

**A critical analysis of pastoral and bishopric
appointment and self-appointment in the African
Pentecostal church in Ndola, Zambia, based on 1
Timothy 3:1-7**

**by
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Summary

The case for pastoral appointment or self-appointment within the African Pentecostal church in Zambia highlights a current contemporary challenge in indigenous Pentecostal and charismatic churches in Africa. While considering the subject a critical issue, very little has been done to address the challenges it poses.

This study explores 1 Timothy 3:1-7 with the view of reconciling it with the current praxis of bishopric and pastoral appointments and (self)-appointments within the African Pentecostal church in Ndola, Zambia. The text is discussed from the perspective of its first recipients and suggested author. Various principles are drawn from the New Testament text that are applied to a specific ecclesiastical circumstance. Varying usage of the concept of elder within the Old, New and intertestamental period is considered. The emergence of bishops within the church and their subsequent roles within judicial and political arenas are covered.

The issue of gender restriction within the broader evangelical body and the African Pentecostal church is covered extensively. The position of mainline evangelical bodies on the role of women in assuming pastoral and bishopric office(s) is presented. The case of female ordination as presented by proponents and opponents of the concept is discussed in detail. This study argues the urgency and need of formulating a concise document on the appointment or self-appointment of clerical leaders in the African Pentecostal church.

The study indicates that the African Pentecostal church in Ndola lacks a well-defined structure and policy on the appointment of clerical leaders. The primary reason for this challenge is the absence of theological trained clergy within the church who promote theological formation. The study concludes with a summary of the relevant constraints. Possible recommendations for further studies in New Testament and contemporary systematic theology are highlighted.

Key terms

1. Pentecostalism
2. African Pentecostal churches
3. Bishop
4. Elder
5. Pastor
6. Pastoral appointment
7. Pastoral self-appointment
8. Ethiopianism
9. Monarchial episcopate
10. Gender restriction
11. Complementarianism
12. Egalitarianism
13. Moderate Evangelicals
14. Non-evangelicals

Declaration

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that the work contained in this dissertation is my own original work and has not previously been submitted by me for a degree at this or any other tertiary institution.

MT Bumie

20 February 2018

Dedication

“Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen” (1 Tm 1:17).

This work is dedicated to all members of my family, especially my wife Prolyn Bumie, my grandmother Gartay Betty Gonkewon, my aunts Laurie Mamie Gonkewon, Amelia Mawah, and my mother Marie Troah. My mother-in-law, Frances Neah has been very supportive over the years. Thanks for always affirming God’s call upon my life.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 FORMULATION OF THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

Scholars have sought to outline the basis of bishopric and pastoral (self)appointment in the African Pentecostal church with no avail. Many have struggled to determine whether these appointments should be carried out by congregational bodies, by a designated group of church leaders, or by the individuals assuming these offices. Even though there is a fair bit of information available on issues related to the subject, research done in the fields of New Testament Studies and Systematic Theology indicate that there is an absence of a comprehensive study on this subject.

The purpose of this study is to attempt a remedy to the contemporary challenges that exist in regard to the (self)appointment of bishopric and pastoral leaders based on the model of 1 Timothy 3:1-7. The issue of gender restriction among certain sections of evangelicals has reignited the debate which has existed from antiquity. The proliferation of self-attributed titles and offices among African Pentecostal churches has also resuscitated an age-long skepticism.

There has been series of misunderstanding about the appointment and (self)appointment of pastoral leaders in the African Pentecostal church in Ndola, Zambia. While a majority of missiological writings have advocated for churches that are self-governing, self-supporting and self-propagating¹, it has become evident that most of these churches lack a clearly constructed theological premise for their operations.

The idea of establishing churches that possess the three selves (self-governing, self-supporting and self-propagating) “became part of accepted missionary strategy between 1840 and 1870 which is generally attributed to the intellectual and theological power and persuasiveness of Rufus Anderson and Henry Venn” (Williams 1990:1). It can be argued that in addition to the three selves, a fourth self

¹ See Williams (1990:1) for further reading on the role of Anderson and Duff

would be the (self)appointment of clerical leaders, a subject that is examined in this study. A major challenge posed by (self)appointing leaders is the lack of supervision from other independent bodies, and the absence of a clear path of maturity for the members of the local congregation.

(Self)appointment of pastoral and bishopric leaders also poses a credibility challenge. Many within the wider evangelical body, and those from without, struggle to accept leaders who ascend to clerical offices without credible recommendation. They often emerge on the stage of ministry without prior training or mentorship. While some view the self-appointed leaders with skepticism others project misconceived thoughts about their gifting and qualifications.

The misconception presented by the (self)appointment of leaders has greatly influenced the outlook of ecclesial leadership on the continent. Some non-African leaders have attributed different terminology to this phenomenon. Anyone studying African church history will realize that from the onset of the Pentecostal Movement in Africa, the African churches sought to gain some form of independence from their Western counterpart. "Missionaries understood Ethiopianism to be the proliferation of independent African churches under self-appointed African pastors" (White & Daughton 2012:296). While the proliferation of churches may be seen as a great method of fulfilling the great commission, it also came with the absence of control and supervision. Most independent churches lack supervision and are directly exposed to unilateral control by its leaders.

It is worth mentioning that while Ethiopianism is viewed as the initial system of independence of African churches, it does not fully equate to Pentecostalism. Kalu (2008:viii) correctly indicates that "many scholars perceive followers of Ethiopianism as cultural nationalists and hardly connect them with Pentecostalism".

White and Daughton (2012:296) define Ethiopianism as "any advocacy, civil or religious, of equal rights or any independent, unregulated sphere of actions for Africans". In this context, Ethiopianism refers to the establishment of independent churches which does not consist of any form of external supervision upon the local churches. One can confirm that this belief of self-government has not been uniquely

restricted to the church. Politicians presented a similar message of hope and civil emancipation throughout the liberation struggles.

Kalu (2008:viii) adds that “Ethiopianism was a muscular movement that operated with a certain theodicy claiming that God has not deserted Africans to their humiliations but has raised a people to restore Africa’s lost glory”. Ethiopianism just like Pentecostalism, emphasize a message of hope and redemption. Its leaders believe that the season of African dominance in ecclesial environment is about to dawn.

A major challenge posed by the independent churches is that “the pastors exercise unlimited dictatorial power over the congregations” (Jenkins 2004:74). The pastor is allowed to exercise unlimited control over the church and in most cases, he/she is not subjected to any system of check and balance of power.

1.2 DEFINITION OF KEY TERMINOLOGIES

A few principal terms need a clear definition and understanding for the purpose of this study, namely Pentecostalism, African Pentecostal church(es), and bishop, elder, and pastor. In this study, these terms will be used with the following meanings:

Pentecostalism

Pentecostalism may be understood as that stream of Christianity that emphasizes personal salvation in Christ as a transformative experience wrought by the Holy Spirit; and in which such pneumatic phenomena as speaking in tongues, prophecies, visions, healing, miracles, and signs and wonders in general, are sought, accepted, valued, and consciously encouraged among members as evidence of the active presence of God's Spirit.

(Asamoah-Gyadu 2013:389)

Pentecostals place a great deal of emphasis on the present work of the Holy Spirit in the lives of the converted individuals. Schlemmer (2008:12) indicates that “at its core is usually a re-conversion experience called baptism by or with the Holy Spirit, harking back to the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the first Christians in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost”.

African Pentecostal church(es)

It may be difficult to accurately pen an accurate or unanimous definition of African Pentecostalism, not “because it is still evolving and changing rapidly, but the proliferation of division and innovation is dizzying” (Ukah 2007:9). While it seems difficult to come to a consensus about some form of unanimous description, the following classification may be made:

African Pentecostal churches may be categorized as a branch of Pentecostalism which has its origin from the indigenous individuals who emphasize the present works and power of the Holy Spirit in the African church. These churches are characterized by healing, miracles, deliverance and other supernatural manifestations. Park (2013:124) indicates that “in African Pentecostal churches, the power of the Holy Spirit is more than just spiritual significance. It means dignity, authority and power over all types of oppression. The power of the Holy Spirit gives believers liberation”.

African Pentecostals equally emphasize the priesthood of all believers, the active manifestation of the power of God through believers, a call to holiness, and dominion over evil forces. Schlemmer (2008:12) notes in addition that “Pentecostals also emphasized and to varying extents still emphasise moral rigour, a literal interpretation of the Bible, and the commitment to seek salvation before Christ’s Second Coming”.

According to Ukah (2007:9), “three distinct strands (of Pentecostalism) may be identified although some of these overlap at significant points²: i) Classical/Mission Pentecostal Churches; ii) Indigenous/Independent Pentecostal Churches and, iii) New Pentecostals/Charismatic churches/Ministries”.

While Pentecostal churches in general share a lot of similarities, the African Pentecostal church should be recognized for its distinctive elements. “African Pentecostalism did not originate from Azusa Street and is not an extension of the American electronic church” (Kalu 2008:viii). While this argument remains true, it can

² See Ukah (2009:9-18) for detailed explanation on each of these divisions.

be added that Western Pentecostalism have had some influence on African Pentecostalism. Western Pentecostal denominations, like the Assemblies of God, have had significant work done on the African continent. These denominations equally possess a huge following on the African continent.

Bishop, elder, and pastor

The terms pastor, elder, bishop, and overseer are used interchangeably in this study and are therefore considered to be synonymous. Bixby (2005:23) defines an elder as “a bishop and a pastor who is called of God and affirmed by a church to lead, shepherd, and teach the church; to prepare it as the bride of Christ; and to present it growing, maturing, and set apart for the chief Shepherd who shall judge and reward him”. This definition englobes the duties and responsibilities of the elder and perfectly fits his/her scope of operations.

While most scholars agree that the terms may be used interchangeably, some argue that pastors should be treated separately because they are not used in the same manner as overseer in the original language. Merkle (2004:46) argues in counter-argument that “although the term pastor does not occur in the Pastoral Epistles, it is clear that it refers to the same office as the elder or overseer”. The position of this study is that while pastor and elder or bishop may not have the same semantics in the original language, it appears that they are used to refer to the individuals.

1.3 RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

Resane (2008:7) accurately indicates that “church polity is a wide field and calls for extensive research. Proliferation of ideas and diversity within this ecclesiastical concern is complex”. This study concentrates on examining a biblical text with the goal of extracting principles that could be applicable to a current ecclesiastical situation.

Osuagwu (2016:4) suggests “that every interpreter should begin by first acknowledging that the context of interpretation is dynamic and progressive and thus changes from time to time and from place to place”. While acknowledging the complex and dynamic nature of biblical interpretation, the basic principles of hermeneutics needs to be taken into account throughout the process. Scholars and

students of Biblical theology need not only adopt a method of interpretation that suits their objective(s), but also consider one that accurately examines the text and situation being discussed.

Clines (1995:92) argues that scholars are “not all engaged in some objective quest for determinate meanings, and that our ideologies, our locations, our interests and our personalities determine our scholarship”. It can be argued that while most researchers seek to be as objective as possible in their analysis, study has shown that there has always been some level of subjectivity. Every form of subjectivity in this objective study are considered to be the shortfalls of the student.

Finally, this study engages in presenting a diversity of views about different theological issues considered allowing each reader to endorse a unique position which may not necessarily be endorsed by the student. The multiplicity of views allows one to consider the arguments of different scholarly groups.

1.4 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The purpose of this study is not to present a new interpretation of or final exegetical remarks on 1 Timothy 3. Rather, this study wants to expose existing interpretations, and apply the relevant principles to contemporary ecclesiology.

The necessity of ongoing study which examines and reconciles the ancient and the contemporary meaning of a text resonates with this study. Issues about the context, authorship, audience are discussed. Considering that recent ecclesiological praxis has significantly challenged the adequacy of Biblical norms and practices, it has become evident that one needs to embark upon a study that examines the subject of clerical appointment and (self)appointment from a closer perspective. This study might possibly help in presenting a unified front regarding the appointment of bishops and pastors based on lessons derived from 1 Timothy.

This study then, in short, investigates the Biblical basis of pastoral and bishopric appointment and (self)-appointment within a twenty-first century church located in Ndola, Zambia. Exegetical concepts are drawn from 1 Timothy 3:1-7 which are then applied to this church and denomination.

1.5 METHODOLOGY

Biblical exegetes and interpreters have adopted different methods for linguistic and exegetical studies over the centuries. Osuagwu (2016:5) indicates that “the first is the more traditional diachronic or historical critical method. The second methodological consideration is synchronic reading of the text”. Other methods of interpretation used in biblical studies are reader response criticism, and social-scientific criticism. This study is literary and descriptive in its approach, and gleans from some of these methodologies.

The general procedure of this study can be broken down into the following steps: The historical critical approach is used to understand the underlying historical occasion presented by the author of the Pastoral Epistles. This brings to light the various historical and cultural allusions of the text. The synchronic method is also used to understand the theoretical arguments of the text in a given period. There are also literary examinations of the immediate context along with the canonical arguments that are often postulated. Grammatical and lexical documents are consulted as well to ascertain the full understanding of the pericope.

There is also an exegetical synthesis which presents exegetical findings of the author’s intended message and the major concerns that are covered. The relationship of the motifs and concerns to the historical setting of the book are treated with great deal of attention.

The main exegetical work is found in Chapter 3 of the study. The exegetical study is considered as a single discourse unit which coherently identifies the opening and closing boundary of the text. This unit is subdivided into various phrases and clauses based on their syntactical dominance. Each phrase is examined in great detail with special emphasis placed on the difficult interpretational issues. The grammatical, lexical and contextual particularities of the text are discussed. Insights from commentators aide significantly in identifying the hints of the original meaning of the text that would have been conveyed by the original author to the initial audience.

Apart from the exegetical work, a considerable section of the study uses comparative tools to compare the similarities and differences of each view discussed.

The issue of gender restriction within church leadership structure is also explored. Various works dealing with the promotion of women to clerical responsibility especially after the second World War are explored. These are compared with the biblical interpretation of women within church leadership responsibilities. The works of Lister (2004), Rogers (2009), Hoehner (2007), and Belleville (2003) are critical to this aspect of the study.

1.6 HERMENEUTICAL AND EXEGETICAL CHALLENGES

Contemporary students and interpreters of the New Testament are confronted with series of challenges in their study of the Pastoral Epistles. The challenges mentioned in the Pastoral Epistles can either be classified under the hermeneutical or exegetical concerns. Köstenberger (2010:1) indicates that the major “hermeneutical challenges include the Pastorals’ authorship, genre and matters related to their historical background”. Pauline authorship of the Pastoral Epistles was commonly accepted until the nineteenth century when scholars began to reject this consensus. Recent scholarships have presented a robust case for pseudonymous authorship of the Pastoral Epistle. Scholars³ arguing for a later pseudonymous writer indicate that the “divergence is now seen to be even wider and to go deeper than had been realized hitherto” (Harrison 2016:45).

“The authorship of the Pastoral Epistles continues to be a major topic of scholarly debate. The authenticity of Paul’s correspondence with Timothy and Titus went largely unchallenged until the nineteenth century” (Köstenberger 2010:1). Full argument about the authorship of the Pastoral Epistles is examined in-depth in the subsequent chapter. Pro and counter-claims about the authorship of the Pastoral Epistles along with the relevant evidences are adequately presented by the leading scholars on the subject.

Having covered the major hermeneutical challenges, it can be indicated that “the exegetical issues pertain to the question of proper church leadership and other matters related to the two major ecclesiastical offices of elder or overseer and

³ See Harrison (2016:137-139) for further argument on the statistical inconsistency between the Pastorals Epistles and other Pauline Epistles.

deacon, respectively” (Köstenberger 2010:1). This study discusses the former while allowing discussions of the latter to amplify the arguments raised about the former.

In regard to the exegetical perspective, there are basically two propositions presented. One group of scholars argues that the Pastoral Epistles transcends a specific situation and was written as a general letter. The other group suggests that the Pastoral Epistles was an *ad hoc* document written to address a specific ecclesiastical situation. These claims reveal that there are several exegetical questions that remain unanswered in the Pastoral Epistles. Köstenberger (2010:160) proposes that “an adjudication of Paul’s teaching on these issues in the Pastorals is needed all the more as the relevant passages present several major exegetical challenges, which is part of the reason why issues related to church government continue to be hotly debated and disputed today”.

Finally, several arguments have arisen over the uniqueness of different features in the Pastoral Epistles. Köstenberger (2010:6) acknowledges that “an important issue that is often not given adequate weight in the discussion is the significant number of historical particularities featured in the Pastorals”. These particularities are used to argue for the case of Deutero-Pauline authorship.

1.7 OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

This study falls under the field of New Testament studies and Biblical exegesis, and utilizes the commentary approach. The structure is a slight modification of Smith’s⁴ pattern. The study has the following outline:

Chapter 1: Introduction

Chapter one gives a general orientation of the study. It covers the introduction of the problem, the reason behind the topic of research. It covers the foundation and provides the scope of the study.

⁴ See Smith 2008:169-182 for a proposition of the plausible roadmap exegetical outlines for works in Biblical exegesis.

Chapter 2: Historical background of the Pastoral Epistles

Chapter 2 takes into account the general background, the historical context of the epistle, the literary structure and argument, the major theological themes and motifs. The Chapter provides an analysis of what the epistle teaches about themes relevant to the research problem.

Chapter 3: Exegesis of 1 Timothy 3:1-7

Chapter 3 is the heart of the exegetical work in the study. It divides the pericope into discourse units which indicates the opening and closing boundaries of each paragraph. The discourse unit is also divided into major phrases and clauses which are analyzed exegetically. The exegetical meaning of the text is discussed in this chapter to serve as a precursor to understanding the appointment or (self)-appointment of clerical leaders. There will be a section focusing on the historical occasion of the issue which the author addresses in his writing.

Chapter 4: An investigation into the development of the appointment of overseers, elders or bishops along with views on gender restrictions for ecclesial offices

Chapter 4 deals with the appointment of bishops, overseers, elders and pastors in the early church, and its development in the African Pentecostal church in Ndola, Zambia. A section of Chapter 4 also concentrates on gender-restriction of bishops and pastors. The role and the usage of the gifts of women is examined.

Chapter 5: Elders in the Old and New Testament

Chapter 5 discusses the concept of elders in the Old and New Testament along with the intertestamental period. The origin of eldership and the different arguments relating to the subject are discussed. Various scholarly views relating to gender-restriction and the implications it presents for women in contemporary ecclesial leadership are discussed.

Chapter 6: Contemporary significance and challenges

Chapter 6 explicates the contemporary significance and challenge of bishopric and pastoral (self)appointment along with the debate surrounding female ordination. A practical case is also presented.

Chapter 7: Constraints, deductions and recommendations from the study

Finally, chapter seven provides a summary of the study and covers the constraints, deductions and a list of tentative recommendations for further study. It concludes the study by reviewing the major discussions that were covered during different stages of process.

1.8 SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS

This work encompasses a study of 1 Timothy 3:1-7 with application to the African Pentecostal church in Ndola, Zambia. It is a literary study that applies principles to a contemporary scenario. The focus is on clerical appointment and (self)-appointment within a specified church. The historical, cultural and socio-economic context of the church in Ephesus will serve as a background for the study. The historical context of Ephesus will help enlighten one's understanding of the church that existed in that ancient city.

Chapter 2

Historical background of the Pastoral Epistles

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The question of authorship and the historical issues surrounding New Testament texts and other ancient texts remain a major area of interest among contemporary biblical scholars. The reason behind this interest is the belief that an understanding of the historical issues will guide the interpreter in his understanding of these texts on issues and provide a glimpse into the world of the writer and his audience.

Uncovering the original historical context, and the relevant issues surrounding it, enables the interpreter to have an idea of the possible conditions that existed before, during and in some instances after the period in which the text originated.

Considering that first-and second-century church history is not always accurately developed, the possibility of reconstructing events in the church has often influenced the writings of many scholars. This is often based on the collection of various theories, facts and hypotheses that the researchers may deem necessary. Most often, these details are incomplete and often result in disagreement among scholars.

Never has any of the Pauline letters received more criticism in history than the Pastoral epistles. Various views have been presented about the writer of the Pastorals.

The major scholarly arguments relating to the authorship of the Pastoral Epistles can be categorized into four basic categories: “(a) the authentic hypothesis, (b) the secretary hypothesis, (c) the fragment hypothesis, and (d) the pseudonymous hypothesis” (Smith 2000:100).

2.2 BACKGROUND

Even though these letters are often referred to as Pastoral Epistles [letters], a study of the role of the two men, Timothy and Titus, to whom it was written, reveal that they were not permanent resident pastors, but apostolic delegates assigned with specific task(s). Köstenberger (2003:8-9) indicates that the Pastorals are not so much advice to younger ministers or generic manuals of church order as they are Paul's instruction to his special delegates, set toward the closing of the apostolic era at a time when the aging apostle would have felt a keen responsibility to ensure the orderly transition from the apostolic to the post-apostolic period.

This general norm/specific distinction needs to be consistently maintained throughout interpretation of various passages.

2.3 AUTHORSHIP

Questions regarding the authorship of the Pastorals have dominated conversations on the canonicity and authenticity more than any letter attributed to Paul. New Testament scholars differ on their conclusions on authorship. Three arguments are presented on the authorship of the Pastorals: 1) The epistles were either written by Paul; 2) a scribal service⁵ and 3) the epistle is pseudonymous that is, they were written by someone else who attributed them to Paul. The issue of pseudonymity can be divided into two categories. Some believe that the pseudonymous letters contain Pauline fragments while others believe that the letters do not contain any fragment from Paul⁶. The positions taken by scholars depend on whether they accept that accounts in the Pastoral Epistles "is the actual situation or whether it is part of a fictitious representation of an early period" (Marshall 2004:53).

There have been a few propositions about the problem of authorship of the Pastoral Epistles. Smith (2000:20-22) classifies the question of authorship under three major schools of thoughts i.e. "the critical school, the conservative school and the

⁵ When referring to scribal service, some argue that Paul dictated the epistles while others state that he granted the secretary (amanuensis) liberty to write the content in his own words and language. This justifies the argument of the difference in vocabulary and style.

⁶ These pseudonymous writers are considered to be fictitious or anonymous. The historical background is believed to have been reconstructed to persuade readers of the veracity of the Epistles.

continuity school”, while Guthrie (1990:23-24) provides the following groups of persons as possible suggestions for author(s) of the Pastoral Epistles: “Paul, Timothy and Titus, an editor and a later Paulinist”. These supposed authors are further examined below:

2.3.1 Paul

The case for Pauline authorship of the Pastorals rests “on two grounds - internal (the claims which the letters make that they were written by the apostle), and external (the acceptance of the letters as genuine by the church from the earliest days until the last century” (Stott 1996:22). Supporters of this view believe that the internal evidence is so explicit that it invalidates the claims that the Epistles were written by pseudonymous writers. The writer of the Pastoral Epistles introduces himself as Paul (1 Tm 1:1; Tt 1:2; 2 Tm 1:1), and goes on to indicate that he is an apostle of Jesus Christ which is based on the command or will of God. He also introduces Timothy (who was left in Ephesus) and Titus (who was based in Crete) as the recipients of the Epistles.

All of the Pastoral Epistles also contain personal messages addressed to the recipients. In 1 Timothy, Paul “makes a number of personal references to his (Timothy’s) ordination (1:18; 4:14), and his youthfulness (4:11ff.). In Titus, there are fewer personal references. The second letter to Timothy is the most personal of the three” (Stott 1996:23).

Apart from Stott (1996), a great number of conservative scholars such as Donald Guthrie (1957), William Hendriksen (1957), Philip H. Towner (1994), Joachim Jeremias (1934) and Newport J.D. White (1910), just to name but a few, believe that Paul himself wrote the Pastoral Epistles. “The conservative school defends the Pauline authorship of the Pastoral Epistles, interpreting them as authentic letters from Paul to Timothy and Titus written in about 65 C.E.” (Smith 2000:21). They place the writing of the Pastoral Epistles after Paul’s release from his first Roman imprisonment as indicated in Acts 28:11-31.⁷

⁷ Critics of Pauline authorship reject the reconstruction of the Pastorals based on the accounts in Acts. The two views on chronology of the Pastorals will be discussed below.

When considering the language, “they (pro-Pauline scholars) acknowledge the fact that the differences in style and vocabulary are difficult to explain, but regard the theological content of the Pastoral Epistles as being thoroughly Pauline in content, with allowance made for differences in emphasis” (Smith 2000:22). These conservative scholars reject the possibility that there has been an inclusion of pseudepigraphal writings within the Pastoral Epistles either intentionally or unintentionally. Other

scholars who are determined to retain genuine authorship by Paul paint a portrait of an old man, broken by hardship and years, fearful for the future, unable any longer to think through to his magnificent old doctrinal formulations and concerned only to instruct his two beloved disciples in the preservation of doctrine and Church structure after his fast-approaching death.

(Wansbrough 2015:304)

These external factors might have significantly affected his literary composition.

Pro-Pauline scholars also believe that the case for Pauline authorship is strongly supported by the salutation of the Epistles and the testimony of the early church. Stott (1996:24) argues that the genuineness of the Pastoral Epistles “was almost universally accepted by the church from the beginning”. He goes on to indicate that “the letters from Clement of Rome to the Corinthians (c. AD 95), from Ignatius of Antioch to the Ephesians (c. AD 110), from Polycarp to the Philippians (c. AD 117)” all affirm overwhelmingly the Pauline authorship of the Pastoral Epistles. These external witnesses remained popular until when “Friedrich Schleiermacher rejected 1 Timothy in 1807 and F.C. Baur rejected all three letters in 1835” (Stott 1996:24).⁸ The argument raised by these critics have reignited the debate on the authorship of the Pastorals.

Other conservative scholars who hold to the use of an amanuensis believe that “because of the close linguistic affinity of the Pastorals with Luke-Acts, it has been suggested that Luke may have been responsible for the stylistic peculiarities” (Guthrie 1990:23).

⁸ The statistical work of P.N Harrison (1921:52) has greatly contributed to the argument against Pauline authorship.

2.3.2 Timothy and Titus

Certain schools of thought believe that the Pastoral Epistles are “Deutero-Pauline, that is to say, composed by a disciple of Paul who attributed them to the pen of his master” (Stott 1996:22). Some of the proposed disciples are Timothy, Titus, Luke or other later writers. But, Malina and Pilch (2013:67) however argue that “these Epistles are foreign and it is very likely that Paul’s companions, Timothy and Titus, were also dead at the time of the composition of these letters.”⁹

Another theory suggested indicates that “the two close associates of Paul edited the Pauline material in their possession and published it in the form in which we now possess it” (Guthrie 1990:23). Scholars who support this argument at times also include Luke, the physician as one of the possible Deutero-Pauline writers of the Epistles. These scholars believe that the content of the Epistles was not altered in any way, except that it was compiled by different close associates.

2.3.3 An editor

This view is basically a modification of the two previous views. Those who are not convinced that Titus, Timothy or Luke are possible alternatives propose that “some other person edited the Pauline material which came into his possession and arranged the notes in their present form shortly after Paul’s death” (Guthrie 1990:24). The challenge of this view is that those who argue against Pauline authorship do not speak against the issue of the rearrangement of the materials but rather against the fact that someone wrote the epistles and attributed them to Paul.

2.3.4 A later Paulinist

The case of a later Paulinist combines the arguments raised by the critical school of thought with that of the conservative school of thought. “It embraces the critical school’s conclusion that the Pastoral Epistles are pseudepigraphal writings but also reflects the influence of the conservative school’s attempt to prove their genuinely Pauline character” (Smith 2000:22).

⁹ Malina and Pilch (2013:67) contrast the ‘real Timothy’ as a much older person who was already dead, as opposed to the younger figure presented in the Pastoral Epistles.

Those advocating for a later Paulinist authorship accept the argument raised by the continuity school of thought which proposes that “the author has attempted to make Paul’s ideas speak afresh to his own historical situation, a situation that differed substantially from those that Paul actually addressed” (Smith 2000:22). This Paulinist perfectly understood Pauline thoughts, and tried to convey it to his audience through his writing.

Malina and Pilch (2013:67) suggest that “more specifically, then, these letters originated from a third-generation Pauline Jesus-group in Ephesus” whom they refer to as ‘the Pastor’. He may have written after the death of Paul, Timothy and Titus.

As Harding (1998:31) puts it, “no other document from the post-Pauline era is so closely oriented to Paul’s own thought than the PE”. Whether it be through Paul’s own composition, or that of his disciples, the ideas in the Epistles remain strongly connected to the apostle.

2.3.5 Other pseudonymous writers

The fifth category of possible authors of the Pastoral Epistles are pseudonymous authors. The pseudonymous writer is viewed as “a devout, sincere and earnest Paulinist, who lived in Rome or Ephesus, and wrote the Pastorals at the beginning of the reign of the Emperor Hadrian (AD 117)”. He “made no secret of the fact that he was writing under an assumed name” (Harrison, in Stott 1996:29). The writer’s intention was to counter the rise of false teaching and restore sanity in the church. He, and his collaborators, carefully studied Paul to such an extent that they could accurately articulate his thoughts.

It must be noted that each of these suggestions have weighty information to support the arguments. Considering that this study is not geared towards resolving the issue of authorship of the Pastorals, both views, Pauline and non-Pauline, will be examined. In cases where the choice of authorship can affect the overall interpretation of the pericope, the writer will express the view he seems most comfortable with.

2.3.6 Objections to Pauline authorship of the Pastoral Epistles

Objections to Pauline authorship of the Pastoral Epistles are normally based on arguments relating to chronology, epistolary format, the question of styles, vocabulary, style proper, content, theology, and the issue of pseudonymity. These arguments are discussed below.

