his description of the creation account by noting that, “When God created man, he made him in the likeness of God. He created them male and female and blessed them. And when they were created, he called them ‘man’” (Gen. 5:1-2). Moreover, the author, at the end of the description of the flood narrative (Gen.9:1-7) makes an allusion to his first description of the origin of man by reiterating Genesis 1:26, when he writes that “... for in the image of God has God made man.”<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> The Hebrew text suggests that the author of Genesis relates v.26 with Gen.2:7 where the human body is formed; Barnes (2007: nn) notes that, “אדם *’ādām*, “man, mankind,” which means “be red,” is a collective noun, having no plural number, and therefore denoting either an individual of the kind, or the kind or race itself. It is connected in etymology with אדמה *’ādāmâh*, “the red soil,” from which the human body was formed in Gen.2:7. It therefore marks the earthly aspect of man. צלם *tselem*, “shade, image,” in visible outline. דמות *d<sup>e</sup>mût*, “likeness,” in any quality. רדה *rādâh* “tread, rule.””

<sup>14</sup> These few texts from the book of Genesis already suggest that inherent in the image of God that man is created in are ethical presuppositions; as Kline (2000: 62) comments that “Inherent in man’s nature as the image-son of God were the primary ethico-religious principles of his life”; see full exposition (Kline 2000).

The Genesis account claims authority in the explanation of the origin of mankind in its creation narrative. As noted above, we are told that man is created in the image of God, and in his likeness (Gen. 1:26); this notion is referred to as the *imago Dei* in both theological and philosophical circles. The notion of the *imago Dei* seems to be the most logical point of departure for our exploration of the nature and the destiny of the human being. The *imago Dei* is the beginning point of understanding all Christian theological doctrines, as Henry (1973: 339) confirmed that:

The importance of a proper understanding of the *imago Dei* can hardly be overstated. The answer given to the *imago*-inquiry soon becomes determinative for the entire gamut of doctrinal affirmation. The ramifications are not only theological, but affect every phase of the... cultural enterprise as a whole.

Hence, “as with a number of doctrines, that of the ‘image of God’ thus has a small textual base, yet its importance in the Scriptures and Christian thought far exceeds this” (Sherlock 1996: 29).<sup>15</sup> For instance, this affirmation impacts and influences the other aspects of life; in particular, in the context of this research, it influences one’s ethical paradigm. Though this doctrinal affirmation of the *imago Dei* is recorded in the Old Testament narrative, it is revealed in the New Testament narrative in the person and practice of Jesus Christ, and all the other writers of this narrative build on that foundation. Therefore, this phenomenon underpins New Testament theology and New Testament ethics; the two – theology and ethics – are intertwined, thus, behaviour cannot be separated from belief.

The *imago Dei* notion is an adequate reflection of human nature in that it encompasses all the various dimensions of human nature. If any notion is all-encompassing then it is a worldview, thus, the biblical phenomenon of the *imago Dei* is a worldview; it has implications for the various disciplines of mankind. Therefore, this research attempts to prove that the *imago Dei* worldview serves as a framework and influences New Testament ethics, with particular focus on Pauline studies. Hence the title of this research is: “The *imago Dei weltanschauung* as a narrative motif in New Testament ethics: a focus on Pauline theology.”

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<sup>15</sup> Sherlock (1996) in his book titled: “*The doctrine of humanity*” discusses at great length the importance of the doctrine of humanity in the context of the forces like race, gender, ethnicity, and social status which threaten to disassemble any universal notion of “human nature” or “human condition”; thus, he suggests that the Christian doctrine of humanity is ripe for clarification and restatement.

So this research suggests that to resolve many ethical dilemmas of today's society, that is seeking to reconstruct society back to its "normality", one must look back to the origin of mankind, expressed in a theistic biblical perspective. It was in his original nature that mankind reflected complete human dignity;<sup>16</sup> hence, Human dignity is inseparable from the person, and it does not depend for its reality on being acknowledged by others, whether by individuals or by the state; rather, it demands such recognition and acknowledgement. Human dignity is simply the existence of the individual man or woman, viewed from a certain perspective – viewed, that is, as constituting a task and a challenge for the existing person and as imposing certain obligations on other individuals and communities (Dwyer 1994: 729).

Man, however, having lost his high position in the Garden of Eden has also lost his dominion over the rest of creation, especially over himself.<sup>17</sup> Therefore, when God was restoring him to this position he revealed this in the main Character of the New Testament – Jesus Christ, who is "... the image of God" (2 Cor. 4:4), and "is the image of the invisible God..." (Col. 1:15), and is also "... the reflection of God's glory and the exact likeness of his being..." (Heb. 1:3, ISV.). It is evident that He is the revelation of the image of God, and truly expresses how God initially created man to be like. His whole message in the New Testament is a worldview that adequately explains reality as it should be; and the understanding of this *imago Dei* worldview is necessary for understanding New Testament ethics. Thus, "a worldview is an inescapable function of the human heart and is central to the identity of human beings as *imago Dei*" (Naugle 2002: xix).

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<sup>16</sup> According to Dwyer (1994: 724), "To speak of the dignity of the human person is to speak of the worth or value of the concrete existing human being... human beings have a value or a worth qualitatively different from that of anything else in the world, that this dignity is inalienable in the sense that it can never be lost, and that it is never permissible to merely use a human being to attain some end or purpose." Therefore, human dignity impinges on all areas of life, whether internal – personal, or external – social; all the disciplines of life: like philosophy, theology, psychology, biology, or sociology are affected by the nature of human dignity. So for one to determine what constitutes human dignity one must, firstly, consider the factors that relate to intrinsic dignity, secondly matters relating to his/her extrinsic dignity. The account of the *imago Dei* seems to be a good basis for the explanation of human dignity.

<sup>17</sup> The Genesis narrative must be read in light of theological imagery; Gaster (1988: 33) shows the significance of theological imagery in reading the Bible by noting that, "The Bible is not in itself religious: that term can be properly applied only to a human reaction to it. The Bible is literature, and literature involves not only ideas of writers, but also art – that is, the technique of conveying ideas through the medium of words. Words, however – as a modern poet has put it – are shrunken garments; what is in a writer's mind and heart often outruns the limitations of language and vocabulary. The scriptural writers therefore eke out this shortcoming by resort to mythological representation."

## 2.1.2 The worldview analysis

Worldviews, according to Wright (1992: 32) form the grid through which humans, both individually and in social groupings, perceive all of reality. James Oor, echoed by Naugle (2002: 10), highlighted that worldviews are inescapable realities, rooted in the constitution of human beings who must think about and act in the world. Thus, worldview analysis is a fundamental investigation. The English word worldview finds its origin from the German term *Weltanschauung*, a word that is comprised of two words: “*Welt*” a German word that is translated as “world” in English, and the second word is “*anschauung*” which means “view” or “outlook”; hence, the whole term is translated as worldview in English.

It is an intellectual or a cognitive orientation of an individual or society, and it shapes how that individual or society interprets the world. A worldview refers to a wide world of perception, and refers to the framework of ideas and beliefs through which an individual interprets the world and interacts with it. Naugle (2002: xix) suggests that “a worldview is best understood as a semiotic phenomenon, especially as a system of narrative signs that establishes a powerful framework within which people think (reason), interpret (hermeneutics), and know (epistemology).”

A worldview provides an individual or a society with a framework of generating, sustaining, and applying knowledge to the different realities that an individual or a society encounters. It also creates a dialectical phenomenon for interpreting, explaining, and giving meaning to existence and experience. Thus, a worldview becomes an established phenomenon within an individual or a society and the individual or society then shapes their lives from such. Nevertheless both these are in a dialectic which is founded on the continual hermeneutical spiral of theology and history; as Wright (2013: 24) remarks that:

The reason why it is important to study worldviews is that human life is complicated, confusing, multifaceted, and often puzzling – much like Paul’s letters, in fact. Study of Paul, as of the New Testament and much else besides, has for too long taken place in a (philosophically) idealist world, where thoughts and beliefs are passed to and fro as though between discarnate intelligences, leading of course to many perplexities, not least the then awkward transition from ‘theology’ to ‘ethics’, a transition with which Paul seems to have had no difficulty.

The worldview becomes the framework that impacts on all other aspects of life and determines the understanding of the various disciplines that impact on all humanity – like theology, philosophy, biology, psychology, sociology, etc. There seems to be a tension regarding the construction of a worldview. Scholars, such as R. H. Nash and J. P. Moreland, suggest that a worldview is created by an individual who applies it, whilst other scholars, such as K. Wiredu and D. A. Masolo suggests that a worldview is knowledge that operates on a community level;<sup>18</sup> so individuals draw these perceptions from the community and integrates them to their basic beliefs to create their own unique perceptions.<sup>19</sup>

A worldview comprises of different elements; for instance, it includes: an ontology, which explains the theory of existence; an epistemology, which explains the theory of knowledge; a teleology, which explains the theory of the destination; a praxeology, which explains the theory of action. A worldview is all-encompassing in that it should seek to be comprehensive; the *imago Dei Weltanschauung* conveys, as Naugle (2002: 4) remarks, that as a theistic system it exhibits the rational coherence of the biblical revelation. So a theory qualifies as a worldview if it speaks to the different factors that affect mankind; such as: economics, politics, law, history, ethics, and other disciplines.<sup>20</sup>

“Worldviews are generated by the mind’s aspiration to a unified comprehension of the universe, drawing together facts, laws, generalizations, and answers to ultimate questions” (Naugle 2002: 9); therefore, Wright (2013: 25) remarks that “A great deal of what humans do, say and think appears to spring from deep, buried sources.” Thus, the *imago Dei* notion qualifies as a worldview because it provides answers to ultimate questions, and provides these in an integrated whole.

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<sup>18</sup> N. T. Wright (2013:xvii) in introducing the relevance of a worldview in any study suggests that ‘worldview’ as it is used in communities must be used in relation to the mind-sets of individuals in those communities.

<sup>19</sup> This tension may also seem to be geographical in the sense that individuals that draw their perceptions from the community level characterize African Philosophy which is determined by communitarianism, whilst communities that create their philosophies from individual thinkers characterize Western philosophy. To read more on this check: “African Philosophy as Cultural Inquiry” Edited by Karp & Masolo; “A Companion to African Philosophy” Edited by Wiredu (2006); “Philosophy from Africa” Edited by Coetzee & Roux (1998).

<sup>20</sup> Noebel (2001) thoroughly discusses the ten disciplines that are essential for any idea or outlook to qualify as a worldview; these disciplines are: Theology; Philosophy; Ethics; Biology; Psychology; Sociology; Law; Politics; Economics; History.

Therefore, this research will explain how a worldview impacts on these various disciplines but will focus on a worldview's impact on ethics, and will propose that the *imago Dei* worldview is the most consistent, comprehensive, coherent, and concrete worldview of understanding humanity; in particular, show how the *imago Dei* worldview forms the framework of New Testament ethics within Paul's theology.<sup>21</sup> However, it is noteworthy to realize that in the contemporary setting the *imago Dei* is not the only worldview that has been accepted as the only worldview, but competes with many other worldviews that seek the allegiance of many. Thus Naugle (2002: xvi) remarks that, "the presence of a multitude of alternative worldviews is a defining characteristic of contemporary culture. Ours is, indeed, a multicultural, pluralistic age. This wide range of cosmic perspectives on offer stands in some contrast to the basic intellectual unity of the classical and Christian West."

Since a worldview contains within its structure an ethical model, different worldviews and their ethical models will be contrasted to show which is the most adequate, and also provides an intelligible unity of understanding humankind. Noebel (2001: 2), in his brilliant work on the four dominant worldviews that are competing for the hearts and minds of people, defines the term *worldview* by stating that "*worldview* refers to any ideology, philosophy, theology, movement, or religion that provides an overarching approach to understanding God, the world, and man's relations to God and the world."<sup>22</sup>

Noebel (2001: 1) categorises the four dominant worldviews into two classifications, on one side is the Christian worldview. On the other is the humanist worldview divided into three easily definable branches: Secular humanism, Marxism/Leninism, and Cosmic humanism (the New Age movement). Further on, he comments that while the latter three don't agree in every detail, there is one point on which they unanimously concur – their opposition to Biblical Christianity. Hence, Biblical Christianity affirms a position which is strongly opposed as most societies are increasingly becoming secularized; however, its influence remains unabated.

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<sup>21</sup> Worldview is also particularly important when doing hermeneutics, as this research constructs its arguments through the use of the biblical text, as Everyone comes to the text with pictures and controlling stories – and indeed with philosophical, theological, cultural, social and political assumptions and presuppositions (see Wright 2013:xviii).

<sup>22</sup> David Noebel's (2001) book, titled: "The Battle for Truth" systematically presents the four dominant world's influence on the ten disciplines of life; Noebel, in his attempt to defend the Christian worldview in the marketplace of ideas, does not interpret the other worldviews, rather he lets every worldview speak for itself and allows every individual to make their choice of which worldview they adopt.



The church, as one of the vehicles that exists to promote and defend the Biblical worldview must continue to be at guard against allurements of secularism that tend to undermine the biblical worldview and in the process mislead many individuals. Thus, Noebel (2001: 16), in his defence of Biblical Christianity remarks that the “Biblical Christian worldview is spiritually, intellectually, emotionally, and practically far superior to all other worldviews”. Further on he states that:

The Christian worldview shines brighter than its competition, is more realistic, better explains man and the universe, is true to the Bible, is more scientific, is more intellectually satisfying and defensible, and best of all, is in keeping with and faithful to the one person who has had the greatest influence in heaven and on earth – Jesus Christ (Noebel 2001: 334).

It is Jesus Christ who perfectly embodied the principles of the worldview of Biblical Christianity. This research attempts to show that there is a common thread that unites New Testament ethics and articulates them in a coherent manner; this thread is the *imago Dei Weltanschauung*. This notion will serve as a framework that integrates exegetical insights that are discovered through study, because exegesis needs a motif to become meaningful.

Hays (1996: 3) observes that careful exegesis heightens our awareness of the ideological diversity within Scripture and of our historical distance from the original communities to whom these texts were addressed, hence it is important to give a coherent account of our methods for moving between text and normative ethical judgments. With reflections on the normative ethical judgements of the New Testament, this research focuses on Pauline theology, for Paul’s influence on Christian thought has been great, following after that of Jesus. Wright (2009: x) notes that “studying the New Testament remains not only the core of a good theology degree, but one of the premier intellectual and personal challenges available in any academy; and studying Paul in particular constitutes one of the most demanding and rewarding of sub-disciplines.” Dunn (2003: 2) annotates:

The influence of Paul on subsequent Christianity has been incalculable. Not for nothing was he hailed a century ago as ‘the second founder of Christianity’. And for the most part his influence has been positive and creative, challenging new generations as he did his own to a renewed appreciation of ‘the truth of the gospel’, provoking leading exponents of Christianity to fresh insights into what it means to be ‘Christian’ and ‘church’, and stimulating again and again fresh theological syntheses at the fulcrum point of epochs in transition.

### 2.1.3 The New Testament Examination

As we approach the study of the New Testament it is important to be aware that as twenty-first-century readers/hearers of the New Testament writings we are entering the first-century C.E. as foreigners who live in a different social setting, and so we need to understand the social system these writings were written in. Malina (1993: xi) notes that for one to understand what another person says and means requires a listener or reader to somehow share in the world of meaning of the speaker or writer; thus, to understand what people say one must know their social system.

As our study is of the New Testament, Malina (1993: xi) reminds us that the social system supporting the New Testament is that of the Eastern Mediterranean of the first-century A.D. [C.E.]. Understanding this world will help us to see what is common between the first-century world and the twenty-first-century world, and through that discovery we will be able to transport the biblical principles from the biblical world to our world; and doing this will help us avoid ethnocentric anachronisms.<sup>23</sup> Thus, “The only way to avoid such misinterpretations, such ethnocentric anachronisms, is to understand the culture from which our foreign writings come” (Malina 1993: 12). This culture serves as the larger frame from which we interpret these writings. This culture is formed by six cultural cues: Perception, Feeling, Acting, Believing, Admiring, and Striving.<sup>24</sup> So, using these cultural cues to understand another culture we become involved in the process of abstract thinking. Hence, every higher abstraction is a sort of a bigger picture. What abstraction enables us to do is to represent and make some order among the countless experiences we undergo in the course of our interacting with our multiple environments; our ability to think abstractly enables us to generate some orderly or patterned understanding of our complex experiences (Malina 1993: 12–26). The word “culture” is such an abstraction.

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<sup>23</sup> Ethnocentrism is a belief that one’s ethnic group is superior to another one, and anachronism refers to something located in a time when it could not have existed or occurred. So in relation to our study, ethnocentric anachronism, according to Malina (1993: 11) is imposing the cultural artifacts, meanings, and behaviour of your own period on people of the past. In his other work on *Social-Scientific Methods in Historical Jesus Research*, Malina (2002: 3-26) also suggests that the social-scientific research offers us proper filters to keep out anachronism and ethnocentrism (See full article in the book: *The Social Setting of Jesus and the Gospels*, 2002, edited by Stegemann, Malina, and Theissen).

<sup>24</sup> See Malina (1993: 15-17) for a longer description of these cultural cues and how they make up the essential core of a given culture.



Through this abstraction we find models or paradigms that enable us to draw principles from the biblical world to the contemporary world. Thus, “models really cannot be proved right or wrong. After all, they are postulated, that is, they derive from a sort of insight that seem to hold experiences together in such a way as to make sense” (Malina 1993: 19). Therefore, the model that is postulated in this paper for understanding the New Testament writings – in particularly Pauline writings – is the *imago Dei*, which will enable us to form Paul’s ethical model within the Corinthian correspondence and Philipians.<sup>25</sup>

This anthropological model is particularly significant for Schillebeeckx, as Schreiter (commentator on the writings of Schillebeeckx 1984: 27), comments that Schillebeeckx in his “coordinates for an anthropology” emphasizes how the fullness of humanity is yet to be realized and how we will not be able to understand what salvation is if we do not understand who is being saved. Thus, his anthropological model shapes his ethics. This became evident in his hermeneutical approach of critical theory, which became the basis for doing his ethics and expresses itself through the dialectic of tradition and the present. The contrast of these two, according to Schillebeeckx (1984: 108-109), may be expressed in the following way: The hermeneutic tradition looks in history for what can be made present again, while critical theory looks for what cannot be made present again. Both approaches are fully justified, since history is an insane complex of sense and nonsense. Those who practiced the hermeneutic sciences had to some extent forgotten that our relationship with the past contains elements of division and justified opposition. Further on he notes that within the hermeneutical circle, there is an interaction between our understanding of traditional relationships of meaning and the constant correction of our own pre-understanding. This critical, corrective impulse goes back in practice to the dominant claim of the tradition that we are aiming to make present.

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<sup>25</sup> To be able to be effective in doing this, Malina (1993) provides us with an anthropological model which will help us to hear the meaning of the texts in terms of the cultural contexts in which they were originally proclaimed. This anthropological model is based on the presupposition that: All human beings are entirely the same, entirely different, and somewhat the same and somewhat different at the same time; this basic presupposition can be summarized into three parts: Nature, Culture, and Person. Malina (1993: 26) explains this three part presupposition by showing that all human beings are entirely the same, entirely different, and somewhat the same and somewhat different at the same time. The area of sameness asks why questions about the physical environment and about human beings as part of that physical environment: this is nature. The area of difference asks why questions about unique individuals and their unique personal stories: this is person. The area of partial similarity and partial difference asks why questions about the human environment people have developed as the framework or model of their social behaviour: this is culture.

The apparent point of departure is the presupposition that what is handed down in tradition, and especially the Christian tradition, is always meaningful, and that this meaning only has to be deciphered hermeneutically and made present and actual.<sup>26</sup> Therefore, the aim of this research is to present the *imago Dei* as a necessary framework in pursuing New Testament ethics in Pauline theology; drawing from the plurality of the anthropological, philosophical and theological, literary, sociological, and other approaches to make its conclusions.

Schillebeeckx (1971: 230), in his discussion of biblical anthropology in light of these other academic disciplines, comments that since theology is a reflection in the light of faith about the content of human experience which has already been made explicit in the natural sphere by philosophy, the theologian has constantly to return to the anthropological insights of the philosopher and include these in the totality of faith.<sup>27</sup> Nevertheless, the presence of God will be assumed in the treatment and integration of all the various disciplines and approaches; hence, “The overriding concern is to retain—or, perhaps, in the present postmodern atmosphere, recover—in New Testament hermeneutics the proper precedence of God as knowing subject without ignoring the real hermeneutical and philosophical issues that arise if one is not merely to be dogmatic and neo-conservative” (Torrance 2006:5).<sup>28</sup>

The gospel of Mark begins by introducing John and Jesus both preaching a message of repentance; John came preaching a baptism of repentance (v.4) and Jesus came preaching: “The kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news” (v.15).<sup>29</sup> It is interesting to notice that the message of repentance is at the heart of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

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<sup>26</sup> For a detailed discussion of Schillebeeckx’s (1984: 106-119) Hermeneutical Theology and Critical Theory see his discussions on: Critical Theory as Emancipative Praxis; Ideology and Ideology Critique as Hermeneutics; Orthopraxis as a Criterion of Critical Theory; Critical Theory, the Church, and Theology; and Critical Theory, Faith, and the Theologian.

<sup>27</sup> This research will depend on the Hermeneutical lens and methodology of Selby (2006), in his book: *Comical Doctrine: An Epistemology of New Testament Hermeneutics*.

<sup>28</sup> Torrance (2006:5), In the Foreword of Selby’s book, *In Comical Doctrine: An Epistemology of New Testament Hermeneutics*. Milton Keynes: Paternoster.

<sup>29</sup> It is interesting to realize that Jesus frequently spoke of the kingdom of God and in what is known as the manifesto of the kingdom message found in Matthew 5-7: The Sermon on the Mount, Jesus’ focus was on ethics; check the exposition of Boardman (2008) in his book: “The Kingdom”.

The verb repent here is a translation of the Greek word: μετανοέω (*metanoēō*) which means to change one's mind; this is a derivative of the noun μετάνοια (*metanoia*), translated as repentance (Mark 1:4) which means a change of mind, as it appears to one who repents. This is significant for understanding any theme in the context of a worldview because it is a consequence of a cognitive operation. Worldview is the faculty of human reason, as Naugle (2002: 303) comments that "[human reason] is an endowment in which people as thinking beings (*homo sapiens*) have trusted to provide a knowledge of themselves, their surroundings, and beyond". Pascal (1989: 82-83) said that, "man is a thinking reed... it is by means of thought that... [one] can comprehend the universe." Wright (1992: 14) comments that Jesus and Paul's explanation of the gospel embodied a revolutionary worldview. Worldview formation happens in the cognitive faculty; so the call to repent is a call to change the mind.

The prefix of the word repent: re means to return and the word pent which follows means a high place; by implication, repentance means *reversal*. So humanity must return to the high position it was created in – which was reflecting the image of God. The creation of man in the image of God is the pinnacle of all creation; hence humanity holds a high position in all creation. So the good news of the kingdom of God declares that anyone who is in Christ is called to return back to this position. Therefore, man needs to live in light of this revelation; hence, this revelation of the *imago Dei* is adequate to create an ethical paradigm for man in all situations.

The theology of the call to be like Christ is one of the main threads of the New Testament message, in particular, within Paul's writings. Thus, "Paul's influence and writings have shaped Christianity as the writings/theology of no other single individual have... So Paul's status within the New Testament canon in itself gives Paul's theological writings a pre-eminence which overshadows all the Christian theologians who followed" (Dunn 1998: 3).

It is noteworthy to remark that the Jewish ancestry of Paul makes his writings significant for the exploration of any Old Testament narrative, as he quotes and makes many allusions to Scripture in most of his letters; most importantly he tells the story with a twist by making the story of Jesus the thread and an end of the story.

Wright (1992: 407) remarks that, “Because Israel’s story speaks of a creator God who claims all people, all lands, as his own, Paul is able to reach out from within that story and address Jew and Gentile alike. He thus claims that the story of Jesus fulfils the purpose for which the creator God called Abraham in the first place.” This research is going to focus on the writings of Paul to prove its thesis that the notion of the *imago Dei* is the narrative motif of New Testament ethics.

Moreover, because of the discovery of the great diversity that existed in early Christianity, as reflected by recent New Testament scholarship, Pauline Christianity becomes significant for this research because it is a reasonably coherent and identifiable segment of early Christianity. Meeks (2003: 7) suggests that Pauline Christianity is the best segment of early Christianity to study the moral world of early Christianity because it is the best-documented segment of the early Christian movement.

We have at least seven indubitable letters of the principal figure [Apostle Paul] (which in their received form may contain fragments of yet other letters).<sup>30</sup> These are earliest of all extant Christian writings. Two characteristics make these letters particularly useful for socio-historical inquiry: each responds to some specific issue in the life of one of the local churches or in the missionary strategy of the leaders; and they frequently quote traditional material, which provides glimpses of rituals, rules, admonitions, and formulated beliefs common to the Pauline communities (Meeks 2003: 7).<sup>31</sup>

Even the other six letters, that are purported to be written by Paul, whose authorship modern scholars dispute, also, according to tradition, belong to Pauline Christianity. The previous statements compel one at this point to ask questions about the sources of all the letters that have traditionally been attributed to Paul; as Meeks (2003: 8) further on notes that the letter to Colossians and the letter to Ephesians, were most likely written by disciples of Paul. The same may be true of 2 Thessalonians.

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<sup>30</sup> For instance this is evident in Paul’s letters towards the Corinthian church, as one of the tentative proposals suggests that Paul wrote four letters to the church of Corinth, with two letters being lost – one known as the “Lost letter” and the other as the “Severe letter”; thus, some modern scholars find parts of the two “lost” letters in II Corinthians: Lost letter (1 Cor. 5:9) in 2 Cor. 6:14–13:1, and Severe letter (2 Cor. 2:3–4, 9; 7:8–12) in 2 Cor. 10–13. For more discussion on these proposals see Utley (2002: 3).

<sup>31</sup> For a possible chronology of Paul’s writings see Utley (2002: 2), in his book: *Paul’s Letters to a Troubled Church: I and II Corinthians* (Volume 6).

Moreover, these pseudonymous letters provide evidence that the Pauline association was a self-conscious movement which accorded to Paul the position of ‘founder’ or leading authority.<sup>32</sup> Paul states that the primary calling for every believer to attain in Christ is to be conformed into the image of Christ, “for those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son” (Rom.8:29). He even motivates this by rendering himself as one pressing on to this goal as his life aim, when he suggests that: “I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus” (Phil.3:14).

In Colossians 3 he gives us rules for holy living, which are a reflection of the new life we have in Christ, and this new life is “being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator” (v.9). Reflecting on his efforts towards the Galatians he reflects by saying that he labours like a mother in the pains of child birth – so that “Christ is formed in you” (v.19). Even when he calls the believers in Ephesus to the unity of faith in the body of Christ, he urges them to live a life worthy of the calling they have received (Eph. 4:1). That calling is for them to become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ (Eph. 4:13). The attainment of this state is referred to as holiness; so, the Bible’s standard for morality is holiness.

“This morality is not arbitrarily handed down by God to create difficulties for mankind. God does not make up new values according to any whim. Rather, God’s very character is holy and cannot tolerate evil or moral indifference – what the Bible calls sin. Therefore, if we wish to please God, we must act in accordance with his moral order so as to prevent sin from separating us from Him” (Noebel 2001: 109).

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<sup>32</sup> Considering that this research will construct most of its arguments through the exegesis of the passages that exist within the books that are traditionally known to belong to the ‘Pauline Corpus’, it is essential at this point to make a few comments on the sources of Paul’s letters. This research adopts Wright’s (2013: 56-61) conclusions about the sources of those 13 letters, where he assumes three things: First, he believes Colossians is certainly Pauline, and is to be used without excuse or apology. Second, Ephesians and 2 Thessalonians are highly likely to be Pauline, even if (a concession to the weaker siblings; I do myself find this Plausible) they were written by someone close to Paul and doing their best to imitate him. They may be used in evidence though perhaps not made to bear an entire load themselves. Third, as to the Pastorals, 2 Timothy may well be by Paul, writing in a different mood and context, and may be drawn on similarly, though again with due caution. 1 Timothy and Titus come in a different category, and will be used, in the opposite way to that in which a drunkard uses a lamppost, for illumination rather than support. Therefore, this is the framework I will use when discussing any of those 13 letters which are traditionally attributed to Paul; however, my research will limit itself to passages found in the ‘authentic letters’ category. I will exegete at length, in chapter 8 and 9, three of those belonging to the undisputed letters (2 Cor. 3:18; 4:1-15; Philippians 2:5-9).

It is significant to make a distinction between morals and ethics. Gaster (1988: 34) differentiates the two by noting that morals are the standards traditionally recognized as necessary for ensuring what is deemed good in society and in individuals. These are determined by the exigencies of a particular society, and vary with its ever-changing culture.

Ethics, on the other hand (on which, to be sure, morals are ultimately based), has as its province the determination of what constitutes 'good' in the first place and implies an antecedent premise. Therefore, the biblical text has within its narrative ethical principles. Every theology has an inherent ethical dimension; so the theology of the call to the recapitulation of the *imago Dei* in humanity in the New Testament influences New Testament ethics. One observes, through the Gospels, that Jesus in all his teachings was teaching his followers a particular 'philosophy', or a 'way of living'. He was providing them a certain vantage point from which they could define and describe reality; so "Jesus' teaching was intended as a way of life only for those people who subjected their lives to God's rule" (Drane 2001: 163).

This whole teaching was encapsulated in a theme of the Kingdom of God, and explained through different teachings. For instance, The Sermon on the Mount:

The most complete delineation anywhere in the New Testament of the Christian counter-culture. Here is a Christian value-system, ethical standard, religious devotion, attitude to money, ambition, life-style and network of relationships – all of which are totally at variance with those of the non-Christian world. And this Christian counter-culture is the life of the kingdom of God, a fully human life indeed but lived out under the divine rule (Stott 1988: 19).

Stott (1988: 9) also comments that The Sermon on the Mount, "seems to present the quintessence of the teaching of Jesus." Thus, Noebel (2001: 111) adds that, "The apex of Christ's ethical teaching is encapsulated in the Sermon on the Mount, found most comprehensively in Matthew 5-7." This connection between the *Kerygma* and *Didache* is seen throughout the New Testament and underpins the theology of the New Testament, which connects theology and ethics. *Kerygma* was essentially a declaration of what God had accomplished through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus and *Didache* was the term used for moral teaching or advice.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> Kerygma determined the identity of the followers of Christ and this presupposed the *Didachē* which they followed which determined their ethics; hence, ethics is the outgrowth of one's identity.



For instance, this is seen in Paul's letter to the Romans where he teaches the theology of salvation in the first eleven chapters and then teaches about the ethical and practical implications of that theology; likewise, the epistle to the Ephesians is constructed in the same format where the first three chapters focus on the position of a believer and chapter four through to six presents how believers must conduct themselves in light of their position in Christ.<sup>34</sup> This predisposition occurs in other letters attributed to Paul, as Burrige (2007: 98) confirms that, "In Romans and Galatians, the ethical material comes in the second part of each letter and deals with specific issues asked by Paul's correspondents or pertaining to their situation. This tendency can also be discerned in some other letters (e.g., 1 Thessalonians) and in later Paulines (e.g., Ephesians)."<sup>35</sup>

Rosner (2003: n.p.) notes that Paul's moral teaching cannot be isolated from the rest of his instruction. Doctrine and ethics are intimately related in Paul's letters. Hence, "A theology remote from everyday living would not be a theology of Paul" (Dunn 1998: 9).<sup>36</sup> Thus, Paul elucidates the gospel of Jesus in his writings. Drane (2001: 163) remarks that, "Those who claim to be able to accept the Sermon on the Mount, but not the other claims about Jesus in the New Testament, have failed to recognize the essential character of Jesus' teaching. It is impossible to isolate his theology from his ethics, and to do so destroys the integrity of them both."<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> Wright (2013: 42-44) cautions us here and calls this a further split of Paul's theology and ethics, which supposedly owes its roots to the sharp Reformational antithesis between 'faith' and 'works', and later this split was continued by Immanuel Kant and other modern theologians. Thus, these movements of contemporary thought generate further sets of questions: must we stay forever within the split worlds of 'indicative' versus 'imperative', and of 'politics' versus 'religion'; or, as Wright elucidates, does Paul himself provide ways towards a fresh integration of belief and life? Therefore, it is precisely this kind of discussion which may be resolved by the placing of 'theology' within the larger model of 'worldview', and enables us to address these matters in a more nuanced way. Also see Schnelle (2009: 550-552) who makes a case against the theory of the dichotomy between the indicative and imperative orientations in Pauline theology.

<sup>35</sup> Burrige (2007: 98-100) further on cites Dibelius (1936), who argued that the ethical material at the end of the letters was little more than contemporary Hellenistic paraenesis, inserted to provide moral guidance in the absence of an early Christian ethic, which was not needed in the expectation of the immediacy of the second coming. He also discusses in detail the separation and integration of Paul's ethics, eschatology and theology.

<sup>36</sup> For a critical review of Dunn's thesis, see Kim's (2002) study; some of his reflections will be introduced later.

<sup>37</sup> It is noteworthy to realize that not all New Testament scholars accept this predisposition of Paul's ethics woven together with his theology; for instance, Dibelius (1936 and 1976), as cited by Hays (see 1996: 17, 56), proposed that the blocks of moral advice that characteristically occur at the end of Paul's letters should be understood as *paranesis*, general collections of maxims adopted from popular Hellenistic philosophy.

This is essential for moral theory because, “The apex of Christ’s ethical teaching is encapsulated in the Sermon on the Mount, found most comprehensively in Matthew 5-7” (Noebel 2001:111). This idea is also manifested in the person and practice of Jesus Christ, for, the character of Jesus is the highest pattern of virtue, and his lifestyle was an outflow of that character. Marshall (2004: 41) comments that the historical Jesus is relevant to New Testament theology at three levels: First, Jesus is the historical person whose activity and message, more than that of anybody else, formed and shaped the church, and therefore he has as much right to be heard for his own sake as Paul or John. Second, he proposes that his historical activity is the starting point from which developed the whole Christian movement and its thought and practice, and therefore a study of his influence is appropriate. In this sense, Jesus is the presupposition of the theology of his followers. Third, Jesus is the subject of reflection in the Gospels, and therefore the writings of the Evangelists must be considered as a significant part of the search for the theology of the New Testament.<sup>38</sup>

Through Jesus Christ the purposes of creation are revealed and this is grasped in New Testament theology, and his practice is revealed in New Testament ethics. The pinnacle of this creation is mankind, and this brings into focus the doctrine of humanity; this doctrine is the pinnacle of creation, hence, “all creation culminates in humanity” (Pannenberg 1994: 175). Erickson (1998: 481) suggests that because of its relationship to other major Christian doctrines the human is the highest of God’s earthly creatures, the study of humanity brings to completion our understanding of God’s work and, in a sense, of God himself, since we do learn something about the Creator by seeing what he has created. Grenz (2000: 125-6) confirms that we are dependent beings whose origin lies both existentially and essentially in the creator. As a result, our very existence stands as a testimony to the reality of God. Further on he adds that anthropology, therefore, sets the stage for all that follows. Anthropology concerns itself with man being created in the image of God; and this being a discipline of systematic theology, it is important that one does not disregard biblical theology in the process of constructing a framework for the discipline of systematic theology.

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<sup>38</sup> Richard Burridge in his book: *Imitating Jesus: An Inclusive Approach to New Testament Ethics* (2007) shows how the ethics of Paul were derived from Jesus’ ethical teachings.



If he is our source then our growth in ethics is totally depended on understanding his image, which will require that one does a thorough exegesis of certain New Testament texts. Exegesis is an essential methodology in creating the structure or framework of the body of this dissertation. Thus, the principles of the socio-rhetorical criticism will be employed to reach the objectives of this paper; which is an attempt to prove that New Testament theology of the reflection of the *imago Dei* creates the framework of New Testament ethics. Moreover, the exegetical methodology presented by Andrie du Toit (ed.) (2009) in “*Focussing on the Message*” will be employed. This research will depend on a thorough exegesis to avoid misleading hermeneutics that divide the church over issues of morality; Hays (1996: 2) comments that one of the reasons that the church has become so bitterly divided over moral issues is that the community of faith has uncritically accepted the categories of popular discourse about these topics, without subjecting them to sustained critical scrutiny in light of a close reading of the Bible.

Hence, Wright (2009: x) comments that “the church and the academy both urgently need a new generation of teachers and preachers who will give themselves totally to the delighted study of the text and allow themselves to be taken wherever it leads, to think new thoughts arising out of the text and to dare to try them out in word and deed.” One of the primary goals of New Testament theology study is to understand how the message of the New Testament creates a framework for New Testament ethics. The framework that will be used in this research is that of the three related analytical categories of identity, ethics, and ethos, discussed in the book: “*Identity, Ethics, and Ethos in the New Testament*”, edited by Jan G. Van der Watt (2006).

As our focus will be Paul, it is evident that Paul discusses the relationship of these three: identity, ethics, and ethos, in his writings; Van der Watt (2006: vii), in making reference to some of Paul’s material, notes that Paul thinks that his addressee should behave on the basis of their identity and ethics. Marshall (2004: 34) notes that the focus of the New Testament writings is concerned with Jesus and the repercussions of his activity. One also hopes that this thesis will be able to contribute to the need of resources and avenues for Christian individuals and communities in growing ethically. Hence, Marshall (2004: 35) comments that the Gospel of the writings of the New Testament is concerned with the spiritual growth of those who are converted to the Christian faith.

Moreover, he notes that they are concerned to make converts and then to provide for their nurture, to bring new believers to birth and to nourish them to maturity. Therefore, New Testament believers are called to ethical progression!

## **2.2 The apparent synthesis**

New Testament believers are not left to themselves to determine what should constitute their ethical paradigm, but rather the New Testament documents provide them with ethical vistas that should constitute their ethical norms. New Testament scholars have introduced six approaches to study New Testament Ethics, and have presented them using three analytical categories of identity, ethics, and ethos. Identity, referring to who a person or a community regard themselves to be and why; this is a significant category because it has a determinative influence on the following categories of ethics and ethos. The ethics of the New Testament are based on the discovery of a new-identity by the first Christian communities. This is the most significant category because it is fundamental and it determines the reflection of the other two categories; in a sense, being precedes doing. Hence, Meeks (1986: 12) shares this insight:

There is a way of looking at ethics from the bottom up, in which it is a perfectly proper form of ethical directive to say, for example to a child, “we do not do that.” Probably the response from the child, and perhaps also from the professional ethicist, will be, “why not?” Very often that is an important question to ask, but there are other occasions when it may be more productive to ask a different question: Who are “we”? The question “Why?” calls for an explanation; “Who?” invites understanding.

The second analytical category in ethics involves the ethical codes, rules, values, and principles that a person or a community base their actions on; these would be indicators that characterize how a person or a community must be like. The third category of ethos is a behavioural category, in a sense that this behaviour is a reflection of the ethics embraced by an individual or a community, and it displays the identity of that individual or community; ethos is the actions that reveal the unique identity and express the ethical convictions of the individual or a community (Van Der Walt 2006: ix). These analytic categories embody Paul’s ethical trajectory of the indicative and imperative; Dunn (1998: 630) defines this feature of the indicative and imperative in Paul’s theological ethics by stating that:

The point is that the indicative is the necessary presupposition and starting point for the imperative. What Christ has done is the basis for what the believer must do. The beginning of salvation is the beginning of a new way of living. The “new creation” is what makes possible a walk “in newness of life.” Without the indicative the imperative would be an impossible ideal, a source of despair rather than of resolution and hope. The imperative must be the outworking of the indicative.

It is this feature of the ethic that is the outworking or of a theology that characterizes New Testament ethics. Hays (2006) has excellently summarized the six approaches to New Testament ethics; these six treatments are regarded as “models [that] represents a particular conception of how the study of ethics is to be related to the New Testament” (Hays 2006: 4).

### 2.2.1 Historical description of the ethical teaching of the New Testament writings

This is regarded as the most popular model in the study of New Testament ethics, as Hays (2006:4) notes that “most books on New Testament ethics by New Testament scholars have fallen into this category.”

This model is significant because it deals particularly with the New Testament text, how it constructed the ethics of the first New Testament communities; moreover, this model is important because most books in this category develop their themes upon the two important characters of the New Testament: Jesus and Paul, who are of central significance for this research. Thus, the relative weight of discussion given to the various sources makes it clear that Jesus and Paul are the two central figures for New Testament ethics. There is no treatment of extracanonical writings, so the New Testament canon is treated as a self-contained entity. This model is diverse in its approach to New Testament ethics because the New Testament literature is characterized by different voices in different contexts; so this model does not provide a unifying principle of the whole New Testament ethics.

Hays (2006: 5), cites Shrage – who belonged to this ‘school of thought’ – who highlighted the concept of ‘the law of love’ as the guiding factor in most New Testament writings; however, Hays (2006: 5) further on notes that his book [*The Ethics of the New Testament*, 1988] contains no synthetic reflection about the unity of the New Testament canon as an ethical witness; Shrage’s work is concerned to describe the ethical ideas and teachings of the New Testament rather than to examine the actual practices of the early Christians.

As a result, this model contains within itself the potential of creating a hermeneutical crises because anyone can interpret these ideas and teachings of the New Testament the way it suits them; and without a thorough delineation of the ethical practices of the New Testament the individual or community may corrupt the very message of the New Testament in their attempts to construct the ethics of the New Testament.

### 2.2.2 Ethnographic description of the social world of the early Christians

The key scholar of this model or school of thought is Meeks (1993), who is one of the leading figures, and a social historian, of the Early Christian Movements. Their analysis begins with the reflection of how the Early Christian communities interacted with the social world they found themselves; “according to this model, the New Testament scholar is like an anthropologist seeking to ‘visit’ ancient communities in the Mediterranean world and to offer an ethnographic account, a ‘thick description’ of their life and practices” (Hays 2006: 6).

So this model concerns itself with the study of the social structure that the Early Christian communities interacted with; this investigation is not restricted to the New Testament canon, but surveys the world and the cultures where these New Testament documents developed. However, this model does not give normative ethical practices of the Early Christian communities, and so it proves inadequate; as Hays (2006: 7) observes that:

Meeks shies away from translating the results of his studies into normative ethical reflections. His ethnography of ancient communities is designed as a purely *wissenschaftlich* enterprise, taking its place in the secular university alongside other purportedly value-neutral investigations in the humanities and social sciences. One result of his studies is to heighten our awareness of the great cultural and historical distance between our world and the ancient Mediterranean world. To appropriate early Christian texts in a direct way as normative for today is highly dubious and even dangerous.

Meeks’ work on normative Christian ethics is encapsulated in his presentation of the seven ‘Preliminary Theses on Christian Morality’, which he describe as: (i) Making morals and making community are one dialectical process; (ii) A Christian moral community must be grounded in the past; (iii) The church’s rootage in Israel is a privileged dimension of its past;

(iv) Faithfulness ought not to be confused with nostalgia; (v) Christian ethics must be polyphonic; (vi) Moral confidence, not moral certainty, is what we require; (vii) God tends to surprise (Meeks 1993: 213-219).<sup>39</sup>

Understanding the world of the Early Church and the principles that governed them but not relating those principles to today's church does not contribute much practical relevance for today's ethical reflection of the New Testament; thus, this model – though it emphasizes another dimension of the Early Christian communities – it also seems inadequate.

### 2.2.3 Extraction of ideals or principles

This model regards the New Testament texts as narratives that embody ethical principles that must be extracted in the process of reflecting on the story, in a sense the story is secondary because it does not provide any normative ethical principles, however such principles are contained in the story.

So, “in this model, the stories and letters of the New Testament are taken as carriers of a moral message that can and must be extracted from them, in the form of ideals, principles, or ethical themes, such as love, justice, or liberation... It is characteristic of this approach that once the freight is delivered, once we have the concept, we no longer really need the story” (Hays 2006: 9). Reinhold Niebuhr (1892 – 1971) is regarded as one of the proponents of this model, as Hays (2006: 9) further on comments that:

Niebuhr treats the love-ethic of Jesus as an ‘impossible ideal’ that cannot be practiced directly by human beings. It can only be approximated through the attempt to enforce the principles of justice in human societies, which will require the use of violence because of the pervasive reality of human sinfulness... Niebuhr’s appeal to the ‘ideal’ of love and the principles of justice allows him to overturn the normative force of Jesus’ explicit teaching against violence in the Sermon on the Mount.

The risk of this methodology is that it chooses certain ideals and principles but in the process it ignores the rest, which are also necessary for a comprehensive reflection of normative ethics of the New Testament.

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<sup>39</sup> This work was a development from his earlier work: “*The Moral World of the First Christians*”; here Meeks (1986) discusses some particular dimensions of the social process by which the character – character in this regard signifies identity – of the Christian communities of the first two centuries took form (cf. Meeks 1986).

Hence, “Interpreters who work in this model often pay relatively little attention to detailed exegesis and ignore the shape and content of the biblical narratives. The New Testament is used in a highly selective way, as the interpreter lifts out nuggets of truth and ignores the rest” (Hays 2006: 9). If the ethical ideals and principles of the New Testament are not treated in relation or side-by-side with the narrative from which they are extracted then they become lopsided and may have an opposite effect of what is intended. This is evident in some of the work of liberation theology, as in “the work of some liberation theologians, one sometimes senses that a particular theme or principle, such as liberation or justice, has become an independent construct no longer closely governed by the biblical narratives” (Hays 2006: 9). This model is also an inadequate representation of New Testament ethics.

#### 2.2.4 Cultural critique of ideologies in the New Testament

It is unfortunate to notice that part of the history of the Christian church is marked with abuses that emanated from many individuals and groups who professed to be loyal to the Bible and faithful to its teaching, though in the process they undermined the ethical teachings of the Scriptures. Thus, a movement of biblical scholars and Christian theologians arose to counter these corruptions that were based on a wrong hermeneutic of the Bible. As a result a model of the ‘cultural critique of ideologies in the New Testament’ was birthed, by scholars whom have been applying a ‘hermeneutics of suspicion’ to Scripture; this group of scholars included feminist theologians, who, for instance, rejected the ideology of patriarchy, which is evident in some Christian communities, as destructive to human flourishing – for one of the key motives of ethics is human flourishing. Hays (2006: 11) describes this model by noting that:

Sadly, our common history does bear witness to epidemic violence, including violence against women, children and the powerless. Certainly this violence is to be condemned, and one might hope that interpreters of the Bible would have good grounds for proclaiming such condemnation. The difficulty in which we find ourselves, however, is this: if the Bible itself – the revelatory, identity-defining text of the Christian community – contains texts that authorise and promote such violence, what are we to do? What is the ground on which we stand to conduct a critique of Scripture? For Schüssler Fiorenza, the answer is clear: a feminist critical hermeneutic does not appeal to the Bible as its primary source but begins with women’s own experience and vision of liberation. Experience is treated as unambiguously revelatory, and the Bible is critically scrutinised in its light.

The problem with this model is that it seems reactionary in a sense that it may not be able to construct an ethic except if there was an experience that precedes the formation of an ethical norm. This model uses one's experience as a form of evaluating the Bible; as Hays (2006: 11) annotates that this model explicitly begin with a particular social or political advocacy stance and uses this as a programmatic basis for evaluating the ethical impact of all biblical texts.

Where the text fails to pass this ideological screening mechanism, they are to be 'unmasked' and subjected to critical scrutiny. As a result, the New Testament loses its authority as a guide to New Testament ethics, and Christian communities are again left at the mercy of human opinion in their ethical construction. Thus, Hays (2006: 12) remarks that the obvious difficulty with this model is that it tends to diminish any meaningful claim for the authority of the New Testament, and it decides in advance what must be true. Therefore, even this model proves inadequate to provide a comprehensive understanding of New Testament ethics.

#### 2.2.5 Character-formation and 'the ethics of reading'

This approach begins its analysis not with ethics but with an individual that embodies those ethical norms; thus, the emphasis of this model is on the character-formation of the individual. Hays (2006: 12) notes that this model is an approach to ethics that emphasizes the formation of character in the moral agent. However, this character-formation is not only the individual's responsibility but also the responsibility of a community that embraces those ethical principles as a whole.

Thus, this model is characterised by the fact that, "The most important task of the church is to be a community capable of hearing the story of God we find in scripture and living in a manner that is faithful to that story. If and only if we are such a community can we seek to derive moral guidance from the story of Jesus" (Hays 2006: 13).

Hence, it is in this context that Scripture will be understood; if it is read in a community that is already shaped and characterized by the ethical principles of Scripture. Hauerwas, one key proponent of this model, is cited as saying that:



This formation occurs through the example of the lives of the saints and through the church's liturgy, especially the Eucharist. The Lord's Supper is a community-forming tradition that creates the indispensable context for the interpretation of Scripture. Thus, there is no 'problem' about how to relate ethics and the New Testament. We are embedded in a community, the church, whose traditions teach us how to read the story of Jesus. As we participate in that community, we are shaped by that story to become a peaceful people, forgiven and forgiving (Hays 2006: 14).

The problem with this model is that it lifts man's traditions above the Scriptures; and now if tradition is the evaluative mechanism of our ethics then even when we go wrong we will find difficulty in accepting the correction from Scripture.

Hays (2006: 15) warns that, "Such reader-centered approaches threaten to deprive the New Testament witnesses of any voice that can challenge or correct us." This model also proves inadequate to give a thorough understanding of New Testament ethics.

#### 2.2.6 Metaphorical embodiment of narrative paradigms

In the discussion of the six treatments of New Testament Ethics, Hays presents the sixth model which was his own construction through an integration of the previous five schools of thought; and he titled his own model as the *Metaphorical embodiment of narrative paradigms*.

"The defining characteristic of this sixth model for relating Scripture and ethics is that it reads the Bible as a story that narrates God's gracious action for the reconciliation of the world. The story creates a symbolic world in which we are to find our orientation and our identity" (Hays 2006: 16). This model envisages a Christian community that will embody the story of 'the gospel' of Jesus Christ metaphorically and continue to live out that story in the present day.

As we hear this story we reflect on our lives and allow that story to shape our lives and our ethics are formed through this dialectic; thus, "in this model, the stories of the New Testament canon are privileged. We do not stand in judgement over them; rather, *they* confront and form and shape us... our first business, then, within this approach, is to listen as carefully to the New Testament witnesses as possible" (Hays 2006: 16).



This model is significant to build on for the investigation of this research because it takes into account the other five models and builds on them, and seems the most adequate of the whole six; moreover, it is exegetically sound in that it considers all the biblical disciplines, for it not only stops on the descriptive stage – like most of the other five models – but it has a pragmatic element in it.

This model does not present only a theory of how an individual or a community who embraces the ethical principles of the New Testament will look like, but also it makes those individuals and communities models of those principles as they embody the story of the gospel. “Thus, the church itself, being transformed into the image of Christ, becomes a living metaphor for the power of God to which the text also bears witness. The text shapes the community, and the community embodies the meaning of the text” (Hays 2006: 17).

### **2.3 The emerging hypothesis**

In consideration of the New Testament ethics map, “drawn” by Hays (2006), of the six approaches to study New Testament ethics, it is noteworthy to realize that most of these six approaches limit their discussion to the New Testament world, without making the central figure of the New Testament – Jesus of Nazareth – a priority in their discussion. Burrige (2007: 4), in his excellent study of the New Testament, comments that “the key to understanding the New Testament has to be the person of Jesus, and that therefore he is the correct person and place with which to begin as well as to end.”

Burrige (2007: 16), in his observations and critiques of the work of New Testament ethics – including those mentioned above, begins by surveying the academic discussion of the subject.<sup>40</sup> He feels, however, that most of that work does not apply the New Testament ethical principles to the moral issues of today.

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<sup>40</sup> Burrige (2007) records his reflections of the survey in his book titled: *Imitating Jesus: An Inclusive Approach to New Testament Ethics*; his survey involves: British scholarship, German studies, studies in the United States of America, Roman Catholic and Orthodox work, Worldwide studies, Evangelical approaches, and historical and sociological enquiry. There is also a detailed discussion of these approaches in his study.

Thus, he notes that, “It is significant that after this exhaustive survey of scholarship from around the world and across the various traditions, it is only more recently that a few scholars like Hays and Verhey have really attempted to bridge the gap between the New Testament ethical material and the multiple nature of moral issues today” (Burrige 2007: 16).<sup>41</sup>

Therefore, the best approach to keep these two factors – the New Testament ethical material and the nature of moral issues today – related is by reading all the New Testament writings in light of a Christological emphasis; thus, Burrige (2007: 21) in his explorations of how to relate the New Testament ethics to today suggests that, “Only from this beginning, in the person and teaching of Jesus, can we trace the story forward through the gospels and the letters, as the impact of Jesus is demonstrated by their central Christological concerns.” Further on Burrige (2007: 31) makes this important note:

First and foremost, the whole of the New Testament is about Jesus of Nazareth and what God has brought about through his deeds and words, life, death and resurrection. Without him as the catalyst, there would be no New Testament, and no Christian church, let alone Christian ethics. Therefore he is the correct place to begin our study of the ethical material in the New Testament.<sup>42</sup>

This research begins the narrative of Jesus from the Old Testament, because, as noted above, Jesus is the perfect embodiment of the image of God that man was originally created in.

The first man – created in that perfect image – was Adam, however, he did not fulfil the demands of reflecting that image as intended, so Jesus Christ, through being the second Adam, fulfilled the requirements of reflecting that image; thus, Apostle Paul notes that: “So also it is written, “The first MAN, Adam, BECAME A LIVING SOUL” The last Adam became a LIFE-GIVING SPIRIT.” (1 Cor.15:45 NASB. *Emphasis mine*). Therefore, Jesus is the perfect image who creates a foundation of the ethics of the New Testament through his deeds and words.

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<sup>41</sup> Hays’ (1996) significant work in New Testament ethics is: *The Moral Vision of the New Testament*, and Verhey’s (2002) important work in this field is: *Remembering Jesus: Christian community, Scripture, and the moral life*.

<sup>42</sup> Burrige (2007) in his second chapter: “*Jesus of Nazareth: Great Moral Teacher or Friend of Sinners*”, discusses the importance of the person and teaching of Jesus in the formation of the ethics of the New Testament. Burrige’s insights, from his book, are referred to in some of the chapters that follow.

The six treatments of New Testament ethics discussed above made allusions to the Old Testament Scriptures, however, the discussions seem to be based on the effect of environmental factors – could be historical, or geographical, or cultural, or ideological, or metaphorical, etc. – as they influenced New Testament believers. These descriptions are mostly descriptive than practical – except the sixth model, constructed by Hays (2006: 18) who focuses on how the Christian community can practically embody the gospel; he notes that until we see the text lived, we cannot begin to conceive what it means, and until we see God's power at work among us we do not know what we are reading.

Although the sixth model, by Hays, proves adequate to provide a comprehensive, coherent, and concrete understanding of New Testament ethics, it also seems plausible to make an investigation of the nature and destiny of the person who will inculcate these ethics as he is initiated into this New Testament community of believers; the model for this person is Jesus Christ.

Burridge helps us here in presenting Jesus of Nazareth as the central figure of New Testament ethics. Therefore, the Hays model constructed through Burridge's Christological emphasis provides a new model for understanding New Testament ethics. Perhaps, this research attempts to construct a seventh approach in the study of New Testament ethics, which will focus on the identity of the moral agent who reflects on an understanding of the Old Testament creation narrative of the *imago Dei*, as it underpinned Pauline ethics. Hence, his theology had an influence in the creation of his ethical norms.

A major feature of Paul's theology is his vigorous ethical concern. As a pastor as well as a theologian, Paul was inevitably concerned with the outworking of his gospel – not only in terms of the beginning and process of salvation and of communal worship and ministry but also in terms of how believers should live. His letters bear witness to the depth of this concern (Dunn 1998: 626).

According to Paul, this reality in the lives of the believers is shaped by their identity in Christ, of which they have taken after his image. Thus, identity formed by the *imago Dei* is useful for understanding normative ethics because it is universal.

The concept of normativity is useful to our construction of an ethical paradigm because it translates our judgments into theories, which help to make our evaluations of morality universal; thus, “theory enables us to delve beyond our surface intuitions about what is right and wrong to get at the underlying explanation for that judgment – a very important judgment, since it enables us to provide justifications for our actions and evaluations” (Driver 2007: 4). Further on Driver (2007: 4) notes that:

The role of normative ethical theory is to better understand moral justification; one important point to stress is that normative ethics is about giving an account of what we ought to do, or what we ought to be like. This is distinct from giving an account or a theory of how people do in fact act, and how they do in fact go about praising and blaming. That is the subject of descriptive, not normative, ethics.

One should take notice of two important clauses in the statement quoted above which are: what we ought to do, or what we ought to be like, for they describe two important features in the ethical evaluation: action and character. I think these two must be related in a certain order which stipulates that character should precede action; how we ought to be like influences what we ought to do.

The focus of our evaluation should be on the character of the individual than on what they do; nevertheless, these two cannot be separated, for character is revealed in action. An ethical theory is an indispensable feature of evaluating morality and for justifying character and actions. What is also important in one’s evaluation is to find a universal character of the theory assessed or in discussion. Driver (2007: 11), in the introduction of her work notes that:

When it comes to ethical theories, we also look for novel guidance. Ethical theories are supposed to provide us with decision procedures and/or criteria for evaluation of actions and character. They are, in that way, practically oriented. If a theory does not give us answers that go beyond our intuitions, then the theory is not doing any independent work for us, and this would be a draw back.

The apostle Paul always had both these, character and action, in tension; and as a theologian he realized that the identity of the New Testament believers is shaped by the God who created them – who is revealed in Jesus Christ.

“Morality depends upon what God believes is right and wrong. This is often referred to as the “doxastic” interpretation of divine command theory. On this view God is, in effect, an ideal observer. He has all the virtues that we associate with the ideal epistemic agent and moral judge. He is *impartial*, since He loves all persons equally; He is rational and thus makes no errors of reasoning; and He has full information, so He will not be making mistakes on the basis of partial information. If God, then, who is not swayed by bias or prejudice, who is completely fair, and who knows all of the relevant facts... Thus a distinction can be drawn between the volitional and the doxastic versions of the theory” (Driver 2007: 27).

The doxastic version of the divine command theory is the most reasonable and adequate for a normative ethical theory because it accounts for a universal description which is necessary for evaluating both character and actions. Christian ethics finds its basis in God, it is Him who determines what is right and what is wrong – it is not human opinion.

For the Christian, God is the ultimate source of morality, and it is nothing short of blasphemy when we place ourselves in His role. And yet, if one does not submit his nature entirely to the moral absolutes founded in God’s character, logically the only ethical authority residing over mankind is our own impulses. It is important for the Christian to understand the fallacies of secular ethics, so that he can avoid the inconsistencies of unfounded ethical ideals. All secular ethical codes are an aberration of God’s code and should be recognized as such (Noebel 2001: 110).

God reveals his will through the Scriptures. Bretzke (2004: 99), in his discussion of how Scripture is meant to function as a normative voice in moral issues, supports Divine command theory by noting that:

I believe from the perspective of fundamental moral theology the question becomes one of how we can take the Bible off the shelf and bring it back into ethical discussions in a way which uses Scripture in a constructive and authentic dialogical manner – a way that may not “clinch” moral arguments from the start by closing off any subsequent debate or discussion, but through a process that will allow the voice of Scripture to be heard, engaged, and evaluated in a manner that properly forms and informs both our character and our moral reasoning which flows out of that character.

Thus, this research picks on the Scriptures – particularly, the writings of Paul – to formulate normative ethics. Paul, who was of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews (Php.3:5), was familiar with the Old Testament creation narrative and most probably, this Old Testament creation narrative, influenced his anthropological horizon.

### 2.3.1 The quest for an anthropological horizon

This investigation of the new approach towards New Testament ethics, which introduces an element of an anthropological horizon, does not ignore the preceding six approaches, but rather builds on their insights and creates a dialectical operation between them and results in this apparent emerging approach of the *imago Dei weltanschaang*. Thus, Kopfensteiner (1992: 45) suggests that students learn best through reflecting and adding new insight to the classical approaches by noting that:

The basic presupposition of the classical system are questioned, conceptual categories are disrupted and rearranged, and traditional terms take on new meanings. The result of this process is that the classical system is restructured and a new framework for asking questions is erected... the discovery of history within the philosophy of science has carried a tacit critique of the tradition's foundationalist view of rationality. Moral reflection must be able to learn from this epistemological and historical discussion without jeopardizing its own autonomy.

The above description, which shows doubt on tradition, may simply be described as the questioning of the traditional answers because of a dissatisfaction that arises from contemporary situations where the traditional answers no longer seem adequate.

Thus, Kopfensteiner and Lesch<sup>43</sup> both foster the idea that our departure for our contemporary discussion of normative ethics must consider various horizons of the cultural landscape. Lesch (2000: 196-7) notes that, "The important thing is the expansion of horizons that allows us not to cling desperately to one normative concept of the public realm, while around us the world has changed so much that the old categories are only partially applicable." The *imago Dei* anthropological horizon is an old concept of human nature, however, because of its timeless wisdom it remains a necessary departure for normative ethics.

Kopfensteiner (1992), in his work on history in the moral epistemology, unpacks his argument by focusing on three key situations in the history of moral epistemology. Firstly, he focuses on Thomas Kuhn's contribution to the understanding of scientific revolution.

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<sup>43</sup> Lesch makes contributions to the historical, social dialogue of ethics in his article titled: "Media Ethics as a Cultural Diagnosis of the Times" (2000).

Secondly, he moves on to discuss the character of moral reasoning within moral theology; particularly, to show what underpins it. Thirdly, he shows how paradigm shifts in normative ethics has an effect of moral progress.

### 2.3.1.1 History of Science

Kuhn's critique of traditional scientific models in his work: *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* is significant because he questions the traditional answers not as an "outsider" but as one who also belongs to the same movement and heavily involved in it. Kopfensteiner (1992: 45) confirms this by noting: "The irony rests in the fact that Kuhn's work has proved to be an immanent critique of the legacy in whose shadow this movement stood."

History had taught him that those who had gone before him attempted to construct an adequate scientific model; however, their works still proved to be inadequate. What's important to highlight about his predecessors in light of the history of moral epistemology is the fact that his predecessors were in different scientific contexts and some build on the same thought pattern – though from different schools – and others did so consecutively. Thus, "Kuhn's awareness of this insight originated with his experience of history" (Kopfensteiner 1992: 46).

Kuhn suggests that at the centre of the paradigm shifts in moral reasoning is a dialectic between theory and praxis; thus, Kopfensteiner (1992: 46) remarks that Kuhn distinguishes two components of the paradigm, which are: a formal-theoretical component and a pragmatical-empirical one. The dialectic is not only between theory and praxis, but also between the two paradigms – the old traditional one and the new constructed one; because, "there is always some overlap between rival paradigms – overlap of observations, concepts, standards and problems" (Kopfensteiner 1992: 47). Nevertheless, Kopfensteiner moves a step further in his next point because Kuhn's reflection on the history of epistemology was focused on scientific revolutions, but Kopfensteiner's focus was on moral progress.



### 2.3.1.2 History of Moral Reasoning

At the centre of the history of moral reasoning is human flourishing; human beings continue to reflect on their moral standards because they anticipate an experience of moral progress which brings meaning within their communities. This reflection is done within the community because it involves not only the individual but also those the individual interacts with. Hence, Kopfensteiner (1992: 48) describes meaning as having a narrative structure. However, because this reflection involves more than one individual, there must be a common notion that reveals a common understanding.