2.3.6.1 Chronology

Until recently, the almost unanimous view held among “New Testament scholarship was that Paul is not the author of the Pastoral Epistles, although there are a few well known and outspoken voices to the contrary” (Porter 1995:106). Scholars such as Dibelius and Conzelmann (1931), Holtzmann (1880), and Gealy (1955) have argued for a non-Pauline author, while others such as Constable (2016), Fee (1985), Guthrie (1990), and Mounce (2000) have maintained the view of Pauline authorship.¹⁰

Of all the objections to the Pauline authorship of the Pastoral Epistles, more specifically of 1 Timothy, the debate on the chronology is the most discussed. Scott (1936:xvi-xvii), for example, declares, “that Paul cannot have been the author is most clearly apart when we examine the historical framework of the letters”. The argument is that “the chronological difficulty with the Pastoral Epistles is placing them within the established Pauline chronology reconstructed from the letters and Acts” (Porter 1995:108). Neither Paul’s letters nor the records in Acts give a detailed account of Paul’s travels and his life in general. There is some extent of silence that leaves one to speculate about certain details. Bringing Acts into the discussion makes the situation to appear a bit complex. “It is argued that the historical events referred to the PE do not fit into the time frame of Acts and are therefore fictitious” (Mounce 2000:lxxxiv).

Other scholars who rebuff the claims that the Pastorals are fictitious indicate that the historical account in the Pastoral Epistles is independent of the accounts in Acts. “If the historical details are taken seriously, they show a ‘second career’ after the time in Rome with which Acts concludes” (Wansbrough 2015:304). This supports the claim that Paul’s ministry is not comprehensively covered in the accounts in Acts.

¹⁰ Other contemporary scholars who promote Pauline authorship of the Pastoral Epistles include George W. Knight (1992) and Luke Timothy Johnson (2001).

When referring to the chronological detail, “one critic calls this ‘the chief argument’ proving that Paul cannot have written the Pastorals” (Hendriksen 1957:22). Harrison (1956) and Hanson (1983) are other scholars who also object to the chronological details pointing to Paul as the author of the Pastorals.

No amount of scholarly work can satisfactorily place the Pastoral Epistles within any of the periods that are often hypothesized. Whether the chronology is placed within Acts, or between the letters of Corinthians or at some stage during or after the Ephesian sojourn, there will remain issues of queries and controversies. Each of these reconstructions will have diversity of issues to address which cannot be agreed upon based on speculation.

Despite these varied criticism, Porter (1995:108) believes that “1 Timothy and Titus could easily be placed within the Pauline chronology (because) neither Paul’s letters nor Acts gives a complete chronology of Paul’s life and travels, and hence it is impossible to decide on the basis of chronological issues what to do with the Pastoral Epistles”. This leaves most proponents to place the origin of 1 Timothy to Macedonia (1 Tm 1:3; 3:14).

2.3.6.2 Epistolary format

When considering the epistolary format, it is argued that “the epistolary format of the Pastorals is sometimes said to be significantly different from the “genuine” Pauline letters, with personal matters receding into the background as church matters emerge”¹¹ (Porter 2013:65). The personal feature especially in 1 Timothy fades into the background of the letter as the author’s ecclesiological arguments unfold. Porter (1995:110) concludes that “the result is that the argument regarding a different epistolary format is not sufficient to establish non-Pauline authorship”.

2.3.6.3 The question of styles

“The matter of style continues to be highly problematic” (Porter 2013:65). Questions relating to the styles of the Pastoral Epistles normally center on two issues, that is,

¹¹ See Dibelius and Conzelmann (1972) for an earlier presentation of this position.

the vocabulary of the Epistles and the style of the author. These two features are used to argue to indicate if the epistles are Pauline or not. The normal argument raised among many New Testament scholars is that the Pastoral Epistles are not Pauline or better put, they are not authentically Pauline because of the variation of their epistolary format compared to other “authentic” Pauline letters. Young notes that of the three Pastoral Epistles, 1 Timothy “affords the most difficulties. For here, personal elements fade into the background” (Porter 1994:134).

2.3.6.4 Vocabulary

The argument raised about the vocabulary centers on the issue of varying words and word-class frequencies that are used in the Pastoral Epistles. “Numerically-based studies of vocabulary continue to be indecisive, for numerous reasons regarding sample size, means of calculation, and comparison of other letters” (Porter 2013:65).

Various scholars have tried to prove how non-Pauline are the vocabulary used in the Pastoral Epistles, while several others have countered these claims. The works of Harrison and Holtzmann have been the most decisive material for English and German critics of Pauline authorship of the Pastorals. Harrison argues that:

- 1) He demonstrated that the PE have a far greater proportion of words not found elsewhere in a thirteen-letter collection of Pauline letters than any other letters in it;
- 2) Harrison argued that the vocabulary was closer to that of second century writers than Paul; and
- 3) He showed that the PE especially lack a great deal of the connective tissue found in the genuine letters.

(Marshall 2004:60)

Pro-Pauline scholars however argue that the points raised by Harrison includes series of flaws in his methodology and presentations. Despite the challenges posed by Harrison’s methods, one cannot ignore the high ratio of words in the Pastorals. There is a need for pro- Paulinist to satisfactorily answer to the facts presented.

2.3.6.5 Style proper

“The matter of style continues to be highly problematic, as there has been no decisive answer to the question of sample and the issue of what is the acceptable range of stylistic deviation for any other” (Porter 2013:65-66). The difficulty with this argument is that it seems almost impossible to ascertain which Pauline letters can be considered to be personal letters. Almost all the letters attributed to Paul, except Philemon and probably 2 Timothy are often contested because of their impersonal nature.

The whole argument about the style of the Pastoral Epistle leaves us with two unresolved issues: “The first is with the appropriate sample for discussion. The second consideration regarding style is what exactly is being determined and how significant the findings must be before it can be decided that something is or is not Pauline” (Porter 1995:109-110).

2.3.6.6 The question of content

The issue of the content of the Pastoral Epistle is basically related to the debate on formal and ostensive church offices. “In many scholar’s minds, the Pastoral Epistles appear to be referring to an established church structure” which has “formal offices (elders, overseers/ bishops, deacons) with people who occupy these positions having authority over the other members” (Porter 1995:110). This underlying thought is that an orderly succession, similar to Catholicism, recognized by the laying on of hands has replaced the exercise of the gifts of the Spirit. The institutional structure seems to be dominant over the charisma which was common in the apostolic age.

A second issue raised about the content of the Pastoral Epistles is “whether any of the practices or apparent beliefs spoken of in the Pastorals are totally unfamiliar to the authentic Pauline letters” (especially 1 Corinthians, Galatians and Colossians; Porter 1995:112). The impression is that these beliefs and practices are not adequately addressed in the Pastoral Epistles as they are treated in the authentic Pauline letters.

2.3.6.7 Questions relating to theology

Of all the arguments used to dispute Pauline authorship of the Pastoral Epistles, the strongest differences are raised on the basis of the theology of the Pastoral Epistles. Many believe that the theology of the Pastoral Epistles seems to be more developed than other Pauline writings.

When relating to the question of theology of the Pastoral Epistle, it is believed that “certain terminology that grantedly occurs in the authentic Pauline writings is used in different ways” (Porter 1995:112). Certain words or concepts which are used subjectively in the authentic Pauline Epistles are considered to be used objectively in the Pastoral Epistles. Similar words are used with different or added meaning(s). Quite often, the idea remains the same even though it connotes an added meaning. These theological variations may either be considered as theological developments which complement the meaning in other authentic Pauline Epistles, or terms that simply contradict the overall meaning, thus making them non-Pauline.

The objection of Pauline authorship of the Pastorals poses two main questions, namely “how much diversity can be found within a single author, especially when none of the ideas appear to be contradictory of established Pauline thought? How is it that they were ever and so long thought to be genuinely Pauline” (Porter 2013:66).

Having covered the question relating to the theology of the Pastoral Epistle, the eminent question that will require an answer then is whether there are pseudepigraphal writings in the New Testament and if so, whether the Pastorals are pseudepigraphal in nature.

2.3.6.8 The issue of pseudonymity

The issue of pseudonymity is a comprehensive subject of discussion and a thorough investigation of the matter cannot be fully covered in this study. Only a brief analysis of the major arguments will be addressed.

There is no doubt that pseudonymous writing was a common trend in ancient times. O'Brien (1999:40) confirms that “the question we are addressing is not whether

pseudonymous writings existed in the ancient world. They did and these included letters (even if there were relatively few)". It is further ascertained that

the evidence for this can apparently be seen in at least two ways: there are comments in the ancient writers including those of the early church regarding writings that are known to have false authorship; and there are a number of writings, especially of a literary type, such as the Platonic and Cynic letters that have been determined to be pseudonymous.¹²

(Porter 1995:114-115)

The records are clear and to a great extent they abound in regard to the existence of non-biblical pseudonymous writings in the ancient world. "Pseudonymity was a literary convention of the time, there was no deception involved, for readers would understand that ascription to an authoritative figure of the past was merely a convention of authorship" (Wansbrough 2015:297). Quite often, both the audience and the writers knew that the literature was pseudonymous.

Some even indicate that there was a fair amount of the practice of pseudonymous writing in some Christian circles, that is, other Jewish or Christian literature that were non-Canonical. The fact that these documents were non-canonical further affirms that the early church never endorsed the practice of pseudonymous writings within the Canon. When referring to the New Testament, there is no clear evidence of the inclusion of pseudonymous writings in the New Testament canon even though there are debates over anonymous documents in the New Testament. "In the New Testament also it has been vigorously argued that the gospels were originally anonymous and were subsequently (in the second century) attributed to their named authors"¹³ (Wansbrough 2015:298).

Conservative scholars argue that the early church neither encouraged nor tolerated pseudepigraphal literature.¹⁴ Some of those guilty of forgery or pseudepigraphy were punished by the church.

¹² See also Donelson (1989-23, 23-42).

¹³ Anonymous literature should not be considered necessarily as pseudonymous documents. Several scholars who disagree on pseudonymous writings in the New Testament accept that some of the New Testament texts are anonymous.

¹⁴ Liberal scholars disagree with the position presented by conservative scholars.

Three examples which clearly reflect the rejection of pseudonymous writings are mentioned as follows:

In the second century, (a) Tertullian reports that an Asian presbyter was removed from office for forging a letter in Paul's name (On Baptism 17); (b) both 3 Corinthians and the Epistle to the Laodiceans are transparent attempts, in customary apocryphal fashion, to fill in a perceived gap in canonical revelation (cf. 1 Cor 5:9; 2 Cor 2:4; 7:8; Col 4:16); and (c) the end-of-second century bishop of Antioch, Serapion (d. AD 211), sharply distinguished between apostolic writings and those that "falsely bear their names" (pseudepigrapha; cited in Eusebius, H. E. 6.12.3)

(Köstenberger 2000:3)

One can conclude from these examples that it is difficult, if not impossible, to ascertain that the early church knowingly accepted or promoted pseudonymous letters into the canon. "By contrast, at the end of the second century Bishop Serration of Antioch forbade the reading in the Church of Rhossus of the 'Gospel of Peter', on the grounds that its Christology was unsatisfactory" (Wansbrough 2015:298). Writings that conflicted with the canon were uprightly rejected.

In cases where pseudepigraphal writings existed but were not brought to the knowledge of the early Church Fathers, these writings were never promoted in church circles and were thereby excluded from the canon. From a canonical point of view "the general if not invariable pattern was that if a work was known to be pseudonymous it was excluded from the canon of authoritative writings" (Porter 1995:114). Several writers attest to this fact. Carson, Moo and Morris (2005:368-69) indicate, for example, that the "spurious epistle ascribed to Paul is the Epistle to the Laodiceans". This epistle along with the Alexandrian letters form part of the Muratorian Fragments or canon which are considered to be falsely attributed to Paul. They were excluded from the canon and were never considered to be authoritative. Literature such as the Gospel of Peter, 3 Corinthians, the Letters to the Laodiceans and a host of other documents were rejected from canonical documents.

Those who hold the view that such documents existed amongst canonical document fall short to provide an authentic defense for their point of view. Meade (1986) and

Harrison (1921) are two proponents of the ideology of the inclusion of pseudonymous literatures in the New Testament. Harrison (1921:12) states that the pseudonymous writer:

was not conscious of misrepresenting the Apostle in any way; he was not consciously deceiving anybody; it is not, indeed, necessary to suppose that he did deceive anybody. It seems more probable that those to whom, in the first instance, he showed the result of his effort must have been perfectly well aware of what he had done.

Even though this was a common practice for secular pseudonymous writing, this, however does not clearly point out that the New Testament writers engaged in this practice. Meade (1986:17-43) states that there were three major traditions used in the Old Testament which are the prophetic tradition, the wisdom tradition and the apocalyptic tradition. Of the three, the only one that seem relevant to this study is the prophetic tradition, where the writings of the anonymous authors were attached to that of the original Old Testament writer. The difficulty with accepting the two other propositions is that the genres of writings and the process of production of Old Testament prophetic writing was different from New Testament epistles. Isaiah is a prophetic literature that is anonymous, while the Pastorals are epistles attributed to a specific author from the onset of the writing.

If these writings were wrongly attributed to authors who never wrote them and if they were publicly endorsed by the recipients who had full knowledge of the false attributions, the texts are to be viewed then as misleading and untruthful.¹⁵ Donelson (2015:11) declares in counter argument to this assertion that “no one ever seems to have accepted a document as religiously and philosophically prescriptive which was known to be forged”. The act of forgery was never considered a licit practice in the early church, and the usage of that practice was never endorsed in the writings of early church fathers. The argument in favor of canonical pseudonymity, which is raised by a few scholars including F. C. Baur (1835) and H.J. Holtzmann (1880), seems to me to be not entirely convincing. “It is undeniable that one of the primary motivations behind ancient pseudepigraphy was respect for figures of the past, but

¹⁵ This will greatly challenge the credibility of Scripture and its inspiration

there is sparse evidence for the concomitant theory that these were executed innocently and openly” (Donelson 2015:10). This however may be debated by those who align to the critical school of thought contesting the authorship of the Pastoral Epistles.

The difficulty with accepting the argument raised by proponents of the pseudepigraphal conversation is that they often confuse anonymity with pseudonymity. Rist (1972:89) proposes that eighteen of the twenty-seven books of the New Testament are pseudepigraphal documents because they are considered to be anonymous and may contain a great deal of deception in their content. The truth remains however that church tradition and a great number of scholars have ascribed relevant authorship to those books. In cases where the authorship are debated (such as the Gospels), their writings are still considered to be canonical because of several other variables such as the authenticity of the narrations and its conformity with other New Testament accounts.

“There are no known explicit statements from the first several centuries of the Christian church to the effect that someone knew that the Pastoral Epistles were pseudonymous”¹⁶ (Porter 1995:115). It was rare to find Jewish authors who engaged in pseudonymous writings. Carson et al (1992:367-68) states that “only two pseudonymous letters have come down to us from Jewish sources, namely, the Epistle of Jeremy and the Letter of Aristeas, neither of which is really a letter. One of the ways in which documents were excluded from the canon was to verify if they were pseudonymous. Their inclusion in the canon was based on a robust process which took into account various interpretative, theological, exegetical and historical issues.¹⁷

It can be summarized that the Pauline authorship of the Pastorals is disputed on five grounds: “historical allusions, ecclesiastical situation, the nature of false teaching, vocabulary and style and the theology of the Pastoral Epistles” (Moss 1994:3-4).

¹⁶ On the contrary, there are several authors who endorse Pauline authorship of the Pastorals. See Porter (1995:115-116) for attestation to Pauline authorship of the Pastorals and Donelson (2006:20-22)

¹⁷ The New Testament canon was formed over a period of 250-300 years. It took into account several factors which are not all included above. See (Thomassen (2010) and McDonald (2012) for discussion on the formation of the canon.

Even though the issue of authorship of the Pastorals remain a major critical point of discussion among scholars in New Testament studies, this study believes that the argument for Pauline authorship remains the strongest and most convincing so far.

2.4 MAJOR VIEWS OF PAULINE CHRONOLOGY

When considering the Pastoral Epistles, there are basically three major views presented about Pauline chronology: “Those that hold to a post-Pauline date, sometimes reaching as late as the early second century, those that hold to a post-Acts 28 release and a second Roman imprisonment, and those that hold to composition within the Acts chronology” (Porter 2013 69).

2.4.1 Post-Pauline chronology

From a post-Pauline point of view, the Pastoral Epistles are believed to have been written by a devoted follower possibly using Pauline fragments or at least writing in the spirit of the beloved apostle, to a time in the second century by some now unknown pseudepigrapher whose intentions and procedures are now completely obscured and beyond recovery”

(Porter 2013:70)

This view is built on the fact that scholars find it difficult to fit the Pastoral Epistles (especially 1Tm) within the lifespan of Paul. Scholars supporting this view deny both Pauline authorship and any authentic audience of the epistles.

Schnelle (1998:328-329) states that the “historical situation presupposed in the Pastoral Epistles cannot be harmonized either with the data of Acts or with that of the authentic Pauline letters”. Schnelle believes that the accounts in 1 Timothy 1:3 are the opposite of what is presented in Acts and thereby contradict Paul’s journey.

2.4.2 Post-Acts 28 chronology

This view states that “the Pastoral Epistles were written in a period after Paul’s release from imprisonment in Rome as recorded in Acts 28 and up to and including a second Roman imprisonment that led to his death” (Porter 2013:72). Church tradition has it that Paul may have been possibly released after the account in Acts 28 and may have possibly engaged in further itinerant ministry before being re-arrested and

taken to Rome for a second trial and eventual death. The Post-Acts 28, just like the post-Pauline chronology, reject placing the Pastoral Epistles in the timeframe of Acts.

2.4.3 The Acts chronology

“An attempt is made to locate all three of the letters within the chronology presented in the book of Acts” (Porter 2013:77). This view is highly speculative and the least popular of the three views mentioned. Paul is believed to have written either from Corinth, Caesarea, Jerusalem or Macedonia. The challenge with all these locations is that most scholars believe the Pastoral Epistles were written from Rome. Porter (2013:77) reveals that “there are at least six versions of this proposal that have been presented”¹⁸ in reference to the Acts chronology.

It can be concluded that it will be difficult to arrive at a definitive position in relation to Pauline authorship and pseudepigraphy on the basis of Pauline chronology due to the argument raised by each of the hypothesis. Scholars will continue debating on the authorship, dates, places of writing and audience.

2.5 AUDIENCE/RECIPIENT (DESTINATION)

“The Pastoral Epistles are probably best understood as letters written to individual coworkers¹⁹ of Paul, Timothy and Titus, which were meant to be read to the congregations in which they were working (so each letter closes with a benediction addressed to “all”— 1 Tm 6:21; 2 Tm 4:22; Tt 3:15)” (Towner 1994:5). Both Timothy and Titus were young men asked to steer the leadership duties in these churches. Timothy was of mixed blood (his father was Greek, and his mother was a Jew; (Ac 16:1-3), while Titus was a non-Jew (Greek; Gl 2:3).

The geographical locations of the two cities where the recipients of the Pastoral Epistles dwelt was very strategic. Both Ephesus and Crete were key cities.

¹⁸ See Porter and Fewster (2013:77) for a review of the six views presented by Badcock, Van Bruggen, Reicke, Robinson, and Johnson.

¹⁹ See Dibelius and Conzelmann (1972:50-51), Ellis (1989:107-11) and Miller (1997:93) for a counter position to the one raised above

2.5.1 The city of Ephesus

“Ephesus was a city located on the western coast of Asia Minor (modern Turkey). Its location along a major trade route made it (like Corinth) a natural point for the church to be planted and from there influence other parts of the Roman Empire” (Towner 1994:6). The city of Ephesus was one of the strategic cities of Asia Minor. Ephesus was the “commercial hub of Asia, a transfer point of trade, melting pot of cultures, free Roman city noted for Greek influence and center of magical arts and the hub of idolatry” (Hanna 2014:230). Arnold (1989:14) consents that “of all ancient Graeco-Roman cities, Ephesus, the third largest city in the Empire, was by far the most hospitable to magicians, sorcerers, and charlatans of all sorts”. Magical practices ranging from curses, evil eye, to evil guides were widespread in Ephesus.

The temple of Diana, the Greek chief goddess, was one of the major attractions of Ephesus. Diana was considered to be the goddess of fertility. “The story was that it had fallen from heaven. The greatest glory of Ephesus was that she was the guardian of the most pagan temple in the world” (Barclay 1962:153). The goddess Diana represented the pride of the city and its people. She attracted dozens of idol worshippers and traders. The cult of Artemis was a prominent cult in Ephesus.

2.5.2 The church at Ephesus

The church at Ephesus consisted of Jews and non-Jews who congregated as one new family. “The church at Ephesus served as a mother church to other churches across the province and as a central point of ministry” (Hanna 2014:262).

Paul’s first contact with the city of Ephesus is mentioned in Acts 18:19-21. He briefly visited the synagogue but refused to tarry in the city because of his intention to spend the feast in Jerusalem. He, however, promised to return again to them. Paul returned to Ephesus during his third missionary journey recorded in Acts 19:1-10. He began to witness to the Jews (Ac 19:8) but when opposed, he concentrated on reaching the non-Jews in the school of Tyrannus (Ac 19:9). This resulted in the establishment of a mixed congregation of Jews and non-Jews (Ac 19:10). The events occurring to the sons of Sceva granted Paul a greater platform to minister the Gospel. Acts 19:17-21 states that fear gripped many, and they believed in the Lord resulting in the word of God growing mightily.

2.5.3 The Island of Crete

“Crete is an island in the Mediterranean, situated south of Greece and Asia Minor on a north-south line bisecting the Aegean Sea” (Towner 1994:6). The reputation of the Cretans was not considered to be pleasant in any way. One of their esteemed prophets called them liars, evil beasts, gluttons (Titus 1:12).

2.5.4 The church at Crete

“The churches on the island of Crete were unorganized, though there appear to have been Christians in many of its cities (Titus 1:5)” (Constable 2014:2). Titus had to set the church in order and handle the issue of false teachers. “There is no implication that Paul himself established the churches in the island” (Guthrie 1990:26). It is clear, however, that Paul had visited the Cretan church. After years of faithful service, the church became well established under the episcopal leadership of Titus.

Tradition has it that Titus, having become first bishop of Crete, died there in advanced years. His successor, Andreas Cretensis, eulogized him in the following terms: ‘The first foundation-stone of the Cretan church; the pillar of the truth; the stay of the faith; the never silent trumpet of the evangelical message; the exalted echo of Paul’s own voice’.

(Hughes 1962:76)

2.6 DATE OF WRITING

The issue of dating the Pastoral Epistles varies, based on the school of thought one aligns oneself to. Various propositions have been presented regarding the time of writing of the Pastorals. Advocates of the pseudonymous hypothesis and the fragment hypothesis “usually dated the Pastoral Epistles between 90 and 110 C.E.” while advocates of the authentic and secretary view “date the Pastoral Epistles near the end of Paul’s life, ca. 63-66 C.E.” (Smith 2000:101). Conservative scholars, like Moss (1994:6), indicate that “a date of 63-66 seems to fit the data currently available”. Other critical and liberal scholars support the argument of a second century writing which has been a prevalent thought since the nineteenth-century until recently when pro-Pauline scholarship seems to prove that the earlier dating seems to be the most accurate.

2.7 HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Developing an accurate historical scenario for the Pastoral Epistles remain a huge challenge for scholars who support Pauline authorship of the Pastorals. It appears that the details in the Pastoral Epistles does not always fit with the ones recorded in Luke's account in Acts and the Pauline letters. "It is suggested that the author of these letters has manufactured allusions that would give the impression of an historical setting" (Carson & Moo 2005:561).

"From 1 Timothy and Titus one gathers that Paul is moving about freely and is not in prison, as he was when he wrote the "Prison Epistles" (Knight 1992:5). It is also clear that Paul left Timothy in Ephesus²⁰ to fight against heresies, while Titus was left in Crete to appoint the right elders in every town when he went to Macedonia (1 Tm 1:3). It is possible that Paul may have had some contact with Ephesus and had been to Crete (Tt 1:5), even though that may not have been a recent visit.

The challenge with the exact place and location where Paul wrote from has ignited the debate on the historical context. "It is this difficulty of reconciling the historical and geographical references in the Pastorals with Luke's narrative which has led some scholars to reject the notion that they have been invented" (Stott 1996:3). Regarding his location, "there is no definite indication of where Paul is as he writes these two letters (1 Tm and Tt), and the evidence is not sufficiently interlocked that an itinerary emerges" (Knight 1992:5). It is also not clear when he visited Nicopolis (Tt 3:12), Troas (2 Tm 4:13), or Miletus (2 Tm 4:20).

The records in 2 Timothy (1:17; 2:9) show that Paul was in Rome being imprisoned once again²¹ and expected to be executed (2 Tm 4:6,18). Guthrie (1990:27) concludes that Paul "must have either been at Caesarea or at Rome, unless of course the hypothesis of an Ephesian imprisonment is regarded as a possibility". Apart from the locations stated by Guthrie, some believe that Paul may have written the Pastoral Epistles from an Ephesian prison, or during his first Roman imprisonment.

²⁰ "This does not necessarily mean that he had himself just been to Ephesus" (See Guthrie 1990:26)

²¹ Scholars disagree on whether Paul visited Rome once or twice, even though the possibility of his first release ignites the debate.

“The more radical critics of Pauline authorship have adopted the view that the pseudonymous author of the Pastorals has made up the historical allusions to give the Epistles some semblance of authenticity” (Guthrie 1990:31). The challenge posed by this view is that it does not take into account the realism of some of the allusions in the Pastoral Epistles, that is, Paul’s cloak, his parchments, scrolls, and his acquaintances. If these were fictitious elements, the pseudonymous author would have possibly avoided indicating them. The historical peculiarities featured in the Pastorals are so extensive that one will not go through the trouble of reinventing them to simply support his claim. The writer of the Pastoral Epistle outlines various historical details in 2 Timothy 4:9-21 which cannot easily be formulated based on pseudonymous claims. If all these details were considered fictive by the second century audience, there would have been a unanimous outcry.

Proponents of the fragment theory, such as Harrison, indicate that “although the Epistles as they stand are the work of a non-Pauline author, that author has included in his composition certain genuine fragments” (Guthrie 1990:32). They argue on the basis of a repetition of history which allows Paul to visit the East (Troas and Miletus) for a second time and get in touch with most of his associates. The unlikelihood of such events leaves one to consider the historical construction of the fragment theory as purely speculative. Guthrie outlines three crucial reasons why he believes the fragment theory to be improbable:

1. The disintegrated character of the so-called fragments belies them, especially the theory of Harrison;
2. The preservation of these disjointed fragments constitutes another problem, for they are not for the most, part, the type of fragments which would normally have had much appeal;
3. As a process of historical investigation fragment theories are open to criticism on the grounds that they suppose that the Acts history contains the complete history of Paul.

(Guthrie 1990:33-34)

Considering the difficulty, if not impossibility of reconciling the historical allusions based on the fragment theory, “one may be forgiven for concluding that the theory of the Pauline authorship of the Pastorals is considerably more plausible than

pseudonymous (or allonymous) alternatives” (SBJT 7:3; Fall 2003:8). It appears that the Pastoral Epistles are more akin to the “authentic” Pauline letters than they are to pseudonymous writings.

2.8 FALSE TEACHERS

The writer of the Pastorals seems to focus on addressing the impact of false teachers in his letters. There are several references to false teachers and false teachings in the Pastoral Epistles. “It is usually assumed that the same false teaching is opposed in all three letters” (Carson et al 2005:563). Both pro-Paulinists and Pauline critics of the Pastorals agree that some form of false teachings or Gnosticism were being opposed by the writer of the Pastoral Epistles. These false teachings were in contradiction to Jewish and Christian teachings.

Proponents of Pauline authorship of the Pastorals indicate that the false teachers were insiders of the church in Ephesus and Crete. “The false teachers at Ephesus seem to have advocated dietary regulations and to have forbidden marriage (1 Tm 4:3) and advocated for a realized eschatology (2 Tm 2:16-18)” while Titus contends with false teachings involving “circumcision (Tt 1:10), Jewish myths (Tt 1:14) and quarrels about the law (Tt 3:9)” (Polhill 1999:400). The false teachers targeted young widows, certain class of wealthy people, women and the church in general. Holtzmann who dates the Pastoral Epistles to the second century describes the false teachers as “Gnostics who are provided with Jewish pedigrees by the author” (Harding 1998:12). This form of Gnosticism fits within the narrative of the first and second century.

2.9 THE ECCLESIASTICAL ISSUES

“The PE are ostensibly addressed to Timothy and Titus who are depicted as having some kind of pastoral responsibility for Christian congregations in Ephesus and Crete respectively” (Marshall 2004:52). They include messages primarily meant for the individual church leaders who will in turn pass it on to their congregations.

“Alongside the opposition to Paul, therefore, a second element in the situation is the state of development of the churches depicted in the PE” (Marshall 2004:520). From an ecclesiastical perspective, it is believed by critics of Pauline authorship that the

issues discussed may have occurred at a much advance period²² (i.e., the second-century) other than the Pauline and Apostolic era (mid first-century). “It is claimed that Paul’s other writings show that he had no interest in church polity at all, so that it would be out character for him to have written some of the instructions found in the Pastorals” (Liftin 2000:728). The challenge with this argument is that the offices of overseers, elders, deacons mentioned does not necessarily relate to a much developed “monarchical episcopate” as was in the second-century and onwards. In the Pastorals, bishops and elders are used interchangeably while during the second century “Ignatian-type bishops (episkopoi) came to be distinguished from and set in hierarchical authority over elders (presbyteroi)” (Liftin 2000:728). Philippians 1:1 shows that the ecclesial offices of bishops and deacons existed during Paul’s days.

The qualities of bishops and elders or deacons do not point to any exceptional case that is indifferent to the first-century.²³ It can be concluded that “there is nothing in the Pastorals’ ecclesiastical situation which necessitates a date later than the time of Paul” (Guthrie 1990:10). There is really no weighty case from an ecclesiastical standpoint that validates the church offices of the Pastorals as being post-Pauline.

2.10 THE OCCASION

There are basically two scenarios relating to the occasion of the Pastoral Epistles. One scenario can be drawn from the Pauline account, while the other can be constituted based on the pseudepigraphic narrative.

2.10.1 Based on Pauline authorship

Reconstructing the occasion of the Pastoral Epistles based on Pauline authorship may be only possible if one carefully considers the details in the Epistles, Acts and other Pauline writings. After his Roman trial and possible acquittal (Ac 28:11-31), it seems possible that Paul had the possibility of leaving Rome and may have visited Ephesus, Macedonia and the surrounding areas. Acts 28:30 states that he had his own rented property, welcomed guests and confidently preached the kingdom of

²² See Lea and Griffin (1992:31-32) for the five main arguments against Pauline authorship based on the ecclesiastical situation.

²³ This position is, however, countered by those who argue for pseudepigraphic authorship of the Pastoral Epistles. It will not be entirely surprising that some conservatives will support post-Pauline date. (see Polhill 1999:398)

God. “From 1 Timothy and Titus one gathers that Paul is moving about freely and is not in prison, as he was when he wrote the “Prison Epistles” (Knight 1992:5). The scenario in 2 Timothy is different from that of the first two Pastoral Epistles. Paul was rearrested and placed in prison before he wrote 2 Timothy. He was in Rome (2 Tm 1:16,17;2:9), and expected to die (2 Tm 4:6, 18) in the near future.

2.10.2 Based on the pseudepigraphic account

It seems difficult to reconstruct an accurate historical occasion of the Pastorals based on the pseudepigraphic account, because of the incompatibility of the historical data with the occasion. We do not fully understand what was the historical issue that necessitated the writing. The only possible argument one can make from a pseudepigraphic case is that the letters were addressed to churches in Asia Minor which had a strong connection to the author.

2.11 PURPOSE

2.11.1 Based on Pauline authorship

If the argument of Pauline authorship of the Pastoral Epistle is accepted as a valid case, it becomes easy to answer the questions related to the purpose of the Pastoral Epistles. “Paul’s central concern in writing was to give instruction for confronting false teachers and restoring the stability of the churches” (Towner 1994:6). His letters were also meant to authenticate the authority of his apostolic delegates who were left in Ephesus and Crete to guide the church against false teachings.

There are two major issues that are presented as the primary purpose of the three epistles. “(1) Paul warns Timothy and Titus about a false teaching and exhorts them to stand against it; (2) Paul gives instructions to the Christians of Ephesus and Crete, through Timothy and Titus, concerning their conduct and church life” (Knight 1992:5-6). Countering false teachings which was creating havoc in lives of individuals and families in the church is the primary focus of the Pastorals, while establishing church order is the immediate purpose.

2.11.2 Based on pseudepigraphic authorship

Fee (1988:6) presents three basic arguments as the possible reasons which may be used to validate the pseudepigraphic case.

The most common reconstruction sees a combination of three factors to have caused an author to write these letters: the warning of Paul's influence in the church; the threat of a 'Gnostic' form of false teaching; and the need for organizational structures during the church's transition from an intensely eschatological community with 'charismatic' leadership to a people prepared to settle down to a longer life in the world with more 'regular' clergy. These three issues were major issues in second century church.

2.12 MAJOR THEOLOGICAL THEMES

Some of the most popular and pervasive theological themes in the Pastorals are "faith, savior, salvation, and good works" (Mounce 2000:cxxxii). The Pastoral Epistles tend to present a strong soteriological message. Salvation is seen as a present reality based on Christ's historical accomplishment. This salvation can also be seen as unfinished. Constable (2014:4) adds that the themes of "rebuke, personal integrity, the gospel, ethics, eschatology, and church order" are other prevalent themes in the Pastoral Epistles. Faith and truth are key thematic words in the Pastorals. They are the "two terms that describe the whole matrix of objective data of which the Christian religions consists; the sum total of orthodox doctrine; the content of the faith in an inclusive sense" (Towner 1989:121, 122). "The impending dangers facing the church are a recurrent theme whenever the church at Ephesus is mentioned" (Moss 1994:7). These false teachings served as a direct threat to the advancement of the church.

One thing that stands out in the Pastorals is that most of the themes and terms used in other Pauline Epistles are either omitted or used differently in the Pastoral Epistles. Guthrie (1990:18-20) outlines five alleged non-Pauline features as being the major cases that are presented by critics of Pauline authorship:

- 1) The conception of God is said to be partially Jewish and partially Hellenistic
- 2) There are various opinions regarding the Christology of the Pastorals.
- 3) The infrequency of mention of the Holy Spirit.
- 4) The Pastorals' use of the word 'faith' (pistis) is said to be non-Pauline
- 5) A similar objection has been raised over the Pastorals' use of "grace" (charis)

Apart from these objections some even argue that “the Pastorals are more practical than theological” (Bailey & Constable 1999:458); they provide series of exhortations rather than explanations.

2.13 TERMINOLOGIES USED IN THE PASTORAL EPISTLES

The terminologies used in the Pastorals stirs a fair amount of debate. There is rigorous argumentation on either side of the debate with regard to the terminologies used in the Pastoral Epistles. It is argued that some terminologies are either omitted or used differently in the Pastorals as compare to their usage in other Pauline Epistles. Critics of Pauline authorship believe that these are the two weightier argument in this debate. Each of these arguments needs to be examined briefly.

2.13.1 Terminologies omitted from the Pastorals:

It is believed that the Pastoral Epistles does not take into account various concepts and terminologies that are used by Paul in the “authentic Pauline letters”. The omission of key Pauline terminologies make Pauline critics justify their position. The argument about the authenticity of the Pauline Epistle is one that has never be agreed upon among many scholars.

2.13.1.1 Son (υἱός)

Hanson describes as “most startling” the absence in the Pastoral Epistles of the use of υἱός (“son”) for Christ “and the total absence of any mention of the cross” (Hanson, in Knight 1992:33-34). A counter argument will be that υἱός is not used in Philemon and Philippians which are considered to be part of the authentic Pauline Epistles.

2.13.1.2 Seven other terms

Other terms considered to be absent in the Pastoral Epistles are “εὐαγγελίζομαι, εὐχαριστέω, καυχάομαι, πνευματικός, σοφία, σῶμα, and ψυχή” (Knight 1992:34). The fact that these terminologies are absent in the Pastorals does not mean that they are found in all of the authentic Pauline letters. Each of these words mentioned do not all appear in the “authentic” Pauline letters. In cases where they are found in the other Pauline Epistles, they tend to appear once in the entire letter.

2.13.2 Terminologies used differently from the normal Pauline concept

Various terminologies which may be used in the normal Pauline Epistles to refer to certain unanimous concepts are used differently in the Pastoral Epistles. Most substantively, the Pastorals also present various terminologies that are never used in other Pauline Epistles. Some of the common terminologies used differently in the Pastoral Epistles are:

2.13.2.1 Faith

The usage of the word 'faith' (pistis) is often considered as non-Pauline. "The concept of faith, which in the authentic Pauline letters seem to be a subjective or obedient response to God, takes on the more objective sense of a common body belief or a virtue, or even Christian itself (e.g., 1 Timothy 1:2, 5, 14, 19; 2:7, 15; 3:9; 4:1, 6, 12; 5:8, 12; 6:10, 11, 12, 21; 2 Timothy 1:5; 2:22; 3:8, 10; Titus 1:4, 13; 2:2; 3:15)" (Porter 1995:112). Faith is often used in the Pastoral Epistles to express the idea of fidelity.

Faith in the Pastorals is used to convey the concept of a totality of truth which ought to be obeyed. Elsewhere in other Pauline Epistles, it "denotes the quality of abiding trust in Christ" (Guthrie 1990:53). Even though the idea of trusting God is omitted in the main justification passage in the Pastorals (Tt 3:5), this does not mean that this idea is entirely abandoned in the rest of the Pastoral Epistles.

2.13.2.2 Holy Spirit

"A more serious difficulty is the infrequency of mention of the Holy Spirit" (Guthrie 1990:52). It is argued that the writer of the Pastoral Epistles does not appear to focus on the doctrine of the Holy Spirit to a great extent. This infrequency however is not unique to the Pastoral Epistles. Similar instances occur in 2 Thessalonians, Philemon and Colossians where the Spirit is mentioned only once. Collectively, the Pastorals refer to the Holy Spirit more frequently than the acclaimed normal Pauline letters.²⁴

²⁴ See Carson and Moo (2005:557) for statistical details of word count and counter-arguments to this claim.

In the Pastorals, the Holy Spirit is indicated along with the human spirit. Even though the concept of the Holy Spirit is rarely used separately, except in three instances, (1 Tm 4:1; 2 Tm 1:14 and Tt 3:5), whenever it is used, it expresses the normal Pauline concept of the phrase. Proponents of Pauline authorship of the Pastorals believe that the descriptions used to refer to the Spirit in Titus 3:5 should not merely be viewed as liturgical expressions distinct of the author's line of thought. On the contrary, this should be considered as a Trinitarian statement.

2.13.2.3 Righteousness

“Righteousness, which in the authentic Pauline letters signifies the state of being in right relationship with God, in the Pastoral Epistles seems to take on the more neutral and objective sense of justice” (Porter 1995:113). The same argument can be raised about the usage of ‘love’ in the Pastoral Epistles. It must be noted that the idea of righteousness and justice are often intertwined in Scriptures.

2.13.2.4 Salvation

Paul states that salvation is a past, present and future reality. “Salvation is a matter of historical record because Christ entered history and accomplished it . Paul (also) presents salvation as unfinished” (Towner 1994:10). The full task of salvation will be completed at the return of Christ. Salvation “began with Christ's first appearance but will be brought to a full conclusion only with his second appearance. The present age stands between these two poles” (Towner 1994:10). Salvation should be viewed in these three phases from the epistolary perspective.

The concept of salvation also ties in with mission. “An often-overlooked concern of these three epistles is mission. The whole of 1 Timothy 2 and 3 are devoted to mission” (Towner 1994:11). If salvation is incomplete, the task of reaching the world will equally be considered incomplete.

2.13.2.5 Love

“Love, which is a key virtue in the authentic Pauline writings, is seen as one virtue among others in the Pastoral Epistles, often side-by side with faith” (Porter 1995:113). This argument is a bit difficult to accept because just like the case in 1 Timothy 6;11; 2 Timothy 2:22, love is also considered as one of the virtues in

Galatians 5:22 which is considered to be an authentic Pauline letter, places love with the other virtues.

2.13.2.6 God

“The conception of God is said to be partially Jewish and partially Hellenistic” (Guthrie 1990:50). Apart from the appellation of God, which are not found in other Pauline letters, advocate of a later Paulinist claim that the most basic characteristic of God from a Pauline perspective, namely His Fatherhood is omitted in the Pastoral Epistles.

Proponents of the Pauline authorship argue that the writer’s focus was on the soteriological work of God (Christ) rather than His paternal attributions. “In the Pastoral Epistles, God is called savior six of the eight times that such phrasing appears in the New Testament” (Porter 1995:113). The six references of God in the Pastoral Epistles are found in 1 Timothy 1:1; 2:3; 4:10 and Titus 1:3; 2:10; 3:4.

2.13.2.7 Christology

The Christology of the Pastoral Epistles have been one of the least discussed subject in modern scholarship on the Epistles. Christological concepts have often been overlooked in the Pastoral Epistles and “Christological statements have been commonly viewed as traditional fragments that have no integral theological role to play” (Belleville 2013:221). While much research has been done on the authorship, date, audience of the Pastorals, few have concentrated on its Christology.²⁵ Matters relating to the Christology of the Pastorals may be classified into two: 1) different designation of Christology in the Pastorals and 2) the ‘in Christ’ phrases.

Different appellation of Christology in the Pastoral Epistles

Various views are postulated concerning the Christology of the Pastoral Epistles. “Some find an epiphany Christology, others a title Christology, yet others a subordination Christology” (Guthrie 1990:51). The differences of opinion on the Christology of the Pastorals often occur when certain Christological phrases are used in isolation of the others found in the Pastorals.

²⁵ See Porter and Fewster (2013 221-243) where Belleville argues that the primary issue in Pastoral Epistle is Christological error rather than orthopraxy.

'In Christ' - phrases

“It is claimed that the phrase ‘in Christ’ does not describe a mystical relationship in the PE but a ‘quality’ (gift) available to those who are ‘in Christ’” (Easton, in Mounce 2000:xcii). Porter (1995:113) argues in response that “the Pauline phrase seems to have taken on a more technical sense of existence within the Christian community in the Pastorals”. Guthrie (1990:51) argues that “admittedly the most frequent Pauline usage is to describe persons rather than qualities, but where applied to qualities it is most probable that some mystical element is intended”. It is difficult to prove that all of the nine usages of the “in Christ” phrase omit entirely the mystical relationship. Even though the emphasis of 2 Timothy 1:9 is on the grace of God, the mystical relationship with Christ cannot be ignored either.

2.13.2.8 Ethics

It is often argued that the Pastoral Epistles divert from the normal Pauline concept of ethics. “Martin Dibelius popularized the idea that the Pastorals reflect a ‘bourgeoisie’ (middle class) ethic. By this he meant a way of life that attempts to make peace with its social context” (Polhill 1999:403). The difficulty with Dibelius' argument is that the normal Pauline letters such as 1 and 2 Corinthians and Romans also take a socially conservative approach regarding issues of ethics. In Romans 13:1-5, for example, Paul encouraged the believers to respect the governing authorities, while in 1 Timothy 2:1-2, he asked that prayer be lifted for those in authority.

In reality, “what these scholars are referring to is the atmosphere of respectability, of conformity to prevailing social values, which they feel permeates the ethical instruction of the Pastoral” (Stott 1996:28). The Pastorals only amplify and further develop the concept as compared to other Pauline letters. Knight (1992:19) states that “the charge that the PE teach only a ‘middle-class ethics’ is not only erroneous but also set an inappropriate disjunction between the other Paulines and the PE”.

2.13.3 Conclusion on terminologies of the Pastorals

When considering the different terminologies, one may realize that there are differences in the expression of these theological terminologies as it relates to their usage. Those who support a later Paulinist often argue that the theology of the three epistles is not compatible with that of Paul” (Polhill 1999:401) while proponents of

Pauline authorship believe these terminologies remain consistent with the authentic Pauline letters. Knight (1992:19) adds that these supposed differences may exist because “Paul does not always use in his letters those concepts that are most often associated with him”.

A second argument will be that, even if the concepts exist elsewhere in various Pauline writings, they seem to be further developed in the Pastorals. This will mean that the Pastoral Epistles will be placed towards the end of Paul’s life. The major point of discussion will be whether these ideologies or terminologies are complementary or contradictory to the authentic Pauline letters. If the terminologies are found to be entirely contradictory, the canonicity of the Bible will come under serious scrutiny.

Finally, “conclusions regarding authorship based on stylistic differences are highly precarious, not the least because the sample size of the writings in question is too small for definitive conclusions on the basis of word statistics alone” (Marshall 2003:6).

2.14 LINGUISTIC CHALLENGES IN THE PASTORAL EPISTLES

The most compelling case presented by disputants of Pauline authorship relates to the linguistic problems revealed in the Pastoral Epistles. The arguments raised are strongly in favor of a rejection of Pauline authorship. These claims were firstly presented by Schleiermacher (1807), later supported by F.C. Baur (1835), H.J. Holtzmann (1880) and finally amplified by P.N. Harrison (1921). Scholars have written extensively on these claims and counter-claims which seem to be unending. Malina and Pilch (2013:68) believes that “the language and concepts in these letters are those commonly used by Hellenistic writers of the period.²⁶” The period indicated refers to the post-Pauline era, more specifically, the second century.

Guthrie (1990:57) summarizes these argument under four major points as popularized by Harrisons. These include the problem of:

- 1) The large number of words unique to the Pastorals in the New Testament;

²⁶ See Malina BJ & Pilch (2013:67-161) for textual notes and social analysis of the Pastorals

- 2) The large number of words common to the Pastorals and other New Testament writings but unknown in the other ten Pauline letters;
- 3) The characteristic Pauline words and group of words missing from the Pastorals; and
- 4) Grammatical and stylistic differences

A review of Harrison's argument will reveal the following points: It cannot be disputed that there are series of linguistic differences between the Pastoral Epistles and other Pauline letters. The major argument which weighs in favor of Pauline authorship is that these differences cannot be harmonized consistently to validate a non-Pauline authorship. Proponents of Pauline authorship believe that the "dissimilarity of subject matter, variations due to advancing age, enlargement of vocabulary and the difference in the recipients" may serve as valid reasons to support the differences contained in the Pastorals as compared to the "authentic" Pauline letters (Guthrie 1990:58). These conditions may have influenced the author's literary and linguistic composition.

On the other hand, if the language of the Pastorals can be proven beyond reasonable doubt to be the language of the second-century, then the non-Pauline authorship will remain a valid argument. Harrison's argument that the language of the Pastorals resembles that of the early church father's and apologists do not always find unanimous support among scholars because it cannot entirely be proven that the language of the first century was entirely different from the second. The linguistic argument also does not always satisfactorily resolve the issues discussed. Harrison finally argues that "words peculiar to the Pastorals in the Greek Testament were in very frequent use in this second-century period. But in view of the fact that all but a small group of these words were known in Greek literature before AD 50", invalidates the claim (Guthrie 1990:58).

It must be noted, however that in as much as pro-Pauline scholars provide substantive argument of Pauline authorship of the Pastorals, the claims raised by critics of Pauline authorship need further answers and will necessitate further study over the years to come.

2.15 THE GENRE

The Pastorals are often referred either as epistles or letters. Even though some may choose to distinguish the two terms, most often, scholars have taken the liberty to use any of the two terminologies interchangeably. There is also some level of consensus among scholars on the genre of the Pastoral Epistles as opposed to its structure. Marshall (2004:12) notes that “the second letter to Timothy fits most closely into the genre of the personal paraenetic letter. Titus has more the character of a set of instructions from a superior person to his agent, but like 2 Timothy it has a conclusion”. Both the introduction and the conclusion of 2 Timothy have a very personal connotation. It includes gratitude and personal greetings for the recipients. Titus, just like 1 Timothy, includes a list of mandates.

Of the three letters “the one that is least like a letter is 1 Tim which is almost totally lacking in personal touches although it is specifically addressed to Timothy” (Marshall 2004:12). It starts with personal greetings and ends with a benediction.

2.16 OUTLINE OF 1 TIMOTHY

Scholars remain divided on the structure of the Pastorals. Different outlines have been presented over the years. The following structure of 1 Timothy, adopted from Marshall (2004:30) will serve as a working hypothesis in the study:

OPENING SALUTATION (1 Tm 1:1-2)

BODY OF THE LETTER

A. TEACHERS AND CHURCH LEADERS (1:3-3:16)

INSTRUCTION TO AVOID FALSE DOCTRINE (1 Tm 1:3-20)

Forbid opponents to promulgate false teachings (1 Tm 1:3-7)

The true purpose of the law (1 Tm 1:8-11)

The source of Paul’s power and commission (1 Tm 1:12-17)

Renewal of commission to Timothy (1 Tm 1:18-20)

INSTRUCTION ON PRAYER (1 Tm 2:1-15)

Prayer for all people (1 Tm 2:1-7)

Men and women at prayer and in the church meeting (1 Tm 2:8-15)

QUALIFICATIONS FOR OVERSEERS AND DEACONS (1 Tm 3:1-13)

Qualifications for overseers (1 Tm 3:1-7)

Qualifications for deacons (1 Tm 3:8-13)

THE CHURCH AND THE MYSTERY OF THE FAITH (1 Tm 3:14-16)

B. THE ATTITUDE OF THE CHURCH LEADER TO THE CHURCH AND THE GROUPS IN IT (1 Tm 4:1-6:21a)

TIMOTHY'S DUTIES AS A TEACHER IN THE FACE OF HERESY (1 Tm 4:1-16)

The rise of heresy and the need for sound doctrine (1 Tm 4:1-5)

The need for instruction that leads to godliness (1 Tm 4:6-10)

Timothy as a teacher (1 Tm 4:11-16)

THE TREATMENT OF VARIOUS GROUPS IN THE CHURCH (1 Tm 5:1-6a)

How to deal with the old and the young (1 Tm 5:1-2)

Instructions about widows (1 Tm 5:3-16)

Instructions about elders (1 Tm 5:17-25)

Instructions about slaves (1 Tm 6:1-2a)

TRUE AND FALSE TEACHERS CONTRASTED (1 Tm 6:2b-21a)

Teachers with false doctrines and motives (1 Tm 6b-10)

Instructions on true teaching (1 Tm 6:11-16)

What to teach to the rich (1 Tm 6:17-19)

Final warning to Timothy, summing up earlier themes (1 Tm 6:20-21a)

CLOSING GREETINGS (1 Tm 6:20-21a)

2.17 CONTEMPORARY INTERESTS IN THE PASTORALS

The Pastoral Epistles deal with a series of issues that are discussed seriously by scholars currently. One major issue of concern is "the role of women in the church,

women in the worshipping community, and especially the ministry of widows” (Oden 1989:2). There is an ongoing debate over whether women should be ordained to the office of elders and bishop.

Paul points out that “good works, that express godliness should characterize Christian women more than the way they dress and groom themselves” (Constable 2016:31). Their character was to exceed their dress code. It must be noted that Paul does not state that proper dressing and grooming for women is unimportant. “Whether their dress is an issue, their attitude is Paul’s true concern” (Mounce 2000:108, 109). The focus is on character.

Regarding the role of women in public worship, Paul states that he “does not permit women to teach or have authority over a man”. The critical passage used as an argument against women speaking in church is 1 Timothy 2:8-15. Scholars are divided on the exact interpretation and application of this passage as it relates to the role of women in the contemporary church. Some consider this passage to relate to a cultural issue that does not need to be generalized, while others argue that the instruction remains binding for all group of women in the church. Those who hold a middle view state that “Paul seems to have been speaking here of the whole local congregation. I do not think he would have objected to women teaching or leading some groups, within the church, that we commonly recognize as ‘sub-groups,’ provided they do so with the approval of the male leadership of the church” (Constable 2016: 34). In fact, Paul mentions twice in the Pastorals (2 Tm 1:5 and Tt 2:3-5) that women are allowed to teach other women and children and instruct men privately (Ac 18:26). The area of emphasis is the issue of exercising authority over men. Chapter 4 of this study will examine gender-restriction of the offices and in the New Testament household codes.

Another issue of current interest is “the ministry of the church to the poorest of the poor - the dispossessed in society, the elderly poor, slaves and bond servants” (Oden 1989:2). A major contemporary challenge is care towards the poor and the unfortunate of the society. There is much argument about the actual body responsible to provide the necessary care for them. Some argue that it is the sole

duty of the state while most Christians believe that it has always been the duty of the church to take care of their members who are the poorest, and those out of its fold.

Even though debates of authorship, date, provenance still remain current contemporary issues under discussion, in the church, a considerable amount of literature can be found on it. I will therefore not include it in this list. The distinction between the offices (elder, bishop and deacon) is fairly discussed as well.

Thematic discussion in the Pastoral has raised significant conversation recently with the most discussed being Christology, eschatology and soteriology.

A final issue of contemporary significance relates to “the earliest liturgies, prayers, confessions, qualifications for ministry and in the support of ministry” (Oden 1989:2). The Pastoral Epistles cover issues which are of practical, theological and historical importance in many ways.

2.18 CHALLENGES IN INTERPRETING THE PASTORAL EPISTLES

There are basically two major challenges that are often encountered when interpreting the Pastorals in this contemporary age. The challenges may either relate to hermeneutical or exegetical issues (Köstenberger 2003:4-13).

2.18.1 Hermeneutical challenge

The hermeneutical challenge covers the authorship, genre and background while exegetical difficulties relate to the principal apostolic teachings on church government or structure and the necessary qualifications for ecclesial offices. An exegetical understanding of key terminologies such as *episkopos*, *diakonos*, and the rendering of the phrase of a husband of but one wife will greatly help in interpreting the Pastorals.

The debate regarding the authorship surfaced in the nineteenth century and has since been an issue of discussion among scholars. Several volumes have been written on the subject in the last few decades. Regarding authorship of the Pastorals, “an increasing number of scholars have claimed that the Pastorals are an instance of pseudonymous writing in which a later follower attributes his own work to his revered

teacher in order to perpetrate that person's teachings and influence" (Köstenberger 2003:4). The major debate about the authorships centers on its historical details which makes it difficult to reconcile various theological and linguistic issues with other Pauline Epistles. This difficulty leaves scholars divided on accepting or rejecting Pauline authorship while those who maintain a middle ground argue that the Pastorals are "allonymous" that is, it was written by a close associate of Paul after his death with the intention of preserving his thoughts.

2.18.2 Exegetical challenge

Regarding the exegetical aspect, it can be stated that the Pastoral "letters transcend mere ad hoc argumentation and deal with important issues of perennial importance for the church in a way that has continuing relevance and authority" Köstenberger 2003:10). One of the major issues which has solicited debate for centuries has been the question of church government and the requirements of ecclesiastical and pastoral leaders. Considering that the passages on church government pose major exegetical debate, there is a need to properly examine the major arguments on this highly discussed topic.

2.19 CONCLUSION

Having examined the various arguments on several issues that relate to the historical background, authorship, audience, date and pseudepigraphy of the Pastoral Epistles, it can be stated that the argument against Pauline authorship seem to be persuasive from an initial glance, but further examination often reveals that there are several issues that Pauline critics fall short of satisfactorily answering. Some of the apparent problem passages and differences rather help to support Pauline authorship.

Even though it remains true that there are also several issues that may never be reconciled with the "authentic" Pauline letters, there are on the contrary more facts that agree with each other. The overwhelming internal evidence and external evidence from the Church Fathers, leave one to conclude that these letters were written by Paul, the apostle of Jesus Christ.

The issue of reconstructing a scenario to fit with the pseudonymous author's intention for the Pastorals seem to be a difficult probability. Conservative scholars argue that the second century audience would have most possibly rebuffed any fictional reconstruction.

Another crucial issue is that even though pseudonymous writing may have possibly been popular in ancient times, it can't however, be stated with certainty that the early Church Fathers knowingly and willingly accepted pseudonymous writings into the New Testament canon. On the contrary, there is overwhelming support from the early church fathers such as Tertullian, Eusebius, Irenaeus, the Muratorian Canon, Clement of Alexandria, Ignatius and Polycarp on Pauline authorship.

A major argument against Pauline authorship centers on the church structure in the Pastorals which is believed to be one that reflects second century monarchical episcopate. This argument, even though, may be an important observation however falls short of substantive weight in that the terminologies of elders and bishops were often used both within the 'authentic' Pastoral Epistles and other Pauline Epistles to refer to the same office.

Based on the details listed above, this leaves one to conclude that the case for Pauline authorship of the Pastoral Epistles tend to carry substantive weight than the argument raised against it. Even though several details remain difficult for proponents of Pauline authorship to fully defend, the vast majority of the information weighs against critics of Pauline authorship.

Having examined the different data available, this study is fully aware that these arguments might not be the sole possibility and the acceptable position for all New Testament scholars. This study is aware of the arguments raised by Pauline critics, and has attempted to present their major argument throughout this study. It can be finally stated that the debate on these topics will remain active for the next few decades ahead.

The next chapter will focus on developing an in-depth commentary for the pericope under study, taking into account its exegesis, meaning and significance for today.

Chapter 3

Exegesis of 1 Timothy 3:1-7

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Having discussed the major arguments on the authorship, historical and ecclesiastical contexts and the questions surrounding the authenticity and canonicity of the Pastoral Epistles, this study progresses to analyze the exegetical meaning of the text. This Chapter is the heart of the exegetical study, comprising of a thorough analysis of the text. Textual variants within the pericope are examined in order to present the possible variation(s) of translation of the text. The major problems and difficulties within the passage are discussed.

This Chapter begins with a conceptual analysis of the preceding pericope (1 Tm 2:8-15) which highlights possible views of gender restrictions within the Pastoral Epistles. In 1 Timothy 2:11-15, the author of the Pastorals discussed the critical issue of women vis-a-vis leadership in the church in Ephesus. The goal of the exegetical study within this Chapter is to lay a precursory foundation for the basis of discussion on the appointment or [self] appointment of clerical leaders. At the end of the Chapter, the study hopes to arrive at various propositions of the topic under discussion.

A careful analysis of 1 Timothy 3, and possibly most of 1 Timothy, reveals that the writer of the epistle focuses on addressing false teachers and their impact on the church in Ephesus. Even though “it has become customary for commentators to see 1 Timothy 3 as some sort of generic church manual,” a proper analysis of the chapter reveals that the writer of the epistle discusses the characters and qualifications of genuine church leaders as opposed to the myths of false teachers (Witherington 2006:233). There has been varying arguments about what is the exact understanding of the myths and genealogies. Some have considered them to be “Gnostic character” systems while others have viewed them as “speculative cosmologies” (Fee 1988:41). “It is more plausible that these myths and endless genealogies reflect Jewish influence of some kind, undoubtedly with some Hellenistic

overlays” (Fee 1988:42). A combination of Jewish and Hellenistic practices may have been active in Ephesus and would have probably influenced the Ephesian church.

3.2 ANALYSIS OF 1 TIMOTHY 2:8-15

In this pericope, the writer of the Pastoral Epistles deals with male and female in public worship. He admonishes men in general to take the lead in prayer and worship. “Having dealt with the disruptive men, Paul turns to the disruptive women; just as the men are to stop fighting, the women are to dress appropriately” (Constable 2017:32). The Ephesian problem at this stage is twofold: quarreling among men and the inappropriate adornment of women. The writer emphasizes that inner beauty is of greater significance than physical apparel.