Kopfensteiner (1992: 49) suggests that this commonality is brought about by the original anthropological horizon. He notes that: “This characterization of moral truth has an impact on normative reflection. To understand a norm’s propositional formulation, one must see how its prescriptive use mediates or discloses a more original anthropological horizon. This horizon... is the hermeneutical key to the prescriptive meaning of the norm.”

This notion of the anthropological horizon is significant because it reveals the cognitive content of the perceiver. It is here where one sees that belief is intertwined with behaviour, as Kuhn saw them as two components: theory and praxis. Thus, “between the originating horizon and the justified behaviour there is formed a hermeneutical circle which converts into a spiral, so that moral reason completes its own history” (Kopfensteiner 1992: 49). It is this history that provides us with meaning in new situations. It is here where nature transforms into normative.

### 2.3.1.3 History of Moral Progress

Kopfensteiner brings his argument to a conclusion by discussing the principle of totality and moral progress. Entailed within history is moral traditions, and so for human flourishing there must be development within that framework, for this expresses the principle of totality, which brings the various elements together; thus, “the principle holds that the part exists for the sake of the whole” (Kopfensteiner 1992: 55).



This principle suggests that moral progress takes into account the development that is brought by science as significant because it expands one's horizon that is shaped by tradition; hence, "within the history of the principle of totality is the dialectic between tradition-bound research and revolutionary science" (Kopfensteiner 1992: 56).

This scientific revolution provides the emancipation for human flourishing, as it relates to tradition. Therefore: "The reciprocity of tradition and emancipation accounts for moral progress" (Kopfensteiner 1992: 57). Therefore, this is necessary for this research because the scientific revolution has provided us with tools – like literary criticism, social-scientific criticism, rhetorical criticism, postmodern criticism, and theological criticism, etc. – which will enable us to better investigate the tradition of the *imago Dei* phenomenon, and how it relates to the contemporary situations.

However, this introduces a different question in the study of normative ethics, which asks – since the *imago Dei* phenomenon belongs to the religious world of ideas – is there a place and relevance of religious ethics in the contemporary world? Stout (2001: 109) remarks that, "It must be said, however, that most moral philosophers in recent decades have felt free to dismiss religious ethics as plainly fallacious and therefore not worthy of serious philosophical study." However, in making a case for religious ethics, Stout (2001: 114) notes:

The God who commands us is the God who created us. And he created us with certain ends in view – especially that of loving fellowship with God. He made us the way we are as human beings. Given the way we are and the way creation has been structured, we do well to strive for the good for which we were designed and toward which we tend. But because we are finite and fallen, the commands of the perfect God are our best guide to the fulfilment of our own nature – the best criterion of moral goodness and obligation we've got.

Thus, our understanding of our human nature – which determines our anthropological horizon – influences our ethical paradigm; this could be either secular or religious.

### 2.3.2 The question of religious ethics

Whether we begin with religious propositions or secular propositions in our moral reasoning is a secondary matter, because both these are manifestations of the worldview we embrace; as Stout (2001: 120) further on notes that:

None of us starts from scratch in moral reasoning. Nor can we ever start over again, accepting only beliefs that have deduced from certitudes or demonstrable facts. We begin already immersed in the assumptions and precedents of a tradition, whether religious or secular, and we revise these assumptions and set new precedents as we learn more about ourselves and our world. Our starting point is not so much arbitrary as inescapable: we are who we are, the heirs of this tradition as opposed to that one, born into one epoch than another, our intuitions shaped by the grammar of our native tongue. We demonstrate our rationality, if at all, by how we move out from that starting point – subjecting this or that assumption or precedent to criticism as real doubts arise, employing old vocabularies or inventing new ones, the better to think and live well.

The statement by Stout, quoted above (2001: 120), is, perhaps, the statement that encapsulates the nature of foundations in ethics. Moreover, it provides us with a clear understanding of the departure of moral reasoning in normative ethics. Here we are provided with the point of the beginning of moral reasoning, which is one's presupposed epistemology, or one's ontology. Kopfensteiner (1992: 48) remarks:

Our perception of the world are not pure and immediate; we do not just gaze at the world, we see it as something and another. Our access to the world, then, is through language. The world is intrinsically linguistic. In learning a language we look upon the world in a certain way; we learn how to speak and converse about the world. By acquiring a language we are inducted into a network of conceptual relations through which we reason about the world.

Hence, Stout (2001: 120) noted that “We begin already immersed in the assumptions and precedents of a tradition, whether religious or secular, and we revise these assumptions and set new precedents as we learn more about ourselves and our world.” These presuppositions we uphold, which also influences our point of departure for moral reasoning, according to both Stout and Kopfensteiner, these in some way implicitly dictate which direction we will go in our moral reasoning.

The framework which guides our reflections on ethics is an anthropological horizon, as Kopfensteiner (1992: 49) comments that “to understand a norm's propositional formulation, one must see how its prescriptive use mediates or discloses a more original anthropological horizon. This horizon is the hermeneutical key to the prescriptive meaning of the norm.” Stout already suggests that in ethics there are two anthropological horizons, which are secular and religious; we either start ethical reflections on secular presuppositions or on religious presuppositions.

In making this differentiation between these two linguistic traditions, or anthropological horizons, Stout (2001: 118) gives justification for the relevance of the religious propositions in comparison with the secular propositions; as he states that “if all our moral beliefs ultimately depend upon fundamental criteria we simply decide upon, those beliefs seem not to have been justified at all but rather rendered utterly arbitrary.”

Thus, in this contexts one already has an epistemic foundation – whether religious or secular – to reason morally; hence, “None of us starts from scratch in moral reasoning” (Stout 2001: 120). These anthropological horizons have a cognitive formulation which is shaped by one’s linguistic tradition. Hence, “Our starting point is not so much arbitrary as inescapable: we are who we are, the heirs of this tradition as opposed to that one, born into one epoch than another, our intuitions shaped by the grammar of our native tongue” (Stout 2001: 120).

To be progressive in our ethical reflection in the future, Stout (2001: 120) suggests that we need to allow our anthropological horizon undergo a thorough scrutiny as rational beings. Thus, he finishes his statement by noting that, “We demonstrate our rationality, if at all, by how we move out from that starting point – subjecting this or that assumption or precedent to criticism as real doubts arise, employing old vocabularies or inventing new ones, the better to think and live well.”

As rational beings we cannot afford to be complacent in our reflections of moral reasoning by not critically evaluating our moral propositions; rather, we must critique our linguistic tradition through a formation of a dialectic of the dialogue between that tradition – which is an anthropological horizon – with a new understanding of the new conditions that beset that tradition. As a result our moral reasoning will improve.

Therefore, “between the originating horizon and the justified behaviour there is formed a hermeneutical circle which converts into spiral, so that moral reason completes its own history” (Kopfensteiner 1992: 49).

### 2.3.3 The qualifying ethical horizon

One's ethical horizon is influenced by a worldview and this research proposes that a biblical worldview is the most coherent, in comparison with the humanist worldview which is characterized by ethical relativism that suggests that it is men who make the rules. Hocutt (1980: 137) noted that, "The fundamental question of ethics is, who makes the rules? God or men? The theistic answer is that God makes them. The humanistic answer is that men make them. This distinction between theism and humanism is the fundamental division in moral theory." Both these are opposing forces as either maintains that the other is irrelevant in moral theory.

As the *Human Manifesto II* states that, "The traditional supernaturalistic moral commandments are especially repressive of our human needs. They are immoral insofar as they foster illusions about human destiny (heaven) and suppress vital inclinations" (Kurtz 1973: 50).<sup>44</sup> Thus, the humanist worldview considers the religious moral codes as inhibiting human flourishing because it is too restrictive.

The British Humanist association summarizes this worldview by suggesting that, "Humanists believe that man's conduct should be based on humanity, insight, and reason. He must face his problems with his own moral and intellectual resources, without looking for supernatural aid" (cited by Noebel 2001: 87).<sup>45</sup> If ethical theory is dependent on man and needs no supernatural aid then it is bound to be relative and change with any situation and will change as human opinion change because every man judges every situation from their own perspective; so "ethical relativism consists of little more than experimenting with ethics in every new scenario" (Noebel 2001: 88). Therefore, Noebel (2001: 90) adds:

When one sorts through the haze of vague assertions, there emerges one foundational assumption that all Humanists hold dear: a systems of ethics must allow more "freedom" than Judeo-Christian ethics. Absolutes must give way to suggestions and guidelines. Humanist ethical theories, however they are formulated, are all fundamentally justifications for denying God's moral order.

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<sup>44</sup> Gaster (1988) elaborates on the three main premises of secular humanism's confrontation with the Bible and biblical ethics; reference to these is made in Chapter 5 of this dissertation in the section: Biblical v. Secular ethics.

<sup>45</sup> This statement was made at the Annual general meeting of the British Humanist Association, in July 1967.

However, can one depend on man's formulation of ethical constructions? Throughout history it seems evident that when man depended on himself that has always led to the escalation of evil – for example, the age of the Enlightenment proves this very clearly. The human mind left without the divine influence is not adequate to provide an ethical order, in the same way as it is not able to formulate the physical order. C. S. Lewis (1973: 56) commented that, “the human mind has no more power of inventing a new value than of imagining a new primary colour, or, indeed, of creating a new sun and a new sky for it to move in.”

The ethical order must also be depended on a divine influence, and the divine order assumed here is of the Judeo-Christian tradition; this biblical worldview is the only true source of morality. We cannot depend on human beings to set the standards of morality as human beings – particularly outside of Christ – act out of a corrupt will. Hence, Kunhiyop (2008: 55) remarked that when we do ethics we need to understand both the God who is the source of our ethics and the people to whom these ethics are given. He continues to note that this point – of acknowledging God as the source of ethics and recognizing human beings as fallen – is ignored by both teleological and deontological ethicists, who seem to think that good games depend on good rules more than they depend on good players.

However, there are two important points we need to remember about human nature. First, humans are created in the image of God. Second, humans are fallen and need salvation. Thus, no matter how good the rules are, we cannot play by them because we are limited and corrupted by sin. Therefore, the Judeo-Christian tradition introduces an ethical theory that is formulated by absolutes instead of relativism, and it is these absolutes that make the biblical worldview universal and coherent. Therefore:

This common moral heritage could be defined as anything from an attitude to a conscience, but however one defines it, one is left with the impression that some moral absolutes exist outside of man. According to this concept, whenever man judges he is relying upon a yardstick that measures actions against an absolute set of standards. Without a standard, there could be no justice; without an ethical absolute, there could be no morality. This absolute standard outside of man is apparent throughout all of mankind's attitudes toward morality (Noebel 2001: 108).

<b>Research Rationale</b>		
<b>The Initial Thesis</b>	<b>The Apparent Synthesis</b>	<b>The Emerging Hypothesis</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The <i>imago Dei</i> inquiry</li> <li>2. The worldview analysis</li> <li>3. The New Testament Examination</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Historical description of the ethical teaching of the New Testament writings</li> <li>2. Ethnographic description of the social world of the early Christians</li> <li>3. Extraction of ideals or principles</li> <li>4. Cultural critique of ideologies in the New Testament</li> <li>5. Character-formation and 'the ethics of reading'</li> <li>6. Metaphorical embodiment of narrative paradigms</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The quest for an anthropological horizon</li> <li>2. The question of religious ethics</li> <li>3. The qualifying ethical horizon</li> </ol>

Figure 2: Summary of topics discussed in Chapter 2

### 3. WHY WORLDVIEW?

In the introduction, the phenomenon of worldview is already introduced, in pages 45 to 48, where the origin of the term is stated and a brief explanation of its significance for an anthropological horizon is given. In this chapter, the content of the phenomenon of worldview will be treated at length; moreover the competing basic worldviews will be defined and described with their bearing on human existence, and thereafter I will discuss the characteristics of a worldview which formulate its structure.<sup>46</sup> These basic worldviews are in competition because they introduce an intellectual battle in the minds of many because the choices every human being makes are firstly decided in the mind before they are acted out; for “people act as they think” (Hoffecker 2007: x). Hence, Nash (1992: 10), in discussing worldviews in conflict, suggested that thinking Christians are involved in battles every day of their lives. While it is understandable that most Christians tend to think of this battle in its moral and spiritual dimensions, however, this conflict is intellectual.<sup>47</sup>

Sproul (1986: 21) in making reference to the culture of his country commented that it is also important to understand that our culture is a melting pot. We do not live in a culture that is uniform, where only a single definable world view or value system is operating. We have been a melting pot of people and, therefore, of ideas. The result has been that many different beliefs and philosophies compete for acceptance within our society. Further on, Nash (1992: 12-13) shows the contour of this conflict from the beginning of the church; as from its inception, the Christian church has been involved in battles involving ideas, theories, systems of thought, presuppositions, and arguments. These battles not only occurred in the Gospels, but they are seen throughout the Early Church.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> The discussion of this chapter follows a philosophical angle, which is necessary for this research as it sets a philosophical perspective which will be drawn from in the following chapters; as the expression of Torrance (2006: 5) in his foreword of Selby's book: *Comical Doctrine: An Epistemology of New Testament Hermeneutics* expresses the approach taken here, where he notes that: “Unless the philosophical material is dealt with here it would necessarily obtrude itself in later chapters and become focal when it ought to be tacit.”

<sup>47</sup> The eight basic worldviews, which are going to be discussed in the following pages, seem to stem from two foundational principles, which are: theism and naturalism. Theism is a reference to belief in God; belief that one God created and rules humans and the world, not necessarily accompanied by belief in divine revelation such as through the Bible. Naturalism, on the other hand, is a belief that all religious truth is derived from nature and natural causes, and not from revelation.

<sup>48</sup> For a thorough discussion on how these battles manifested in the New Testament, in the Early church, in the patristic period, in the Middle Ages, in the Reformation, and in modernity see Nash (2007: 8 – 15).



Moreover, these battles have ramifications in all areas of life, as Colson (in the foreword of: *Sunshine 2009*: 10) remarked that Christianity, rather than being limited to the moral and spiritual realms, is a fully formed worldview, with implications for all areas of life; hence, biblical ideas left their stamp on economics, politics, science, education, and, in fact, on the entire course of Western civilization for the past 1,700 years. Somehow, our lives today are a result of whether we followed God's idea or another man's idea.

Sproul (2000) even wrote a book of about two hundred pages entitled: *The Consequences of Ideas*, illustrating how the ideas of philosophers such as Plato, Aristotle, Augustine, Aquinas, Descartes, Locke, Hume, Kant, Marx, Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Sartre, Freud, and Darwin had a great influence on how people think of life today and they have shaped most of man's existence. Sproul (2000: 9) notes, "I ask about things that were virtually unknown just a century ago, but that we now consider essential elements of everyday living. These practical things are there because someone first thought about them before they were invented or brought into existence. The idea preceded the product."

So, as Phillips and Brown (1996: back page) suggested that whether it's called a "philosophy of life," "reason for being," or "worldview," we all have ideas as to why we are here and where we are going. And because everyone does not use the same criterion for developing his worldview, we are bombarded with competing perceptions that are vast and confusing. "The modern study of worldviews helps illuminate worldviews, both traditional and secular, which are such an engine of both continuity and change, and therefore it explores feelings and ideas and tries to understand what exists inside the heads of people" (Smart 2000: 1).<sup>49</sup> Therefore, "Ideas have consequences, and the result of the loss of the idea of the image of God as the foundation for human worth can have catastrophic consequences for human rights and human life" (Colson in *Sunshine 2009*: 10). Thus, Hoffecker (2007: x) confirms that, "Everyone has a worldview, and one's worldview influences every aspect of a person's thought and life. One's worldview gives coherence to how one thinks and lives, provides moral parameters, and directly motivates behaviour."

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<sup>49</sup> Smart (2000) explores the phenomena of a worldview through juxtaposing it with the world's main religions and their geographical context where they are most dominant; and he suggests that a worldview or religion manifests itself through six dimensions: the doctrinal or philosophic dimension; the narrative or mythic dimension; the ethical or legal dimension; the ritual or practical dimension; the experiential or emotional dimension; and the social or organizational dimension.



As the foundational study of ethics must be founded on the phenomenon of a worldview, because two central characteristics of worldviews is their presuppositional character and their possible answers to the most fundamental questions we can ask (Sire 2004b: 15). What are these fundamental questions? Sire (2004b: 20) outlines seven fundamental questions, whose answers to these questions are the essence of the formation of a worldview;<sup>50</sup> the questions will be outlined below with answers from both a theistic perspective and a naturalistic perspective. The seven questions are:

- i) What is prime reality – the really real? To this we might answer God, or the gods, or the material cosmos.
- ii) What is the nature of external reality, that is, the world around us? Here, our answers point to whether we see the world as created or autonomous, as chaotic or orderly, as matter or spirit, or whether we emphasize our subjective, personal relationship to the world or its objectivity apart from us.
- iii) What is a human being? To this we might answer a highly complex machine, a sleeping god, a person made in the image of God, a “naked ape.”
- iv) What happens to persons at death? Here we might reply personal extinction, or transformation to a higher state, or reincarnation, or departure to a shadowy existence on “the other side.”
- v) Why is it possible to know anything at all? Sample answers include the idea that we are made in the image of an all-knowing God or that consciousness and rationality developed under the contingencies of survival in a long process of evolution.
- vi) How do we know what is right and wrong? Again, perhaps, we are made in the image of a God whose character is good; or right and wrong are determined by human choice alone or what feels good; or the notions simply developed under an impetus toward cultural or physical survival.
- vii) What is the meaning of human history? To this we might answer, to realize the purposes of God or the gods, to make a paradise on earth, to prepare a people for a life in community with a loving and holy God, and so forth.

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<sup>50</sup> Also see Kipling’s reference to these elemental questions as his “Six honest serving men who taught him all he knew: What, Why, When, How, Where, and Who?” (see Kipling 1927: 585).

Answers to these questions will create a framework for a worldview we adopt as the set of presuppositions which determine our perspectives about all of life; which will determine what we prioritize, and this will eventually order our practices, or determine our ethics and ethos.<sup>51</sup>

### 3.1 The content of a worldview

Wright (2013: 28) uses a metaphor of sight and spectacles and suggests that we may remind ourselves that a 'worldview' is not what you normally look at, but what you normally look through; as worldviews are like spectacles, which one normally takes for granted, and only thinks about them when they are broken, dirty or out of focus. To clarify this metaphor, he continues to note that what is more, though 'view' implies 'looking and seeing' (which is indeed both an important dimension and a useful and perfectly helpful metaphor), in this modification and development of the worldview-model one might equally well say 'encounter' or 'experience'.

Therefore, this isn't purely about the arrangement of ideas in people's minds. It is about the pattern and meaning of an entire life. Now that the worldview we hold determines the meaning of an entire life, it means that our decisions are a result of that very worldview we hold; we cannot escape it, unless we get assistance from someone else.

Hence, Wright (2013: 33-34) confirms this when he extends his sight and spectacle metaphor in noting that you can't get on with the rest of your life if you are forever taking your spectacles off and inspecting them, and one of the problems with spectacles is that if you break them you may not be able to see properly in order to mend them yourself.

So it is with worldviews: when you are questioned about some or all of your worldview, and you have (as it were) to take it off and look at it in order to see what's going on, you may not be able to examine it very closely because it is itself the thing through which you normally examine everything else.

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<sup>51</sup> Wright (2013: 26-27), in drawing from Kipling's work (see Kipling 1927), shows how these questions help us to create a theology, as he constructs new questions (which may seem to be rephrases of those other seven questions) and phrase them as: Who are we? Where are we? What's wrong? What's the solution? How do we get out of this mess? When is this happening? And Why?

Naugle (2002: 61), in making reference to Heidegger's development of the phenomenon of worldview, commented that "Worldviews themselves, if only tacitly, are a response to the problem of the existence and meaning of the world, and at least sketch a subliminal answer to the ultimate questions of existence."<sup>52</sup> If we follow the theistic answers to the seven questions, outlined above, in our formation of the framework of our worldview then we will have to firstly consider the notion of the *imago Dei* as the foundational principle of our worldview; as one notices that most of the theistic answers to these questions make reference to the image of God.

For instance, that a human being is a person created in the image of God; that we as human beings are able to know something because we are created in the image of an all knowing God, and we can differentiate between what is right and wrong because we are created in the image of a good, holy God.

Thus, the *imago Dei* qualifies as a comprehensive worldview. When we conceptualize the anthropological horizon of the *imago Dei* as a worldview we need to firstly define what is a worldview. When introducing the phenomenon of a worldview one already seeks to find a definition and description of what is a worldview and its implications. Thus, we begin by asking fundamental questions about a worldview. Is it ontological? Is it metaphysical? Is it epistemological? Is it ethical? Is it praxeological? A worldview has to give answers or solutions to these basic disciplines of life, as it creates the framework where one's perceptions are developed.

A worldview is a set of presuppositions which precedes a way of life; hence, discovering one's own worldview is a significant step toward self-awareness, self-knowledge and self-understanding (Sire 2004a: 17). Essentially, Sire (2004b: 19) remarks, in his other work, that a worldview is a set of presuppositions (assumptions which may be true, partially true or entirely false) which we hold (consciously or subconsciously, consistently or inconsistently) about the basic makeup of our world.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> Wright (2013: 23) suggests that when considering a 'worldview' we must give it a full and a balanced account in how it relates to the three standard topics in ancient philosophical reflection: Physics ('what is there'), Epistemology ('how we know things'), and Ethics ('how to behave')?

<sup>53</sup> Sire (2004a: 17) broadens this definition by remarking that: "A fundamental orientation of the heart, that can be expressed as a story or in a set of presuppositions (assumptions which may be true, partially true or entirely false) which we hold (consciously or subconsciously, consistently or inconsistently) about the basic constitution of reality, and that provides the foundation on which we live and move and have our being."

Thus, “worldview thinking” is not merely an academic issue and concern. Worldview issues and influences pervade every area of human existence, from individual reflection to all forms of social and cultural activity – family and marriage, labour and management, economic transactions, scientific investigation, technological development, political and judicial practices, arts and entertainment, and leisure and recreational activities. Worldviews determine the cultural activities in which individuals and people groups immerse themselves. (Hoffecker 2007: x).

The phenomenon of a worldview developed in three definable disciplines, which encapsulates all movements and development of this phenomenon; these disciplines are classified as: a Philological History of “Worldview,” a Philosophical History of “Worldview,” and a Disciplinary History of “Worldview” (Naugle 2002); in a wide variety of context from German idealism, to Nihilism to Calvinistic Christianity (Sire 2004b: 23).<sup>54</sup> Within these disciplines one finds historical, philosophical, and theological reflections of the phenomenology of “Worldview.”<sup>55</sup>

According to James Oor (1887: 365) the phenomenon of “Worldview” had attained celebrity status in the academic fields in the second half of the nineteenth century; Naugle (2002: 55) after citing some of Oor’s (1887) notes that “though it was one of the favourite terms of the day, much to the dismay of Oor and others, its philological history for the most part was unexplored territory. So, this research will firstly discuss the philological history of the term: worldview.”<sup>56</sup>

### 3.1.1 Philological History

The term Worldview is derived from the German word *Weltanschauung*, which, it seems evident, was coined by Immanuel Kant (1724–1804), as Naugle notes that there is virtually universal recognition that this notable Prussian philosopher coined the term *Weltanschauung* in his work *Critique of Judgment* published in 1790, where Kant was writing about the power of the perception of the human mind. The paragraph from Kant’s work reads:

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<sup>54</sup> Wright (2013: 26) defines worldview-study as also insisted, with strong support from some recent work in linguistics and its sociological, cultural and political implications, on the importance of underlying narratives, the scripts by which people order their lives, the ‘plays’ in which they assume themselves to be actors.

<sup>55</sup> Naugle (2002) in his brilliant research: *Worldview: The History of a Concept* traces the concept to its origin and how it developed in various disciplines. It is through his work that foundational definition and description of this research is derived.

<sup>56</sup> In outlining and discussing the three disciplines of “Worldview” in this research, extensive reference will be made to Naugle’s (2002) book.

If the human mind is nonetheless to be able even to think the given infinite without contradiction, it must have within itself a power that is super-sensible, whose idea of the noumenon cannot be intuited but can yet be regarded as the substrate underlying what is mere appearance, namely, our intuition of the world [*Weltanschauung*]. For only by means of this power and its idea do we, in a pure intellectual estimation of magnitude, comprehend the infinite in the world of sense entirely under a concept, even though in a mathematical estimation of magnitude by means of numerical concepts we can never think it in its entirety (cited by Naugle 2002; 58-59).<sup>57</sup>

Naugle (2002: 59) comments that the various phrases in the context of this quotation, such as “mere appearance” and the “world of sense,” suggest that for Kant the word *Weltanschauung* means simply the sense perception of the world. Thus, from its coinage in Kant, who apparently used the term only once and for whom it was of minor significance, it evolved rather quickly to refer to an intellectual conception of the universe from the perspective of a human knower. From this we can already draw the ontological, epistemological, metaphysical, ethical, and practical elements of a worldview.

It seems most probable that the term prospered in the decades following its origination, especially under the influence of a number of key thinkers mostly in the German idealist and romantic traditions; the first scholar who adopted the term was Kant’s disciple, Johann Gottlieb Fichte (1762–1814), who used the term: *Weltanschauung* in his first book, *An Attempt at a Critique of All Revelation* (1792). The second scholar who adopted this term was Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph von Schelling, who was a younger colleague of Fichte, and made reference of this term in his work: *Philosophical letters* (1795). (Naugle 2002: 59-61).

However, there seems to have been a shift or a development from Kant’s use of the term: *Weltanschauung* to Schelling’s use of the term; thus, Naugle (2002: 61) comments that “from its birth in Kant to its use by Schelling, the term’s primary meaning shifted from the sensory to the intellectual perception of the cosmos.”<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> *Weltanschauung* as a German term gives credence to the fact that the scholars who studied the history of the term were German scholars; see Naugle (2002: 56-58) who mention seven of these scholars detailing these studies.

<sup>58</sup> Naugle (2002: 61-66) gives a brief account of how the development of the use of the term branched out to most of Germany and other European countries, like amongst the Norwegian, Swedish, Dutch, Poland, Russian, French, and Italian; and going overseas to the English speaking-world, from great Britain to the U.S.A.

Therefore, “Since its inception in Immanuel Kant’s *Critique of Judgment* in 1790, the notion of *Weltanschauung* has become one of the central intellectual conceptions in contemporary thought and culture” (Naugle 2002: 66).

### 3.1.2 Philosophical History

The philological history of the term: *Weltanschauung* mostly gives account of the linguistic development of the term and the key figures who were involved in coining the term and those that started using it in the orientation of philosophy. So, in the philosophical history of the term focus will be on philosophers who took this term and applied it in different contexts, as others started appropriating *Weltanschauung* in the fields beyond philosophy, which was in science, psychology, sociology, and history; although most dialogues happened in the circles of philosophy.

The key figures from the nineteenth century through to the twentieth century are: Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770–1831), Søren Kierkegaard (1813–1855), Wilhelm Dilthey (1833–1911), Friedrich Nietzsche (1844–1900), Edmund Husserl (1859–1938), Karl Jaspers (1883–1969), Martin Heidegger (1889–1976), Ludwig Wittgenstein (1889–1951), Donald Davidson (1917 –); beyond these philosophers, of whom most of them were born in the nineteenth century, the phenomenon was taken up by postmodern philosophers who were born in the twentieth century.<sup>59</sup>

In the nineteenth century, the conception of the thought of *Weltanschauung* in the various scientific studies – whether in natural sciences, or social sciences – was developed by Hegel, Kierkegaard, Dilthey, and Nietzsche. Hegel is significant here because he tapped on the philology history of *Weltanschauung*, by making a comparison of Fichte’s system of philosophy with that of Schelling, in his first published work: *The Difference Between Fichte’s and Schelling’s System of Philosophy*.

Thus, Naugle (2002: 69) remarks, “From the beginning of his career, *Weltanschauung* served as Hegel’s term of choice to convey an important idea within the framework of dialectical thought.” Likewise, Kierkegaard embraced this term in that he also made use of it in his philosophical reflections and personal life and it was a central category in the thought life of Kierkegaard. Thus:

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<sup>59</sup> Given the large material of the worldview concepts that are available from all these philosophers and the limited space available in this research, I will briefly discuss their contribution to the phenomenon of worldview.

Kierkegaard introduced the concept of both worldview and lifeview in Scandinavia. Preferring the more existential orientation of lifeview over the more Hegelian and abstract notion of worldview, he employed the idea as a way of referring to alternative ways of being in the world (aesthetic, ethical, religious) and as a theme that penetrates to the meaning and purpose of life itself, whether in Christian or non-Christian terms (Naugle 2002: 81).

It was through Dilthey's works that the idea of worldview came into wide usage, and he was able to show how there are different worldviews and that there is a struggle of power between all these worldviews in the mind of man. Thus, "Though the term worldview had already been introduced in philosophic discourse by Immanuel Kant, Wilhelm Dilthey was the first to expound his own philosophy largely in terms of this concept" (Sire 2004b:24). Naugle (2002: 87) comments that, according to Dilthey, Worldviews are not one but many and the multiplicity of worldviews can be explained by the simple fact that they are developed under radically different conditions by radically different kinds of people; thus, the world of man knows a growth of structures of world views and a struggle between them over the minds of men.

The next figure who made a significant contribution to "worldview" perspectives is Friedrich Nietzsche who took the naturalism structure of worldviews to the extreme by introducing the concept of "the death of God." As Sire (2004b: 27) comments that Nietzsche is the boldest, if not the first, nihilist of the modern world, who infamously announced the death of God, and this meant that the notion of God was no longer functioning in human imagination, no longer having an effect on how people behaved; people might say they believed in God, but their thought and actions betrayed their functional atheism. According to Nietzsche, worldviews are artificial constructs necessary for human survival.

Naugle (2002:104–107) and Sire (2004b:24–28) summarizes worldview perspectives of these philosophers by noting, that for Hegel, worldviews as alternative frameworks are the historically embedded, culturally significant phenomena of the absolute Spirit, each of which finds expression aesthetically; though, Hegel's philosophy of history ignites interest in understanding the historical process as spiritual warfare with the notion of competing worldviews at the center. For Kierkegaard, lifeviews are central to human existence, and he saw it as most appropriate for every Christian to develop a lifeview.



In Dilthey, worldviews are historically produced perspectives on reality. A worldview begins as a “cosmic picture,” and through a complex interrelation between human consciousness and the external world, a more sophisticated and detailed sense of who we are and what is the nature of that which is around us emerges. To that is added a growing sense of values. For Nietzsche, God is dead, only nature exists, and history reigns. On this basis he conceived of worldviews as reified cultural constructs and idiosyncratic perspectives on life, artificial to be sure, but necessary for human survival in an ultimately chaotic, unnavigable world.

The beginning of twentieth century worldview thinking was characterized by Husserl, Jaspers, and Heidegger, as, according to Naugle (2002: 148) the philosophical history of worldview in the twentieth century has been analysed in the context of Husserl’s phenomenology, Jaspers’s incipient existentialism, and Heidegger’s fundamental ontology. Husserl was determined to distinguish worldviews from scientific philosophy, whereas Jaspers’s interest in worldview was psychological in orientation, and Heidegger’s concern in explaining worldview as a purely modernist construct (Naugle 2002: 108).

Husserl’s efforts were employed in distinguishing the personal and value orientation of worldviews from philosophy as a strong, factual science. Jaspers focused his reflections on worldviews as mental frameworks in his *Psychology of Worldviews*, where he sought to connect the response of the human soul to the limit situations in life, and to the formation of subjective life attitudes and objective world pictures. Heidegger, moreover, claimed that modernity was the age of the world picture, where the influence of Cartesian thought posits human subjects as thinking beings who view the world as an object to be pictured (Naugle 2002: 146-147).<sup>60</sup>

Later in the twentieth century, the term was adopted by linguistic, analytic, and postmodern philosophers, as: Wittgenstein, Davidson, and “deconstruction philosophers” as Derrida (1930 –), Berger, Luckmann, and Foucault (1926–1984). Wittgenstein became known as a worldview philosopher, who thought that worldviews, Naugle (2002: 150-151) notes, as sacrosanct reality constructs must be understood as sure and certain conceptions or ways of looking at the world. Far from superficial, they reside at a very deep level, underlying the character and culture of an entire people.

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<sup>60</sup> Naugle (2002) does a thorough explanation of these three thinkers and their worldview perspectives in Chapter five of his work (2002: 108 -147) where he treats the first half of the twentieth century.



Thus, *Worldview* as a comprehensive “perspicuous presentation” of things is “fundamental.” In developing his understanding of *Weltanschauung* he used the word *Weltbild*, which means “World Picture” and it seems that these two were used synonymously in his philosophical orientation; as related to *Weltanschauung*, there are four basic themes discussed in his book: *On Certainty*.<sup>61</sup> Hence, “Wittgenstein embraces what might be accurately called a “linguistic” *Weltanschauung* rooted in words, their use and meaning” (Naugle 2002: 162).

According to Davidson *Weltanschauung* is closely identified with conceptual schemes which means that a worldview is a view of how things work in the world. Thus, Naugle (2002: 164) remarks that, “because of the kinship between ‘conceptual scheme’ and *Weltanschauung*, Davidson’s critique of the plausibility of the former entails an analysis about the very idea of the latter as well.”<sup>62</sup>

It is evident that most philosophical thinking regarding worldview from Kant thus far has mostly followed the naturalism perspectives, with a few exceptions now and then like through Kierkegaard’s approach which embraced a theistic foundation to worldview thinking, but most philosophers from the nineteenth century to the beginning of the twentieth century based their worldview concepts on historical, scientific, and literary formulations. However, postmodern formulations of worldview thinking took a different direction, as:

In the postmodern period, there was substantial confidence on the part of the average westerner, the Christian in particular, to obtain a comprehensive view of the universe, its facts as well as its values, based on God and his self-revelation in the Bible. In the modern period the center of gravity shifted from God to man, from Scripture to science, from revelation to reason in confidence that human beings, beginning with themselves and their own methods of knowing, could gain an understanding of the world, at least its facts if not its values (Naugle 2002: 173-174).

This, supposedly set the ground for humanism, which put confidence in humanity and the systems and structures he has created; which resulted in what Naugle (2002: 174) phrased as “a disbelief that any worldview or large-scale interpretation of reality is true and ought to be believed and promulgated.”

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<sup>61</sup> For these four themes evident in Wittgenstein’s discussion of world pictures see Naugle (2002: 161).

<sup>62</sup> For more on Davidson’s idea of the “*Conceptual Scheme*” and its critiques see Naugle (2002: 164 – 173).

Nevertheless, most of the philosophies promulgated in the nineteenth century and twentieth century created worldviews that, on most accounts rejected theistic formulations, perpetuated naturalism. Hence, the postmodern philosophers introduced a mechanism that reconstructed both the theistic and naturalism formulations that were established in modernity and before which became known as “Deconstruction.” “Thus worldviews, once deconstructed, are reduced to a self-referential system of linguistic signifiers dispossessed of any authentic metaphysical, epistemological, or moral import” (Naugle 202: 175).<sup>63</sup>

Burger and Luckmann introduced a concept of reification in their postmodern discourse in developing their system of deconstruction; and they defined this concept as “the apprehension of human phenomena as if they were things, that is, in non-human or possibly superhuman terms... reification is the apprehension of the products of human activity as if they were something else than human products – such as facts of nature, results of cosmic laws, or manifestations of divine will” (Naugle 2002: 178). Thus, one’s worldview must be constructed with elements beyond human structures and systems.

Foucault used the idea of *episteme* to construct his framework of a worldview, and this *episteme* makes reference to the nature of knowledge as foundational for human existence; as he (Foucault 1972: 15) notes, in his work: *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, that, “episteme may be suspected of being something like a world-view, a slice of history common to all branches of knowledge, which imposes on each one the same norms and postulates, a general stage of reason, a certain structure of thought that the men of a particular period cannot escape – a great body of legislation written once and for all by some anonymous hand.”

Hence, “Foucault uses the terms *episteme* and *worldview*, sometimes in contrast, sometimes almost as synonymous” (Sire 2004b: 30). Thus, Naugle (2002: 181) confirms that, “the notion of *episteme* is crucial to Foucault’s thought, and it seems at least initially to bear a family resemblance to worldview.”<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>63</sup> For a thorough explanation of the definition of the system of “Deconstruction” see Naugle (2002: 174 – 177).

<sup>64</sup> There are some complexities one must resolve when one is dealing with Foucault’s relation of episteme with a worldview, especially when one consults different works of Foucault; for more on these discussions and the complexities they create, see Naugle’s (2002:180 – 184) lengthy discussion on Foucault.

The different conceptual framework of *Weltanschauung* in postmodern philosophers from that of modern philosophers introduces different understandings of the phenomena of the nature of worldview, however, both accounts of the modern and postmodern philosophy, as presented above, are underpinned by naturalism; a naturalistic worldview guide that thinking. Thus Naugle (2002: 186) asks:

On the basis of this revelation [the postmodern view which suggests that all worldviews are products of human construction], does not Christianity have a much better story to tell than postmodernism, indeed a true one, especially in announcing the good news of the existence of God, the sacramental nature and meaning of the cosmos, the dignity of human persons as *imago Dei*, and the hope of a comprehensive redemption in the work of Jesus Christ through the power of the holy Spirit?

### 3.1.3 Disciplinary History

This section of the history of the phenomena of *Weltanschauung* is particularly significant for this dissertation, which proposes that a worldview impacts on all the disciplines that order humankind; hence, a disciplinary history of *Weltanschauung*, which resulted because the phenomena branched-out into various disciplines in the natural sciences and in the social sciences. So, *Weltanschauung* “migrated from its philosophical home to take up residence in a wide variety of enterprises, especially in the natural and social sciences. To the extent that basic ways of conceiving the world and place of human beings within it affect how one understands the natural and social domains” (Naugle 2002: 187).

In the natural sciences, the notion of worldview influenced the thinking of two key scientists: Michael Polanyi (1891–1976) and Thomas Kuhn (1922 –1996). Naugle (2002: 206 – 207) summarizes the important contribution made by these two scientists in understanding *Weltanschauung* by stating that Polanyi’s notion of tacit knowledge commensurate with a common understanding of the function of a worldview as a set of presuppositions lying just below the “waterline” of conscious awareness that govern an individual’s way of knowing and being in the world.

Moreover, Kuhn’s paradigm revolution in the philosophy of science offers a validation and confirmation to the school of Christian thought which recognizes the role of various worldviews in shaping human consciousness and affecting theoretical activity.

In the social sciences there are more figures that influenced the disciplines of the social sciences with the notion of worldview; perhaps, because it seems that worldviews bearing on the social sciences is greater than in the natural sciences. As:

Natural scientists investigate the physical, but not the human, world. On the other hand, social scientists are vitally concerned about analysing and understanding powerful cognitive forces like worldviews that not only undergird the practice of their own disciplines, but radically affect and are a critical component of the human soul (psychology), society (sociology), and culture (anthropology). Hence, whereas worldviews and paradigms may at best be an indirect concern or influence in the natural sciences, they are an overt preoccupation and target of study in the social ones (Naugle 2002: 210).

It is in the three disciplines in social sciences mentioned above – psychology, sociology, and anthropology – where one notices a direct influence of the *Weltanschauung* phenomenon.

In psychology, it was the works of two prominent psychologists, Sigmund Freud (1856–1939) and Carl Jung (1875–1961), through their essays on *Weltanschauung*,<sup>65</sup> where the influence of worldview in psychology started to be seen; as, Naugle (2002: 211) commented that both considered this conception [*Weltanschauung*] of crucial importance, and devoted entire essays to the subject with distinct concerns in mind. Whereas Jung occupied himself with the relationship between psychotherapy and worldview, Freud investigated the question of a *Weltanschauung* in an attempt to determine whether or not psychoanalysis constituted an independent worldview.<sup>66</sup>

The second important discipline in the disciplinary history is sociology. Sociologists who made a significant contribution to the disciplinary history of *Weltanschauung* are Karl Mannheim (1893–1947), Karl Marx (1818–1883), and Friedrich Engels (1820–1895).<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>65</sup> Reference to these essays, as provided by Naugle (2002: 212, 218). Freud's essay is entitled: "*Inhibitions, Symptoms and Anxiety*," in "An Autobiographical study," translator Strachey (1962, London: Hogarth Press); and Jung's essay is entitled: "*Psychotherapie und Weltanschauung*," in *The Practice of Psychotherapy: Essays on the Psychology of the Transference and other Subjects*, translator Hull (1966, New York: Pantheon Books).

<sup>66</sup> On Freud and Jung's integration of the notion of *Weltanschauung* in psychology see Naugle (2002: 211-222).

<sup>67</sup> There are other two sociologists, Burger and Luckmann, who are not included in this list because they have already been made reference to in the philosophy history of *Weltanschauung* among postmodern philosophers; they have been mentioned in the disciplinary history of sociology because, as Naugle (2002: 222) remarks, they have been pioneers in formulating the conception of the sociology of knowledge, which attempts to demonstrate how social dynamics are at work in the construction of cognition, with clear implications on the formulation of worldviews.

Mannheim followed the analysis of Wilhelm Dilthey in regarding the scientific formulations as foundational to social sciences, which then becomes pretheoretical to the theories of social sciences, thus they act as a *Weltanschauung*. Whereas Marx and Engels saw worldviews as ideologies that serve as frameworks for constructing the social worlds; thus, according to that perspective, “worldviews and ideologies are fundamental ways of conceiving of the nature of things, and the latter can certainly be pressed into service to insure the hegemony of the dominant economic class” (Naugle 2002: 238).<sup>68</sup>

The last important discipline in disciplinary history of *Weltanschauung* is cultural anthropology, which is characterized by the works of Michael Kearney and Robert Redfield. In some ways, Kearney to some extent follows closely to the Marxist approach of worldviews in also seeing them belonging to the family of ideologies; as (cited by Naugle 2002: 239-240) he believes that a worldview is a potentially powerful tool for exploring the recesses of socially constructed human consciousness, and thus has the potential for liberation in all senses of the word.

Moreover, worldviews not only serve class interests, but even thinking about “worldview” itself as a concept is ideologically grounded. Naugle (2002: 244) further on notes that, “Kearney demonstrates not only how worldviews may serve as ideologies, but how certain ideological underpinnings affect theories about nature, content, and function of worldviews themselves.”

On the other hand, Redfield saw worldviews as old as humankind as they have developed alongside other human factors as culture and personality; moreover, he saw worldview thinking as something that played a significant role in civilization. “Redfield believes that ‘worldview’ identifies one of those things that are most general and persistent about people. It takes its place among a constellation of other humanistic concepts such as culture, ethos, national character, and personality type... According to Reidfield, ‘worldview’ should be defined as the way a people characteristically look outward upon the universe” (Naugle 2002: 245).<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>68</sup> For more information on the disciplinary history of sociology see Naugle (2002: 222-238).

<sup>69</sup> The background of “worldview” in cultural anthropology is very important for this research because this dissertation proposes that the study of ethics is done effectively if foundational to this study is an anthropological horizon; for more on the contribution of cultural anthropology in worldview, see Naugle (2002: 238-249).

Therefore all these disciplines in the natural and social sciences, assist us in understanding the significance and role of worldview in defining life and in creating a framework for constructing answers to life's basic questions, and thereby provide meaning for living. Therefore:

All humans are committed to their basic beliefs; otherwise, these beliefs would not be *basic*. Our commitments to our basic beliefs are core commitments – we cling to them; they are non-negotiable; we express them in every facet of our lives. Basic beliefs and core commitments are the fundamental aspects of a worldview, since, by definition, they determine how we understand the world and what aspects of that understanding are non-negotiable. Thus, having and living out a worldview are inescapable aspects of being human. To be human is to have a worldview (Hoffecker 2007: xi).

### 3.2 The competing worldviews

James Sire (2004b: 11-13), in detecting the basic intellectual commitments we make as human beings, introduced the eight basic worldviews and the key figures and works/writings which show a development of this concept.<sup>70</sup> As he introduces the concept he outlines four important points to consider when studying the concept of a worldview. Firstly, it is recognition that a worldview is not just a set of basic concepts but a fundamental orientation of the heart. Secondly, there is an explicit insistence that at the deepest root of a worldview is its commitment to and understanding of the “really real.” Thirdly, there is a consideration of behaviour in the determination of what one's own or another's worldview really is. Fourthly, there is a broader understanding of how worldviews are grasped as story, not just as abstract propositions. Hence, Nash (1992: 9) suggests that looking at life from a perspective of worldviews is an essential part of intellectual maturity. Moreover, this is important for Christians in their Mission to “win” the world to Christ that they should firstly understand their belief system as founded on a comprehensive worldview, which is sufficient to speak, and can be applied, in all the disciplines of life.

The most important step for Christians is to become informed about the Christian worldview, a comprehensive, systematic view of life and of the world as a whole. No believer today can be really effective in the arena of ideas until he or she has been trained to think in worldview terms. How does the Christian worldview differ from worldviews of the enemy? What are the weaknesses of competing worldviews? How can we utilize the best arguments against them?” (Nash 1992: 14).

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<sup>70</sup> The most important of these works is: Naugle (2002) already referenced greatly above, in showing the definition and development of the concept of a worldview.



It is in Sire's (2004a) book: *The Universe Next Door* where the descriptions of all the eight basic worldviews are presented in detail. The following section of the research will discuss all these basic worldviews, in summary, making extensive reference to Sire's (2004a) book; the descriptions that will be outlined below are going to be constructed through each respective worldview's answers to the fundamental questions about life and its meaning, as given by Sire (2004a) throughout his book: *The Universe Next door*.<sup>71</sup>

### 3.2.1 Christian Theism

In relation to prime reality, God is infinite and personal (triune), transcendent and immanent, omniscient, sovereign; hence, the concept of God is what holds together all the answers for the fundamental questions of life, and through his attributes his nature and design of all creation is revealed, and he sustains all things (Sire 2004a: 26-29). In relation to the nature of external reality, God created the cosmos *ex nihilo* to operate with a uniformity of cause and effect in an open system; thus, there is order in all of creation and he continues to be involved with it (Sire 2004a: 29-31). In relation to what is a human being, human beings are created in the image of God and thus possess personality, self-transcendence, intelligence, morality, gregariousness and creativity, and thus, human beings are to reflect the God who created them in dignity and dominion (Sire 2004a: 31-34).

In relation to death, for each person death is either the gate to life with God and his people or the gate to eternal separation from the only thing that will ultimately fulfil human aspirations (Sire 2004a: 40-41). In relation to the possibility of man knowing cognitively, human beings can know both the world around them and God himself because God has built into them the capacity to do so and because he takes an active role in communicating with them (Sire 2004a: 31-37). In relation to man knowing what is right and wrong, human beings were created good, but through the Fall the image of God became defaced, though not so ruined as not to be capable of restoration; through the work of Christ, God redeemed humanity and began the process of restoring people to goodness, though any given person may choose to reject that redemption. (Sire 2004a: 37-42).

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<sup>71</sup> These fundamental questions are outlined above. The following discussion will be somehow a brief summary of Sire's descriptions of the eight basic worldviews that seek to answer the seven fundamental questions.

The ethics of Christian theism are based on the character of God as good (holy and loving) (Sire 2004a: 37). In relation to human history, history is linear, a meaningful sequence of events leading to the fulfilment of God's purposes for humanity... (Sire 2004a: 42-44). All of the above presuppositions are drawn from the Bible, as Hoffecker (2007: xii) remarks that "The Christian worldview is rooted in the Bible: the transcendent, triune God, who sovereignly created and redeemed heaven and earth, provides the ultimate context for understanding all reality." Therefore, "A Christian *Weltanschauung* is compelling because of its capacity to explain in rich and satisfying ways the remarkable diversity of created existence and the full range of human experience in a unified, coherent manner" (Naugle 2002: 249-250).

### 3.2.2 Deism

Deism is also linked to theism, but it considered human reason sufficient above revelation; as Sire (2004a: 47) remarks that deism denies that God can be known by revelation, as it casts out Scripture as an authority in theology and allows only the application of "human" reason. Thus, it seems to be a response to the Enlightenment's questions about God and traditional Christianity; Sire (2004a: 46) notes that deism might have resulted because of a change in the location of the authority for knowledge about the divine, where it shifted from being found in the special revelation found in Scripture to the presence of reason, which is "the candle of God" in the human mind. So reason should be used to judge revelation. Deism saw God as the one who created the Universe and then left it to unfold on its own; so the system of the universe is seen as a giant clockwork, and God is seen as the clockmaker (Sire 2004a: 47).

Therefore, in relation to prime reality, a transcendent God, as a *First Cause*, created the universe but then left it to run on its own. God is thus not immanent, not fully personal, not sovereign over human affairs, not providential (Sire 2004a: 48-49). In relation to the nature of external reality, the cosmos God created is determined, because it is created as a uniformity of cause and effect in a closed system, thus, no miracle is possible (Sire 2004a: 49-50). In relation to what is a human being, deism sees human beings as also part of the clockwork of the universe; nothing special about them from the rest of creation. So they have a sort of autonomous nature just like the rest of the stuff of the universe and they are what they are, without any hope of becoming anything different or anything more (Sire 2004a: 50).



Thus, in relation to death, man is nothing more than physical substance, and God, according to Hawkins (cited by Sire 2004a: 57), is a term used for the embodiment of physical laws. In relation to the possibility of man knowing cognitively, it is realizing that the cosmos, this world, is understood to be in its normal state; it is not fallen or abnormal. We can know the universe, and we can determine what God is like by studying it because human beings have the intellectual capacity to study the universe and God (Sire 2004a: 50-53, 55).

In relation to man knowing what is right and wrong, ethics is limited to general revelation; because the universe is normal, it reveals what is right. So whatever is, whether right or wrong, has been created to be like that (Sire 2004a: 53-54, 55). In relation to human history, history is linear, for the course of the cosmos was determined at creation (Sire 2004a: 55).

### 3.2.3 Naturalism

Naturalism is an atheistic approach which considers the universe as a giant mechanism of matter. In relation to prime reality, as in Deism God is reduced, Sire (2004a: 60) suggests that in naturalism he loses his very existence. Thus, matter exists eternally, and is all there is. God does not exist, but it is the nature of the cosmos that is primary and, thus, eternal (Sire 2004a: 61-62). Reason, therefore, becomes the sole criterion for truth (Sire 2004a: 60). In relation to the nature of external reality, the cosmos exists as a uniformity of cause and effect in a closed system. This cosmos cannot be changed or influenced by anyone as no supernatural being exists; hence, the beautiful regularity of the seasons is not the effect of a divine plan but the result of gravitation, existing in a closed system (Sire 2004a: 62-64).

In relation to what is a human being, human beings are complex “machines” who have a mind as the substance and function that control the machine; personality is an interrelation of chemical and physical properties, we do not yet fully understand, which enable human beings to determine their destiny (Sire 2004a: 64-67). In relation to death, death is extinction of personality and individuality, as men and women are made of matter and nothing else. When the matter that make up an individual is disorganized at death, then that person disappears; so life does not survive the death of a body (Sire 2004a: 67-68).

In relation to the possibility of man knowing cognitively, the mind, as the function of the machine: the human body, knows things through interaction with other matter. In relation to man knowing what is right and wrong, this was earlier determined by the surrounding culture; thus, ethics is related only to human beings, so there is nothing transcendent about morality. So the community values are determined through experience as people live amongst each other (Sire 2004a: 72-76).

In relation to human history, it began with the origin of the universe, which happened a long time ago, and has since then evolved; part of this Darwinian evolution theory (atheistic definition of evolution) is considered the source of the origin of man. History is a linear stream of events linked by cause and effect but without an overarching purpose. The origin of the human family is in nature and most likely will return to it, and this will determine the end of human history; human history will continue as long as humans exist – when they disappear, then human history will also end (Sire 2004a: 68-72).

### 3.2.4 Nihilism

Nihilism is recognized as a feeling which rejects any possibility of a philosophy, as Sire (2004a: 87) noted that nihilism “is a denial that anything is valuable. If it proceeds to the absolute denial of everything, it even denies the reality of existence itself.” Thus, life is without value, without purpose, and without meaning. Nihilism, according to Sire (2004a: 90) “is the natural child of naturalism,” but, as naturalism considered reason as the criterion of truth, nihilism denies even that very reason. So in relation to prime reality, nihilism also proposes that matter is all that there is; it is the primary cause and it is eternal. In relation to the nature of external reality, the cosmos is a closed system, so nothing exists beyond the matter of the cosmos.

In relation to what is a human being, a human being is part of the universe and is only a machine; “a mere piece of machinery, a toy, – complicated, very complicated, but a toy of impersonal cosmic forces” (Sire 2004a: 93). Thus, in relation to death, the death of the body, which is the disorganizing of matter ends everything for that particular individual. In relation to the possibility of man knowing cognitively, although this worldview places its ability to know in the methods of scientific inquiry, nevertheless, it places no confidence in the ability of man to know anything as what one thinks that they know may only be an illusion.

However, “if any given person is the result of impersonal forces – whether working haphazardly or by inexorable law – that person has no way of knowing whether what he or she seems to know is illusion or truth” (Sire 2004a: 97). Sire (2004a: 100) adds that in this framework, “people pursue a knowledge that forever recedes before them. We can never know.”

In relation to man knowing what is right and wrong, human beings do not have a sense of *oughtness*, and every human being determines their morality as they live through experience; thus moral values are relative to one’s culture (Sire 2004a: 102). In relation to human history, nihilism sees all events that happen as a result of chance; as a person does not act but he reacts. So his change is determined by the change of an environment around him.

Therefore, “The strands of epistemological, metaphysical and ethical nihilism weave together to make a rope long enough and strong enough to hang a whole culture. The name of the rope is Loss of Meaning. We end in a total despair of ever seeing ourselves, the world and others as in any way significant. Nothing has meaning” (Sire 2004a: 105-106).

### 3.2.5 Existentialism

Existentialism developed from nihilism, and in some way it seems to transcend nihilism, but it developed into atheistic existentialism and theistic existentialism. “On the one hand, atheistic existentialism developed to solve the problem of naturalism... On the other hand, theistic existentialism was born in the middle of the nineteenth century as Søren Kierkegaard responded to the dead orthodoxy of Danish Lutheranism” (Sire 2004a: 113).

Nevertheless, the focus in this section will be on atheistic existentialism, which also accepts the propositions of naturalism. As in relation to prime reality, the cosmos is composed solely of matter, but to human beings reality appears in two forms – subjective and objective. The objective world is the world of material, of inexorable law, of cause and effect, of chronological, clock-ticking time, of flux, and of mechanism. The second world is the subjective world of the mind, the world of consciousness, of awareness, of freedom, and of stability.

So in relation to the nature of external reality, the cosmos exists as a uniformity of cause and effect and it is a closed system (Sire 2004a: 114-116).

In relation to what is a human being, for human beings alone existence precedes essence; people make themselves who they are, and so they make themselves who they want to be through what they do. In relation to death, death ends everything; both the objective and the subjective worlds come to an end when the individual dies. There does not even seem to be much mention of that state of death. In relation to the possibility of man knowing cognitively, man follows his objective world, where each man is totally free as regards their nature and destiny, to discover the world around him.

In relation to man knowing what is right and wrong, building from his objective world, man moves into his subjective world to create value; as, “In full recognition of and against the absurdity of the objective world, the authentic person must revolt and create value” (Sire 2004a: 108). Thus, in relation to human history, man creates his own history; he is in charge of his own destiny. Thus, other events are seen as happening by chance. Therefore, “Atheistic existentialism goes beyond nihilism only to reach solipsism, the lonely self that exists for fourscore and seven, then ceases to exist. Many would say that that is not to go beyond nihilism at all; it is only to don a mask called value, a mask stripped clean away by death” (Sire 2004: 126).

### 3.2.6 Eastern Pantheistic Monism

The above worldviews are mostly found in the Western world, so the Eastern world followed a different intellectual approach to answering the seven fundamental questions; as, “Indeed, there is – a different way. With its antirationalism, its syncretism, its quietism, its lack of technology, its uncomplicated lifestyle and its radically different religious framework, the East is extremely attractive. Moreover, the East has an even longer tradition than the West” (Sire 2004a: 142). Thus, this is a theistic approach. In relation to prime reality, Atman is Brahman, and Sire (2004a: 144) defines this term Atman, as the essence, the soul, of any person, and Brahman is the essence, the soul of the whole cosmos. So God being the whole cosmos means that God is all that exists; nothing exists that is not God. “In Pantheism the chief thing about God is Oneness, a sheer abstract, undifferentiated, non-dual unity” (Sire 2004a: 150). In relation to the nature of external reality, some things are more one than others, in that others are closer to be with the One (God), and others are not yet close to being like the One. So this means that for one to be themselves they must require unity with the One (Sire 2004a: 146-147).

In relation to what is a human being, many (if not all) roads lead to the One. So in relation to death, one graduates to being with the one more, as to realize one's oneness with the cosmos is to pass beyond personality; thus, "For any of us to 'realize' our being is for us to abandon our complex personhood and enter the undifferentiated One" (Sire 2004a: 150). In relation to the possibility of man knowing cognitively, to realize one's oneness with the cosmos is to pass beyond knowledge; so human beings in their essence are beyond knowledge.

Therefore, "knowledge, like personality, demands duality – a knower and a known" (Sire 2004a: 150). So to grow in knowledge one must get closer to the One. In relation to man knowing what is right and wrong, here: to realize one's oneness with the cosmos is to pass beyond good and evil, as the cosmos is perfect at every moment. Thus, this gives rise to Karma which suggests that one's present fate, one's pleasure or pain, one's being a king or a slave is the result of past action (Sire 2004a: 152-153).

In relation to human history, it is to realize that one's oneness with the One is to pass beyond time. Time is unreal; so history is cyclical. Thus, yesterday's facts are not meaningful in themselves. The Eastern Scriptures are filled with parables, fables, stories, myths, etc., but almost no history in the sense of events recorded because they took place in an unrepeatable space-time context (Sire 2004a: 157).

### 3.2.7 The New Age

The New Age worldview seems to have its origin in ancient Gnosticism and uses the evolutionary model that draws from different worldviews, both theistic and atheistic to construct its approach (Sire 2004a:164-166). Thus, "The New Age worldview is highly syncretistic and eclectic. Though its weirder ramifications and stranger dimensions come from Eastern pantheism and ancient animism, its connection with naturalism gives it a better chance to win converts than purer Eastern mysticism" (Sire 2004a: 176).

In relation to prime reality, Sire (2004a: 178-183) notes, that, whatever the nature of being (idea or matter, energy or particle), the self is the kingpin, the prime reality. As human beings grow in their awareness and grasp of this fact, the human race is on the verge of a radical change in human nature; even now we see harbingers of transformed humanity and prototypes of New Age. So the "self" is the prime reality.

In relation to the nature of external reality, the cosmos, while unified in the self, is manifested in two more dimensions: the visible universe, accessible through ordinary consciousness, and the invisible universe, or mind at large, accessed through altered states of consciousness (Sire 2004a: 183-188).

In relation to what is a human being, the core experience of the New Age is cosmic consciousness, in which ordinary categories of space, time and morality tend to disappear (Sire 2004a: 188-194). In relation to death, physical death is not the end of the self; under the experience of cosmic consciousness, the fear of death is removed. So death is a transition to another form of life. (Sire 2004a: 194-195).

In relation to the possibility of man knowing cognitively, here three distinct attitudes are taken to the metaphysical question of the nature of reality under the general framework of the New Age: (1) the occult version, in which beings and things perceived in states of altered consciousness exist apart from the self that is conscious, (2) the psychedelic version, in which these things and beings are projections of the conscious self, and (3) the conceptual relativist version, in which the cosmic consciousness is the conscious activity of a mind using one of many non-ordinary models for reality, none of which is any “truer” than any other (Sire 2004a:195-203). In relation to man knowing what is right and wrong, ethical questions receive little attention because a human being is seen as a king, thus he/she cannot do wrong (Sire 2004a: 205). In relation to human history, it focuses on what is happening in the present.

### 3.2.8 Postmodernism

Giddens (1990: 1) remarked that today, in the late twentieth century, as is argued by many, we stand at the opening of a new era, to which the social sciences must respond and which is taking us beyond modernity itself. A dazzling variety of terms has been suggested to refer to this transition, a few of which refer positively to the emergence of a new type of social system (such as the “information society” or the “consumer society”). Further on Giddens (1990: 2) adds that these social systems suggest rather that the preceding state of affairs is drawing to a close and gives rise to “post-modernity,” “post-modernism,” “post-industrial society,” and “post-capitalism.” In making reference to Jean-Francois Lyotard (1985) Giddens (1990: 2) noted that:

Post-modernity refers to a shift away from attempts to ground epistemology and from faith in humanly engineered progress. The condition of post-modernity is distinguished by an evaporating of the “grand narrative” – the overarching “story line” by means of which we are placed in history as beings having a definite past and a predictable future. The post-modern outlook sees a plurality of heterogeneous claims to knowledge, in which science does not have a privileged place.

The beginning of the twentieth century showed signs of hope for the church in the west; the West seemed to be prospering in all dimensions, even the church was experiencing freedom of expression, with less persecution to be concerned about. Sasse (1964: 3), in his description of the Western world at the beginning of the 20th century, remarks that, “This was a period of unprecedented wealth, the result of industrial progress, of world trade, and of vast colonial expansion. The Western civilization of Europe and America seemed rapidly to be conquering the whole world and to be outstripping all mankind on the road of unlimited progress.” Thus, “the twentieth century has been a time of unparalleled activity in the natural sciences and in the technology that has developed from them” (Macquarrie 2001: 13).

Many maintained that persecution could not occur in the civilized world; as a result, there was great hope that this century will be a century of prosperity and peace, thus, unwarranted optimism characterized this time. In fact, at the end of the World Ecumenical Missionary Conference of Edinburgh in 1910, there was a feeling that the power of the kingdom of God will be seen in this century; as they quoted Mark 9:1, where Jesus told his disciples that some here will not taste death before they see the kingdom of God come with power.

However, this hope was shattered by the First World War in 1914 through to 1918, to be followed by the Second World War in just after two decades from the end of the First World War – the second war began in 1939 through to 1945. Maimela (1990: 121) comments that:

The liberal theology of the nineteenth century continued to fascinate the Western world until the First World War destroyed the morale and confidence of western civilization on a scale hitherto unknown. The war shattered the optimism which had nourished nineteenth-century theology. It became obvious that the faith that liberal theology had put in the human capacity for good, progress, and expansion of culture was misplaced, because it underrated the human propensity toward sin and evil.



In the midst of such atrocities, there needed to be a theological response; perhaps it is probable that it is the preceding theologies that contributed to such cruel acts. These are some of the events, forces, and conditions that directly and indirectly influenced the contexts that demanded a new theology; which gave birth to another interpretation of the key doctrines of the Christian faith. Some of these events and forces being the two World Wars, the new post-colonial societies, the struggles against racism and sexism, the spread of mass communication, business corporations and technological advances.

Matthews (1992: 7), in his work where he attempts to illustrate the history of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, comments that: “More than any other this has been a century of change. Empires which took generations to build have been swept away, monolithic superstates founded on ideology have been created and destroyed, technology we now take for granted was not even dreamed of at the beginning of the century.” McMahon (2007: np.) confirms this by stating that “the world was changed the perception of theology and Western civilization around the world.” Hence, Thiselton (1996: 610) characterized this age as *An Age of Anxiety*.<sup>72</sup>

Postmodernism makes a contribution to all the worldviews outlined above, as it deconstructs some of the frameworks which were created by modernism and are slowly becoming out-of-date, or in some cases irrelevant. In that it critiques the autonomy and sufficiency of reason which were considered as the criterion for truth in most modernity. Beginning with prime reality, “The first question postmodernism address is not what is there or how we know what is there but how language functions to construct meaning. In other words, there has been a shift in ‘first things’ from being to knowing to constructing meaning” (Sire 2004a: 214).