The most contentious point of argument relates to the apostle’s prohibition of women’s participation in public instruction. A background of the ancient milieu shows that women were discouraged from engaging in public speaking. Keener (2007:756-759) indicates that “whereas women might learn in public in many ancient circles, teaching was a different matter. Ancient society rarely allowed teaching roles to women”. The writer of 1 Timothy might have probably upheld this position in his letter.

Restriction of women in ecclesial leadership in 1 Timothy 2:11-12 seems to contradict Paul’s concession in 1 Corinthians 11:2-16 where women were allowed to prophesy and pray in public meetings. This difficulty leaves one to wonder whether Paul would have applied the same restriction(s) in current ecclesiastical circles or if he would have conceded as he did in Corinth. Other circumstantial issues such as the decline of the availability of men to assume ecclesiastical offices leaves one to wonder about the validity of the rule in contemporary church circles.

The recurrent practice of several mainline churches appointing women to ecclesial ministry has recently stimulated various debates. Hoehner (2007:770), who presents six distinctions between offices and gifts, argues that “while scripturally speaking, a woman cannot hold the office of an elder or bishop”, it is her duty to exercise the gift (of pastor-teacher) sovereignly bestowed on her. It is evident that the list of ecclesial

offices presented in the Pastoral Epistles are to be considered separately from charismatic gifts presented elsewhere in the New Testament. The gifts of pastor-teacher and evangelist are not gender-restrictive and certainly encompass public speaking which conflicts with Paul's initial argument mentioned above. The offices, on the contrary, may be argued to be gender-restrictive based on one's exegetical and hermeneutical alignment. The next Chapter will focus on this discussion.

3.3 PARALLELS BETWEEN 1 TIMOTHY 3 AND TITUS 1

The Pastoral Epistles generally share several similarities and differences. Mounce (2000:156) reveals that "the similarities among the three lists of qualities for church leadership in the PE are remarkable". It appears that the requirements of the overseers covered in 1 Timothy 3 are further delineated in Titus 1. Six of the qualities are parallel (i.e., above reproach, hospitable, one wife, not a drunkard, not pugnacious and having believing children), while at least five others are similar (i.e., temperate, prudent, not contentious, not a lover of money, able to teach), while the rest of the list is different (See Mounce 2000:156).

Several commentators²⁷ believe that the office of an overseer and elder is the same, while a few others prefer to distinguish them. In cases where distinctions are made, the following need to be taken into account:

- Both the overseer in 1 Timothy 3 and the elder in Titus 1 are primarily responsible for oversight of their flock;
- overseers and elders are expected to exercise teaching duties in their congregations; and
- both officers are confronted with similar challenges in the Pastoral Epistles and are requested to refute false teachings which served as a danger for their flock.

While 1 Timothy 3 requires the overseers to be individuals who have matured in their faith (that is, not recently converted), Titus 1 ignores this restriction. The common argument²⁸ presented is that the Cretan church consisted primarily of new converts,

²⁷ See Merkle (2003:33) for discussion of both views

²⁸ See Mounce (2000:182) for further justification along with hypothetical dating between both epistles.

while the Ephesian church had existed for a much longer period. The requirements for the Cretans were therefore slightly moderate than the Ephesians.

3.4 PARALLELS BETWEEN PAUL'S LIST AND OTHER GRECO-ROMAN LITERATURE

Various scholars have highlighted the similarities between Paul's list and other Greco-Roman lists which deals with the requirements of different public officials. "It is argued that both Onasander's list and Paul's list in 1 Timothy 3 were based on preformed Hellenistic tradition" (Merkle 2014:174). The argument proposed is that both lists contain words and verbs that are either identical or similar in meaning or nature.

Merkle (2014:174) expounds further that "perhaps the main argument in favor of recognizing that the author of the Pastoral Epistles used a preformed tradition is the general nature of the qualifications". The generalities of these requirements leave New Testament scholars and students to speculate whether the list applies to ecclesiastical leaders, ordinary Christians or other secular representatives.

Mappes (2003:210-211) compares Onasander's list with 1 Timothy 3:2-7 and a host of other ancient writings and argues that the "dissimilarities between the lists are also apparent...and discount the hypothesis of Dibelius and others that the writer of the Pastorals used a well-known list of virtues and vices to call the church to a conciliatory position". The dissimilarities, just like the similarities, provide series of evident for proponents of each view.

The arguments and counter-arguments about the similarities and dissimilarities of the various lists leave scholars well divided over the case of preformed tradition. Merkle (2003:211) however concludes that "the crucial issue is not whether Paul's list of virtues was similar in any way to lists in other communities. Rather, the point is that in listing these virtues Paul communicated his own theological intent".

3.5 THE HISTORICAL OCCASION

Determining the historical context of this pericope is a daunting task for New Testament scholars, commentators and students. From an initial examination, it

appears that the text and its immediate context falls short to present any obvious situation that can be clearly linked to the passage. A thorough reconsideration, however, reveals that the background scenario hints about disruptive men and extravagant women coupled with false teachers and self-centered individuals.

Dibelius and Conzelmann (1972:50-51), who argue for a fictitious situation, opines that “the existence of the episcopate and the diaconate is presupposed” in the letter, making the Pastoral Epistles a catalogue of schematic virtue. In other words, they should be viewed as a leadership catalogue. Mounce (2000:154) disagrees with this proposition, arguing that “once a full picture of the opponents is developed, chap. 3 becomes one of the strongest arguments that the PE are directed toward a specific historical problem and should be understood in light of that situation”.

These disagreements leave scholars divided over the historical issues relating to the text. Lea and Griffin (1992:106), in support of Mounce (2000), argue that the “instructions here were not merely a manual for church organization, but ... were an effort to guarantee that new leaders in the church would have commitment to Christ and would encourage godliness and unity”. They argue that Paul encountered some difficulties with certain leaders in the Ephesian church and intended to write 1 Timothy to curtail those problems. These opposing leaders may have possibly caused problems related to leadership in the Ephesian church. Towner (2006:239) states that “behind this concern was wither an actual or anticipated leadership crisis, perhaps related to the activities of the false teachers” was prevalent in the Ephesian church. The existence of an actual historical situation can be presupposed based on these deliberations.

Hughes and Chapell (2000:2) summarize the epistle and indicate that “first Timothy is about church order and conduct. But there was also a deeper purpose—namely, world evangelization and mission”. The desire of reaching out to the world with the gospel and planting dynamic churches propels the writer of 1 Timothy to insist on the characters and qualifications required for those who will assume these responsibilities within the churches.

Lea and Griffin (1992:105) further asserts in light of this, that “Paul’s discussions majored on qualifications for office and not on duties”. The major historical debate has been whether these offices should be considered as monarchical episcopate with a single bishop exercising authority over the elders and the deacons. It does not appear that this position of episcopal leadership is argued at this stage.

The pericope presents several historical and exegetical challenges that needs to be resolved in order to present clarity to the interpretation. Dibelius and Conzelmann (1972:50) state that the most prominent exegetical question will be “why are “bishops” (ἐπίσκοποι) and “deacons” (διάκονοι) described in very similar ways? And, why are particular requirements for office not specified, but instead qualities which for the most part are presupposed for every Christian?” In order to answer these exegetical questions, one will need to take into consideration several parameters.

The primary emphasis of the Pastorals is to address false teachings and false teachers by presenting the ideal characters expected of ecclesial leaders. This is not based in any way on the formal establishment of an institutional body akin to other ecclesiastical bodies which developed in the second and third centuries.

It is false that the Pastorals reflect the notion that institutionalization is the way to deal with false teaching. Rather, it is the character of the leaders, not the job descriptions or the interrelationships between different sorts of ministerial roles, that is stressed here in combating the problems in Ephesus.

(Witherington 2006:233)

3.6 DISCOURSE UNIT

Chapter 3 continues the discussion raised from the preceding pericope (1 Tm 2:11-15) where Paul addressed the role of women in public worship as it relates to teaching. Stott (1996:92) indicates that it “is not always clear whether the maxim in question is what precedes or what follows”. This study, however, treats the maxim in 1 Timothy 3:1 as the commencement of a new discourse. Having amply dealt with the controversial subject of women in leadership, which has resuscitated a fair amount of discussion in recent years, the author of the Pastoral Epistles then turned to men in church leadership presenting the required qualities.

This paragraph (1 Tim 3:1-7) divides into three parts. (1) Paul commends the office of overseer (v 1). (2) He lists eleven qualities that should be possessed by an overseer (vv 2-3). The first stands as the title over all these qualities: an overseer must be above reproach; all that follows spells out what this entails. (3) Paul then speaks to three specific situations: an overseer must manage his household well (v 4-5) he should not be a recent convert (v 6); he must be well thought of by non-Christians (v 7).

(Mounce 2000:153-154)

Paul then presents three reasons which provide support for the three specific situations mentioned. The first reason begins with the εἰδέ clause while the second and third reasons are emphasized by the ἵνα clause.

The discourse unit of this pericope poses no major problem. The paragraph commences with a conditional clause which contains the point of departure for the pericope. The rest of the paragraph focuses on a defense of the initial argument.

3.7 STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS

The pericope may be structurally divided as follows:

1a πιστὸς ὁ λόγος

1b Εἴ τις ἐπίσκοπῆς ὀρέγεται, καλοῦ ἔργου ἐπιθυμεῖ

HEAD—————2a δεῖ οὖν τὸν ἐπίσκοπον ἀνεπίλημπτον εἶναι

2b μιᾶς γυναικὸς ἄνδρα, νηφάλιον σώφρονα κόσμιον φιλόξενον διδακτικόν

HEAD 1—————3 μὴ πάροινον μὴ πλήκτην,

HEAD 2—————ἀλλ' ἐπιεικῆ ἄμαχον ἀφιλάργυρον,

SITUATION 1_____4 τοῦ ἰδίου οἴκου καλῶς προϊστάμενον, τέκνα ἔχοντα ἐν ὑποταγῇ, μετὰ πάσης σεμνότητος

PURPOSE 1—————5 (εἰ δέ τις τοῦ ἰδίου οἴκου προστῆν οὐκ οἶδεν,

πῶς ἐκκλησίας θεοῦ ἐπιμελήσεται;),

SITUATION 2———— μὴ νεόφυτον,

PURPOSE 2—————6 ἵνα μὴ τυφωθεῖς εἰς κρίμα ἐμπέση τοῦ διαβόλου.

SITUATION 3 ————— 7 δεῖ δὲ καὶ μαρτυρίαν καλὴν ἔχειν ἀπὸ τῶν ἕξωθεν,
PURPOSE 3 ————— ἵνα μὴ εἰς ὄνειδισμὸν ἐμπέση καὶ
παγίδα τοῦ διαβόλου.

3.8 COMMENTARY

1 Timothy 3:1a: πιστὸς ὁ λόγος,
Faithful (trustworthy) is the saying²⁹.

This formula is peculiar to the Pastoral Epistles and seems to indicate that there were a number of pithy sayings, maxims, portions of hymns or of catechetical teaching, current in the church and possibly originating in the inspired sayings of the Church prophets, to which the apostle appeals, and to which he gives his sanction.

(Spence-Jones 2015:np)

The writer of the Pastoral Epistles begins the discourse by quoting one of the faithful sayings. The peculiarity of the formula has led to series of difficulties for exegetes who have struggled over the centuries to ascertain the exact meaning and the context to which it is linked. “Ancient exegetes did not agree on whether the formula πιστὸς ὁ λόγος should be taken with what goes before or what follows” (Dibelius & Conzelmann 1972:52). The uncertainties surrounding the meaning have led scholars to support either of the two positions. “Some think it refers back to 1 Tim 2:15. But most believe that the formula points forward to 3:1b” (Mounce 2000:168). Those who argue for the later indicate that “Paul commonly makes use of this form of expression as a prelude to what he is about to introduce” (Calvin & Pringle 2010:74).

The former which emphasizes the soteriological undertones of the faithful sayings seem to be attractive while the later which reinforces the subsequent thought in the pericope appeals to a fair section of audience. If the saying is viewed as a prefix, it emphasizes the importance of the subject which follows. This will validate Paul’s commendation of the desire for the office of overseer. On the other hand, if the saying is viewed as a concluding thought of the previous discourse “this would mean

²⁹ Background. The saying in question refers to 3:4-7. There are five of these faithful sayings in the Pastoral Epistles (cf. 1 Tim 1:15, 3:1, 4:9; 2 Tim 2:11). They represent well known sayings that the early Christians would accept as true without question.

that all the faithful sayings deal with the issue of salvation” (Mounce 2000:168). This restricts the interpretation of the rest of the faithful sayings to various soteriological contexts.

This phrase is the second of five trustworthy sayings in 1 Timothy, with the first appearing in 1 Timothy 1:15 “The saying itself has seemed rather pedantic, and because the word ‘save’ (cf. 1:15) appears in 2:15, some have argued that the preceding verse is the trustworthy saying” (Fee 1988:79). It can be added that to some extent, the phrase is troublesome. “The argument most often presented for referring the formula to what precedes in 2:15 is the claim that sayings attached to the formula elsewhere are always concerned with salvation” (Knight 1992:153). Since most of the usages of the popular saying refer to soteriological issues, a great number of commentators have sided with this view. Witherington (2006:235) supports this proposition and states that “it is part of a midrashic biblical argument already in progress at 1 Timothy 2:13”.

Having examined the various arguments, Utey (2000:np) proposes that it seems most likely that “this idiom can act as both a concluding statement and an opening statement”. The choice of its placement may vary but the acceptance of its popularity remains unanimous among scholars. “Paul was most likely suggesting the common knowledge that the office of a church leader was an important, significant work” (Lea & Griffin 1992:108). Paul affirmed the honorability of the office of overseer amidst the abuse it suffered from the hands of false teachers. Similar abuses are recurrent in contemporary ecclesiastical circles.

From a scribal perspective, it appears that there is a slight variation of translations among interpreters. “The variant ἀνθρώπινος, replacing πιστός, “trustworthy,” occurs in D* b g m; Ambst Spec; and is accepted by NEB, Moffatt tr., Wohlenberg, Easton, Barrett, and apparently Houlden. Here it would mean “popular” or “common.” (Mounce 2000:153). With the insertion of the variant, the phrase will either be read as, this is a human or a common saying.

The manuscripts supporting this translation are not very credible. Most of the reliable manuscripts argue for the trustworthy saying. “Several critics argue that pistos is the

easier and more obvious reading, and therefore reject it in favour of *anthrōpinos*, which they translate ‘popular’ (Kelly 1963:74). The readings of the Masoretic Text do not confirm the position of the common saying. The variation is possibly an insertion by scribe who believed that the word was incorrectly inserted at the beginning of this paragraph. Fiore (2007:73) supports this argument and indicates that “the variant reading for “true” (*pistos*), has no support in the early Greek manuscripts and might have originated with a scribal distinction between the creedal sayings elsewhere and this more mundane saying on official service”.

Arriving at the exact meaning of the phrase will remain a great point of discussion among theological scholars and students. As Fee (1988:79) expressly indicates, “perhaps too much has been made of the concept “saying as though all these trustworthy sayings were in wide circulation in the church”. It has been argued widely that the faithful sayings were common knowledge to the audience and the writer did not need to further elaborate on their meaning(s) and context(s). This proposition could or could not be valid depending on one’s line of argument. Mounce (2000:168) clearly points out that “while the other faithful sayings appear to be traditional material, this one does not”. The faithful saying phrase might have been used to strengthen the argument that follows subsequently in the pericope. Constable (2017:42) concurs with this view and states as well that “Paul cited another well-known saying (trustworthy statement; cf. 1:15) to introduce and give support to what he was about to teach”. It has been common tradition among scholarly work to propose an argument based on an existing hypothesis or theory.

Kelly (1963:72) indicates that “Paul’s object in quoting the *tag*³⁰ is (a) to vindicate the importance of the practical ministry, and (b) to add force to his plea that church officers should possess the highest qualities”. The author of the Pastoral Epistles therefore admonishes aspiring officers to display irreproachable characters.

Grudem (2000:905) defines church officer as “someone who has been publicly recognized as having the right and responsibility to perform certain functions for the

³⁰ The *tag* refers to the faithful saying quoted in 1 Timothy 3.

benefit of the whole church”. Overseers, elders and a host of others fall under this category.

3.9 EXEGETICAL ANALYSIS

Pistos (faithful, trustworthy) is used as an adjective, nominative, singular masculine; and Logos (word, message) is a noun and it is nominative, singular, masculine.

3.10 COMMENTARY

1 Timothy 3:1b: Εἴ τις ἐπισκοπῆς ὀρέγεται, καλοῦ ἔργου ἐπιθυμεῖ
(if anyone aspires to the office of overseer, he is desiring a good work)

This section begins with a conditional clause and progresses with the argument that the office of overseer was open to all who aspired for it and met the criteria that were listed subsequently. Knight (1992:153) notes that “the terms of the first clause are quite general (εἴ τις, if any man)”. The obvious question raised is if this generality embraces the aspiration of women to ecclesial offices as being noble. It appears however that 1 Tim 2:12 and 3:2a poses problem for women who aspire for these offices, but it does not entirely silence the ambition of women.

Even though it seems that the ideal is to have men assume these offices, women may be allowed to function in certain offices under exceptional circumstances. It is worth noting that there are several New Testament passages that allow women to exercise their gifts of prophets, apostles, etc. while there are rare instances where they are allowed to assume church offices. Apart from the natural meaning of women, some have spiritualized the meaning of women to refer to the church to whom the overseer is married thereby allowing females to assume the office. The next chapter will discuss the different meaning and possible challenges in detail.

In order to avoid any nuance, some commentators prefer to translate εἴ τις as “if any man” instead of “if anyone”. The student believes that there is no need for such undertaking because εἴ τις is an indefinite pronoun which functions in a nominative singular masculine case accompanied by a noun that is a genitive singular feminine. The phrase should therefore be considered as a general statement. “The effect is to recommend that ‘anyone’ meeting the qualifications listed afterward aspire to the

office, with the understanding given in the second clause that such an aspiration is desire for a 'good' task or assignment" (Knight 1992:153). The writer suggests that the office was noble and those who desired to assume it needed to be commended. The apostle began "first affirming leadership as a noble aspiration" (Hughes 2000:2). It appears that men in the Ephesian church were hesitant of occupying this ecclesial office.

The verb ὀρέγεται which appears in 6:10 with a negative connotation is used here in 3:1 in a positive sense. Knight (1992:153) asserts that, "that the verb ὀρέγεται in the first clause is indicative signifies that the condition is assumed to be true". The desire of the aspiring officer points to a specific situation. This sense of aspiration is not based on an egotistical ambition but is a result of a genuine intent. "The verb "strives" (orgetai) suggests a heartfelt longing. That longing is emphasized by the verb desire" (epithymeî) in the next clause" (Fiore 2007:73). This longing is based on the intention of service.

From a grammatical point of view, ἐπιθυμεῖν, "to desire (followed by a genitive; cf. Wallace, Greek Grammar, 132), occurs only here in the PE, but the cognate noun ἐπιθυμία, 'desire,' occurs six other times" (Mounce 2000:169). This desire is further commended in this pericope.

"The term 'sets his heart on' can refer to a desire coming from self-centered ambition, but it may also be a desire that springs from genuine love and commitment (cf. Heb 11:16, where 'longing' is the same Greek word)" (Lea & Griffin 1992:107). The later definition seems appropriate in this instance. Knight (1992:154) also confirms this position and adds that the term which "literally means to "stretch oneself, reach out one's hand," is used figuratively to mean "aspire to, strive for, desire" with genitive of the thing desired". The desire to serve in ecclesial office should be done with a sense of total dedication springing from a pious intention.

Despite the fact that some Hellenists, especially the philosophical moralists, used the verbs 'aspire' and 'desire' in a negative sense – the former to refer to greed, the latter to sexual desire – the verbs were often used in an ordinary sense. 'Aspire' would connote striving after something good, even the kingship.

(Collins 2012:79)

The aspiration mentioned in this pericope is a godly desire which drives the individual to serve God and His church with humility and modesty. It is not based on a self-centered objective nor should it be imposed on the church of God. “The episcopate is described as the object of a man’s fervent aspiration. The adjective here emphasizes the attractive visibility that ought to characterize the fruit of an episcopate” (Quinn & Wacker 2000:254-255). This affirms why the writer of the Pastoral Epistles commends the aspiration for the episcopate and other ecclesial offices as a noble and commendable task. Aspirants were expected to abstain from ungodly desires which enticed some to assume episcopal responsibilities.

The first of all qualities that a priest or bishop ought to possess is that he must purify his soul entirely of ambition for the office.... If anyone should cling to a position for which he is not fit, he deprives himself of all pardon and provokes God’s anger the more by adding a second and more serious offense.

(Gorday 2000:168)

Striving for the office of an overseer is considered by the author of the Pastoral Epistles as a good work. The writer of the Pastoral Epistle emphasized the nobleness of this office because “there was some disinclination to serve in such capacities, perhaps because of the troubles caused by the false teachers (1 Tim 5:17–22)” (Witherington 2006:236). The recipients of the Pastoral Epistles are advised that “the pastorate is a noble task, because it involves the care and nurture of the people of God, and that it is laudable to desire this privilege” (Stott 1996:92). Assuming this office should be based on a divine call combined with a personal desire to serve the flock of God.

Dibelius and Conzelmann (1972:51) comments that the phrase “whoever strives for the office of bishop (Εἴ τις ἐπισκοπῆς ὀρέγεται) then would be derived from a common saying, which, to be sure, Pseudo-Paul sanctions, but against which he asserts the ethical prerequisites of the episcopate”. It emphasizes the point raised initially in the introductory section of the pericope and also takes into account the variant reading of ἀνθρώπινος ὁ λόγος (it is a human saying). This literary variation allows the author to highlight the discrepancies between 1 Timothy 3:1 and 3:2 as he presents the paragenesis using the common saying.

This interpretation will therefore mean that the writer, whom the student supposes to be Paul, was not endeavoring to encourage Timothy to establish a new office in the church but rather provide common requirements or qualifications for an existing office.

Another important word that merits full attention is the term “office”. Knight (1992:154) states that “the term ἐπισκοπῆς in 1 Tim. 3:1 does not derive from Acts 1:20 or its OT original. It is newly coined on the basis of the title ἐπίσκοπος, which had meantime established itself in the early church”. The idea presented by the usage of the term ἐπίσκοπος is that it should be viewed as a position or an office. Collins (2012:79) disagrees with this line of thought and proposes that “the term ‘oversight’ (episkopē) designates a function within the community, not a permanent position or office”. He also believes that the term ἐπισκοπῆς has been used elsewhere in the New Testament noticeably in Acts 1:20. Spence (2013:np) supports Collin’s argument and states that “ἐπισκοπῆς in the sense of the episcopate, occurs only here and Act 1:20, where it is rendered bishopric in the A.V., and overseer-ship in the margin of the R.V. being the translation in the LXX of Psa 108:1-13”. Kent (1982:118-120) however believes that ἐπισκοπῆς relates to an office and could entail four important facts:

- It is an office which may be rightfully desired by the believer,
- An office which involves oversight,
- An office that involves work.
- An office which is worthwhile.

Having considered the function of ἐπισκοπῆς, it is necessary to examine the adjoining thoughts on the ἐπίσκοπος. Collins (2012:79) defines an “overseer” (ἐπίσκοπος) as “someone who watches over another or over others in order to see that things are going smoothly”.

Considering that the qualities listed in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 are similar to those mentioned in Titus 1, it seems appropriate to agree with Mounce (2000:161-164) that “the titles of overseer and elder are used interchangeably. Paul instructs Titus concerning elders (Titus 1:5) and then in the next breath calls them overseers (Titus 1:7) with no

indication that the audience has changed”. Even though this line of thought may seem the most exegetically balanced to accept, Meier (1973:345) however disagrees with this position and proposes that “the ἐπίσκοπος was a ‘specialized presbyter’ assigned the particular duties of preaching and teaching”. This will thereby mean that the πρεσβύτερος, unlike the ἐπίσκοπος, were a more general term that encompasses every other church leader that was not engaged in the functions of teaching and preaching.

Lea and Griffin (1992:108) stress that “we must not confuse the office of overseer or bishop mentioned here with the ecclesiastical office of bishop that developed later. In later times a bishop was a superintendent over a diocese”. Scholars believe that the initial charismatic leadership that dominated the church in the early parts of the first century gave way to a more institutionalized body somewhere towards the end of the second century. This argument is rebuffed by critics who believe that the church has always consisted of some institutional leaders since its inception. The former argument is also used by non-Pauline critics to support pseudepigraphal authorship of the Pastoral Epistles.

Calvin (2010:75) adds that “while Paul includes generally all pastors, the ancients understand a bishop to be one who was elected out of each college to preside over his brethren”. This promotes the idea of a monarchical episcopate where each bishop was chosen to preside over a city with several other leaders and pastors placed under his jurisdiction. Mounce (2000:164) affirms that “the use of the singular ἐπισκοπῆς, and the singular forms that follow (3:2-7) suggest to some the beginning of the monarchical episcopate”. It can be argued that even though ἐπισκοπῆς appears in the singular, it however remains consistent with other Scriptures which indicate that God has always intended the multiplicity of leaders in the church.

3.11 DIFFERENCE BETWEEN ἐΠΙΣΚΟΠῆς AND πρεσβύτερος IN JEWISH CULTURE

When thinking about the difference between an elder and an overseer, it appears that “perhaps πρεσβύτερος reflected more the patriarchal background in Judaism while ἐπίσκοπος was sometimes used when the emphasis was more on the function of providing oversight” (Mounce 2000:164). The concept of elders was not a new

theory developed uniquely in Pauline churches. The Jewish culture fully understood the importance of elders in their communities. Mappes (1997:81-82) notes that the equivalent translation of πρεσβύτερος from the Septuagint is “used to describe individuals who are advanced in age, during which time the prospects of marriage and childbirth have passed”. In the Old Testament, these elders which possibly originated from the patriarchal Jewish settings of the Semitic peoples were often chosen based on their age while New Testament ecclesiastical elders were not necessarily men who were advanced in age but those who were matured in faith and served as the spiritual leaders of the church. The overseers in the New Testament were required to demonstrate high level of moral virtues.

Smith (2000:120), in presenting a case for older men in ecclesial office, argues that the “πρεσβύτερος conveys the assumption schema of a senior male, usually a family head, who holds a civil or religious leadership office in the community”. The underlying argument is that the term originates from its Jewish root and was often used to refer to men who were advanced in age. According to Smith (120), this usage of the term remained active throughout the period of the synagogue and the New Testament church. Glasscock (1987:67-68) argues as well that “nobody under 30 years of age would be accepted as a spiritual leader in ancient society”. The study believes that even though the possibility of having older men in ecclesial office was high, this however did not entirely exclude younger men who were equally matured and qualified.

3.12 THE USAGE OF ἐπισκοπῆς IN SECULAR GREEK

The term overseer in secular Greek refers to “the function of either a human being or a deity. Sometimes it refers to a financial officer of a group who oversees some kind of resources or funds. But interestingly, in Cynic-Stoic literature it refers to some sort of missionary preacher of righteousness” (Witherington 2006:235). The socio-Graeco implications of the term emphasizes the qualities of oversight which seems to intertwine with its ecclesial meaning. There seems to be no distinctive separation of the usage of the terms of overseers and elders from its ecclesial meaning and context.

“The word overseer receives such translations as bishop (KJV, ASV), Presiding-officer (TCNT), superintendent (Goodspeed), or pastor (Williams)” (Lea & Griffin 1992:107). The ἐπίσκοπος (overseer, bishop) is the person entering into the ἐπισκοπή (the office of oversight). His title is descriptive of his function which relates to a specific office. As a church officer, his duties encompass the task of teaching and oversight of the church.

It seems that the overseers do not represent a separate hierarchical office during the composition of the Pastoral Epistles, but rather refers to a functional responsibility of oversight for the flock. The terms of overseers, bishops and elders may have been used interchangeably. Witherington (2006:235) indicates that “the specific episcopal office is a development that seems to come after the Pastorals were written, but obviously before Ignatius’s day in the early second century”. Church history proves that the Ignatian form of episcopate became prominent as of the second century. Dibelius and Conzelmann (1972:50) disagree with the theory of a later episcopate and indicate that “the existence of the episcopate and the diaconate is presupposed” by the author of the Pastoral Epistles. Merkle³¹ (2003:35-36) justifiably presents six reasons to suggest that the terms of overseers and elders are the same terms that are used interchangeably.

Apart from being an honorable office, the author of the Pastoral Epistles emphasizes that the ἐπισκοπή is a work. Calvin and Pringle (2010:74) clearly indicate that “this is not an indolent rank, but a work; and next, that it is not any kind of work, but excellent, and therefore toilsome and full of difficulty, as it actually is.”

The idea of oversight does not merely relate to a supervisory duty. The overseer is required to, among many other duties, “erect and extend the kingdom of God, to procure the salvation of souls which the Lord himself hath purchased with his own blood, and to govern the Church, which is God’s inheritance” (Calvin & Pringle 2010:74). The overseer was confided a challenging responsibility that required accountability to the Master.

³¹ See Merkle (2003:35-36) for a detailed analysis of the similarities between overseers and elders.

3.13 EXEGETICAL ANALYSIS OF 1 TIMOTHY 3:2-7

Having clarified the foundational issues related to the passage, the focus now shifts to the character description of the overseer. Lea and Griffin (1992:106) asserts that “Paul’s³² discussions majored on qualifications for office and not on duties”. The qualities solicited for the overseers stood as a direct opposite of the characters of the false teachers. These character descriptions which are mostly observable qualities clearly contrasted with the lifestyle and morals of the false teachers described in the Pastoral Epistles.