Thus, being precedes knowing, in contrast to naturalism’s assumption which suggests that knowing comes before being. In relation to the nature of external reality, the world is constantly changing as we define it.

In relation to what is a human being, human beings make themselves who they are by the languages they construct about themselves. Thus, we make ourselves by what we choose to do (Sire 2004a: 225). In relation to death, postmodernism follows cultural relativism. In relation to the possibility of man knowing cognitively, the truth about reality itself is forever hidden from us.

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<sup>72</sup> For more on Thiselton’s (1996: 610 – 627) description of the 20<sup>th</sup> century see the full article: *An Age of Anxiety*.



Knowledge is power, however, postmodernists do not adopt one type of knowledge – whether scientific knowledge or religious knowledge – objective; as “There is no purely objective knowledge, no truth of correspondence. Instead there are only stories, stories that, when they are believed, give the storyteller power over others” (Sire 2004a: 224). All we can do is tell stories, and these stories speak of where we have been to where we intend going. This truth is realized through metaphors and anthropomorphisms.

In relation to man knowing what is right and wrong, “ethics like knowledge, is a linguistic construct. Social good is whatever society takes it to be” (Sire 2004a: 226). This is a development of cultural relativism, where the value that is accepted by most of the community is the one that is adopted for that time. In relation to human history, only the present is important as “the pastness of the past disappears in the mists of the present moment” (Sire 2004a: 231).

<b>Competing Worldviews</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Christian Theism</li> <li>• Deism</li> <li>• Naturalism</li> <li>• Nihilism</li> <li>• Existentialism</li> <li>• Eastern Pantheistic Monism</li> <li>• The New Age</li> <li>• Postmodernism</li> </ul>

Figure 3.1: Summary of topics discussed in the second section of Chapter 3

### **3.3 The characteristics of a worldview**

To understand a worldview one must understand the characteristics that form its structure; as all the above mentioned basic worldviews share a certain structure that has a bearing on each worldview’s development. Worldviews are founded on three themes which form its structure; these are: ideas, feelings, and values – these characteristics could also be transcribed as cognition, affection, and evaluation.

Therefore, there are three themes that form the structure of worldview: cognitive theme, affective theme, and evaluative theme; as Hiebert (2008: 50) suggests that worldviews are made up of three interacting dimensions: ideas, feeling, and values.<sup>73</sup> It is through these that one recognizes the implicit nature of worldviews; as in most cases they go unexamined. Thus, worldviews, “Like glasses, they shape how we see the world, but we are rarely aware of their presence. In fact, others can often see them better than we ourselves do... they are like the submerged portion of an iceberg, which keeps it afloat but is unseen” (Hiebert 2008: 46). Hence, the cognitive dimension of a worldview.

### 3.3.1 The Cognitive theme

As noted above that worldviews are part of the intellectual orientation, as people act as they think; hence, the cognitive theme, as cognition is the mental ability or faculty or process of acquiring knowledge by the use of reasoning, intuition, or perception. Moreland and Craig (2003: 97) confirm that human beings are cognitivists, and define a cognitivist as the one who accepts the fact that people have knowledge; Further on, they comment that such an expression of confidence – in that human beings have cognitive abilities – is quite at home in a Christian theistic worldview, because God is good, trustworthy, rational being who created and designed humans to have knowledge about him and his world.

There are two types of criterions of knowledge that one possesses, and these criterions of knowledge are: intellectual knowledge and sensual knowledge. Copleston (2003c: 199) explains these two criterions of knowledge by noting that Intellectual knowledge is knowledge of objects which do not affect the senses: that is to say, it is knowledge, not of *sensibilia*, but of *intelligibilia*. Sensitive knowledge is knowledge of objects as they appear, which are subjected under the ‘laws of sensibility’ namely the *a priori* conditions of space and time; whereas intellectual knowledge is knowledge of things as they are.

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<sup>73</sup> This structure of the cognitive themes, affective themes, and evaluative themes is adopted from Hiebert’s (2008) work of *Transforming Worldviews* where he develops the idea of an anthropological idea of how people change; however, these themes are adapted with other sources to make sense of this research. As Hiebert restricts the cognitive theme to the sensual knowledge which is the apprehension of the senses subjected under subthemes of time and space; for a thorough discussion of the effect that time and space has on a worldview see pages 50-59.

The empirical sciences come under the heading of sensitive knowledge, while metaphysics is the prime example of intellectual knowledge.<sup>74</sup>

Lonergan (1980: 37) in his epistemological structure states that this process of cognitive analysis and synthesis happens in different stages. The complete structure of knowing happens in three stages or levels. We know first by experience, through attending to what has been presented to the senses. Secondly, we attain understanding as the next step of knowing, by seeking an intelligent pattern or relationship of what is presented to us. Thirdly, we make a judgment of that understanding if it is objective and truthful. Therefore, the analysis of knowledge yields the three elements: experience, understanding, and Judging.

Therefore, cognition has an influence on one's conduct as the cognitive is the primary feature of the structure of one's worldview; thus, "Cognitivism holds that moral statements make truth claims because they are indicative statements that convey descriptive factual information" (Moreland and Craig 2003: 400). Such information is a development of both types of criteria of knowledge.

Murray (2003: 209-211) seems to be using a different term: meta-invention to describe a worldview as displayed by cognition; as he notes that by meta-invention, I mean the introduction of a new cognitive tool for dealing with the world around us. Hiebert (2008: 50) comments that worldviews have a cognitive dimension which includes the deep assumptions about the nature of reality shared by the members of a group; this cognitive dimension includes the mental categories and logic, which people use for thinking. Thus, the cognitive theme provides a culture with the fundamental mental structures people use to define and explain reality.

### 3.3.2 The Affective theme

It seems that we living in a world that is influenced mostly by the cognitive outlook on reality, but sometimes sadly in ignorance of the affective in decision making or in one's outlook. Hence, Goleman (1996: 4) mourns this reality by noting that "a view of human nature that ignores the power of emotions is sadly short-sighted. The very name *Homo sapiens*, the thinking species, is misleading in light of the new appreciation and vision of the place of emotions in our lives that science now offers."

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<sup>74</sup> Note that Copleston's explanation is a development of Kant's theories and their development; to see a lengthy discussion see Copleston (2003c: 196-202), in a chapter that thoroughly discuss the life and the writings of Kant.

From that perspective one begins to notice that “Worldviews also shape deep feelings of joy and sorrow, fear and revulsion, and awe and worship. They influence people’s tastes in music, art, dress, food, and architecture as well as the way they feel toward one another and about life in general.

These affective assumptions underlie the notions of beauty, style, and aesthetics found in a culture” (Hiebert 2008: 59). Goleman (1996: 4) further on adds by commenting: “As we all know from experience, when it comes to shaping our decisions and our actions, feeling counts every bit as much – and often more – than thought. We have gone too far in emphasizing the value and import of the purely rational – of what IQ measures – in human life.”

However, in a critical manner, Goleman (1996: 4) noted that, “Intelligence can come to nothing when the emotions hold sway.”<sup>75</sup> The importance of the affective theme is important to understand as part of the structure of one’s worldview; this is even evident when one looks at churches, regarding the role emotions play in effecting change in the lives of many. Hiebert (2008:60) illustrates this by stating that:

Different affective themes are expressed in different ways. In high Christian churches, the dominant emotions are awe and wonder in the presence of great mystery expressed in high rituals. In many “low” Protestant churches, feelings of peace and calm are evoked by means of meditation and orderly preaching. Many charismatics seek ecstasy through dance, music, and rhythm. In short, religions vary greatly in the emotions they value and the ways these emotions are expressed”.<sup>76</sup>

Although this affective theme is as important to recognize as the cognitive theme, as it also forms part of one’s worldview, Hiebert’s (2008: 60) observation suggests that some churches, and perhaps other organisations, downplay this affective theme by noting that scholars and leaders who stress the preaching of cognitive truth in church services downplay the importance of feelings in worship and tend to overlook the importance of feelings in the lives of ordinary people.

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<sup>75</sup> Goleman (1996) has produced a classic work, in a book entitled Emotional Intelligence, where he explores the subject of understanding the emotional part of the brain; see the whole book for a thorough discussion.

<sup>76</sup> Hiebert’s (2008:60) definition of the affective theme is effectual; however, his categorization of Christian denominations is flawed in that here (in the above quote) he recognizes orthodox or traditional churches as “high” Christian churches, and the Protestant movements as “low” Christian churches, and he provides a narrow definition of charismatic churches – his mention of the “high” and “low” churches without definition leaves a lot to be desired.

He illustrates this by noting that these leaders push to get work done and fail to see the emotional distress caused by their actions; moreover, because of this approach – of preferring the cognitive above the affective – people often leave the church with their heads full and their hearts empty. Both the cognitive theme and the affective theme are important, as they both – with the evaluative theme – form the structure of one’s worldview. Thus, Christianity doesn’t only make its appeal to some sort of intellectual elite; it isn’t just based upon contemporary academic wisdom, which is outdated in decades rather than centuries.

As we study the history of ideas we become aware that ideas quickly go out of fashion; most of them are abandoned as new ideas emerge, others are refuted. However, the significance of Christianity hangs on the fact that underlying the gospel is something which cannot go out of date – the power of God, which makes an appeal to the affective nature of the individual.

Thus, Hiebert (2008: 60) sees both these as dependent on each other through remarking that, “Most people make religious decisions on the basis of emotions and experience as much as on the basis of rational argument. On the other hand, stressing affectivity alone leaves people with their hearts full and their heads empty. Both cognition and affectivity are vital to religious life.” Thus both the mind (cognitive theme) and the heart (Affective theme) are important in the process of change. Change which comes through the knowledge of Word of God influences our minds before it affects our hearts. That very word that the Holy Spirit illuminates into our hearts must first pass through the mind or through the cognitive process.

As R. C. Sproul (2003: 63-67) comments that, the Word of God can be in the mind without being in the heart; but it cannot be in the heart without first being in the mind. Nevertheless, the affective theme is also an important part of the structure of one’s worldview; so we must open ourselves to tracing those aspects of our lives which bring joy and sorrow, pain and delight, fear and revulsion, and awe and worship to our senses which will partly reveal what worldview we hold.

### 3.3.3 The Evaluative theme

The third component or characteristic of a worldview is the evaluative theme and could be considered as a normative assumption, which gives rise to the social and moral order in a culture, and may include such notions as virtues, standards, morals, and manners (Hiebert 2008: 60).

This is, perhaps, though intertwined with the other two themes of cognition and affection, a process of judging the ideas and feelings that resulted from the cognitive and affective processes.

Hiebert (2008: 60) confirms this by remarking that the evaluative themes in their own turn provide the standards people use to make judgments, including their criteria for determining truth and falsehood, likes and dislikes, and right and wrong. Thus, morality is at the center of a worldview.

Hiebert (2008: 63-65) adapts Parsons evaluative norms and he outlines them as seven moral dimensions which is believed to exist in all societies.<sup>77</sup> These seven moral dimensions are presented as each evaluation made between two categories with its characteristics, which are seemingly both categories in opposition with the other or as different approaches or outlooks; as presented by Hiebert (2008: 64) in this fashion:

#### Evaluative Norms at the Worldview Level

- |   |     |  |
|---|-----|--|
| 1. <u>Emotional Expression</u><br># seek gratification of senses and desires<br># permissive<br># examples: Kwakiutl, modern Consumer culture, tantricism | vs. | <u>Emotional Control</u><br># delayed gratification, renunciation<br># disciplinary<br># examples: Hopi, Protestant ethic, monasticism |
| 2. <u>Group Centered</u><br># collective interests<br># corporate responsibility and decisions<br># examples: Bunyoro, tribalism                          | vs. | <u>Individual Centered</u><br># individual interests<br># personal fulfilment and decision<br># examples: Kapauku, Modernity           |
| 3. <u>Other-World Oriented</u><br># stress other worldly gain<br># examples: medieval Europe<br>Buddhism  | vs. | <u>This-World Oriented</u><br># stress this worldly gain<br># examples: modernity, postmodernity                                       |
| 4. <u>Emphasize Ascription</u><br># relations based on one's birth  | vs. | <u>Emphasize Achievement</u><br># relations based on one's Achievement   |

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<sup>77</sup> The source of this adaptation by Hiebert is: Parsons, Talcott and Shils, Edward (eds.) 1952. *Toward a General Theory of Action*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

- |   |     |   |
|---|-----|---|
| # Value attributes                                |     | # value performance   |
| # example: caste system in India                  |     | # example: class system in United States  |
| 5. <u>Focus on the Whole Picture</u>              | vs. | <u>Look at Specific Details</u>   |
| # take broad context into account                 |     | # take only narrow context into account   |
| # examples: Indian village <i>panchayat</i> cases |     | # example: United States court cases  |
| 6. <u>Universalist</u>                            | vs. | <u>Particularist</u>  |
| # treat everyone alike                            |     | # treat each person on basis of his Or her ascribed role, status, and Situation |
| # stress universal truths, laws, grids            |     | # stress uniqueness of each situation   |
| # push for standardization                        |     | # value uniqueness and diversity  |
| # universal, absolute theories                    |     | # adaptation to situation context   |
| # absolute ethics                                 |     | # situational ethics  |
| # examples: Judeo-Christianity, modernity         |     | # examples: Hinduism, postmodernity   |
| 7. <u>Hierarchy Is Right</u>                      | vs. | <u>Equality Is Right</u>  |
| # see people as intrinsically unequal             |     | # see people as intrinsically equal   |
| # give privileges to the superior                 |     | # hold everyone equal in rewards/punishment                                     |
| # patron-client relationships                     |     | # contractual relationships   |
| # example: Indian caste society                   |     | # example: Scandinavian societies   |

The outline above serves as a summary of the evaluative norms and actions which determine the outlook individuals have and these determines the “meaning” they draw from all of life. The evaluative theme, as the final component of the structure of a worldview, completes the basic framework of a worldview; therefore, the three themes need to be studied together for one to be able determine one’s worldview and find meaning. Therefore:

Together, cognitive, affective, and evaluative assumptions provide people with a way of looking at the world that makes sense out of it, that gives them a feeling of being at home, and that reassures them that they are right. This worldview serves as the deep structure on which they construct their explicit belief and value systems and the social institutions in which they live their daily lives (Hiebert 2008: 65).

<b>Characteristics Of A Worldview</b>		
<b>Cognitive Theme</b>	<b>Evaluative Theme</b>	<b>Affective Theme</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cognitive theme provides a culture with the fundamental mental structures people use to define and explain reality</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A normative assumption, which gives rise to the social and moral order in a culture.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The affective theme deals with emotions and how they affect one's worldview.</li> </ul>

Figure 3.2: Summary of topics discussed in the third section of Chapter 3

Thus, the following chapter shows how worldviews have an impact of influencing anthropological horizons which have the potential of affecting many generations.



#### 4. THE ANTHROPOLOGICAL STRUGGLE

Throughout the centuries there seems to have been an anthropological struggle because mankind has made many attempts to find his origin and destiny; and this has been evidenced by an increase in the study of disciplines such as philosophy, psychology, and sociology. I refer to this struggle as an anthropological struggle because anthropology in itself is the study of humankind in all its aspects, especially human culture and human development. The term anthropology is a compound word, made of two Greek words: *anthropos* and *logos*; the word *anthropos* is translated as man/human and *logos* as discourse/study.<sup>78</sup> Thus, “Anthropology is a science dealing with man (we would say ‘humans’) and his (their) origins” (Carlson 1997: 111). In recognizing the similarities and differences in humans, De Jongh (2010: 2) notes that anthropology as a study produces information (data), knowledge and understanding of what makes people different from one another and what makes them similar, and looks at what all human beings have in common.<sup>79</sup> This, partly, contributes to this anthropological struggle.

People in general seem to be mostly concerned about their reputation. Many people are so apprehensive about the kind of image they are displaying in public; perhaps, fearful that the way they are seen on the outside impugns on their worth as human beings. Hence, there is so much attention employed in choosing the clothes one wears and their labels and the car one drives. Most professionals and celebrities hire an image consultant to help them enhance their public image. It, however, seems that the more people improve their public image the greater the superficiality in their lifestyles. Even in the discipline of Psychology there is more research done on the importance of one’s self-image. There is a growing confusion as to what should constitute an image; so the history of mankind has been characterized by many – thinkers and movements – who have attempted to explain this mystery. Hence, many descriptions of the original image of humanity are reductive, because they are reducing humanity only to a few aspects of his nature, and this has had many unpleasant ramifications.

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<sup>78</sup> Prof Mike De Jongh (2010:1-13) in his work: “*The Anthropological Study of Culture in a Multicultural Context*” defines anthropology and its relation to other study disciplines as sociology, history, economics, education, & theology.

<sup>79</sup> The approach of this research views anthropology from its technical definition which espouses the feature which expresses commonalities in human beings, as necessary for ethics.

## 4.1 In search of an identity<sup>80</sup>

Schillebeeckx (1984: 28) in his description of personal identity, particularly within social culture, uses the concept of “Coordinates for an Anthropology” to explain identity. He suggests that today we have become more modest in our positive definitions of what humanity is; then he goes on to cite Ernst Bloch, who wrote that “Man does not yet know what he is, but can know through alienation from himself what he certainly is not and therefore does not want to, or at least should not want to, remain false.” Moreover, he continues to note that we do not have a pre-existing definition of humanity – indeed for Christians it is not only a future, but an eschatological reality. There are, however, people who give the impression that they have a blueprint for humanity. They have a fully drawn picture of man and a specific image of coming society, an “entire doctrine of salvation,” a dogmatic system which, paradoxically enough, seems to be more important than the people with whom it is really concerned.<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>80</sup> Be mindful that the ancient world regarded the formation of one’s identity different than we do in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, as the focus was more on the “communal identity” rather than “individual identity”, for both the Hebrew and the Greek communities; for instance, Icenogle (1993: n.p.) notes that for Hebrew people, wisdom was gained through the serious dialogical reflection of adult people of faith. This dialogical setting reflects a historical practice in the faith community to discover the mysteries of God’s work in the world through mutual reflection; whereas in the Greek communities it seems that there was a recognition of both “individual identity” and “communal identity”, which was seen to develop through the family setting. Thus, Kittel, Bromiley, & Friedrich (1964: 521) comment that the anthropocentric and also individualistic character of rational Greek thinking is comprehensively stated in the well-known principle of Protagoras: “Each man is for himself the measure of things, of those that are, that they are, and of those that are not, that they are not,” Plat. Theaet., 152a. This finally stands behind all the *paideia* of the Greeks, and *paideia* as a task and goal of the state brings no basic change at this point. But Plato achieves a new and intentionally antithetical formulation: ὁ δὴ θεὸς ἡμῖν πάντων χρημάτων μέτρον ἄν εἴη μάλιστα, καὶ πολὺ μᾶλλον ἢ ποὺ τις ... ἄνθρωπος, Leg., IV, 716c. Here neither individualism nor anthropocentrism is in the last resort abandoned, but a definitive and absolute claim replaces relativism. Thus the necessary transcendent orientation of *paideia* is discovered.

<sup>81</sup> Schillebeeckx (1984: 28-39) outlines in detail the seven Coordinates of Anthropology whose focal point is *personal identity within social culture*; these seven anthropological constants are: 1) Relationship to human corporeality, nature and the ecological environment; 2) Being a man involves fellow men; 3) The connection with social and institutional structures; 4) The conditioning of people and culture by time and space; 5) Mutual relationship of theory and practice; 6) The religious and “para-religious” consciousness of man; 7) Irreducible synthesis of these six dimensions. In his conclusion, where he describes what these coordinates achieve, he remarks that Christian salvation is concerned with the whole system of coordinates in which man can really be man. This salvation – the wholeness of man – cannot just be sought in one or other of these constants. The way in which human failure and human shortcomings are coped with must be termed a form of “liberation”. In that case that might then be the all-embracing “anthropological constant” in which Jesus the Christ wanted to go before us.

The understanding of one's self-image impacts on all areas of life. Therefore, it is true that "we direct our lives according to the image we have of ourselves" (Brown 1995: xviii). However, it seems like that man is still in search of his identity. History is filled with various illustrative norms for the origin and nature of mankind; through ancient times to the modern age man has always aspired to understand his nature and destiny.<sup>82</sup>

The exploration of the nature and destiny of mankind is significant for one's analysis of ethics. The explanations and descriptions of human nature throughout history followed two definable streams: a secular approach and a primarily religious approach. Our focus will be on the main thinkers and movements that have greatly influenced the understanding of human nature and destiny throughout history – as it had a bearing on ethical reflection.

Many, within the secular approach, have attempted to define man. Hence, poets, historians, philosophers, theologians, artists, and different forms of literati<sup>83</sup> have endeavoured to explain human nature, and maybe sought to answer the question: What is MAN? Or what does it mean to be human? Swanson (1973: vii), a biologist, in his research on *the natural history of man* noted that:

The natural history of man could very legitimately take off in many directions and have many varied emphases. Whatever man was, is, or might become, whatever he has done, is doing, or might do – all of these fall within the province of his natural history. Similarly the emphasis could be biological, cultural, behavioural, ecological, technological, or aesthetic, and the central theme could be related to food, energy control, arts and crafts, language, or racial diversity. Any one, or any combination, of these approaches could yield a well-structured image of man, and each would contain a modicum of truth that could withstand close scrutiny.

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<sup>82</sup> The term man as used in this dissertation is used as synonymous with human nature, so both terms are used interchangeably; however, in most cases the term human nature will be used, preferred to avoid the sensitivities of the contemporary culture of sexism which sees man – referring to masculinity – as dominant and women under oppression, and thus may seem exclusive of women in the creation of mankind, and may foster the attitude that maintains that a man is superior to a woman.

<sup>83</sup> The term *literati* is not a familiar term but it is appropriate here, it means: the class of learned people.

For instance, William Shakespeare, in *Hamlet* (2008: 65), wrote: “What a piece of work is a man! Noble in reason! How infinite in faculty! In form and moving how express and admirable! In action how like an angel! In apprehension how like a God! The beauty of the world! The paragon of animals!” Beck (1961: 2), a scientist, noted: “What of man, the organism? What is he? What is his origin, his state and his destiny? Man, we know, is an animal which, like all animals, seeks food, shelter, and security... who fights off the encroachments of a hostile environment... then, like all animals, he dies.” Even the Psalmist asked: “what is man that you are mindful of him, the son of man that you care for him? You made him a little lower than the heavenly beings and crowned him with glory and honour. You made him ruler over the works of your hands; you put everything under his feet” (Psalm 8: 4-6).

Now, “given the sparkling variety of people in our world, can any single answer be formed to the question of what it means to be human?” (Sherlock 1996: 16). Macquarrie (1983: 1) in his attempts to answer this question in his thesis on the nature and destiny of the human being began by stating, “What is a human being? What is human nature? These are among the most difficult questions that can be asked, yet they are also among the most important.” Haberman and Stevenson (2004: 5) in their work on the *Ten Theories of Human Nature* have endeavoured to give indications that answer these questions through summarizing the influential movements and figures who have sought to define and explain human nature. They suggest that these theories are embodied in human societies and institutions; so, they are not just intellectual constructions, but ways of life.

The contents of Stevenson and Haberman’s book are used here as a framework to explain these theories; supplemented with other related works, and also engaging with other writings.<sup>84</sup> These theories are not discussed in depth; so only abbreviated introductions of these theories are presented, to enhance the argument of this thesis. Moreover, these theories were influential in different degrees in different epochs. Thus, different amounts of attention will be given to each, respective to their significance in human history.

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<sup>84</sup> Kelly & Tallon’s (1976) research in the exploration of the nature and destiny of man, in their book, entitled: *Readings in the Philosophy of Man*, is used as a supplementary of Stevenson and Haberman’s book.

#### 4.1.1 Confucianism image of humanity

One of the movements that became influential in explaining the theory of human nature is Confucianism; which had more influence on Chinese thought and civilization. The movement was started by Confucius (551-479 B.C.E.), who placed more emphasis on humanism, than on metaphysics; he was, as Stevenson and Haberman (2004: 11) explain, “concerned primarily with basic human welfare and spoke little about the ultimate nature of the world in which we live.” Confucius anticipated that the destiny of man was to become like the *sages*, who were the ancient rulers of earlier ideal times. Hence, the *sages*, who modelled their lives according to the Way of heaven – which was the way of morality, which had something to do with the transcendent and ethical conduct – “become models of the Way to human perfection in the present, the Way to be followed by all people” (Stevenson & Haberman 2004: 12).

However, despite his (Confucius) optimism regarding the potential of the human nature he still thought that only a select few would reach the human perfection of the *sages*. Thus, “although all human beings are potential sages, in reality this is an uncommon occurrence. Most human beings exist in a dreadful state” (Stevenson & Haberman 2004: 13). On the same note, Confucius concluded that human beings have a free will, thus, every human being has the freedom to pursue or reject morality or proper conduct. Therefore, he maintained that we all have a choice as to how we live in every situation.

#### 4.1.2 Hinduism image of humanity

The philosophy of Hinduism is the most diverse of all the movements that has a significant bearing on the nature of the human being; it is regarded as the most dominant religion of the majority of the people in the South Asian subcontinent. Hence some historians suggest that true Hinduism is confined to India (Manley and Neech 1955: 99). Moreover, it is difficult to trace its origins because it has no founder and no clear historical beginning, hence, no single particular text is regarded as authoritative for its followers.<sup>85</sup> Its adherents “think of their religion as being grounded in a way of action” (Stevenson & Haberman 2004: 27).

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<sup>85</sup> Manley and Neech (1955) trace the origin and development of Hinduism in their reflection of its philosophy.

Those who seek a text to refer to their religion turn to the writings known as Upanishads. Stevenson & Haberman (2004: 27-28) further explain that “the group of texts known as Upanishads have played a decisive role throughout Hindu religious history... The term ‘Upanishad’ means literally to ‘sit near’ but has come to mean ‘esoteric teaching’.” This theory expresses the idea that divinity expresses itself in multiple forms; however, there is a single unifying principle – which is ultimate divinity – called *Brahman*.

This figure, *Brahman*, was lonely and desired another, and so it divided into two parts: a male and a female; then the pair began to interact sexually, and from this relation were born the entire universe and its diverse forms. Therefore, in relation to human nature, human beings’ kin are not only fellow human beings but all other beings as well. This has huge implications for the understanding of the nature and destiny of mankind, which this philosophy refers to as the *atman*, who is the ultimate self. The *atman* is not an independent, autonomous being, but is a part of an interrelated network of reality. This being seeks knowledge to discover his infinite being which is his destiny; which is the reality of being part of *Brahman*.

So, in the process to this destiny, the self [atman] undergoes reincarnation until he becomes part of the *Brahman*; and the doorway to this place is through the sun.

The sun in much Hindu mythology represents the doorway out of this world, and, indeed, we are told that those who achieve the highest knowledge go on from the sun to reach the world of *Brahman*, from which they never return to worldly life... some later Upanishads insist that the path of no return is far superior to the path of return. According to the more ascetic Upanishads, return to this world is an indication of one’s failure to achieve ultimate knowledge of one’s self. A very special kind of knowledge, then, is declared to be the culmination of a successful human life (Stevenson & Haberman 2004: 34).

#### 4.1.3 Buddhism image of humanity

Closely related to the previous understanding of humanity according to Hinduism is Buddhism; which is also one of the prominent forms of religion throughout most of Asia. It includes a variety of teachings of the Buddha. According to this tradition, Buddha is the ultimate goal – this is the goal of the Nirvana or Buddhahood. After its establishment it split into two divisions.

One branch became known as the *Theravada*, also known as the 'Way of the Elders'. The other branch developed to become known as *Mahayana*, also known as the 'Great Vehicle'. There are two important texts for this understanding of the nature of human existence; the branch of *Theravada* refers to the Pali Canon Scriptures, whereas the *Mahayana* branch refer to the Lotus Sutra. The Buddha of the Pali Canon taught the four noble truths that are practical teachings designed to remove human suffering. These four truths concern: the nature of suffering, the origin of suffering, the cessation of suffering, and the path leading to the cessation of suffering. Hence, this is the goal of human existence: to live free of suffering.

This process happens through a period of reincarnation, which aims at reaching supreme enlightenment. Thus, the self is constantly changing; as Stevenson & Haberman suggests that, according to Buddha, "the teaching that there is nothing solid in the world also applies to the self" (2009: 55).

So it is not the self that is real, but rather the components of the self that are real; these five components make the person. Therefore:

There is no "person" apart from these five components. The teaching of the five aggregates is a way of accounting for an entire person without resorting to the idea of a "self." Once the five aggregates are examined and analysed, one discovers that there is nothing behind them that can be taken as a substantial center or permanent "I". Buddhist practice aims to dismantle the unexamined (and false) belief in separate individuality or the idea of the self. Any concept of an ego, self, or soul as an ever-lasting, independent, and absolute entity, an unchanging substance behind the changing phenomenal world, is strongly denied any authentic existence (Stevenson & Haberman 2009: 56).

The five components or aggregates that make the person are: form, sensations, perception, mental formations, and consciousness. Form is the matter that is made up of ever-changing atoms; in the context of the person it is the body, which includes the six senses, one of the six senses being the mind. The sensations are the physical processes that result when the one form comes into contact with the other forms; "sensations are the feelings produced as the eye comes into contact with visible forms, the ear with sounds, the tongue with tastes, the nose with odour, the body with tangible objects, and the mind with mental objects, such as thoughts" (Stevenson & Haberman 2009: 57).



These sensations come in three kinds: others are pleasant, others are unpleasant, and others are neutral. The third component is perception, which is the recognition of objects discovered when sensations are produced. Which then lead to the fourth component: mental formations; these formations “include our predispositions, impulses, attitudes, and tendencies that make up the unique character of our own personality” (Stevenson & Haberman 2009: 57).

The last component is consciousness, which is an awareness; this is the awareness one comes to through the process of the interaction of the above four components. Buddhism sees the essence of human nature as reaching Nirvana, which is a state where a human being experiences no more suffering. Therefore:

The ultimate state in Buddhism is referred to as Nirvana. The word Nirvana literally means ‘blowing out’ or ‘extinguishing,’ as in the blowing out of a fire. In the present context, the reference is to the blowing out of *dukkha* [suffering] by means of extinguishing the fire of craving. This leads to the blessed state of Nirvana (Stevenson & Haberman 2009: 61).

#### 4.1.4 Plato’s image of humanity

Plato (427-347 B.C.E.) was a Greek philosopher who was deeply impressed by the teachings of Socrates who was known as an ethical philosopher, also called the father of philosophy because he concerned himself with the use of reason in fundamental and ethical questions; nevertheless, it is Plato who influenced most of the figures that lived after him, those whom also attempted to define and explain human nature and destiny. Plato believed that, “The task of the philosopher was to know man. This attitude he inherited from his master, Socrates” (Kelly & Tallon 1967: 1).<sup>86</sup> His influence extends even to the contemporary times, as Stevenson & Haberman (2004: 69) confirms that “Plato’s pioneering thought is still of great contemporary relevance.” He argued that the use of reason was essential; thus, “Plato retained Socrates’ faith in rational inquiry; he was convinced that it was possible to attain knowledge of deep-lying truths about the world and about human nature” (Stevenson & Haberman 2004: 70).

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<sup>86</sup> Socrates never recorded his thoughts in writing, but his wisdom was written by Plato in his works known as dialogues; in these dialogues he showed the search for some ethical concept related to wisdom. The most important of these dialogues are set around Socrates’ trial: *Euthyphro* (about piety); *Crito* (about justice); *Charmides* (about self-control); *Lysis* (about friendship); *Laches* (about courage) (Houser 1995: 3-47).

Plato maintained a dualist view of human nature, by describing human nature as composed of soul and body; the soul is the non-material entity that exists apart from the body, and the body is the entity that is independent, but is not eternal as the soul is. He further on explained that the soul has a tripartite structure, it is composed of the mind/intellect, spirit/emotions, and the will; Plato thought of the 'spirit' as central in every human being because emotion seems to be greater than intellectual or rational recognition in every situation. Stevenson & Haberman (2004: 77) note that Plato identified that 'spirit' must be distinct from reason, thus, we surely have to agree that emotion is different from bodily desires and from rational and moral judgment.

Hence, they further on suggest that, "a different tripartite distinction of mental faculties that has become standard, especially since the advent of Christianity, is as follows: reason, emotion, and will" (Stevenson & Haberman 2004: 78). However, Plato recognized that there is disharmony in soul and society, so these three tripartite faculties are present in every person but they operate on different degrees in different people, as the main desire of each type is: knowledge, which is philosophic; reputation, which is victory loving; and material gain, which is profit. Kelly and Tallon (1976: 1) comment that his anthropology treats of the pre-existence (Timaeus) of the human tri-part soul (Phaedo), the theory of reminiscence (Meno), and immortality (Phaedo and Phaedrus). Plato's ethics are concerned with moral and political themes. So, the significant characteristics of Plato's philosophy of man are: love, beauty, and immortality (1976: 1).

Nettleship (1951: 75), in his records of the lectures on Plato's 'Republic', confirms that according to Plato, normal human nature must have each of the three elements: the element of appetite, the element of spirit, and the philosophic element. The disharmony between the three made Plato conclude that of these three, reason must direct spirit and will; as Stevenson & Haberman (2004: 79) state that:

He [Plato] has a very clear view about which of the three elements should rule: it is reason that ought to control both Spirit and Appetite. But each has its proper role to play, and there should ideally be harmonious agreement in the three aspects of our nature, with Reason in overall command.

#### 4.1.5 Aristotle's image of humanity

Aristotle (383-322 B.C.E.) is another outstanding thinker from Athens; another influential Greek philosopher whose thoughts also greatly impact the contemporary scene, as those of his mentor, Plato. Aristotle “joined Plato’s Academy at the age of seventeen, and the influence of Plato on his thought is obvious” (Stevenson & Haberman 2004: 87). However, he did not accept his entire mentor’s presuppositions, thus he changed the direction of his inquiry. As one critically and comprehensively studies the works of both one discovers distinct philosophical impressions in both on human nature; in summary, one observes that Plato was more interested in transcendence and Aristotle was more interested in the extraordinary mysteries in the ordinary situations.<sup>87</sup>

His writings were in a different format, seen as more abstract and technical; thus, he became known as the philosophers’ philosopher. “His prolific writings cover three phases: the Platonic period of the Academy, the transitional, and the phase of the lyceum, which was devoted mostly to logic, metaphysics, natural sciences, ethics, politics, and philosophy” (Kelly & Tallon 1976: 9).<sup>88</sup> Hence, because of his interest in his surroundings, his many brilliant works have been seen as prodigious!

Aristotle defined man as a rational animal, an intelligent being; his ability to reason is what distinguishes him from all other animals. Ostwald (1962: xiii), a translator of Aristotle’s work: *Nicomachean ethics*, in introducing the book, notes that:

For Aristotle, as for Plato, man possesses *logos*, the power of speech and reasoning. This does not mean that everything man does is rational; it simply means that man alone of all animals possesses reason, which gives him the capacity of organizing his various activities by means of thought in a way no other animal can.

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<sup>87</sup> According to Aristotle, there are three areas of theoretical science: Physical sciences, Mathematics, and Metaphysics; moreover, there are also three practical sciences: Ethics (concerns the individual), Economics (concerns the family), and Politics (concerns the community); and his book: *Nicomachean Ethics* is devoted to the first which is ethics (Houser 1995: 49-87).

<sup>88</sup> Kelly and Tallon (1976: 9) provide a commentary on how all the themes that Aristotle treated relate, and they make an emphasis on his discussion of Soul as a substantial matter and functions of the Soul.

Further on he notes that since this power differentiates him from the other animals, it constitutes the essential element in his definition, and only insofar as man acts rationally can he be said to act as a human being at all; thus acting like a human being is tantamount to acting like a rational human being (1962: xiv).

Stevenson & Haberman (2004: 92) corroborate by citing Aristotle as stating that animals, unlike plants, perceive through their sense organs and move themselves around to fulfil their desires. What then do human beings do or have that is extra to all this? It is the faculty of “thought and intellect.” Therefore, “Greek thought puts great store in the intellect, our ability to attain knowledge of truth (including moral truth); the highest fulfilment of human life was thought by Plato and Aristotle to be attainable only by those who are able to gain such rational knowledge” (Stevenson & Haberman 2004: 56).

Thus, Aristotle proposes that, “Since intelligible objects are universals, there must also be an efficient cause transforming the content of our sensations into universal concepts through abstraction. This cause is the agent intellect, which seems to be spiritual being completely separate from our individual souls” (Brown et.al. 1995: 85).

#### 4.1.6 Kant's image of humanity

Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) enters the “philosophic scene” in a significant age of scientific development known as the *Enlightenment*, and became the key philosopher of his time. Thus, “Kant was surely the deepest thinker of the enlightenment. He believed in the potential for human reason to improve the human condition (here using the term ‘reason’ in a wider sense than philosophical rationalism, to mean science and its social applications)” (Stevenson & Haberman 2004: 120).

His life was also impacted by the twin influences of his age: Christianity and Science, which seemed to be at war with each other. So, Kant set out to create a synthesis of both; hence, “The overarching problem of Kant's philosophy was to reconcile the claims of morality and religion with scientific knowledge. He hoped to paint one big, though complicated picture, giving human nature its appropriate place within physical nature” (Stevenson & Haberman 2004: 124).

From both these theories of religion and science – which he was attempting to reconcile – Kant defined these as rationalist theory and empiricist theory. From these he developed a theory that considers both of these, which results in perceptual knowledge. In the process he arrived at the same place that most of the philosophers that preceded him came at; which is that reason – cognitive abilities – is what distinguishes man from other animals.

But Kant improves the concept of reason by suggesting that in man this reason reaches a level of understanding in that man is able to organize various thoughts and arrive at a certain cause which leads him to act. However, human actions are influenced by two causes: hypothetical imperatives, and categorical imperatives; the former is an empirical character, and the latter is an intelligible character. Hypothetical imperative is when an action follows a cause of own desire to satisfy that desire; whilst, a Categorical imperative is an action that follows an obligation or a moral order – a reason for an action that we must perform irrespective of our self-interested satisfaction. However, “He does not accept the notion of a moral sense, believing instead that human beings use the same faculty to make moral judgments as they do to gain knowledge of the world. That faculty is *reason*” (Stewart 2007: 150). Further on Stewart (2007: 150) annotates:

Kant also does not argue for a universal morality or anything like natural law. Instead he proposes to explain in purely formal terms what makes an action moral and articulates a formula that can be applied anywhere by anyone to determine what the moral action is. This formula he calls the categorical imperative. That it is categorical means it is not conditional on any particular end to be achieved. To say that it is imperative means it is a command, but a command that we give to ourselves. Here is Kant’s best-known formulation of the categorical imperative: *Act on the principle that you can will to be a universal law of nature*. Some people think this sounds like the Golden Rule: Do unto others as you would have them do unto you. Kant says that the categorical imperative is different. To capture that difference would be to state it in the following way: Do unto others what you are willing for everybody to do.

Thus, Kant sees perfect human nature as that which conforms to the latter cause of action: Categorical imperative. Therefore, “this is what Kant calls ‘pure’ or a ‘p priori’ practical reason; he means that morality is fundamentally a function of our reason, not just our feelings” (Stevenson & Haberman 2004: 126). In his classic work: *God as a Postulate of practical Reason*, Kant (2007: 156) remarks that:

If we inquire into God's final end in creating the world, we must name not the happiness of rational beings in the world but the highest good, which adds a further condition to the wish of rational beings to be happy, *viz.*, the condition of being worthy of happiness, which is the morality of these beings, for this alone contains the standard by which they can hope to participate in happiness at the hand of a wise creator.

Hence, "Kant emphasizes the distinction between self-interested inclinations and moral duty" (Stevenson & Haberman 2004: 129).

#### 4.1.7 Marx's image of humanity

Karl Marx (1818-1883) is known as the most powerful critique of the capitalist system, developed by Adam Smith, which had spread throughout Europe.<sup>89</sup> Marx was influenced by Hegel, but developed his ideas with his partner Friedrich Engels, who was also influenced by Hegel's process of dialectic; however, since those who followed Hegel separated into two camps: the 'Right' and the 'Left' Hegelians, they were part of the 'Left' Hegelians. Lundin (1998: 296) comments that Marx and his collaborator Friedrich Engels built their system on the philosophy of G.W.F. Hegel, who saw history as a series of monumental struggles between theses and their antitheses, which then produce higher syntheses; which he termed it as a dialectical process. Marx is, in some circles, known as one of the founding fathers of sociology. According to him, human nature was distinctive in the sense that man is essentially characterized by his social nature; as he is recorded as noting that the real nature of man is the totality of social relations.<sup>90</sup>

Moreover, he wrote that we do not need to conceive of society as an abstract entity that mysteriously affects individuals; rather, what kind of individual one is and what kind of things one does are affected by all of one's interactions in the society one lives in (Stevenson & Haberman 2004: 147-148). Hence, the society that one lives in determines who that person will become; this will mostly be driven by economic determinism.

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<sup>89</sup> Adam Smith's economic views became popular through his book: *The Wealth of Nations*, which was published in 1776, and was recognized as fundamental to an understanding of economics. P. J. Rourke (2007) wrote a succinct version of *The Wealth of Nations*, entitled: *On The Wealth of Nations*.

<sup>90</sup> In his magisterial work: *The Communist Manifesto* (1848), Marx shows how the goal of history is rooted in understanding the human person as a worker, as a social being, and as someone who needs to be freed from religion (Ryan 1995: 252-293).

Therefore, what makes us distinctive as human beings is that “we are active, productive beings, we are different by nature from the other animals because we produce our means of subsistence..., for we make conscious plans how to produce our livelihood in new situations” (Stevenson & Haberman 2004: 148).

#### 4.1.8 Freud’s image of humanity

Sigmund Freud’s basis of explaining human nature was also reductive, in which he reduced human life to a scientific phenomenon.<sup>91</sup> Freud was trained as a psychiatrist and founded a school that became known as Psychoanalysis. He claimed that every action has preceding causes, which are reflected in the mind; these causes may have hereditary endowment. Hudson (1995: 369-395) explains Freud’s philosophy of the human person as understanding human behaviour through the role of unconscious mental states and instinctual desire. Thus, “thoughts and behaviour that had formerly been assumed to be of no significance for understanding a person, such as slips of the tongue, faulty actions, dreams, and neurotic symptoms, Freud assumed must be determined by hidden causes” (Stevenson & Haberman 2004: 160). Further on the authors note that this led to the creation of the concept that was known as the “Freudian slip”, which suggests that nothing a person thinks or does or says is really haphazard or accidental; everything can in principle be traced to some cause or other, presumably in the mind (Stevenson & Haberman 2004: 160). It seems that Freud, in his theory of human nature, did not consider much of the man’s ability to choose freely without any cause that is unconscious.

#### 4.1.9 Sartre’s image of humanity

Jean-Paul Sartre (1905-1980) was one of the most influential existentialists during his time, influenced by the philosophy of Heidegger; he popularized the theory of existentialism which expressed that man’s existence precedes his essence. Hence, “Sartre has been known as an existentialist” (Kennedy 1995: 507).<sup>92</sup>

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<sup>91</sup> Pannenberg (1999: 143-144) in discussing the universality of sin explains Freud’s view of human nature.

<sup>92</sup> Of his best-known works: *Nausea* (1938), *Being and Nothingness* (1943), *Existentialism* (1946), and *The Critique of Dialectical Materialism* (1960), it is in *Existentialism* where he defines his view of existentialism (Kennedy 1995: 507-521).



During the second half of the twentieth century, philosophy was dominated by existential (or phenomenological) philosophy on the one hand and by analytical philosophy on the other. From the phenomenological side the two dominant thinkers were Martin Heidegger and Jean-Paul Sartre (Sproul 2000: 173).

His thesis of human nature was essentially founded on the denial of the existence of God; “Sartre holds the absence of God to be of the utmost significance for human life; the atheist does not merely differ from the theist on a point of metaphysics, he holds a profoundly different view of human life” (Stevenson & Haberman 2004: 181). Having held to the atheistic view throughout his life, he saw life as an absurd existence, without meaning. Therefore:

We have not been created for any particular purpose, either by God or evolution or anything else, we simply find ourselves existing by no choice of our own and have to decide what to make of ourselves, so each of us must create his or her own nature or “essence”... Certainly there are no general truths about what we ought to be (Stevenson & Haberman 2004: 182).

#### 4.1.10 Darwin’s image of humanity

Charles Darwin (1809-1882) is also one of the thinkers whose theory on human nature had a profound effect on man’s definition of himself. Sproul (2000: 187) notes that “the publication of Darwin’s *The Origin of Species* was as revolutionary as the publication of Copernicus’s *On the Revolution of Heavenly Spheres*.” Darwin’s concern was with man’s origins; this is the issue that drove his research. So he suggested that man evolved from an ape.<sup>93</sup> Thus, “In limpid, readable prose, Darwin reviewed the anatomical evidence of our animal ancestry and theorized about the evolution of our intellectual and moral faculties from animal antecedents” (Stevenson & Haberman 2004: 204). Sproul (2000: 189) confirms this, on his reflections on Darwin’s book: *The Origin of Species*, by noting that: “In the book he theorizes that all living organisms on earth have descended from a single primordial form. From that single source all varieties of life have evolved and continue to evolve.” Although Darwin concluded that “natural selection not only prompts changes within species but leads to the origination of new species” (Sproul 2000: 191), man still has animal instincts and he is still evolving.

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<sup>93</sup> Pearcy (2004) discusses the impact Darwinism had on history and its philosophical implications.

The views of human nature delineated above could all be classified under the category of secularism, as they all concur in that they reject biblical Christianity.<sup>94</sup> Dobson and Bauer (1990: 22) observed that the secular humanist system of values has now become the predominant way of thinking in most of the power centers of society. It has outstripped Judeo-Christian precepts in the universities, in the news media, in the entertainment industry, in the judiciary, in the federal bureaucracy, in business, medicine, law, psychology, sociology, in the arts, in many public schools and, to be sure, in the halls of congress.

<b>Anthropological Horizons (Images Of Humanity)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confucianism</li> <li>• Hinduism</li> <li>• Buddhism</li> <li>• Plato</li> <li>• Aristotle</li> <li>• Kant</li> <li>• Marx</li> <li>• Freud</li> <li>• Sartre</li> <li>• Darwin</li> </ul>

Figure 4: Summary of topics discussed in Chapter 4

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<sup>94</sup> Secularism denotes a view of reality which excludes reference to the transcendent or sacred (Smith 2000: 519). For a full definition and description of secularism see the whole article by Smith (2000: 519-520).

## 5. BIBLICAL ETHICS VERSUS SECULAR ETHICS

It is evident from reflecting on the different anthropological horizons that there is a conflict between Biblical ethics and Secular Ethics, for both the Bible and Secular philosophies have different influences on one's ethical paradigm.<sup>95</sup> Secularism is a force which became a predominant worldview in most public institutions, a worldview which presented society with particular set of ethics in its rejection of the biblical ethics based on the Judeo-Christian tradition. Secularism is manifested through the anthropological notions or worldviews described above (see chapter 3 and 4), which Swanson referred to as explanations of man and 'well-structured images of man'.

This proves how humanity has, throughout its existence, struggled to comprehend its nature. Hence, there are multiple reductive expressions of human nature.<sup>96</sup> As one pensively considers the various claims, discussed above, one is confronted with multiple inconsistencies in most of these theories, which seek to define and describe human nature; as a result, these perspectives reduce the human being to either an economic being, or a sexual being, or an evolving being, or a spiritual being, or a rational being.<sup>97</sup>

All these make up man but as separate they give an insufficient account of the image of man, because some of these views of anthropology deny the existence of God. All these views together could be classified in the category of secular humanism – which stands opposed to biblical Christianity.

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<sup>95</sup> Paradigms can be characterised through their: Ontology (What is reality?), which is what exists and is a view on the nature of reality; Epistemology (How do you know something?) which is our perceived relationship with the knowledge we are un/dis/covering; and Methodology (How do u go about finding out?) which refers to how you go about finding out knowledge and carrying out your research. It is your strategic approach, rather than your techniques and data analysis. Therefore, a paradigm is simply a belief system (or theory) that guides the way we do things, or more formally establishes a set of practices.

<sup>96</sup> Packer and Howard (1985) in the book, *Christianity: The True Humanism*, show how all these different expressions belong in the category of Secular Humanism, and how Christianity presents a true form of humanism.

<sup>97</sup> Erickson (2013: 429 – 436) discusses at length the different Images of the human, which could be outlined as: A Machine; An Animal; A Sexual being; An Economic Being; A Pawn of the Universe; A Free Being; and A Social being. Erickson also discusses these different images or conceptions of the nature of humanity in comparison with the Christian view of humanity.

This secularism has great implications, as Parker (1993: np.) comments that, the sentimental secularism of modern Western culture, with its exalted optimism about human nature, and its shrunken idea of God, creates a skepticism as to whether personal morality really matters, and leads to the decay of conscience.

## 5.1 Humanity in Confrontation

Pannenberg (2006: 47-48) once noted that, in the history of modern society the belief in a moral consensus based upon the human nature we all have in common, replaced the social function of religious belief which hitherto had been regarded as indispensable to the foundation of social peace. As a result, for most of humanity the voice of conscience is almost extinguished because of the overwhelming experience of human perversion and injustice. Gaster (1988: 29) suggests that Secular humanism's confrontation with the Bible rests on three main premises:

- 1) It contends that the canons of 'correct' human conduct should be projected out of man rather than injected into him – that is to say, they should issue out of man's perception and experience of his human situation rather than out of commandments enjoined by some superior and transcendental authority.
- 2) It rejects the idea that this supposedly external authority is a personal being rather than an abstract principle – that is to say, it rejects the notion of God, and hence that the Bible is his "word."
- 3) It regards some of the laws, institutions, and forms of behaviour recorded in the Bible as below the moral standards developed in subsequent ages and as therefore unacceptable to current Western society.

Hays (1996: 1-7), in introducing *The Moral Vision of the New Testament*, gives a defence for the Bible's task of New Testament Ethics in outlining some of the problems that may result if the Biblical text is not used correctly or when people "abuse or misuse" the Bible to achieve their own ends, at times these ends may be evil or may justify an evil act. He suggests four ways (The fourfold Task of New Testament Ethics) which can help one to interpret the Bible correctly, especially as regards to ethics.

The first task is the descriptive task, which helps one to read the text carefully; thus, “The descriptive task is fundamentally exegetical in Character. The first thing we must do in order to understand the ethics of the New Testament is to explicate in detail the messages of the individual writings in the canon” (Hays 1996: 3). The second task is the synthetic task, which helps to place the text in its canonical context; hence, “If we are pursuing New Testament ethics with theological concerns in view, however, we must move on to ask about the possibility of coherence among the various witnesses” (Hays 1996: 4).

The third task is the hermeneutical task, which relates the text to our situation. This task helps in the process of resolving the hermeneutical crises that may arise when we consider the temporal and cultural distance between ourselves and the text. Our contemporary world and the text world are different; so “The task of hermeneutical appropriation requires an integrative act of the imagination. This is always so, even for those who would deny it: with fear and trembling we must work out a life of faithfulness to God through responsive and creative reappropriation of the New Testament in a world far removed from the world of the original writers and readers” (Hays 1996: 6).

The fourth task is the pragmatic task, which is about moving one from the first three tasks to a state of living the text, as Hays (1996: 7) defines it as the task of embodying Scripture’s imperatives in the life of the Christian community; this task in some sense realizes the other three tasks. Thus, Hays (1996: 7) remarks that after all the careful exegetical work, after reflective considerations of the unity of the New Testament’s message, after the imaginative process of correlating our world with the New Testament’s world, the test that finally proves the value of our theological labours is the “fruit test” (Matt.7:18, 20). The value of our exegesis and hermeneutics will be tested by their capacity to produce persons and communities whose character is commensurate with Jesus Christ and thereby pleasing God.<sup>98</sup>

Gaster (1988: 29), although he outlined the three premises of Secular humanism’s confrontation with the Bible, he also further on provides objections to these premises of secular humanism’s rejection of biblical ethics.

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<sup>98</sup> For a full discussion of “The Fourfold Task of New Testament Ethics” please see Hays 1996:1-10.

He discusses five objections to reveal how secular humanism depends very largely on a series of confusions and misconceptions. The first objection is that the meaning of the Bible is not static; rather it is dynamic. Hence, “what is articulated in scripture in specific contexts transcends the particularity of such contexts and are simply paradigms and illustrations of universal truths” (Gaster 1988: 30). To elaborate this principle Gaster (1988: 30) notes that at the “back of this principle lies an apprehension of the fact that meaning is everywhere a junction between a writer’s statement and his reader’s experience and associations, and that it is therefore necessarily subjective and varied. Revelation is a two-way street; it is a process of collaboration between he who speaks and he who hears.”

Lewis (2007: 1823) defines Revelation as an activity of the invisible, living God making known to finite and sinful people His creative power, moral standards, and gracious redemptive plan.<sup>99</sup> The second objection challenged secular humanism’s rejection of the concept of God. In this regard we notice that secular humanism fails to see the expression of the God of the Bible revealed through the use of anthropomorphic language and other figures of speech as a personal God. Thus, Gaster (1988: 32) remarks that what secular humanists have to get into their heads is that the best way of coming to grips with biblical ideology is to realize that the image of a personal god is simply a diagram, just as the symbol for triangle is not substantially a triangle, but merely the diagram of a geometrical entity and, just as in algebra,  $a + b = c$  represents an equation of quantities, but not of alphabetical characters.

Gaster (1988: 32) uses this analogy to explain the incarnation through noting that, “It should therefore be observed that, despite its reductive anthropomorphic language, what this tenet really implies is not the transformation of a divine body onto a human body (Jesus), but the possession by a human body of the power to exemplify and reify the principle that we personify as God.” Therefore, Gaster (1988: 32) brings this objection of secular humanism to its head by noting that, “once this is realized, it becomes apparent that secular humanism’s opposition to the concept of God is terminological rather than substantive, and is biased, in the final analysis, on insensitivity to metaphor and poetry.”

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<sup>99</sup> For a full discussion of divine revelation see: Lewis, G. R. (2007), in his article: “*What Is Divine Revelation?*”

Pannenberg (2006: 48) observes that to be moral a purification of conscience is necessary, which issues from faith in God, and if God would not exist, then the wicked only were reasonable in their actions, and the good person would be unreasonable. The earthly success of the wicked must ruin the moral sense even among the good, if there would not be a recompense for all individual deeds beyond this life. Therefore, it is only the belief in God and immortality that makes a moral life appear reasonable.<sup>100</sup>

Sometimes what feeds secular humanism's idea of the rejection of the concept of God is dogmatic interpretations of the existence and person of God; interpretations which do not make room for ways and techniques which can help to describe God, and also remembering that the best method to do theology is to keep in balance the *kataphatic* and *apophatic* approaches – and using both these approaches dialectically.<sup>101</sup> Rivkin (1988: 105) challenges dogmatic interpretations of the concept of God by commenting that:

Israel's changing concept of God and our changing realities may thus not be so different despite the radically different presuppositions about God that may separate us from the biblical writers – except in one most important respect. Whereas the changing God of the Bible was enveloped by the dogmatic belief that he changed not at all; and whereas even the most audacious of the prophets ascribed their intuitive insights and mental ruminations to a direct revelation from God, contemporary thinkers are free of those dogmatic and doctrinal constraints that in the past sought to keep critical reason in check.

Further on he suggests that, as we free ourselves from the constraints of dogmatism the framework that bounds our quest for truth will assure us that the quest will be unbounded (Rivkin 1988: 105). Perhaps, through this freedom we will be introduced to new revelations of the existence and person of God.

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<sup>100</sup> Zacharias and Geisler (2003) in their book: *Who Made God*, treats most of the questions that deal with the existence of God; from questions such as: "Who Made God?" "Why couldn't the world always have existed?" "How can God make something out of nothing?" "What was God doing before he made the world?" "How can there be three persons in One God?" "How can a good God send people to hell?" "And how can God be both loving and just?" Also see Zacharias' (2007) book: *Beyond Opinion*, which also treats many other questions that treat the subjects that deal with the existence of God.

<sup>101</sup> For a thorough discussion of both these affirmations of *Kataphasis* and *Apophasis*, see Carabine (1995), in *The Unknown God*. Louvain: Peeters Press.



The third objection challenges secular humanism's refusal to recognize the Bible as the Word of God. For the Word of God is part of the essence of God; for "if we see God as an abstract principle which *is* rather than a being which *does*, the Bible may be viewed as an integral part of his essence rather than as a product of an antecedent, distinct entity" (Gaster 1988: 32). Therefore, the narrative and the events described in the Bible metaphorically are the Word of God.

The biblical writers see events in the perspective of a cosmic continuum, which they represent by theological imagery as the ongoing plan of a transcendental Person. This means that they possess an ultrapunctual, trans-temporal significance that goes beyond the moments of their occurrence and is perpetually relevant. The Exodus of the Israelites from Egypt, for instance, exemplifies in a particular historical context the human urge of all men always to escape from every kind of bondage (including ignorance, obscurantism, and blatant materialism) and their readiness to trek through a figurative wilderness in order to reach a figurative promised land. (Gaster 1988: 33).

The fourth objection is also related to seeing the Bible as the Word of God, through seeing the Bible not as a religious book but as literature. Thus, "the Bible is literature, and literature involves not only the ideas of writers, but also art – that is, the technique of conveying ideas through the medium of words. Words, however – as a modern poet has put it – are shrunken garments; what is in a writer's mind and heart often outruns the limitations of language and vocabulary. The scriptural writers therefore eke out this shortcoming by resorting to mythological representation" (Gaster 1988: 33-34). Hence, as we read the Bible we should take into cognizance the ideological and metaphoric aspects of the Bible.<sup>102</sup>

The last objection to secular humanisms is that of its criticism of biblical ethics. Here secular humanism tend to confuse morality with ethics, as they look at certain actions in the Bible and accept them as normative ethics, or its secondary moral standards. As Gaster (1988: 34) defines morals as the standards traditionally recognized as necessary for ensuring what is deemed good in society and in individuals, whilst, on the other hand, ethics has as its province the determination of what constitutes 'good' in the first place and implies an antecedent premise.

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<sup>102</sup> For a lengthy discussion of the Bible as Literature, see Ryken's (1985) book: *How to Read the Bible as Literature*.

Therefore, underlying the biblical narratives of prophecies and laws and the conduct of the characters in the narratives are ethics conveyed by a transcendental God who communicates them to us through theological imageries.<sup>103</sup> Through the ages the Bible has been used as a source of normative ethics and many have turned to it to create moral standards for their communities; as Hoffmann (1988: 7) suggests that the use of the Bible as a standard against which to measure the rightness or wrongness of human action is a well-established custom in Western societies.

Further on he notes that Western societies have grown up with the Bible; constitutions, statutes, and ideas of government – ranging from absolute monarchy to representative democracy – are thought to be derived from its mandates. It is impossible to think of a Shakespeare or a Goethe or an Eliot – or indeed an Isaac Newton or a Spinoza – without the continuing conversation between the Bible and the cultures that have hosted it over the centuries.

## 5.2 Humanity in Conflict

Larue (1988: 17) comments that no informed person will question the impact of the Bible on the development of life and thought in the Western world. Indeed, nearly one half of the world's population – including Jews, Christians, and Muslims – honour the Bible either wholly or in part. It is also evident that its themes appear in great art, great music, and great literature. Our everyday speech is sprinkled with phrases rooted in the Bible.<sup>104</sup> Numerous kind and charitable programs are rooted in biblical teaching; even other nations' constitutions have drawn their principles from the Bible.

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<sup>103</sup> For elaborate descriptions of these five objections to secular humanism please see Gaster (1988; 30-36). Sproul (2003) also gives thorough objections to secular humanism's rejection of God's existence and Biblical authority.

<sup>104</sup> Job 19:20, One escape by the "skin of his teeth"; Matt. 5:41, one must go "the extra mile"; Dan. 5:25, one sees "the handwriting on the wall", or any of a variety of phrases that have found their way into the vernacular.

Hence, Larue (1988: 17) further on notes that, “There can be no challenge to the obvious: many good and decent persons, families, and groups root their humanitarianism and high principles in biblical precepts.”<sup>105</sup> However, many regard biblical ethics as “situation ethics”.<sup>106</sup> Hoffman (1988: 9), and his colleagues, as critics of the Bible as a source of normative ethics suggests that biblical ethics are not “normative” but “situational,” that is, the ethical views of biblical writers are grounded in the moral concerns of their own day and their advice and opinions, including even the *soi disant*<sup>107</sup> Ten Commandments, are caught in the relativity of time, place, and circumstance.<sup>108</sup> Thus, this introduces the conflict between biblical ethics and secular ethics. Hence, at the centre of this conflict the question arises: How can the Bible be viewed as a source of normative ethics? This section of this chapter (and the chapters that follow) will prove that the Bible can be a source of normative ethics, amidst modern critics who repudiate that fact.

Such as Larue (1988: 11-14) who challenges the notion that the Bible contains books that espouse highest ethical principles,<sup>109</sup> but he recommends the secular ethics as normative by noting that: “The humanist ethic recognizes human fallibility: it is aware of the variations in human thinking that emerge and evolve through social and historical changes. It continues to enhance the democratic principles of free thought, free expression, and the centrality of that which is human – both male and female – in evolving the highest human ethic” (Larue 1988: 14).

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<sup>105</sup> See Alexander Boot (2006), in his discussion of “How the West was Lost” and in his implications of how the Bible or the notion of God/Jesus helped shape the civilizations of the West; through noting that the Western man was born in the East and he was brought to life by an earth-shattering event that took place 2000 years ago at the Eastern outskirts of *Pax Romana*, in a plain Galilean barn (2006: 1).

<sup>106</sup> Joseph Fletcher (1966), in his book: “*Situation Ethics: The New Morality*” elaborates this concept of situation ethics.

<sup>107</sup> *Soi disant* is a French expression which means the so-called or self-styled.

<sup>108</sup> Not all scholars view the Ten Commandments as being caught in the relativity of time, place, and circumstance; thus, many works prove the universality and relevance of the Ten Commandments for today. See: *How Jesus Transformed The Ten Commandments* (Clowney 2007); *His Loving Law Our lasting Legacy* (Ortlund 2007); *Keeping the Ten Commandments* (Packer 2007); *Written in Stone* (Ryken 2003); *The Ten Commandments For Today* (Edwards 2002); *The Decalogue* (Charles 1926).

<sup>109</sup> Larue (1988: 12-13) makes references from Genesis in which he concludes that from its very beginning in the book of Genesis the Bible portrays both the deity and its central heroes as liars. The lies may be deceit practiced for expediency, but the results are lies nonetheless.