1 Timothy 3:2a: δεῖ οὖν τὸν ἐπίσκοπον ἀνεπίλημπτον εἶναι, δεῖ τοῦν τὸν ἐπίσκοπον ἀνεπίλημπτον εἶναι (It is necessary [that] the overseer must be above reproach)

The qualities highlighted here seem very similar to the list in Titus 1 which refers to the qualification of elders. Smith (2000:121) indicates that “the strong resemblance in content suggests a common source”. It may also be argued that both lists refer to the same office or position.

The section begins with an emphasis on the necessity of the requirement of irreproachability for the overseer. The term “οὖν indicates that an inference is to be drawn. δεῖ, which denotes compulsion in the sense of what is necessary, or one must do, states the inference to be drawn by means of the accusative and infinitive that follow” (Knight 1992:155). The inference is stated shortly thereafter in the epistle. Mounce (2000:170) alludes that “οὖν, therefore, emphasizes the connection between the list and the office (v 1). Because the office is significant, a certain type of person must hold it. δεῖ, ‘it is necessary’ denotes necessity due to fate (in secular thought), duty, law, and inner necessity”. This person is required to be blameless.

The primary and most general characteristic of an overseer is that he must be irreproachable. Smith (2013:55-56) calls it “the umbrella requirement ... which governs a list of specific examples”. The quality of irreproachability shapes the rest of the qualities listed. Kelly (1963:75) indicates that this means that the overseer “should present no obvious defect of character or conduct, in his past or present life, which the malicious, whether within or without the church, can exploit to his

³² The case for Pauline authorship of the Pastoral Epistles has been argued in the previous chapter of the study.

discredit". Considering the former estate of Paul, it will be difficult to accept that the aspiring overseer will be disqualified based on his pre-Christian lifestyle. He is however required to live an exemplary life before believers and unbelievers after conversion.

The rest of the qualities subsequently listed depends on this primary criterion. Witherington (2006:236) comments that "the person in question must be of unimpeachable character. The Greek adjective ἀνεπίλημπτον (1 Tim 3:2), later applied also to widows and to Timothy himself (1 Tim 5:7; 6:14), has to do with observable conduct that cannot be reproached". Both believers and non-believers need to see a lifestyle that is above reproach. The overseer ought not to be "open to attack or criticism in terms of his Christian life in general and in terms of the characteristics that follow in particular" (Knight 1992:156). The overseer needs to assure that he does not engage in activities that solicits legitimate criticism. Lock (1924:36) indicates in summary that "the overseer should not be liable to criticism as he would be if he failed in any of these qualities", which will be listed below.

The term ἀνεπίλημπτον (= ἀνέγκλητος, Tt 1:6a) "refers to being blameless, irreproachable (BAGD), or unimpeachable (Quinn 1990:78). It points chiefly to observable behavior which is beyond legitimate reproach and is "the dominant prerequisite" (Smith 2000:122). ἀνεπίλημπτος is the key term in the list presented in this pericope. The overseer should be both without reproach and irreproachable of any noticeable external default. The other characteristics listed in the pericope point to and explain this main qualification.

ἀνεπίλημπτον is "properly an antagonistic term, signifying, 'one who gives his adversary no hold upon him;' but it is often (as here) applied metaphorically to one who gives others no cause justly to accuse him" (Calvin & Pringle 2010:76). This implies that the overseer ought to provide no reason for a justifiable criticism through his lifestyle.

Constable (2017:42) reveals that "the description 'above reproach' means that he should possess no observable flaw in his character or conduct. There should be no cause for justifiable criticism, now or in his past (cf. v. 10), that anyone could use to

discredit him and bring reproach on the name of Christ and the church". Both the church and those outside it expect a high standard from the overseer. The term "without reproach can scarcely mean without critics, since Paul himself had such, but blameless as to living" (Oden 2013:169).

Even though the focus of this study is on ecclesial offices, it is interesting to consider that the quality of irreproachability was not exclusively limited to church leaders. Public servants were also required to be irreproachable. Keener (1993:75) highlights that "political leaders were also expected to be above reproach, but a persecuted minority sect needed to protect itself against public slander even more than politicians did". Taking into account that Christian leaders were to be model of integrity in the society, their lifestyle needed to be scrutinized strictly. Witherington (2006:234) states that "since in these letters the impact of the Christian witness on outsiders is always in view, the virtues that are emphasized here are ones already admired and modeled in the culture rather than distinctively Christian virtues". Lea and Griffin (1992:109) supports this argument, stating that the author of the Pastoral Epistles "may have emphasized particularly those traits that were highly valued by the pagan world". The desired qualification for the overseer did not solely appeal to first century Christians, it also set out the desired model for the pagan world.

From a grammatical perspective, the article (τὸν) could either be monadic (indicating that for each church there is one overseer), or it could be generic (indicating that a class of overseers are in view) (Wallace 1996:229). The conclusion raised from this discussion is that even though the article is singular, the noun could have possibly functioned as a generic noun. Merkle (2003:37) accepts this position and states that "it is probable that the singular form 'the overseer' (τὸν ἐπίσκοπον) in 1 Timothy 3:2 is a generic singular". This will imply that multiple overseers for each church is in view. This position is accepted by Kelly (1963:74), who indicates that in "spite of its use in the singular both here and in Tit. 1:7, it is extremely likely that the overseer is to be understood generically, and that a plurality of such officials is presupposed". Considering also that the two terms (overseers and elders) are not used separately together nor do all two have an exhaustive list of separate qualifications, one will argue that the author of the Pastoral Epistles intended to interchange the terms when referring to the same office.

1 Timothy 3:2b: μιᾶς γυναικὸς ἄνδρα, νηφάλιον σώφρονα κόσμιον φιλόξενον διδακτικόν (*a one-woman man, clear-minded, self-controlled, dignified, hospitable, skilled in teaching*)

Having discussed the primary qualification and non-negotiable responsibility of the overseer, the writer of the Pastoral Epistles proceeded to spell out other specific requirements which emphasized the main idea of the primary criterion. Mounce (2000:171) indicates that “the eleven characteristics in vv 2b-3 are grammatically dependent upon the δεῖ, “it is necessary,” of v 2”. The first on the list of secondary requirements refers to the marital life of the overseer, namely, μιᾶς γυναικὸς ἄνδρα (a one-woman’ man).

The first specific requirement in the list deals with the overseer’s marriage. Historically, the phrase has been understood to refer to male overseers but, as Mounce (2000:171) points out, this cannot be the exclusive position because “this phrase is one of the most difficult phrases in the PE, and yet it is one of the most significant because the opponents have forbidden marriage, and sexual promiscuity is a serious problem”. A proper exegetical understanding and interpretation of the phrase will greatly influence one’s position on the rest of the passage.

Knight (1992:157) begins the discussion by indicating that “ἄνῆρ and γυνή, the common NT words for ‘man’ and ‘woman,’ take on the meanings ‘husband’ and ‘wife’ in contexts such as here”. Despite being translated as the former, they could signify also the latter.

There are basically four or five major interpretations of the phrase μιᾶς γυναικὸς ἄνδρα. “First, the elder must be married. Second, he must be married only once. Third, he must be monogamous. Fourth, he must be a moral husband” (Constable 2016:42). A fifth view is presented by Kent (1982) and will be discussed below. Johnson (2001:213-214) adds a slight modification to Constable’s interpretation and proposes that:

It could mean that the man was married once and, if widowed, did not remarry.
It could mean monogamous rather than polygamous. It could mean faithful to a

wife and without a mistress. It could also be taken as prescribing a married overseer rather than a celibate one. All these definitions are possible.

Each of these views which has strong ancient support will be discussed briefly. Early church fathers such as Theodore, John Chrysostom, and Jerome recognized the existence of different interpretations in the early church. For a detailed analysis of the various interpretations see the relevant authors (see Constable 2016:42-45; Kent 1992:122-126).

Smith (2013:57) states in reference to this quality that “only one of the thirteen requirements is quantifiable—a husband of one wife. All the other qualities are a matter of judgement of interpretation”. It makes it extremely difficult to fully ascertain the degree to which each of the other qualities might be weighed.

The overseer must be married

The first view promotes marriage as a prerequisite for candidates desiring ecclesial office. “This view sees as disqualified all unmarried men” (Ironsides, in Constable 2016:43). This interpretation presents a high view of marriage for church officers.

The two main difficulties with this interpretation is that it disqualifies single men and married men without at least two children. This interpretation also does not seem to be consistent with other Pauline teachings on celibacy.

A balanced position on this view will be that It appears that the author of the Pastoral Epistles intended “to guard against any depreciation of marriage (cf. 4:3); but to be unmarried would incur no reproach” (Lock 1924:36). Allowing single individuals and celibates the opportunity to serve in ecclesial office provides a sense of harmony of New Testament teachings on marriage and singleness which are presented in the gospels and the letters to the church in Corinth. Knight (1992:157) reveals that “it is exceedingly doubtful that Paul intended that these words and the words about ‘children’ (plural, vv. 4, 12) be understood as mandating that only a married man with at least two children could be an officer in the church”.

If Pauline authorship of the Pastoral Epistles is accepted, as is the opinion of this study, it will be difficult to defend the argument of having only married men serve as overseers because Paul's life reveals that he was probably single. It also appears that Timothy, the recipient of two of the Pastoral Epistles, was single. Establishing a requirement that excluded them from ecclesial office seems to be too ambiguous an argument to present. Mounce (2000:158) believes that it is probable that the author "wrote in terms of the common situation, i.e., of being married and having children, and then spoke of what should be the case when this most common situation exists in an officer's life". In cases where it was not applicable to the overseer's life, he will still be considered eligible for the office if he fulfilled the other requirements.

The overseer must be married only once

Some interpreters state that the phrase 'husband of one wife' implies a person who has one wife in a lifetime. Mounce (2000:173) indicates that "this was the position of the early church" because "the early church viewed celibacy after the death of a spouse to be a meritorious choice". This view disqualifies and shuns individuals who engage in "remarriage, whether after divorce in the case of a converted pagan or after the decease of his first wife" (Kelly 1963:75). It also rules out the idea of divorcing one wife and remarrying another regardless the circumstance(s).

This view poses a few difficulties. Firstly, remarriage in Scripture is not forbidden for couples who terminated their marriage due to sexual infidelity (Mt 19:9); or due to the death of their spouse (1 Cor 7:39), or in the case where a believing spouse was abandoned by his/her unbelieving partner (1 Cor 7:15).

Keener (1993:) argues that "husband of one wife" refers to one's current marital status and behavior; validly divorced people who remarried were considered married to one spouse, the second one, not to two spouses". Both Jesus and Paul gave widowers and widows the freedom to remarry. Glasscock (1983:247) in agreement with this theory states that "If Paul had stated ἕσχω μίαν γυναῖκα μόνῃς ('having had only one wife'), it would be easier to argue that Paul meant possessing only one wife in one's lifetime up to the point of his being examined". Calvin and Pringle (2010:77) agrees that "the words of the apostle are, 'who is,' and not 'who hath been'". The emphasis is placed on the current marital status of the candidate.

The overseer must be monogamous

Constable (2016:44) states that “this view sees as disqualified any man who is married to more than one woman at a time”. The overseer is viewed as a one woman type of man and was expected to exhibit the highest standard of morality in the society.

This view guards against polygamy and concubinage. The argument that polygamy was not practiced in the Graeco-Roman culture cannot be entirely accepted because writings from the first and second century speak of polygamous relationships. Fee (1988:84) quotes Demosthenes (*Oration* 59:122) who states “mistresses we keep for the sake of pleasure, concubines for the daily care of the body, but wives to bear us legitimate children”. It is believed by some that the acceptable argument could be that Christian polygamy was accepted in the early church.

The issue of polygamy within the church is a fairly debatable question among scholars. Arguments and counter-arguments abound on the subject. Regardless where one stands, it can be agreed with Knight (1992:159) that “the implication is that the phrase in 3:2, 12 is therefore not intended to exclude only polygamy”. The phrase encompasses every form of promiscuous relationship outside of marriage, including but not limited to, concubinage, or unlawful divorce, remarriage and every form of marital and sexual infidelity.

Spiritual marriage

Kent (1982:122) presents and rebuffs a fourth view regarding $\mu\acute{\iota}\alpha\varsigma \gamma\upsilon\upsilon\alpha\iota\kappa\acute{o}\varsigma \acute{\alpha}\nu\delta\rho\alpha$ which is the “marriage to the church view. One Roman Catholic view is that the one wife is the church to which the bishop must consider himself married”. It is clear from the passage that there is no need to spiritualize the meaning of the text. Calvin and Pringle (2010:76) argue that it “is a childish fancy to interpret this as meaning ‘the pastor of a single church’”. Other Scriptural references, such as Ephesians 5:25-31, also indicate that Christ, not a bishop or overseer, is the groom of the church.

The overseer must be a moral husband

Stott (1996:94) states that “the fifth proposal is that Paul is excluding all those guilty of married unfaithfulness. A candidate for the pastorate must be ‘faithful to his one wife’ (NEB), ‘a man of unquestioned morality, one who is entirely true and faithful to

his one and only wife”. The candidate desiring to be an overseer is required to exhibit a character of trustworthiness and loyalty in his marital relationship. He needed not to have concubines or mistresses. Smith (2006:26-41) argues “at length that option 5 is the likeliest interpretation of the phrase in its context”. This interpretation places the emphasis on the character of the man rather than his previous marital status.

Mounce (2000:173) indicates that “this would allow for the possibility of an overseer being remarried after a death, divorce, or possibly adultery in the distant past but would disallow polygamy and sexual immorality”. The emphasis is placed on the marriage. Kelly (1963:75) indicates “that their object is merely to prescribe fidelity within marriage, a suitable paraphrase being ‘not lusting after other women than his wife’ – but this is to squeeze more out of the Greek than it will bear”.

Having examined the five major interpretations of the phrase μιᾶς γυναικὸς ἄνδρα, a few details will need to be reviewed in order to draw up possible conclusions. It must be noted that commentators are divided over the exact interpretation of the phrase under review. Translations range “from the least restrictive qualification (a married male or female) to the most restrictive (a male married only once)” (Wahlen 2014:29). A possible clue of the exact interpretation will be that “the emphasis is on the word μία, one” (Mounce 2000:171). Whether it is one woman at a time, one woman in a lifetime or one marriage will remain debatable.

Another hint is that “the noun γυναικὸς is in the genitive and therefore deals with attribution. It may refer to relationship or quality. It is best to understand this γυναικὸς as being a genitive of quality. The noun being modified is ἄνδρα, accusative singular of ἀνήρ” (Glasscock 1983:250). The kind of man advocated for will then be a one-woman man with the genitive of quality expressing its emphatic position. μιᾶς serves as an adjective in the genitive singular which describes γυναικὸς. When the two are combined, they form an adjectival phrase describing the noun ἄνδρα.

1 Timothy 3:2c νηφάλιον σώφρονα κόσμιον φιλόξενον διδακτικόν (*temperate, sensible, respectable, hospitable, skillful in teaching*)

νηφάλιον: The next specific requirement deals with the overseer's vigilance. The phrase which does not have its exact equivalent in English has been translated as being "clear-minded. It has a cultic meaning of 'holding no wine, including objects made from the wood of the vine; abstention from wine as does the English sober" (Mounce 2000:174). The underlying concept is that he is free from wine consumption. Collins (2012:82) agrees with its metaphorical usage and adds that it could mean a "clearheaded or self-controlled" individual. Dibelius and Conzelmann (1972:53) disagrees with this interpretation and argues that "a specifically cultic character of the requirement is not implied".

Knight (1992:170), however, believes that νηφάλιον should not be taken literally to mean "temperate in the use of alcoholic beverages". It probably means here, as is also the case with 'sober' in English, sober in the sense of clear-headed, self-controlled" (BAGD). It appears that even though its original sense could indicate the abstinence from wine, it is used in this instance in a broader metaphorical form because the question of alcohol is addressed in the next verse.

Calvin and Pringle (2010:78) define νηφάλιον³³ as "vigilant or circumspect" thus expressing the true meaning and function of the duty of the overseer. The task of providing oversight entails a high level of vigilance and watchfulness.

Some commentators believe that the term νηφάλιον in 1 Timothy 3:3 is used in a parallel circumstance in 1 Timothy 3:11 and corresponds with μ ἢ οἶν ὠπολλ ῶ προσέχοντας in 1 Timothy 3:8. To this, Dibelius and Conzelmann (1972:53) advocate that it is "possible that the word 'sober' (νηφάλιος) is used in its literal sense together with 'not given to wine' (μὴ πάροινος)". Lock (1924:38) defines νηφάλιον (1 Tim 3:11, Tit 2:2 only in N.T.) as "temperate in use of wine; cf. 8, 11, 5:23; perhaps also sober minded or vigilant". The term νηφάλιον in its actual usage contains a variety of meanings. Kent (1982:126) argues that "etymologically, this term means abstaining from wine entirely, and is so used by Josephus. It also had a metaphorical usage in the sense of spiritually sober, temperate, calm, and sober in judgment".

³³ The reading of νηφάλιον is preferred by many of the best MSS over νηφάλειον which seems to have been introduced by Beza. See Calvin and Pringle (2010:78) for further discussion.

Goday (2000:171) mentions that “priests given to wine are both condemned by the apostle and forbidden by the old law”. The argument of wine consumption is not an easy one to navigate considering that there are various denominational groups that present some of the strongest arguments on each side of the spectrum. It appears that the clear emphasis in the phrase points towards much wine³⁴. Guthrie (1990:96) adds that “the quality required amount to denials of extreme case of excess”. This requirement which seems to be a stringent condition for overseers could also apply to the normal body of believers.

σώφρονα: The next virtue listed is one of the most important and cardinal virtues on the list of qualities. Knight (1992:159) points out that σώφρων “represents a word group that is not frequently used in the NT. This particular term denotes the prudent, thoughtful aspect of self-control (BAGD)”. It speaks of the overseer’s decency even as it relates to his sexuality. This quality is also emphasized in Titus 1:8 where reference is made to the elder.

The one who provides oversight of the flock needs to be sensible and self-controlled. Calvin and Pringle (2010:78) “have preferred to translate σώφρονα, temperate, instead of sober, because σωφροσύνη has a more extensive meaning than sobriety. Modest means one who conducts himself with decency and propriety”. Collins (2012:81) calls it “the virtue of discretion expected of the overseer”. It connotes the idea watchfulness.

The word σώφρονα occurs uniquely in the Pastoral Epistles and portrays an idea of moderation in lifestyle. This term is closely associated with being sober-minded, which is one of the virtues discussed earlier. σώφρονα “may have the same nuance as the related noun sōphrosunē” (Kelly 1963:76). Even though the both terms may be closely associated, σώφρονα is used to speak of being temperate while σωφροσύνη covers the concept of being sober.

Some words in the Pastoral Epistles are often used along with other words to create various emphases. “The coupling of prudent (σώφρων) and modest (κόσμιος) is very

³⁴ Some argue that the apostle advised Timothy, his prodigy, to take a little wine for the stomach.

common in the Pastoral Epistles” (Dibelius & Conzelmann 1972:53). Some may add the third virtue of respectability as being closely akin to the two others.

κόσμιος: This virtue, “(also in 2:9) is used in classical Greek (LSJM) and in the inscriptions (MM) it is used to describe a person as orderly (cf. κοσμέω, κόσμος), well-behaved, or virtuous; that which causes a person to be regarded as respectable” by others (Knight 1992:159). This quality may also be defined as “decent or dignified, and it refers to a person’s outward deportment or outward appearance which balances the inward quality of self-control” (Mounce 2000:174). Overseers in particular and Christian leaders in general need to possess the non-negotiable quality of self-mastery. They need to be “well behaved and well mannered’ (Collins 2012:82). He who exercises authority over others need to present himself in a dignified and well-ordered manner which is irreproachable by all.

Having discussed several personal attributes, the author of the Pastoral Epistles switched to two inter-personal qualities. The first speaks of the issue of welfare and the second relates to the quality of doctrine.

φιλόξενος literally means love of strangers but it is often translated as being hospitable. Hospitality was an essential part of the overseer’s duties. The house of the overseers “should be a retreat for the exiles” (Calvin & Pringle 2010:79). He needs to be a person who gladly and willingly welcomes strangers into his house.

“The virtues listed form three groups. The first two items are paired by virtue of having φιλό- in compound. φιλόξενος: hospitality; literally, a friend of strangers. φιλάγαθος: a lover of good” (Smith 2000:127). Despite the reality that contemporary cultures side with the use of hospitality over the concept of the love of stranger, both ideas need to remain vivid in the translation and interpretation of the text.

Kelly (1963:76) indicates that being “hospitable, underlines that in his official capacity he has the duty of keeping open house both for delegates traveling from church to church and for ordinary needy members of the congregation”. The overseer needs to set an example for the flock he leads by demonstrating hospitality to guests.

The next term speaks of the overseer's teaching ability. διδακτικόν literally can be translated as skillful in training and could also mean to "be willing to learn and able to teach" (Collins 2012:83). This quality "involves mental skills" (Guthrie 1990:96). The overseer is required to be a skilled teacher. "A skilled teacher represents didaktikos, an adjective which also characterizes Timothy as The Lord's slave in 2 Tim 2:24. The term is not otherwise documented in the NT, Ap. Frs., or LXX" (Quinn & Wacker 2000:246). This quality is used to exemplify the teacher's dedication to learn and disseminate biblical truth with accuracy.

Fee (1988:81) indicates that the "contexts suggest that able to teach means the ability both to teach the truth and to refute error". Biblical teaching involves both concepts. The overseer should not only present truth, he should refute false teaching which is often a major challenge in the church.

Kelly (1963:76) classifies the overseer "group within the body of elders who are occupied with preaching and teaching". Some commentators take the liberty to divide church officers among teaching and non-teaching overseers (see, e.g., Mounce 2000:175). This argument is not supported in this study because it appears from the text that all overseers were expected to be apt to teach.

Dibelius and Conzelmann (1972:53) indicate that διδακτικός "does not prove that the bishop³⁵ had already assumed, as his regular duty, the office of teaching, but only that some capability in this regard was desired". The overseer needed to possess this ability which will be developed throughout his tenure of service. Kelly (1963:76) states that "these duties are more fully specified in Titus 1:9 as comprising (a) loyalty to the apostolic tradition, (b) readiness to instruct the congregation in it, and (c) vigilance in confuting those who pervert it". Correcting those who pervert the truth as well as teaching the truth are parallel attributes desired in the overseer. This type of correction needs to be done with gentleness (2 Tm 2:24).

Kent (1982:127) cautions that "the adjective does not mean teachable, but apt at teaching". The overseer needs to possess the ability and skill of teaching those to

³⁵ The term overseer is often used as opposed to bishop. Whenever the later appears, it is understood in the light of the former and is used interchangeably.

whom he provides oversight. His ability to propagate the truth and refute errors was cardinal in guiding the church from spiritual decline and heresy.

*1 Timothy 3:3: μὴ πάροινον μὴ πλήκτην, ἀλλ' ἐπιεικῆ ἄμαχον ἀφιλάργυρον
(Not given to much wine, not violent but forbearing, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money)*

The writer of the Pastoral Epistle paused from a list of positive qualities to present some negative qualities that were not desired in the overseer. The quadruple emphases of μὴ highlights the emphatic implication of the expression which are contrasted by ἀλλὰ. These four qualities and a host of others listed are considered as “simply irrefutable examples” (Quinn 1990:89). They are non-negotiable for the overseer.

μὴ πάροινον: This negative vice deals with wine. Kent (1982:128) suggests that the literal translation means “not beside wine. From the original meaning of one who sits long beside his wine there came the meaning of one who becomes quarrelsome after drinking”. The difference between the Old Testament and the New Testament usage of drinking is that it is sometimes commended in the former while it is totally shunned in the later. The only instance where drinking is encouraged in the New Testament is the case of Timothy where Paul emphasizes its medicinal use. Some commentators use this inference to argue that moderate drinking is not forbidden by Scriptures.

Kelly (1963:77), however, argues that μὴ πάροινον is used to “guard against being a slave”. He asserts further that “what is condemned is not drinking wine, but drunkenness”. While some make a distinction between the both, others refer to both terminologies as meaning the same concept and thereby prohibit total use of alcohol.

It appears that drunkenness was a major issue in Ephesus. “The fact that the same injunction is repeated in all three lists³⁶ suggests that this was a serious problem in

³⁶ The three lists refer to those of overseers, deacons and elders.

the Ephesian church” (Mounce 2000:176). Discussions on wine remain a contentious issue in the contemporary church.

μὴ πλήκτην: Kent (1982:128) opines that μὴ πλήκτην may be translated as “not a striker. This is derived from the verb *plesso*, to strike, and denotes a pugnacious, quick-tempered individual who strikes back with his fists when annoyed”. Even though there are vast section of commentators who side with this description, some however choose to object to this proposed meaning. Goday (2000:171), as Chrysostom, disagrees with Kent (1982) and states that μὴ πλήκτην “does not mean a striker with the hands...but refer to those...who unseasonably smite the conscience of their brethren”.

Calvin and Pringle (2010:81) adds that “striker is the term applied to those who deal much in threatenings, and are of a warlike temperament”. The overseer should not be one who is constantly ready for a fight. He is required not to be contentious.

ἀλλ’ ἐπιεικῆ ἄμαχον: Mounce notes that “ἀλλὰ, but, may separate the following positive requirements from the preceding negative ones, but the final two qualities of v3 are negative so it is better to see ἀλλὰ ἐπιεικῆ as the opposite of μὴ ἠπληκτῆν”. While remaining negative in form, the next two words present a positive concept. The pair of negatives in this section are contrasted with the positive virtue of equilibrium. “Balance is a quality that one expects to find in judges, magistrates, and rulers. Balance evokes a sense of equity in the application of law and the exercise of civil leadership” (Collins 2012:83).

Kelly (1963:77) defines ἐπιεικῆ as “the gracious condescension, or forbearings, with which the Christian pastor should deal with his charges, however exasperating they may on occasion be”. The overseer is required to abstain from being quarrelsome and contentious. On the contrary, he should promote an atmosphere of peace and tranquility while remaining gentle and kind to the flock.

ἐπιεικῆ is often paired with ἄμαχον. ἄμαχον “denotes the person who is not contentious” (Kent 1982:128). The overseer should be one who is “averse to

contentiousness” (Oden 1989:144). He should be able to bear long enough with the weakness of the flock and outsiders.

The next quality, ἀφιλάργυρον, deals with the overseer’s desire for money and material possessions. “The etymology of the term is argueros, silver, money; and phileo, to love, with the alpha privative” (Kent 1982:128). “The twelfth quality on the Pastor’s list, “not a money lover, begins a short series of virtues that are requisite for householders” (Collins 2012:83). The overseer needs to be free from corruption and the cravings of money.

Oden (1982:144) warns that the “the overseer must not be greedy for gain, especially by means incommensurable with the office of ministry”. Unlike the false teachers who are characterized by greed and its insatiable desire of becoming rich, the overseer needs to be content with what he has. This quality shuns every undue attachment to material possessions and its earthly gains.

Considering the danger attached to greed, “a word against avarice appears in every list of qualifications for leadership (1 Tim 3:8; Titus 1:7; cf. Acts 20:33)” (Fee 1988:82). Greed consequently lead to unlawful practices of extortion and trickery. Some have assumed pastoral offices not because of the legitimacy of their calling but because of the desire to amass wealth from the ministry. Smith (2000:139) warns that “greed is a disgraceful motive for spiritual service”. The overseer should not be embroiled with materialism.

Mounce (2000:178) proposes that “the overseers may have controlled the church’s finances, so it was especially important that they be above reproach in this area”. Kelly (1963:77) in agreement to this describes the “episkopos as keeper of the community purse”. The overseer needed to constantly guard himself of falling prey to this evil ambition. Most independent churches and ministers suffer the stint of financial impropriety.

1 Timothy 3:4: τοῦ ἰδίου οἴκου καλῶς προϊστάμενον, τέκνα ἔχοντα ἐν ὑποταγῇ, μετὰ πάσης σεμνότητος (Managing [his] own household well, having [his] children in subjection with all respect)

After listing a total of eleven cardinal requirements, the writer of the Pastoral Epistles shifted his attention to enumerate three principal qualities required for the overseer. This includes management of his household, his duration in the faith, and his reputation to outsiders.

The task of oversight includes the duties of management. Management in this context does not portray the idea of using brute force. The term προϊστάναί can be defined as “to lead, govern; it evolved into the notion of protecting, caring” (Mounce 2000:179). The overseer’s oversight at home should be rooted in love.

Paul affirms that the overseer must manage his household properly. Guthrie (1990:96) describes this concept of management as “a most important principle which has not always had the prominence it deserves”. Those who aspire to lead the household of God should have demonstrated similar leadership traits in their homes. The aspiring overseer is expected “to be outstanding in his direction of his own home, with children who are obedient and quite reverent” (Quinn & Wacker 2000:247).

The term καλῶς portrays the “idea of doing a task in a satisfactory manner, of achieving the desired results” Mounce (2000:179). Managing the church which is God’s household is in some ways similar to managing a family (household). The author of the Pastoral Epistles places a strong sense of dignity on Christian home as he compares it with the church. This passage has its parallel reference in Titus 1:6c which states that the elder needs to have believing (faithful) children. While 1 Timothy 1:4 emphasizes submission, Titus 1:6c echoes the message of faithfulness. It seems that faithfulness implies the qualities of obedience and submission (see Smith 2000:123). The two concepts are closely intertwined. The linguistic ambiguity of the terms hinders one from asserting a single usage over the other.

One of the difficulties with this verse is that it is interpreted by pro-marriage advocates to mean that the overseer should be married and have at least two children. Constable (2017:43) argues against this view and indicates that even though “Paul assumed children in the home... he...did not require them”. Mounce (2000:177) concurs with Constable (2017), and indicates that it “is not a demand that

an overseer be married or have more than one child; it is saying that a person who is married and has children must exhibit the proper leadership in his own household before attempting to do the same in God's household" (see also Lea & Griffin 1992:112). Single individual such as Paul and probably Timothy, were not to be excluded from being overseers if they fulfilled the other qualities.