One other reason that many people criticise the Bible as a source of normative ethics arise from the fact that many adherents of the Bible appear to be selective in choosing ethical codes from the texts, and so choose what seems expedient in that situation. As Larue (1988: 18) argues that those who make biblical moral teachings the law of the land and who compel their neighbours to adhere to particularistic or denominational interpretations of the Bible do not really accept all biblical teachings. There is a pick-and-choose principle at work that enables each group to determine which moral, ethical, or ritual requirements are essential for acceptable life and conduct and which may safely be ignored.<sup>110</sup>

It is true that most adherents of the biblical text tend to use the principle of pick-and-choose in their use of the Bible every day; however, this is also true of the critics of the Bible in that they are also selective when choosing passages to criticize the Bible. They also tend to ignore certain passages which may approve even the notions that they adopt as their own or those that are secular. For instance, Larue (1988), as quoted above, made reference to the humanist ethic as recognizing human fallibility, however, he never makes note of the biblical reference that was written a few centuries before he existed that already declared human depravity (Rom. 1). As Romans 3:23 confirms that, “For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God’s glorious standard” (NLT).<sup>111</sup>

Thus, the creation of an ethical system from a theistic perspective has as its premise the original sin in man as a beginning point; as Henry (1957: 172) comments that:

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<sup>110</sup> Larue (1988: 18) gives a few examples of this notion by noting that most Christian groups believe that Jewish ritual laws, including those for testing the validity of charges of adultery (Num. 5:11-28) or proving the virginity of a new bride (Deut. 22:13-21), are irrelevant; but there have been some Christian groups who called for the killing of homosexuals, basing their arguments on biblical law (Lev. 20:13).

<sup>111</sup> This idea is referred to as the doctrine of sin in theological circles, and has different dimensions; see Erickson (1998: 579-657) where he discusses the nature of sin, the source of sin, the results of sin, the magnitude of sin, and the social dimensions of sin. In the next chapter of this research, allusions to Erickson’s thesis on sin are referenced, in a discussion of the interrelationship between the doctrine of sin and other doctrines.

Christianity declares that God is more than the ground and goal of the moral order. Unequivocally it lays stress on the reality of God's judgment of history. It affirms, that is, the stark fact of moral disorder and rebellion: "the whole world lieth in wickedness" (1 John 5:19). By emphasis on the fact of sin and the shattered moral law of God, on the dread significance of death, on the wiles of Satan and the hosts of darkness, Christian ethics sheds light on the treacherous realities of moral decision.

Moreover, as Kennedy (1980: 91) suggests that "when a person makes up his own ethical code, he always makes up an ethical system which he thinks he has kept," though at times – given the pretences which results because of the inevitability of sin – he still falls short of the very ethical standards he himself has created. Thus, Kennedy (1980: 91) further on remarks that "in the law of God, we find a law which smashes our self-righteousness, eliminates all trust in our goodness, and convinces us that we are sinners. The law of God leaves us with our hands over our mouths and our faces in the dust. We are humbled before God and convinced that we are guilty transgressors of his law."

Secular ethicists also argue against the Bible as a source of normative ethics on the grounds that biblical writings are only relevant as they are applied through the principle and process of continuing interpretation. For "these writings have no more divinity or sacred authority than any other writings from the same time and period. Both Jewish and Christian Scriptures are human products that have been declared 'divine' by human councils" (Larue 1988: 23).

Thus, these writings must undergo continuing interpretation to provide moral guidance; as Larue (1988: 25) further on notes that "the examples of varied interpretations of biblical teachings and the ways in which they are utilized in modern contexts could certainly be expanded. But it is enough to note that in each instance the Bible is accepted as a divinely rule book – the supreme source for ethical and moral guidance – and that the principle of continuing interpretation is employed so that those who have moved beyond the limitations of biblical ethics can continue to use the Bible as a reference book."<sup>112</sup>

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<sup>112</sup> For more on the principle of continuing interpretation, Larue (1988) in his article: "Biblical Ethics and Continuing Interpretation" shares how this principle was applied in the Jewish tradition, in the Christian tradition, and in the Modern interpretation of Biblical ethics.

Nevertheless, Larue (1998:22-27) seems to be contradicting himself as in his discussion about the same matter, in the same book, he suggested that the writings in the Bible have no more divinity or sacred authority than any other writings from the same period (pg. 23), and later on he suggests that the Bible can be used as a reference book (pg. 25).<sup>113</sup> However, Schillebeeckx (1984: 76) considers Christianity as a religion of revelation and therefore a religion of dogma, and this revelation is exclusively *a word-revelation*, which we can now find in the books of the Old and New Testaments.<sup>114</sup>

The Bible is either divine or not; one's interpretation of certain Scriptures does not determine whether the whole of Scripture is inerrant and infallible.<sup>115</sup> The Bible is the Word of God in its nature and origin, as 2 Peter 1:20-21 tells us that, "Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation. For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit."<sup>116</sup>

As earlier on, the author of the epistle of 1 Peter already assured his readers of the power and eternity of the word of God, by noting that they have been born again through the living and enduring word of God (v.23), and that the word of the Lord stands forever (v.25).<sup>117</sup> Therefore, Jones (2001: 16-17) suggests that:

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<sup>113</sup> Perhaps, Larue's (1988 – see full introduction) view of the Scriptures seem narrow, as there is an impression that his interpretation of Scripture may have elements of *eisegesis*, and shows an inconsistency in applying the tools of biblical interpretation (Biblical criticism tools).

<sup>114</sup> See Schillebeeckx (1984: 75-88) chapter on Experience and Revelation, where he discusses the interpretive process in terms of Christian revelation.

<sup>115</sup> For thorough definitions of inerrancy and infallibility, and the meaning of inerrancy, read Feinberg's (1980: 265-304) article: "The meaning of Inerrancy", and Geisler's (306-334) "Philosophical presuppositions of Biblical Errancy".

<sup>116</sup> According to the chronologically sequence of the New Testament, 2 Peter is the last document to be written; as Borg (2012: 587) remarks that "There is a strong scholarly consensus that 2 Peter is the last New Testament document to be written." Although by this time most of the documents of the New Testament were in circulation, however, in the quoted text, Peter refers to the OT as Scripture since the NT as canon did not exist by then; Easton (1893: np) confirms this through noting that the names given to the Old Testament in the writings of the New Testament are "the scriptures" (Matt. 21:42), "scripture" (2 Pet. 1:20), "the holy scriptures" (Rom. 1:2), "the law" (John 12:34), "the law of Moses, the prophets, and the psalms" (Luke 24:44), "the law and the prophets" (Matt. 5:17), "the old covenant" (2 Cor. 3:14, R.V.).

<sup>117</sup> There is adequate evidence that suggest that 1 Peter and 2 Peter both belong to Petrine authorship; for a thorough discussion on authorship of both epistles see Guthrie (1990: 760-857) and Carson and Douglas (2005: 636-668).

The source of people's justification and authorisation of their Christian ethical decisions is the Bible... While it is necessary to understand the complexity of this decision-making process, one may also legitimately speak of 'the authority of Scripture and Christian ethics' as one of the central theological-epistemological questions in the process. In short, the Bible looms large as the principal authority to which most Christians appeal when they seek to justify their ethical decisions.<sup>118</sup>

Thus, the source of the standard of ethical decisions for humanity must be the Bible; for "the Bible has the authority of ethical decisions because it is the Word of God" (Jones 2001: 17).<sup>119</sup> Bonhoeffer (as cited by Brown 1985: 157) remarks that, "Only the man whose final standard is not his reason, his principles, his conscience, his freedom, or his virtue, but who is ready to sacrifice all this when he is called to obedient and responsible action in faith and in exclusive allegiance to God." Thus, Christianity has after all a good deal to say about the nature and form of the moral life, and much of what it has to say concerns human beings and human natures as such (MacIntyre 2006: 17).

Schillebeeckx (1984: 260) confirms this by noting that the ethical as well as the religious life is grounded in the same general human primal faith or primal trust for which the philosopher can adduce good cause on the basis of human experiences, but nevertheless in such a way that the primal trust cannot be accounted for purely rationally or theoretically. Schillebeeckx (1984: 260-268) in his discussion of the nature of religious ethics and the extent to which the New Testament can be a source of Christian ethics, makes an observation that: Ethics is concerned with both the inner attitude as well as the concrete activity of people, which is intended to be the concrete embodiment of this basic attitude or ethical disposition.

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<sup>118</sup> Epistemology refers to the science or analysis of the good reasons why people do or believe certain things. Theological epistemology is, consequently, the science or analysis of the theological good reasons why people do or believe certain things. Thus, Christian ethics is subject to analysis by theological epistemology; this treatment is discussed thoroughly in chapter 6. See: "The Epistemological dimension."

<sup>119</sup> For a fuller discussion on "The authority of Scripture and Christian ethics" see Jones (2001.)



Thus, two categories of ethical norms follow immediately from this: (1) *formal forms*, that is, general, dynamic directives which tell us we must promote the *humanum* and not to slow it down; (2) *material norms*, that is, norms through which – that is, through the mediation of a culturally previously given image of the human and through the historically conditioned activity of people with the many-sided situation of the world – this formal ethical intention is embodied in time and space, and receives its concrete context.<sup>120</sup>

Thus, the ethical possesses a certain autonomy, source, and basis of the ethical in the reality of God. Beyond that the Christian sees autonomous morality in the context of the praxis appropriate to the demands of the reign of God. Even when their fundamental inspiration comes from a religious belief in God, ethical norms – that is, norms promoting human dignity in an intersubjective discussion accessible to all reasoning people – must be rationally grounded. Therefore, Schillebeeckx (1984: 263) adds that if we speak of a specifically Christian ethic, we do not mean an ethics specific alone and only to Christianity.

One perhaps goes from a Christian interpretation to a certain judgement and ethical praxis. But this ethical insight can be mediated and universalized, that is, the ethical content itself is then accessible to non-Christians as well. Hence, this thesis chooses a theistic approach to studying humanity; humanity in a theological perspective will be the premise of creating an ethical system. The theological perspective of humanity is presented here as contrast to humanity's views of secular humanism; the theological perspective introduces God to the equation of anthropological ethics.

This conception of God, which is not given to us in a general concept of God derived from the study of religions, but from and in Jesus of Nazareth, mediates to the Christian a very definite orienting direction for action. Then the believer has the duty in faith to promote that which is good and true for realizable humanity... What the elevation of the ethical into the religious will involve... The Greek fathers especially spoke of a “divinization” of humans, in the sense of a grace-filled participation of humans in God's own life... “Divinization of human beings through grace” therefore means nothing other than the positive undefinable fact that God is the *salvation of human beings*. (Schillebeeckx 1984: 266-268).

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<sup>120</sup> For a full discussion of the contrasts and complementarity of the absolute “formal norms” and relative “material norms” see Schillebeeckx (1984: 260-268).

### 5.3 Humanity in Christianity

The challenge of our day, as Pannenberg (1999: 27) notes, is that “modern anthropology no longer follows Christian tradition in defining the uniqueness of humanity explicitly in terms of God”, whilst, “the biblical framework does indeed presuppose an omnipotent and omniscient God” (Rivkin 1988: 100).

Thus it is important to introduce anthropology in a theological perspective, because it is in this setting where one is able to explore the various dimensions of humanity and construct a reliable framework for anthropology. Reliable referring to both the limitations and potential of the human. Berchmans (2001: 4) explains this reality by noting that: “At the heart of understanding what it means to be human is the recognition and the acceptance of the reality of human finitude that harbours within itself infinite possibilities for future growth and development”. Further on he notes that:

Understanding what it means to be human must necessarily be worked out in the parameters of one’s self-transcendence and finitude... The experience of finitude in human existence is paradoxically interwoven with an openness to infinite possibilities, which in fact finds its source (*imago Dei*) and destiny (*theosis*) in God himself (Berchmans 2001: 5).

This, therefore, introduces the understanding of humanity through the Bible’s concept of the *imago Dei*. Considering that the focus of this research is on Paul’s use of the *imago Dei* as his anthropological model, Schnelle (2009: 282-283), in his study of Paul’s anthropology, noted that Paul intensively pursues the question of human identity, and his answers concerning the questions that are about human identity stand within the tradition of Old Testament faith in God the creator, and it is from here that we draw the conclusion that the basis or the source of human identity derived from the Old Testament faith is the anthropological model of the *imago Dei*.<sup>121</sup>

This theory of the Bible seems consistent and complete than the other predispositions – some referred to above. It is very interesting to notice certain marks of the Bible’s view of human nature in the other theories, though distorted and alluded to through different terminologies.

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<sup>121</sup> Schnelle (2009: 282-319), in his work on the *Theology of the New Testament*, extensively discusses Paul’s anthropological elements. See also Boyarin (1997) who explores Paul’s anthropological dualism which was enhanced by both his Jewish and Hellenistic influences.

As one endeavours to find research on the relation of the Bible and ethics one is confronted with a lack of material that bridges the two concepts and on the other hand there is a diversity of scholarly opinions regarding the relationship between Scripture and ethics.<sup>122</sup> Green (2011: 1-3) in introducing the dictionary of Scripture and ethics shows the development of this phenomenon, and notes that for all the scholarly attention to the relation of Scripture and ethics, it remains a labyrinth.

Further on, Green (2011: 1) notes:

Among some, and for a variety of reasons, the study of Scripture has little, if anything, to contribute to the study of moral theology. There are biblical scholars who regard it as no part of the task of their discipline to form or inform the way Christians understand and embody Scripture. And there are Christian ethicists who regard the biblical text as at best marginally important to the ways in which Christian ethics should be undertaken. On the other hand, there are some who regard the Bible as a timeless moral code that simply needs to be repeated and obeyed today. For still others, the biblical witness may be relevant today, but the trail from ancient Scripture to contemporary moral questions is an arduous one, best left to those who are experts on that trail, to a scholarly or ecclesiastical magisterium. And for yet others, including many scholars, the complexities and language of one discipline or the other make a meaningful conversation difficult, if not impossible.

Other difficulties we may include here are those which are created by the perspectives of biblical criticism. For instance, historical criticism introduces the history and the culture modern thinkers may not be familiar with; as Green (2011: 2) remarks that, "The rise of historical criticism brought to the surface another challenge: diversity within the biblical canon. Grammatical criticism shows us the difficulty of translating certain words or phrases as used in original biblical languages. Literary criticism questions some of the narratives we may have established as normative for principled living, whereas they were metaphoric."<sup>123</sup>

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<sup>122</sup> Green (2011: 1) cited Gustafson (1965: 285-354) who called attention to the relation of Christian ethics and biblical studies and lamented the paucity of material that relates the two areas in a scholarly way.

<sup>123</sup> To study all the elements of Biblical Criticism see Hayes and Holladay (2007) in *Biblical Exegesis*, as they elaborate on all these elements as necessary for Biblical interpretation.

Rivkin (1988: 99), in introducing the difficulties that one faces when they attempt to build a biblical foundation for contemporary ethics, and in stressing the reality that the Bible which was centuries in the making and consisting of a diversity of books, written at different times for different purposes, by a wide variety of individuals impelled by a wide variety of interests, remarks that, “To speak then of biblical ethics as though it were a body of agreed upon principles is to speak of a body of ethics that is nowhere to be found in the Bible.” But he reconciles these disparities by noting that:

Only if biblical ethics is taken to be that record of the variety of ethical responses to changing problems that prophets, priests, kings, and other Israelite leaders came up with in the course of the historical experience of Israel can we juxtapose biblical ethics to contemporary ethics. When we do make such a juxtaposition, we discover that, though the conceptual frameworks may radically differ, the process by which ethical principles are established turn out to be very much the same (Rivkin 1988: 99).

Richard Hays (1996: 1-11), in light of the context that “the text has inexhaustible hermeneutical potential”, attests to the fact that appeals to Scripture are suspect for at least two reasons: the Bible itself contains diverse points of view, and diverse interpretive methods can yield diverse readings of any given text; as a result this diversity has a potential of creating difficulties in the process of constructing biblical ethical principles.<sup>124</sup>

In an attempt to resolve these difficulties, Green (2011: 2) outline five answers which may help one in resolving the relation of Scripture and ethics:

- One answer has been that many have found in the diversity of Scripture a reason to reject outright the possibility of using Scripture as a normative source in ethics.
- The second answer has been a kind of harmonization that makes all of the voices speak as though they were one, in spite of the fact that no single voice in Scripture, taken on its own, could ever be heard to speak in just that way.

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<sup>124</sup> See above, Hays’ (1996: 1-11) approach to resolving these difficulties in his description of the Fourfold task of New Testament Ethics.

- The third answer has been to allow one voice to speak for all. In protestant circles, the voice of choice has typically been Pauline, especially as heard in Romans. When thinking of the theology of James and John or Jude, according to this strategy, one is more likely to hear the voice of the Pauline ventriloquist than that of James, John, or Jude.
- The fourth answer has focused on the search for the coordinating center of Scripture – for example: “covenant,” or “reconciliation” – the effect of which has been to mute alternatives within the canon.
- The fifth answer has been to focus on Scripture’s metanarrative, a unity that lies in the character and activity of God that comes to expression in various but recognizably similar ways in these various texts.

This research draws from the fourth and fifth answers as its presupposition rests on the suggestion that the *imago Dei* is the coordinating center of Scripture – particularly in relation to ethics – and it is also Scripture’s metanarrative which forms the unity of Scripture’s ethical paradigm. Therefore, the *imago Dei* creates the organizing principle for creating the framework of the ethics in Scripture. This organizing principle underpinned most ethical principles throughout Scripture – from the Old Testament through to the New Testament. This is very evident in some of the prophetic writings of the Old Testament; as Rivkin (1988: 103) suggests that:

The ethical imperatives articulated by Amos, Hosea, Micah, and Isaiah – imperatives focusing as they did on interpersonal relations, societal infrastructure, international relations, and future possibilities – were themselves capped by a quantum leap that carried with it a first principle from which a biblical foundation of contemporary ethics can be deductively derived. This quantum leap was the first chapter of the book of Genesis.

It is in Genesis where we are introduced to the first human being, and it is there where his nature and destiny is described; thus, “Stripped of its time-bound form and mode of expression, the first chapter of Genesis gives us a single being, the consequences of whose existence is a hierarchical universe that has at its apex a single individual, pictured as being the image of God, who is endowed by this creator-God with the right and the power to make of this universe what he or she wills” (Rivkin 1988: 103).

What's significant about the Genesis 1 narrative is that the description of the creation of man in verse 26 – 28 suggests that the creation of man (*Adam*: plural, male & female) to be like God is intimately related to the commission to rule, to have dominion. As one reads the whole account of creation from the beginning one discovers that the creation of man is the pinnacle of God's creation; hence, God said: "let us make man in our image, in our likeness".<sup>125</sup>

It is plausible to suggest that these descriptions do not refer to physical likeness. The words image and likeness here are translations of the Hebrew words: "*tselem*" and "*demuth*"; "*tselem*," which means a resemblance; it is a representative figure; "*demuth*," also connotes the idea of resemblance; but here, it maintains the idea of the image shaped or fashioned like its creator.

Both these refer to spiritual and moral resemblance; thus, man's endowment with the creator's qualities results in him being and acting in the manner of the creator. Both image and likeness allude to having the nature and characteristics of God. Simply, this means to be godly; so godliness precedes dominion, though intimately related, godliness underpins ruler-ship. In essence, we have to be like God to rule like God. Godliness is at the heart of kingdom administration. Mankind is heaven's earthly agency for kingdom ruler-ship influence. Mankind is intended to embody the nature of God on earth and serve as his divine representative in the physical world. Hence a godly individual could also be described as one who is ethical.

So, the restoration of man to be like God precedes the man's role of ruler-ship. So God, in creation, gave the human being authority to choose whether to cultivate good in all of creation or to cultivate evil in all of creation. As Rivkin (1988: 103) comments that, "however omnipotent this God may appear to be, it is evident that this God does not have the power to deprive the individual of his or her free will, even when the individual defies God's commands and goes his or her own aberrant way."

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<sup>125</sup> It is worth noting that not all scholars agree that Adam was the first human being on earth; for instance, Persinger (2006: n. p.) contends that Adam and Eve were not the first humans on Earth as believed by most Christians and Jews on the planet. He suggests that the reason other humans are only vaguely referred to is because the Old Testament, especially Genesis was written for the purpose of establishing God as the creator and supreme being and to provide a genealogy, starting with Adam and Eve, leading up to the birth of Christ. The other humans are simply not important to the story; however, they are mentioned vaguely.

Thus, when man, he/she, defies God's commandments he lives short of his potential, and his disobedience creates an environment for an ethical discourse because he/she has now lost complete godliness. Hence, God has to restore him/her back to his/her original image – God's Image – to restore order back to all of creation. Thus, "The first individual was created in this Being's image and often this Being's likeness – an image and likeness that was no more male than it was female – and this individual was given carte blanche to draw out either the good built into the universe or the evil that the rejection of the good would bring in its train. All of creation was thus made dependent on the human choice" (Rivkin 1988: 103).

Hence man cannot blame the environment as the source which determines his choices but rather he/she has been given authority to shape the environment. It is his/her choices which will determine the environment he lives in; his/her prosperity or his/her poverty are a result of his/her own choices.<sup>126</sup> Therefore, the outcome of the universe, could perhaps, be dependent on the choices that the individual will make in his or her efforts to shape the universe in such a way as to fulfil ideal aspirations, whether they be good or evil, worthy or unworthy, possible or impossible in relationship to the moral laws governing the individual.

Thus, the ethical imperatives are determined by an on-going pursuit of man to make godly choices, which are impacted by his original image and likeness. Rivkin (1988: 103-104) further on remarks that, "Beginning as we must with the free-choosing individual, it would seem to follow necessarily that the preservation of that individual must be the ultimate concern of ethics. All other concerns must pale before this and assume the role of corollaries, not axioms."

This, perhaps, may demand that the individual moves his/her focus from the disciplines which create his/her social infrastructure – disciplines like economics, politics, sociology, law, etc. – and transcend them and as he/she detaches himself/herself from them, thus, he/she will regain his/her power to choose outside of their influence, and as he/she regains his freedom which he/she was endowed with in creation in Genesis when he/she was created in the image and likeness of God.

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<sup>126</sup> Man here is used in the plural and refers to both male and female, and man's choice here is also a representative of the social structures which impact on his livelihood; thus one's prosperity or poverty is not always an individual choice but the choice of those who have control over social structures.



Hence “It thus turns out that the prime ethical imperative that follows from the first chapter of Genesis is the prime ethical imperative we need today: the building of a transnational world in which the right of the individual to choose freely is everywhere vouchsafed. Here then is a biblical foundation on which a contemporary ethic may be built” (Rivkin 1988: 104).

The account of Genesis serves as the first principle that represents the whole of Scripture; so this image of God – which man was created in – is described throughout the Bible, and here the ethical paradigm of the *imago Dei* is developed. “Thus, the human being, as *imago Dei*, created in the divine image, is on a journey towards God, in this life. Indeed, that is what the moral life is. Christian theology, centred on God and nothing but God, has God as its focus – in moral theology also, then” (Kerr 2006: 77).

As man is the pinnacle of God’s creation, even, therefore, his primary pursuit must be to seek to be like his creator, God. This is the central message of the Bible – to instruct man on how to be like God morally. Therefore:

The Bible itself is a storehouse filled with foundations for whatever ethical systems one might wish to build. It is a record of a people’s odyssey with a God who was responsive to the tides of time, circumstance, and changing futures; a God for all seasons; a God whose omnipotence lay in his power to continuously become other than he was thought and proclaimed to have been. Yet by virtue of this proclivity for change, this God turns out to be but a mirror image of the reality that human beings have contended with and must still contend with when they seek ethical principles and certitudes (Rivkin 1988: 104).

Man needs to recover his freedom to choose before he can develop a just and sustainable ethical system, but this is possible when he starts searching for his original image, created in the likeness of his creator. It is in this image where his/her freedom to choose resides. This is the point where the Bible meets with ethics. Thus Rivkin (1988: 105) suggests that:

The ethical imperative drawn by contemporary thinkers can be spelled out with logical rigor in the hope that rational minds will see that if we begin with the free-choosing individual as the cornerstone of our ethic, and with a reality that is accessible to individual minds irrespective of the bodies in which they are housed, or the country in which they find themselves, then the ethical imperative that follows is the building of a global infrastructure supportive of the free-thinking and free-choosing individual who will be guided by ethical imperatives logically following from this enhanced stage of human possibility. On that day, but only on that day, will a biblical foundation of contemporary ethics become the foundation of a freely acknowledged universal ethic.

Therefore, Schillebeeckx (1987: 50-55) highlights that ethics should be directly founded in a belief in God, for there is an intrinsic connection between faith and ethics. Thus, the Christian sees the autonomous morality of humanity concretely in the context of a practice in accord with the kingdom of God on which he or she has set his or her hope. The spirituality of the ethics of Christians lies in theological life.

Stagg's (1973: 13) commentary on the importance, or rather the preeminence, of theology to the discipline of anthropology serves as a summary for this chapter, as he suggests that: "Anthropology belongs properly to theology. What is man? What is his origin, nature, and destiny? What is his plight? What threatens him? What is it to be lost? What is it to be saved? What is required of man? What is his task? How is he related to God, to other persons, to the material order? It is proper to give man a primary place in theology, as he has in Scripture."

<b>BIBLICAL ETHICS VERSUS SECULAR ETHICS</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Human Confrontation</li><li>• Human Conflict</li><li>• Humanity in Christianity</li></ul>

Figure 5: Summary of topics discussed in Chapter 5

## 6. THE THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION

It is generally suggested that the proper way to study or investigate anything is to begin with the simple and go to the complex; to start with the fundamental, basic principle and then to develop the subject in its complexities. Thus, today man is known to be a complex being. Considering that Genesis 1:26-28 is the first mention of man in the Bible, this then has a particular significance for biblical theology as regarding the principle or law of first mention in the Bible. Cooper and Haynie (2012: 56) define this principle as, “The principle that requires one to go to that portion of the Scriptures where a doctrine is mentioned for the first time and to study the first occurrence of the same in order to get the fundamental inherent meaning of that doctrine.”<sup>127</sup>

On the first occurrence of any theme in the Bible one notices its description in usually a simplest form, and here we find the fundamental or dominant rule of the concept, which creates the basis for understanding its other appearances in the other parts of the Bible. Therefore, “The book of Genesis has properly been called the "seed-plot" of the Bible. The word, Genesis, comes from the Greek expression which in its verbal form means *to begin*, or, *to come into existence*. This first book of the revelation of God is properly called, therefore, "the book of beginnings"” (Copper & Haynie 2012: 56).<sup>128</sup>

Therefore, to understand the creation of man as a moral being we must understand his beginning; for, “the account of God's creating man emphasizes the importance of our studying the first account in Genesis 1 and 2 that we have of man in the Holy Writings. All that we learn of man as to his constitution and of the place which he has in the plan of God fits into this original conception. Thus the basic teachings found in these original passages are essential to our understanding of other references to him and to his future” (Copper & Haynie 2012: 56). From the simple description of man in Gen.1:26, there is a history of reflections throughout man's history of ethics/morality.

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<sup>127</sup> The principle of first mention means that where a word (in the original Hebrew or Greek manuscripts) occurs first in the text can be very significant in helping to identify the meaning of that word and the general understanding that should be associated with the term.

<sup>128</sup> Copper & Haynie (2012) outline the seven fundamental doctrines that are found in this "Book of Beginnings"; which are: a) The Creation of the Universe; b) The Creation of Man; c) The Doctrine of Sin; d) Sacrifices; e) Biblical Chronology; f) The Judgment of the Wrath of God; g) The Rainbow Covenant.

The theological reflection referred to here is that of the Judeo-Christian heritage; as it is important to notice that “one of the principal attributes of God affirmed by Christians is that he is Creator. That conviction is foundational as we integrate our theology into our worldview” (Walton 2009: 7). The term: Theology technically refers to a study or discourse about God, for it is a compound word formed of two Greek words: θεός and λόγος; thus, it can be used in a broad or narrow perspective.<sup>129</sup> The broad perspective is a general discussion about God and is not restricted to any particular faith or worldview, and may include different expressions of theism (monotheism, polytheism, pantheism, panentheism, and deism) and antitheism (agnosticism) notions.

This phenomenon discussed here is of the Hebrew and Christian understanding of human nature. It is noteworthy to mention here that both the Hebrew religion and the Christian religion have also been treated as rivals for many centuries, and each can exist as an independent hypothesis; nevertheless, for the sake of the argument of this thesis, these two are presented as a synthesis of one concept of the understanding of human nature which comes as a revelation that unfolds through different stages, but culminated under the two Covenants. First, through the covenant of the Old Testament, and secondly through the covenant of the New Testament.<sup>130</sup> Thus, “All Christian thought must prove itself as theology, and Christian thought about ethics must prove itself as ‘moral theology’... Yet at the same time theology is a complex of intellectual undertakings” (O’Donovan 2006: 33). The foundation of this theory is on the understanding of a monotheistic conception of God; that this God, referred to in the Bible as *elohim* (Gen.1:1), and in Gen.2:4 as *yahweh*, used together with *elohim*, and here both words are translated LORD God. So, this being in Judeo-Christian tradition is the one who begins all things; He speaks creation into existence (Genesis 1), except that with man he employs much consideration in creating him/her; thus he/she is superior to all other creation.

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<sup>129</sup> For a thorough discussion of the definition of these terms/concepts and their usage in their original language, secular use, their development, and their use in the Old and New Testaments, see Kleinknecht, Quell, Stauffer, and Kuhn (1965: 65-119 – Volume III) for θεός (theos) and Kittel (1967: 69-143) for λόγος (logos).

<sup>130</sup> Roger Nicole provides a treatment of the relation of the Old Testament to the New Testament, in a chapter entitled: “The Old Testament in the New Testament” in *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary: volume 1* (1979: 617-628); dealing with matters such as: the relevance of the Old Testament to New Testament Time, Old Testament prophecies concerning Christ and the Church, the Unity in diversity of Old Testament passages, etc.

Clark (2007: np.) cites Gregory Nyssen who noted that “the superiority of man to all other parts of creation is seen in this, that all other creatures are represented as the effect of God’s word, but man is represented as the work of God, according to plan and consideration.” Genesis 1:26-28 declares: “Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.” So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.” It is from this text, McGrath (2001: 440) suggests, that the Christian tradition has insisted that humanity is the height of God’s creation.

We notice here that man – male and female – is given dominion over all other creation, however, implicitly there is an allusion in the text that suggests that man is dependent on his/her creator, he/she is not sufficient in him/herself; so to effectively exercise dominion over all creation he/she must keep connected to God, his source of authority.<sup>131</sup> Clark (2007: np.) commented that “God created man capable of governing the world, and when fitted for the office, he fixed him in it. We see God’s tender care and parental solicitude for the comfort and well-being of this masterpiece of his workmanship, in creating the world previously to the creation of man.”

Thus, “The Hebrew concept of humanity sees us as existing primarily in relation to God, who has created us to occupy a special position in the universe” (Stevenson & Haberman 2004: 54).<sup>132</sup> However, because of man’s disobedience (Gen.3) God declared the penalty of man’s disobedience and established the history of redemption which was culminated through the birth, life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

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<sup>131</sup> Neusner (2005: 121-124) outlines the process of the creation of man through providing the entire sequence of events of the creation and fall of man and woman, which he suggests happened through the sixth day of creation, illustrating this by using a series of verses from Psalms; e.g. Psalm 8:5; 1:6; 85:11, 2; 49:13, 24). See, *Theological Dictionary of Rabbinic Judaism: Principal Theological Categories* (2005).

<sup>132</sup> Collins (2006: 62), in his linguistic, literary, and theological exposition suggests that the view that speaks of man as created in the image God is *the resemblance view* which is highly ontological because it speaks of the actual part of human nature which focuses on who/what they are (ontological) instead of what they do (functional); to read more on the difference of the ontological and functional nature of human beings see Collins’ (2006) book, chapter 4: “*Genesis 1:1 – 2:3: The Creation Week.*”

To understand man as being created in the image of God it is important to understand who this God is – to determine how his essence and existence is revealed; as Genesis 1: 26 begins with the words: “Then God said...” The premise of the philosophy of religion is based on questions of the existence of God, and questions regarding the existence of God have received most attention in religious debates; thus, Stewart (2007: 117) annotates: “probably no single issue in religion has received more philosophical attention than the question of God’s existence.”

Claiming that God exist and not provide reasonable evidence for his existence has been a debate that has characterized the discussion in the contemporary philosophy of religion; thus, “Assuming that the traditional conception of God is acceptable, one is led to wonder whether or not reason can prove, demonstrate, or at least supply evidence in favour of the claim that God exists” (Stump & Murray 2001: 61). Hence, “Today there is a concentrated debate in philosophy of religion and in the discipline of philosophy at large over the nature and requirements of evidence” (Taliaferro 2003: 246).

Regarding the aspect of the requirements of evidence, Taliaferro (2003: 246) further on asks these central question on the debate of the evidence of belief in God; he asks: “What is evidence? What are the implications of the current theories of evidence for the justification of the belief that there is a God? Do religious views of God and the cosmos require evidence in order to be intellectually respectable? Where does the burden of proof lie in religious matters?” What does evidence entail?

The word ‘evidence’ is derived from the Latin *ex videre*, meaning ‘to see.’ Typically the term is used to mark off considerations that justify beliefs, or, if you will, justify that what persons believe they see to be true. Normally, a question about why a person holds some belief calls for the presentation of what counts as evidence. ‘Evidence’ generally refers to reasons of a justificatory sort, reasons why one’s beliefs may be said to be properly warranted, entitled or deserved (Taliaferro 2003: 248).

The nature of evidence has generally been referred to sensory abilities that may involve seeing, hearing, smelling, feeling, and tasting; thus, “sensory modes or powers are often thought of as providing our chief source of evidence about the nature of the world. We typically ground our beliefs about ourselves and the objects around us on the basis of what we see, hear, feel, smell and taste” (Taliaferro 2003: 250). Evidence, however, about the reality of God cannot be limited to sensory abilities, but must also involve reason that is not based on experience.

## 6.1 The Ontological dimension

Sensory experience is important, however, it must not be treated to the exclusion of cognitive patterns of experience. Theologians and philosophers constructed two sources of evidence, as the debate of the existence of God followed two streams of theology: revealed theology and natural theology, philosophers engaged natural theology which was constructed from these two sources of evidence, which are: a *priori* and a *posteriori*.

“For the Christian, God is the ultimate source of morality, and it is nothing short of blasphemy when we place ourselves in his role. And yet, if one does not submit his nature entirely to the moral absolutes founded in God’s character, logically the only ethical authority residing over mankind is our own impulses. It is important for the Christian to understand the fallacies of secular ethics, so that he can avoid the inconsistencies of unfounded ethical ideals. All secular ethical codes are an aberration of God’s code and should be recognized as such” (Noebel 2001: 110).

In many philosophical circles it is not enough just to make a claim of the existence of God without providing some form of evidence to back-up your claim. Thus, one must firstly argue to prove the existence of God before one attempts to relate this being to any aspect of the human phenomenon, especially here where humanity is studied alongside theological ethics.

“Arguments for the existence of God are commonly divided into a *posteriori* arguments and a *priori* arguments” (Rowe 2001: 16). These two clustered arguments make it probable to demonstrate beyond reasonable doubt the existence of a supreme being or God. The “Arguments a *priori* are attempts to determine knowledge of God solely by means of intellectual insight, independently of the senses. A *posteriori* arguments are based on observations about the world that lead to a claim that God is the logical result of reasoning about these facts” (Stewart 2007: 119). In a simpler, narrow sense one may differentiate these two as one belonging to reason – this is a *priori* – the other belonging to ‘experience’ – this is a *posteriori*. Hence, Taliaferro (2003: 250-51) comments that some philosophers think that we can know some truths without relying upon any experience at all. This is sometimes said to be a *priori* (from the Latin term for “from the preceding”). The a *priori* contrasts with what we may know as a *posteriori* (from the Latin for “from the later”). A *posteriori* knowledge involves recourse to experience.



### 6.1.1 *A Priori* Arguments

We will firstly discuss the *A priori* argument because it deals with the Ontological argument which attempts to describe the being of God, who is the central subject of the discussion of religion – even of this research. Rowe (2001: 16) confirms that the nature of the *a priori* argument by stating that an *a priori* argument purports to rest on principles all of which can be known independently of our experience of the world, by just reflecting on and understanding them; thus, he later on notes that in the ontological argument one begins simply with a concept of God.

The proponent who is considered to be the one who explained the position of this argument clearly is Anselm who had concluded that among all of existence there is a being that is supremely great and good, and transcends in power and perfection over everything that exists.

The Ontological argument is arguably the most famous attempt to demonstratively prove that God exists. The argument, first presented by Anselm, the eleventh-century archbishop of Canterbury, is an attempt to show that reflection on the concept of God alone is sufficient to prove that God exists in fact. Anselm's argument is set out in the form of a *reductio ad absurdum*, that is, it begins with the assumption which is then shown to be false by showing that something contradictory would follow if it were true... Since, the argument supposes, it is surely better to have existence than to lack it, we cannot coherently conceive of the greatest possible being as non-existent (Stump & Murray 2001: 61).

Thus, "It is perhaps best to think of the Ontological Argument not as a single argument but as a family of arguments each member of which begins with a concept of God and, by appealing only to *a priori* principles, endeavours to establish that God actually exists" (Rowe 2001: 29). Further on Rowe (2001: 29) confirms the fact that "the most important [argument] historically is the argument set forth by Anselm in the second chapter of his *Proslogium*. Indeed, it is fair to say that the ontological argument begins with chapter 2 of St. Anselm's *Proslogium*".

The premise of the Ontological Argument rests on the idea that there exists a necessary being which give existence to all other existence and everything that exists is contingent and thus possible as long as it exists in the understanding; therefore, if there are contingent possibilities then there must be a necessary being which gives birth to these contingencies.

Hence, “Possible things, then, will be all those things that are not impossible things – that is, all those things that are either contingent or necessary. If there are no necessary things then all possible things will be contingent and all contingent things will be possible. If there is a necessary thing, however, then there will be a possible thing which is not contingent” (Rowe 2001; 30).

Thus, there are two concepts of existence – there is existence in the understanding and there is existence in reality. Anselm who coined both these concepts is echoed as conceiving existence in the understanding as when we think of a certain thing then that thing exists in the understanding (Rowe 2001: 31). One does not necessarily have to believe in that existence for that existence to be true or real, but the fact that one can think of it already makes that thing already existing in the understanding. Stump & Murray (2001: 65) echoed Anselm in his *Proslogion* where he noted that:

And, indeed, we believe that thou art a being than which nothing greater can be conceived. Or is there no such nature, since the fool hath said in his heart, there is no God? (Psalm 14:1). But, at any rate, this very fool, when he hears of this being of which I speak – a being than which nothing greater can be conceived – understands what he hears, and what he understands is in his understanding; although he does not understand it to exist.

Anselm illustrates this by stating that, “When a painter first conceives of what he will afterwards perform, he has it in his understanding, but he does not yet understand it to be, because he has not yet performed it. But after he has made the painting, he both has it in his understanding, and he understands that it exists, because he has made it” (Stump & Murray eds. 2001: 65). Thus, “Anselm insists that anyone who hears of God, thinks about God, or even denies the existence of God is, nevertheless, committed to the view that God exists in the understanding” (Rowe 2001: 31).

It, therefore, seems plausible to suggest that even the very debates that people have about the existence of God – whether he exists or not – prove that God does exist indeed; as according to Anselm he already exists in the understanding. Anselm notes: “Hence, even the fool is convinced that something exists in the understanding, at least, than which nothing greater can be conceived. For, when he hears of this, he understands it. And whatever is understood exists in the understanding” (Stump & Murray Eds. 2001: 65).

So God's existence is greater than any other existence because God is a necessary being who is greater in wisdom and moral goodness. Thus, it is plausible, at this point, to suggest that if there is existence in the understanding that may not be verified through sensory abilities then existence in reality may be a manifestation of a part of that which exists in the understanding. Perhaps, all other existence as verified by the senses exists because the necessary being – which we may call God – gives it existence.

Therefore, there are two premises of Anselm's Ontological Argument; the first premise suggests that God already exists in the understanding, and the second premise suggests that God might have existed in reality. So the second premise could be interpreted as meaning that God – as there is existence in the understanding and existence in reality – is reflected in all other existence that belongs to the category of existence in reality.

As the Psalmist once noted: "The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands. Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they display knowledge. There is no speech or language where their voice is not heard. Their voice goes out into all the earth, their words to the ends of the world" (Psalm 19:1-4). Thus, both premises give birth to the third premise which suggests that if a being exists in both understanding and in reality then that being is greater than both understanding and reality. Anselm's propositions were firstly criticized by Gaunilo on the basis that this view can only be relevant when referring to God but not to anything else; however, this criticism already ironically supports Anselm's view because God as a supreme being can exist in both understanding and reality because he is infinite and greater.

"A thing has necessary existence if it would have existed no matter what, if it would have existed under any possible circumstances. An equivalent definition is this: A thing has necessary existence if its non-existence would have been impossible" (Van Inwagen 2001: 72). The Ontological argument is also seen in the metaphysics (the study of being) of Aquinas, in particular in how he shows that being is revealed in action. Clark (2001: 32) in his development of Aquinas' metaphysics comments that:

This is an important step forward in our understanding of what it means to be real, and one of the essential keys to the whole thought of St. Thomas, yet one that is not always clearly recognized or appreciated by other metaphysicians. It is through action, and only through *action*, that real beings manifest or “unveil” their being, their presence, to each other and to me. All the beings that make up the world of my experience thus reveal themselves as not just presence, standing out of nothingness, but actively presenting themselves to others and vice versa by interacting with each other. Meditating on this leads us to the metaphysical conclusion that it is the very nature of real being, existential being, to pour over into action that is self-revealing and self-communicative.

Perhaps it is through this “action” that being in the understanding gives birth to life in reality. According to Aquinas all existence has a different level of being. He begins by explaining a metaphysics of the Name of God as the Absolute Being. Aquinas explains how God is unique amongst all other beings, because he has supreme perfection like no other being, for these other beings have a particular perfection received from the Absolute Being; it is from the Absolute Being every other existence receives its essence. God, who is ultimate reality, existence and essence cannot be separated because God is existence and his essence is part of his very being.

In all ordered efficient causes, the first is the cause of the intermediate cause, whether one or many, and this is the cause of the last cause. But, when you suppress a cause, you suppress its effect. Therefore, if you suppress the first cause, the intermediate cause cannot be a cause. Now, if there were an infinite regress among efficient causes, no cause would be first. Therefore, all the other causes, which are intermediate, will be suppressed. But this is manifestly false. We must, therefore, posit that there exists a first efficient cause. This is God (Aquinas 1975: 95).

Although other philosophers considered essence as the most significant as it gave a thing its existence, however, to exist does not mean there has to be a body, because things exist in a different way, some have visible material others not.

Any existence is knowable through its essence, for essence is the nature or character of every existence. Essence is what causes a thing to be a being. However, in contrast, in Aquinas anything receives its essence from existence. Existence causes a matter to have character or gives it essence. Gilson (1964: 64) comments that, “In Thomas’ technical language, actual existence, which he calls *esse*, is that by virtue of which a thing, which he calls *res*, is a being, an *ens*. It is the being-hood or being-ness of being. It is *be* in being. It is to be that makes a certain thing to be a being. *Esse* is defined by its essence, namely that which the thing is.”

Therefore, “The notions of existence and essence are necessary to account both for the possibility of there being anything at all and of anything being knowable” (Shutte 1981: 245). Clark (2001: 151) confirms this by noting that:

This is the first and most basic, the foundation of all the rest, by which each finite being becomes a member of the all-embracing community of real existents by participating in the all-inclusive source of all perfection, the act of actual existence, of active presence, according to the limited mode or degree allowed by its particular essence.

In Aquinas, existence precedes essence; now, since existence comes before essence, essence is found in the being “because essence is primarily found in substances” (Gracia 2003: 139). But essence appears in all these substances in different levels and, as Gracia (2003: 141) elucidates that in Aquinas’ thoughts these realities are distinguished and arranged hierarchically. At the top it is God since he is an act of pure and simple existence. This is followed by spiritual substances which, as like other substances, derive their existence from God. Therefore, all substances must participate in existence to receive being, for it is through this operation of participation where substances receive perfection or are fulfilled.

Clarke (1988: 64) defines this participation as “the basic ontological structure of sharing in the universe, by which many beings share diversely in some one common positive property or ‘perfection’, thus making a unified group or community of some kind.” Further on, in explaining how God unifies these diverse beings, Clarke (1988: 65) notes that “all the members of the group sharing the same participation structure are then further unified by sharing the same one transcendent ultimate source from which this common shared perfection flows. Thus the immanent One in many is also a many from a transcendent One.”

Existence as an agent that is basic participates to give created beings essence, for this first agent is God and He is existence; he does not receive existence from someone or something, but he is. So by his act of participation he makes all other creatures – which He himself created – to have existence; moreover, these other created beings participate in the process. So every substance receives being participatively as it shares in the act of existence, and this act of existence is God; “Hence God alone, who is his own act of existing, is pure and infinite act” (Anderson 1953: 32).

God also causes the sustenance of all substances and beings, and this is realized as an individual act. Thus, “the whole key to a realist epistemology like that of St. Thomas is that action is the self ‘self-revelation of being,’ that it reveals a being as this kind of actor on me, which is equivalent to saying it really exists and has this kind of nature – an abiding center of acting and being acted on” (Clark 2001: 12). Clark (2001: 31) further on in his book, in following Aquinas’ system of thought, comments that:

It seems to me, following St. Thomas – and the whole metaphysical system laid out in this book is built around it – that the only adequate criterion for discerning the presence of real being, one that is both necessary and sufficient and that we all use in practice, whether we recognize it or not, is that of action. What is real is what can act on its own, express itself in action, is the center and source of its own characteristic action.

So everything proves its existence through acting; being is realized as different beings interact with each other through acting on each other. When one being acts it allows the being which is acting upon to receive its being and so the process happens vice versa as the other agent responds through action. This action is the action of the intellect, for, “the whole extraordinary history of human development in coping with nature, meeting and solving its challenges by the use of creative science, technology, etc., bears witness to the success of our common commitment to the intelligibility in principle of all of nature – including implicitly all of being” (Clark 2001: 17).

Even ideas do not exist until they are acted upon. Action is an intrinsic property of any being, so every existing thing must have the capacity to act to be able to be recognized by the other existing beings; for, “first of all, no other being could know it (unless it had created it), since it is only by some action that it could manifest or reveal its presence and nature; secondly, it would make no difference whatever to any other being, since it is totally unmanifested, locked in its own being and could not even react to anything done to it” (Clark 2001: 32).

Thus, it is action that makes it make a difference to itself and to others. Hence, action is an intrinsic property in every being; so being is manifested through action. Clark (2001: 33) confirms this by noting that action flows over naturally from real being precisely as existent and is an intrinsic *property* of every real being. He further on states that the common medieval adage expressed it as: *agere sequitur esse*.



As St. Thomas expressed it with technical precision: existence is the *first act* of a real being, action its *second act*, flowing immediately from the first. The exception here is God, because it is only God who is a totally self-sufficient perfect being and the creator of all existence; nevertheless, he chooses to act so that everything may receive existence, for we exist because he acted. As he acts he gives every being the capacity to enrich other beings and also receive from them, and through this process every being is perfected. Hence:

This expansive dynamism of the act of existence implies a certain ontological “generosity” within every real being. For the real beings of our universe go out of themselves in action for two reasons: one, because they are *poor*, in that as limited and imperfect they are seeking completion of themselves from other beings; two, because they are *rich*, in that they actually exist and so possess some degree of actual perfection and have an intrinsic tendency to share this in some way with others... it seems the ultimate reason is that it is the very nature of God himself to be self-communicative love, and since all other real beings are in some way images, participations of the divine goodness, they all bear the mark within them, according to the nature of each, of this divine attribute (Clark 2001: 33).

Such generosity is an innate quality in every being because every being wants to communicate itself to other beings so that other beings may know it, and supposedly celebrate it as part of the universe. Through this interaction knowledge expands and reality expands through these experiences. Therefore, being “*actively presents itself to other real beings by its characteristic self-manifesting, self-communicating action on them, and in return receives their action on it, thus becoming a member in the interconnected community of real existents we call the universe*” (Clark 2001: 34).

Therefore, action is the self-revelation of being. All beings, except God, are given the capacity to act so that they may discover themselves, and this process does not happen in one act but all beings must perform many acts that are structured so that they may attain a certain reality.

Thus, this action is revealed in a community, where the other experiences the others; giving and receiving action from the others so that all beings involved may open up to new knowledge and manifest their being. So being cannot operate in isolation, for “*to be is to be together, actively present to each other. All real beings are doing this all the time. But it lights up with special clarity in the case of a fully conscious dialogue between two free persons*” (Clark 2001: 40).



Hence, the diversity and multiplicity of all real beings, which reveals the synoptic vision of the universe that reflects the image of God. Thus:

This key metaphysical doctrine of St. Thomas – reconciling the One and the Many in the universe as diverse participants of all beings in the central perfection of existence through limiting essence – if properly understood, opens up a magnificent synoptic vision that can easily deepen into a religious or mystical vision of the whole universe of real beings as a single great community of existents, with a deep “kinship” of similarity running through them all, which turns out when fully analyzed to imply that all are in some way *images of God*, their source, each in its own unique but limited (imperfect) way (Clark 2001: 88).

The best ontological description of God is Jesus Christ, and through this God has provided a way for humanity to relate with him; thus, “Through his incarnation, the Son of God became consubstantial with humanity and hence his resurrection was the resurrection of the whole of humanity into a new ontological state marked by participation in the divine life” (Volf 2006: 105). Evdokimov (1970: 84) adds by noting that it is “through Christ the whole of humanity ‘enters into God as its ontological place’.”

Aquinas’s description of a being that manifests itself in action expresses an Ontological reality, however, more so, because action reveals a state of motion, this idea assumes a cosmological argument – which is part of *a posteriori* arguments. Therefore all reality receives its existence from God; it is here where Anselm and Aquinas’ reflections on the Ontological Argument converge. Now that evidence is provided through the *a priori* arguments, it is also important to outline *a posteriori* arguments to have a comprehensive view of the existence of God.

### 6.1.2 A Posteriori Arguments

Taliaferro (2003: 379) comments that one makes an appeal to *a posteriori* matters to find reasons why it is possible God exists necessarily. This argument goes a step further in asserting that the existence of God – since our lives are a reflection of his existence – is also revealed in his works, which mankind is part of; thus, “An *a posteriori* argument depends on a principle or premise that can be known only by means of our experience of the world” (Rowe 2001: 16).

This usually involves an empirical investigation. This source of evidence consists of three arguments, which are: the cosmological argument, the teleological/design argument, and also the moral argument. The “Cosmological arguments represent another attempt to construct a demonstrative proof for the existence of God. There have been a number of versions of the cosmological argument presented and defended by philosophers through the ages (Stump & Murray 2001: 62).

Before we discuss the cosmological dimension, the teleological/design dimension, and also the moral dimension, it may be expedient to firstly discuss another dimension that follows from the ontological or metaphysical dimension, which will possibly lead smoothly into those three dimension which belong to the a *posteriori* argument. This is the epistemological dimension.

## 6.2 The Epistemological dimension

Epistemological inquiry is probably as old as the origin of humankind, because epistemology provides sources for humanity to find his origin, even of his morality. Hence, “when one speaks of Christian Ethics, then questions of justification and authorization become one of epistemology” (Jones 2001: 16). This quest seems to be embedded in every human being; thus, it is possible that this longing is the very source of skepticism. This skepticism could be viewed from two perspectives – either from the negative side or from the positive vantage point; either from a sense of doubt or from a sense of wonder. The source of the negative perspective may be a refusal to accept objective truth which has as its substratum universal principles of morality.

This blindness results from one’s limitations of their subjective experiences, of which most people draw attention to their personal experiences as the essence of truth. Hence, such idiosyncratic perspectives may be misleading. However, the positive side of skepticism which results from a heart that seeks to find objective truth, opens up possibilities of understanding the nature, presuppositions, conditions, extent and limits, sources, degrees and types, foundations, and justifications of human knowledge. Therefore:

There may be positive reasons for inquiring into knowing and knowledge. We may simply want to understand the tremendous ability of the human mind to transcend itself and come to know the world beyond it. We may wonder how we can go from particular experiences to wider knowledge, including universal ideas. Or we may wonder at the extent of our knowing and ask whether or not an integrated knowledge or wisdom is available to us (Walmsley 2009: 1).

This enables one to understand the source of understanding, which is the essence of one's being; as Lonergan (1992: 674) suggests that, "by asking what being is, we have been led to conceive an unrestricted act of understanding." The fundamental question here is how should we do epistemology? Before we answer this question, perhaps, we should explain what does the enquiry entails. First of all, one needs to determine what the nature of knowledge is. When we speak of knowledge, what are we essentially referring to? Is knowledge tangible, and can it be defined? Or is knowledge an abstract phenomenon? These questions lead to a central question in the study of epistemology, which is discovering the sources of knowledge. Does our main source of knowing come from reason, which is a priori knowledge (knowledge we can attain before experience)?

Or does our main source of knowledge attained through sense perceptions, which is known as a posteriori knowledge (a knowledge we arrive at after experience)? Perhaps, both positions are inadequate, and so one should work at merging the two to arrive at a complete epistemology. Walmsley (2009: 1) comments that "our early confidence that we can know the world around us is shaken when we realize how often our senses are not reliable or our reasoning is not dependable." So, we cannot depend on either our reasoning capacity, neither on our sense perceptions to come to a correct understanding of doing epistemology. The best way to determine an adequate epistemology is to seek to construct a comprehensive inquiry, which integrates the answers to the basic questions of epistemology.

The chosen approach of doing epistemology will guide us, for "the method of inquiry is particularly important in determining what epistemological investigation really involves" (Walmsley 2005: 5). One must draw from both the cognitive abilities and sense perceptions to find understanding; both these have processes that work effectively when considered together. Our realization was that it is in the mind where one conceives knowledge; however, the mind must engage the outside world to give meaning to what is conceived in the mind. Hence, it became plausible that it is required for one to take a step further and inquire other methodologies that explain the cognitional structure and cognitional operations as they relate to experience.

Therefore, Lonergan's (1992) classic work: *Insight*, which surveys the cognition structure of knowing – which is an investigation of understanding – provides a basis for doing epistemology. Lonergan (1992: 13) claims that what's at the heart of understanding is self-appropriation; which, as he explains in his introduction of *Insight*, “will consist in one's own rational self-consciousness clearly and distinctly taking possession of itself as rational self-consciousness.” Walmsley (2009: 1) comments that, “self-appropriation for Lonergan is a way of grasping what really goes on as we come to know. It involves a sustained self-attention as we engage in the process of coming to know. It involves a heightened self-awareness of our concrete performance.” This process of self-appropriation is one's personal responsibility, and anyone who seeks to engage on this process can only do it out of their own personal choice; thus, “No one else, no matter what his knowledge or his eloquence, no matter what his logical rigor or his persuasiveness, can do it for you” (Lonergan 1992: 13).

### 6.2.1 The Pattern of Self-Appropriation

All human beings have a desire to know the unknown; so every person seeks to know the unknown, and also seems to be drawn towards it. However, this pursuit, according to Lonergan (1980: 3), is methodical; he notes that seeking knowledge is conscious, intelligent, rational, and deliberate. A knower does not reach knowledge by accident but there are ‘certain steps’ that he must take to attain knowledge. Nevertheless, this pursuit is an inbuilt-ideal that is innate in every human being. This tendency towards the ideal is foundational in the pursuit of knowledge and from it rises other two tendencies towards knowledge which are: infused habits and acquired habits.

Therefore, “the pursuit of knowledge, then, is the pursuit of an unknown and the possibility of that pursuit is the existence of an ideal” (Lonergan 1980: 4). However, even though this ideal exists in every human being it is not every human being that conceptualizes it; it does not become an idea until the individual who is seeking self-appropriation deliberately pursues knowledge. Hence, “the ideal, then, not only develops; it changes. So one's ideal of knowledge, what one is seeking in knowledge, is something that is not conceptually explicit. It becomes explicit in the pursuit of knowledge” (Lonergan 1980: 6).

This ideal could be reached either through science or through philosophy. In science this ideal changes and becomes explicit as one attains a certain level of knowledge. It becomes explicit through different phases, which, supposedly, they are in motion; the movement is from law and system to states and probabilities, and then to things and causes, then lastly to analysis and synthesis. But then there is an ideal of philosophy which is pure reason. This ideal, Lonergan (1980: 11) explains, is “a set of fundamental, analytic, self-evident, necessary, universal propositions from which, by deduction, equally necessary and universal conclusions are reached.”

Thus, “the ideal of knowledge is oneself as intelligent, as asking questions, as requiring intelligible answers... We are capable of getting hold of fundamental matters of fact in terms of which we can give a fairly definitive account of the cognitional ideal” (Lonergan 1980: 15). This cognitional ideal is functional, and so it is through its operative tendencies that knowledge becomes explicit; thus, one attains self-appropriation.

This operation starts when one hears words and from word he forms a concept or concepts in the mind, in the process of forming the concept, he weighs the evidence that is forming the concept, then he moves to the final step of the cognitive operation which is judging; he is now able to make a judgment that express the intelligibility of his self-appropriation. This whole process of self-appropriation begins when an individual becomes present to him/herself, because one cannot be consciously present to others if they are not present to themselves first. This being present to oneself involves empirical and intellectual consciousness.

This is what Lonergan (1980:17) refers to as a reflection on oneself; hence, “it is a conscience in the ordinary sense and one asks, ‘Am I doing right or wrong?’ Rational reflection is concerned with one’s whole action.” So the aim of this whole process of self-appropriation is moving “towards the functionally operative tendencies that ground the ideal of knowledge” (Lonergan 1980: 18).

Lonergan (1980: 18) further on suggests that we reach broad knowledge through the investigation of the intellectual performance of the three branches of knowledge, which are: mathematics, science, and common sense. However, it seems that the first two: mathematics and science are tools of investigation which provide evidence for the intelligibility of common sense; however, this common sense is not adequate for it is bound to change every time new knowledge is made explicit to the respective individual. Perhaps it is through common sense that the ideal becomes real to every individual.

However, one does not arrive at a point of self-appropriation in an instant or overnight; there are certain stages that an individual must go through to arrive at a point of self-appropriation. More so, this process is effective if the individual – seeking self-appropriation – involves themselves completely through the whole process. Therefore, there is a procedure to acquiring self-appropriation.

### 6.2.2 The Procedure of Self-Appropriation

This process of cognitive analysis and synthesis happens in different stages. The complete structure of knowing happens in three stages or levels. We know first by experience, through attending to what has been presented to the senses. Secondly, we attain understanding as the next step of knowing, by seeking an intelligent pattern or relationship of what is presented to us. Thirdly, we make a judgment of that understanding if it is objective and truthful.

Therefore, “The analysis of knowledge yields the three elements: experience, understanding, Judging” (Lonergan 1980: 37). Crowe (2004: 50), on his commentary on Lonergan’s cognitional structure of knowing as an elementary framework for knowing, suggests that “calling the cognitional structure of experience-understanding-judgment an invariant comes to us initially, and remains with us permanently, as a challenge. It is indeed Lonergan’s position, based on his own grasp of its inevitability”. Therefore, Naickampambil (1997: 11) confirms that, “our interpretation of the notion of cognitional self-appropriation has been articulated into a creative synthesis and presented as a dynamic process involving various phases and growing cumulatively from a lower phase to the higher.”

### 6.2.3. Knowing as Experience

Since common sense is both an objective and a subjective view, experience is the subjective field of experience. It is subjective because it constitutes sensations, and these sensations are reflected differently by different people. For instance two people may see or hear or touch or taste the same things and give different interpretations and reflections of what they have seen, heard, touched, or tasted.

All these actions, however, are sensations as Lonergan (1992: 205) notes that, all these “have a bodily basis; they are functionally related to bodily movements; and they occur in some dynamic context that somehow unifies a manifold of sensed contents and of acts of sensing.” Yet, these experiences could be categorized under different patterns; these being: the biological pattern, the aesthetic pattern, the intellectual pattern, and the dramatic pattern.

However, one may also include the practical, mystical, and symbolic patterns of experience as patterns that help bring understanding. More so, it is important to recognize that there are two patterns that create the greatest tension in man, these being the biological and the intellectual patterns. Thus, Walmsley (2008: 98) suggests that the tension is between the evolutionary inherited biological pattern and the patterns derived from intelligence. It is because of the interrelation of these patterns of experience that one reaches understanding. This interrelation of these experiences is referred to as: Polymorphism.

Thus, “At first glance it seems clear that polymorphism is above all a matter of patterns and their interrelationships. Hence to understand polymorphism we should be very clear on how we understand the patterns” (Walmsley 2008: 98). Perhaps, the best thing to do first is to define the concept of pattern of experience. Lonergan (1992: 205) defines it by noting that there are, then, different dynamic patterns of experience, nor is it difficult for us to say just what we mean by such a pattern. As conceived, it is the formulation of an insight; but all insight arises from sensitive or imaginative presentations, and in the present case the relevant presentations are simply the various elements in the experience that is organized by the pattern.

Walmsley (2008: 101) helps us by simplifying this definition through commenting that, to understand a pattern is to have an insight into the given sensitive or imaginative presentations, into the various elements that have already been organized by that pattern. To grasp a pattern is to come to understand something about the pre-patterning of experience.

In other words, patterns are not deliberately produced after deliberate reflection; they are prior to any conscious and deliberate operations of consciousness... they may be best seen in terms of a functional relationship between the psyche and the intellect or spirit. The patterns are always already in place, as rudimentary ways of being in the world according to the various concerns of engaged intelligence.



### 6.2.3.1. Patterns of Experience

#### 6.2.3.1.1 Biological Pattern

This pattern “results from the underlying biological exigencies when these overwhelm the spirit or when the spirit abdicates its legitimate control. Lonergan describes it as a flow of experience that may be ascribed to animals” (Walmsley 2008: 106). Since in other contexts human beings are classified as animals, therefore these experiences – which are biological – are instinctive; then, perhaps, an exposure to a certain phantasm may draw out a certain response from the human being. However, these responses must not be thought of as restricted to sensations.

Thus, Lonergan (1992: 206) explains that, “The formation and nutrition of organic structures and of their skeletal supports, the distribution and neural control of muscles, the physics of the vascular system, the chemistry of digestion, the metabolism of the cell, all are sequences of events that fit into intelligible patterns of biological significance.” So this pattern is characterized within external manifestations of the experience. Therefore:

Extroversion is a basic characteristic of the biological pattern of experience. The bodily basis of the senses in sense organ, the functional correlation of sensations with the positions and movements of the organs, the imaginative, conative, emotive consequences of sensible presentations, and the resulting local movements of the body, all indicate that elementary experience is concerned, not with the immanent aspects of living, but with its external conditions and opportunities. Within the full pattern of living, there is a partial, intermittent, extroverted pattern of conscious living (Lonergan 1992: 207).

#### 6.2.3.1.2 Aesthetic Pattern

This pattern is presented as the artistic pattern. Lonergan’s (1992: 207) description of this pattern clearly portrays the subjective field of experience; for this experience concerns itself with the particular intelligible systems. That is why Lonergan uses an example of an artist as one intelligible system that expresses the nature of the aesthetic system as it explains the particular insight. Tekippe (2003: 95), in his commentary on Lonergan’s descriptions of patterns of experience, notes that:

The insight of the artist is not expressed in the explicit and defined universals of the scientist, nor even in the more implicit concepts of the man of common sense. The artist, to interpret Lonergan somewhat, grasps the universal in the particular through insight; but, instead of expressing the universal as such, he expresses it only through the particular.

Therefore, this pattern of experience reveals the freedom in man to enjoy the beauty that is presented to his senses – which happens through the biological pattern – and form intelligence from it. Thus, “we can now grasp how aesthetic consciousness involves ‘wonder in its elemental sweep.’ Such wonder is prior to ‘the neatly formulated questions of systematizing intelligence.’... Above all the aesthetic subject wonders at his own originating freedom” (Walmsley 2008: 114).

#### 6.2.3.1.3 Intellectual Pattern

We have already noted above that there is an interrelation – which is dynamic – between all the patterns of experience; moreover, we noted that it is in the intellectual pattern where the tension that forms insight is most experienced. Therefore, this makes the intellectual pattern the priority over all the other patterns.

Walmsley (2008: 120) remarks that, “Lonergan clearly gives priority to this pattern”, therefore, he further on comments that “we see here how, with the intellectual pattern, questions about the relationships of the patterns to one another cannot be avoided”. Thus, “patterns are not simply alternatives along a horizontal spectrum. There are vertical relationships of mediation and transcendence among them” (Walmsley 2008: 120).

In summary one may suggest that this pattern encapsulates the whole experience of the patterns that lead to insight; thus, Tekippe (2003: 95) remarks that “this pattern has a particular importance for Lonergan; later he will suggest that the philosopher can ‘get it right’ only while operating in the intellectual pattern of experience.”

#### 6.2.3.1.4 Dramatic Pattern

The above three patterns of experience seem to remain insufficient to explain the complete experience of man, for they all concern themselves with intangible insights that may not be able to be evaluated and criticized in the company of others. Hence, Lonergan goes further to include the pattern of experience that has practical implications for daily living, especially in the event of encountering other human beings.

This is the dramatic pattern; this pattern “deals with ordinary human living as a whole. It integrates not only experiences and physical movement, images and memories, insights and judgments, but also decisions and human actions and interactions” (Walmsley 2008: 127).

If the interrelation of these patterns is treated in a logically, hierarchical order, then this pattern would be the practical analysis of the experience. This is the action that makes the experience of man dignified; that man’s actions transcends the biological pattern, which most animals are restricted to, and it is acting to receive approval from others. Thus, Lonergan (1992: 211) remarks that, “it is in the presence of others, and the others too are also actors in the primordial drama that the theatre only imitates.”

This is underpinned by the fact that man is created to live in a community, “for man is a social animal. He is born in one family only to found another of his own. His artistry and his knowledge accumulate over the centuries because he imitates and learns from others” (Lonergan 1992: 211).

Tekippe (2003: 96) beautifully summarizes this pattern of experience, in his commentary on the dramatic pattern, by noting that:

Finally, Lonergan speaks of the dramatic pattern of experience. This would seem to be the same as the common sense or practical pattern of experience already discussed, but with a twist. As noted already, the human animal is self-conscious; he not only acts, but is aware of himself acting, and is aware that others are aware of his actions. To a greater or lesser extent, then, he is always playing a role... It is in this pattern, which Lonergan in other contexts will call the “dramatico-practical pattern,” that one works out one’s life-insights.

Therefore, it is noteworthy to conclude this section by suggesting that it is the mediation and interrelations between these patterns that one receives insight; as noted above, these patterns lead one to life-insights. These, therefore, form an understanding; hence, this leads to our next point, which is knowing through understanding.

## 6.2.4 Knowing as Understanding

This next process in the cognitional analysis is where one forms intelligibility from the particular experience, for the experience is subjective, thus, one must ground this experience in common sense; for it is only in such where one will find truthfulness and objectivity out of the experience. This is the aspect that will be discussed in the next section. To reach understanding, Lonergan does this by recovering the Thomist cognitional theory, which was an inquiry he began after his undertaking of understanding Aquinas; his acquaintance with Aquinas created a quest in him to recover this cognitional theory, which he understood as a process towards understanding.

The process towards the goal of understanding is dynamic and aims at answering two fundamental questions to what is presented to the intellect; the first question is: “what it is?” and the second question is “Whether it is?” The process of reaching understanding – which happens through answering these questions – happens through two operations: direct understanding and reflective understanding.

### 6.2.4.1 Direct Understanding

To answer the first question, Lonergan suggests that there are four fundamental causes that must be explained which bring us to direct understanding of what is presented to the intellect; these are: the material cause; the efficient cause; the final cause; and the formal cause, which is a result of the first three causes. Stebbins (1995: 9) explains the relation of these four causes by suggesting that:

Any actually existing finite reality can be explained in terms of four fundamental causes... Of these, three pertain to things insofar as they come into existence or undergo change: if we ask about what a thing is made of, we seek a material cause; if we ask about what causes it to come into existence, that is, the agent that reduces the thing from potency to act, we seek an efficient cause; if we ask about the end to which an agent’s action tends, we seek a final cause (*V:134*). But beyond the causes that explain the coming-to-be of a thing, there is the cause that explains what a thing is insofar as it actually exists, insofar as it has completed the passage from potency to act: this is the formal cause or form, which makes matter to be both a thing and a certain kind of a thing.

In the fourth cause it is where understanding begins to develop because there is now an intelligible thing in the intellect to be evaluated in the cognitional operation; hence, it is “within the Aristotelian-Thomist scheme the formal cause is peculiarly relevant to understanding: for the question *quid sit* [what it is] manifests principally a desire to know the essence of a thing” (Stebbins 1995: 9). So understanding occurs when one understands the essence of what is presented to the intellect. Every time an individual is exposed to any phantasm – this is a term used by Aquinas as a term that represents of something we consider in our imagination as something we wish to understand.

Stebbins comments that, “a phantasm is an image, where the term ‘image’ refers to any sensible datum or set of data as imagined. It allows us to focus our attention on particular aspects of the data given by sense and to manipulate them in various ways” (1995: 9). However, not all the data presented by the senses is useful or relevant to provide understanding; therefore, it may be that the intellect filters all the data that is presented to it and selects that which is relevant for providing understanding. This is probably the manipulation of the data that is presented. Lonergan suggests that this manipulation happens through reason, and this reasoning makes one grasp the essence of the image.

Therefore, “this grasp is what Lonergan calls an act of direct understanding; it consists in an insight into phantasm, an apprehension of the intelligibility – that is, the form, pattern, order, structure, coherence – that interrelates the various elements of the phantasm” (Stebbins 1995: 10). So this operation of direct understanding constitutes two aspects: the first being a quest to grasp the intelligibility of a phantasm presented by the senses of imagination; the second aspect of the operation is the conceptualizing and expression of this intelligence. Through one arrives at the essence of the definition of the phantasm.

#### 6.2.4.2 Reflective Understanding

In the whole operation of direct understanding, Lonergan suggests that this whole process leaves us with possibilities, which are not reality yet. Hence, Stebbins (1995: 14) remarks that, “beyond direct understanding and its rationally expressed product, then, there is need for another operation by which we attain knowledge of the real, which is the ultimate goal of wonder.” This then introduces the second operation, which is reflective understanding.

This operation is more critical in its evaluation because it now seeks to transform that understanding into reality. Lonergan describes this operation as introspectively gathering sufficient evidence for a prospective judgment (1992: 304). It is through this operation that man's rationality is activated, and this process is indispensable because it proves the power of his intellect over all creation.

Hence, Lonergan (1980: 137) further on annotates that, man "is rational, he is a reasonable being, and yet he is defaulting on his rationality if he grasps the sufficiency of the evidence and does not judge. Again, he is defaulting on his rationality when he does not have sufficient evidence and nevertheless does judge." All the evidence that is received through experience must be thoroughly evaluated so that one is able to arrive at an understanding.

However, it seems that it is here where most humanity has failed, possibly most of humanity deliberately neglects this operation because it reveals and exposes their neglect of their intellect; hence, suffer in the perpetuity of seeking truth in their subjective experiences, which many times has the potential of distorting the truth because subjectivity tends to enhance the false comforts we usually embrace. This is what Lonergan refers to as an oversight. Therefore, knowing must not end with understanding but knowing must also be reflected through judgment.

#### 6.2.4.3 Knowing as Judgment

This is also a very important phenomenon in Lonergan's thinking, for it is through judgment that a human being recognizes that he is a 'knower'. Thus, one commentator notes that, according to Lonergan, judgment is the capstone of knowing (Tekippe 2003: 133). To escape the danger of relying on our subjective experience we must seek an operation that provides us with an objective truth from our experience. This cognitive operation is knowing through judgment. Lonergan describes it as the composition of essence with existence on the objective side. He continues to add that the act of judgment is not an act of synthesis, but an act in which one *posits* synthesis. Hence, a judgment does not add further synthesis; it simply posits the synthesis that is the object of thought (Lonergan 1980: 139). The act of judgment has three approaches: the first approach is of language and it involves utterances, sentences and propositions; the second approach is an attempt to answer questions of universal essence; the third one involves the individual's affirmation of their commitment to intellectual responsibility.

Therefore, judgment brings together the various elements of the cognitive analysis and synthesizes them to provide insight. Tekippe (2003: 136) confirms this by noting that, “In the schema of knowing proposed, it is obvious that judgment occupies the final place; not surprisingly, judgment also synthesizes the prior steps in the knowing process.” Since this part is a final form of reaching insight, it is, therefore, essential that one should consider all the evidence thoroughly so that they arrive at a point of insight that relates to universal essence.

Self-appropriation should make us sensitive to our orientation to intention of being and truth. It puts us in touch with the cognitional structures that are always operative in our consciousness. In this way we discover an underlying foundational, immanent ‘method’ that functions normatively in all our seeking for reality and truth.

### 6.3 The Cosmological dimension

The Cosmological argument has two parts; the first part proves the existence of a special being, and the second part proves how this being which is proved by the first part has attributes such as omnipotence, omniscience, and omnipresent, and is eternal and perfect, and ultimately good. The first part of the Cosmological argument could best be presented through two important concepts: the concept of a *dependent being*, and the concept of a *self-existent being*.

By a *dependent being*, Rowe (2001: 18) notes, “we mean a *being whose existence is accounted for by the casual activity of other things*. Recalling Anselm’s division into the three cases: ‘explained by another,’ ‘explained by nothing,’ and ‘explained by itself,’ it’s clear that a dependent being is a being whose existence is explained by another.” Rowe (2001: 18) further on notes that, “By a *self-existent being we mean a being whose existence is accounted for by its own nature*. This idea is an essential element in the theistic concept of God.”

Therefore, “The Cosmological Argument (that is, its first part) is a deductively valid argument. If its premises are or were true, its conclusions would have to be true” (Rowe 2001: 19). However, more evidence is required to prove the truth of the conclusion – since part one of the Cosmological Argument provided evidence for the truth of the premise but assumed the truth of the conclusion based on the premise.



Thus, the second part of the Cosmological argument is necessary to provide sufficient evidence for the existence of God. Both these parts, were therefore, referred to as the Principle of Sufficient Reason (PSR). It is significant to state that of Aquinas's five ways of proving the existence of God, the first three falls within this category of this source of evidence; as Rowe (2003: 17), in his introduction to his discussion of the Cosmological argument, notes that the major development in the Cosmological argument took place in the thirteenth and in the eighteenth centuries. In both these accounts of the thirteenth and eighteenth centuries both parts of the Cosmological argument are evident. In the thirteenth century St. Thomas Aquinas put forth five distinct arguments for the existence of God, and of these, the first three are versions of the Cosmological argument.

In the five ways Saint Aquinas coined as necessary for knowing God, the first three are: the argument of the Unmoved Mover (*ex motu*), the argument of the First Cause (*ex ratione causae efficientis*), and the argument from Contingency (*ex possibili et necessario*). Aquinas' first three ways of the five ways are important because they set the foundation for the discussion of the Cosmological argument. The first way – The Argument of the Unmoved Mover (*ex motu*) – suggests that this is the being that which nothing greater can be conceived could not exist in the understanding alone but would have to exist in reality as well, for it is greater to exist both in the understanding and in reality than it is to exist in the understanding alone. This idea suggests that within existence there is change, and this confirms the metaphysical reality of change from potentiality to actuality. In his Summa he notes:

The first and more manifest way is the argument from motion. It is certain, and evident to our senses, that in the world some things are in motion. Now whatever is moved is moved by another, for nothing can be moved except it is in potentiality to that towards which it is moved; whereas a thing moves inasmuch as it is in act. For motion is nothing else than the reduction of something from potentiality to actuality. But nothing can be reduced from potentiality to actuality, except by something in a state of actuality... Therefore, whatever is moved must be moved by another... it is necessary to arrive at a first mover, moved by no other; and this everyone understands to be God (Aquinas 1997: 22).

The second way – The Argument of the First Cause (*ex ratione causae efficientis*) – unfolds in five steps, which suggests that:

(a) There exists things that are caused; (b) Nothing can be the cause of itself; (c) There cannot be an infinite regress of causes; (d) Therefore, there exists an uncaused first cause; (e) The word God means uncaused first cause. Therefore, from these affirmations, it is evident that God exists.

Thus, “The second way is from the nature of efficient cause. In the world of sensible things we find there is an order of efficient causes. There is no case known in which a thing is found to be the efficient cause of itself... Now to take away cause is to take away the effect... Therefore it is necessary to admit a first efficient cause, to which everyone gives the name of God” (Aquinas 1997: 22). Therefore, God as cause put everything in motion to produce a certain effect; thus, that which is in motion is dependent on that First mover, and this leads to the third way.

The third way – The Argument from Contingency (*ex possibili et necessario*) – is the argument that arises from causation, and from the idea of dependence, where the created order is totally dependent on the Creator, and thus finds its sustenance from the Creator; because there are dependent beings like us, there must also be an independent being where dependent beings can rely and depend on for their existence. “Therefore we cannot but admit the existence of some being having of itself its own necessity, and not receiving it from another, but rather causing in others their necessity. This all men speak of as God” (Aquinas 1997: 23). Thus, Rowe (2001: 17) briefly summarizes Aquinas’ first three versions of the Cosmological argument by noting that:

In the first of these he started from the fact that there are things in the world undergoing change and reasoned to the conclusion that there must be some ultimate cause of change that is itself unchanging. In the second he started from the fact that there are things in the world that clearly are caused to exist by other things and reasoned to the conclusion that there must be some ultimate cause of existence whose own existence is itself uncaused. And in the third argument he started from the fact that there are things in the world which need not have existed at all, things which do exist but which we can easily imagine might not, and reasoned to the conclusion that there must be some being that had to be, that exists and could not have failed to exist.

Even though Aquinas' account of the Cosmological argument is broad and thorough, yet it is argued that although he proves the existence of a special sort being, he does not prove the existence of a theistic God (Rowe 2001: 17). However, the five ways that Aquinas present appears within the *Summa Theologiae*, which present more propositions that provide evidence for the existence of a theistic God.

As both parts of the Cosmological argument appear in St. Thomas Aquinas in the thirteenth century, so both parts of the argument are evident in the account of the eighteenth century; which was expounded by Samuel Clark (1675-1729), the English theologian and philosopher. His arguments also followed more-or-less the same trail which the thirteenth century Cosmological account followed; thus, "the first part of the eighteenth-century form of the Cosmological Argument seeks to establish the existence of a self-existent being.

The second part of the argument attempts to prove that the self-existent being is the theistic God" (Rowe 2001: 18). The first premise suggests that because any being is able to be explained by another and by itself confirms that that being does exist; this view was not far removed from Anselm's premises of proving the existence of God (mentioned above). Perhaps the *principle of sufficient reason* was an elaboration of Anselm's ideas. Rowe (2001: 20) remarks:

PSR, as it was expressed by both Leibniz and Clark, is a very general principle and is best understood as having two parts. In its first part it is simply a restatement of Anselm's principle that there must be an explanation of the existence of any being whatever... Now, the purpose of the second part of PSR is to require an explanation of these facts, as well. We may state PSR, therefore, as the principle that there must be an explanation (a) of the existence of any being, and (b) of any positive fact whatever.

Whilst the Cosmological argument derives its argument from the cosmos, it nevertheless makes a distinction between God as a necessary being and the cosmos as exists contingently; it is from this point where theism distinguishes itself from naturalism, for nature is not God and God is greater than nature for he created nature. Thus, "God exists necessarily, the cosmos contingently" (Taliaferro 2003: 353).

## 6.4 The Teleological dimension

The cosmos as it exists did not happen by chance; however there is an intelligent designer who formed it the way it is. Thus, “the old Design Argument has as its starting point our sense of wonder not that things exist, but that so many things that exist in our universe exhibit order and design. Beginning from this sense of wonder, the argument endeavors to convince us that whatever produced the universe must be an intelligent being” (Rowe 2001: 44). This is the central argument of the Teleological arguments.

Thus, “These arguments focus on characteristics of the cosmos that seem to reflect the design or intentionality of God or, more modestly, of at least one powerful, intelligent agency of some kind. Part of the argument may be formulated as providing evidence that the cosmos is the sort of reality that would be produced by an intelligent being” (Taliaferro 2003: 365). Arguments in this category focus on the intelligent order that is constructed by the intelligent designer on this cosmos; hence, “most versions of the teleological argument are built on (or contain sub-arguments for) the intelligibility of purposive explanations” (Taliaferro 2003: 365).

In teleological arguments these explanations are constructed through the use analogies or comparisons that may resemble the universe we find ourselves; so “the critical questions we must consider in assessing the old Design Argument spring mainly from the fact that it employs *analogical reasoning*” (Rowe 2001: 45). This view looks at the many “machines” that are used in the operations of the world’s systems in view of the fact that there is an intelligent designer behind these machines, thus, one draws insights from the order of their operations to suggest that likewise the whole universe must have an intelligent designer.

Therefore, “Since we know that machines (watches, cameras, typewriters, automobiles, and so forth) have been produced by intelligent beings, and since many things in nature so closely resemble machines, we are justified ‘by all the rules of analogy’ in concluding that whatever produced those things in nature is an intelligent being” (Rowe 2001: 44).

It is necessary to use analogies in this investigation because as humans we are limited in our intelligence and abilities to create the whole universe, and none of us have seen the expansion of the universe from the beginning – we only know it as a complex machine; so we make use of analogies as we study the universe part by part – and even these parts of the universe are teleological systems. Rowe (2001: 46) comments that:

The Design Argument endeavors to answer the question of whether our universe results from intelligent design. If we had observed the origin of many universes other than our universe and also observed that all or most of them resulted from intelligent design, we then could have reasoned in a straightforward fashion that our universe likely arose from intelligent design. This would not have been analogical reasoning since we would have reasoned from things (other universes) that are exactly the same as the subject of our investigation, our universe. But since we have no knowledge or experience of universes other than our own, we must employ analogical reasoning, we must start with things that resemble, but are not the same as, our universe and infer that because these other things arose from intelligent design it is likely that our universe arose from intelligent design.

If these “small machines” which are used as analogies are teleological systems of a larger teleological system continue to reflect orderliness then this proves that the intelligent designer of our universe continues to sustain the universe and everything contained in it. Aquinas, in his descriptions of the five ways that prove the existence of God, makes a reference to the Teleological Argument (*ex gubernatione rerum*) as the fifth way of knowing that God exists. This argument finds its bases on the fact that the world exhibits an intelligent purpose or order, thus, there must be a divine intelligence, or a supreme designer, to account for the observed or perceived intelligent purpose or order in creation. He notes that,

The fifth way is taken from the governance of the world. We see that things which lack knowledge, such as natural bodies, act for an end, and this is evident from their acting always... so as to obtain the best results. Hence it is plain that they achieve their end, not fortuitously, but designedly... Therefore some intelligent being exists by whom all natural things are directed to their end; and this being we call God (Aquinas 1997: 23).

The Teleological argument is also important because – as the other arguments – it strengthens the other arguments (those mentioned above) to provide a sufficient argument for the existence of God; thus, “theistic cosmological arguments can gain ground from teleological arguments, the reverse is true as well” (Taliaferro 2003: 368).

Moreover, “the reasons may not be decisive but they may be sufficient to conclude that believing in such a cause is not unreasonable. Imagine now that the teleological argument gives one some reason to believe there is at least one being, a powerful, intentional agency behind the ostensibly purposive character of the cosmos” (Taliaferro 2003: 368). For God is in his character orderly and intelligent thus all his creation is orderly and is an intelligent design. The teleological argument is an alternative to the view of naturalism, which generally fails to provide meaning to most of the central questions about life and the processes therein. Hence:

An important point to observe in all extant teleological arguments is the degree to which most of them appeal to particular features of the cosmos only to highlight the overall power of theism as an explanation of the existence and character of the cosmos. Arguments that are less focused on this overriding project are sometimes labeled “God of the gaps” arguments. Such lines of reasoning appeal to the difficulty naturalists face in explaining certain gaps, the development of life from nonlife, the emergence of consciousness from non-conscious forces, the gap between humans and nonhumans. Today teleological arguments typically appeal to the fabric of the cosmos as a whole along with its regularities, organic life, consciousness, human life, and so on (Taliaferro 2003: 369).

The Teleological argument, not removed from the Cosmological argument, also argues that there is a God who is powerful – who also transcends all nature – who through his creations also reveals who he is and all creation have the marks of the existence of God. Thus, “the argument from design is an argument from the order or regularity of things in the world to a god or, more precisely, a very powerful free non-embodied rational agent, who is responsible for that order” (Swinburne 2001: 100). Therefore, if this being is rational he will also be able to be understood rationally. The account of the creation of humanity begins with these words, “Then God said...” (Gen.1:26). It is clear from reading these words from the creation narrative that the story of humanity begins with God.

This idea refutes many arguments of the skeptics who have tried to define and explain human nature without reference to God; like Nietzsche (1844 – 1900) who was an atheist that supported the idea that God is dead. Brown (1990: 554) noted that “Nietzsche regarded himself as a prophet of the death of God, and a spokesman for liberated humanity.”

Moreover, he maintained that “Since God is dead, humanity must go it alone. We must make up our own rules and values as we go along.” Another philosopher who regarded humanity as existing independent of the existence of God is Bertrand Russell. Thiselton (1990: 615) cites him when he defined man as “the product of causes which had no prevision of the end they were achieving; his origin, his growth, his hopes and fears, his loves and his beliefs are but the outcome of accidental collocations of atoms.”

However, the God who created mankind has revealed himself, even to those who deny his existence. As the apostle Paul writes that: “Since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities – his eternal power and divine nature – have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse” (Rom.1:19-20).

This involves God's natural revelation, where God has revealed himself through what is visible to all human beings. Moreover, God also reveals himself in a particular revelation, through a relationship; as Briggs (1990: 15) notes that, “God reveals himself to his people, not in doctrinal statements nor in theoretical studies, but in action, in the outworking of a story of relationships”. It is God who initiated this whole process, then one's understanding of God determines one's view of humanity; for instance:

‘God’ for many people means an abstract force, power or influence. For others ‘God’ is like the communication cord on a train – for emergency use only. Believers have their understanding of God shaped by the religious tradition from which they have come, and in which they stand. Since we are made in the image of God, the view we have of God will considerably affect our understanding of ourselves as human beings (Sherlock 1996: 17).

This understanding also, considerably varies even among evangelical Christians. Through the church age, some had emphasized the view that God is transcendent, whilst others emphasized the view of God's immanence. These theological positions have been significant in the history of humankind as they shaped the worldview of most influential thinkers and movements that shaped the doctrine of humanity.



Grenz and Olson (1992: 11), in their survey and interpretation of the twentieth century theology, defined these theological positions, by noting that:

At its best Christian theology has always sought a balance between the twin biblical truths of the divine transcendence and the divine immanence. On the one hand, God relates to the world as the Transcendent One. That is, self-sufficient apart from the world... On the other hand, God also relates to the world as the Immanent One. This means that God is present to creation. The divine one is active within the universe, involved with the processes of the world and of human history.

The Christian truth maintains that the balance of both these theological positions is necessary for a correct understanding of humanity; for Isaiah tells us that he saw the Lord seated on the throne, high and exalted (Isa. 6:1) and Paul tells us that God provided a way so that men would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him; 'For in him we live and move and have our being.' (Acts 17:27-28). Therefore:

A balanced affirmation of both truths facilitates a proper relation between theology and reason and culture. Where such balance is lacking, serious theological problems readily emerge. Hence an overemphasis on transcendence can lead to a theology that is irrelevant to the cultural context in which it seeks to speak, whereas an overemphasis on immanence can produce a theology held captive to a specific culture (Grenz & Olson 1992: 11-12).

The best way we can know the image of God is by constructing a reflection of the nature of God through looking at the biblical text where we see how God responded to his creation in different situations; as "Christian faith is grounded in the God revealed in through the Scriptures" (Sherlock 1996: 18). As this is man's reflection, it does not aim at being accurate, but rather giving indications – with limited terminology – as to who is God. Jesus tells us that God is Spirit (John 4:24); if God is Spirit, is Jesus here referring to the third mode of the Trinity? Who is the Spirit of truth, who will guide us into all truth (John 16:13)? If God is Spirit, it would be misleading if we try to construct a physical image of God.

"Nowhere in the Bible is there a reference to the "body of God." The closest representation is the body of Christ the Messiah, God incarnate, God in the flesh" (Ulmer 2005: 14). This makes sense with the understanding of Jesus as the 'Christ, the image of God' (2 Cor. 4:4); "He is the image of the invisible God..." (Col. 1:15). Jesus came to reveal God as love. John in one of his epistles describes God's nature as love, by saying that God is love (1 John 4:7).

So, if we want to know the image of God we will have to understand the nature of love; thus, it would then prove plausible why we are created in God's image, and expected to reflect it. A text that that explains the nature of love – God – as the Spirit is Galatians 5:22-23, where Paul calls believers to live in the Spirit, and living by the Spirit means that we bear the fruit of the Spirit. So “the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.” (Note the singular term: “fruit” which is manifested in different characteristics).

Therefore, Christ takes the center, because it is evident that He is the revelation of the image of God, and truly expresses how God initially created man to be like. John also presents Jesus as “the Word [that] became flesh, and dwelt among us” (1:14 NASB). Therefore, “Christian faith names God as ‘Father, Son and Spirit’, the holy Trinity... Only of this Trinitarian God can we say, ‘God is love’ (1 Jn. 4:16). And when it comes to thinking about being human as being ‘made in the image of God’, this vision of God makes a great deal of difference (Sherlock 1996: 19).”

## **6.5 The Moral dimension**

All arguments that provide evidence for the existence of God seek to provide a comprehensive, consistent, and coherent account of the nature of God's existence; however, the Teleological arguments begin their arguments by making reference to the physical universe and its processes. Thus, there is a necessity of another argument that would make these arguments to be concrete in the sense that they are practical.

This last argument discussed here – the Moral argument – provides such an aspect which begins its premise with human nature; the Moral argument is the most “accessible” to all humanity in the sense that moral issues confront all humankind daily as they make choices moment-after-moment. Therefore:

The arguments based both on design and on the principle of sufficient reason proceed from observed characteristics about physical nature to God as the best explanation for them. The moral argument uses at its point of departure a feature about human nature: the capacity to make moral judgments. God, so the argument goes, is the best explanation for human moral capability (Stewart 2007: 149).

So the moral argument introduces the existence of God through the moral laws that seem to be governing most societies of this world. Therefore, “there are a host of moral arguments for theism. Some of these argue that the very existence of objective moral laws requires there to be a supreme law-giver, God, responsible for them” (Taliaferro 2003: 370). Aquinas’ fourth way of the existence of God may fit into this moral argument; this fourth way is:

The Argument from Degree (*ex gradibus perfectionis*). Human beings, in their pure thought, are able to recognize beauty and goodness and can understand what perfection may entail; thus, this being which is transcendent is a being of ultimate perfection, so different levels of perfection imply that there is a being that is ultimately perfect. Therefore, “the fourth way is taken from the gradation to be found in things... Now the maximum in any genus is the cause of all in that genus... Therefore there must also be something which is to all beings the cause of their being, goodness, and every other perfection; and this we call God” (Aquinas 1997: 23). The fact that human beings pursue moral goodness attests to the fact that – as realized above that human beings are dependent – there is a God who is perfectly morally good, thus, human kind is drawn to this vision. Thus, Taliaferro (2003: 270-1) remarks:

Theism may enter the picture by providing a richer metaphysical account as to why the cosmos is such that there are objective values. In a theistic cosmos, values lie at the heart of reality, whereas for most naturalists values are emergent, coming into being from evolutionary processes that are themselves neither inherently good or bad. If theism has some credibility on other grounds, then a theistic moral argument would not be invoking an extraneous hypothesis to account arbitrarily for objective values... Theism would then be a rich theory for it could also account for the facts of morality as well.

It is precisely through this argument that one realizes that humanity should not deny the existence of God and should seek – both corporately and individually – to acknowledge the presence of this powerful, divine being, because if humanity fails to do that, then, it does this to its own peril, and this is destructive. Thus, Saint Paul in his discussion of the depravity of humanity when it does not acknowledge God notes:

The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of men who suppress the truth by their wickedness, since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities-his eternal power and divine nature-have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse. For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like mortal man and birds and animals and reptiles. Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another. They exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator-who is forever praised. Amen (Rom.1:18-25).

Therefore, if we deny the existence of a divine, supreme being – known as God – then we don't have a basis for grounding the moral values that we use to regulate society and create order in all of society; hence, there must be a God who is perfect in moral goodness, and – since he created all mankind in his image – wants all mankind to reflect that image ethically and morally.

This argument is expressed in different forms. The first expression of this argument is the existence of the Natural Law which proves the necessity of a greater law-giver, and these laws are found in different religions – and most of these laws are common, and also seem to unify humanity in regards to the formulation of human values. Thus, Stewart (2007: 149) notes that:

This view of morality finds its basis in the doctrine of *lex naturalis*, the natural law, a set of principles that can be known by all reasonable people at all times. Whether it could be the Tao of Lao Tsu, the Ten Commandments, the Hindu Code of Manu, the Analects of Confucius, or other ancient thought systems, all of these embody a common understanding of right and wrong that can best be explained as implanted in human beings by God.

Another view in this argument constructs evidence from the fact that all humanity have a divine nature and so divinity represents moral goodness, thus, there is an imprint of this moral goodness in every humanity. This anthropological view presents the existence of God as this divine being who laid an obligation on all humanity to act morally. As a result, “this capacity to recognize moral obligations sets us apart from the natural order of things and signals that humans bear within their nature a capability that can best be explained as coming from God” (Stewart 2007:149).

One philosopher who made a significant contribution to this argument is Immanuel Kant (1724-1804), who proposes that God – though a postulate – is necessary for moral capacity in man; as Stewart (2007: 151) comments that “In his moral philosophy Kant reinstates God as a requirement for making sense of moral duty.” Kant does this through introducing the premise of the *categorical imperative* as necessary for moral action, which is defined as acting on the principle that you can will to be a universal law of nature. Thus, we act morally because God makes it reasonable for us to act morally; and so Kant conceives *God as a Postulate of practical Reason*. Therefore, Kant (2007: 156), in his classic work: *God as a Postulate of practical Reason*, remarks that:

If we inquire into God’s final end in creating the world, we must name not the happiness of rational beings in the world but the highest good, which adds a further condition to the wish of rational beings to be happy, *viz.*, the condition of being worthy of happiness, which is the morality of these beings, for this alone contains the standard by which they can hope to participate in happiness at the hand of a wise creator.

It seems that man retained the image of God after the fall; however, it was perverted, and he lost its likeness. These two concepts: the image and likeness are central in the understanding of man as God’s creation. The human race is a specialized creation of God, unique among all the rest of earthly creatures. This distinctiveness is implied in the decision of God to create mankind in his own image and likeness. No real understanding of man can be achieved without probing into the significance of those two words, “image” and “likeness” (Elmore 1986: 28).

The word translated image is the word: “*tselem*,” which means a resemblance; it is a representative figure, for instance, it could be a statue that bears a strong physical resemblance of a person or something it represents. Whereas likeness is the word: “*demuth*,” which also connotes the idea of resemblance; but here, it maintains the idea of the image shaped or fashioned like its creator, thus, acting in the manner of its creator. So, the two ideas seem to be hanging on each other.

Man created in the image of God shows that man is a creature, and therefore, he is not independent but he is completely dependent on God. Even his days on the earth are determined by God, as Job remarks, “Man's days are determined; you have decreed the number of his months and have set limits he cannot exceed” (Job 14:5).

Moreover, Nehemiah says that, “You’re the one, GOD, you alone; You made the heavens, the heavens of heavens, and all angels; The earth and everything on it, the seas and everything in them; You keep them all alive” (Neh. 9:6 MSG). It is God who preserves all creation, and it is Him alone who determines the days of man. Therefore “Since he is creature, man can only be saved by grace – that is, in utter dependence on the mercy of God. But the fact that man is also a person implies that he or she has an important part to play in the process of being redeemed” (Hoekema 1986: 7).

There are even new issues that have developed in the interpretation of this text (Gen.1:26-28), because of new theological developments generated by scientific research; like the issues of environmentalism, where other researches are questioning the ethical dimensions of man ruling over all creation, as Fretheim (1994: 335) asks: “Does the dominion passage commend the exploitation of the earth?” The author of the Genesis account revisits this affirmation later in his description of the creation account by noting that, “When God created man, he made him in the likeness of God. He created them male and female and blessed them. And when they were created, he called them ‘man’” (Gen. 5:1-2). Thirdly, the author, at the end of his description of the flood narrative makes an allusion to his first description of the origin of human nature by reiterating Gen. 1:26, when he writes that “... for in the image of God has God made man.”

As one considers all these descriptions more problems arise in regard to interpretation, as when one thinks of human nature one is confronted with a few apparent inconsistencies; hence others assume that these should not be read as literal occurrences in the origin of human nature. For instance, perceived internal inconsistencies where there seems to be two stories of the creation of human beings, and perceived scientific inconsistencies, where the accounts don’t seem to relate to cosmology, geology, and biology, as contemporary humanism may affirm. Stevenson & Haberman (2004: 54) suggest that:

Only symbolic readings of the creation stories can be taken seriously. It is now widely – though not universally – accepted that they are myths (perhaps symbolic of deep symbolic truths), so there need be no incompatibility with science. Anyone who asserts the historical existence of Adam and Eve as the unique ancestors of all humanity is in my view insisting on an overly literal interpretation of scripture.

However, a thorough, exegetical analysis of these texts refutes these perceived internal inconsistencies. The best way to interpret these texts is to read them as a story which is an admixture of literal material and representative material of the human race – the admixture of the literal and the symbolic. So, the Genesis narrative weaves together the typical and the archetypical stories. Therefore:

They are *typical* or *archetypical* stories; that is, they explain aspects of human life in every age, including inter-human, human-nonhuman, and creature-Creator relationships. The various uses of the word אָדָם (*adam*) point the reader in this direction (generic – 1:26-27; 2:5; 3:22-24; 5:1-2; 6:1-7; the first man – 2:7-4:1; Adam-4:25-5:5). This movement back and forth between humankind and the first man suggests an effort to portray the human in both typical and atypical ways (Fretheim 1994: 335).

However, in Genesis 3, a distortion of this image of the original human is distorted. This distortion is highlighted by the tension within man that is caused by the two configurations that had become part of his nature; first, being that man is created in the image of God, and secondly that man's nature is marked by disobedience, pain and death. It is plausible to suggest that the second configuration was not originally part of man's nature as the text tells us that after the creation of man, "God saw all that he had made, and it was very good..." (Gen. 1:31). The Genesis account, that includes the narrative of the creation of man in the image of God (Gen. 1:26-28), also accounts of man's sin that caused him to lose the likeness of God, though not the image, thus no longer perfect, but distorted (Gen. 3:1-7); as Scougal (1801: 84) notes:

As all men stand in a near relation to God, so they have still so much of his image stamped upon them, as may oblige and excite us to love them: in some this image is more eminent and conspicuous, and we can discern the lovely tracts of wisdom and goodness; and though in others it is miserably sullied and defaced, yet it is not all together erased, some lineaments at least do still remain.



The Bible says that, “For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Rom. 3: 23); it speaks of all humanity. The theological term for the doctrine of Sin is *Hamartiology*, which comes from the Greek word *ἁμαρτάνω*, which means to act contrary to the will and law of God, and to engage in wrongdoing (Louw & Nida 1996: 772).<sup>133</sup> So, all human beings have fallen short of the reality of revealing the image of God. Therefore, no man can escape the reality of sin; hence, “sin is universal. Not merely a few isolated individuals or even a majority of the human race, but all humans, without exception, are sinners” (Erickson 1998: 638).

Now because all sinned along with Adam, they all lost the likeness of the image of God. When we read the book of Genesis, in the third chapter, we see the description of how sin first entered the human race, and this has affected all of humanity; though, many people think that this story is not real, it is either mythical or allegorical. Nevertheless, Strong (1907: 583) helps us in this matter by describing this act as a historical event:

We adopt this view for the following reasons: (a) There is no intimation in the account itself that it is not historical. (b) As a part of a historical book, the presumption is that it is itself historical. (c) The later Scripture writers refer to it as a veritable history even in its details. (d) Particularly features of the narrative, such as the placing of our first parents in a garden and the speaking of the tempter through a serpent form, are incidents suitable to man’s condition of innocent but untried childhood. (e) This view that the narrative is historical does not forbid our assuming that the trees of life and of knowledge were symbols of spiritual truths, while at the same time they were outward realities.

Thus, “the whole of humanity could be thought of as the tribe of Adam, and Adam’s sin was the sin of the race” (Murray 1959: 5); moreover, “The sin of each individual is preceded by Adam’s sin” (Niebuhr 1976: 161). The sin committed by Adam and Eve, of transgressing the law of God, is an imputation of the human race.

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<sup>133</sup> However, it is important to recognize that many popular preachers use this word in a wrong way – out of its associative, denotative, and connotative contexts; for instance, the reference to *Hamartiology* is seen to refer to ‘missing the mark’; they continue to explain that to ‘miss the mark’ means to live short of the character of God, whose image we are created after. As Varner (2007: 20) also suggests that, “another Greek word for ‘mark’ is *charagma*, which can be transliterated to the English word, ‘character’. Hence, they explain *hamartia* as to fall short of the character of Christ.”

Paul notes that: “Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned” (Rom. 5:12). Man inherited a sinful nature, which perverted the image he was originally created in. Man was not created as a sinful being, therefore, sin was not originally part of the nature of man; so, “we find it to be a defilement of the image of God in man” (Terry 1907: 83).

Man being created in the image of God meant that man was the actual exhibition of that image in moral resemblance of God; Ferguson (1989: 11), as he comments on God’s broken image, notes that, “Genesis 1:26-27 introduces us to the original divine pattern for man’s life. He was the image-bearer of God.” However, after he fell, that image was distorted. One does not have to look very far to notice that God’s image in man has been distorted, one must just look inside him/herself and scrutinize the motivations of most of the things they do – find out what really drives them. One will find out that most of these motivations will be contrary to what God expects of man, moreover, one will realize, as he/she looks into the biblical text, that the image of God is opposed to the reality of the image of man in his/her human nature, as a fallen being.

The true image is to be reflecting a life of holiness; however, sin distorts this image, thus, it is difficult for man to understand the life of holiness he is called to, unless he first seeks to understand the sin that distorts the image of God in him. Ryle (1979: 1), in his work on *Holiness*, starts the book by writing:

He that wishes to attain right views about Christian holiness must begin by examining the vast and solemn subject of sin. He must dig down very low if he would build high. A mistake here is most mischievous. Wrong views about holiness are generally traceable to wrong views about human corruption... The plain truth is that a right knowledge of sin lies at the root of all saving Christianity... The first thing, therefore, that God does when He makes anyone a new creature in Christ, is to send light into his heart and show him that he is a guilty sinner. The material creation in Genesis began with `light`, and so also does the spiritual creation.

The subject of the image of God has been one of the most contentious subjects in most Christian forums; many have argued if this image is about the physical nature, that man has bodily characteristics that are similar to God. Others have suggested that this speaks of the spiritual nature, that man was created with the same spiritual nature as God.

Maybe it is man's ability to speak that reflects the image of God in him; this ability to reason and express what he is thinking, in word, may be what being in the image of God is about. Ferguson (1989: 12) suggests that, "The 'image of God' probably means that God originally made man to reflect his holy character and his position as bearing rightful rule over all his creation. In that respect he is like God". Dwyer (1994: 724-725) confirms this by remarking that:

The concept of the human person as one capable of knowledge and love and of functioning as a responsible moral agent is omnipresent in the OT and NT. However, the biblical concept is theocentric – that is, it sees human dignity as flowing from the person's relationship with God and not as the result of some quality that human beings possess independently; the person is the woman or man created by God, addressed by God, called by God, accepted by God; for both the OT and NT the dignity of the person is rooted in the fact that the human being is made in the image and likeness of God (Gen. 1:26-27) and is therefore capable of being God's partner in dialogue.

Bayertz (1996: 73) in his discussion of the *imago Dei* states that, "human dignity is viewed here as reflecting the dignity of God." However, this notion of a man or woman inheriting this worth and value may seem difficult to understand, thus, it may be wise for one to draw on some insights from a few figures who have reflected on this understanding to contribute to one's understanding of human nature. Many throughout the church age have reflected on what this image entails in their explanations of the *imago Dei* as the origin of all humanity.

Paul took the Gospel as used by the church's memories of Jesus' words and deeds and developed his ethical framework from such; for, "he always wrote to particular communities facing specific problems. In his letters he proclaimed the gospel of the crucified and risen Christ and called for the response of faith and faithfulness" (Verhey 2001: 10). Paul used the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ as a basis for informing his ethics, as Christ's crucifixion and resurrection were to be a model of the formation of individuals, and this was determinative of Christian communities (Rom.1:4; 6:1-6; 1 Cor. 1:23; 2:2; 6:14; 15:1-4; 2 Cor.5:15; Gal.2:20; 5:24; Eph.2:6; Php.3:10; Col.2:12). Dunn (2006: 626) confirms this by remarking that, "A major feature of Paul's theology is his vigorous ethical concern. As a pastor as well as theologian, Paul was inevitably concerned with the outworking of his gospel".

Thus, “The proclamation of the gospel was always the announcement that God had acted in Christ’s cross and resurrection to end the reign of sin and death and to establish the coming age of God’s own cosmic sovereignty. That proclamation was sometimes in the indicative mood and sometimes in the imperative mood” (Verhey 2001: 10).<sup>134</sup> Paul shows how through Christ’s death and resurrection we are restored to a being created in the likeness of Christ, and through attaining this being we are able to act according to God’s nature. Verhey (2001: 10) continues to note:

In the indicative mood, Paul described the power of God to provide the eschatological salvation of which the Spirit was the “first fruits” (Rom.8:23) and the “guarantee” (2 Cor.5:5). But the present evil age continued; the power of sin and death still asserted their doomed reign. The imperative mood acknowledged that Christians were still under threat from these powers and called them to hold fast to the salvation given them in Christ. “If we live by the Spirit, let us also be guided by the Spirit” (Gal.5:22).<sup>135</sup>

Thus, it is evident that there are certain ethical themes which were introduced in the Old Testament, explained in the Gospels and elaborated in Pauline writings are seen in the rest of the New Testament as instructions to be embodied by the Church. As Hebrews presented exhortations of the new covenant as a better covenant (Heb.8:1-13); this covenant reflects God’s original intention in creation as God will put his laws in their minds and write them on their hearts, and he will be their God, and they will be his people (v.10). This is what God intended when he created man in Genesis 1:26-28, that we will acknowledge him as our God and we will be his people; and in fulfilling this in the new covenant he will write his laws on our hearts through the Holy Spirit, and this is a theme that is seen in Pauline writings (2 Cor.3).

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<sup>134</sup> This theological structure of Paul’s ethic of the indicative and imperative presupposition is introduced by Furnish (2009: 207-227), it is also seen in the works by Dunn (2006).

<sup>135</sup> Furnish on the aspect of Paul ethic as subsumed under the structure of the indicative and imperative remarks that “The major conclusion to be drawn from that survey and thus one of the controlling presuppositions of this present study is that the relation of indicative and imperative, the relation of “theological” proclamation and “moral” exhortation, is the crucial problem in interpreting the Pauline ethic. This concept is developed further in chapter 7 of this thesis.

With the development of the Christian communities in new contexts, which had to deal with new situations which demanded new answers, as the church expanded the church had to deal with new moral questions as confronted by new cultural dynamics; thus, the Christians returned to the original source – the Bible – to find these answers.

Throughout the history of the church Christians have looked to the Bible for theological concepts by which to understand their moral obligations, commandments by which to live, values by which to order personal and social existence, patterns of life worthy of emulation, and insight into the dynamics of Character formation. At the same time, the Bible has been used along with other sources of moral understanding (acknowledged and unacknowledged) and has been read in a wide variety of cultural contexts that have shaped the way it has been interpreted (Cosgrove 2001: 13).

From the 1970s to today we saw the rise of narrative theology, with its attempt to utilize the concept of story as the central motif for theological reflection. Grenz and Olson (1992: 271) assert that the new emphasis on narrative opened the way to “a new means of conceptualizing the divine transcendence while giving place as well to immanence, for its transcendence is the transcendence of the story.” Because of all these different traditions arising in the twentieth century, the matter of doing ethics became increasingly complex; hence, “By the close of the twentieth century, the role of the Bible in Christian ethics had become a highly complex theological and intellectual problem. Except in fundamental circles, one could no longer simply equate biblical ethics with Christian ethics” (Cosgrove 2001: 24).

Moreover, “The diversity of moral perspectives in Scripture and the epochal difference between antiquity and modernity (or postmodernity) made it difficult to conceive the Bible as a direct source of Christian ethics” (Cosgrove 2001: 24).

Evangelicals, in spite of the pressures of modernism (and postmodernism), still held to a traditional balance regarding transcendence and immanence. Thus, “They [evangelicals] have been untiring in their reminder that theology must direct its efforts toward the vision of the balance between immanence and transcendence.” (Grenz & Olson 1992: 314). Two evangelical theologians of note in this area are Carl F. H. Henry and Bernard Ramm. Both men, especially Ramm, were willing to dialogue with theologians outside evangelicalism while still holding to traditional views of transcendence and immanence.

Christian theologians must seek a balance between the biblical truths of divine transcendence and divine immanence as this is necessary in the quest to appropriate biblical principle in daily living. Supposedly, ethical living is dependent on the balance between divine sovereignty and human responsibility, and that balance construct for us a balance between divine transcendence and immanence. It is necessary for the church to maintain this balance in its teaching and practice, as this is essential in developing an ethical community around the world – particularly in our continent: Africa, so that the church may influence Africa by an evangelical theology, in its response to the situations that Africa face today. As:

In Africa today, the winds of change are rapidly affecting almost every sector of public and private life. Traditional practices and beliefs are being questioned and abandoned in many places... Islam and Christianity are both claiming enormous numbers of converts in many countries. According to the estimates of some analysts, Africa has become the most Christian continent in the world by the year 2000 AD. By the same time, however, Islam may become the dominant force in Africa’s politics and government (O’Donovan 2000: 1)

As the church attempts to bring resolutions to the African continent it must remember, as O’Donovan (2000:1) cautions, that “God’s solutions are not usually easy. God does not provide ‘quick fixes’ for problems that are as old as humankind. God’s remedies also require a high level of personal commitment, courage and faith”. So, the church must remain faithful to its biblical mandate, and in the same manner, to remain fruitful in society as kingdom people. Hence, this research looks to Paul’s use of the notion of the *imago Dei* as a sufficient anthropological horizon.

Five dimensions of the Imago Dei					
Ontological		Epistemological	Cosmological	Teleological	Moral
A Priori	A Posteriori	Self-appropriation - Pattern - The procedure  Knowing as an experience Patterns: Dramatic, Intellectual, Aesthetic; Biological  Knowing as understanding - Direct understanding - Reflective understanding - Judgement understanding	Two important concepts: - The dependent being (Humankind)  - The self-existent being (God)	Argument of design endeavours to respond to the question of who is the intelligent designer behind the cosmos.	Moral issues confront all humankind and humans have an inherent capability to make good moral judgments.

Figure 6: Summary of topics discussed in Chapter 6

## 7. THE MODEL OF PAULINE ETHICS

Chapter six focused on the theological reflection of the concept of *imago Dei*, which is significant in providing a perspective of the general understanding of the notion of the *imago Dei*. The theology and history of this concept should be juxtaposed to get a better perspective, and both these serve a significant role in constructing Paul's ethical worldview – as both, the world of theology and the world of history must be treated in conjunction to get a better perspective of the subject at hand. Wright (2013: 55), in his discussion of the importance of the dialogue between 'New Testament Theology' and 'New Testament History', suggests that only when we have understood Paul's worldview do we understand why his theology is what it is, and the role it plays precisely within that worldview. Moreover, only when we understand Paul's theology do we understand why he believed himself called to do what he did, and why he went about his tasks in the way that he did.<sup>136</sup>

Wright (2013: 73) further annotates that even history does not thrive in a vacuum, and the lingering puzzles of postmodernity with their sometimes shrill new moralism create fresh contexts within which to re-read ancient texts and to reopen older investigations. Therefore, the dialogue between these two disciplines remains indispensable in the study of Paul, as "A historical and social analysis of Paul and his communities helps to explain why he needed to develop 'theology', and a theology of this sort, with its Messiah-and-Spirit-driven emphasis on the one God and on the unity of the people of this one God" (Wright 2013: 31). A few references relating to Paul's ethics were made in the previous chapters; however, no inferences regarding his use of the concept of the *imago Dei* were outlined. This chapter will introduce the references of the concept of the *imago Dei* in Pauline literature.

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<sup>136</sup> Martin (1993: 92-95) in his article on the *Center of Paul's Theology*, discusses the criteria for Paul's theology through providing "Patterns of Pauline Theology," which are: 1) God's Grace; 2) The Cosmos; 3) The Cross; 4) Ethical Imperative; & 5) Missionary Mandate. In the discussion of the pattern of the Ethical Imperative (which has a greater bearing on this research) he notes that the gap between historical "is"-ness and ethical "ought"-ness has to be bridged, and a rationale provided for the apostolic claim that the death and resurrection of the man Jesus impinge upon human activity both as a power to break the stranglehold of evil and as effectual summons to new life (Rom.6:1-23; Gal.1:4; 5:13-26; 1 Cor.15:20-28, 34; 2 Cor.5:18-21; 1 Thess.5:9-10).



This will be introduced in light of the setting of Paul's ethics – his person, his world, his background, his letters, and his theology.<sup>137</sup> The central passages where Paul makes reference to the concept of the *imago Dei*, as it relates to Christology, will be analysed exegetically in the next two chapters.<sup>138</sup> There are many reasons why “Pauline Christianity”<sup>139</sup> is significant in relation to the study of the ethics of the New Testament, as the world of the New Testament covers a broad spectrum of Christian communities who held different cultural values and who also adopted and applied the gospel of Christ differently, depending on their cultural environment; thus, the “New Testament scholarship in this century has discovered great diversity in early Christianity” (Meeks 2003: 7).

Hays (1996: 187) adds that, “The New Testament is not a simple, homogenous body of doctrine. It is, rather, a chorus of diverse voices. These voices differ not only in pacing and intonation but also in the material content of their messages.” Hays (1996: 3) also caution us in our attempt to studying New Testament ethics by suggesting that “the first thing we must do in order to understand the ethics of the New Testament is to explicate in detail the messages of the individual writings in the canon, without prematurely harmonizing them. When we read the texts in this way, we note distinctive themes and patterns of reasoning in the individual witnesses.”<sup>140</sup>

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<sup>137</sup> Machen (1925: 4) comments that the religion of Paul is a fact which stands in the full light of history; thus, it is important to understand the history in which Paul lived in to understand his gospel.

<sup>138</sup> Clines (1993: 426), in his chapter entitled *image of God*, outlines passages making references to the image of God in the New Testament, but focussing on Paul's use of the concept (1 Cor. 11:7; 2 Cor.4:4; Phil.2:6; Col.1:15; 3:10). However, the word *eikōn* appears 10 times in Paul's letters (the reference here includes even the disputed letter) – Rom.1:23; 8:29; 11:4; 1 Cor.11:7; 15:49; 2 Cor.3:18; 4:4; Col.1:15; 3:10.

<sup>139</sup> Pauline Christianity is a reference to the Christianity which is described in the letters which are known to be canonically belonging to Paul; in this context, these will involve both the seven undisputed letters and the six disputed letters.

<sup>140</sup> Considering the study of the historical criticism which, according to Hayes & Holladay (2007: 53-58), assumes that a text is historical in at least two senses: it may relate history as well as have its own history, we are able to allow the individual witnesses speak separately; thus, when we study texts we must learn to distinguish between the “history in the text” and the “history of the text.”

Hence, this research partly adopted Wrights (2013) views on Pauline theology; although it extensively acknowledges Wright's approach of treating Paul in his work of *Paul and the Faithfulness of God* – as he explains this approach by noting that something must be said about the problem of diachronic and synchronic readings of Paul: about whether, in other words, we should first study the letters one by one (diachronic, going through time) and only later attempt a single overall presentation (synchronic, placing all the different 'times' together).

As we see in Wolter (2006: 209), where he observes that, despite the divergence of the ethical questions Paul is treating in 1 Corinthians, his ethical teaching is theologically coherent.<sup>141</sup> It also endeavours to engender an approach which treats its exegesis through an engagement of both the processes of diachronic and synchronic features;<sup>142</sup> relying on the synchronic process mostly but making use of the diachronic process where necessary.<sup>143</sup>

Therefore, choosing the “witness” of Paul as foundation to this study gives this research a focus which will enable one to draw distinctive features of New Testament ethics, and this approach will prove coherent, given that most contemporary writers of Christian ethics devote a significant amount of attention to Paul's ethics.

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<sup>141</sup> See Hays (1996:17) for a discussion of Dibelius and Betz who do not see a direct connection between the ethical prescriptions of Paul and his theological proclamations.

<sup>142</sup> Gorman (2009: 12-23) defines the diachronic approach as the historical-critical method, which is a study that could simply be called the world “behind the text”; and focuses on the origin and development of a text. Whereas, the synchronic approach could also be labelled the narrative-critical method, which is a study that could simply be called the world “within the text”, which looks only at the final form of the text, the text as it stands in the Bible as we have it. Therefore, given the objectives and the limited space of this research, the starting place of the exegesis of the passages at hand will be from their final form, even though where necessary the historical-critical method will be applied to enhance our exegesis.

<sup>143</sup> Wright (2013: xix – xx) determined his approach through reflecting on the problems of the chronology of Paul's letters and the practicability of the size of his book; see more on this.

Furnish (2009a: xiii) confirms this by noting that “It is not surprising that most writers on Christian ethics should feel obliged to devote some attention to the ethics of Paul, for the apostle’s place in the history of Christianity and his decisive influence on protestant thought in particular give his teaching special prominence.”<sup>144</sup>

Given the oral tradition and the oral transmission of the message of Jesus to his original followers, it is difficult to understand the social world of the first followers of Jesus because their culture is framed by an oral culture and our culture is influenced by the literary paradigm.<sup>145</sup> Therefore:

We should choose one reasonably coherent and identifiable segment of early Christianity. For several reasons the most satisfactory choice comprises the extended missionary activity of Paul of Tarsus and a broad circle of co-workers and the congregations they established in cities across the north eastern quadrant of the Mediterranean basin (Meeks 2003: 7).<sup>146</sup>

We, therefore, somehow, are dependent on the history of Pauline Christianity in our attempts to construct the social world of early Christianity; as “for the surviving evidence for most varieties of first-century Christianity is spotty at best and not easy to evaluate” (Meeks 2003: ix). All the different disciplines of history, sociology and theology merge seamlessly in Paul, as Wright (2013: 49) remarks that “the varied tasks involved in studying Paul become blended together, and it is important that we learn to listen for the different voices within the developing harmony, or, as it may be, cacophony.”

Meeks (2003: ix-x) suggests that “The letters attributed to Paul and his immediate associates and disciples, supplemented by the Acts of the Apostles – the first history of their activity, written only a generation later – provide evidence both richer and more direct than that available for any other segment of the Christian movement.”

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<sup>144</sup> It is significant to notice that the “quest for the historical Paul” is easily definable as the “quest for the historical Jesus” as Witherington (1998: 9) suggests that we begin on a solid ground in our search for Paul because most scholars are in agreement that at least six or seven undisputed letters in the N.T. are from Paul’s own hand, whereas Jesus left no writings of his own.

<sup>145</sup> Dunn (2005), in his work on “A New Perspective on Jesus,” gives a broad definition and explanation of an Oral Culture (2005: 89-101); he also outlines the five characteristic features of an Oral Tradition (2005: 46-56).

<sup>146</sup> For elaborate reasons why Pauline Christianity is the satisfactory choice see Meeks (2003: 7-8); here he gives three reasons in detail.

Moreover, his letters provide us with rich insights into his world, which his hearers appreciated as they could find the relevance of his message as an overflow from his world. Thus, Wright (2013: xx) suggests that “The letters [of Paul] consist of a few bucketfuls of water drawn from a deep well, poured out into whichever vessels Paul thought appropriate for the audience and the occasion.” There are many reasons why “Pauline Christianity” is the most preferred in the study of most New Testament doctrines, but Hays (1996: 14-15) summarizes them into three points.

Firstly, beginning with the Gospels tends to create a perspectival distortion. The letters of Paul are actually the earliest extant Christian writings, the oldest texts in the New Testament. When we begin with Jesus and the Gospel traditions, we foster, consciously or unconsciously, the impression that Paul is interpreting or reacting to the Gospels. In fact, however, the Gospels that we know were written well after Paul’s death, and Paul makes only a few passing references to the teachings of Jesus (e.g., 1 Cor.7:10; 11:23-25).

Thus, we stand a better chance of appreciating Paul’s distinctive patterns of moral reasoning if we consider his letters in their own right before turning to the Gospel materials. Secondly, of all the New Testament writers Paul offers the most extensive and explicit wrestling with ethical issues. In his correspondence we can see how he encounters specific problems and reasons his way through to a solution. The processes of moral logic are, as it were, exposed and on the surface, so that we can see how his reasoning unfolds.

Thus, for heuristic reasons, it is useful to begin with Paul, as reading his work will allow us to develop analytical categories that will prove useful in examining other New Testament texts in which the logic of moral argument is less explicit. Thirdly, some of the writings of the New Testament, particularly the Gospels – as useful as they are for the study of ethics – present the hypothetical prehistory of the texts which need a lot of space to be explained and resolved – which could prove to be a separate thesis in itself; however, most of Paul’s letters appear in the New Testament in a form that could be easily treated both canonically and chronologically.<sup>147</sup>

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<sup>147</sup> Lategan (1996: 300-310), in his article on *The Pauline Ethic*, confirms that Paul’s ethical statements never occurred in the form of abstract, theoretical discussions, but were always related to concrete situations in the congregation, and frequently amounted to *ad hoc* decisions aimed at resolving particular problems.

Wright (2013: 66) adds that “What’s more, whether we live in the church or outside it, we cannot ignore the fact that Paul’s letters have been, and still are, enormously formative influences within western culture and, in a measure, global culture.” Paul is also significant in that he also bridges both the worlds of the Old and the New Testament, as Wright (2013: xv) asserts that his entire theology is best understood in terms of his reworking of those themes in the light of the Messiah and the Spirit. Hence, we need to understand him historically, within the complex and confusing world of his day. Paul’s complex world was a construction and conglomeration of his Jewish, Greek, and Roman worlds.<sup>148</sup> The first important world of Paul is Paul’s world as a Jew. In his defence before the Jews in Acts 22:3 Paul makes a reference to the fact that: “I am a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but brought up in this city, educated under Gamaliel, strictly according to the Law of our fathers, being zealous for God, just as you all are today.”<sup>149</sup> Thus, we have to first understand him as Jewish, as through his writings we notice that he remains a decidedly and determinedly Jewish thinker.

Wright (2013: xvi) comments that, “Paul developed something we can appropriately call his ‘theology’, a radical mutation in the core beliefs of his Jewish world, because only so could he sustain what we can appropriately call the ‘worldview’ which he held himself and which he longed for his churches to hold as well.” So, Paul’s Jewish worldview, reflects on the Exodus narrative of the Old Testament, interpreted through the story of the Messiah who came to reconcile humans and God, Jews and Gentiles, and slaves and masters; and this radically reshaped story around the crucified Messiah, challenges the world of ancient paganism with the concrete signs of the faithfulness of God” (see Wright 2013: 21-22). At the same time Paul was natured in the Greek and Roman world which enabled him to minister even in the pagan world.<sup>150</sup>

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<sup>148</sup> Wright (2005) in his earlier work on *Paul* in the first chapter: *Paul’s World, Paul’s Legacy*, has a section subtitled: *The Three Worlds of Paul*, which he names: Judaism; Hellenism; and Roman (see pages 3-12).

<sup>149</sup> Stegner (1993), in his article of Paul as a Jew discusses six themes of: Paul’s Autobiographical Statements; Paul’s Formal Education in Judaism; Paul’s Apocalyptic Worldview; Paul’s Self-understanding as a Jew; Paul’s Mysticism; and Paul and Torah, which encapsulate Paul’s Jewish world.

<sup>150</sup> Tenney (1965) in his work on the New Testament Times, in explaining the cultural tensions of the world of the first century, discusses these tensions as arising from three different worlds; which were the worlds of: Judaism, Hellenism, and Roman culture, and these three are used here as the main headings which encapsulate the “three worlds” of Paul.

Thus, Wright (2013: 26) considers one of the extraordinary achievements of Paul as turning theology into a different kind of thing from what it had been before in the world either of the Jews or of the pagans. Therefore, Paul's ethics provide a solid ground for studying New Testament ethics.

## 7.1 The Setting of Paul's Ethics

These three worlds of Paul help us to understand Paul, however, at the same time introduce us to the complex world of Paul. The complexity is intensified by the traditions of men which have been attached to Paul in the past two thousand years as interpreters attempted to interpret that world. Drawing insights of the social world of the original followers of Jesus from "Pauline Christianity" does not solve all our problems of understanding the movement of Jesus, even for those who already followed the literary tradition, for we must also deconstruct the meaning of Paul's letters from the interpretations of Western cultural framework; as Meeks (2003: 1) cautions: that, "We must try to disentangle [the first documents of Christianity] from the dense web of traditions in which they are embedded, traditions that are integral with the cultural identity of the West."

As a result, the researcher of any theme or motif in the Bible must attempt to assess those with perspectives even outside their traditions and within their historical context; as Wright (2013: xix) recognizes that part of the problem of most scholars in interpreting Paul is trying to imagine him after their own image.<sup>151</sup> Thus, history reminds us that:

It has often happened that one tradition has so identified some elements of its own reconstruction with 'what Paul was saying' that those who come after cannot help reading Paul through the lenses of that reconstruction; and then the same thing happens again, and again; for example: there are plenty of serious-minded people in the world today who read Paul through a series of lenses bequeathed by Luther, Kant, Bultmann and others, and then interrogate Paul as to his perceived inconsistencies and *aporiae* as though these were there in his writings rather than in the cross-eyed effect produced by the lenses (Wright 2013: 67).

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<sup>151</sup> Hooker (1975: 28-44) expounds on the scholars and the pastors' use of their own image in constructing the world of the apostles.

Unfortunately, these interrogations continued into the twentieth century and took on another form, as some started to take a dim view of Paul's theological claims; some charged that Paul had corrupted the "religion of Jesus" into a "religion about Jesus" by imposing concepts and practices drawn from Greek and Roman religions. Others argued that he had imposed on it the burden of rabbinic concerns and methods (Furnish 2009b: 9-10).

However, this happens because of a wrong interpretation of Paul; as Paul's central message was about the "new creation" through the crucified and risen Christ. Therefore, Barton (1993: 892) notes that there can be no doubt for modern readers of Paul that an adequate interpretation of his letters and of the theology they express requires the historical perspective that the historical method aims to give. Hence, the Christianity of Paul – as recorded in the Pauline corpus – provide more evidence of the social world in which the first Christian groups emerged; the world in which the foundational ethics of the Early Church were formed; which, accordingly, should set the precedence for the latter generations of Christians.