The term οἴκου (genitive with προϊστημι) is used here in the sense of "household or family" (Knight 1992:161). In the case of the church, Mounce (2000:179) adds "οἶκος can mean both the building and what it houses". It is used metaphorically in 1 Timothy 3. "The image of the household is the dominant ecclesiological metaphor in the Pastoral Epistles" (Collins 2012:84). It reaches the epitome of description here.

The prospective overseer should command a fair amount of respect and submission from his children. The main phrase ἐν ὑποταγῇ denotes the idea of children willingly submitting to their father's leadership in a dignified manner. This submission is not independent of the father's authority. Knight (1992:161) states that "the subjection shown by the children must reflect the character of their father's leadership". This kind of submission shows the cordial relationship between the children and their father. "The Greek phrase rendered with proper respect (meta pasēs semnotētos) involves an element of dignity, yet without sternness" (Guthrie 1990:96). This involves instructing, encouraging and admonishing children to be upright.

It was extremely important that the prospective overseer demonstrated a great sense of leadership in his home. The context of the milieu seems to show that "there is abundant evidence that marriage was at this time being undermined by frequent divorce, widespread adultery and homosexuality on the one hand, and by an extreme reactionary asceticism on the other" (Oden 1989:141). The overseer who was expected to be above reproach needed to provide an example through the leadership traits he demonstrated at home.

Having presented a foundational argument, Paul interrupts his line of thought to introduce a parenthetical question in the next verse. This question is to some extent a rhetorical proposition.

1 Timothy 3:5: (εἰ δέ τις τοῦ ἰδίου οἴκου προσῆναι οὐκ οἶδεν, πῶς ἐκκλησίας θεοῦ ἐπιμελήσεται;) (Now if anyone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for the church of God?)

The question in 1 Timothy 3:5 presents the reason why the argument in 1 Timothy 3:4 needs to be taken seriously. “With this rhetorical question Paul makes explicit what is implicit in v 4” (Mounce 2000:180-181). There seems to be a progression of thoughts in this discourse. “The argument moves from the lesser to the greater, in analogous realms, i.e., from the family to the family of God, and states that inability in the former makes ability extremely doubtful in the latter” (Knight 1992:162). The overseer’s ability of providing oversight for the church is weighed by his ability of handling his family well. Having a dignified family life was essential for the prospective overseer.

The parenthetical section begins with a conditional clause which repeats the previous verse partly. “Ὅδε introduces a contrast to the requirement just given by means of a conditional statement, of which the ‘if’ clause is assumed to be true, and the conclusion is in the form of a rhetorical question expecting a negative answer” (Knight 1992:162). Public officers, whether ecclesial or secular, were evaluated based on how well they handled their households. If the prospective overseer could not manage his own household, he was disqualified from managing the household of God.

The rhetorical question forms part of the second half of the verse which begins with πῶς. The question “elicits a negative to its own statement” (Knight 1992:163). Those who did not rule their own households were disqualified from managing the church. The overseer needs to bear in mind that the church belongs to God. He is the Owner and its true Founder. Men are viewed as stewards entrusted with oversight.

From a grammatical standpoint, “the word church has no article, and might be translated a church of God’s’, i.e. any local congregation” (Kelly 1963:78). The use of the term ἐκκλησίας with its genitive θεοῦ connotes a Christian undertone. The genitive θεοῦ also emphasizes ownership.

Having interrupted his argument, the author of the Pastoral Epistle resumed his thought in the next verse. It is argued that the next two verses provide the only Christian virtues out of the list of qualifications requested.

*1 Timothy 3:6: μὴ νεόφυτον, ἵνα μὴ τυφωθῆς εἰς κρίμα ἐμπέση τοῦ διαβόλου
(Not a recent convert, lest having become conceited he might fall into [the] judgment of the devil)*

The writer of the Pastoral Epistles prohibits overseers from being novices or new believers. This section begins with a negative expression which emphasizes the importance of the spiritual maturity of those appointed to oversee. It is understood from the verse that prospective overseers were required to be Christians who have matured in their faith. Of all the requirements listed, this seems to be the sole requirement that speaks exclusively of the faith of the aspiring leaders. Some argue that the other requirements may apply to Christian and non-Christian leaders except for this specific qualification.

This requirement does not necessarily speak of the age of the aspiring officers but of their spirituality. Paul does not indicate that they should not be young people, he rather argues that they should not be new converts. νεόφυτος which is an adjective accusative singular masculine literally means “newly planted but is used figuratively, only in Christian literature, of one newly planted in the Christian church, or newly converted” (Knight 1992:163). Over the years, the term evolved into several usages. Collins (2012:85) states that “the word ‘neophyte’ would later become a technical term in the jargon of the church, describing people who had recently adopted the Christian faith and entered the Christian community”. The term has also had other non-Christian meanings ranging from architecture to agriculture. Metaphorically, the meaning of the term “was extended so that it could be used of any person who is new to a discipline or way of life” (Collins 2012:85). The prospective leaders should have stayed long enough to be tested before being appointed.

Appointing new converts to the office of an overseer presents a serious problem for the appointee and the church. They stand in danger of being puffed up or conceited. The term τυφοῦσθαι “means literally ‘to wrap in smoke’ (Abbott-Smith) and suggests

that a new convert would find himself beclouded” (Guthrie 1990:97). He could be engulfed in pride which leads to subsequent destruction.

The phrase κρίμα ἔμπέση τοῦ διαβόλου is an ambiguous expression. The term διαβόλου is used by some to refer to the devil and by others to speak of a slanderous person. Mounce (2000:163) however proposes that διάβολος “in the articular substantival form refers specifically, as here (contra Weiss), to the devil”. It may not be entirely valid to use it as an adjectival plural which points to humans as elsewhere³⁷ in the Pastoral Epistles.

“The words εἰς κρίμα ἔμπέση τοῦ διαβόλου are, by most expositors, ancient and modern, understood of falling into the same condemnation and punishment that the devil fell into through pride” (Calvin & Pringle 2010:84). The phrase may also be interpreted severally depending on how one considers the genitive to be expressed. In this instance, the genitive could either be objective (referring to the punishment imposed on the devil) or subjective (meaning the punishment carried out by the devil). Guthrie (1990:97) states that it could also mean “the condemnation reserved for the devil, the condemnation wrought by the devil or the condemnation of the slanderer”. The first interpretation³⁸ appears to be the most possible usage of the phrase while the other two provide viable alternatives. The term may also be used to refer to the trickery of the devil. Collins (2012:85) mentions that “the devil’s judgment is to be interpreted in the light of the more common phrase, the devil’s trap”. Believers in Christ may not be judged by the devil, but they stand liable of being victim of the attacks of the slanderer.

One of the outstanding differences between the qualifications in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1:6 is that the requirement of seniority in conversion “is significantly absent from the parallel instructions about overseers for the Cretan church, which had only recently been founded” (Kelly 1963:78). It is evident that the church in Ephesus had been established much longer than the church in Crete where new converts may have been appointed to serve as elders.

³⁷ See 1 Timothy 3:11, 2 Timothy 3:3 and Titus 2:3.

³⁸ See Knight (1992:164) for a similar discussion on the usages of κρίμα.

1 Timothy 3:7: δεῖ δὲ καὶ μαρτυρίαν καλὴν ἔχειν ἀπὸ τῶν ἔξωθεν, ἵνα μὴ εἰς ὀνειδισμὸν ἐμπέσῃ καὶ παγίδα τοῦ διαβόλου (*Now it is necessary to have a good testimony from the ones outside, lest he might fall into reproach and trap of [the] devil*)

This verse completes the list of qualification for the overseer. The final verse ends the argument with how it commenced at the beginning of the paragraph. The grammatical construction of 1 Timothy 3:6 and 7 are similar. The two verses warn against a possible negative situation. The writer of the Pastoral Epistles warns the prospective overseer to be careful not to fall victim to the reproach of those outside the church.

Just like in 1 Timothy 3:2, 1 Timothy 3:7 begins with δεῖ which expresses the necessity of the requirement. : δεῖ may either be translated as it is necessary (GNT) or moreover (KJV, ASV, ESV). It emphasizes the appropriateness of the requirement. The next particle, δε is used as a connecting particle and “carries only a weak adversative force” (Mounce 2000:184).

ἔξωθεν “is an adverb of place used here with a masculine plural article” (Knight 1992:164). The ones outside (τῶν ἔξωθεν) refer to those who are outside the Christian faith, that is the unbelievers or non-Christians. The writer of the Pastoral Epistles “evidently thinks of the pastorate as a public office requiring public esteem” (Stott 1996:99). The lifestyle of the overseer could be used to either honor or discredit the gospel message. The writer of the Pastoral Epistles pleads that the overseer maintain a good μαρτυρία (testimony) to outsiders.

If the above condition is not met, the overseer will put himself and the church of God in a situation of reproach. “ὀνειδισμός, reproach, is an extreme disgrace which may also be considered as an insult (Mounce 2000:184). The ἵνα clause clearly explains the reason why it was exceedingly important for the overseer to exhibit an irreproachable lifestyle. Kelly (1963:79-80) rightly argues that “the pastor who fails in this respect is liable to incur slander, since unsympathetic outsiders will put the most unfavourable interpretation on his slightest word or deed”. This reproach can only be avoided by living an impeccable life free of legal condemnation from those who are

within the church as well as those who are outside. False accusation and unsubstantiated criticism does not necessary count in this scenario.

The second reason presented through the use of the ἵνα clause is that the overseer may fall in the trap of the devil. “παγίδα τοῦ διαβόλου, snare of the devil, is similar to the phrase κρίμα τοῦ διαβόλου” (Mounce 2000:184). The two phrases are considered to be ambiguous in nature and expression. Commentators are well divided over the meaning of these phrases. Despite the controversy, it seems however that, in this case, διαβόλου may be viewed as a subjective genitive³⁹ which can be interpreted as the snare (trap) set by the devil. It appears that the snare refers to that which is intended for others.

παγίς is “used figuratively of things that bring danger or death, suddenly and unexpectedly” (Knight 1992:196). The individual who refuses to take heed to his conduct endangers himself of the vices of the devil. The church needs to guide itself against such dangers by appointing people who are matured in their faith and have demonstrated a good testimony to the church and outsiders.

3.14 CONCLUSION

The goal of this Chapter was to provide a working translation of the text and subsequently examine its exegetical meaning. Several verbal, lexical, grammatical and rhetorical issues were addressed.

The Chapter covered some of the fundamental qualifications for leadership in the local church. The main problem within the Ephesian church seems to be internal rather than external. It does not appear that the church, at this stage, was facing persecution from outsiders. On the contrary, the church was exposed to the practices of false teachers and the trait of immature Christians who desired to occupy ecclesiastical leadership. Just like the Ephesian scenario, most churches in contemporary times suffer the most from self-appointed leaders from within who use the church as a means of personal aggrandizement.

³⁹ See Stott (1996:99) for further affirmation of this position.

The primary ethical prerequisite in this pericope is that the overseer is irreproachable or blameless. The author of the Pastoral Epistles is also concerned about the image of the church to outsiders. He encourages leaders and prospective leaders to live in a manner that was irreproachable to those who are outside the faith.

Even though some of these qualifications could be understood in the light of secular leadership, they however primarily speak of ecclesial responsibilities and should thereby be treated in that order.

The discussion on the translation of the text attempted to highlight several issues of divergence among translators and commentators. The purpose was to remain faithful to the original meaning of the text while highlighting the different technical issues.

Having presented the basis for this study, the subsequent chapter will cover various views on gender-restriction about overseers along with the history of the appointment of bishops and overseers. The case of female appointment to clerical offices will also be considered.

Chapter 4

An investigation into the development of the appointment of overseers, elders or bishops along with views on gender restrictions for ecclesial offices

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The preceding chapter focused on the exegetical meaning of 1 Timothy 3:1-7 which helped in presenting the underlying meaning of what the text meant for its original recipient(s). The exegesis in the previous chapter provides the foundation for the argument in the subsequent chapters.

The exegetical work serves as a precursory chapter to understand the requirement(s) of the office of overseer which is also referred to as bishop or elder. A few critical issues relating to gender restriction and the marriage code were introduced. It was proposed that while marriage is the ideal, it is not an absolute requirement for overseers.

Having established the basis of the study, an exploration into the progression of ecclesial offices is done with the view of understanding and comparing the current practices with first- and second-century instructions. The objective of this Chapter is to consider the development of the appointment of overseers. Views relating to gender restriction about the episcopate will also be discussed. These arguments are evaluated by comparing them with the contemporary ecclesiology conversations. This Chapter also takes into account the heart of current ecclesiological debates which relates to clerical appointments. Various propositions about several qualifications listed are considered and critiqued.

It is argued in this study that the terms overseers, elders and bishops are used interchangeably in the New Testament and quite often refer to the same office. This claim, however, has not gained unanimous support in the church over the centuries. Church praxis has revealed that certain denominational bodies and scholars have used the terms distinctively to refer to independent group of clerical leaders.

This Chapter is divided into two major sections: The first section deals with the history of the emergence of monarchical episcopate with emphasis on the rise of monarchical systems among Catholics. This first section argues the exegetical and theological bases of overseers and elders and compares it with the current scenarios of bishopric and pastoral appointment and self-appointment found among African Pentecostal churches. The second section deals with different views on gender-restriction and the role of women in ecclesial leadership.

4.2 THE EMERGENCE OF THE MONARCHIAL EPISCOPATE

The earliest indication of the emergence of bishop as an office distinct from elders can be traced to John, the beloved apostle. Clement of Alexandria declares “that ‘after the tyrant’s death’ John ‘returned to Ephesus from the isle of Patmos,’ and ‘went away, being invited, to the contiguous territories of the nations, here to appoint bishops, there to set in order whole churches, there to ordain such as were marked out by the Spirit’” (Hastings, Selbie & Gray 1906-1926:663). Early church writings also show that John frequently used the title bishops to refer to leaders appointed in the church.

Several Church Fathers agree that John was both on Patmos and subsequently released to Ephesus. “Some of the early church fathers⁴⁰ wrote that the Apostle John experienced exile on the island of Patmos during Domitian's reign. They wrote that the government allowed John to return to Ephesus after this emperor died” (Constable 2014:2). It is understood that John was initially sent from Ephesus where he pastored to Patmos and then released under Nerva to return to Ephesus after the death of Domitian.

Some scholars opine that John’s post-Patmos experience consisted of the designation of bishops in the church in Ephesus and the scripting of his apocalyptic letter. Church history reveals that John wrote Revelation based on the insistence of the bishops and other ecclesial leaders. The Muratorian Fragment indicates that “John, one of the disciples was exhorted by his fellow-disciples and bishops ... to write all thing in his own name, and they were all to certify” (Willis 2002:17). There

⁴⁰ This view is shared by Clement of Alexandria, Eusebius, Irenaeus, and Victorinus. See Beckwith (1922:366-93), Ladd (1985:8), and Brown (1966:lxxxviii-xcii).

are various suggestions about the dating of Revelation. The time of John's writings ranges within different periods depending on the scholar. Constable (2014:1) notes that "many conservative interpreters date the writing of this book near A.D. 95 or 96. Kenneth Gentry argued that John wrote Revelation in the late 60s". A date within or slightly after the reign of Domitian seems to fit well with this narrative.

Despite the divergence of views on the message of Revelation, the attribution of its authorship to John was widely accepted by the early church. Tertullian indicates that "although Marcion rejects his Apocalypse, the order of the bishops [thereof], when traced up to their origin, will yet rest on John as the author" (Roberts 2007:350). While early church writings show that John presented the structure of the bishops, it is however uncertain if he intended to have the bishops as a separate class of church officers from the elders. Most commentators believe that John probably used the terms interchangeably.

The next factor which popularized the concept of bishops was the death of the apostles. The demise of the apostles and prophets brought with it the rapid divergence of structural change within the church. As the church grew and spread across Asia Minor, the unity of the church seemed to be threatened by its rapid expansion. "It was at that time that Ignatius of Antioch formulated the principle of the episcopate which has remained valid in many churches until the present day: one bishop – one church" (Moltmann 1993:200). Ignatius formulated his principle of monarchical episcopacy as a means of safeguarding the church from disintegration.

Ignatius's three-level division of church offices, known as the monarchical episcopate, gradually became the model followed by all churches. It was well established by the mid-2nd century. In that system the bishop in effect became the successor to the apostles and was alone responsible for administering the sacraments of baptism and the Eucharist (Communion).

(Elwell & Beitel 1988:141)

While most scholars of New Testament and church history view Ignatius' concept as a means of promoting unity in the church, several others find it increasingly difficult to accept this structure as a biblical model for church leadership. It is argued that a significant portion of New Testament and post-apostolic writings reveal that such

monarchical system was absent during the period of the apostles. Wood and Marshall (1996:141) record that

there is no trace in the NT of government by a single bishop; the position of James at Jerusalem (Acts 15:13; 21:18; Gal. 2:9, 12) was quite exceptional, and the result of his personal relationship to Christ; but influence is a different thing from office.

Other New Testament references, such as the situation of the church at Philippi shows that there was plurality of bishops and deacons. The accepted argument is that throughout the New Testament emphasis is placed on a body of ecclesial leaders over individual leaders.

Elwell and Beitzel (1988:135) propose that while “many scholars have argued for a purely Spirit-led church government in the early period, the evidence points to the presence of both institutional and charismatic elements from the beginning”. Further readings from the *Didache* and various writings of early Church Fathers make it difficult to accept that there was a fully institutional body during this period. The records however reveal that ecclesial leadership experienced significant change between the era of the apostles and the early Church Fathers until the fourth century onwards.

Information regarding the institutionalization and the development of the monarchical system varies from one author to another. According to Wood and Marshall (1996:141),

it seems most probable that monarchical episcopacy appeared in the local congregations when some gifted individual acquired a permanent chairmanship of the board of presbyter-bishops, or when the church expanded, and the presbyters were scattered to outlying congregations, leaving only one of their number in the mother church.

With time, the ecclesiastical structure of governance evolved from the apostles, elders, overseers, deacons and charismatic prophets to a separate class of monarchical bishops. While some argue that the monarchical system was

established by some presbyters to exercise influence over others, others opine that it was intended to maintain cohesion among the churches.

The argument for a structural system of episcopal leadership has some theological support. It is understood that Ignatius “founded this episcopal unity of the church by means of the following theological hierarchy: one God – one Christ – one bishop – one church” (Moltmann 1993:200). This form of governance is believed by its proponents to be a representation of the celestial system of governance. Emphasis was placed on the hierarchical structures which assured that doctrines and practices were in conformity with traditions passed down from the apostles.

Once a form of government was established, council meetings began to be instituted as the church expanded. Dever (2005:13) asserts that “as early as the second century, Ignatius would refer to a council of elders, called to give counsel to a chief pastor, or bishop. Ignatius uses the words presbyter (elder) and bishop distinctly”. The concept of council meetings subsequently evolved in many urban churches where pastors and bishops were given further authority over their congregations.

The need of leadership became evident both at the meetings of the elders and in the local churches. Elders who were more influential began to gain prominence over their equals. “Jerome, commenting on Tit. 1:5, remarks that the supremacy of a single bishop arose ‘by custom rather than by the Lord’s actual appointment’, as a means of preventing schisms in the church (cf. Ep. 146)” (Wood & Marshall 1996:141). Leaders with greater influence became popular while their less influential colleagues were forced to submit to their leadership.

Walker *et al.* (1985:48-49) agree that the emergence of monarchical bishops came about almost naturally, and certainly informally, as special status and responsibility in each church came to be assigned to an elder who regularly chaired meetings of what Ignatius calls “the presbytery”.

While this type of ecclesial leadership was not believed to be entirely biblical or apostolic in nature, it was favorably endorsed as the ideal form of government in

many post-New Testament churches due to its practical implications. This system was viewed as a unifying factor for the churches.

While the emergence of a monarchical system of governance was slower in certain parts, other regions readily embraced the structure.

Generally, it seems, competent and noted pastors, like Ignatius of Antioch, were elders who were first among equals – that function became an office, and that office seems to have grown in authority until the episcopate is understood to be a separate office from the eldership.

(Dever 2005:14)

Powerful and competent presbyters took advantage of Ignatius' proposition to exert themselves over local congregations and regions. This system of governance soon became popularized and accepted in most local churches.

The stronger the bishops became, the more they expressed their desires to conquer other territories. "Such bishops seemed to accrue authority not only in their own congregations, but throughout the area, and sometimes – in the case of the 'metropolitan sees' that arose – over much wider regions" (Dever 2005:14). Bishops with wider range of influence were considered to be more powerful than those with lesser domain of authority.

The monarchical system of governance became fairly popularized and remained the official means of leadership in the post-apostolic church. This form of government eventually replaced the body of elders.

It took many centuries for the episcopal form of government to gradually emerge from the simple self-governing independent New Testament churches to the monolithic episcopatism of the Roman Catholic Church. This evolution can be traced in several steps.

(Geisler 2005:53)

4.3 THE DEVELOPMENT OF ROMAN CATHOLIC EPISCOPATE

The development of Roman Catholic episcopate dates back to the thirteenth century. "The doctrine of transubstantiation, the primacy of the Bishop of Rome, and the

seven sacraments” dates from 1215 onwards (Geisler 2005:48). The development of Roman Catholicism and the establishment of bishop of Rome as the head of the Roman Catholic church unfolded simultaneously, starting from the placement of bishops over individual churches to recognition of bishops over the entire church. This form of leadership reached its apex when the bishop of Rome was recognized as the successor of Peter.

The normal apostolic church was one that consisted of apostles, prophets, teachers, elders or overseers who provided oversight of the church. There was no organized hierarchical structure until the second century. John’s appointment of bishops in Ephesus did not necessarily place them above other ecclesial leaders at that point.

This concept, re-introduced by Ignatius, was popularized by the Roman Catholic church. Roman Catholics view the bishop, and ultimately the pope, as the successor of the throne of Saint Peter whom they consider to be the founder of the church in Rome. The majority of evangelical scholars argue, however, that the church in Rome was neither founded by Peter nor was it governed by him.

Readings from the New Testament seem to indicate that the apostolic church was autonomous in form and leadership. Geisler (2005:48) asserts that “the visible New Testament church had no hierarchy, but each church was independent and congregational in form. There was no episcopal form of government where a bishop was distinct from and had authority over elders”. The church was either led by the apostles or a group of elders.

The introduction of hierarchical structure dates further to a later period within church history. Moltmann (1993:200-201) indicates that “in the middle ages and in the nineteenth century the doctrine of the monarchical episcopate was developed further in the theology of the papacy ... derived from the representative sequence: one church – one pope – one Peter – one Christ – one God”. This theological concept is strongly rooted in the argument that the pope serves in the line of apostolic succession emanating from Peter. Declarations by papal leaders were thereafter considered to be infallible and authoritative.

With the Romish bishop gradually gaining prominence over other bishops, a final declaration was made at the First Vatican Council in 1870 to confirm his primacy.

The final step in the evolution of the primacy of the Roman episcopacy awaited the pronouncement of Pope Pius IX that the bishop of Rome is infallible when speaking from Peter's chair (*ex cathedra*) on matters of faith and practice.

(Geisler 2005:52)

This declaration is considered to be the final step established by the Roman Catholic church to grant the bishop of Rome primacy over other ecclesial leaders.

4.4 THE RISE OF BISHOPS TO POLITICAL AND JUDICIAL OFFICES

Romish bishops and the Catholic ecclesial leaders gained further prominence when Constantine ascended to imperial power. Bishops began to exert political powers in addition to their clerical responsibilities. "The emergence of bishops with virtually the status of local magistrates was one of the most significant legacies of the Constantinian revolution" (Keith 2004:64). While contending against Maxentius, Constantine expressed his allegiance to the Christian God, and subsequently granted privileged responsibilities to the bishops after ascending to imperial power. While others argue that Constantine's decision was purely political,⁴¹ a few scholars such as Keith (2004) believe that his actions were based on his supposed conversion. The ascendance of Constantine to the political seat of Rome marked a significant transition of the church. Leaders of the church gained more influence and the church was allowed to thrive easily.

Constantine maintained a high regard of bishops and allowed them the necessary powers that were solicited either by the bishops or their followers. "Constantine accepted a common view among Christians of the time that the agreement of bishops in council should be taken as God's own decision" (Keith 2004:64). Church history reveals that Constantine was instrumental in the organization of few of those councils.

⁴¹ See Burckhardt (1949:62-154) for a critique of Constantine's conversion as a political issue.

The emperor also attributed judicial responsibilities to the bishops and allowed civil matters to be transferred to the courts of episcopal leaders. “Constantine allowed a civil case to be transferred to an episcopal court at the request of either party, and enacted that there was to be no appeal from the bishop’s decision” (Keith 2004:64). This newfound responsibility granted to the bishops was viewed both as a blessing and a distraction from spiritual duties which were the primary reason for the office. Several bishops misused their privileged responsibilities, eventually attracting criticism from some within the church and outside its boundaries.

While the Roman Catholic Church and other denominations advocated for a monarchical style of leadership, some conservative churches insisted on the maintenance of a system of elders. The elders along with the deacons were supposed to be viewed as the principal governing body within the local church.

4.5 BAPTIST’S CONCEPT OF BISHOP AND ELDERS

Traditionally, Baptists have understood the terms elders and bishop as referring to the same ecclesial office. Dever (2005:10) indicates that “the Second London Confession (1689) read the officers appointed by Christ ... are Bishops or Elders and Deacons”. Technically, Baptists consider that “there are only two offices in the church” (Cowen 2005:56). The terms pastors, elders, bishops, overseers fall under one office while deacons stand as the second office.

Bishop, overseer and elder were terms that were used interchangeably within the Baptist church until a few decades ago when the Baptist churches opted to maintain elders as the sole term for the first class of church officers. Dever (2005:10) states further that it “is not until 1963 that this Biblical and historic word finally seems to drop out of official usage by the Southern Baptist Convention”. Baptists understand that the “pastor and bishop, can also refer to an office; however, they are more descriptive of what the elder is to do” (Cowen 2005:57). Elders are expected to provide oversight and leadership for their churches.

The office of elders and deacons is strictly reserved for male leaders within the Baptist church. Women are not allowed to occupy any role teaching or exercising authority of any form in the church when males are in attendance. Baptists argue

that allowing women to teach or preach to mixed congregations is akin to exerting authority over men.

Baptists advocate for a congregational form of decision making within their local assemblies. Even though elders and deacons are elected to provide general leadership, they are however admonished to ensure that they exercise consultative leadership. The true center of power in the Baptist church is its congregation. Dever (2005:) notes that the “responsibility for the discipline and doctrine of the congregation, under God, lies not with the deacons or the elders, but with the congregation as a whole”. Congregationalism is an integral part of the functioning system of Baptist churches.

The duties of the elders is often well defined within the Baptist churches. They are charged with the responsibility of feeding and shepherding the flock of God. Cowen (2005:73) concludes that “the role of the pastor-elder can be described under three separate headings. He is to be a teacher, a pastor, and a leader of the congregation”. All other duties, whether administrative, financial or public relations fall under one of these three categories mentioned above.

4.6 SINGULARITY OR PLURALITY OF ELDERS

There are basically two principal positions presented when considering the issue of eldership in the church. Some advocate for single elders over each church while others propose multiple elders for every congregation. Those favoring the monarchical system of ecclesial leadership will advocate for a third system that enables elders or bishops to have oversight over multiple congregations.

One of the pertinent questions that arises when speaking about elders or overseers (bishops) in the Pastoral Epistles is whether there was a plurality or singularity of elders over each local church. Considering that the concept of elders originates from its Jewish background, it has been argued that “the evidence would tend to say that the normal pattern in the New Testament is for there to be more than one elder in each congregation” (Dever 2005:11). Biblical evidence ranging from the writings of Peter, Paul, Luke and James seem to support the theory of plurality of elders as

opposed to the singularity of ecclesial leaders. Except for a few exceptional cases, elders in the New Testament consisted of a team of leaders (see Dever 2005:11-22).

The New Testament structure of elders was essentially based on the Jewish pattern. Jewish cultures and religious institutions acknowledged the plurality of elders. “The pattern in the Jewish towns of Palestine was to have multiple elders. The pattern in the Jewish synagogues was also of plural leadership” (Dever 2005:11-10). It seems probable that the New Testament church inherited this form of leadership.

Allen (2012:104) argues that “Paul was not content with ordaining one elder for each church. In every place, he ordained several. This ensured that all authority should not be concentrated in the hands of one man. Responsibility was divided, and many were enlisted in the service of the church”. Accountability was also maintained.

Bixby (2007:11) concludes that “the plurality of pastors (elders) is not really a question, but the difficulty is the application of this truth”. The practical intricacies relating to the number of elders per church vary from one church to the other depending on its size, income, polity, and administration. Scripture, despite endorsing the plurality of elders, remain silent on the number of persons required to assume this office in each local church.

Merkle (2003:39) also concurs that “the church should be led by a plurality of elders/overseers ... equal in status”. He considers leadership by a group of individuals to be the closest representation of New Testament style of church governance.

4.7 THE EMERGENCE OF BISHOPS IN NDOLA AND ZAMBIA

The idea of bishops and overseers is not an entirely new concept in Ndola, Zambia. The mainline churches in Ndola and Zambia have always maintained an institutional form of appointment of pastors and bishops. The appointment of bishops in the mainline churches dates far back to the post-independence era. While the idea of bishops remains an age-old concept in the traditional churches, it is however a new phenomenon among most independent and charismatic churches in Zambia. There are no structural directives on ascension to this office. Considering that most of the

independent churches are founded by individuals who felt the call of God and accepted to utilize their gifts, they often tend to be the primary point of decision making in their local churches.