Meeks (2003: x), sees the social world of Jesus distorted by some scholars who see the images of the first Christians that come most immediately to mind as those of shepherds and peasants and simple fisher folk in a rural landscape.

Images from Jesus' parables in the Gospels, reinforced by the agrarian slant of much American piety [even African piety] and by the works of art that decorated the Sunday school rooms and lesson books that many Christians knew as children. Whatever truth there may ever have been in that picture, however, the Christianity that became the imperial religion of the Roman Empire after Constantine's conversion looked nothing like it. If we had more evidence from the first decade of the movement, we might find that even in those early years the environment was not quite so bucolic as we have imagined.

One of the reasons why Pauline Christianity may be slanted towards the urban setting is because of the oppressive regimes that controlled Palestine preceding the birth of Christ.<sup>152</sup>

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<sup>152</sup> Simmons (2008: 17-49) discusses the importance of context and the impact of foreign domination of the Jewish people which are helpful for one to understand the world of Jesus and Paul.



As Meeks (2003: x), making a case for the urban setting of Pauline Christianity, continues to note that the urbanization that Alexander, his successors, and then the Romans brought to the region may have affected the movement at an even earlier stage than we once thought; these powers were also continuing the oppression that was brought about by the Assyrians, Babylon, and the Persians. Be that as it may, it was as an urban cult that Christianity spread through the empire, and the earliest substantial evidence we have of its formation as an urban cult comes from the documents associated with Paul. Meeks (2003: 11) continues to note that, “The cities of the Mediterranean world were at the leading edge of the great political and social changes that occurred during the six and a half centuries from Alexander to Constantine.”

In a world of philosophical debates, some New Testament scholars suggest that Paul’s ethical thoughts were derived from the insights he learned from his contemporary philosophers; as Betz (1979: 292), in his support of the view that there is a disjunction between Paul theology and his ethics, notes that in a rather conspicuous way Paul conforms to the ethical thought of his contemporaries. It is, however, evident that Paul’s ethics are rooted in his Gospel, or the Gospel of Jesus and his comprehensive theological thought. Hays (1996: 18) remarks that:

Only if we back off some distance from the actual content of the Pauline letters can we posit a dichotomy between Paul’s *theology* and his *ethics* – or between *kerygma* (the proclamation of the gospel) and *didachē* (the teaching of standards of conduct), or between *indicative* (what God has done in Christ) and *imperative* (what human beings are called upon to do).

Though, Christianity is relevant to both the rural and urban settings, Paul’s world was, nevertheless urban; as Meeks (2003:9-10) comments that Paul was a city person. The city breathes through his language; he seems more at home with the clichés of Greek rhetoric, drawn from gymnasium, stadium, or workshop. So the Pauline circle was conceived from start to finish as an urban movement. “The city, then, was the place where the new civilization could be experienced, where novelties would first be encountered. It was the place where, if anywhere, change could be met and even sought out. It was where the empire was, and where the future began” (Meeks 2003: 16).

Stark (2011: 9) describes this world as a pagan world which was far from being static, where travel and trade applied not only to people and commerce, but to the gods as well. As a result, Rome acquired an extremely complex religious makeup that brought about considerable competition and often inspired bitter conflicts and repression.

This competition was between the different gods that demanded to be venerated; as Stark (2011: 19) further on notes that “aside from requiring humans to venerate them properly, the Roman gods seemed to care little about human behaviour, moral or immoral – moral offences were not treated as offences against the gods. Worse, these gods set bad examples of individual morality.” It was not only the Roman gods, but this world was permeated by the Athenian idols. So, to understand how the early Christians applied their ethics we must firstly understand the social world of early Christianity.

Thus, this section of the research seeks to describe, as Meeks (2003: ix) also described the social history of the original Christians, the Christians groups’ social forms, the social environment, the customary cultural assumptions embedded in that environment, and the peculiar subculture being invented by some of those groups. What is also significant about the social setting of Pauline ethics is that values were mostly developed through the communal framework and the tenets which shaped these Christian communities could be better understood as we study them in their group formations; hence, “Since we do not meet ordinary early Christians as individuals, we must seek to recognize them through the collectivities to which they belonged and to glimpse their lives through the typical occasions mirrored in the texts” (Meeks 2003:2).

Personal and collective ethics are determined by a dialectic relationship between Individual identity and norms, and this creates the cultural framework of a society; however, this process is integrated by a worldview. As, “Society is viewed as a process, in which personal identity and social forms are mutually and continuously created by interactions that occur by means of symbols” (Meeks 2003: 6). Further on Meeks (2003: 6) notes that there is some real but complex relation between social structure and symbolic structure, and religion is an integral part of the cultural web. Thus, for Pauline Christianity the *imago Dei Weltanschauung* serves as that “religion” which integrates his ethics.

The setting of Paul's world somehow shaped the person Paul was to be as he remained a Jew and fully committed to Judaism, and he continued to grow in the Greek cultures of Hellenism, and he never forgot his status as a Roman citizen.<sup>153</sup> These three worlds also gives us insight into the kind of sources – both by life-example and by teaching – which influenced Paul and impacted the communities he engaged with as both an adherent of Judaism and later on as a committed follower of Jesus.

## 7.2 The Sources of Paul's Ethics<sup>154</sup>

We have established above that studying Paul makes a demand for the theological and historical tasks; and it is proficiency in these tasks that lead to effective exegesis. Thus, to investigate sources is the task of a historian and any examination of Paul's teachings requires one to go back in history to find his sources; as Furnish (2009a: 25) cautions us that it would be naïve to presuppose that Paul's ethical teaching is a completely new creation. All of us are influenced and formed by certain teachings and examples in our history, as all of these played a role in our upbringing or schooling – in both the formal and informal settings; so even Paul had influences that shaped his thinking, teaching, and behaviour!

There are particularly three significant sources that influenced Paul's ethical paradigm; which are the Old Testament, the Hellenistic World, and the Teaching of Jesus. These different sources formed what today we may call 'Paul's worldview'.

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<sup>153</sup> For a thorough discussion of Paul as a Roman citizen see Reasoner's (1993: 139-141) article on Roman Citizenship, here he explains in detail Paul's Roman citizenship, and the implications thereof; also as it relates to Paul's appeal to Caesar.

<sup>154</sup> The sub-headings in this section are borrowed from Furnish's (2009a) work on the *Theology and ethics in Paul*, though they have not been phrased verbatim.

## 7.2.1 The Old Testament<sup>155</sup>

The worldview of Saul of Tarsus was formed by the ancient traditions of Israel about which he was so passionate, and reformed around the Messiah (Wright 2013: 33); as a matter of fact, in his letters, he proudly identifies himself as belonging to the people of Israel.<sup>156</sup> As, “Among the fundamental data about Paul’s life belongs his own testimony that he was an Israelite (Rom.11:1; 2 Cor.11:22; Phil.3:5) and was from the tribe of Benjamin (Rom.11:1; Phil.3:5). The latter statement fits well with the tradition in Acts (13:9) that besides his Roman name ‘Paul’ he had also the Jewish name ‘Saul’, the name borne by the greatest figure in the history of the tribe, namely the first king of Israel” (Kim 2007: 32).

Thus, “All Paul’s letters attest his indebtedness to the faith of the Old Testament and to the traditions of this covenant people.” (Furnish 2009a: 28-29). So even though he often sets himself over against those traditions and concepts, he does not abandon the fundamental conviction that the Christian community is the true Israel (Furnish 2009a:29).

So his ethical outlook was formed by the text, the Old Testament, which was central to the Israel people; and from these writings he developed his convictions. Furnish (2009a: xvii) also comments that Paul’s ethical concerns are not secondary but radically integrated to his basic theological convictions. As his worldview was a radically redrawn version of the Jewish worldview he had formerly held, with some elements (the symbolic praxis) radically reduced in significance and others (the narratives) radically rethought. The new symbolic praxis which stood at the heart of his renewed worldview was the unity of the Messiah’s people (Wright 2013: 30).<sup>157</sup>

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<sup>155</sup> Although many scholars include Paul’s use of the Apocrypha, Pseudepigrapha, and Rabbinic Judaism in his teachings and writings, our discussion here will narrowly include his use of the canonized Old Testament books in his teachings and writings; for more on Paul’s use of the Apocrypha, Pseudepigrapha, and Rabbinic traditions, see Furnish (2009a: 35-42).

<sup>156</sup> For example, see Philippians 3:4-6; Romans 9 – 11; Galatians 1:13-14; 2 Corinthians 11:22

<sup>157</sup> In the third section of this chapter, where the discussion will be on Jesus’ teaching as a significant source for Paul’s ethics I will discuss how the Apostle Paul radically reduced and rethought some of the basic narratives of the Old Testament.

Ridderbos (1957: 59-62), thus, notes that the essential character of Paul's preaching of Christ can be seen clearly from the manner in which he brings the revelation of God in Christ and the Old Testament constantly in relation to each other. As a consequence, Paul's entire preaching is characterized by the conviction that Jesus is the Christ of Israel, and that, therefore, the coming and work of Christ can be understood only against the background of the history of the revelation which the Old Testament describes (see 2 Cor.3:12; Rom.4:24; 1 Cor. 10:11). Hence, "It would be naïve to presuppose that Paul's ethical teaching is a completely new creation" (Furnish 2009a: 25). Therefore:

Paul did not have to stop being a Jew, and thinking and speaking Jewishly, in order to have a message for the world. Quite the contrary His message for the world was the message that the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob had done at last what he had promised, providing the world with its rightful Lord. When we put Jewish-style creational monotheism back at the centre of his thinking, a new possibility emerges, of a comprehensible and necessary overlap between his own specifically Christian thinking and the moral and cultural thinking of the wider world (Wright 2013: 47).

According to Paul, the Old Testament is a concealed feature of the Christian faith. However, it is revealed in the New Testament, through the birth, life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ; to be exemplified in the early church. If one may use an analogy one would describe the Christian faith as similar to the iceberg that is about thirty percent above sea level, which is supported by the Old Testament which is similar to the iceberg under the sea level which is about seventy percent.

Therefore, for Paul, the Old Testament was necessary and significant for the fulfilment of the New Testament people to fulfil the great commandment and the great commission. Paul in his second letter to Timothy instructs Timothy to continue in what he has learned, and has been convinced of – which is the Old Testament – for this is what is able to make one wise for salvation (3:14-15); Because, "All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness" (3:16).<sup>158</sup> There are many other themes from the Old Testament which Paul alludes to in his writings as having their foundation in the Old Testament.

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<sup>158</sup> Remember that all Scripture referred to here is an inference to the Old Testament as the New Testament books were not collated yet – possibly other books which we find in the New Testament were also not written yet. I also make reference to this quotation as from Paul to Timothy because I have already mentioned above my position regarding Paul's authorship of the so-called pastoral letters (see page 54).

For instance, the doctrine of salvation which is perfected in the New Testament is a teaching that runs through the Old Testament. We see God choosing Israel as His people, yet they became rebellious as God's people; thus, we see in the story God appointing certain individuals as His prophets to proclaim the salvation which will be brought by their Lord, God. However, they continued to be rebellious; yet God foreknew this and continued to appoint prophets to speak of the salvation that would be realised in the time of Jesus; hence, "the great thoughts of salvation which the prophets give forth gather around certain conspicuous figures in the people of Israel" (Davidson 1961: 365).

Moreover, "the study of Israel's past concerns not only the historian but also the believer" (Chavalas 1993: 145). There is an evident influence of the Old Testament writings in the New Testament ethical teaching. One of the reasons which explain this phenomenon is the unique relation of dual authorship of the Bible, which remains consistent in its reflection. The human authors of the Old Testament recorded prophecies which were revealed in the New Testament, as God enabled the New Testament writers to write; hence, "the Old Testament prophet's message remains demonstrably the basis for the divine New Testament fulfilment" (Bock 1985: 307). The Christian ethic finds its basis in the Old Testament; thus, many refer to it as a Judeo-Christian ethic, because they recognize the significance of the Old Testament for the Christian faith. Therefore, "It would be impossible to understand the Pauline gospel apart from the apostles' heritage" (Furnish 2009a: 29).

Nevertheless, Paul does not use his heritage glibly, and does not just quote or allude from the Old Testament just for the sake of doing it, or for the sake of impressing others. Rather, he uses the Old Testament as a 'testament' that attests to Christ as the Messiah and as a bedrock of the Gospel of Christ Jesus for New Testament believers. Drane (2000: 268-269) comments that it was not only in terms of specific beliefs that Paul continued to respect and celebrate his Jewish heritage. The very way he wrote and reasoned, using the Hebrew Scriptures to 'prove' his theological points, was taken directly from his training as a Pharisee. For instance, no one who reads his letter to the Galatians can fail to be amazed, and sometimes surprised, by the way Paul draws what can seem to be very unusual meanings from apparently quite straightforward Old Testament passages.

For instance, he was arguing like a Jewish rabbi when he claimed that the promises made to Abraham referred to a single person, Jesus Christ; the Greek word for 'offspring' (like its English equivalent) is a collective singular word and not plural in form (Galatians 3:16). Like the rabbis, Paul argued from single isolated texts, and could link up texts taken from completely different, and unrelated, parts of the Old Testament. Thus, Furnish (2009a: 42-43) comments that the apostle makes use of Old Testament materials, although not in a narrow, copybook fashion; perhaps, to distinguish his letters from the rabbinic as well as the *derek 'eretz* traditions.<sup>159</sup>

For instance, in his letters there is a sparing use of the Wisdom literature, and a relatively infrequent appeal to the Decalogue. Thus, the Old Testament is not a source for his ethical teaching in that it provides him rules, aphorisms, maxims, and proverbs. Rather, it is a source for his ethical teaching in that it provides him with a perspective from which he interprets the whole event of God's act in Christ, and the concomitant and consequent claim God makes on the believer.

## 7.2.2 The Hellenistic World

As much as Paul was Jewish in his thinking, we cannot neglect the fact that he was as much Greek in his thinking; thus, both the influences of the Jewish world and the Greek world were synchronous in his life. In the attempt to bridge the Jewish world – which was characteristic of Judaism, and the Greek world – which was characteristic of Hellenism, Wright (1992: 152-153) comments that the context of early Judaism was the Greco-Roman World, and an important account of this world was the Greek empire of Alexander the Great.<sup>160</sup>

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<sup>159</sup> *derek 'eretz* traditions were traditions of the people of the land who were poor and unskilled and left behind at the time of the Babylonian captivity, and became popular during that time of the Babylonian exile; Simmons (2008: 29) comments that from the perspective of Ezra and Nehemiah (cf. Neh.8:1 – 13:31) these people had become lax in their understanding and obedience to the law of Moses and had been reduced to mere subsistence. (For more information and context of 'the people of the land' please see Simmons 2008: 17-48).

<sup>160</sup> For more on how the Greco-Roman political and religious world shaped Early Judaism see Wright's work on *The New Testament and the People of God* (1992: 147-166).



Furnish (2009a: 49-50) confirms this by noting that one must conclude that Paul's Jewish background does not fully account for the manner, or even the substance, of his ethical teaching. That teaching is in various ways dependent upon Hellenistic forms and concepts even though there is nothing in the least way analogous to his specific citation of the Old Testament.

And yet the familiar controversy about whether Jewish or Greek influences have contributed more to the apostle's thought neglects to recognize the essential point – that Paul's Judaism was itself already substantially modified by Hellenism.<sup>161</sup>

To understand the Hellenistic world that influence Paul's ethics we have to go back into history at the time of Alexander the Great<sup>162</sup>, as he is the man that lead the Greek nation into world dominant power between 331-167 B.C./B.C.E.<sup>163</sup> Blomberg (1997: 11) assists us in providing a summary of this time by noting that Alexander apparently hoped to unite the eastern and western parts of his empire and create a new hybrid of cultures, religions, and peoples – all, however, permeated by Hellenistic (Greek— from Hellas, the Greek word for Greece) culture and influence. Thus, Hellenization spread as the result of imperialism. Greek culture and influence could be found everywhere.<sup>164</sup> For Jews, this provided significant enticements to disobey their Law. All the subjugated peoples were exposed to the breadth of Greek religion and philosophy. Major libraries (especially in Alexandria) and universities (especially in Tarsus) were founded.

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<sup>161</sup> Bousset (1970: 153-210) is known to be one of the scholars who perpetuated the controversy that creates a distortion in Paul's influences, in suggesting that Paul's Christology is best understood in light of the Hellenistic influences, quite divorced from the Jewish synagogue in which he had been raised, which had no place in it in any case for a truly divine Christ; (also see Fee 2007: 12).

<sup>162</sup> Alexander the Great was born in 356 B.C., taught by Aristotle, and inspired by Achilles (the warrior in the Iliad); Alexander has been considered by many the greatest military ruler ever. In only thirteen years (336-323) he conquered and controlled virtually all of the former Persian Empire, plus some territories not previously under its control. His rule extended from Greece to India, from southern Russia to northern Africa.

<sup>163</sup> For many centuries the form of dating that was used on most literature was preceded or followed by these two abbreviations: 'B.C.' (Before Christ), and 'A.D.' (Anno Domini, Latin word meaning 'in the year of the Lord'); however, it has lately been changed to B.C.E. (Before Common Era) and C.E. (Common Era). So in this research I have used both these forms interchangeably.

<sup>164</sup> Josephus (1987) writes an extensive history on how the reign of Alexander the Great impacted the Jews, particularly on Book 11: From the first Cyrus to the death of Alexander the Great, and Book 12: From the death of Alexander the Great to the death of Judas Maccabeus, in his works on *The Antiquities of the Jews*.

Jews divided among themselves as to whether or not it was acceptable to study, learn from, and incorporate Hellenistic elements into their lifestyles. As a result Hellenism permeated the Jewish communities, even unto the time of Paul; thus, Furnish (2009a: 44) remarks that Paul's Judaism was itself of the Diaspora, thoroughly ventilated by the pervasive influence of Hellenistic concerns, concepts, and modes of expression.

This led to the common use of the Greek Language in all the arrears that Greece invaded; thus, "No doubt the most pervasive result of Alexander's conquests was the spread of the Greek language itself. Almost everyone who had to do business with the Greek soldiers and merchants who came to be located in every urban center had to learn to speak a little Greek" (Blomberg 1997: 12).

The extent of the spread of the Greek language is perhaps best illustrated by the need of diaspora Jews (i.e., outside Israel) to translate the Hebrew Bible into Greek as early as the mid-third century B.C., because of the disuse into which Hebrew was falling even among the generally closed and tightly-knit Jewish communities. Blomberg (1997: 12-13) annotates that this translation of what we call the Old Testament became known in Roman times as the Septuagint, from the Latin word for "seventy." Thus, traditions developed that seventy (or seventy-two) scholars were commissioned to produce this translation, and one late legend claimed that all worked independently to produce word-for-word identical copies! Moreover, he also makes the note that the latter claim is demonstrably false – the surviving manuscripts demonstrate the same complex history of formation and development of textual variants and traditions as do the Hebrew Bible and Greek New Testament.

The importance of the Septuagint for New Testament studies, though, can scarcely be overestimated. In a substantial majority of cases, the LXX (as it is customarily abbreviated) is often the version quoted in the New Testament, even when the Greek rendering varies from the Hebrew in some significant way. The Septuagint was clearly "the Bible" for most first-century diaspora Jews. Thus, Paul did know and used the Septuagint, as Fee (2007: 20-21) comments that there are good reasons from the Pauline corpus itself for us to use the term Septuagint with regard to the Greek Bible that Paul himself used and that was assumed by him to be a text that he had in common with his Greek-speaking churches.

Thus, Paul's Greek rendering of the OT: his wording, including some unusual renderings, are too often that of the Septuagint. An important area of scholarship which is only beginning to receive the attention it deserves involves the relationship among the different versions of the Septuagint and the ancient copies of the Hebrew Old Testament. Therefore,

One must not minimize the significance of the fact that Paul read a Greek Bible which already bore the impress of Hellenistic piety, that he himself wrote in Greek and laboured among Gentile people. The very fact that Paul on occasion finds it necessary to emphasize and document his Jewishness perhaps suggests that at least some of his readers would not think of him first of all against that background. It is too extreme to say that no important Hellenistic influences are to be discerned in Paul's thought, and that, remaining throughout his life "a Jew to the finger tips", he may have borrowed some Hellenistic terms and forms, but always with entire unconcern for their original meanings (Furnish 2009a: 44).

"Paul's ethical teaching is, however, indebted to Hellenistic 'sources' in a more general sense. Numerous scholars have pointed out Pauline phrases, metaphors, and terms which are familiar and frequent in Hellenistic circles as represented by the broad and pervasive movement of Stoicism" (Furnish 2009a: 45-46).

### 7.2.3 The Teaching of Jesus

Although there has been a debate regarding Paul's reliance on the teachings of Jesus in his ethical formulation, Furnish (2009a: 51) insists that the sayings of Jesus constituted the "primary source" in Paul's work as an ethical teacher. According to Ridderbos (1957: 43-46), in making a commentary of 1 Corinthians 15:8, Paul appeals for his knowledge of Christ more than once to the revelation which he had experienced at his conversion; moreover, the book of Acts, in its threefold picture of Paul's conversion, lays the emphasis upon the unexpected and overwhelming character of the conversion (Acts 9:3-5; 22:6-8; 26:15). Therefore, "In this encounter with the person of the exalted Christ is to be found the starting point of Paul's apostolic preaching" (Ridderbos 1957: 46).<sup>165</sup>

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<sup>165</sup> See also Ridderbos (1957: 46-53) where he makes reference to the source of Tradition to Paul's preaching.

Paul's devotion to Christ was the foremost reality and passion of his life, as Fee (2007: 1) notes that what Paul said in one of his letters serves as a kind of motto for his entire Christian life: "For me to live is Christ; to die is [to] gain [Christ]" (Phil.1:21). Actually, Paul himself testified that his gospel is not from man, rather he received his gospel, through the revelation of Jesus Christ" (Gal. 1:11-12). Paul frequently makes reference to this testimony; as in 1 Corinthians 9:1 he asks a rhetorical question: "Am I not an apostle? Am I not free? Have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord? Are you not my work in the Lord? Paul's testimony of faith in the gospel of Christ Jesus is also acknowledged by Luke in the book of Acts, where he even mentions it three times: Acts 9:1-19; 22:3-16; 26: 4-18). Thus, the example and teachings of Jesus was the source of Paul's ethics. We see this through Paul's acknowledgement that he was the recipient of the revelation of Jesus, thus, he has become the bearer of those very traditions he has received from Christ. Christ Jesus' traditions were so important to Paul that he even saw it as significant for his hearers to also hold onto them.

We even see in how he administers the "Lord's Table" as delivering to the saints that which he had received from the Lord (1 Cor. 11:23). Moreover, in 1 Cor. 15:3, in his exposition of the resurrection of Christ he tells the Corinthian believers that: "For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures." He even claims that the instructions for conduct he is passing on to this church come from the Lord Jesus (1 Cor. 7:10). Even the Synoptic writers later on prove that the very traditions which Paul perpetuated were from the Lord Jesus (Matt. 5:32; 19:9; Mark 10:11-12; Luke 16:18).<sup>166</sup> Paul also makes allusions of his testimony of having received his revelation from the Lord.<sup>167</sup> For instance, one such allusion is Romans 10:2-4, as Kim (2007: 3-4) comments that what Paul says of Israel in Romans 10:2-10 corresponds with his autobiographical statements especially in Philippians 3:4, and he understands the tragedy of Israel in the light of his conversion experience.

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<sup>166</sup> Most scholars believe that the Gospels were written later than Paul's letters; see Elwell and Yarbrough's book (2013), Part 1: Encountering Jesus and the Gospels (pages 19-53) and Part 3: Encountering Paul and His Epistles (235-254).

<sup>167</sup> Furnish (2009a: 52) cautions students who make allusions of the words of Christ in Paul by suggesting that the identification of "allusions" or "echoes" are always a particularly subjective matter, so one must tread carefully here and not lay too great a strain on the imagination or too great an emphasis on the results.

Just as he was zealous for God before the Damascus experience, Israel also has zeal for Him, however, it is an unenlightened zeal. Another reference which some scholars recognize as Paul's reference to Christ is his allusion to his call to apostleship on the road to Damascus is 1 Corinthians 9:16-17, as having been laid hold by Christ, he is compelled to preach the gospel, and this is necessitated by Christ. Even 2 Corinthians 3:4 – 4:6 shows allusions to Paul's experience of encountering Christ on his way to Damascus. Kim (2007: 13), in making reference to that passage, comments that Paul's "encounter with Christ was like removing a veil from his mind that had hindered his true understanding of the Torah and acceptance of the gospel."

Furnish (2009a: 53-54), in treading cautiously in finding Christ's ethical teachings alluded to in the letters of Paul recognizes eight inferences;<sup>168</sup> five allusions between Romans 12 and 14 and three in 1 Thessalonians 5. In Romans 12 verse 14 Paul instructs the believers to "Bless those who persecute you: bless, and curse not," could be an allusion to Jesus' command in Matthew 5:44 which says, "But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them who despitefully use you, and persecute you." Paul in Rom.12:17 continues to admonish the saints to, "Never pay back evil for evil to anyone" seem to be echoing Matt.5:39 where Jesus says, "But I say to you, do not resist him who is evil; but whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn to him the other also."

The instruction in Rom.13:7 to "Render to all what is due them: tax to whom tax is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour" could be a reference to Jesus' instructions in Matt.22:15-22 where Jesus concludes the section by telling the Pharisees to "render to Ceaser the things that are Ceaser's; and to God the things that are God's." Another allusion is in Rom.14:13-14 where the instruction is given to not judge others and not to put a stumbling block in a brother's way may be an echo of Matt.7:1-6 where Jesus is admonishing his hearers not to judge and this echo is coupled with Jesus' words in Matt.18:7 where he warns that "woe to that man through whom the stumbling block comes!" (Also see: Mark 9:42 and Luke 17:1-2).

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<sup>168</sup> As noted above, Paul would have learned these sayings of Jesus from the oral traditions of the teachings of Jesus that prevailed in his time – NOT from the gospel accounts – as the gospels were not written yet by the time he wrote his letters.

The fifth allusion of Paul's ethical teaching from Jesus' teaching comes from Rom.14:14 which reads, "nothing is unclean in itself; but to him who thinks anything to be unclean, to him it is unclean", may be an inference to Matt.15:11 where Jesus teaches that it is not what enters into the mouth defiles the man, but what proceeds out of the mouth that defiles the man.

The first allusion in 1 Thessalonians 5 is in verse 2 which states that "For you yourselves know full well that the day of the Lord will come just like a thief in the night", echoes the image and instruction Jesus gave in Matt.24:43-44 where Jesus says, "But be sure of this, that if the head of the house had known at what time of the night the thief was coming, he would have been on the alert and would not have allowed his house to be broken into. For this reason you be ready too; for the Son of Man is coming at an hour when you do not think He will." Even the phrase in 1 Thess.5:13 which says, "Live in peace with one another" may be an echo of mark 9:50 where Jesus says, "Be at peace with one another." The last allusion in 1 Thessalonians in chapter 5 verse 15 where Paul says, "See that no one repays another with evil for evil," is also a reference to Matt.5:39-47.<sup>169</sup> The quotes and allusions made reference to above provides us with the evidence that "the apostle was familiar with traditions about Jesus' teaching and had possession of certain elements of that teaching" (Furnish 2009a:54). He recognized these traditions as authoritative because he encountered Jesus as the Christ and was thus committed to writing of the divinity of Jesus.

In most of his letters, Paul's theology is constructed through a presupposition of Christology. "Thus, even a casual reading of Paul's letters reveals how Christocentric his basically theocentric worldview has become. God the Father is always the 'first cause' of everything and thus always appears in the primary position as the 'prime mover'; nonetheless, the focus of Paul's life is on Christ himself" (Fee 2007: 9). Creed (1938: 138) on his remarks on Paul's letters about the divinity of Jesus says, "when St. Paul has proclaimed his persuasion that the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord is the sovereign power, to which all things created must yield place, the way has been opened for the belief that through Christ all things created came to be."

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<sup>169</sup> Note that the ethical eight ethical allusions made reference to above where adapted from Furnish (2009a:53-54), expanded and fitted within the argument of this research.

“Paul does not appeal to Jesus as an earthly teacher or to his sayings as the instruction of a distinguished rabbi. His appeals are to the risen, reigning Christ, the church’s Lord. The “words of the Lord” carry authority not because they can be identified as the *ipsissima verba* of a particular wise or important figure from the past. Rather, their “authority” and “authenticity” in the believer’s encounter with them in the context of his whole life in faith, in the Spirit, in the community of believers – “in Christ.” (Furnish 2009a: 56).

Fee (2007: 7) attests to the fact that the primary focus in all the Pauline letters is on salvation in Christ, including Spirit-empowered ethical life as the genuine outworking of such salvation; but in the process, Paul regularly speaks of Christ in ways that indicate that “the Son of God” is also included in the divine identity.

### 7.3 The Spirit in Paul’s Ethics

Fee (1996: 98) defines ethics as the whole of life under the new covenant lived in and by the Spirit in the Christian community and in the world as the people of God. So Paul’s understanding of Christian ethics is life in the Spirit, as the ethical life is often central in his letters, and the Spirit is mentioned often in those contexts of the ethical life. For instance, in 2 Corinthians 3:18 – “And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord’s glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit” – Paul highlights that the Christian ethical formation is empowered by the Spirit; so the Spirit plays a central role in Paul’s ethics.

Hafemann (2000: 161), in his commentary of 2 Corinthians 3:18, notes that in 3:18 Paul closes his argument by drawing the conclusion that naturally follows from his identification of *Yahweh* with the Spirit, that the Spirit is the power of new life (3:6b). The meaning of Paul’s statement in 3:18 can be paraphrased as follows: Since the Lord is the Spirit, as demonstrated by the freedom (from the veil) for obedience that the Spirit creates (v.17), “we all” – that is, all members of the new covenant community, both Jews and Gentiles – “are being transformed into the same image. In other words, by the power of the Spirit we are experiencing in a progressive sense more and more of this freedom to obey God, and as a result we are being changed into God’s own image by becoming obedient to his will.



To be in the image of God is to manifest his “likeness” by acting in accordance with his commands as an expression of God’s own nature. It is God’s intention to restore his nature in humanity; so through the Spirit he works out this ideal, which happens through progressive conformity to Christ-likeness. This conformity, which happens in a community, is initiated and assisted by the Holy Spirit who becomes our companion in journey of transformation. Therefore, the resurrection of Jesus establishes the entire Christian life in the action of God by the Holy Spirit. Moreover, Fee (1996: 97) adds, “the Spirit, in constituting a new people for God’s name, fulfils the purpose of the law and stands over against the ‘flesh’ by enabling righteous living.”

The Christian life begins as a community that is gathered at the place of impossibility, the tomb. Just as Jesus’ birth launches us into the creation and Jesus’ death launches us into history, Jesus’ resurrection launches us into living in community, the holy community – the community of the resurrection. Jesus’ resurrection is the Kerygmatic lift-off for living in the community of the Holy Spirit (Peterson 2005: 230). Transformation happens through companionship with the Spirit, for the Spirit is the agent of this change, which is the Holy Spirit; because it is God who initiated the process, it is also Him who sustain the process by His Spirit; thus it is Him who will bring the process to its final stage – to be conformed to the image of Christ. Without a continual filling of the Holy Spirit in our lives – as Ephesians 5:18 tells us – it is impossible for a believer to come to maturity in Christ. MacArthur (2003: 86) confirms this by remarking that, “Growth toward Christ’s likeness occurs only when we are spiritual, walking in the Spirit, filled by the Spirit... full maturity results only from being filled with the Spirit as a pattern of life.”

Thus, God manifests himself in the Holy Spirit, because monotheism is indeed at the heart of Paul’s theology, not simply as ‘what he believed about God’ in a sense that could be detached from what he believed about other topics, but rather as the integrating theme which explains and gives depth to all the others (Wright 2013: 37). Moreover, Martin (1986: 74) remarks that the Holy Spirit transforms all believers into God’s pattern, the archetype of perfect humanity, Jesus Christ, as a progressive experience and by communion with the living God (Rom 8:29; Gal 4:19; Phil 3:21; 1 John 3:2).

So every Christian can behold the divine glory, through the Spirit, in this life in anticipation of perfect conformity to Christ in the next. This conformity is attained as one lives in and by the Spirit in both the Christian community and in the world. Fee (1996: 99) remarks that “Christian ethics is not primarily an individualistic one-on-one-with-God brand of personal holiness; rather it has to do with living the life of the Spirit in Christian community and in the world.” This is, perhaps, the critical point of the whole process of transformation because this transformation cannot be dependent on any theological system; although these systems could be helpful in one’s quest of understanding the truth, however, they are still created by man and may limit God’s dynamic work in one’s life if they are treated as the source of transformation.

Sire (1990: 22) cites Tennyson, who noted that: “Our little systems have their day; they have their day and cease to be; they are but broken lights of thee, and thou, O Lord, art more than they.” Further on, he echoes the words of Stott who commented that: “Systematic theology is certainly a legitimate and even necessary academic discipline, but God did not choose to reveal himself in systematic form, and all systems are exposed to the same temptation, namely to trim God’s revelation to fit our system instead of adapting our system to accommodate his revelation” (Sire 1990: 22). So the company of the Holy Spirit is necessary – rather indispensable – in the whole process of transformation.

So, “As the Holy Spirit works in our lives, our characters are brought more into conformity with the original image of God in us” (Sire 1990: 71). So Paul makes the Spirit, as part of the trinity, the essential part in the creation of Christian theology. Wright (2013: xvi) remarks that Paul actually invents something we may call ‘Christian theology’, in reworking his Jewish beliefs about God around his understanding of the Messiah and the Spirit; hence, only a robust re-appropriation of Paul’s Jewish world of monotheism, election and eschatology, would help in understanding his ethics.

His understanding of the Spirit plays a central role in helping us understand how the ‘doctrines of God’, as revealed in the biblical text, can assist us in constructing a theological-ethical framework for the contemporary church.

Paul remained a deeply Jewish theologian who had rethought and reworked every aspect of his native Jewish theology in the light of the Messiah and the Spirit, resulting in his own vocational self-understanding as the apostle to the pagans (Wright 2013: 46). Paul also affirms that his preaching of the cross came with “words taught by the Spirit” (1 Cor.2:13), which included “explaining spiritual things by spiritual means” (that equals the things taught by the Spirit with language appropriate to the Spirit).

To have the Spirit in this way means not to be subject to merely human judgments; rather, it means to have the mind of Christ (vv.15-16; cf.7:25, 40) (Fee 1996:80). Thus, the potential of the human mind reaches its apex in the possibility of possessing the mind of Christ through the ministry of the Holy Spirit, as Paul notes in 1 Cor. 2:16: “But we have the mind of Christ.” To have the mind of Christ is no mystical experience, but it is the opportunity to develop the mentality of Jesus, which will guide our choices and acts. Hence, “In the much misunderstood second chapter of 1 Corinthians, Paul is not putting down intelligence or true wisdom, as so many have thought. He is instead saying that God’s foolishness, the foolishness of the cross, is wiser than the wisdom of the world. And we who are Christians have that mind” (Sire 1990: 19).

When Paul urges his Roman hearers to be ‘transformed by the renewal of their minds’, this was not simply a piece of good advice for those who wanted to practice their faith with a bit more understanding. It was vital if the entire worldview he was advocating and inculcating was to take root and flourish (Wright 2013: 36). For the Christian life is about belief, to trust in the One who is the creator and giver of all life; thus, “to be a Christian is to be one who believes. The content of that faith is at once radical and liberating” (Sproul 1998: 10). Paul introduces this essential element of faith in the process of transformation; unless individuals have forsaken their worldly ideas of the image of God and believe in Christ as the true image of God, they cannot be transformed into the image of Christ. For “In Paul the idea of transformation refers to an invisible process in Christians which takes place, or begins to take place, already during their life in this world” (Kittel 1967: 758).

Paul's command, "Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind..." (Rom. 12:2), highlights the disciples' responsibility in the process of transformation; this transformation will not happen unless they begin to renew their minds, because the mind is the place where faith is nurtured, it is also the seat of all spiritual and carnal conflict. Thus, "to be conformed to the thinking of this world is to think with its forms or structures. To be transformed is to think beyond the forms of this world. And the power for this transformation is the renewed mind" (Sproul 1998: 9). Paul, also noted that faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ (Rom. 10:17 NASB).

It is the word of Christ that we need to hear and believe; then we will be transformed into His image. It is in the faculty of the mind where the human being is influenced, his behavior is a reflection of what his mind has been feeding on; your beliefs determine your behavior.

Moreland (1997: 73) explains the intricate relation between belief and behavior through remarking that beliefs are the rails upon which our lives run. We almost always act according to what we really believe. It doesn't matter much what we say we believe or what we want others to think we believe. When the rubber meets the road, we act out our actual beliefs most of the time. That is why behavior is such a good indicator of a person's beliefs.

In making reference to the Spirit as the agent that completes the work that is started by the Messiah, which is an inference of Philippians 1 verse 6, Wright (2013: 18) notes that the 'good work' in Philippians is an inference to the transformation of character brought about by the Spirit; as a consequence, "The life of the mind was itself elevated by Paul from a secondary social activity, for those with the leisure to muse and ponder life's tricky questions, to a primary socio-cultural activity for all the Messiah's people" (Wright 2013: 27)

For Paul, there is no question that the praxis of the Messiah-following people created a context within which it made sense to think the revolutionary thoughts he urged his converts to think. But it is equally clear that he believed that the renewal of the mind through the work of the spirit would generate and sustain new patterns of behaviour. In elevating (and simultaneously democratizing) the life of the mind, Paul was not buying into an idealist frame of reference, something which, as we have seen, his modern followers have found it all too easy to do (Wright 2013: 27).

So, Christians have to involve their minds if they expect to be transformed into the image of Christ. Transformation in behaviour, as Paul tells us, does not just happen, but it needs us to be involved, even though it comes by the grace of God. Yes, it is true that Grace is opposed to earning, but not to effort. Therefore, “The role of intellectual development is primary in evangelical Christianity... if we are to be formed in Christ (Galatians 4:19), we must realize the work of God in our minds and pay attention to what a Christlike mind might look like” (Moreland 1997: 22). Thus, the means by which we accomplish this transformation in conduct is the “renewing of our minds” (Eph. 4:23; Col. 3:10). And this is a renewal in the spirit of our minds as:

Our greatest assurance is the continuing help of the Holy Spirit. In Nehemiah’s important prayer, recounting the history of God’s leadership of Israel, he said, “You gave your good Spirit to instruct them” (Neh. 9:20). He is, after all, the ultimate teacher of our materials. The psalmist correctly coupled God’s teaching with the Spirit: “Teach me to do your will, for you are my God; may your good Spirit lead me on level ground” (Ps. 143:10) (Hunt 1994: 196).<sup>170</sup>

A new orientation in our thinking leads to a new orientation in our behaviour. This transformation in one’s thinking is the bedrock of the transformation and formation of a worldview, and this worldview, Wright (2013: 27) suggests, creates a context for theology, but theology on the other hand is necessary to sustain the worldview. Together they generate, and are either reinforced or modified by, ‘real life’ in all its rich variety.

Ridderbos (1957: 56–59), in his discussion of the sources of Paul’s preaching – which are going to be thoroughly explored in the next chapter – refers to the source of the Holy Spirit as the significance of the *Pneuma*; thus, Paul considered the knowledge of the historical Jesus to be of little significance, and that for his own preaching and views of Christ, he trusted exclusively to that which he was given by the *Pneuma*. Hence, Paul’s preaching of Christ ought not to be described as historical but as pneumatic; this notion is noticed in the well-known passage of 1 Corinthians 2:6-16, which is referred to as the “*Pneuma-passage*” (see also: Rom.16:25-26; Eph.3:5; Col.1:25-27).

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<sup>170</sup> Even Paul’s concept of the Holy Spirit also has its sources, as Paige (1993: 404-413) mentions three main sources: the revelation in the OT canon, inter-testamental Judaism, and early Christian thought. He also discusses the different elements of the Holy Spirit: The Spirit of God; The Spirit and Wisdom; The Spirit as Divine Power; The Spirit of Christ; The Spirit and Mission; The Spirit and the Christian’s New Life; The Spirit and Eschatology; and The Spirit and Worship.

[Thus] when Paul appeals to the spirit of God for his own preaching, and when he elsewhere attaches value to the particular working of the Spirit and speaks of ecstasies and visions there is, in this, not an independent principle of knowledge of the person and work of Christ, but it is rather the renewing and constructive work of the Holy Spirit, by which the preaching of the historical Christ receives its religious and moral application and effect (Ridderbos 1957: 58-59).<sup>171</sup>

This worldview of the theology of the Spirit is developed through an on-going engagement with the Scriptures, and a thorough understanding of the Scriptures comes through an exercise of exegesis. Exegesis is the point where history and theology come together and tackle one specific task (Wright 2013: 48). Now that we have explored Paul's worldview through the use of the tasks of history and theology, we are ready to move into our exegetical tasks; as a matter of fact, "Only then do we really stand a chance of approaching the tasks of exegesis itself, of the sustained study of the individual letters, with any deep overall understanding" (Wright 2013: 55).

Therefore, the study of Paul's worldview leads to a striking, dramatic conclusion: this worldview not only requires a particular 'theology' to sustain it, but also requires that 'theology' itself play a new role, integrated with the worldview itself. Paradoxically in terms of the traditional division between social science and theology, it is by studying Paul within 'worldview' categories that we acquire a new way of seeing not only what was really important within his fully blown theology but also why theology as a whole became more important for him, and ever afterwards within the community of Jesus' followers. (Wright 2013: 30).<sup>172</sup>

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<sup>171</sup> Please note that I did not write a separate section of the Spirit as one of the sources in the section above: 7.2 with the heading "The Sources of Paul's Ethics", where I discuss the three sources of Paul's ethics: the Old Testament, the Hellenistic World, and the Teachings of Jesus, because the Holy Spirit's ministry is interwoven throughout all these three sources discussed above.

<sup>172</sup> For more discussion on "the unknown years" of Paul, particularly between Damascus and Antioch, see Hengel and Schwemer (1997).

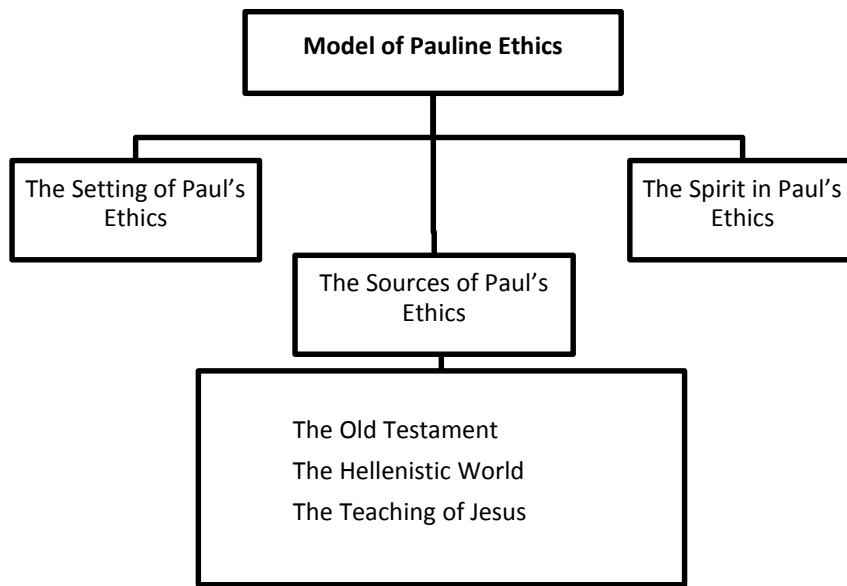


Figure 7: Summary of topics discussed in Chapter 7



## 8. *IMAGO DEI* IN THE CORINTHIAN CORRESPONDENCE

“ἐν οἷς ὁ θεὸς τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου ἐτύφλωσεν τὰ νοήματα τῶν ἀπίστων εἰς τὸ μὴ αὐγᾶσαι τὸν φωτισμὸν τοῦ εὐαγγελίου τῆς δόξης τοῦ Χριστοῦ, ὃς ἐστὶν εἰκὼν τοῦ θεοῦ.”<sup>173</sup>

To be able to understand this text (2 Cor.4:4), which is quoted above, we have to firstly survey Paul’s relationship with the Corinthian church; as Loubser (2006: 219) suggests that all of the Pauline letters are engaged literature that conforms to first century rhetorical culture; moreover, as one reads through Paul’s letters, there is little abstract argumentation and the communication is mostly direct and concrete. So Paul’s letters to Corinth were intended to inform, influence, and persuade the recipients ethically. Loubser (2006: 219) further on comments that all aspects of Paul’s discourses – paraenesis, ecclesiology, soteriology, Christology, eschatology – are integrated and focused toward an ethical end. Belief is intended to lead to behavior. So this reason is what partly underpins Paul’s correspondence with the Corinthians.

The letters of Paul’s Corinthian correspondence are significant in one’s study of ethics because, as Green (1982: 9-10) remarks, there are many advantages in studying a substantial and homogeneous collection of writings such as the Corinthian correspondence. Paul spends about 18 months in Corinth during his second missionary trip (Acts 15:36 – 21:16 – Athens-Corinth-Ephesus).<sup>174</sup> Corinth was an influential city, destroyed by the Romans in 146 B.C., but was rebuilt by Julius Caesar in 46 B.C. During Paul’s missionary time it was a city that enjoyed a monopoly of trade and rapidly grew wealth; but the problem was that this rapid wealth promoted a false culture, as it happens with most affluent communities or individuals. The problem was not only a false culture but it was also false teachers, as the matter of ‘false’ apostles (who used letters of recommendation, had leanings towards Judaism, and which stood accused of hawking with the word and adulterating it) had not been resolved (Loubser 2006: 220).

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<sup>173</sup> The text quoted is 2 Corinthians 4:4, which has reference to the word *εἰκὼν*, and the exegesis of this verse will be done in the context of this passage. This verse is derived from: Aland, K., Black, M., Martini, C. M., Metzger, B. M., Robinson, M., & Wikgren, A. (1993; 2006). *The Greek New Testament, Fourth Revised Edition (with Morphology)* (2 Co 4:4). Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft.

<sup>174</sup> Stalker (1983) dedicates a whole chapter on Paul’s Missionary travels; see chapter 6 (Pages 66-88).

The ebb and flow of travel and commerce brought to the city of Corinth a floating population; hence, wealth and dire poverty, beauty and wretchedness, charm and squalor existed side by side at Corinth.<sup>175</sup> The relation of Paul and the Corinthian church is referred to as the Corinthian correspondence. Paul actually wrote four letters to the Corinthian church, the most troubled and demanding of his congregations.<sup>176</sup>

The church at Corinth was a vexing problem to Paul because of its instability; its religious and moral antecedents were the exact opposite of Christian principle. The 1<sup>st</sup> letter is the lost letter; the 2<sup>nd</sup> letter is 1 Cor.; the 3<sup>rd</sup> letter is the sorrowful letter; and the 4<sup>th</sup> letter is 2 Cor. Historians tell us that it was not long after this that Paul wrote the third letter – which was also lost – known as the sorrowful letter where he probably was despairing over their attitude towards the Gospel and him as an apostle. However, after the church received this letter there was a change of attitude in many believers in Corinth, so Paul writes 2 Corinthians.<sup>177</sup> This is the epistle where Paul's character shines through; the letters to the church in Corinth are invaluable because of the light they throw on the personality of Paul.<sup>178</sup> In 2 Corinthians Paul is responding to the good news he has heard about the improved attitude of the Corinthians towards him. However, as he penned this epistle, he was under furious attack in Corinth.

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<sup>175</sup> Corinth was an international metropolis, as Reicke (1968:232-236) elaborates that it was famous for commerce, industry, luxury, and immorality. See his work: *The New Testament Era*, where he writes on the world of the Bible from 500 B.C. to A.D. 100.

<sup>176</sup> Utley (2002: 3) outlines a tentative proposal of Paul's Contacts with the Corinthian Church in this fashion: A. How many letters did Paul write to Corinth? (1) Just two, I and II Corinthians; (2) Three, with one letter being lost; (3) Four, with two letters being lost; (4) Some modern scholars find parts of the two lost letters in II Corinthians: (a.) previous letter (1 Cor. 5:9) in 2 Cor. 6:14–13:1); (b.) severe letter (2 Cor. 2:3–4, 9; 7:8–12) in 2 Cor. 10–13); (5) Five, with 2 Cor. 10–13 being the fifth letter, sent after Titus' report relating the further bad news

B. Theory #3 seems to fit best: (1) Previous letter, lost (1 Cor. 5:9); (2) I Corinthians; (3) Severe letter, lost (possibly part of which is recorded in 2 Cor. 2:1–11; 7:8–12); (4) II Corinthians.

<sup>177</sup> For more background of Paul's Correspondence with the Corinthian church see Tenney (1985: 296-305), where he also makes notes on Paul's "Lost Letter" to the Church at Corinth.

<sup>178</sup> For a detailed description of Corinth, with an analysis of how the letters Paul wrote to the church in Corinth gives us a window into the personality of Paul, see Bornkamm (1982: 68-77), who provides a background of Corinth which helps us to understand the many religious, social, and moral problems treated at length in the Corinthian letters and also what these say about the extremely proletarian character of the church.

False apostles had infiltrated the church there, assaulting Paul so as create an environment for purveying legalistic heresy; to gain a hearing for their demonic lies they thought of destroying Paul's apostolic and spiritual credibility in the eyes of the Corinthians.<sup>179</sup> Moreover, some disregarded his leadership – they did not acknowledge his authority; perhaps they preferred to be instructed by Peter or Apollos, who had visited the church a few times after Paul had planted the church. Not Paul, probably because he was not part of the first apostles who lived with Jesus. Rather Peter, a Palestinian Jew who had been a leading disciple among the original followers of Jesus; so Jewish members would have been attracted to Peter. Others, like the educated Greek members, preferred the ministry of Apollos, who was a gifted orator; they would have been fascinated by his intellectualism and philosophical discourses (see 1 Cor. 3).

However, Paul was seen as a manual worker, and would have appeared unimpressive in an age in which rhetoric and oratory were highly valued. His confidence seems to have been drawn from his conversion experience and the encounter with the Gospel of Jesus Christ, which was foretold in the Old Covenant, which he was familiar with, even with its transformation in light of Christ Jesus. Hence, he continually makes reference to that covenant as it has a bearing in the New Covenant. Thus, in dealing with moral matters of the church and the significance of the gospel of Jesus in the context of character formation, and in making a defense for his apostleship, he draws on Old Testament images such as the one of the *imago Dei*.

Much of Paul's Christology finds its point of departure in Christ's death and resurrection and to whatever degree he draws the lines from thence, on the other hand to the incarnation and on the other to the future of the Lord, all this does not alter the fact that the whole of his preaching of the historical and future revelation of Christ is supported by the confession of Christ as the Son of God, in the supra- and prehistorical sense of the word. It can even rightly be said that the sending of the Son by the Father in the fullness of time presupposes his pre-existence with God (Ridderbos 1997: 68).

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<sup>179</sup> Sampley (2000: 12-19) discusses at length Paul's opponents at Corinth, through explaining the two stages of opposition, certain indices of opponents, plausible indices of opponents, and unclear indices of opponents. Thus, Sampley, in making comments to his commentary on 2 Corinthians noted that "Pauline opposition among the Corinthians may no longer be ignored, and the commentary will be assiduous in detailing the sources of Corinthian discontent signalled in the text of 2 Corinthians. At issue, between Paul and his opponents (intruders and allied Corinthians alike), is Paul's status and authority with the Corinthians" (2000:19).

## 8.1 The Concept of the Image

There are a few passages in 1 Corinthians where the apostle makes fairly direct use of the Old Testament in his ethical teaching. The Genesis text about man and woman becoming “one flesh”, in Genesis 2:24 which reads: “ἕνεκεν τούτου καταλείπει ἄνθρωπος τὸν πατέρα αὐτοῦ καὶ τὴν μητέρα αὐτοῦ καὶ προσκολληθήσεται πρὸς τὴν γυναῖκα αὐτοῦ, καὶ ἔσονται οἱ δύο εἰς σάρκα μίαν” (Anon, 1979:n.n.), is quoted exactly in 1 Corinthians 6:16, “[ἡ] οὐκ οἶδατε ὅτι ὁ κολλώμενος τῇ πόρνη ἔν σῶμά ἐστιν; Ἔσονται γάρ, φησὶν, οἱ δύο εἰς σάρκα μίαν” (Aland, et al., 2006: n.n.) in order to refute the notion evidently held by the Corinthian “spiritists” that what one does with his body has no bearing on his relationship to Christ (Furnish 2009a: 32).<sup>180</sup>

Reference to the concept of *image* within the Corinthian correspondence appears in four verses. Firstly, the notion is used in 1 Corinthians 11:7 in the context of Paul’s instruction about Christian Order, as he notes that “For a man indeed ought not to cover *his* head, forasmuch as he is the *image* and glory of God: but the woman is the glory of the man.” The second time the apostle uses this notion is in 1 Corinthians 15:49 in the midst of his discussion about the resurrection, as he further on notes that, “And as we have borne the *image* of the earthy, we shall also bear the *image* of the heavenly.”<sup>181</sup> It is significant to notice that in both the verses above there is an inference to human beings’ calling to bear the image of their creator, which, according to the next chapter’s discussion, it is the image that is embodied fully by Christ in all its glory; thus, in the context of 1 Corinthians 11:1 Paul makes an invitation to the Corinthian believers that they must be imitators of Paul as he is also an imitator of Christ. The third place where Paul makes a reference to the notion of image within the Corinthian correspondence is the passage we have made a few comments on in the previous chapter, which is 2 Corinthians 3:18 where Paul writes that, “But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same *image* from glory to glory, *even* as by the Spirit of the Lord.”

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<sup>180</sup> The Old Testament quotations are quoted from the Septuagint so that the reader may easily compare with the Greek New Testament texts.

<sup>181</sup> Emphasis to the notion of *image* – as written in italics – in the passages quoted in this section of the paper is mine.

The fourth place Paul uses this term is 2 Corinthians 4:4, which reads: “The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel that displays the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.” The term image is the translation of the Greek word *εἰκών*.<sup>182</sup> The term *εἰκών* had different connotations in the Old Testament. For instance, it was used in reference to the prohibition of images, as in Exodus 20 verse 4 tells us the third commandment, in the context of the Ten Commandments, where God was telling the children of Israel: *לֹא תַעֲשֶׂה לָךְ פֶּסֶל וְכָל־תְּמוּנָה אֲשֶׁר בַּשָּׁמַיִם וְאֲשֶׁר בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרָיִם וְאֲשֶׁר בַּמַּיִם וְאֲשֶׁר בְּכָל־אֲרָצוֹת מִצְרָיִם וְאֲשֶׁר בְּהָרִים וְאֲשֶׁר בְּעֵמֶק וְאֲשֶׁר בְּכָל־אֲרָצוֹת מִצְרָיִם*<sup>183</sup> The Septuagint version reads: “*οὐ ποιήσεις σεαυτῷ εἰδωλον οὐδὲ παντὸς ὁμοίωμα, ὅσα ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ ἄνω καὶ ὅσα ἐν τῇ γῆ κάτω καὶ ὅσα ἐν τοῖς ὕδασιν ὑποκάτω τῆς γῆς.*” (Anon, 1979: n.n.).<sup>184</sup>

However, the word image as used in the Old Testament also represents an idol which has dyslogistic undercurrents, as used in Exodus 20 verse 4. Thus, Clines (1996: 498-500) remarked that the term denotes a material representation, usually of a deity. Unlike the term ‘idol’, which has a pejorative overtone, ‘image’ is objectively descriptive. Throughout the ancient Near East numerous images of various deities were to be found in temples and other holy places, such as open-air shrines; many private houses also contained a niche where the image of the protective deity of the household stood. Images were commonly anthropomorphic (in human form), though theriomorphic images (in animal form) were also widely used, especially in Egypt.<sup>185</sup>

Moreover, the form of the image, especially of the theriomorphic examples, frequently represented some prominent characteristic of the particular deity; thus an image of a bull (e.g. of El in Cannann) portrayed the god’s power and fertility.

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<sup>182</sup> I have preferred to use both the Greek word *εἰκών* and the transliterated word: *eikōn* to explain the concept and context of the *imago Dei* within the Corinthian correspondence. As references to the use of this concept will be from both the Old and New Testaments, this chapter will focus its exegesis on its use mostly from 2 Corinthians 4:4.

<sup>183</sup> Anon, 2006. *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia: with Werkgroep Informatica, Vrije Universiteit Morphology; Bible. O.T. Hebrew. Werkgroep Informatica, Vrije Universiteit.*, Logos Bible Software.

<sup>184</sup> The Hebrew word used here for graven image is *פֶּסֶל* (*pesel*), which is a reference an idol. *פֶּסֶל* also refers to something that is cut into shape; hew out stone tablets; building-stones. An idol, image — idol, as likeness of man or animal; of metal; of wood (see Whitaker 1996).

<sup>185</sup> Theriomorphic is when a being or a deity has an animal form; for instance, one could say that “the gods depicted in theriomorphic form”.

The image was not primarily intended as a visual representation of the deity, but as a dwelling-place of the spirit of the deity enabling the god to be physically present in many different places simultaneously. A worshipper praying before an image would not necessarily accept that his prayers were being offered to the figure of wood or metal itself, but would probably have regarded the image as a 'projection' or embodiment of the deity. Of course, those in Israel who denied any reality to the deity represented by the image maintained that the worshippers of foreign deities were paying homage to mere wood and stone; hence, this would be an expression of idolatry towards Yahweh.

Thus, "The conviction that Yahweh is not to be depicted in the form of an image is intrinsic to true Yahweh worship" (Kittel 1964: 381). This may be because God created the heaven, the earth, and everything that is above or beneath it; hence, those things cannot be compared to him.

Kittel (1964: 383) summarizes the three practical implications of this ancient prohibition (Exo.20:4; Lev.26:1; Deut.4:16; 5:8; 27:15) which are: firstly, the avoidance and so far as possible the removal of cultic images of alien gods; secondly, the lack of images in the native cultus; and thirdly, the avoidance of representations of men and, partially at least, of other living creatures.<sup>186</sup> The Old Testament also gives expressions of the idea of the deity taking or appearing in a visible form to man; however, the Old Testament only express a part of this idea, for it mostly revealed an understanding that it is not possible, or rather God wouldn't reveal himself in a form that is open to human perception. So part of this expression could also be through *theophanies*.<sup>187</sup>

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<sup>186</sup> For a lengthy explanation of these three practical implications of this ancient prohibition of the use of graven images please see Kittel (1964: 383-388).

<sup>187</sup> Kittel (1967: 749) suggests that in the Old Testament there are many references to God as being which, like man, has a face, eyes, ears, nose, mouth, lips, tongue, arms, fingers, back, clothes, shoes, staff etc.; but this is so obviously figurative that the LXX corrections were not necessary to maintain the purity of the concept of God. In none of the many OT *theophanies* or *angelophanies* is there a manifestation in full human form of the supraterritorial beings, and nowhere is there a depiction of the divine form which is seen. In the OT the theomorphic understanding of man is more important than the anthropomorphic view of God.

David Clines (1996: 500) also provides three ways the concept of image was used in the Old Testament:

(a). Images of foreign gods

Though the making and worshipping of images is forbidden by Pentateuchal law (Ex. 20:4–5) and condemned by the prophets (e.g. Je. 10:3–5; Ho. 11:2), their use in Israel throughout pre-exilic times was common (Jdg. 6:25; 1 Ki. 11:5–8; 16:31–33), even at times within the Temple itself (2 Ki. 21:3–5, 7).

(b). Images of Yahweh.

Standing stones (*maššēbôt*) erected by the Patriarchs (e.g. Gn. 28:18, 22; 35:14) were perhaps originally regarded as images (similarly the sacred trees; cf. Gn. 21:33), but were later forbidden (Asherah, Dt. 16:21) or re-interpreted as merely commemorative objects (cf. Gn. 31:45–50; Jos. 4:4–9). Later, images of Yahweh were denounced by pure Yahwists: the golden calf at Sinai (Ex. 32:1–8), the image made by Gideon (Jdg. 8:26–27), the golden calves at Dan and Bethel (1 Ki. 12:28–30), the calf of Samaria (Ho. 8:6).

(c). Man as the image of God.

In a few texts in Genesis (1:26–27; 5:2; 9:6) man is said to have been created ‘in’ or ‘as’ the image of God, ‘according to his likeness’. Though many interpreters have thought to locate the ‘image’ of God in man’s reason, creativity, speech, or spiritual nature, it is more likely that it is the whole of man, rather than some part or aspect of him, that is the image of God. The whole man, body and soul, is the image of God; man is the corporeal image of the incorporeal God. As in the ancient Near East, man as the image of God represents him through his participation in the divine breath or spirit (cf. Gn. 2:7; perhaps also the spirit of God is included in the ‘us’ of 1:26; cf. the reference to the spirit of God in 1:2). Man’s role as ruler of the earth is established by his creation as God’s image (1:27). Elsewhere in the ancient Near East it is usually the king who is said to be the image of God, but in Genesis 1 it is mankind as a whole that is God’s vizier and representative. Significantly, man is still spoken of as the image of God after the Fall: the force of Genesis 9:6 depends on the belief that man represents God, so that an injury done to a man is an injury done to God himself (cf. also Jas. 3:9).



Even in the New Testament the Jews seem to have found it offensive to worship or show allegiance to any graven image representing any authoritative figure; however, hypocritically, some accepted and possibly wanted to own a denarius but they used it to test Jesus (cf. Mark 12:15; Luke 20:24). So even in the New Testament there are different connotations to the use the word *εἰκῶν* but the dominant use of the Greek term meant “to be similar” or “to be like,” or “to appear”; and in the strict sense an image of someone would be seen as an artistic representation (e.g. a painting or statue) or a natural reflection or apparition (Kittel 1964:388).

Louw and Nida (1996: 64-65) show how the word is used in the New Testament, in its denotative, associative, and connotative contexts, through noting that the term *εἰκῶν* is that which has been formed to resemble a person, god, animal, etc.—‘likeness, image’. They also give the examples of Matthew 22:20 which reads: εἰκῶνα: τίνος ἢ εἰκῶν αὐτῆ; Rom.1:23 reads: εἰκόνας φθαρτοῦ ἀνθρώπου καὶ πετεινῶν. Acts 7:43 says: τύποςβ: τοὺς τύπους οὓς ἐποίησατε προσκυνεῖν αὐτοῖς; and Acts 17:29 says: χάραγμαβ: οὐκ ὀφείλομεν νομίζειν χρυσῶ ἢ ἀργύρῳ ἢ λίθῳ, χαράγματι τέχνης καὶ ἐνθυμήσεως ἀνθρώπου, τὸ θεῖον εἶναι ὅμοιον. In certain contexts the referents of εἰκῶνα, τύποςβ, and χάραγμαβ may have special religious significance in that they may refer to idols, but the focal component for the translator is that of a likeness or resemblance.