Common ecclesial praxis in the independent churches shows that most of those bearing the titles of bishops, overseers and pastors are often self-appointed and unregulated. There are no institutional bodies set in place that validate or refute the veracity of these (self) appointments. The officers argue that they have been gifted for the office and are thereby required to exercise leadership regardless of the commendation or disapproval of other men.

Another common practice is that the male overseers often co-lead their ministries along with their spouses whom they designate as founders and co-founders of the ministries/churches. Most wives of bishops and pastors exercise equal authorities as their husbands based on the titles attributed to them within the churches.

4.8 CONCLUDING REMARKS ON THE EMERGENCE OF BISHOPS

One of the drawbacks of Ignatius' system is that while "the monarchical episcopate certainly brought unity into the Christian churches, it did so at the cost of eliminating the charismatic prophets" (Moltmann 1993:200). The gifts of prophets and evangelist along with the other ministry gifts gradually faded away, giving way to a more institutionalized structure.

The next challenge posed by the monarchical system is that it placed the power of the pope, on some occasion, at the same level with the authority of the Word of God. Moltmann (1993:201) notes that council of the Romish church declared that

in the context of this progression, the "vicar of Christ" on earth possesses graduated divine authority, and his 'ex cathedra' declarations are therefore infallible, with an infallibility that can in fact only be enjoyed by the truth itself.

Arguing that the unity of the church depends on the bishop of Rome or its monarchical system rather than the Scriptures seem to be an incomprehensible declaration to present. If the unity of the church was solely dependent on a system rather than Scripture, it will pose series of unjustifiable issues.

Moltmann (1993:202) justifiably asserts in relation to this debate that “the unity of the Christian community is a Trinitarian unity” rather than a papal or monarchical one. It is a unity based on the biblical template. The Trinitarian unity and doctrine has a far more profound binding on the church than does the monotheistic monarchical model. The doctrine of Trinitarian unity presents the church as a communal body consisting of brothers and sisters that is not limited by any hierarchical structure.

Gleanings from Scriptures tend to reveal that the church was led from its inception by a group of leaders who remained accountable to Christ, one another and the church they led. The early church was initially governed by a team of apostles, then prophets and elders who assured that the biblical model remained intact. This system of leadership had its bearing from the Judeo-Christian culture that was prevalent in the early centuries.

Having examined the issues related to bishops and elders along with the arguments presented by Catholics and Baptists, the next section of this study will focus on issues related to gender-restriction within ecclesial leadership. Various scholars and different denominational groups share differing opinion over the role of women in church leadership.

4.9 GENDER RESTRICTION

The case for women in ecclesial leadership has been ferociously debated for centuries and has heightened over the past few decades. The ascension of women to pastoral ministries in some churches has resuscitated the discussion on gender restriction and male subordination. Hoehner (2007:761) states that “it was not until the last two centuries that women gradually became full-fledged members of the clergy”. Except for a few cases where women served on eldership teams, women were mostly excluded from leadership roles in a vast majority of the churches for centuries.

The emergence of women to prominent leadership roles within the church brought with it great criticism. The appointment and self-appointment of women to clerical offices have either been attributed to several factors, namely the advocacy for

equality of male and female in the home and church; the unavailability of men to assume clerical offices; the Spirit gifting of women who feel compelled to occupy these responsibilities; and a shift within the secular workforce accommodating women to occupy various leadership responsibilities.

The history of women ascending to ecclesial offices can be traced to the Salvation Army. “The first woman to preach in a church (or, more correctly, a chapel) was William Booth’s wife, Catherine, who continued to preach after her husband had finished, stating that the Holy Spirit had called her to share the gospel” (Hoehner 2007:761). The concession made for Catherine eventually opened the door for several women to ascend to various pastoral and bishopric duties within the Episcopal, Methodist and Pentecostal churches, just to name a few.

Since then, several propositions have been submitted over the years about different positions on the role of women in ministry and the restrictions they tend to encounter. The arguments presented are basically divided into those who stand on the two extremes along with others who promote a middle view on the subject. Other views are either a combination of the three main views common to New Testament scholars.

Lister (2004:109) classifies gender related articles under four major categories: complementarian, egalitarian, non-evangelical and undeclared authors. A fifth classification will be the school of the hierarchical interpreters.

4.9.1 Complementarian view

The complementarian view “designate an author who recognizes the full personal equality of the sexes, coupled with an acknowledgment of role distinctions in the home and church” (Lister 2004:109). Complementarians argue that both men and women complement each other in their duties in the church and home. They recognize that God has attributed “different gender-defined roles” to each sex (Strauch 1999:6).

One key feature of complementarianism is that it often advocates for a hierarchical system. Man is recognized as the leader of his wife the woman is expected to submit

to her husband's authority. Scholz (2005:84) notes that "sometimes it is also identified as 'hierarchicalism' or 'traditionalism'". It must be noted however that most complementarians are uncomfortable with extreme labels which ignore their desire of promoting mutual interdependence. Some have misunderstood complementarians by stating that they do not value the role of women in the ministry. Breeding (2009:79), in counter argument, indicates that "complementarians do not advocate a male-only approach to ministry within the church". They also value the contribution of women in the church and urge them to contribute to the welfare of the church by submitting to male leadership.

Complementarians use the biblical prohibition in 1 Timothy 2 to argue for timeless restriction of women in the church. Köstenberger (2003:10), a complementarian, argues that "the Pastorals quite clearly set forth paradigms for the church that reach beyond their original Ephesian or Cretan context". The argument proposed by this assertion is that the church structure mentioned should not uniquely be considered as a first century composition which ignores a parallel system developed from the third century onward.

While Köstenberger (2003) remains silent on the appointment of female overseers and bishops, he clearly advocates for female deacons. Köstenberger (2003:12) asserts that "on the whole, women deacons are to be preferred" because "the word diakonos was still used for males and females" in Paul's days. The general understanding among Bible translators is that *diakonos* could either be translated as the wife of deacons or female deacons. Considering that the diaconate is associated with the ministry of helps, it makes it easier to argue that women could occupy this responsibility because they might not be required to exert authority over men.

"Evangelical patriarchy maintains that certain ministry positions in the church are inappropriate for women and should be restricted to men. In particular, women should not operate in positions of authority over men" (Franklin 2004:14). Most evangelicals would argue that Paul prohibits women in 1 Timothy 2:13-14 from domineering over men through the teaching ministry. Saucy (1994:90) indicates that "the teaching is thus of a nature that would be equivalent of exercising authority over those taught". Complementarians would argue that women are not allowed to occupy

teaching roles within the church which involves a male or mix audience. Some will however concede to allow women to teach other females when the need arises.

Some scholars make sharp distinction between complementarianism and patriarchy. Tracy (2007:576) indicates that “‘patriarchy’ refers to ‘male rule’ and hence ‘male authority’ and describes a very broad continuum of gender role models in which males have some type of gender-based authority over females”. The greatest danger of an absolute male patriarchy is that if not monitored carefully, it could result in male abuse and violence targeted at females. A biblical view of the equality of males and females along with their role distinctions need to be promoted in order to avoid unhealthy tension in the home and church.

Saucy (1994:79) adds that “the testimony of human history, consistently reveals the reality of patriarchy – a reality that, despite its sinful conditioning, is still most easily explained as having its basis in nature”. While complementarianism has been favored for over two millennia, there is a fundamental need of recognizing that the widespread abuse of male power has often been treated with a blind eye in the normal evangelical church primarily because of the fear of tempering with male patriarchal system. “Feminist scholarship has repeatedly demonstrated that throughout human history patriarchy (male authority and power over females) has provided the foundation for male domination and often abuse” (Tracy 2007:586). This has presented hurdle for egalitarians who a clear need of re-evaluating the concept of headship and submission. While some may argue that evangelical feminism has taken the debate out of proportion, a majority of scholars concur that conservative evangelicals have not done much to combat violence against women. Their inaction has been detrimental to the welfare of women in general.

4.9.2 Egalitarian view

The egalitarian view covers “evangelicals who see only undifferentiated equality, i.e. they see no scriptural warrant for affirming male headship in the home or the church” (Lister 2004:109). Egalitarians argue that the church needs to affirm the gifting of its leaders irrespective of their gender. They consider several gender-restrictive passages to be taken out of context by complementarians. A great portion of

egalitarians support theories of evangelical feminism which have become popular both within Christian and non-Christian circles over the last few decades.

The evangelical feminist movement was born out of the Evangelical Women's Caucus which grew out of the Evangelical for Social Action meetings in 1973 (Rogers 2009:57). Theories of evangelical feminist movement soon began to take shape as series of consultations were held in the United States of America. Cochran (2005:2) indicates that "at the heart of this engagement among evangelical feminists was a negotiation over the nature, meaning, and scope of biblical authority, the end result of which was a weakening of scriptural authority". This resulted in a rejection of the traditional methods of interpretation of key passages relating to women.

The doctrine of inerrancy was modified by liberal feminist to accommodate different theories on evangelical feminism while the idea of homosexuality was affirmed by progressive evangelicals. Rogers (2009:57) correctly asserts that "their modified definition of inerrancy and use of modern hermeneutical and theological methods, though fervently contested within evangelicalism, resulted in the expansion of evangelical, theological, and hermeneutical boundaries". The concept of gender inclusiveness became popular as a result of the feminist movement. Different evangelical doctrines were either modified or rejected based on the rise of egalitarianism.

Several egalitarian scholars believe that there are either hermeneutical or exegetical flaws in the interpretation of texts that favor male leadership in the church. Belleville (2003:3), a leading egalitarian scholar, categorizes the discussion under "four key exegetical fallacies: contextual/historical, lexical (silently, authentically), grammatical (the Greek infinitive and correlative), and cultural (Artemis)". The arguments proposed by Belleville are often questioned by other scholars because she shifts her argument from the normal exegetical meaning of 1 Timothy 2:11-15 to a series of speculations which favors her claims. Her counterproposal in relation to the four views mentioned above may be considered to be speculations which do not contain support from the text cited.

Belleville (2003:3) argues, for example, that “false teaching is Paul’s overriding concern” as opposed to church order. Most of her work is centered on validating this claim. She argues that there are numerous accounts of women occupying leadership responsibilities in Scriptures. Hoehner (2007:770) disagrees and states that “the first infinitive “to teach” (διδάσκειν) does not connote the kind of teaching, for example, false teaching; otherwise it would imply that men can teach false doctrine, but women cannot”. Considering that Paul neither endorses false teachings from men, Belleville’s argument does not perfectly fit the context.

Franklin (2008:14), an egalitarian, believes “that women should be welcomed and encouraged to serve in positions of church leadership and authority, and that giftedness and not gender should determine a person’s qualification to serve”. Egalitarians often consider that Spirit gifting of the individuals trumps all other criteria and requirement for ecclesial office including those related to gender.

Grudem (2004:35), in response to the claims mentioned above, asserts that “while egalitarian leaders claim to be subject to Scripture in their thinking, what is increasingly evident in their actual scholarship and practice is a rejection of the effective authority of Scripture”. To Grudem, and other complementarians, allowing women to assume teaching responsibilities will equate to ignoring the biblical instruction.

Webster (2012:148) argues that “gifting is more important than gender for service in the church.... The Spirit’s priority on gifting over gender for ministry, means ministry is less authority driven and more ministry driven”. Most egalitarians will concur with Webster for he beautifully captures their argument. Stinson (2008:17) counters this position by revealing that “while every believer is equipped by the Holy Spirit indiscriminate of gender, how each man or woman serves the church falls under the framework of Scripture”. While some complementarians accuse egalitarians of despising or comprising Scriptures, the latter argue that they fully value the biblical text.

The constant disagreement between complementarians and egalitarians reveal that the instructions in Scriptures on church structures does not always appear to be as

clear as one may think. The ambiguity of New Testament church structures has left several questions either unresolved or constantly debated among conservative and liberal scholars.

While Grudem favors women leadership in para-church organizations and sub-committees within the church, he shuns female leadership within the collective ecclesial body. The assertion below summarizes his thought.

I would approve of a woman as Director of Christian Education or Superintendent of the Sunday School, or as a committee chairman within the church.... On the other hand, I would not think it appropriate for a woman to be a permanent leader of a home fellowship group, especially if the group regularly carries out pastoral care of its members and functions as a sort of mini-church within the church.

(Grudem 1995:8)

Even though Grudem (1995) and Hoehner (2007) may both agree on female subordination within the church and home, the latter however argues for the distinction between ministerial gifts and offices. Hoehner (2007:763) indicates that “Scripture consistently maintains a distinction between the office and the gift. Eldership is an office, whereas pastor-teacher is a gift”. This makes one rethink over a commonly held position of the interchangeable nature of the following terms: pastor, elder, bishop, overseer. If Hoehner’s proposition is true, there will be an urgent need to re-adjust the commonly held position of the interchangeability of the terms. It is worth noting however that not all scholars share Hoehner’s position.

Another issue of debate among New Testament students is the combination of pastor-teacher as one gift or its eventual separation as two gifts. Saucy (1994:83) notes that “whether all those recognized as ‘teachers’ actually held the office of pastor or elder is not certain”. While some believe that all pastors possess the teaching gift, there is disagreement whether all teachers can be designated as pastors. Church history has not always shown the two gifts as one and the lexical structure allows the two translations.

Hamilton (2008:54) believes that “as for the distinction between gift and office, pastors and elders, there may be a word study fallacy in Hoehner’s interpretation”. The argument is that while one refers to the office, the other refers to the role of the person occupying the office. The elders are therefore expected to carry out pastoral duties in their churches.

Hoehner (2007:767) argues further that “if the delineation between gifts and office had been operative,” women would not be restricted from assuming the office of elders and bishops while they exercised their gifts of pastor-teachers. This will do justice to the text and also allow the body of Christ to benefit of the gifting endowed upon female ministers. The church will thereby recognize their gift and use them in line with their gifting. This will also resolve the claim of misinterpretation and dilution of biblical text to suit any given circumstance.

Grudem (2004:52) indicates that elders allowing women to teach would be indicative “of a liberal tendency because on no other area of conduct would we be willing to say that someone can do what the Bible says not to do as long as the pastor and elders give their approval”. Grudem’s position rebuffs every form of authorization granted based on circumstantial occurrences.

Grudem (2004:52) argues further that women who teach the Bible to men only when they are under the authority of the elders have “become no different from men who teach the Bible”. This position is shared by other complementarian who argue against women preaching to male or mix audience in church.

The case for gender neutral text seems to be gaining support around the world. Publishers like Zondervan and IBS have gone to great length to publish gender-neutral editions of the Bible called *Today’s New International Version*. While this move may be welcomed by many, current conservative scholars have raised series of concern. Grudem (2002:37) indicates that “the heart of the controversy is this: The TNIV people have decided to translate the general idea of a passage and to erase the male-oriented details”. Apart from omitting male related details, the gender-neutral translators also include female-oriented thoughts in the passages.

Diluting or under-translating biblical text poses huge concern for complementarians because it opens the door for one to modify Scripture in order to suit their doctrinal position. Such undertaking also undermines the authority of Scripture and accommodates liberal interpretation of Scripture. While egalitarianism may not be entirely wrong, it poses a huge concern when its tenets deny every masculine undertone found in Scripture.

Egalitarian scholars may however argue that their disagreement with conservative scholars who advocate for male headship is simply based on difference in interpretation which does not alter the supremacy of Scripture. Egalitarians may argue further that the Bible gives them support for their position. Grudem (1998:np) finally questions egalitarians based on six crucial questions which may be categorized under the following headings “kephalē, hypotassō, or, authenteō, “neither X nor Y, and Women teaching false doctrine at Ephesus”.

The argument raised by a few scholars is that Paul’s prohibition of women in 1 Timothy should be treated as a temporary situation unique to the Ephesian church. They argue that women should be granted the full right to assume any leadership responsibility within the church. While this may be a possible hypothesis, some scholars however disagree with the position and propose that the injunction be considered as a timeless principle. Hoehner (2007:769) notes, in reference to 1 Timothy 2:12, that “since it is stated in the present active indicative (οὐκ ἐπιτρέπω; ‘I do not permit’), some think it is the author’s personal opinion indicating a temporary prohibition. The context, however, demands an imperatival force applicable for all time”.

Mounce (2000:184) concurs that “while it is necessary to interpret [1 Tim. 3:1-7] in light of its historical context, this does not mean that what it says, or what the principles lying behind the text say, is necessarily limited to the original context”. The deduction will be that since the problems experienced by the Ephesian church are common in other contemporary churches, the universal principle will be applicable to them as well. Merkle (2014:186-187) concludes that “the lists are general, specific, not comprehensive, universal ... and the intent of the qualifications must be upheld today”. This will mean that the principles laid out should be considered as normative

and non-negotiable unless it can be objectively proven otherwise based on serious evidence.

4.9.3 Moderate evangelicals

Moderate evangelical views cover authors who “do not explicitly affiliate with either the complementarian or egalitarian position, although they endorse politically and religiously conservative organizations and promote an evangelical perspective” (Scholtz 2005:96). Most moderate evangelicals reject feminist theologies and often accuse the general evangelical church of yielding to the pressure of feminist demands. Miller’s (1999) essays on the Bible, fatherhood, and culture is a classic example of views expressed by moderate evangelicals.

4.9.4 Non-evangelical authors

This non-evangelical heading deals with “important secular works as well as articles that broach the subject of biblical gender issues from a religious, albeit, non-evangelical point of view” (Lister 2004:109). This category covers liberal scholars wanting to retain some sort of relevance and identity within the Christian community. These authors range from non-evangelicals who either support or critique complementarianism, egalitarianism or the moderate evangelical. Below are examples of non-evangelical authors covering each of these categories.

Scholtz (2005), a leading non-evangelical author, examines the complementarian, egalitarian and moderate evangelical views in her essay. Scholtz (2005:86-91) classifies the complementarian position under five main points: “sincere commitment to the Bible, support for patriarchal gender roles, failure to engage mainstream scholarship, the challenge of evangelical feminism, attachment to gender essentialism”. She reviews various egalitarian work and gives a comprehensive history on Christian for Biblical Equality (CBE), an institution considered to be the primary advocate for egalitarianism.

Methuen promotes the arguments raised by egalitarian authors. Methuen (2005:164) discusses “some of the evidences for women’s leadership in the early Church before examining possible motivations for excluding them from leadership”. Downing,

another non-evangelical author, uses Galatians as a premise to understand gender debate and women in ecclesial leadership. Downing (2005:180) avers that “there could be no intellectual activity, no ethical sensitivity and no social function from which someone’s sex would preclude her or him”. Some scholars think it appears that the writer of Galatians 3:28 seems to affirm the equality of men and women. Miles (2001:23) adds that “for Paul, women and men alike are new creatures in Christ and have been given spiritual gifts without regard to gender”.

From a non-Christian perspective, the basis of exclusion of women from ecclesial leadership structure was to accommodate the masculine figure by avoiding every idea that disturbed the social mores. Methuen (2005:171) indicates that “if Christianity was to become a more respectable and established religion, it needed to present an ‘acceptable’ face to those to whom the gospel was to be preached”. This enabled the church to maintain a strong influence to the world to which it had to minister.

Methuen (2005:173) reveals that “the exclusion of women from those offices came about for reasons of mission, for fear that pagans would ‘mock and scoff’ to hear women teach”. The prevalent circumstances in the first century milieu might have strongly influenced the writings of the authors of the Pastoral Epistles. Downing (2005:181) adds that while Paul did not uphold a non-egalitarian view, there are “certainly instances where Paul succumbs to social pressure (1 Cor. 11.2–14; 14.33b–35), and certainly instances in some of the deutero-Pauline letters where what is said would seem to beg for an Aristotelian kind of defence (Eph. 5.35; 1 Tim. 2.11-15)”.

Considering that the opposite of the above situation is common practice in contemporary secular and ecclesial workspace, it might be ideal “to reverse that exclusion by (re-?) opening episcopacy to women” (Methuen 2005:173). Women are easily welcomed in the workplace and their leadership ability is embraced in some circles. While there remains significant tension between certain section of the society that devalues the role of women, a fair amount of men will readily welcome the leadership of women in the church and at home.

4.10 CONCLUDING REMARKS

While both complementarians and egalitarians have valid points of discussion, it appears that both camps sometime take the discussion further than necessary. Both parties will do well if they heed to Blomberg's (2001:330) assertion that "Paul was neither a classic hierarchicalist nor a full-fledged egalitarian". Paul did not seek to promote complementarian, egalitarian or evangelical views. The uncontested Pauline letters vividly indicates that women shared in various ministry responsibilities including deacons, co-laborers and probably apostles, like the disputed case of Junia (see esp. Rm 16). It is true that in some instances, it appears that the Scripture clearly forbids women, while in others it remains silent of the engagement of women in teaching and leadership responsibilities.

Chapter 5

Elders in the Old and New Testament

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In the preceding chapter the history of the appointment of bishops in the church was discussed. The first half of that study considered the progression of eldership from the popular designation to its technical monarchical understanding. The second section of the chapter discussed various scholarly views relating to gender-restriction and the implications it presents for women in contemporary leadership roles within the church.

The objective of this Chapter is to explore the concept of elders in the Old and New Testament. The Chapter examines the origin and progression of the term elder along with its usage within the Old and New Testament. The final portion of the Chapter discusses diverging views on the relationship between Old and New Testament eldership.

The study reveals that there are variety of misconceptions about elders in the Bible and within contemporary ecclesiastical environments. Different individuals have postulated varying definitions of and attributions to the term. While most Christians accept the elder as some kind of leader within the church, they disagree on the exact role of the elder and their biblical responsibility over the centuries. An examination of these key aspects from the Old and New Testament will attempt to bridge the gap the ancient meaning and its contemporary usage.

5.2 ELDERS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

The concept of eldership is a complex idea expressed in a variety of ways in the Old Testament. Different words are used to convey the idea of eldership within the Jewish culture and the rest of the Old Testament. Its Jewish heritage strongly influences the meaning and usage of the term both in biblical and extra-biblical writings. An understanding of the major definition of elders will further enlighten one's understanding of the concept.

Fensham (1979:53) defines elder as “an elderly person; also, an authority, or a person with judicial office. It is commonly accepted that the origin of this later meaning is to be sought in the ancient patriarchal family institution of the Hebrews”. Israel was a patriarchal society that evolved around male leaders. The elders were considered to be the center of decision making within the nation. Eldership in Israel was as basic as the family.

“In the Old Testament, the term for elder (zaqen) refers to (1) someone who has entered old age or (2) a leader of the community who performs various functions” (Merkle 2007:61). Elders consisted of a group of men who had demonstrated leadership trait among other leaders. Two-third of the references of elder in the Old Testament is attributed to a distinguished group of leaders of the community while one-third of the meaning is used in reference to older men.

The Jewish culture required that men who had exemplified their maturity either through their knowledge, experience or heredity, and on some occasion through their age, be chosen to serve as leaders. “A group of men, known as the elders, regulated life in both the nomadic tribes and the local settlements of Semitic culture” (Byran 2009:19). The elders exercise both supervisory and representative duties.

“The term elder is used more than 180 times in the Old Testament. Its literal meaning has to do with age, and yet approximately two-thirds of the term’s uses apply to community leadership” (Evans & Godwin 2011:31). While eldership in the Old Testament is often associated to age and experience, the concept is repeatedly understood both within the Old and New Testament to designate a sense of wisdom and maturity. Elders in Israel were chosen to provide wise counsel to various groups. Byran (2009:19) concurs that “Old Testament elders were predominately senior adults, and thus the elders are an important source for insights regarding senior adult spiritual growth and development”.

The Septuagint uses the Greek term πρεσβύτερος to represent various Hebrew words that conveyed the idea of eldership within the Jewish culture. Some of the terms used in the Old Testament to represent elders “are בְּכוֹר (“firstborn”), גְּדֹלָה

(“great”), *יָשׁוּב* (“aged, old”), *רִאשׁוֹן* (“former, first, chief”), *יָבֵט* (“aged, old, hoary head”), and *כְּבִיר* (“great, mighty, much”) (Mappes 1997:80). Most of these descriptions intertwine with one another to convey a variety of concepts on eldership within the Jewish context.

Miller (1985:317) opines that the Old Testament elders were “representatives of the whole people, and they are this only in the sense of mere representation, not with any initiative or governing power, but along with and under leading figures like Moses and Joshua”. While briefly indicating that the elders later became a decision-making body, Miller (1985) failed to acknowledge that elders were an influential body that had duties that exceeded mere representation. Old Testament sources on the contrary, reveal that elders were powerful and influential group of men who guided life in Israel. Hamilton (2014:18) adds that “elders were both representative of and responsible for the people”. They were held equally accountable for the sins and failures of the people and were subsequently judged along with the erring nation.

Strauch (1995:122) concurs that “Israel’s elders were not mere figureheads. Their vital leadership role is displayed by their active involvement in every crucial event in Israel’s history”. The elders are seen to be actively involved in leading the Israelites along with the prophets and judges from the period of slavery in Egypt to the moment they went to the Promised land and thereafter.

Two biblical examples reveal the influence of the elders on Israel. In 1 Samuel 8:4-5, the elders requested aging Samuel to appoint a king akin to the surrounding nations. Later, in the history of Israel in 2 Samuel 5:1-3, Saul the befallen king pleaded with David, his immediate heir, to parade with him before the elders. Saul intended to maintain his status before the elders even though he had been rejected from the throne. Several other biblical instances reveal that the elders in Israel had an enviable status in Israel.

“The establishing of elders, as a distinct group of leaders, most likely originated in the patriarchal tribal settings of the Semitic peoples, where the family was the basic social unit” (Mappes 1997:81). The concept of elders was recognizable early on in

the history of Israel especially during the patriarchal period. Older men were chosen and placed in these leadership positions based on their experience and their level of wisdom. They were required to provide counsel for the younger generation and their tribal groupings.

Elders served the Hebrews during each phase of their history. "Throughout the Old Testament they functioned as judges in civil as well as religious matters. They advised kings, counseled people in their towns, and at times were associated with the high priest" (Glasscock 1987:70). The elders gained prominence among the Israelites that they became a prominent force when Jesus appeared on the scene of Israel's history.

Other middle Eastern and Near Eastern nations valued the concept of eldership that they adopted it. "Elders in Israel became a spiritual office as well as being the traditional position of honor that it was among most ancient Near Eastern cultures" (Glasscock 1987:69). The spiritual responsibility of elders was mostly complementary to the works of the priests. The elders initially occupied their traditional status before eventually evolving into a religious class.

McKenzie (1959:522-523) categorizes elders in the Old Testament to twenty different categories ranging from "elders in Israel to elders in Moab and Midian". There were elders who provided oversight for cities, towns, families and tribes. The ancient nation of Israel and the neighboring nations recognized elders as men chosen to serve in leadership responsibilities over a designated group of people.

Wegner (1997:1135) indicates that "the biblical text mentions elders among the Egyptians (Gen 50:7; Ps 105:22), Moabites (Num 22:4, 7) and Midianites (Josh 9:11), Gibeonites and Israelites (Exod 3:16)". The idea of eldership was well engrained in Ancient Near Eastern cultures. While elders commenced as a non-institutional body, they later developed into a fully organized structure in Israel.

Throughout the history of Israel, the nation has been exposed to concept of elders. "It appears that as far back as the Egyptian captivity, the Israelites were led by elders (Ex. 3:16), and it is commonly accepted that this concept originated in the Hebrew

patriarchal family institution” (Wegner 1997:1135). Each family or tribe in Israel was represented and informally governed by the elders.

The elders occupied a prestigious bureaucratic position among the different groups of leaders within Pharaoh’s entourage. “Below the royal family was the family of the viziers, provincial governors, priests of major deities and other high ranking members of Pharaoh’s bureaucracy” (Stiebing 2016:144). The elders formed part of the distinguished leaders who provided counsel to Pharaoh.

Elders continued to provide guidance for the Israelites after they were delivered from captivity in Egypt. “When the Israelites settled into the Promised Land, there was a continuation of the role of elder in the life of Israel” (Evans & Godwin 2011:32). Their roles evolved further as the Israelites grew in number and spread across Canaan.

Elders had a well-defined perimeter of operation. They were not chosen to establish new laws and policies but to give oversight of the people. “From the Scriptural evidence, these elders were responsible for administering societal standards according to Mosaic Law” (Evans & Godwin 2011:32). They assured that the Israelites obeyed the commands of Yahweh and heeded to the directives of the prophets and kings.

Merkle (2007:61) indicates that “the elders of Israel functioned in a variety of roles. First, they were a representative body. Second, they were a governing body. Third, they were a judicial body”. As representatives of the people, the elders spoke on behalf of the people in political and judicial matters. While they were not considered as the principal governing authority in Israel, they served alongside the kings and governors giving counsels. Their judicial functions consisted of the application of laws and the punishment of lawbreakers.

“The role of elder was not limited to the city, elders were also involved in national oversight. Their exact role is unknown, but it has been proposed that they were to adjudicate any breach of the covenant and to maintain social justice and order”⁴²

⁴² See Wegner (1997:1135) for further assertion of this concept

(Evans & Godwin 2011:32-33). In several places in the Old Testament, the elders were responsible for the punishment of disobedient individuals. In Deuteronomy 19:23, for instance, the elders were instructed to punish murderers.

Various Old Testament figures often consulted the elders in matters of governance and leadership. Hamilton (2014:17) explains that “Abner confers with the elders of Israel to make David king (2 Sam. 3:17), and David covenants with the elders of Israel (5:3) who then anoint him king (1 Chron. 11:3)”. Joshua and Solomon are two prominent Old Testament personalities who also inquired from the elders.

While the Old Testament is full of a plethora of godly leaders who consulted the elders, ancient records indicate that several amoral leaders took advantage of the elders. “When Absalom rebelled against David, Ahithophel’s advice pleased Absalom and the elders of Israel (2 Sam. 17:4)” (Hamilton 2014:18). Ahab and his wife Jezebel are two Old Testament personalities who wrongfully persuaded the elders of Israel. The elders on several occasions were held accountable for the moral decay and failure of the nation of Israel.