The New Testament also has a central meaning of any reference to a living image as being “a likeness,” “an embodiment,” and “a manifestation.” The writer of Colossians1:15 draws us to this understanding by describing Christ as: ὃς ἐστὶν εἰκῶν τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ ἀοράτου; given the initial Old Testament connotation this expression of Colossians 1:15 may seemingly create a contradiction, but Kleinknecht (1964:389) helps us in differentiating between the use of *εἰκῶν* in the Old Testament sense of the prohibition of the use of the images and the New Testament use of *εἰκῶν* as representing a likeness and an embodiment of the living image. He notes that, “Image is not to be understood as a magnitude which is alien to the reality and present only in the consciousness. It has a share in the reality. Indeed, it is the reality. Thus *εἰκῶν* does not imply a weakening or a feeble copy of something. It implies the illumination of its inner core and essence.”

Grogan (2007: 111-112) suggests that the expression of “the image of God” in 2 Cor.4:4 reminds us of Genesis 1:26, 27. It is possible that Paul knew the thought of Philo, the Alexandrian Jew who was his older contemporary, who was very much influenced by the philosophy of Plato who taught that the earthly things which are all imperfect have their perfect counterparts in another world. Moreover, Philo interpreted the Old Testament very largely in Platonic terms, and taught that when God made man on earth in his own image, he also made a perfect image of himself in the heavenly realms. Hence, throughout human history, Philo held that the perfect image of God remained in heaven.

However, Grogan (2007: 111-112) adds that this kind of thinking is not biblical, as for Paul and other New Testament writers taught that there is a perfect image of God and this image is no less than the eternal Christ; as we find this expressed in Colossians 1:15, John 1:18, and Hebrews 1:3.

Perhaps, this is the understanding that most New Testament writers had in mind when thinking of man as being created in the image of God. Peter alludes to this when he writes that believers are given great promises so that through them they may participate in the divine nature (2 Pet. 1:3-4). Even so Paul, in 2 Corinthians 4:4, sees Christ as that very likeness and embodiment of the image of God. This is particularly significant here in the context of Paul’s delineation of the gospel to the Corinthian believers. We understand that one of the serious problems that Paul had to deal with in Corinth was the issue of morality; so reflection on the *imago Dei* was critical for man to know the character to which he is called to assume. This is perhaps, the glory man is called reflect in his life.

So Christ’s revelation of God is gospel, wonderfully good news, for it shows that God cares for his imperfect world, for men and women in whom his image is so sadly marred as to be at times almost unrecognizable. Ever since the fall, the world had been bereft of this perfect revelation in a human being, but in Christ that revelation has come into visibility (Grogan 2007: 112).

The use of the term *εἰκὼν* in 2 Corinthians 4:4 is used alongside glory, and both these terms were used extensively in the Old Testament. Hence, “The employment of Old Testament materials in the ethical teaching is a prominent feature in the Corinthian correspondence, addressed to a congregation in particular need of concrete moral instruction” (Furnish 2009a: 30-31). Therefore:

In the context of 2 Corinthians 4:4 Paul speaks of his gospel as an irradiation of the divine glory. He motivates this by calling Christ, whose glory is seen in the gospel, the image of God, and then speaks further of this glory as the light that God, who through the word of his power once brought light out of darkness, has made to shine in the hearts of the church (Ridderbos 1997: 70).

Paul writes the second letter to the Corinthian church: the most troubled of his congregations. However, this is the epistle where Paul's character shines through; as Guthrie (1990: 433) suggests that the letters to the church in Corinth are invaluable for the light they throw on the personality of Paul. 2 Corinthians is very different from the first letter; in 1 Corinthians Paul wrote to the Corinthians, where he had to deal with the various problems that had arisen in the church and in the second epistle to the Corinthians Paul is responding to the good news he has heard about the improved attitude of the Corinthians towards him; however, 2 Cor. is not logically organized as 1 Cor.

Although 2 Corinthians is separated by only a year from 1 Corinthians (2 Cor. 8:10; 9:2; 1 Cor. 16:1-4) and is addressed to the same community, it is a very different document. Apart from minor outbursts, the tone of 1 Corinthians is calm and measured, and the matters discussed are clearly delineated and organized. Such cool logic is absent in 2 Corinthians. A sense of injury pervades the letter, and the tension under which Paul labours is perceptible in the associative links that give rise to digressions and repetitions, and make certain transitions difficult to explain (Dunn 1991: 10).

Nevertheless, here he writes of the nature of Christian ministry, and he gives a demonstration of this by giving his autobiography as a Christian minister. He writes to them about the true character of the Christian ministry. He, particularly, deals with this aspect of the character of the Christian ministry between 2 Corinthians 3:1 – 7:16, where he discusses different elements of ministry. He considers the ministry as in the service of the new covenant (ch.3), the tremendous responsibilities of the ministry (4:1-15), the ministry must be carried out through Christ (4:16 – 6:2), the hardships and suffering in the ministry (6:3-13), the necessity of purity and righteousness in the ministry (6:14 – 7:1), and the repentance brought about by the ministry (7:2-16).

Therefore this research will restrict its discussion to 2 Corinthians 4:1-15, and this demarcation is influenced by the use of: *The Greek New Testament*, (Fourth Revised Edition, edited by Aland, et.al. 2006), which demarcates these verses under the heading: *Treasure in Earthen Vessels*. Moreover, this whole passage will be treated under two pericopes, the first one being 4:1-6 and the second one being 4:7-15, as the text (cited below) divides this whole text (4:1-15) into two paragraphs:<sup>188</sup>

1 Διὰ τοῦτο, ἔχοντες τὴν διακονίαν ταύτην καθὼς ἠλεήθημεν, οὐκ ἐγκακοῦμεν 2 ἀλλὰ ἀπειπάμεθα τὰ κρυπτὰ τῆς αἰσχύνης, μὴ περιπατοῦντες ἐν πανουργίᾳ μηδὲ δολοῦντες τὸν λόγον τοῦ θεοῦ ἀλλὰ τῇ φανερώσει τῆς ἀληθείας συνιστάνοντες ἑαυτοὺς πρὸς πᾶσαν συνείδησιν ἀνθρώπων ἐνώπιον τοῦ θεοῦ. 3 εἰ δὲ καὶ ἔστιν κεκαλυμμένον τὸ εὐαγγέλιον ἡμῶν, ἐν τοῖς ἀπολλυμένοις ἔστιν κεκαλυμμένον, 4 ἐν οἷς ὁ θεὸς τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου ἐτύφλωσεν τὰ νοήματα τῶν ἀπίστων εἰς τὸ μὴ αὐγάσαι τὸν φωτισμὸν τοῦ εὐαγγελίου τῆς δόξης τοῦ Χριστοῦ, ὅς ἐστιν εἰκὼν τοῦ θεοῦ. 5 οὐ γὰρ ἑαυτοὺς κηρύσσομεν ἀλλὰ Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν κύριον, ἑαυτοὺς δὲ δούλους ὑμῶν διὰ Ἰησοῦν. 6 ὅτι ὁ θεὸς ὁ εἰπὼν, Ἐκ σκότους φῶς λάμψει, ὃς ἔλαμψεν ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις ἡμῶν πρὸς φωτισμὸν τῆς γνώσεως τῆς δόξης τοῦ θεοῦ ἐν προσώπῳ [Ἰησοῦ] Χριστοῦ.

7 Ἔχομεν δὲ τὸν θησαυρὸν τοῦτον ἐν ὀστρακίνοις σκεύεσιν, ἵνα ἡ ὑπερβολὴ τῆς δυνάμεως ἧ τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ μὴ ἐξ ἡμῶν· 8 ἐν παντὶ θλιβόμενοι ἀλλ' οὐ στενοχωρούμενοι, ἀπορούμενοι ἀλλ' οὐκ ἐξαπορούμενοι, 9 διωκόμενοι ἀλλ' οὐκ ἐγκαταλειπόμενοι, καταβαλλόμενοι ἀλλ' οὐκ ἀπολλύμενοι, 10 πάντοτε τὴν νέκρωσιν τοῦ Ἰησοῦ ἐν τῷ σώματι περιφέροντες, ἵνα καὶ ἡ ζωὴ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ ἐν τῷ σώματι ἡμῶν φανερωθῇ. 11 αἰεὶ γὰρ ἡμεῖς οἱ ζῶντες εἰς θάνατον παραδιδόμεθα διὰ Ἰησοῦν, ἵνα καὶ ἡ ζωὴ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ φανερωθῇ ἐν τῇ θνητῇ σαρκὶ ἡμῶν. 12 ὥστε ὁ θάνατος ἐν ἡμῖν ἐνεργεῖται, ἡ δὲ ζωὴ ἐν ὑμῖν. 13 ἔχοντες δὲ τὸ αὐτὸ πνεῦμα τῆς πίστεως κατὰ τὸ γεγραμμένον, Ἐπίστευσα, διὸ ἐλάλησα, καὶ ἡμεῖς πιστεύομεν, διὸ καὶ λαλοῦμεν, 14 εἰδότες ὅτι ὁ ἐγείρας τὸν κύριον Ἰησοῦν καὶ ἡμᾶς σὺν Ἰησοῦ ἐγερεῖ καὶ παραστήσει σὺν ὑμῖν. 15 τὰ γὰρ πάντα δι' ὑμᾶς, ἵνα ἡ χάρις πλεονάσασα διὰ τῶν πλειόνων τὴν εὐχαριστίαν περισσεύσῃ εἰς τὴν δόξαν τοῦ θεοῦ. (Aland et al. 2006: n.p.).

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<sup>188</sup> Barnett (1997) and Harris (2013), as referenced in the first chapter of this thesis under the section of literature review, also discuss this text under two pericopes. These two passages are going to be discussed under the headings: The Context of the Image; The Covenant through the Image; The Content of the Image; The Conflict within the Image; The Christ displaying Image. Both the processes of exegesis and exposition of both pericopes will be employed simultaneously throughout the discussion of this text.

## 8.2 The Context of the Image

In considering the tremendous responsibilities of the ministry (4:1-15), the beginning of chapter 4 clearly shows us that Paul is attempting to conclude a subject he has been writing about in the previous chapter; that is why the beginning word of the chapter is therefore, a translation of the Greek word: *Διὰ* which is a preposition denoting the channel of an act. This word expresses the idea of an outcome on the ground or reason by which something is or is not done; because of the discussion of the previous chapter (3) this should then be the consequence. Hence, Martin (1986: 75) remarks that the link between 2:14-17 and 4:1-6 suggest that Paul is employing a literary device known as “ring-composition,” as his thoughts revert to his earlier statements and complete the circle of ideas; however, Harris (2013: 320-321) observes that the “ring-composition” Paul is employing involves three passages: 2:14-17 and 3:7-18, which have verbal and conceptual links with 4:1-6. Therefore:

4:1-6 resumes themes found in 2:14-17 and 3:7-18, so that *διὰ τοῦτο* looks back to these passages in general and to 3:18 in particular. It was because Paul (and his fellow ministers) were God’s honored agents in spreading the knowledge of God and in calling people to turn to the Lord of the glorious new covenant, and in particular because of the Spirit’s liberating and transforming work (Harris 2013: 322).

Barnett (1997: 211), in making reference to the word: *διὰ*, confirms that the initial “Therefore” with which both the opening sentence and the whole passage (2 Cor.4:1-6) begin, ties what follows with what has just been stated. Indeed, each word or affirmation of v.1 has an antecedent in the previous chapter. Oepke (1964: 67) notes that the usage of this word is usually casual and means “on account of,” or “for the sake of”. Now, Paul gets into the major theme of this passage, which is this ministry: *διακονίαν*. “This ministry” that is, the ministry of the “new covenant” (2 Cor.3:6), as Barnett (1997:212) further on explains, brings the Spirit of righteousness (3:8, 9, 17-18), and is from God. According to Louw and Nida (1996: 460), this word refers to the role or position of serving – task of ministry. This word is also used for any “discharge of service” in genuine love. Thus the house of Stephanas gave itself to the service of the saints (1 Cor. 16:15).

Beyer (1964: 87) remarks that a decisive point for understanding the concept is that early Christianity learned to regard and describe as *διακονίαν* all significant activity for the edification of the community, a distinction being made according to the mode of operation. Thus, every believer is made aware that as he serves others in the community, he is also serving Christ by doing that. Even the highest Christian office, the preaching of the gospel, is described as a ministry of the word in Acts 6:4, when the apostles declared that they will give themselves to the ministry of the word. The original meaning of the Word here is most probably referred to as the bread of life; thus, the Word of God is offered as the bread of life. Therefore, the true service of the preacher is with a view to the salvation of his brethren, by proclaiming to them the Word of reconciliation (2 Cor. 5:18).

So, this ministry that Paul speaks of here is the preaching of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Beyer (1964: 87-93) suggests that ministry is two-fold: firstly it is for those who are going to carry out this gospel, passively they “wait at the table” to be filled; secondly it is them actively “discharging the service” of proclaiming the Word of God, of which they have been entitled. This is the ministry of the new covenant. This ministry of the new covenant is different and distinct from the ministry of the old covenant.

The ministry of the old covenant is the ministry of the letter which brings death, written and engraved on stones; however, the ministry of the new covenant is the ministry of the Spirit and brings life and is more glorious than the old one (2 Cor. 3:6-7). God graciously enables us to be ministers of this new covenant; thus, “the phrase we have this ministry emphasizes Paul’s humble acknowledgement that God had graciously granted him the privilege of being a new covenant minister [5:18; Acts 20:24; 26:16; Rom. 15:15-16; 1 Cor. 4:1-3; Eph. 3:7-8; Col. 1:23,25; 1 Tim. 1:12; 2:7; 2 Tim. 1:11]” (MacArthur 2003a: 125).

We are granted the ministry of the Spirit because we have received mercy. The word used here is *ἐλέεω*, which means to show kindness or concern for someone in serious need – to show mercy, to be merciful toward, to have mercy on (Louw & Nida 1996: 750). *ἐλέεω* is the emotion roused by contact with an affliction which comes undeservedly on someone else. This emotion includes the elements of both awe and mercy.

The Greeks considered the deity to be the subject of *ἐλεέω*; thus, God's *ἐλεέω* is displayed in regeneration. Within this community, it was typical that the emotion of *ἐλεέω* played a great part in the administration of justice; the accused were to arouse the *ἐλεέω* of the judge so that they may get justice.

In the Old Testament (LXX), the word is used differently (Exo.34:1; Judges 8:1). Here it denotes an attitude of man or God which arises out of a mutual relationship; it is the attitude which the one expects of the other in this relationship, and to which he is pledged in relation to him. Thus the relationship of mutual *ἔλεος* arises between relatives and friends, hosts and guests, masters and subjects, or others in covenant relation; it is not primarily a disposition but a helpful act corresponding to a relationship of trust, and faithfulness as the appropriate attitude.

Thus, the implied demand of this relationship is a legal one. On the one hand *ἔλεος*, mercy, is demanded from a superior, and on the other hand, faithfulness is demanded from him who has been showed mercy. Therefore, on God's side *ἔλεος* comes to denote grace, which rests on His faithfulness, by which He has freely bound Himself to the people, so that the righteous can appeal to God's mercy assuming that they for their part have kept their obligation. Those who have made and kept the covenant are the faithful, and they are called the righteous, the upright, and those who fear God.

In religious usage God's *ἔλεος* always means His faithful and merciful help, and this one-sided understanding is expressed in the use of *ἔλεος*. We must always remember, however, that it is the *ἔλεος* which God has promised, so that, although one cannot claim it, one may certainly expect it. In other words, the thought of *ἔλεος* and the thought of the covenant belong together. Yet the degree that man is unfaithful, the *ἔλεος* for which he hopes takes on the character of pardoning grace. God keeps to the covenant and promises in spite of man's unfaithfulness, and from His *ἔλεος* there is finally expected definitive redemption from every need (Bultmann 1964: 480).

So, it must be emphasized that *ἔλεος* primarily denotes the act or demonstration of assisting faithfulness; thus, even in the New Testament *ἔλεος* is often used for the divinely required attitude of man to man, which is the original Old Testament sense of the kindness which we owe one another in mutual relationships.



The denotation of the Old Testament (LXX) usage of the word ἔλεος in the New Testament is found in Luke 10:37 where it describes the act of the Samaritan; it denotes the showing of love and the act of mercy. ἔλεος has the same sense in Matthew 18:33, where Jesus rebukes the man whom he had shown mercy and yet failed to show the same mercy to his servant. However, the thought revealed here is that God's mercy precedes that of man. God's ἔλεος is often thought of in the original Old Testament sense of faithfulness, the gracious faithfulness of God (Grundmann 1965: 470). Therefore, the spirit enables us to fulfill this ministry, as we have received mercy; thus we do not lose heart, or we do not faint.

The Greek word used here is ἐγκακέω, which means to lose one's motivation to accomplish some valid goal – 'to become discouraged, to lose heart, to give up' (Louw & Nida 1996:318). It is not positive, in the sense that it is an incapacity or weakness, that has more than purely moral significance. It also means morally bad, wicked. Grundmann (1965: 470) adds that:

The question of lack or incapacity, which in the most varied forms affects all spheres of life in terms of *kakos*, has always been particularly significant in relation to life and religion. It provokes a question of supreme significance, namely, that of the origin and purpose of evil, of the meaning of the world, of the plan and purpose of God. This is the problem of theodicy, and it involves the moral question of the overcoming of evil.

In the Greek world the word *kakos* had a positive and a negative denotation. They believed in a deity whose instruction falls into two distinct parts; the negative: the warning of the disastrous consequences of unrighteousness, and the positive: the praise of the blessing of faithfulness. However, when we consider the usage and understanding of this word in the Old Testament (LXX) there is a shift in understanding from the Greek and Hellenistic usage; it is only in part that the term *kakos* sheds light on the ideas which developed in this field. *Kakos* is one of the LXX words which corresponds to a specific Hebrew stem; however, it misses the particular nuances of the original, it brings out even more strongly the one-sided and impressiveness of the moral and religious judgment which Judaism pronounces on evil and wickedness. Now we consider the usage of the word in the New Testament.

The term *kakos* is of no great significance in the NT. The question of theodicy, which agitates Greek and Hellenistic thinking in the face of *kaka*, loses its point when confronted by the good news proclaimed by Christ and attested by the apostles – the good news of the approaching and victorious dominion of God which is already present in Christ (Grundmann 1965: 479).

Therefore, I assume that Paul uses this term here: 2 Corinthians 4:1, in combination with its preposition  $\epsilon\nu$ , as the word was initially used, where it denoted weakness and incapacity; so Paul explains that because of this ministry, the ministry of the Spirit, we do not experience incapacitation, neither do we become morally bad – the Spirit enables us to live righteously and faithfully. That is why in the next verse he writes that, on account of the ministry we have received, we have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God (v.2). Stegmann (2009: 98-99) comments that in this passage Paul insists that he is not discouraged, because the God of all encouragement (2 Cor.1:3) has bestowed on him this ministry, that is, the ministry of the new covenant. Martin (1986: 76) adds that this ministry is that of the new covenant outlined in chap. 3, notably at 3:6, 8 where ministry of the Spirit looks on to 3:18. So it is just possible that there is latent contact between 3:18 and 4:1; but it is latent, and the connecting thought is developed in the following verses.

Therefore, Martin (1986: 76) further on noted that the upshot of Paul's confidence (stated in 3:4, 12) in his ministry as given him by God is that "we are not discouraged," and this is a verb that can have several shades of meaning extending from "we do not get tired," or "we do not neglect our tasks," or "we do not despair," or "we do not act in a cowardly way," which is being ashamed of the gospel, as according to Romans 1:16. Thus, we do not faint, or loose heart, because the ministry we received, through mercy – in the power of the Spirit – empowers us to both stand in a position to receive mercy from God and secondly to serve others through this ministry faithfully; and the more one remains faithful the more grace/mercy he/she will experience in the ministry (2 Peter 3:18).

This mutual relationship is enhanced and both parties benefit from the union; the superior shows mercy and promises to grant more of it despite the other party's response, and the other party responds to the mercy shown by pledging faithfulness to the covenant and strives to experience more of it. Now, Paul has just declared his refutations of the old covenant, as believed by the Jews in the church at Corinth, he refuses the basic premise of the Judaizers (2 Cor. 3:1-6); and the conflict between him and his opponents comes into clear focus.

Hence in the first part of v.2 he defended himself against his opponents in noting that, “ἀλλὰ ἀπειπάμεθα τὰ κρυπτὰ τῆς αἰσχύνης, μὴ περιπατοῦντες ἐν πανουργίᾳ μηδὲ δολοῦντες τὸν λόγον τοῦ θεοῦ”. Harris (2013: 324) comments that Paul is either defending himself against the malicious charges of some Corinthian opponents (cf. 7:2; 12:16) or attacking those whose ways of acting were secretive and shameful – or perhaps he is on the defense and attack simultaneously. According to Hughes (2006: 81), the deception referred to here is Machiavellian cunning in which “the end justifies the means” regardless of the means employed.<sup>189</sup>

Thus, such cunning will stop at nothing in order to fulfill their lusts, as Paul’s opponents were attempting to cover up their true motives with a veneer of apparent piety and counterfeit spiritual power (Hafemann 2000: 175-176). But not so with Paul, and his fellow workers, as on the contrary, by setting forth the truth plainly, they do not distort the word of God and they commend themselves to everyone’s conscience in the sight of God through. Therefore, Barnett (1997: 214) explains the contrasts between these two groups of ministers by noting that because of echoes of 2:17, it is possible that this verse (2 Cor.4:2) is obliquely polemical as well as more directly apologetic. Both texts (2:17 & 4:2) refer to an inappropriate ministry of the word of God (“peddling the word of God”; “corrupting the word of God”), and they speak of ministry in the sight of God. It would appear that Paul is here contrasting his ministry with that of the “peddlers” so that his words are also an indirect criticism of them.

Hence, Paul commended himself, not by self-vindication, but simply by the open declaration of the truth – which was the gospel and its implications (Harris 1976: 340). This he does as he endeavours to explain the glory of the new covenant. In this, he also shares some of his concerns, I suppose, of the dichotomy that was in the church between the people of the law – these were the advocates of the old covenant; and the other was the people of the Spirit – these advocated the ministry of the new covenant. Perhaps, those who belonged to the ministry of the old covenant were those who were perishing, as “even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing” (v.3).

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<sup>189</sup> In 2 Cor. 11:3 Paul makes another reference to the word “cunning” or “deception” but in this regard he describes Satan’s work saying that “Eve was deceived by the serpent’s cunning.”

### 8.3 The Covenant through the Image

Dunn (1991: 34) suggests that Paul's basic concern, in the passage made reference to above (2 Cor.3:7 – 4:6), is to attract the Spirit-people to his side, and to achieve this he developed a subtle two-pronged attack. On one hand, his formulation of the gospel is calculated both to harmonize with, and delicately but firmly to refashion the Philonic perspective which the Spirit-people had received from Apollos. Moreover, considering that the Corinthian church was a multi-ethnic and multi-cultural community on the other hand, he presents the message of the Judaizers in such a way as to make it as unpalatable as possible to those who prided themselves as being in the forefront of religious thought. Nevertheless, as in 3:14-16<sup>190</sup> the veil remains, and only in Christ is it taken away, so even with unbelievers in 4:3-4 the veil remains and can only be taken away by Christ through his gospel. So in v.3 Paul qualifies v.2 in conceding that not all in Corinth discern a revelation in Paul's ministry, as some find his message obscure; as a result his message of the gospel is veiled to those who are perishing (Barnett 1997: 215).

Thus, Paul writes that, “έν οἷς ὁ θεὸς τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου ἐτύφλωσεν τὰ νοήματα τῶν ἀπίστων”, however this veil or blindness can be removed by that very “light of the gospel that displays the glory of Christ” (v.4); so, in v.3-4 Paul continues his (now very long) sentence by explaining how “the perishing” come to be “veiled.” It is because the “god of this age,” Satan, has “blinded . . . unbelievers” to prevent them from “seeing the light.” Three genitives qualify that “light”; it is “the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ.” “Christ” is declared to be “the image of God” (Barnett 1997: 218). So Paul makes it clear that the reason for the “veiledness” of the gospel in the case of those who are perishing (v.3) is not the gospel itself – as the gospel, according to v.4b, brings enlightenment – but it is the activity of Satan which blinds the minds of unbelievers to the truth of the gospel (Harris 2013:326). Thus, this blindness results εἰς τὸ μὴ αὐγάσαι τὸν φωτισμὸν τοῦ εὐαγγελίου τῆς δόξης τοῦ Χριστοῦ, ὃς ἐστὶν εἰκὼν τοῦ θεοῦ (v.4b).

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<sup>190</sup> “But their minds were made dull, for to this day the same veil remains when the old covenant is read. It has not been removed, because only in Christ is it taken away. 15 Even to this day when Moses is read, a veil covers their hearts. 16 But whenever anyone turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away.”

It is interesting to notice that here the unbelievers are blinded “so that they cannot see the light of the gospel that displays the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.” The implication to see in this regard involves also hearing the gospel, as Barnett (1997: 220) notes that:

Such "seeing" of "the light... of the glory" is, of course, metaphorical for hearing. The gospel of Christ comes first not as an optical but as an aural reality (see, e.g., Rom 10:17; Gal 3:2, 5; cf. 3:1). Nonetheless, his words are not merely figurative. The intensity of Paul's language suggests that he is appealing to shared spiritual experience, his own and his readers'. When the gospel is heard and the hearer turns to the Lord, the veil is removed so that he now "sees" the glory of the Lord (see on 3:16, 18). Light does shine in darkness (cf. v. 6).

So when considering this second part of v.4 in comparison with its first part (v.4a), Barnett (1997: 219) suggests that the two constituent parts this verse, when taken together, are a paradox. Whereas in the first the "god of this age" blinds unbelievers so that they cannot see, the second states that "light" is to be seen, that is, "the light of the gospel," which, however, unbelievers do not see. This light comes from the "glory" radiated by Christ, who is "the image of God." It will be remembered that those who turn to the Lord (3:16) see the "glory of the Lord" and are transformed into "the same image" (see on 3:18). The gospel, therefore, is the basis of the new covenant which enables all those who receive the new covenant to be continually transformed into that very image of God – which is perfectly displayed in Christ.

Paul's emphasis is on the new covenant, so he doesn't only explain the glory of the new covenant, but he also shows us the mode at which is presented and its responsibility; he shows this by asserting that it is God, through His mercy, who chose him and empowered him for the ministry. Barnett (1997: 221) continues to note that in this gnomic saying Paul gives the means, content, and manner of new covenant ministry ("this ministry" —4:1). Paul expresses the means of his ministry as "we preach," one of his two preferred words for his declaration of the gospel. As he stated in v.1 that *“τοῦτο, ἔχοντες τὴν διακονίαν ταύτην καθὼς ἠλεήθημεν.”* Thus, “to those who knew something of his career his use of the word `mercy` would have been particularly evocative. He had been a persecutor of the church and it had taken a specific divine action in his regard to transform him into an apostle” (1 Cor. 15:8-10) (Dunn 1991:40).

In the context of what he says between 3:7-18, where he compares the passing glory of Moses with the surpassing glory of the ministry of the Spirit, there is a sense here that Paul is expressing the necessity of the old covenant, so that people may see the need of the new covenant. It was the design and effect of the law to kill. This is true, so far as the work of salvation is concerned, of the law in all its forms, whether the moral law as revealed in the Scriptures, or as written in the heart, or as the Mosaic Law. In all these forms it was designed to bring men to the knowledge of sin and helplessness; to produce a sense of guilt and misery, and a longing for redemption, and thus be a school-master to bring men to Christ (Hodge 1963:59). Now, those whom have made a covenant with Christ, and are faithful in it, are entrusted with the ministry of the Spirit; on this account, or because of this reason they are not incapacitated to exercise this ministry. The one who has entrusted them with this ministry has also enabled them to continue and persevere in it, amidst all kinds of persecutions; thus, they do not faint nor loose heart. We have received this ministry from God.

Ironside (1990:95) writes: “I know that the gospel is from God because no man would ever have imagined such a message. I am somewhat familiar with most of the religious systems that have occupied the minds of men... All human religions teach men that there is something they can do and must do whereby they can placate God and earn their own salvation.” However, Paul tells his audience that it is only through the gospel of Jesus Christ that one can be saved, and this is the ministry we are devoted to; a ministry of the Spirit, not of the law. God by His mercy has entrusted us with this ministry.

Therefore, “The idea is, that it was by the mere mercy and favor of God, that he had been entrusted with the ministry, and the object of Paul is doubtless to prevent the “appearance” of arrogance and self-confidence by stating that it was to be traced entirely to God that he was put into the ministry” (Barnes 2007: n.p.). Paul is also saying to his critics that whatever he does, he does because of what God has done for him, not necessarily to be against anyone. We live in a world that expects people to have acquired a qualification and attained a certain educational status before they could be appointed to certain tasks or professions; however, God seems to be countering this kind of value system, and He calls those whom are not worthy of the calling.



He grants them mercy and appoints them to be in union with him so that they can partake in God's ministry; moreover, he enables them to be faithful and effective in this ministry, through enlightening their hearts with the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. Best (1973: 37) says of Paul that, "as the recipient of God's mercy, he could not be other than faithful to God's mission and be ready to carry on without losing heart". So it must be like that with us that, as God pledged by giving us mercy, we must pledge our allegiance to the covenant with Jesus Christ by our faithfulness to the ministry we have been entrusted with. As we have received mercy, we have received the ability to be faithful; thus Paul confirms this in his first letter to Timothy when he says, "And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord who has enabled me, because He counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry" (1:12). This is the power of the mercy we have received. This is where we get our confidence to serve, from Him who called and sends us, so this helps us not become weary when we are carrying out this ministry.

Hence, "The awareness of the great privilege involved caused the apostle not to lose heart, despite the many difficulties and sufferings he experienced in the carrying out of that ministry" (Kruse 1989:102). This was possible because of the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God (2 Cor.4:4). Barnett (1997: 218) comments that the Exodus narrative forms the background to this passage. In response to Moses' request God revealed his glory to him, but he was not permitted to see the face of God (Exod 32:18-23; cf. v. 6). On the Damascus Road, Paul, too, saw the glory of God. But there was a shape to it. Paul beheld "the image (*eikon*) of God," the glorified Christ. In the heavenly Christ the invisible God, who cannot be seen, has perfectly and fully revealed himself (cf. Col 1:15). The glorified Christ is the ultimate and eschatological revelation of God. There is nothing more that can or will be seen of God. Therefore, "God's revelatory 'image,' the heavenly Christ, shown to the apostle, becomes the revelation of God for those who hear and receive the gospel" (Barnett 1997: 219-220).

What Paul saw with his eyes in that unique moment he now "sets forth" by means of "the truth" of the gospel (v. 2) addressed to the ears of his hearers (cf. Gal 3:2, 5), by means of which the light of God comes into darkened hearts (v. 6). Light from the glorified Christ streams into the heart through hearing the gospel.



Harris (2013: 330-331) also comments that when Paul affirms that Christ is *εἰκὼν τοῦ θεοῦ*, he is not saying only that Christ “subsists in the form of God” – as according to Philippians 2:6 which says of Christ *ὃς ἐν μορφῇ θεοῦ ὑπάρχων* – having the nature and attributes of God, or only that he is the “glory of God”, and being the outshining of deity. Thus, Christ, as God’s *εἰκὼν*, shares and expresses God’s nature. According to Colossians 1:15, he is the precise and visible representation of the invisible God. So an *εἰκὼν* is a likeness and the visible expression of the invisible God. Therefore,

The degree of resemblance between the original and the copy must be assessed by the word’s context, but it could vary from a partial or superficial resemblance to a complete or essential likeness. Given passages such as Phil.2:6; Col.1:19; 2:9, we may safely assume that for Paul *εἰκὼν* here, as in Col.1:15, signifies that Christ is an exact representation as well as a visible expression of God. *ἐστίν* is a timeless present, indicating that Christ is eternally the perfect reflection of God or at least that in his glorified corporeality Christ remains forever God’s visible expression (Harris 2013: 331).

Through this expression we also realize that “Christ is the embodiment of God’s own character, the prototype and representation of what all those who see God’s glory will become (3:18)” (Hafemann 2000: 176). Hence, Hafemann (2000: 176), in explaining how *Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν* as the *εἰκὼν τοῦ θεοῦ* is the bedrock of the redemption of all humanity, continues to note that the entire history of redemption is encapsulated in 4:4. Adam was created in the glorious image of God, but fell from it. God consequently barred Adam and Eve from his presence, and even Israel encountered the glory of God on Mount Sinai, but fell from it. Nevertheless, the new Adam, Christ did not fall, but he is the revelation of the glory of God to his people. So Paul encountered the glory of God in Christ on the road to Damascus and was converted. As a result, he mediates the glory of God in Christ, and, therefore, his experience and ministry are part of the “second exodus” and “new creation” brought about by Christ as the “second Adam.”

According to Paul, given the nature of Christ as the *εἰκὼν τοῦ θεοῦ*, our ministry, according to v.5, is about “*Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν κύριον, ἑαυτοὺς δὲ δούλους ὑμῶν διὰ Ἰησοῦν.*” So if our preaching and serving is about Christ Jesus alone, then our goal is to grow into the same *εἰκὼν*, as “*ὅτι οὐς προέγνω, καὶ προώρισεν συμμόρφους τῆς εἰκόνας τοῦ υἱοῦ*” (Rom.8:29).

Moreover, this is possible for us because that very light of the gospel of the glory of Christ has shone in our hearts; as in v.6 Paul continues to note that “ὅτι ὁ θεὸς ὁ εἰπὼν, Ἐκ σκότους φῶς λάμπει, ὃς ἔλαμπεν ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις ἡμῶν πρὸς φωτισμὸν τῆς γνώσεως τῆς δόξης τοῦ θεοῦ ἐν προσώπῳ [Ἰησοῦ] Χριστοῦ”; “For God, who said, ‘Let light shine out of darkness,’ made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.”

According to Barnett (1997: 223) this verse is tripartite. The subject of the first part "the God . . ." — is the subject (understood) of the second. Thus "the God who said, 'Let light shine out of darkness,' " is ["the God] who has shone in our hearts." The third part gives expression to God's purpose latent in the second, namely, "to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God." Barnett (1997: 220) also suggests that the darkness made reference to here (v.6), is universal, demonic and cosmic. Yet into the darkness of these blinded minds, light — God's own glory now manifested in Christ — shines forth from the gospel Paul proclaims (cf. v.6). Here, once again, is the apostolic openness/boldness (3:12), the eschatological disclosure of the truth of the word of God (v. 2), by means of which these are enabled to see whose blindness has been overcome by God's light.

Harris (2013: 333), in his comments on v.6 notes that Paul states the reason why he preached Christ and was devoted to the Corinthians (v.5), and that was because God had dispelled his darkness by illuminating his heart and had given him a knowledge of Christ he wished to share. The spiritual principle is this: the person who has light (v. 5) is responsible to share that light (v. 4).

Although there is no direct quotation of an OT text, Paul seems to be alluding to Gen. 1:3-4 as modified by the expression *φῶς λάμπει* in Isa. 9:1,<sup>191</sup> where both texts make reference to darkness turning into light (cf. Isa.8:19-22). Hence, in 2 Cor.4:6 Paul is not only depicting the heart as by nature dark through sin but also implying that conversion is the replacement of that darkness by light, a theme frequently expressed in the NT. Thus, the use of the *καρδία* denotes the whole person, with special reference to inward relations and religious experience; so conversion is the flooding of the darkened human heart by divine light.

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<sup>191</sup> Please see Harris (2013: 334) where he compares the two texts – Gen.1:3-4 and Isa.9:1 – and showed their points of contact.

Whereas "the god of this age" blinds the mind (v. 4), the God of the ages shines in the heart. Paul's thought moves from the physical creation (*λάμπει*) to the spiritual re-creation (*ἐλάμψεν*), from nature to grace. The God of redemption is none other than the God of creation. "It is the same God who said ... who has shone. . . ." But not only is the agent the same; the result of the action is the same — the creation and diffusion of light and consequently the dispersing and dispelling of darkness. Paul, through his Damascus experience of conversion, had a personal experience where his heart, which was full of darkness was enlightened by the encounter with Christ, as Harris (2013: 336) continues to comment that:

Is Paul alluding to his own conversion experience in 4:6? In itself the aorist *ἐλάμψεν* is ambiguous, for while it could refer to the Damascus christophany, it might equally well describe "a second act of cosmic creation" or numerous conversion experiences. In each of these three cases *ἐλάμψεν* would be constative aorist. But it could also be gnomic, referring to God's perpetual illuminating. What makes an allusion to Paul's Damascus encounter with the risen Christ likely are the many similarities in thought and diction between 2 Cor. 4:6 and the three Lukan accounts of Paul's conversion in Acts. In both sets of data there are inward and outward aspects to the conversion, but while Paul emphasizes here the inward, the Acts accounts stress the outward phenomena.

In showing how v.6 also serves as an explanation of Paul's experience – and how that experience is also shared by those who see the light of the gospel – Barnett (1997: 224) adds by noting that in 4:6 there is an outward as well as an inward aspect. Outwardly, on the way to Damascus, Paul saw "the glory of God in the face of Christ"; inwardly, and as a consequence, "God has shone in our hearts" (cf. "God revealed his Son in me" — Gal 1:16). Whereas God's outward revelation of his glory to Paul was unique, his inner enlightenment of the heart also describes the illumination of all who receive the gospel message (cf. "see the light of the gospel" - v. 4). "The gospel is now 'the fundamental representative agency for the splendor of God'; God's glory is present in the proclamation."

Therefore, "In 4:6 Paul is affirming that God's act of shining in human hearts aims at his illumination of those hearts, an illumination that arises from knowing God's glory as it comes into clear focus on Christ's countenance" (Harris 2013: 337).

In reflecting on the first six verses of chapter 4, Barnett (1997: 226) asks: what application, then, do these words have for others? In summarizing his comments on 4:1-6 he notes that significant for such ministry is Paul's statement that God has "shone in" his heart (4:6). This is deliberately representational. God shines into the hearts of all who respond to the gospel; they also "see the light of the glory of God" (4:4). Relating to ministers under the continuing new covenant, missionaries and pastors – and all believers – themselves need to have "seen" that "light" from the gospel, and, on that basis, to preach the gospel that God will shine his light into the hearts of others. Acceptance of and involvement in new covenant ministry as a life calling require the same ethical qualities as those stated by the apostle in v. 2 — determined perseverance, and a renunciation of the shamefully secretive and of craftiness (especially in matters relating to money).

The minister, or anyone entrusted with the message of the gospel of Jesus Christ will not corrupt the gospel by adding to it, but rather commend himself to others before God, by an open declaration of it from a godly life. Clearly, too, Paul's words in v. 5 stand as a rebuke to any minister of the gospel, then or today, who aspires to worldly greatness or recognition. Whoever fails either (1) to preach "Jesus Christ as Lord" or (2) to be "slave for Jesus' sake" fails at the most fundamental point of ministry that has any claim to be apostolic. So here Paul warns against preaching oneself, as Martin (1986: 81) remarks that of the various temptations which beset the Christian minister, one of the chief and deadliest is the temptation to preach himself.

Further on, in summarizing the purpose of 4:1-6, Martin (1986: 81) continues to note that it would be hard to describe the Christian ministry more comprehensively in so few words" as in 4:5. These two quotations aptly and tellingly fix the purpose of the entire pericope. Admittedly Paul's writing is polemically angled throughout as he continues his running debate with his detractors at Corinth. They charged him with all manner of unworthy motives and the discrediting liabilities of physical weakness and theological perversity. In reply, Paul builds his case on several firm bases: the presence of tradition in the church, as he cites the formulary of the lordship of Christ (4:5); his own conversion-call with its overtone that the one who summoned him revealed himself as "God's presence all-divine" (4:4), the glory of God in human form (4:6).

Paul's charge to enlighten the nations as the new "servant of God" (4:5), sent on a mission to all peoples; and his own probity as a person who renounced devious ways and recourse to questionable methods to gain a popular appeal (Gal 1:10; 4:16). Thus, Paul's final argument that those who refuse his ministry are not revealing his insufficiency but their own blindness is given in 4:5. The Corinthians will not be surprised to hear that Paul does not preach himself (or any human leader) as the foundation or object of faith. Jesus, the Messiah, is alone Lord, both over the church and over the world<sup>192</sup> (Hafemann 2000: 178).

Therefore, those whom Jesus has shone in their hearts will be committed to preaching the gospel of Jesus and serving him with their whole hearts. Thus, it is these enlightened human hearts which will continue to display the image of God in their quest to being formed into Christ-likeness. God has deposited inside believers a deposit of that gospel of grace, as Paul continues to explain this in 2 Cor. 4:7-10. Paul is encouraging the believers to value the gospel more than any gift; for all that makes the difference is not the worldly wisdom, or treasures of this world, but rather the gospel of Jesus Christ – which is a priceless treasure. Therefore, the theological message of 2 Corinthians is that the power of God is brought to bear on man, not in man's power, but in his weakness.

#### **8.4 The Content of the Image**

In this section we are now entering into a new pericope: 4:7-15, which this research treats alongside 4:1-6.<sup>193</sup> Harris (2013: 338) introduces this pericope by noting that the exercise of this glorious ministry of communicating the good news takes place, paradoxically, in circumstances that are anything but glorious. He faces incessant trials (4:8-9) and has repeated confrontations with death (4:10-12).

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<sup>192</sup> For Scriptural passages that speak of Jesus as Lord over the church, see: 1 Cor.1:13; 2:5; 3:4-9; 4:1; and for the Scriptural passages that speak of Jesus as Lord over the world, see: 1 Cor.1:2, 3, 7, 23; 5:4; 6:11; 8:6; 9:1; 11:26-27; 12:3; 15:11-12, 31, 57; 16:22; 2 Cor.1:2-3, 19.

<sup>193</sup> See the Greek translation of this text above by Aland, K., Black, M., Martini, C. M., Metzger, B. M., Robinson, M., & Wikgren, A. 2006. *The Greek New Testament, Fourth Revised Edition (with Morphology)* (2 Co 4:7–15). Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft.

This, perhaps, from observing some of Paul's experiences as described in 4:1 through to 4:6 – which is discussed above – continues to explain Paul's experience of preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ amidst strong opposition from his critics. In this new passage, Barnett (1997: 229) also adds that Paul sets out to explain the paradox stated first in 2:14-16. Although his ministry imparts life (2:16), and brings the Spirit of God (3:3) and the glory of God (4:4, 6), in himself he suffers humiliation in God's triumphal procession (2:14) and the basis of his ministry is that of a slave, the crucified Christ (4:5). Those things that the Corinthians and their new teachers disdain in him, that is, his missionary sufferings, he now declares to be fundamental to ministry that faithfully represents the Crucified One. Harris (2013: 338) continues to note that in spite of these sufferings, silence is impossible, because faith in the gospel and Christian hope of resurrection necessitate fearless proclamation (4:13-14).

Moreover, this frailty of the gospel's messengers (4:7a) has two beneficial effects: the power of the gospel to transform lives and his strength to endure suffering are seen to come from God, not from himself (4:7b); God, not man, is glorified, as God's grace spreads and thanksgiving to him is increased (4:15). There are three main themes in 4:7-15: power in the midst of weakness (vv. 7-9), life in the midst of death (vv. 10-12), and faith leading to speech (vv. 13-14).

It is interesting to note that the previous passage (3:18-4:6) powerfully celebrated the glory of God/of Christ as it is mediated to human lives by the apostolic word. But now there is reintroduced the somber note of the suffering of the one who bears that word, which will run through the entire passage 4:7-5:10. Each part of this verse expresses the antithesis between the power of God and weakness of the apostle (treasure/in clay jars, on the one hand; power from God/not from us, on the other). Such antitheses will characterize the entire passage 4:7-5:10 (Barnett 1997: 229-230). Thus, the heart of 2 Cor.4:7-9 is the amazing contrast between the glorious gospel of Jesus Christ and the feeble, imperfect, homely containers in which it is carried. Paul contrasts a priceless jewel with its receptacle; he communicates this truth not simply by principle but by example (Kruse 1987: 106). Hence, this passage is not didactic, but it is biographical. It presents Paul not only as a teacher communicating information but also as a life to emulate. The Apostle's life demonstrated what it genuinely means to walk with God. Hence, he exhorts the Corinthians to, "Be imitators of me just as I also am of Christ" (1Cor. 11:1).

2 Cor.4:7 says that, *Ἐχομεν δὲ τὸν θησαυρὸν τοῦτον ἐν ὄστρακίνοις σκεύεσιν, ἵνα ἡ ὑπερβολὴ τῆς δυνάμεως ᾗ τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ μὴ ἐξ ἡμῶν.*” (Aland et al. 2006: n.p.). This perhaps may be defined as an “Oxymoron experience,”<sup>194</sup> where there seems to be all kinds of negative experiences – that of danger, distress, despair, dissolution, and delusion, whilst simultaneously one is experiencing the presence and power of God. The word used for treasure in v.7 (Gr.θησαυρός) means a place in which good and precious things are collected and laid up. In Matthew 12:35 this word is used metaphorically as describing the heart, where Jesus says that: “a good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good things.” It is used as a store house (Hauck 1964: 136). According to Louw and Nida (1996: 69-70) *θησαυρός*, is a ‘treasure box.’ As Matthew 2:11 says: *ἀνοίξαντες τοὺς θησαυροὺς αὐτῶν προσήνεγκαν αὐτῷ δῶρα.* A ‘treasure box’ may be referred to as ‘a box with valuable objects’ or ‘a box with objects costing a great deal of money.’

But in 2 Corinthian 4:7 it is descriptive of the Gospel; the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ (v.6); this gospel is deposited in the earthen vessels of the persons who proclaim it. Hence, Harris (2013: 339) comments that a *θησαυρός* was a storehouse or strong room for precious things or any receptacle for valuables; hence it referred to anything precious, “treasure.” The word is found only here and in Colossians 2:3<sup>195</sup> in the Pauline corpus. This treasure must be something explicitly mentioned in the context because of *τοῦτον*, whether it be the illumination that comes from the knowledge of God's glory (v. 6) or from the gospel (v. 4), the gospel and its glory or the gospel itself (vv. 3-4), or the ministry of the gospel (v. 1). Common to all these proposals is a reference to the gospel.

Paul, having spoken of the glorious light of the gospel in v.1 through 6, he now contrasts it with the weakness of those who bear it. However, this gospel remains powerful.

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<sup>194</sup> An oxymoron is a figure of speech in which apparently contradictory terms appear in conjunction.

<sup>195</sup> “in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge” (I suppose even here all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge is encapsulated in the gospel – thus, Christ is the gospel; hence in v.5 Paul says: “For what we preach is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord...”).



The astonishing thing is that such a divine treasure, God's own presence of grace, which is absolutely priceless, should be placed in such wretched, weak, fragile vessels; that is our bodies which are subject to decay and vulnerable to disease and injury (Kruse 1987: 106-107). One would assume that this is contradictory – or rather impossible, because one would expect that this treasure would be entrusted only to vessels of the highest value, vessels that are admired and ever always handled with utmost care and reverence.

However, this is rather a paradox in that such vessels were regarded as fragile and as expendable because they were cheap and often unattractive. So the paradox Paul is expressing is that although the container is relatively worthless, the contents are priceless. Although the gospel treasure is indescribably valuable, the gospel's ministers are of little value in comparison (Harris 2013: 340). God places this treasure in powerless human beings. So, God calls human beings and chooses to use them even though they are imperfect and fragile, like the earthen vessels. To show that the power, that is able to transform lives, is from God not from human nature; and even to show that God's power surpasses the weakness of the human body.<sup>196</sup>

So the whole person is likened to the earthen vessel. Earthen vessels were objects that were inexpensive and easily broken, and once broken they had to be discarded. Earthen vessels were cheap and of little intrinsic value. So Paul, having this in mind, sees us as earthen vessels, yet God deposits in us the treasure of `the light of the gospel` to shine in the world and make a difference (see Kruse 1987: 106).

The contrast between the treasure and the earthen vessels which contain it is intended to show that the transcendent power belongs to God and not to man. It is, apparently, part of God's plan that the power is not from man.

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<sup>196</sup> Although many commentators consider the earthen vessel as representing the human body, Harris (2013: 340) exercise much caution in such, being aware that other religions or schools of thought in his day superficially made that reference; thus, he noted that Paul is not disparaging the human body or implying that the body is merely the receptacle of the soul (as in many Hellenistic texts). For him the *σκεύος* ("object," "vessel," "jar") was no more the container in which was placed the "treasure" of *the ψυχή* than the "outer person" was a detachable outer garment clothing "the inner person" (cf. 4:16). *σκεύη* refers to whole persons, who, although insignificant and weak in themselves, become God's powerful instruments in communicating the treasure of the gospel.

“If, for instance, the treasure had been lodged in a superior vessel — the transcendent power would proceed from a human source,” (Harris 2013: 340); or had this priceless treasure been contained in a strong and permanent body it would have proved a fatal combination for proud and sinful man. Therefore, God found it necessary to place this treasure in an earthen, weak vessels, because this power that works within us is the boundless grace of God at work in the lives of believers, to strengthen and empower the weak vessels, so “*ἵνα ἡ ὑπερβολὴ τῆς δυνάμεως ᾗ τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ μὴ ἐξ ἡμῶν.*” (v.7b). For Barnett (1997: 231) This is no merely pious acknowledgment of his limitations as compared to the greatness of God. Rather—as the syntax (purpose construction shows) — it is divinely ordained that the human bearer of the divine revelation should be an earthenware vessel. The enabling — indeed, the surpassing — power for that ministry cannot, must not, arise from the bearer of the message, but only from God. But this is to reiterate Paul's earlier conviction, “Our sufficiency comes from God, who has made us sufficient as ministers of a new covenant” (3:5-6). Therefore, “The general statement made by this verse should be seen as an introduction to the whole section 4:7-5:10, which becomes universal in its application (4:13-5:10)” (Barnett 1997: 230-231).

## 8.5 The Conflict within the Image

Even though the gospel is powerful, it also brings with it persecution and different forms of afflictions; thus, Paul, from verse 8 to 9, writes of some of the harsh realities of human existence, like suffering & death, through noting that: “*ἐν παντὶ θλιβόμενοι ἀλλ’ οὐ στενοχωρούμενοι, ἀπορούμενοι ἀλλ’ οὐκ ἐξαπορούμενοι, 9 διωκόμενοι ἀλλ’ οὐκ ἐγκαταλειπόμενοι, καταβαλλόμενοι ἀλλ’ οὐκ ἀπολλύμενοι.*”. Here Paul describes the Christian life in a series of paradoxes, he gives us contrasting, vivid metaphors, expressed in four pairs; he does this to demonstrate the difficulties and hardships of God's people. In each pair he shows contrast clauses: the first clause in each member of the series implies the earthiness of the vessel, the second clause implies the surpassing greatness of the power. The series of these 4 contrasting clauses in v.8 & 9 all explain v.7 (see Martin 1986: 84-85).

Harris (2013: 341) remarks that in these verses we have a list of trials (*περιστάσεις*) Paul experienced in the course of his ministry. Similar catalogues of hardships are found in Rom. 8:35-39; 1 Cor. 4:9-13; 2 Cor. 6:4-10; 11:23-28; 12:10; Phil. 4:11-12.<sup>197</sup>

The series of four adversative contrasts in 4:8-9 all modify 4:7 by illustrating how this divine power comes to expression in Paul's life. In spite of Paul's being "hard pressed," nevertheless he is not "crushed"; he is "perplexed, but not in despair," and so on. Paul's not being done in by his circumstances, suffering, or persecution is to be attributed directly to God's ability or "power" to sustain him in the midst of his adversity. In making this point, these four contrasts confirm that the "power" manifested in the "treasure" of the gospel ministry belongs to God. Given Paul's weakness, his perseverance can be attributed only to God. Paul's suffering provides the platform for the display of God's power (Hafemann 2000: 183).

Barnett (1997: 233-234) explains the Greek clauses in these two verse by remarking that each clause follows the same pattern: a passive participle expressing an aspect of suffering is contrasted by "but not," followed by another passive participle cognate with, but more severe than, the first (e.g., "hard pressed but not crushed"). At the same time each of the two paired participles expresses a suffering more extreme than the corresponding participle in the line preceding it. Thus, the first pair, "hard pressed" and "crushed," are virtual synonyms in contemporary Greek.

The former ("hard pressed") is probably used first because of its significant and early use in 2 Corinthians; the latter ("in a narrow space," "constricted") is found in the NT only in 6:12. The rhetorical context determines that the latter has the more severe meaning. The next pair are a wordplay (*paronomasia*) impossible to reproduce in translation (*ἀπορούμενοι* and *ἐξαπορούμενοι*, the second word an intensification of the first). Literally rendered it is: "at a loss but not absolutely at a loss." In the third pair, the first participle, "persecuted," is used elsewhere by Paul for the specific assault on Christians, whether his prior hounding of believers (Gal 1:13, 23; Phil 3:6) or his own sufferings at the hands of others.

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<sup>197</sup> Harris (2013: 341) also draws insights for explaining this verse from other scholars as he states that the literary background for Paul's use of this device has been found in the Cynic-Stoic diatribe (Bultmann, 1910), Jewish apocalyptic literature (Schrage, 1974), the OT and Jewish concept of "the afflictions of the righteous" (Kleinknecht, 1984), or the Greco-Roman depiction of the Stoic sage (Fitzgerald, 1988). With regard to 4:8-9, some have derived the actual imagery from wrestling (a possibility for v. 9b), others from the manhunt (this proposal fits best with v. 9a), and yet others from military combat (which may accord with v. 9b).

The second, "forsaken," has a rich background in the OT (LXX) for Yahweh's determination not to forsake his people (e.g., Gen 28:15; Deut. 31:6, 8; Josh 5:1). This is the word from the mouth of the Crucified, quoting Ps 22:1 (Mark 15:34). Here the word implies an eschatological intent; God will not abandon his chosen ones whom he has redeemed. The final pair reflect an extremity of suffering. The first passive — "struck down" — employs a verb not used elsewhere by Paul, but in contemporary literature it means "laid low" (as by a weapon), "bullied" or "stricken." With it is contrasted "but not destroyed," which like its corresponding predecessor ("but not forsaken") has an eschatological thrust, "perishing" (cf. 2:15; 4:3). The suffering apostle will not be forsaken by God, nor "lost" from him.

It is probable that the intruding ministers at Corinth spoke of the power and triumph in the Christian life, but a life without problems. In explaining Paul's situation, Harris (2013: 343) adds that Paul never found himself in a plight from which there was no escape (cf. 1 Cor. 10:13). Hampered on all sides — yes, but without room to breathe — no. Everywhere and at all times afflicted, but never at the end of his tether. Through divine intervention, he was always able to retain his buoyancy of spirit. Acts 18:12-17 illustrates this general truth. When the Corinthian Jews made a concerted attack on Paul and brought him before Gallio's tribunal, he was not left without room to operate, for the proconsul dismissed the charge of religious sedition made against Paul, thus enabling him to continue his work in Corinth for "many days longer" (Acts 18:18 RSV) and his missionary endeavours in the eastern Mediterranean for the next decade (A.D. 52-62) "with the assurance of the benevolent neutrality of the imperial authorities."

Paul is honest, as in this passage he does not cover up his difficulties and hardships; as a matter of fact, "Paul regarded suffering as intrinsic, not extrinsic, to his ministry (cf. 1:4-6; Gal. 6:17; Col. 1:24; Acts 9:16)" (Harris 2013: 342). Paul is speaking the language of experience — the experience of his own incapacity and of God's transcending power which is able to transform every situation. Man's weaknesses, in some sense, actually serve as grounds of divine power — which attests to God's greatness. Paul uses the language of but not: afflicted in every way, but not..., perplexed, but not..., persecuted, but not..., struck down, but not...; because he is certain that the Lord will deliver him and that God will use these situations as catalysts in the process of his transformation into the image of Christ. Therefore:

When these four pairs of antitheses are read, as they might be, as illustrations of the thematic statement in v.7, it is clear that in Paul's estimation, this "hardship catalogue" demonstrates, not his virtuous character or his buoyant self-sufficiency or his steadfast courage amid adversity (as in the case, for example, of the Stoic sage), but his utter dependence as a frail human being on the superlative excellence (*ὑπερβολή*) of God's power. Also, it was not a case of divine power revealing itself as weakness or transcending and replacing human weakness, but of divine power being experienced in the midst of human weakness (Harris 2013: 345).

He remembered that God's grace is sufficient in every situation, as he remembers his afflictions; for later on in 2 Corinthians 12: 7-10 he writes that:

To keep me from becoming conceited because of these surpassingly great revelations, there was given me a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of Satan, to torment me. Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me. But he said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.' Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me. That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

In this it is evident that Paul himself saw the power of God in his weakness (12:1-10) because there he identified with him who was "crucified in weakness" (13:3). And in particular Paul saw his office as "minister of the new covenant" (3:6), which is modeled on the righteous sufferer in Israel, yet Christianised by Paul's awareness of living in the new age with its Christological center (Martin 1986: 88). Thus, there is hope, even when there is impinged suffering because of following Christ. The readers of this letter would have been encouraged to hear that even the great apostle also had difficult times; thus, they were able to identify with him. Phil. 1:29 tells us: "For it has been granted to you on behalf of Christ not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for him."

## 8.6 The Christ displaying Image

V.10. goes on to say, “πάντοτε τὴν νέκρωσιν τοῦ Ἰησοῦ ἐν τῷ σώματι περιφέροντες, ἵνα καὶ ἡ ζωὴ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ ἐν τῷ σώματι ἡμῶν φανερωθῆ.” Harris (2013: 345) suggests that Vv. 10 and 11 form a theological interpretation of the antitheses of vv. 8-9, so that the phrases *ἡ νέκρωσις τοῦ Ἰησοῦ* (v. 10a) and *εἰς θάνατον παραδιδόμεθα διὰ Ἰησοῦν* (v.11a) sum up and explain the experience of being "hard pressed," "bewildered," "persecuted," and "struck down," and *ἡ ζωὴ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ* (vv.10b, 11b) accounts for Paul's preservation from being "cornered," "totally desperate," "abandoned," and "destroyed." The paradoxes in verses 8 & 9 amounted to carrying about in the body the dying of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in his body (see Tasker 1958: 72).

Barnett (1997: 235) share the same sentiment as Tasker in remarking that to these antitheses a further antithesis is added, transmuted from the specific apostolic sufferings listed (vv. 8-9) to the absolute categories of "death" and "life," thereby tying Paul's sufferings to the death and resurrection of Christ. Whereas the previous verses (8-9) were governed by "in everything," this verse is governed by "always," creating an alliterative link between v.8 and v. 10. The unrelieved nature of Paul's sufferings — "always bearing about" — is taken up in v.11 by the emphatic "at all times."

Paul was well aware that if a man would share the life of Christ he must share the risks of Christ, that if a man wished to live with Christ he must be ready to die with Christ; he understood that without the cross there is no crown. The truth that Paul was continually carrying about in his body the dying of Jesus was a powerful rebuttal to the allegations of the false apostles. They argued that Paul suffered because God was chastening him for his secret life of sin. Paul suffered at the hands of evil men because of his identification with Jesus Christ. Those who hate the Lord persecute his people. Therefore, Paul's trials were a badge of honour (2 Cor.1:5; Gal.6:17; Phil.3:10; Col.1:24). Suffering for the cause of Christ should not surprise any Christian, since Jesus himself predicted it (Matt.10:16-24; John 15:18-21).

Every believer is to also carry about in his/her body the dying of Jesus. When Paul spoke of death in his epistles, he used two different words: The word dying here does not translate *thanatos*, Paul's usual word for death, but *nekrosis*. Harris (2013: 345) explains this by noting that: *νέκρωσις* occurs only here and in Rom. 4:19 in the Greek Bible. It may refer to the act or process of "putting to death" (thus "killing," "slaying"), the process of "dying" or of "being put to death," "death," or the state of "deadness" (as in Rom. 4:19, of the "deadness" of Sarah's womb). The first meaning is active (= *θάνατωσις*), the second and third, passive (= *τό ἀποθνήσκειν* and *θάνατος*, respectively). In favor of the second meaning is the fact that physicians used the term to describe the "withering or mortification of the body or of a sick member."

If *νέκρωσις* were merely a stylistic variant of *θάνατος* (as proponents of "death" as the meaning here tend to assume), one would have expected Paul to use his customary word for "death," *θάνατος*, in v.10, then *νέκρωσις* in v.11. Perhaps Paul uses *νέκρωσις* in v.10 to portray not a single event (the death of Jesus), but a prolonged process, the course of events leading up to Jesus' death or the daily trials and hardships that befell Jesus as an itinerant preacher, either of which could be portrayed as his "being put to death" or "being given up to death" (cf. v. 11 a) and would aptly foreshadow Paul's constant apostolic afflictions. Hafemann (2000: 184) confirms this by remarking that Paul's use in 4:10 of *nekrosis* (dying), rather than *thanatos* (death), which indicates that he is thinking of the process of dying rather than its final condition (cf. 1:9, 10; 2:16,- 3:7; 4:12,- 7:10; 11:23). Paul's focus on endurance in the midst of adversity may also explain his emphasis in this passage on Jesus, recalling his earthly life that culminated in the cross, rather than on his royal title, Christ. Therefore, *thanatos* speaks of death as a fact or an event, while *nekrosis* describes the process of dying (Kruse 1987: 107).

This describes the nature and practice of Christian living, that the self – I, me, myself – may die, so that Jesus may be reflected in one's body; as John says, "He must increase, but I must decrease." (John 3:30). Paul constantly faced death, which led him to write (in 1 Cor.15:31) "I die daily." He knew well what it was to "deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Christ" (Luke 9:23). But this dying manifested the life of Jesus in his body. As he wrote to the Galatians, "I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me..." (Gal.2:20).



Martin (1986: 87) notes that the life of the apostle offers a strange paradox, signified by his close union with the suffering Jesus (13:3, 4). His apostolic career "in the body" is the place where the "dying" (*νέκρωσις*) is seen; Paul's term is rare, found only here and in Rom 4:19. His preferred designation is "death" (*θάνατος*, 45 times elsewhere) to denote the demise of the earthly Jesus on the cross. Paul's intimate association of his apostleship with Jesus' death is a major theme of his ministerial life.

As a result, in v.11, Paul links the suffering with Christ as expressed in the theme of dying with Christ, and he makes this reality of the Christian experience explicit in Phil. 3:10, which speaks of participation in Christ's sufferings as indistinguishable from conformity to his death (*καὶ [τὴν] κοινωνίαν [τῶν] παθημάτων αὐτοῦ, συμμορφιζόμενος τῷ θανάτῳ αὐτοῦ*) (see Harris 2013: 349). To suffer for and with Christ is to die with Christ. For the Christian suffering is not a sign of divine disappointment but an opportunity to divine engagement. Just as there is a process of dying, there is also a process in which the risen power of Christ manifests itself in everyday living.

Thus, in our quest to become more like Christ, there is no escape from the process of dying, which is the dying of self. That kind of dying is inherent in all Christian existence. Equally inherent in all Christian existence is the presence of the life of Jesus within – which is the experience of the manifestation of the glory of God and this is a life which is never to be shut up within but always to be manifested to the world. Thus, taken together, the cross and the glory, these twin emphases of Paul's "theology of the cross" and "theology of glory" are not contradictory, but complementary. He is not combating a theology of glory with a theology of the cross, but showing their essential unity (Hafemann 2000: 186).

In v.10, then, Paul is making two important affirmations regarding Christian experience. First, the resurrection life of Jesus is evident at precisely the same time as there is a "carrying around" of his dying. Indeed, the very purpose of the believer's identification with Jesus in his sufferings is to provide an opportunity for the display of Jesus' risen life. Second, one and the same physical body is the place where the sufferings of Jesus are repeated and where his risen power is manifested (Harris 2013: 347).

It seems that v.10 and v.11 represent a synonymous parallelism as they both express the same idea but in different words. Barnett (1997: 236) confirms this through noting that with a concluding sentence, connected by a "for" (*gar*) to what precedes, Paul explains v.10 by basically recapitulating what is said there. Corresponding to its immediate predecessor, this sentence, too, is in two parts, connected by words expressing purpose. We who live are always being handed over to death on account of Jesus in order that the life of Jesus may be made manifest in our mortal bodies. That is why, 1 John 4:17 says that if we live in Christ – or in love – then as he is so are we in this world. Therefore:

In 4:10-11 Paul then interprets the experiences of 4:8-9 in terms of the death and resurrection of Jesus in order to indicate the Christological purpose of his suffering. The power of God revealed in Paul's suffering is, in fact, the same power revealed in the experience of Jesus. Just as Jesus was put on the cross in order to be raised from the dead, so too Paul is "carry[ing] around in [his] body the death of Jesus" (4:10), "always being given over to death for Jesus' sake" (4:11), in order that the "life of Jesus may also be revealed in [his mortal] body." (Hafemann 2000: 183).

## 8.7 The Calling to reflect that Image

Therefore, 2 Cor.4:10-11 has ethical implications for the Corinthian believers- and us as well; that we can live ethically as human beings if we choose to live in Christ and pursue Christ-likeness through continually carrying the cross and following Jesus (cf. Luke 9:23). Thus, Paul writes in v.12 *ὥστε ὁ θάνατος ἐν ἡμῖν ἐνεργεῖται, ἡ δὲ ζωὴ ἐν ὑμῖν*; Barnett (1997: 237) remarks that the initial "So then" (*ὥστε*) introduces the conclusion of his "death ... life" line of thought (vv. 10-11), but there is an unexpected twist. Paul begins by saying that "death is at work in us," meaning "always carrying about the dying of Jesus" (v. 10) and "always being handed over to death" (v. 11).

But, to our surprise, the life side of the equation is no longer "in us" as before (in vv. 10-11), but "in you [Corinthians]." Paul dies to give life to the Corinthians. Those called to be ministers, like Paul, have the privilege of laying down their lives as Christ so that those they serve may receive life from God.

Martin (1986: 89) argues that although Paul's missionary service may have seemed a failing enterprise, nevertheless, death is relentlessly active in his person, robbing him of his power; and Paul counts this disability worth it since his converts at Corinth are receiving the message of "life that leads to life" (2:16). Maybe there is a side-glance at the blessings of the new covenant (3:6) in contradistinction to the old order that spells death (3:6-11). Thus, "In 4:12 Paul draws the consequence of this purpose for the Corinthians: He is given over to death in the present so that God's resurrection power might be at work in their lives (cf. 1:3-6, 10-11)" (Hafemann 2000: 186).

Dying to self has far greater benefits, not only for the minister who takes up his/her cross to follow Jesus but also for those they are ministering to. At times this suffering may be caused by the very people one is ministering to, as we see in the example of Paul, that it was some within the faith community at Corinth who caused Paul's afflictions; nevertheless, Paul did not allow this to affect his faithfulness to his Lord's service, rather, he saw this as an opportunity to imitate Jesus, so that through that Christ will give the Corinthian believers life. When one suffers for Jesus, Christ achieves so much – in his mission to redeem the world – in those ministered to.

So then, the suffering which Paul and his co-workers are experiencing (*θάνατος ἐν ἡμῖν*) is, as a consequence, working life in the believers in Corinth (*ἐνεργεῖται ζωὴ ἐν ὑμῖν*), and this is the source of his confidence for this is the effect of the gospel of Jesus. Hence in v.13-14 he writes: 13 *ἔχοντες δὲ τὸ αὐτὸ πνεῦμα τῆς πίστεως κατὰ τὸ γεγραμμένον, Ἐπίστευσα, διὸ ἐλάλησα, καὶ ἡμεῖς πιστεύομεν, διὸ καὶ λαλοῦμεν, 14 εἰδότες ὅτι ὁ ἐγείρας τὸν κύριον Ἰησοῦν καὶ ἡμᾶς σὺν Ἰησοῦ ἐγερεῖ καὶ παραστήσει σὺν ὑμῖν.*

V.13 is very interesting in this passage in that – although throughout this passage: 4:1-15, Paul makes many allusions to the Old Testament – it is in this verse where he makes a direct quotation to an Old Testament text; however, even though many scholars agree that Paul is using the Psalmist's words, there seems to be some confusion regarding the translation of the Hebrew text and the Septuagint (LXX). Hence, Harris (1976: 343) suggests that the exact meaning of the Hebrew text of Psalm 116:10a is uncertain. In his quotation Paul follows the LXX (Ps 115:1) exactly: "I believed; therefore I have spoken," a translation of the Hebrew in accord with the spirit of the psalm, though not with its precise words.

Sampley (2000: 82) suggests that in this verse (4:13) Paul adverts to the frank speech that he employed with the Corinthians in his most recent correspondence with them, the painful letter (4:13). Using a quotation from Ps 115:1 LXX (cf. Ps 116:10), Paul justifies the way he has spoken (harshly) to them in the painful letter, but, at the same time, he accounts for his current self-promotion." Whereas Harris (1976: 343) proves his point by giving a summary of Psalm 16, through noting that the psalmist recounts a divine deliverance from a desperate illness and its accompanying despondency (vv.1-11) and then considers how he might most fittingly render his devotion to the Lord (vv.12-19). In a real sense, then, the psalmist's expression of thanksgiving arose from his vindicated trust in God: "I held firm to my faith and was vindicated; therefore I have spoken." So in relation to Paul, for his part, he could not remain silent about the gospel he believed, as he declared in 1 Cor.9:16: "Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel" 1 Cor 9:16). Another reason Paul proclaimed the good news with the utmost confidence (cf. 3:12)

Belief is an expression of faith, so it is that faith, which we speak out, that enables us to overcome the trials we face when following Jesus. Then in v.14 Paul continues to explain what enabled him to discharge his ministry of preaching Christ faithfully and boldly (3:6; 4:1, 5), even though it involved hardship and affliction and encounters with death (4:8-12a). It was not only his sharing the psalmist's conviction that faith cannot remain silent (v. 13), but also his Christian conviction that Christ's resurrection was a pledge of the resurrection of believers (Harris 2013: 352-353).

Even though we are continually dying to self through carrying the cross, we, nevertheless, live with the hope of resurrection as Paul claimed that "εἰδότες ὅτι ὁ ἐγείρας τὸν κύριον Ἰησοῦν καὶ ἡμᾶς σὺν Ἰησοῦ ἐγερεῖ" (v.14). Therefore, Hughes (2006: 96) comment that the first reason Paul puts forth for his unflinching preaching amidst the squeezings and bewilderments and houndings and knockdowns of ministry is his utter confidence in future resurrection: "and so we also speak, knowing that he who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus and bring us with you into his presence" (vv. 13b, 14). We also notice from 1 Corinthians that the resurrection was, in fact, central to Paul's preaching of the gospel, as he told the Corinthians: "For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures" (1 Corinthians 15:3, 4).

Thus, for followers of Christ the spirit of resurrection is already at work as Romans 8:11 states that, “And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies because of his Spirit who lives in you.” Therefore, the call to be transformed into the image of Christ is the call to the resurrection life as we grow in the identity of the *imago Dei*.

This then makes suffering for Christ profitable in that it achieves great things – the greatest being the glory of being transformed into the image of God. Paul has this in mind when he closes this passage (2 Cor.4:1-15) by noting that “τὰ γὰρ πάντα δι’ ἡμᾶς, ἵνα ἡ χάρις πλεονάσασα διὰ τῶν πλειόνων τὴν εὐχαριστίαν περισσεύσῃ εἰς τὴν δόξαν τοῦ θεοῦ” (v.15). So this grace (χάρις) which is abounding (πλειόνων) in us (ἐν ἡμᾶς) will lead to thanksgiving (εὐχαριστίαν) which may cause to exceed to the glory of God (περισσεύσῃ εἰς τὴν δόξαν τοῦ θεοῦ). That is believers do not loose heart, even in the midst of suffering – whatever form it may take – they are continually growing into the image of Christ. Harris (1976: 344) summarizes this verse very well by remarking that:

This verse concludes a section of Paul's thought, for in v.16 he repeats the phrase "we do not lose heart" from v.1. Rather movingly, the apostle reminds his converts that he endures all his afflictions with resilience, not to promote his own good but for their benefit (cf. 4:5), and ultimately for God's glory. As God's grace expanded in their hearts and through them reached ever-increasing numbers, so too, the volume of thanksgiving to God for the receipt of illumination (cf. 4:6) would increase and promote the glory of God.

If we share in Christ's suffering we will also share in his glory (cf. Rom.8:17) Therefore, we learn to identify with him and die from our sinful nature and embrace the righteousness which Christ has imparted to those who believe on him (2 Cor.5:16-21). God has made provision for this kind of an ethical lifestyle for every human being as those who are reconciled to God through Christ – according to 2 Corinthians 5: 16-21 – have also been commissioned to be Christ's ambassadors and tell the whole world to be reconciled to God. The Corinthian correspondence helps us see that God wants every human being to live ethically and this is possible when one learns to identify with Christ Jesus, and appropriate his identity in our lives.

It is evident, as Kittel (1964:396) comments, that man can attain the image of God; as there is no speculation that Gen.1:27, behind the thought of Paul, is the image the Corinthian believers are called to attain. Thus, from the fact that in 1 Cor.11:7 he can unhesitatingly apply the same passage to man, or more precisely to the male, whereas in 1 Cor.15:54 it would seem that Gen.2:7 alone applies to man.

So in 1 Cor.11:7 Paul had been able to deduce from man's divine likeness certain practical consequences in terms of the concrete life of his day; but only in 1 Cor.15:49 he can regard this expression as deduced from Gen.5:3, which is determinative of earthly existence. Further on, Kittel (1964:396) writes that the main emphasis in Pauline anthropology is on this being of man as *εἰκών* which is still to be established, or better restored. And this will be done by connection with the being of Christ as *εἰκών*.

In Rom.8:29, *ὅτι οὓς προέγνω, καὶ προώρισεν συμμόρφους τῆς εἰκόνας τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ, εἰς τὸ εἶναι αὐτὸν πρωτότοκον ἐν πολλοῖς ἀδελφοῖς*,<sup>198</sup> there is no tautology in *μορφή* and *εἰκών*. Thus, the general statement that the Christian is to be conformed, or to become a brother of the Firstborn, is given its distinctive emphasis by the fact that a Christian will participate in the divine likeness manifested in Christ. The man who is an image of Christ is an image in the specific sense which the true and original sense for those familiar with the Bible, namely, the sense of Gen. 1:27.

Kittel (1964: 396) further on concludes that this likeness is the goal of the divine *προώρισεν* and the divine *εἰς*. Drawing on Paul's few passages – 2 Cor.3:18; 1 Cor.15:54; Col.3:10 – Kittel (1964: 397) suggests that through these passages we have an answer to the question when the restoration of the *εἰκών* takes place. Therefore, there is an eschatological future in 1 Cor.15:49b. It is also true that Rom.8:29 points us in the same direction. Nevertheless, in this passage, and even more so in 2 Cor.3:18, the eschatological statement is linked to an event which is already present for the Christian. And in Col.3:10 the restoration of the *εἰκών* posits a goal of ethical action in this aeon.

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<sup>198</sup> Aland, K. et al., 2006. The Greek New Testament, Fourth Revised Edition (with Morphology), Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft.

As “The age to come” will see the consummation of the kingdom of God (1 Cor.15:23-28; Eph.5:5; 1 Thess.2:12; 2 Tim.4:1), which involves the eradication of evil and the transformation of god’s children (Rom.8:19-23) (Harris 2013: 328). As a result of the aim of this restoration, the Christian worldview provides a comprehensive definition for man and is adequate to make a holistic case for humanity in his beauty and glory. Thus, if we assume a Christian worldview we begin our definition, as Wright (1992: 45) remarks that, within the sphere of the biblical belief, humans are made in the image of the Creator, and that in consequence they are entrusted with the task of exercising wise responsibility within the created order.

Thus, Paul, when he had to resolve situations that had an ethical bearing resorted back to the creation story in Genesis, as the creation narrative in Genesis provides the “first principles” of all doctrines. Wright (2013: 71), in his other work, also comments that “Paul is after all a *creational* theologian, as his deep structural and thematic reliance on Genesis at key points reminds us. For Paul it was not enough for a theological meaning to float in the air over historical events, intersecting with them for a brief moment only and then leaving again in a hurry for fear of contamination.”

However, Paul sees the theological meaning as continually shaped by the historical events, and theology playing a significant role in shaping history – even here there is an on-going dialectical process that shapes both the worlds of theology and history. Hays (1996: 16) describes Paul as an organizer of far-flung little communities around the Mediterranean that united clusters of disparate people in the startling confession that God had raised a crucified man, Jesus, from the dead and thus initiated a new age in which the whole world was to be transformed. If man is created in the image of God and God is revealed in Christ, then the perfect image of humanity is reflected through the person of Jesus. Man’s image was originally created to be like that of Christ; however, through the fall God’s image in man was distorted.

Hence, man’s situation seems to be bleak, his situation has degenerated to an extent that he began to create idols to worship. Man began to oppose everything that was of God. Thus, this, essentially, is the affront which fallen man is to God. He takes all that God has lavished upon him to enable him to live in free and joyful obedience, and he transforms it into a weapon by which he can oppose his maker.



The very breath which God gives him thousands of times each day he abuses by his sin (Ferguson 1989: 13). However, God in his love and compassion already had made a plan to restore man from his sin; he chooses to work with him to restore his image and likeness in man, he does this through the redemptive work of Jesus Christ. Jesus as the perfect reflection of God's image came to live among men, "and men beheld his glory" (John 1:14). Now man had the opportunity to see the nature and practice of the image of God, which he was to reflect initially; the mercy and grace of God saves him and restores to him what he lost.

Calvin describes this restoration – cited by Ferguson (1989: 13) – when he notes that Adam was at first created in the image of God, so that he might reflect, as in a mirror, the righteousness of God. But that image, having been wiped out by sin, must now be restored in Christ. The regeneration of the godly is indeed, as is said in II Cor. 3:18, nothing else than the reformation of the image of God in them. But there is a far more rich and powerful grace of God in this second creation than in the first... Adam lost the image which he had originally received; therefore it is necessary that it shall be restored to us by Christ.

Therefore he teaches that the design in regeneration is to lead us back from error to that end for which we were created. So 1 Corinthians 4:1-15, presents us with the ministry of God, which comes through his mercy and enlightens us to the urgency of the call to the truth (4:1-3), with the model of the *imago Dei* (4:4), the material which makes this transformation possible, which is the gospel (4:5-6), with the manner through which this is achieved (4:7-12), and with the measure of the glory we attain when we believe. So we preach Christ alone, and we serve others, and in that we grow into his likeness, which is the *imago Dei*!

<b><i>Imago Dei</i> In The Corinthian Correspondence</b>	
<b>Theme</b>	<b>Text</b>
1. The Concept of the Image	1 Cor. 11:7, 1 Cor. 15:49, 2 Cor. 3:18; 2 Cor. 4:4
2. The Context of the Image	2 Cor. 4:1-2
3. The Covenant through the Image	2 Cor. 4:3-6
4. The Content of the Image	2 Cor. 4:7
5. The Conflict within the Image	2 Cor. 4:8-9
6. The Christ displaying Image	2 Cor. 4:10-11
7. The Calling to reflect that Image	2 Cor. 4:12-15

Figure 8: Summary of topics discussed in Chapter 8

## 9. *IMAGO DEI* AS EMBODIED FULLY IN CHRIST JESUS

“ὁς ἐν μορφῇ θεοῦ ὑπάρχων οὐχ ἄρπαγμὸν ἠγήσατο τὸ εἶναι ἴσα θεῶ,”<sup>199</sup>

This text, Philippians 2:6, also makes a reference to the concept of *imago Dei* and it is used in the New Testament, as making an allusion to Genesis 1:26-27, in the context of highlighting the possibility of man attaining that image which Christ fully embodied. In the context of this research we have to show how that very image of God in Genesis 1:26 is embodied fully in Christ Jesus, and how followers of Jesus are encouraged to imitate that image. The passage which is relevant for this discussion is Philippians 2:5-11, and here there is a connection between God (ἐἰλήμ = 'ēlôhîym) Christ (Χριστός Ἰησοῦς = *Christos Iēsous*) and man (ἄδᾶμ = 'âdâm). Philippians chapter 2 v. 6 appear in the context of Philippians 2:5-11, where Paul was encouraging the church at Philippi and the surrounding churches to imitate Christ as he is the full embodiment of the *imago Dei*.<sup>200</sup>

Many have referred to that image described in Philippians 2 as the *Kenotic* image. This suggests that Jesus Christ is the model image Christians must transform to be like. Philippians introduces his image as the *kenotic* image. Paul notes in that letter that Jesus Christ will transform (*metaschematizo*) our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body (Phil. 3:21). In Christ, we notice in the Christology of Philippians, that God redeems humanity to his original condition, and reveals this in the *kenotic* image of Philippians 2:5-11. Dunn (1998: 75) in his commentary on this passage notes that:

The pattern of redemptive “recapitulation” is evident in a sequence of passages – both in the thought of Christ’s identification with the human condition, under sin and under the law, in order to redeem that condition, and in the thought of the exalted Christ as the pattern of a new humanity, with the divine image renewed and the divine glory restored.

<sup>199</sup> Aland, K., Black, M., Martini, C. M., Metzger, B. M., Robinson, M., & Wikgren, A. (2006). *The Greek New Testament, Fourth Revised Edition (with Morphology)* (Php 2:6). Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft.

<sup>200</sup> Fee (2007: 372) goes further through observing that the immediate context of vv. 6-8 is chapter 2:1-5, thus vv.6-8 function primarily as a paradigm; in pages 372 – 376 Fee makes a few preliminary comments which have a bearing on the origin and structure of this passage, as well as its significant role in the context of this letter (I may add that, perhaps, these verses play a significant role in the context of the Pauline letters, in the perspective of this research.

Schillebeeckx (1969: 230-231), in his discussion of the humiliation and exaltation of Christ as the prototype of mankind, comments that Christ came to restore our relationship and dialogue with the living God, and in so doing he restored the Christian meaning of the secular and of the intramundane task of life; which happens through redemption. He continues to remark that the redemption leaves its mark not only on the life of Grace with God, the ultimate meaning of human life, but also on the intramundane task as incarnation of this communion of grace. Like Christ, mankind goes through a “kenosis” in the world on its way to heavenly glorification.<sup>201</sup>

Paul shows us, by explaining Christ’s *kenotic* image, that transformation towards this image is a process; hence, in introducing this letter he writes that: “I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus” (v.6). This is not achieved “over-night”, even for Christ this transformation was a process; and so followers of Jesus are called to a process of maturity. Thus, “Paul’s concern is for the growth of his readers in such qualities as love, knowledge and righteousness” (Marshall 2004: 345).

One commentator, in introducing the book of Philippians confirms this by noting that some aspects of life cannot be rushed; spiritual growth is no different than physical growth – both require time and great patience (Jones 1999: 1555). Therefore, in the context of Philippians, Paul writes to prescribe the “path” to spiritual maturity, in his refutations of the rules and regulations to spiritual maturity imposed on the Philippi Christian community by the false teachers.<sup>202</sup> Marshall (2004: 344) comments that one of the dangers to the church arose from a group of people (rival traveling preachers) who appear to have been encouraging Jewish ritual and legal practices as the path to spiritual perfection or maturity (Phil. 3:1 – 4:1). In his prescription he presents to them the Image of Jesus Christ as the model to imitate; this Image of Christ emerges in the hymn of Philippians 2:6-11, and it emerges as the *kenotic* image.

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<sup>201</sup> For a detailed discussion of Schillebeeckx’s (1969: 210-233) theological discussion of man, which should go through a process of “kenosis” to eventually attain glorification, see his chapter entitled: Dialogue with God and Christian Secularity; here he discusses: the mystery of God as the centre of man’s essence, and the humiliation and exaltation of Christ, prototype of mankind.

<sup>202</sup> The process of spiritual maturity as referred to in this chapter is used interchangeably with the process of growing into the same image of Christ.

The *kenotic* image is a reference to Christ's self-denial through emptying himself, which is explained ahead in this section. So Philippians 2:5-11 presents the example of Jesus, whose attitude every believer must imitate.

Philippians has had a great influence on the thought of many theologians because of the significant ideas expressed in this passage. Martin and Dodd (1998: np.) comment that: "One of the best known and most influential passages in the New Testament is the hymn of Philippians 2:5-11 which traces the dialectical path of Christ from pre-existence – or pre-temporal existence – to incarnation to exaltation". Hawthorne (1998: 96) adds that this passage is, "One of the most exalted, one of the most theologically and Christologically significant texts of all the texts of the New Testament, if not indeed the most, and because there is still no sign that these verses have yet disclosed their full secrets or completely opened up their rich treasures".

However, there seems to be an on-going robust debate amongst many theologians regarding the place of this passage within Christian theology. Many have referred to this passage as a point of the beginning of Christology; they suggested that Paul was proving the divinity of Christ. However, other theologians think that this is a misrepresentation of this passage, particularly in its historical context. They suggest that reading this passage in its historical context one realizes that Paul shows us the way in which those who are in Christ ought to live. How we must conduct our lives. One commentator wrote: "The passage is, indeed, an important Christological statement – but its importance lies not only in what it says about Christ, but also in its implications for the lives of those who acknowledge Christ as Lord" (Hooker 2000: 476). The other debate regarding this passage revolves around the originality of this pericope.

The argument is about whether this pericope, referred to as a hymn, was included by Paul when he was writing this composition or whether it was added later. Marshall (2004: 347) makes the observation that: "The careful language of Philippians 2:6-11 with its rhythmical prose is often taken to betray use of an earlier composition, a Christian hymn celebrating the career of Christ, which was then taken over into this letter to express Paul's sentiments." Hence, some scholars, such as Brown (1998) suggests that Phil 2:5-11 existed before Paul, perhaps as a hymn, and this hymn contains a rich Christology, though Paul uses it here not for the sake of Christology itself but to offer Christ as an example of what it means for the Philippians to 'look not to your own interests but to the interests of others' (2:4).

It is plausible to suggest that this hymn already existed when Paul wrote this composition; however, Paul contextualized it and included it as it helped to substantiate his argument in the composition. Moreover, it is clear that there is a thorough explanation of a Christology; however, such a Christology has ethical implications. Lohmeyer, as cited by Brown (1998: 6), suggested that within this passage is the key to understanding the motive for Christian living. Hence, “The literary form of the passage gives rise to the suggestion that here we are in touch with the worshipping life of the early Christians” (Martin 1998: 2).

So, what also mattered for him in this regard was the significance of this hymn in the life of the follower of Christ. Therefore, Johnson (1999: 374) notes that Paul’s language in 2:6-11 is dense and rhythmic, possibly indicating reliance on a traditional Christian hymn about Jesus. The correspondence in structure and language to the rest of this section is so close that it is also possible that Paul himself wrote the hymn or, at the very least, that he conformed his language in the surrounding text to match the vocabulary of the poem.

### 9.1 Imitation of Christ

Certainly of greater significance, Johnson (1999: 374) further on notes that, it is the content of the hymn, and how it functions for Paul as part of his larger argument in Philippians. The undertone of this letter is fellowship (*koinonia*), a call to Christian fellowship, and this is observed clearer in the Greek, and less obvious in the English. Paul uses forms of the term “fellowship” (*koinonia*) in 1:5; 2:1; 3:10; and 4:15. Hence, Johnson (1999: 373) comments that, “Paul’s rhetoric is even more powerful because he has made fellowship the organizing principle of the letter.” Therefore, those who are ‘in Christ’ (2:1) should share the love, compassion, and sympathy that come from him, and behave in the appropriate way towards one another. This is possible if we follow the example of Christ, which Paul portrays in 2:5-11. Therefore, this passage offers us more than an example of how believers can live together harmoniously but the means towards that end is by virtue of being in Christ, we already have the power to live together in the way suggested by 2:6-11.”

Paul begins this passage by noting: “Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus” (v.5). This phrase appears here as a preface to the content of the character of Christ, whom believers must imitate, (as most English translations puts a colon after it, which suggests that what follows describes the attitude of Christ).

This phrase has two implications, as it suggests that either the people who are called to imitate Christ have that mind which they are called to possess or they are called to have that mind. Johnson (1999: 376) explains this by noting that, “the ambiguity of the Greek should not go unnoticed, as it can be read both indicatively (“you do have”) and imperatively (“you must have”). They have this mind already because of the Spirit (1 Cor.2:16); but they must strive to live it out in imitation of Jesus.”

The phrase used here: “let this mind be” is a translation of the Greek word: *φρονέω* (*phroneō*) which means to exercise the mind intensively to interest oneself in (with concern or obedience); so that you can be like the person you have set your affection on. (One should note that there are different Greek concepts within Paul’s letters that are translated as mind in the English translations; one of them is the one that is referred to here in this section: *φρονέω* (*phroneō*) [Php.2:2, 5; 3:16 Rom.8:5; 12:16], the other concept is *νοῦς* (*nous*) [Rom.1:28; 7:23; 11:34; 12:2; 14:5].); which, according to Louw and Nida (1996: 349), it refers to a particular manner or way of thinking – disposition, manner of thought, or attitude. The principle in this case is that we are to make the Lord Jesus our model, and in all respects to frame our lives, as far as possible, in accordance with his great example.

So, “Paul is trying to form in the Philippians the intellectual and moral abilities to be able to deploy their knowledge of the gospel in the concrete situations in which they find themselves, so that they will be able to live faithfully (or “walk worthily” 1:27)” (Fowl 1998: 145). Christ’s life was characterized by the promotion of the glory of God and the salvation of mankind. Thus, his example of self-denial was to accomplish that goal; so he chose to empty himself to achieve this goal. So, this “hymn establishes a model for Christian imitation in terms of possessing and dispossessing positions of power” (Johnston 1999: 374). Thus, the *kenosis* of Christ.

## 9.2 Kenosis of Christ

The hymn conveys that although Christ existed in the form of God, he did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself (v.6-7). Christ negated himself, deprived himself of his worth, and denied himself his divine rights. What is meant by this is that the heavenly Christ did not selfishly exploit His divine form and mode of being, but by His own decision emptied Himself of it or laid it by, taking the form of a servant by becoming man.



Christ emptied himself further on by taking up the cross, as Johnson (1999: 375) elucidates that “the cross is the ultimate symbol of self-emptying.” The first path of the person who imitates Jesus is “the way of the cross”; as Jesus himself said: “If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me” (Luke 9:23). Jesus emptied himself by taking the “way of the cross”, and so calls us to follow that same example. Bearing the cross has always been a fundamental calling for everyone who desired to follow Jesus; however, many Christians have lost this principle in their different pursuits, as Thomas A` Kempis (1981: 83), in *Of the Imitation of Christ*, notes that:

Jesus has now many lovers of his heavenly kingdom, but few bearers of His cross. Many He has who are desirous of consolation, but few of tribulation. Many He finds who share His table, but few His fasting. All desire to rejoice with Him, few are willing to endure anything for him. Many follow Jesus unto the breaking of bread; but few to the drinking of the cup of his passion. Many reverence His miracles; few follow the shame of His cross.

The universal symbol of the Christian faith is the cross: a call to living under the cross. As we all know that every religion and ideology has its visual symbol, which illustrates a significant feature of its history or beliefs. For Christians it is the cross, which denotes dying. The call to follow Jesus is possible only if we commit to denying ourselves and taking up the cross. What does it mean to deny ourselves?

It is surrendering our will and affections to God and make Him the supreme object of our love and happiness. To deny oneself means denying the sinful self, deny ungodliness, and worldly lust. To deny self-righteousness and to renounce one's works of righteousness, especially in the business of justification and salvation. To deny oneself the pleasures and profits of this world, when in competition with Christ; and Stott (1989: 323) remarks that “To deny oneself is... to turn away from the idolatry of self-centeredness.”

This denying of oneself will involve suffering, however, one must gladly accept suffering for the cause of following Christ. Suffering is inevitable for anyone who wants to follow Christ because the way of Christ is “counter-cultural” and negates the many ways of the world, and it calls one to follow the way of self-denial – which is not an accepted attitude in the world. The world encourages one to amass himself with as much power as one can get so that they can rule over the “weak” in their surrounding or context, and secure themselves in that.

Whilst Christ says that one must deny themselves by emptying themselves, and dispossess themselves of all that power, and trust God; because insistence on security is incompatible with the way of the cross, and such hope on false security may lead one away from the way of the cross. Darrell Bock (1996: 268) writes:

Materialism and the pursuit of power, independence, and security are probably the biggest obstacles to spiritual advancement. Everything in our culture from commercials to our education pushes us in the direction of advancing our standard of living for more comfort. To pick up a cross means walking against the grain of cultural values, so that our own expectations and needs take a back seat to God's call.

Taking up the cross is indispensable in the process of denying ourselves; therefore, we can boast in taking up the cross, as Paul writes in Galatians 6:14 "May I never boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ..." Yes the cross is a difficult calling but it is the path we must take to become like Christ. Christ-likeness is going to be reached through struggles, because there is an element of struggle involved in following Christ in Christian living; thus, godliness will be accomplished through struggle. Suffering is a necessary element of Christian living, as Paul says, "For it has been granted to you on behalf of Christ not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for him" (Phil. 1:29).

The cross stands at the very heart of the Christian faith. No man or woman who follows Christ ever escapes the cross. Jesus knew that everyone who came to Him, in every country and in every culture & age, would have to face the discipline of cross bearing; as He says in Matthew 10: 24 "the servant is not greater than his lord."

The point here is that the disciple who takes up his cross is doing what Jesus does; he is following in the same way as his Master. Luke makes an emphasis in his citation of Jesus' call to his disciples to carry the cross, by saying that this type of self-denial is a daily calling (9:23). Some disciplines of the Christian life are quite occasional, but cross-bearing is continuous – it is a daily calling. Therefore, we must be careful not to conceive of this self-denial, in a chronological fashion, as if the Lord were exhorting his hearers to practice self-denial for a while, then after a lapse of time to stop carrying the cross. The order is not Chronological in the sense that we make this decision once and therefore we are guaranteed a ticket to heaven; but it is a logical decision that we must make every day of our lives. Carrying the cross is a full-time job, not a weekend hobby. It is a lifestyle and a commitment, which never takes a holiday. It is a daily calling.

Every day there will be things coming across our path, which will crucify us. There will be times when we have to swallow our pride, times when comfort and pleasure eludes our grasp, and endure frustrations which run across our desire for an easy life.

Therefore, self-denial and crucifixion is the only way to gain life; Jesus has this matter in mind after speaking of the cross, as in the next verse He says, “For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will save it.” (Luke 9:24). Jesus seems to appreciate the necessity of daily trials, troubles, and tribulations in the life of a Christian, because he knows that these hardships results because of self-denial and they are instrumental in making one become more like him. God will use such opportunities to transform one more and more into the image Christ. Warren (2002: 196) remarks that:

We are like Jewels, shaped with the hammer and chisel of adversity. If a jeweler’s hammer isn’t strong enough to chip off our rough edges, God will use a sledge hammer. If we are really stubborn, he uses a jackhammer. He will use whatever it takes. Every problem is a character-building opportunity, and the more difficult it is, the greater the potential for building spiritual muscle and moral fibre.

Scripture continues to tell us: in Ephesians 4:24, “You were...created to be like God, truly righteous and holy.” Peterson (1995: 482), in the Message, interprets this verse as saying: “Take on an entirely new way of life – a God fashioned life, a life renewed from the inside and working itself into your conduct as God accurately reproduces his character in you.” The cross is essential in character building; thus, God’s ultimate goal for one’s life on earth is not necessarily comfort, but character development, and this will only happen through daily cross bearing. As believers we are called to live in this manner. As Bonhoeffer (1963: 79) put it: “When Christ calls a man, he bids him come and die.”

### **9.3 Servant-hood of Christ**

Part of the self-denial that Jesus took involved taking the nature of a servant, as Paul notes that Jesus emptied himself – made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant (v.7). The word used for servant is the word *δούλου* and it means: a slave; metaphorically, it means one who gives himself up to another’s will, like the service of Christ in extending and advancing his cause among men; devoted to another to the disregard of one’s own interests.

A servant is an attendant; one who is called to be a steward. The word serve/servant is found some 1,452 times in some English Bibles, thus, it is one of the largest topics in Bible. Jesus was a servant to everybody who came across his path: the rich and the poor, the healthy and the sick, believers and unbelievers. Foster (1998: 162) writes that, “True service is indiscriminate in its ministry.” We see Jesus demonstrating this kind of service in John 13:5-15, where he washes the disciples’ feet; when he finishes washing their feet he instructs them: “If I then, the Lord and the Teacher, washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet. For I gave you an example that you also should do as I did to you” (v.14-15). Now, Paul may have been aware of this incident and, perhaps, makes an allusion to it in writing of the example of Christ, that all must comply with this command, as Jesus himself said that he gave us an example to follow.

It is interesting to notice that Paul uses two types of verbs in this passage: principal verbs and participle verbs. Principal verbs are the verbs considered first in rank or importance; in this instance they are: ‘did not regard’; ‘emptied himself’; ‘humbled himself’. Whereas participle verbs are the words formed from the verb, like: going or gone; in this case they are: ‘taking’ and ‘becoming’.

Therefore, the actions indicated by the participle verbs are dependent or serve those actions indicated by the principal verbs. So Jesus had to ‘empty himself’ before ‘taking the form of a servant’. This also proves true for human beings, because one must forget about their rights to be a true servant; one must learn to let go of their status to be a real servant.

You cannot serve effectively if all that you are concerned about is your status. Jesus left his status behind to come and serve the world, as Paul notes that although He existed in the form of God, He did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped (2:6). Therefore, this was possible because He “emptied” himself. Brown (1998: 130) notes that the term emptied could be understood only in the sense of total surrender and self-sacrifice; for the word form’ is not something external to content. What is internal is also external, and what is external is also internal. Therefore, for this reason, the figure has to create for himself a substantial new existence in the self-giving. It is ‘the form of a servant’.

Service is an investment that pays in more than monetary ways. It pays in character development. An old saying is true: “The way to the throne room is through the servant’s quarters.” Matthew 23: 11 says, “But he who is greatest among you shall be your servant”, and Matthew 20: 26 says, “...whoever desires to become great, Let him be your servant”.

You cannot talk about servant hood and not talk about humility; these two are seamless, as service is the most conducive to the growth of humility. So Christ became a servant because he was humble; so the humility of Christ was the substratum of his servant attitude.

#### **9.4 Humility of Christ**

Christ, “being found in appearance as a man he humbled himself...” (v.8). Having taken the appearance of a man, man in his fallen state is characterized by arrogance, he had to humble himself to be able to reflect the image of God. Jesus lived a humble life and humility was at the core of his philosophy. Humility is one of those qualities/virtues which are hard to define. Boice (1998: 72) even remarks: “how little we know of humility, even after many years of Christian life. Yet how essential humility is to true discipleship.” The best way to understand humility is to find out what it is not. Humility is the antithesis of pride, and pride itself seems to be one of the biggest problems in human relations.

Jeffress (2002: 186) defines pride by noting: “Pride is the attitude that credits ourselves with our successes and blames others for our failures.” The problem about pride is that it is very subtle, most of the time it is hard to notice it. Sanders (1994: 154) in his attempts to define pride gives three tests every individual must go through to determine the level of their pride:

The first test is the test of precedence, which asks: How do you react when another is selected for the position when you expected to fill the position? When another is promoted instead of you; when another’s gifts seem greater than your own? The second test is the test of sincerity, which asks: “When we are honest with ourselves, we often admit our problems and weaknesses; but how do you feel when others identify the same problems and weaknesses in you?” The third test is the test of criticism, which asks: “Does criticism lead you to immediate resentment and self- justification? Do you rush to criticise the critic?”

Pride seems to be evident in most human relations and an individual is able to effectively deal with it only when they encounter God; as St. Augustine (1958: np), in his classic work: *The City of God*, captures this reality when he remarks that: “I know, of course, what ingenuity and force of arguments are needed to convince proud men of the power of humility. Its loftiness is above the pinnacles of earthly greatness which are shaken by the shifting winds of time – not by reason of human arrogance, but only by the grace of God.”

The power of this humility impacts every aspect of living. It could best be exemplified by the attitude that seeks to honour others above ourselves, as in the verses that precede the example of Christ of humility Paul describes this state by noting: “Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others” (v.4-5).

Moreover, a humble example is characterized by obedience to God, as we see in the life of Christ, who, as the writer of the epistle of Hebrews writes, had learned obedience from what he suffered (Heb.5:8). He suffered through the “way of the cross”, which was self-denial; he was humble enough that he even died like a criminal, as the hymn continues to convey that: “And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death - even death on a cross!” (v.8). Thus, choosing an ethical lifestyle may not necessarily be popular and it may lead to a form of suffering (see Philippians 1:29).

Humility leads to complete obedience, as Williams (2003: 190) cited Stowell who commented that, “Humility is not a quiet, reserved super-sanctimonious posture in life. The truly humble person can be appropriately bold and can enjoy life to the fullest – laughing and crying with great expression. Humility is the driving desire to give God the glory in all things and to obey him regardless.”

This obedience was part of redemption; so, “as God redeemed and exalted the obedient, humiliated Christ, so God will redeem the obedient, through suffering” (Fowl 1998: 146). Thus, because of obedience, God exalted him, as the last stanzas of the hymn says that: “Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (v.9-11). Therefore, he was exalted.

## 9.5 Exaltation of Christ

The last few verses of this passage move us into a totally different mood – and into a different structure again. The triumphant “therefore” in v.9 introduces the action of God, who now responds to Christ’s self-emptying and humiliation.

God has exalted him above all in heaven and on earth; all will bow to his name, and every tongue will confess that Jesus is Lord. One commentator remarks that the emphatic “And therefore” (v.9) which governs the last three stanzas introduces a new turn (Brown 1998: 9). Thus:

It is frequently noted that in 2:9-11 we are presented with a sudden change of subject. In the opening two stanzas of the hymn (2:6-8) it has been Christ who was the focus of attention; it was he who was on center stage, so to speak. In the third stanza, however, it is God who becomes the principal actor; it is God who takes over the action of the Christological drama (Kreitzer 1998: 119).

Christ’s exaltation speaks of Jesus as a human becoming a being that is divine through this whole process of transformation delineated in the passage. It is shown that these both forms – becoming and being – are contrasted to show Jesus’ divinity and humanity, as Brown (1998: 10) notes that “the divine figure dwells in the sphere of being, and the human figure in that of becoming.” This again provides a model for Jesus’ disciples who are in the process of transformation to becoming formed into his image.

Hence, “here the norm of the moral was posited as the ultimate determination of all existence. The religious ethical act, determined the form and meaning of divine existence, and likewise the religious existence of the believer” (Brown 1998: 10).<sup>203</sup> There are others who refuse to accept the ethical interpretation of this passage; one key proponent of this development is Kasemann, as Fowl (1998: 140) notes that “Kasemann’s primary aim was to undermine the ‘ethical idealist’ interpretation of this passage.” However, Kreitzer (1998: 113) in making a case for the ethical interpretation of this passage makes this observation:

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<sup>203</sup> There are other scholars who disregard and refute any ethical interpretation of this passage; see Morgan’s article of Ernst Kasemann’s Interpretation of Philippians 2:5-11 elaborates on this debate.



Suffice it to say that a growing majority of interpreters agree that Paul does appeal to the example of the earthly Jesus (as expressed within the pre-Pauline hymn) and that he deliberately does so in order to elicit some action on the part of his audience. It may well be that traditional sayings of Jesus about humility and exaltation (such as that recorded in Matt.23:12/Luke 14:11; 18:14), or even the tradition of Jesus acting as a servant to the twelve disciples at the Last Supper (as recorded in John 13:3-17), are ultimately what lies behind the hymn. In any case, Paul wants the Philippians to act in humility and self-effacement and thereby follow the example of their Lord who was rewarded by God for his obedience.

The ethical undertones of this hymn are clearly seen when the exegete uses the hermeneutic tool of rhetorical criticism, which determines the process and order of an argument in a letter to reveal the intention of the author. Kreitzer (1998: 114) elaborates by stating that: “three common means whereby a speaker/writer might try to persuade his audience are commonly noted: *pathos* (the appeal to emotion); *logos* (the appeal to reason) and *ethos* (the appeal to the moral character or reputation of the speaker and his argument).

All these rhetorical categories appear in the hymn. Paul makes an appeal to emotion by telling of the extent of Christ humiliation when he emptied himself and eventually died on the cross. He makes an appeal to reason by speaking of the ramifications of that action, which resulted in God exalting him. He also makes a moral appeal by calling the followers of Jesus to imitate him, because that is a conduct that is worthy of the gospel of Christ (1:27). Therefore, through the use of hermeneutical study tools to prove the ethical interpretation of 2:5-11, one is able to make a case for the last stanzas of the passage (v.9-11) as also having an ethical bearing.

Thus, “The Christian life is founded on Jesus’ way to the cross, which is at the same time the essential criterion of this life. The ethical *proprium Christianum* is thus Christ himself, so that for Paul, ethics means the active dimension of participation in Christ” (Schnelle 2007: 321). Hence, Christianity is being true to Jesus Christ. Kreitzer (1998: 117) cites Fowl who remarks that:

We would argue that by viewing vv.6-11 as an exemplar from which Paul draws an analogy to the Philippians’ situation in order to justify the course of action he has urged in 1:27 we avoid the criticisms levelled against those who see 2:5-11 as proposing a model to be imitated. Further, in this view vv.9-11 play a crucial part in the function of the passage. If God does not vindicate Christ’s suffering and humiliation, there is no reason to expect the same God to save the Philippians if they remain steadfast in the face of opposition.

Therefore, this gives enough reason that God will redeem man by restoring the original image he was created in, if he follows after Christ. In Philippians 2:5-11 Jesus represents Adam as he reveals the original intention of mankind. The Christology that is explained in the hymn suggests God’s original intention in creating man in Genesis 1:26-28, in how God redeems man to that position where he must have dominion over all creation. Dunn (1998: 74), in explaining the view of Christology in Philippians 2:6-11, observes that:

We may note especially the use of Ps. 8:6, describing God’s intention in creating humankind, to complement Ps. 110:1 in describing the exalted Christ’s lordship over all things. The “subjection of all things under his feet” (Ps. 8:6) in effected completed God’s original purpose in giving newly created humankind dominion over the rest of creation. The exalted Christ has fulfilled the function originally intended for humankind (Adam).

Throughout this hymn Christ is presented as a fully human being that goes through transformation to restore the first Adam; in so doing showing all mankind what was God’s original intention in creating man. Dunn (1998: 79) summarizes the message of this hymn by noting that:

Christ is presented as one who did not stand on status but emptied himself, as one whose whole life speaks of serving and not grasping, as one whose way to exaltation was only through death. Even if it were judged not to an expression of Adam Christology, it would still be a powerful way of saying that in Christ, his death and resurrection, God’s original design for humanity finally achieved concrete shape and fulfillment.

<b><i>Imago Dei As Embodied by Christ</i></b>	
<b>Theme</b>	<b>Text</b>
1. Imitation of Christ	Philippians 2:5
2. Kenosis of Christ	Philippians 2:6-7
3. Servant-hood of Christ	Philippians 2:7
4. Humility of Christ	Philippians 2:8
5. Exaltation of Christ	Philippians 2:9

Figure 9: Summary of topics discussed in Chapter 9

## 10. CONCLUSION

The notion of humankind being created in the image God has a moral perspective, and this is evident in the use of the term in Pauline epistles. The image of Christ is the desired image, the image that humanity must look at and learn from it, so that eventually they can reflect it, in the process of the restoration of the image of God, that which they were originally created in. So we will transform from reflecting the first Adam, who is earthly to reflecting the second Adam, who is heavenly. Thus, Paul makes us aware that “Just as we have borne the image of the earthy, we will also bear the image of the heavenly” (1 Cor.15:49 NASB).

Actually, according to Schnelle (2007: 319-320), Paul does not outline his ethic on the basis of knowing and acting, as though it were a subject who acts autonomously as a reasonable and moral being, but, in accord with his theology as a whole, chooses as his point of departure the image of participation in the new being, an existence delivered from the power of sin. Therefore, this image takes concrete form in new actions. Hence, Paul constantly reminds the churches of the bases and results of such a life.

This heavenly image does not necessarily refer to the afterlife but to the life one attains when they are in Christ. In reference to this verse, and the passage at large: 1 Cor.15:42-49, Utley (2002: 182) comments that the Bible does not specifically or fully reveal the things related to the afterlife, probably because we are not able in our fallen, temporal, earthly state to comprehend them. This paragraph discusses the resurrection body by comparing it to the earthly body. Yet, still it is not precise. All that can be said is that our new bodies will be perfectly prepared for life, fellowship, worship, and service of our God in the new age. In light of this, the exact form is irrelevant (cf. Phil. 3:21; 1 John 3:2).

Therefore, in the work of redemption God graciously restores his image in man, making him once again like God in his love, faithfulness, and willingness to serve others. As human beings are creatures, God must restore them to his image – this is a work of sovereign grace. But because they are also persons, they have a responsibility in this restoration – hence Paul can say to the Ephesians, “Be imitators of God” (5:1) (Hoekema 1986: 10).

Schnelle (2007: 320-321) suggests that the point of departure for Paul's understanding of ethics is the new being, since incorporation into the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ is not limited to the act of baptism but, through the gift of the Spirit, determines the present and future life of those who are baptized (cf. Gal.3:2, 3; 5:18; Rom.6:4). So, those whose lives are now located within the sphere of Christ are new creations (cf. 2 Cor.5:17); where Paul speaks of newness of life, he builds on a Christological foundation, not an ethical one (cf. 2 Cor.4:16; 5:17; Gal.6:15; Rom.6:4; 7:6). Therefore, those who have been baptised have put on Christ (Gal.3:27) and are entirely determined by him, for Christ lives in them and wants to be formed in them (cf. Gal.4:19). Jesus Christ is both prototype and model, as the ethical interpretation of the Christ hymn in Philippians 2:6-11 makes clear.

For Paul, Christ himself appears as the content and constant theme of ethics. The theme of ethics is what the new being (the new life in the sphere of Christ) looks like as expressed in what one does and the way one lives (Schnelle 2007: 321). As a result, the disciples of Jesus Christ modeled their lives after the image of their master and lived their lives with a quest of leading and teaching others who don't know their master to be saved (1 Cor.10:33); and this salvation entailed the pursuit to imitate Christ (1 Cor.11:1). In this context, to imitate Christ is living in a way that gives glory to God, as Paul is exhorting the saints in Corinth to do all things for the glory of God (1 Cor.10:31).

This is possible if the believers are living to imitate Christ. Therefore, "Indeed, one of the central Christian convictions is that Jesus as the Christ encompasses all of liberated humanity in himself, regardless of race, sex, or social and economic status" (Neufeld 2007: 12). Therefore, what has happened to baptized believers has placed its stamp on their whole life, for Christ died to sin once and for all, so that those who have been baptized are no longer under the power of sin (Rom.6:9 – 11).

So Paul challenges the Roman Christians to be obedient servants of righteousness (Rom.6:16; cf. 1 Cor.9:19); because Christ died out of love for humanity and this love now controls and sustains the church (2 Cor.5:14; Rom.8:35, 37), it determines the Christian life as a whole (1 Cor.8:1; 13; Gal.5:6, 22; Rom.12:9-10; 13:9-10; 14:15). Therefore, just as Christ became the servant of humanity by going to the cross (Rom.15:8; Phil.2:6), so Christians are to serve one another (Gal.2:6).

What began in baptism continues in the lives of those baptized: they have been placed on the way of Jesus, they imitate Christ, so that the apostle can even say, in 1 Cor.11:1, “Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ” (see also 1 Thess.1:6 and 1 Cor.4:16) (Insights drawn from Schnelle 2007:321).

In his second letter to the church in Corinth, Paul emphasizes that Christ is the model of God’s image we are to transform towards in noting that the glory of Christ is the image of God (2 Cor.4:4). Hence, Utley (2002: 230) notes that to see Jesus is to see the Father (cf. John 1:18; 14:8, 9; Phil. 2:6; Col. 1:15; Heb. 1:3). The NT asserts that Jesus was incarnated to serve three purposes: (1) to fully reveal the Father; (2) to atone for sin; and (3) to give believers an example to follow. Christ’s ultimate goal of liberating humanity is to restore the original image that God endowed man with; but man must be in union with Christ, through faith, to start this process. Hence the apostle Paul, in 2 Corinthians 5:17, explains that: “If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!”

The redemption of Christ has therefore brought a certain deliverance even to the inferior creatures, and an exaltation of them towards their final end. Man, repaired in the image of God, and reformed to his likeness, has recovered not a little of that secondary dominion both over himself and over the inferior creation, especially by the law of self-denial. The more of spiritual life he recovers, the higher his dominion rises over sensible things, the more he spiritualizes even those material and earthly things, and makes them the servants of his faith and charity (Ullathorne nd.: 79).

So, God, through Christ, according 2 Corinthians 5:17, recreates this image anew in man. The old – corrupted – image is surrendered to God so that God initiates this whole process by grace; however, through the partnership with man in the process the new creation is completed. Utley (2002: 241) explains that the “old things passed away” is in the aorist tense and it refers to a completed act in past time, and this refers to conversion. Whereas “new things have come” is in the perfect tense which refers to a past completed act with abiding results. Thus, this refers to discipleship, and as we read the Scriptures we realize that a disciple is someone who accepts a set of beliefs, and embraces a holistic, total, and intentional approach to life based on those beliefs (Donahoo 2005: 5). This new creation is, therefore, a reference to a new being. For humankind to reach a point of complete redemption he must go through a process of transformation.

Christ's death is the transformative event for all of life. Nothing is the same after that. First among the radical changes brought about by Christ's death is the way people should live: no longer for themselves but for the one who died for them (5:15). The transformation begun in Christ's death and resurrection will be expanded until they encompass the entire universe (*κόσμος kosmos*, 5:19, which fits the Romans 8 pattern, where the whole of creation longs for the freedom the children of God already experience; Rom.8:21-23). (Sampley 2000: 92).

Paul looking at Christ as his example he encourages the other believers to see him in that way also; not to look at his physical descent any longer (v.16). Moreover, the same attitude should be shown to the other believers, and they should not be considered in a worldly way any longer because they are new creatures, because they are in Christ (v.17). So, "Believers must look to what is not seen (4:18; 5:7); they must look to the inner person and not take primary clues from the outer person (4:16); they must consider the heart and not the face (5:12)" (Sampley 2000: 92).

Believers in Christ are a-work-in-progress, going through a process of transformation to be recreated into the image of God. The one image that we are called to identify with is the image of Christ, because it is the image we have been called to transform towards. The culmination of this whole process – realized in and through Jesus Christ – is an attestation of God's greatness, and must lead man to glorify Him, because we are created to glorify God. This is the privilege given to mankind: living to glorify God; however, every privilege comes with its own responsibilities, and for the privilege of living to glorify God; mankind's responsibility is to live daily with the aim of conforming to the image of Christ, because this is the ultimate goal of discipleship.

Ulmer (2005: 10) comments that God Himself is the divine image and Jesus Christ is the model, the very image of God on earth. Therefore, man must trust Him, follow Him, obey Him, and his life will then become His personal masterpiece, and become a river of inspiration, a light of encouragement, and a path of enrichment to all who come into his life. Every Christian who has genuinely received new birth must be seen in this light, that they are in the process of being transformed into the image of Christ. Therefore, Sampley (2000: 93) comments that to consider anyone simply from the flesh is to view that person as if the fundamentally transformative resurrection of Christ had not taken place – and as if the norms or standards of judgment had not therein been radically altered.

Believers are not simply offered a new perspective they may or may not adopt as and when they see fit; rather, something so fundamental has changed in such a profound way that the old ways of looking, perceiving, understanding, and, more profoundly, evaluating, have to be let go and replaced with a new way of seeing and understanding

Küng (1978: 249) confirms how this transformation is foundational for all humanity, by suggesting that: “A fundamental transformation is expected: something like a new birth of man himself, which can be understood only by one who actively takes part in it.” Further on, he elucidates how this transformation, which is begun by the new birth in Christ, is achieved; even in comparison with the other views of human nature:

It is therefore a transformation which does not come about merely through progress in right thinking for the sake of right action (as with Socrates) or through the education of man who is fundamentally good (as with Confucius). Nor is it a transformation enlightenment, as the ascetic Siddhartha Gautama passed by way of meditation through enlightenment (*bodhi*) to become Buddha, the enlightened, and in this way to reach an understanding of suffering and finally extinction in Nirvana. According to Jesus, a fundamental transformation is achieved through man’s surrender to God’s will (Küng 1978: 249).

Therefore, to live ethically, one must go through this process of transformation, which is demanded from all humanity, which will result in conforming into the image of Christ. Schnelle (2007: 323) suggests that the Corinthians are exhorted to adopt Paul’s teaching and way of life as the pattern of their own lives (1 Cor.4:16-17). That Paul again takes up the word *ὁδὸν* (way) in 12:31 shows that he intends the way of love. He lives and teaches the love of Christ that has been received; this is why the churches should adopt him as their model. So this change in Christians is motivated by love of Christ, who is the image of God; hence John would write: “God is Love” (1 John 4:8).

Copleston (1962: 100) remarks that “If the principle of morality is love of God and the essence of evil is a falling-away from God, it follows that the human race can be divided into two great camps, that of those who love God and prefer God to self and that of those who prefer self to God: it is by the Character of their wills, by the character of their dominant love, that men are ultimately marked.”



Further on, in making reference to Augustine, Copleston (1962: 100) notes that Augustine saw the history of the human race as the history of the dialectic of these two principles, the one in forming the city of Jerusalem, the other the city of Babylon. This notion of the *imago Dei*, therefore serves as the foundation of the normative theory of ethics; which results in the formation of one's worldview. The concept of normativity is useful to our construction of an ethical paradigm because it translates our judgments into theories, which help to make our evaluations of morality universal; thus, "theory enables us to delve beyond our surface intuitions about what is right and wrong to get at the underlying explanation for that judgment – a very important judgment, since it enables us to provide justifications for our actions and evaluations" (Driver 2007: 4).

An ethical theory is an indispensable feature of evaluating morality and for justifying character and actions. What is also important in one's evaluation is to find a universal character of the theory. Julia Driver (2007: 11) notes that when it comes to ethical theories, we also look for novel guidance. Ethical theories are supposed to provide us with decision procedures and/or criteria for evaluation of actions and character. They are, in that way, practically oriented. Thomas Aquinas made reference to this idea that an ethical theory is underpinned by a creation account, as Driver (2007: 28) comments that Thomas Aquinas held a version of natural law theory. This theory is not a variation of divine command theory.<sup>204</sup> It does not hold that God's will is necessary and sufficient to make a particular action right or wrong. A very popular version of this theory does hold that God created the universe in such a way that morality is revealed to us in His creation. There are laws of morality in the fabric of the universe.

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<sup>204</sup> Driver (2007: 22) defines "Divine command theory" as that which holds that moral norms depend upon God's will, and in that way these norms find their authority outside human nature.

Bretzke (2004: 43), in his discussion of the natural law begins by quoting a text from the Bible: Romans 2:12-17,<sup>205</sup> and explains that this text is relevant to prove the relation of natural law to morality, and that we must keep in mind that for Christian ethics even our natural law theory must in some sense be subject to *norma normans* (“norming norm”) of God’s revelation. Therefore:

Morality depends upon what God believes is right and wrong. This is often referred to as the “doxastic” interpretation of divine command theory. On this view God is, in effect, an ideal observer. He has all the virtues that we associate with the ideal epistemic agent and moral judge. He is *impartial*, since He loves all persons equally; He is rational and thus makes no errors of reasoning; and He has full information, so He will not be making mistakes on the basis of partial information (Driver 2007: 27).

The doxastic version of the Divine command theory is the most reasonable and adequate for a normative ethical theory because it accounts for a universal description which is necessary for evaluating both character and actions. Bretzke (2004: 99), in his discussion of how Scripture is meant to function as a normative voice in moral issues, supports Divine command theory by noting that:

I believe from the perspective of fundamental moral theology the question becomes one of how we can take the Bible off the shelf and bring it back into ethical discussions in a way which uses Scripture in a constructive and authentic dialogical manner – a way that may not “clinch” moral arguments from the start by closing off any subsequent debate or discussion, but through a process that will allow the voice of Scripture to be heard, engaged, and evaluated in a manner that properly forms and informs both our character and our moral reasoning which flows out of that character.

Therefore, this theological view, to some extent, seems to be providing an anthropological horizon that opposes most ethical theories that begin their investigation with human nature.

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<sup>205</sup> “All who sin apart from the law will also perish apart from the law, and all who sin under the law will be judged by the law. **13** For it is not those who hear the law who are righteous in God’s sight, but it is those who obey the law who will be declared righteous. **14** (Indeed, when Gentiles, who do not have the law, do by nature things required by the law, they are a law for themselves, even though they do not have the law. **15** They show that the requirements of the law are written on their hearts, their consciences also bearing witness, and their thoughts sometimes accusing them and at other times even defending them.) **16** This will take place on the day when God judges people’s secrets through Jesus Christ, as my gospel declares. **17** Now you, if you call yourself a Jew; if you rely on the law and boast in God;

So this research proposes that an ethical theory or worldview which has a universal character is a theistic worldview referred to as *imago Dei*, which draws its formulations and perspectives from a theological perspective. However, the difficulty here is one of making theology relevant to current public discourse.

Stout (2001: 163) mourns the fact that “Academic theology seems to have lost its voice, its ability to command attention as a distinctive contributor to public discourse in our culture”. Further on he remarks that “this dilemma is by now a familiar one, much remarked upon by theologians themselves. To gain a hearing in our culture, theology has often assumed a voice not its own and found itself merely repeating the bromides of secular intellectuals in transparently figurative speech.”

As a result most societies have become secularized and have done all they can to discount, undermine, and marginalize any religious views on most disciplines, even in the discipline of theological ethics. Hence, this dissertation makes a case for a particular biblical worldview – *imago Dei*, as sufficient to resolve the ethical dilemmas of this day; drawing its moral use from Paul’s correspondence with the Corinthians.

The beginning point and foundation of Paul’s ethic are the unity of life and action of the new being as participation in the Christ event. Jesus Christ provides both the foundation and the character for the Christian life, and Christians are those who live in the sphere of Christ by the power of the Spirit and whose actions correspond to this new being... Pauline paraclesis aims at a life lived in accord with the Christ event and points to an inner concord between the gospel that is believed and the gospel as lived. It is a matter of knowing and living out the innate unity of faith and life in the power of the Spirit. The Pauline ethic is equally an ethic of command and an ethic of insight (Schnelle 2007: 322-328).<sup>206</sup>

In light of this ethic, this research developed the idea that the *imago Dei* will also help one to understand New Testament ethics within the framework of an anthropological horizon, and that the notion of the *imago Dei* is an adequate account of explaining the essence of New Testament ethics. In relation to accepting the message of the New Testament, this research also showed how the *imago Dei* worldview underpins Pauline ethics and can serve as a framework of understanding Pauline ethics as normative for all humanity.

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<sup>206</sup> See Schnelle (2007:322-328) where he discusses at length the Pauline new way of life for those who are participating in their new being through the Christ event, as seen in practice.

This research outlined the various dimensions of the *imago Dei* concept and explained how all these influence the understanding of New Testament ethics. Given that the nature of the *imago Dei* is comprehensive, it is therefore plausible to suggest that it is a sufficient account for constructing an ethical paradigm. Through this, this will enable one to answer some of the pressing contemporary ethical issues. One needs to understand the message of the *imago Dei* and its bearing on New Testament ethics, in order to recognize how Paul uses this notion to address some of the ethical matters within the faith communities he engaged with.

This research undertook an interdisciplinary approach and drew on various disciplines from biblical theology to systematic theology, to philosophy, to anthropology, to history, to sociology, and to ethics. As, it firstly concerned itself with exploring the theme of the *imago Dei* from its first mention in the biblical narrative of Genesis and within the whole Old Testament discourse, and proposed its relevance as it had a bearing within the New Testament, particularly New Testament ethics.

The *imago Dei* is presented as a worldview because it has all the elements that are at the core of a worldview; in outlining the dominant worldviews – both secular and religious or those that have a theistic and those that are atheistic – one discovered that the *imago Dei* is unique. Thus, the discussion of the *imago Dei* as a worldview led to the conclusion that this phenomenon underpins New Testament ethics and it particularly guides Paul's reflections on humanity as the offspring of God.

As the study looked closely at the Genesis 1:26 – 28 narrative as the foundational text for exploring the concept of the *imago Dei* within the biblical narrative, the study considered the different dimensions of the notion; beginning with the ontological dimension and moving on to constructing the epistemological, cosmological, teleological, and moral dimensions of the theme of the *imago Dei*. Being mindful that within the history of the existence of man, many definitions of humanity have evolved and others followed the religious stream of thinking whilst the others adopted a more secular definition of humanity.

The research explored the different dominant definitions as anthropological horizons and made a case for the biblical Christianity's definition as the most adequate in addressing all the basic matters of humanity, as the other definitions proved insufficient.

The debate between religious ethics versus secular ethics is introduced because modern anthropology no longer considers the Christian tradition definition in its secular, religious indifference, and so making a case for the Bible as necessary for forming normative ethics is critical.

Paul's "worlds": the Jewish, Greek, and Roman world is discussed because they influenced his worldview. The research focused on the Corinthian correspondence because Paul's letters to Corinth are substantial. Moreover, understanding Paul's use of the Hebrew notion of the *imago Dei* requires one to understand Paul's Jewish heritage. Therefore, the setting and sources of Paul's ethics lay a foundation for his use of the *imago Dei* in his letters.

An ethic found on the *imago Dei* is constructed from the exegesis of the various passages, within the Corinthian Correspondence, and in the process of linking them, the ethical norms are developed. As a result, a study on the Christological hymn of Philippians 2:5 – 11, is used in this research as an illustration to prove that for Paul, Christ, as the perfect representation and reflection of the *imago Dei*, is the perfect example for believers – and all of humanity – to emulate.

This identity could be appropriated by all of humanity, as the *imago Dei* has a universal scope; thus, it could be attained by people of all races, in their different sexes, in their different ethnic groups, throughout all generations, in all geographical locations they may find themselves. For instance, in the South African context, the geographical location I currently live in, there has been an attempt by many organisations – including the national political government – to resolve the hostilities between different races, ethnic groups, and different nationalities which have been characterized by violence and hate speech; however, It seems that the approaches to resolve these matters have been inadequate as these realities of hostility continue to raise their ugly head in the different relations, which have resulted in expressions such as racism, xenophobia, and sexism.

Thus, this thesis proposes that the appropriation of the *imago Dei weltanschauung* by all individuals and the adoption of this worldview by all communities will introduce an ethical framework that promotes personhood, peace, and prosperity, which will reorient all of humanity towards love for one another. This kind of love comes from God, as God is love, and Christ is the perfect expression of the image of God. Therefore, the formation of the *imago Dei*, as the identity every human being must embrace and be conformed to, is an important feature in the development of the ethical individual and society!

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