Towards the end of the Old Testament, the idea of eldership was well known and fully developed among the Israelites. “At the close of the Old Testament time, during the early post-exilic period, the concept of elder began to shift away from leaders of families in general to leaders of influential families” (Evans & Godwin 2011:34). These elders were chosen to settle disputes that arose within these families. They were also considered to form part of the bureaucracy of these families.

5.3 ELDERS IN THE INTERTESTAMENTAL PERIOD

Eldership in the intertestamental period was a progression of a bureaucratic and aristocratic class that had developed from the Old Testament period. The elders in the intertestamental period served as members of the Sanhedrin council who were also associated with the High Priest.

Evans and Godwin (2011:34) notes that “at the end of the third or beginning of the second century BC under the Seleucid king Antiochus II, we have evidence of the existence of a council of elders consisting of seventy (or seventy-one) members, the

Sanhedrin". These elders formed a class of spiritual leaders who aided the Levitical leaders in providing spiritual oversight for Israel.

The concept of the Sanhedrin council takes its bearing from the Old Testament. Merkle (2007:62) indicates that "Numbers 11 became the model for the Sanhedrin and was later used to justify rabbinical ordination". In Numbers 11, Moses was admonished to designate elders who would serve with him to lead the Israelites.

This class of elders "became associated with the lay members of the council who came from the patrician families of Jerusalem" (Evans & Godwin 2011:34). The council of the Sanhedrin consisted of a group of highly reputable elders who enjoyed several privileges from various influential families. The council of the Sanhedrin was a mixture of elders, along with the two major opposing groups: the Pharisees and the Sadducees. Constable (2014:242) states that "representatives of both parties constituted the Sanhedrin, the highest Jewish governing body in Israel (cf. Acts 23:6)". Regardless of the controversies that existed between Pharisees and Sadducees, they seemed to agree on one thing, being part of the Sanhedrin along with the elders.

Strauch (1995:123) concurs that "it appears that these elders were part of the non-priestly nobility, heads of important, wealthy Judean families". The elders were prominent figures within the synagogue. Due to the scarcity of information on the elders during the intertestamental period, it remains difficult to fully assert the scope of their operation within the synagogue. It is believed however that they served alongside the priests and were often associated with the Sanhedrin.

Throughout the intertestamental period, the Greek term πρεσβύτερος was favored over the original Hebrew term, זקן. Merkle (2007:62) alludes to the fact that "the translators of the Septuagint favored the term presbyters to translate the Hebrew zaqen, rendering it as such 127 times". This preference is noticeable in many portions of the New Testament where eldership is discussed.

5.4 ELDERS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

The New Testament writers use different words to refer to ecclesiastical leaders. Some of these terms are used in connection with their Hebrew and Greek background, while others are expressed independently of any existing word. While the general meaning of most of the terminology have remained the same for centuries, certain ideas evolved as time went by. This has resulted in some form of misconception regarding the meaning of some New Testament terminology.

“The Greek term *presbuteros* (elder) and its cognates can refer to an old person (man or woman; eg, John 8:9; Acts 2:17; 1 Tim 5:1-2) or can be used in the comparative sense of one who is older than another (Luke 15:25)” (Merkle 2007:63). Both Judaism and Christianity use *πρεσβύτερος* to refer to leaders in the synagogue or the church. Mappes (1997:85-86) indicates that “*Πρεσβύτερος* refers to synagogue officials, members of the Sanhedrin (Matt 16:21; 26:3; Luke 22:66), and church officials (Acts 11:30; 14:23; 20:17; 1 Tim 5:17; Titus 1:5)”.

In the Jewish and Roman cultures, the elders were the *pater familias* or head of families. Saller (2000:182) indicates that the term “comes as heavily loaded with conceptual baggage... *pater familias*, defined as head of household evokes the patriarchal organization characteristic of the Roman family and of the wider society”. The *pater familias* had authority over both their immediate and extended families. In essence the elders were the fathers of the families or households. In the New Testament and post New Testament periods, the elders were expected to be the head of the house churches. Considering that the New Testament model of church was basically the house church format, the elders therefore occupied a prominent role in the administration of house churches.

“The word ‘elder’ was used in most cultures of the ancient Near East and Greek and Roman societies used *πρεσβύτερος* as a title for village officials” (Glasscock 1987:70-71). The general usage of elder refers broadly to any group of leaders who provided oversight for a community, village or town. The idea of oversight was fairly common among the administrative leaders and their communities.

Elders were chosen to serve over different groups of people within the early church. The process of selection of New Testament leaders was complex. “In newly planted churches leaders were elected, called and appointed; they were known as πρεσβύτερος (Ac 14:23; Tt 1:5)” (Breed 2016:3).

Some argue that the New Testament’s designation of elders has its root in the Jewish culture and it is strongly linked to its Old Testament and intertestamental period. They propose that any discussion on eldership which entirely isolates its Jewish heritage will leave one disconnected from the full bearing of the term. A vast majority of New Testament scholars believe that “there are three possible Jewish sources⁴³ of the eldership: (1) the OT elder, (2) the Sanhedrin elder, and (3) the synagogue elder” (Miller 1985:317). Merkle (2007) adds a fourth source to the three presented by Miller (1985). Merkle (2007:66) indicates that “at least four possible sources of the Christian elder have been proposed: (1) the Old Testament; (2) the Sanhedrin; (3) the synagogue; and (4) the culture”.

In the New Testament, “an official elder was not just an older man. He was also a leader, an adviser who judged and counseled. Elders did not function individually, as did the prophets, but were always seen as a college or council” (Glasscock 1987:70). Similar to the Old Testament, elders in the New Testament were classified into various groupings. There were “elders of the people (Matt 21:23; 26:3), elders of the Jews (Luke 7:3; Acts 25:15) and elders of the church (Acts 20:17; James 5:14)” (Merkle 2007:63). Elders were also found in various New Testament churches in the different cities. The elders were expected to be a council of men possessing immense wisdom and insight that superseded mere academic credentials.

When referring to the earliest gathering of New Testament leaders, Calvin (2015:np) notes that the elders were “those who did excel in doctrine and judgment, and those who, according to their office, were competent judges in this matter”. New Testament elders exercised teaching ministry and also provided counsel for their churches.

⁴³ See Miller (1985:317) for his disagreement on this position as he argues for the uniqueness of New Testament eldership.

“The first mention of Christian elders appears in Acts 11:30, which tells us the church in Antioch sent Barnabas and Paul to the elders in Jerusalem.... Later, in Acts 15, the elders are referenced along with the apostles” (Merkle 2009:28). Some scholars believe that the elders were ranked just under the apostles and worked closely with them. Elders worked closely with the apostles when the early church was founded. New Testament elders are seen to be actively engaged in the establishment of doctrinal treatise for the early church. Strauch (1995:36) indicates further that “the elders of the church in Jerusalem united with the twelve apostles to deliberate over doctrinal controversy”. By the time Peter wrote his epistle, the elders had gained prominence among the congregations that they were considered to be an integral part of their leadership.

Constable (2014:179) argues that “elders were common in Jewish synagogue worship where they served as overseers. As time passed, this organizational structure became normal in Christian churches as well”. It is worth noting however that the elders in the Jewish synagogue may not have been entirely identical to elders in the churches even though they shared some similarities.

Evans and Godwin (2011) advocate for a plurality of elders. They indicate that “in its New Testament context, the term is usually presented in a plurality, so that men who desire the office, and are scripturally qualified, work together to lead the church in submission to Christ by aid of the Holy Spirit” (Evans & Godwin 2011:35). The plurality of elders has been seen to be a healthier form of leadership because it promotes accountability and cohesiveness within pastoral teams.

Concerning the number of elder in each church, Wring (2005:197) asserts that “in the New Testament there is an indication that in the early church there was a plurality of elders, although there is no scriptural command for a church to have more than one elder in one church”.

A church with a singular elder often face the risk of developing an authoritarian leader who imposes himself over the rest of the congregation. Merkle (2009:14) correctly points out that “in some systems, the senior pastor is given unmatched authority and is accountable to no one in particular”. The center of power evolves

uniquely around such leaders who unanimously lead the church. Church praxis and tradition have proven that such churches end up being engulfed in endless conflicts.

When considering the relationship between Old and New Testament elders, there are basically two propositions that are presented. Some consider elders in the New Testament to be a modernized adaptation of the Old Testament concept while others argue that New Testament elders should be as a unique idea developed based on the need of the early church.

5.4.1 New Testament elders, a replica of Old Testament elders?

New Testament eldership share a great deal of similarity with the Old Testament concept of eldership. It is believed by some scholars that this form of governance was either a replica or a slight modification of the synagogal form of leadership of elders that was predominant within the Jewish religious community. Strauch (1995:117) declares “it is commonly thought that the first Christians borrowed the elder structure of government from the synagogue. Whether or not that is true is difficult to say with certainty, and really is not overly important”.

Hamilton (2014:21) argues that “what we see of pre-Christian elders in the New Testament is very similar to what we have seen in the Old Testament, with some developments”. It is further argued that one of the reasons why there is high level of silence on the qualification of elders is that the New Testament writers did not consider it necessary to expound further on a concept that was clearly understood to the audience of their letters. This will mean that the term adopted by the early church for ecclesial leaders was widely employed in their social environment and commonly understood by its adherents.

Mappes (1997:89), on his turn, indicates that “while most scholars agree that the church borrowed the concept of πρεσβύτερος from the Jewish synagogue, they disagree on the similarities between the Jewish synagogal eldership and church eldership”. These scholars often emphasize the dissimilarities over the similarities.

5.4.2 New Testament elders, a distinct classification from the Old Testament?

While New Testament elders share various similarities with Old Testament elders, Miller (1985:315) argues that it “is not merely a cultural adaptation”. The argument postulated by this view is that the New Testament elder should be classified distinctly from the Old Testament elders and it should not also be directly correlated to the synagogue elders. It is argued that while the Old Testament model of eldership and its intertestamental counterpart share a vast level of similarity, they however possess a great deal of dissimilarities and should therefore be considered a unique class, not based on any preexistent model. Against this background, the New Testament elders will be considered not to be analogous to the Jewish synagogal eldership.

Wring (2005:190) agrees that “the elders in the first century New Testament church were different from the Old Testament elders, as well as differing from those of the synagogue which was not of divine origin”. While the New Testament elders are distinct from Old Testament and synagogal elders, both terms repeatedly share a series of similarities which tend to reveal that they cannot be entirely separated from one another. The most noticeable similarities are “the plurality of the eldership, the responsibility of the elders for the wellbeing of the people; the authority of the elders within the community, the desired moral qualities of the elders, and the elders’ responsibility to communicate and take care of the Scriptures” (Mappes 1997:91-92).

Wring (2005) presents two reasons why there are similar designation between Old Testament leaders with their New Testament ecclesial counterpart.

The early Christians chose the title of elder for their ministers because they were familiar with the term from its use in the Greek Scripture. Also, in the early stages of the church’s existence, authority resided in the hands of the older and more senior members of the church.

(Wring 2005:190)

New Testament eldership can be considered to be distinct from Hellenistic and Jewish synagogal leaders in the following regard: “emphasis on the church elders’ teaching role, lists of significant moral requirements for eldership, the lack of New Testament analogy to the ἀρχισυνάγωγος, and the lack of civil or political power”

(Mappes 1997:92). Old Testament elders did not necessarily have to occupy a teaching role within their communities.

It is safe to indicate that “no matter how much or how little borrowing occurred, the first Christian congregations clearly weren’t reorganized synagogues” (Strauch 1995:122). On the contrary, they are seen as emerging independent institutions that rivaled the existent status quo of leadership within the synagogues.

Hamilton (2014:14) concludes that “the differences between Old and New Testament elders are too significant to permit the conclusion that the elders of the church were a natural development of the elders of Israel”. Beale’s counter position of the continuation of the concept of eldership from the Old Testament, does not share wide acceptance among scholars. Beale (2011:929) contends that “the office of elder in the church, the new Israel, is to some degree the continuation of the position of elder in Israel”. A striking difficulty with Beale’s position is that he considers the church akin to Israel. It can be argued that the church does not replace the nation of Israel and it should thereby not be considered exclusively as the new Israel.

5.5 CONCLUDING REMARKS

In this Chapter it was indicated that eldership was a common concept within the nation of Israel, the Jewish synagogue and the Judeo-Christian New Testament church. Furthermore, it was illustrated that Old and New Testament elders share several similarities and dissimilarities between them.

Similarly, it has been argued that while there remains a fair deal of intertwine between elders in the Old and New Testament, the later however should not be considered to be a replica of the former.

Finally, proposing a proper understanding of the various usages of the term elder guards one against wrongly assuming the meaning of the concept in the different periods of the history of the Israel and the church.

Chapter 6

Contemporary significance and challenges

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter of this study discussed the concept of elders in the Old and New Testament along with the intertestamental period. The origin of eldership and the different arguments relating to subject were discussed.

The overarching purpose of every academic work is to attempt to answer an underlying contemporary question/problem. Any research which remains an abstract concept separated from a real-life application does not amount to much benefit within the academic and ecclesiastical environment.

The objective of this Chapter is to explore the relevance of 1 Timothy 3:1-7 in contemporary times. This Chapter explores the current practices of ascending to ecclesial office and the challenges or success that may be encountered in that trajectory. The overall impact of such endeavors on the vitality of the church is also discussed. This Chapter considers the hypothesis of the study along with the research question and examines whether current ecclesial praxis can be reconciled as accurately as possible with biblical references. The theological and practical significance of 1 Timothy 2:11-15 and 1 Timothy 3:1-7 is taken into account in this segment of the research.

This Chapter concludes by highlighting two contemporary challenges: the ordination of women to clerical offices and the (self)-appointment of leaders within the African Pentecostal church in Ndola. The case of Anne Zaki, an assistant professor in the Department of Practical Theology at the Evangelical Theological Seminary in Cairo, who is currently seeking ordination within the Presbyterian church in Egypt, is used to highlight the challenges women face in their quest for ordination.

6.2 CONTEMPORARY ECCLESIASTICAL CHALLENGES

The contemporary ecclesiastical structure within the African Pentecostal church reveals that there is an urgent need for the establishment of a coherent evangelical ecclesiology which identifies and drives the longevity of the ministry. The absence of a coherent ecclesiology is one of the greatest needs of the African Pentecostal church in Ndola, Zambia. Resane (2008:18) correctly asserts that “it is this lack of coherence that leads to proliferation when dealing with church polity and governance in the Charismatic stream of evangelical Christianity”. Contemporary practices in most Pentecostal churches in Ndola, Zambia reveal that there are some forms of contradictions between first century church practice and the current realities.

The next contemporary challenge confronting the African Pentecostal church is the self-appointment of most of its leaders/founders. Pastoral self-appointment for emerging ministries is a common trend in many Pentecostal churches in Ndola.

Another major contemporary issue is the role of women in ecclesial and pastoral positions. While most Pentecostal churches openly embrace the ministry of women, some critically discourage their engagement in leadership. The African Pentecostal church in Ndola in particular, openly embrace women leadership in the church.

A final contemporary challenge is the appointment of women to leadership roles, based on their marital affiliation. Wives of pastors and founders of the African Pentecostal church in Ndola are automatically considered as co-founders and pastors, not necessarily because of their calling, but because of their marital affiliation to a member of the clergy.

While the Pentecostal churches in general welcome the appointment and ordination of women to pastoral ministries, some conservative denominations like the Presbyterians, Baptist, and the Brethren churches, refuse women ordination and pastoral appointment. This position is consistent with the practice of many mainline churches. The case of Anne Zaki, an Egyptian academician, is highlighted to reveal the struggle women desiring pastoral appointments face in these denominations.

6.2.1 Pastoral self-appointment

It is common praxis in most Pentecostal churches in general, and the African Pentecostal church in Ndola in particular, to see the main leaders self-appoint themselves and their spouses. A vast majority of these churches are founded by men (and women in some instances) who argue that they felt a strong conviction from God and were led by the Spirit to serve as pioneers/founders of their churches/denominations.

In these churches there is a minimal system of control, and accountability remains a major challenge within the African Pentecostal church. Followers range from small to large congregations within most Pentecostal churches. The doctrinal practices are sometime questionable. Frequent exorcism is practiced arguing the case of the leading of the Spirit which should not be questioned. Prophetic utterances are greatly encouraged.

6.2.2 Pastoral training and mentorship

Pastoral training and mentorship is often overlooked in the African Pentecostal church in Ndola. Emphasis is placed on Spirit gifting rather than theological training and apprenticeship. Most Pentecostals argue that “the priority of Spirit gifting provides a foundation for a theology of women in ministry (e.g. Joel 2:28-29; Acts 2:17-18)” (Franklin 2008:14).

The African Pentecostal church in Ndola does not have any formal training program for its leaders/pastors. Leaders are not given specific requirements for development. Each one is left to search for trainings that may be appropriate to the leader. The emergence of apostolic and prophetic training schools in Zambia has also created a great level of uncertainty in theological formation. While most of these schools are not officially recognized by the government or the relevant accrediting bodies, they however confer degrees that are only accepted in their denominations. There is also a lack of competition in the curricular content and curriculum development remains a major hurdle.

6.3 THE ORDINATION OF WOMEN

One of the most prominent issues that is controverted in contemporary ecclesiology is the ordination of women. The debate on the ordination of women “has been most acutely felt in the Roman Catholic, Orthodox and Anglican churches, but other Christian groups, as well as Judaism, have not been completely exempt” (Raming 2004:xi). Advocates for the biblical equality of men and women see it as unfair to restrict women from priestly offices believed to be reserved for men. Regarding women as incapable of ordination based on their gender seems to be considered by some as a form of injustice to over half of the members of most churches. Debates on gender parity has been a major concern in recent years.

The debate on female ordination is not one that can be easily quieted. Both pro-women and anti-women ordination activists have valid arguments that are postulated. Anyone attempting to engage in the debate needs to take into account the grammatical, historical, literary context and the socio-cultural issues that are presented by each side.

Some scholars argue that history reveals that women were ordained to bishopric and clerical offices at some point in the church. Prusiful (2001:11) highlights three possible scenarios of women ordained to serve as bishops. He indicates in one of the three instances mentioned that “in a fourth-century Roman basilica dedicated to Saints Pudentiana and Praxedis, there is a mosaic depicting four women: two saints, Mary, and a fourth woman with the inscription Theodora Episcopa (Bishop Theodora)”. The argument is that the depiction on the picture reveals that Theodora may have been appointed bishop while she was still alive.

Others argue that the prohibition of female leadership within the church was not a general rule. Womble (2008:199) states that “the women of Ephesus were susceptible to false teaching (1 Tim 4:7; 2 Tim 3:76) and even propagated it; that is why Paul restricted them from teaching”. The argument proceeds that if women were solely prohibited based on the contextual realities, then the text needs to be translated in that light and the prohibition should be treated as such. The case for women ordination will thereby be a valid proposition to present.

Accounts of the post-New Testament church seem to reveal that women were gladly embraced into the church leadership until the demise of the apostles and early fathers. Prusiful (2001:11) also comments that “the ordination of women was systematically opposed starting in the second half of the fourth century.... A major factor was undoubtedly a pervasive prejudice against women”. This resistance was based on the argument raised by opponents of women ordination within the early Church.

Most conservatives who argue for a stricter adherence to Scripture believe that women should duly be excluded from ecclesial leadership because it contradicts biblical norm. These proponents state that if a majority of Christians accept the “plenary inspiration, and infallibility and inerrancy, of Holy Scriptures”, it will be appropriate therefore to seek counsel from the Holy writings on the ordination of women (Smith 1989:51). Ordaining women to ecclesial leadership for some will be a sign of divergence from biblical practice.

From a conservative traditional standpoint, there are basically two assumptions that are made in regard to the objection of women for ordination based on 1 Timothy 2:11-15. The major arguments are as follows:

- (1) that the meaning of *authentein* in verse 12 is clearly known and should be translated simply as have authority, and
- (2) that the appeal to the creation narrative naming Adam and Eve in verses 13 and 14 implies a universal, transcultural principle that prohibits the exercise of ecclesiastical authority by women over men in all (or some) circumstances.

(Davis 2008:5)

Some scholars in recent years have either found the positions indicated above to be faulty or inapplicable to contemporary realities. Belleville (2004:5-23) presents an excellent argument on what she believes to be five occurrences of *authentein* prior to or contemporary with Paul. Davis (2008:6) argues that “the apostle refers to these texts with the local circumstances and the problems of specific churches in view”. Those who hold to this position indicate that Paul intended to correct women who attempted to dominate men in a specific church in Ephesus. Supporters of this view

believe that the contextual significance of the text is often ignored by most conservative scholars.

Opponents of female ordination find their argument stronger than the proponents of the concept of women leadership in the church. Moo (1991:190) indicates that “for by rooting these prohibitions in the circumstances of creation rather than in the circumstances of the fall, Paul shows that he does not consider these restrictions to be the product of the curse and presumably, therefore, to be phased out by redemption”.

Critics of women ordination argue further that “a second explanation for appealing to creation is that Adam was not deceived but the woman was deceived” (Duesing, White & Yarnell 2010:187). The writer of the Pastoral Epistles based his argument in 1 Timothy 2 on the creation account. It is argued therefore that women are more susceptible to be led astray than men and they should thereby be prohibited from ecclesial leadership.

Liberal theologians however advocate that women should be duly welcomed and encouraged in their pursuit of clerical ordination. These scholars argue that Jesus and the New Testament looked favorably on women leadership and possible ordination. Benson (2010:14) states that “Jesus saw women differently. In a culture where women were overlooked, Jesus was counter-cultural in his respect for, affirmation of, and sensitivity toward women”.

The remaining section of this Chapter covers the main arguments on women ordination within major evangelical denominations. Reviewing the principal arguments on female ordination amplifies the need of dialogue on this subject.

6.3.1 The Presbyterian view

The Presbyterian church, like many other conservative denominations, refuse the ordination of women to pastoral offices. While most Presbyterians do not endorse female ordination, some circles within the Presbyterian church however tend to be moderate in allowing women to be ordained for offices of service as opposed to offices of teaching or ruling over men. “The Presbyterian church traditionally has held

that there are (at least) three offices: minister (pastor, teaching elder), ruling elder, and deacon” (Smith 1989:55). While women in Presbyterian church disqualify for the first two offices, they may however be considered for the office of deacons.

The Presbyterian church in general can be divided into two groups: those who embrace the ordination of women and those who reject the appointment of women to the presbytery. The proponents and opponents of each of these views continue to argue their case as they stir up further conversations within the Presbyterian church. Each of these groups present arguments that cannot be ignored by the other.

6.3.1.1 The Reformed Presbyterian church of North America

The Reformed Presbyterian Church “in McKeesport, Pennsylvania, elected one of its ladies to the office of deacon” on the grounds that the constitution of the Westminster Assembly did not specify male gender for ecclesiastical office (Smith 1989:56). After series of contestation within the Presbyterian churches, based on a “vote of 93–24, synod declared that female ordination to the diaconate “is, in our judgment, in harmony with the New Testament, and with the constitution of the apostolic church” (Smith 1989:56).

6.3.1.2 The Cumberland Presbyterian church

The Cumberland Presbyterian church went a step further than their Reformed counterpart. “The Cumberland church’s pragmatic flexibility, along with a chronic shortage of ministers (especially for small, rural congregations), led to the employment of women as evangelists” (Smith 1989:57). This marked a major phase in the acceptance of women to pastoral offices within certain Presbyterian churches.

The general position of the Evangelical Presbyterian church can be summed up as follows:

The Evangelical Presbyterian Church does not believe that the issue of the ordination of women is an essential of the faith.... While some churches may ordain women, and some may decline to do so, neither position is essential to the existence of the church.

(Evangelical Presbyterian Church 1986:np)

The Evangelical Presbyterian church believes that the unity of the Presbyterian church is more important than the structure of leadership and the people who occupy such positions.

Other Presbyterian churches who refuse the ordination of women are sometimes tolerant in allowing them to exercise some pastoral duties while not necessarily bearing the name.

Smith (1989:73-74) concludes in reference to the Presbyterian church that women's ordination in left-wing denominations has been promoted and enacted only because of the denial of the authority and normativity of Scripture.... In denominations where the Bible is regarded officially as inerrant, there has been general rejection of the induction of women into ruling and teaching office.

6.3.2 The Baptist view

In reference to church order, Yarnell (2007:62) summarizes the position of the Baptist as follows: "[T]here are two major New Testament church offices, that of the pastor and that of the deacon". The pastor is considered as one of the elders. Baptists equally reject the elevation of bishops as a higher office over elders and on the contrary consider both terminologies to be synonymous and interchangeable.

Baptists in relation to the church indicate that "its scriptural officers are pastors and deacons. While both men and women are gifted for service in the church, the office of pastor is limited to men as qualified by Scripture" (Baptist Faith and Message 2000 Article VI). There is a consensus among the Baptist churches that only men should be ordained as pastors. On the other hand, some Baptists are sympathetic in allowing women to be ordained as deacons while others entirely restrict the office of deacon to men.

Yarnell (2007:63) indicates that in the

late twentieth century, some Southern Baptists also considered the novel idea of ordaining female pastors. Although the concept was culturally vogue, it contradicts biblical precedent regarding order in creation and the church, and is thus firmly denied in our confession (1 Tim 2:11-15; 1 Cor 14:34-35).

Unequivocally, both men and women should offer themselves for general Christian service in the church.

The ordination of women did not gain much credence within the Baptist church because of the supposed contradiction it had in reference to the Scriptural prohibition. The Southern Baptist churches were thereby obliged to drop their initial intention.

White and White (2010:176) argue that “the Bible also provides clear prohibitions against women teaching and having authority over men. Scripture contains no example of a woman teaching an assembled group in public; it prohibits the practice”. The argument is stretched further that if Scripture forbids women for exercising authority over men, they should thereby not be ordained for pastoral responsibilities.

6.3.3 The Pentecostal view

The Pentecostal churches in general have mostly favored the ordination of women. It is striking to note that the Salvation Army (1870), the Church of God (Anderson) (1881), the Pentecostal Holiness Church (1895), the Pilgrim Holiness Church (1897), and the Church of the Nazarene (1908) all ordained women since their inception at a time when women’s ordination was still an exceptionally rare occurrence.

(Sanchez 2010:17)

The Pentecostal churches may be considered as the forerunners of female ordination. The Salvation Army and a group of Holiness churches rank among the pioneers of the Pentecostal movement that endorsed female ordination from its onset. “Later Pentecostal/Charismatic denominations were also founded which currently ordain women, including the Assemblies of God, the Vineyard and the International church of the Foursquare Gospel” (Russell *et al.* 2010:np). Of note among this list is the Foursquare Gospel church which founded by Aimee Semple McPherson. Robeck (2002:858) describes Aimee as “undoubtedly the most prominent woman leader Pentecostalism has produced to date”. Grudem (2004:59) proceeds a step further and describes her as “perhaps the most prominent woman

leader in the entire history of Christianity in America". Aimee's influence on Christian in general and Pentecostalism in particular shaped the concept of women ordination.

Sanchez (2010:17) traces the acceptance of female ordination in the Pentecostal churches to "its strong emphasis on the present and transforming power of the Holy Spirit". Most Pentecostals emphasize the work of the Holy Spirit within the church than other conservatives would do.

A great majority of Pentecostals argue that the prohibition of women, in Ephesus, from teaching was a cultural issue that should be considered in its cultural context. Others argue that a woman may be allowed to teach once it is done under the authority of male senior leaders or pastors.

Davis (2008:7) opines that in cases where "women are sound in the faith and their lives consistent with the apostolic core values of congregational unity and the harmony and good order of the family, the way would be open for their exercise of ecclesiastical leadership" and ordination. Supporters of this position advocates for a consideration of the circumstantial factors over the transcultural or creational norms.

Opponents of this view indicate however that Paul's "appeal to creation places the commands in a perfect pre-fallen world thus providing timeless instruction" (White & White 2010:177). In other term, the order was established before the fall; it therefore does not need to be abridged after redemption.

Sanchez (2010:17) indicates that the preference of women ministry and ordination in the Pentecostal churches can be summarized based on three major factors:

- 1) a preference for leadership based on prophetic authority vs. priestly authority,
- 2) an encouragement for all people, including women, to give public testimony at church gatherings, and
- 3) the development of flexible and entrepreneurial denominational structures.

Either one or all of these arguments above are presented whenever the question women ordination is discussed. Spiritual inclusiveness and prophetic authority figure at the very top of the list.

John Wesley (1703-1791) may be considered the pioneer of the idea of female ordination within the Pentecostal movement. Wesley who initially started as a critic of women ordination later became an advocate for women in the ministry. “Within Wesley’s Methodism, women were employed for ministry purposes in unprecedented ways. Wesley’s own views were initially quite conservative. Wesley remarked that women should indeed be prohibited from speaking publicly unless they are under an extraordinary impulse of the Spirit” (Sanchez 2010:17). Even though Wesley did not directly endorse the ordination of women, he became very considerate of the involvement of women in the ministry.

Following in the line of Wesley, was “Phoebe Palmer (1807-1873), who has often been called the mother of the Holiness tradition” (Sanchez 2010:18). She exerted great influence in shaping the future of the Holiness movement through her regular teachings and publications. Palmer advocated for women to be actively involved in the preaching ministry within each local church.

Other denominations such as the Church of God and the Church of the Nazarene are two prominent denominations that broke away from the Methodist church and further amplified the ideology of the ordination of women. Various churches and denominations thereafter followed in this line by appointing or ordaining women to various ecclesial offices.

Below are two contemporary cases that highlight the focus of the research. One covers the research question while the other examines the plight of females seeking clerical ordination.

6.4 PASTORAL SELF-APPOINTMENT AND FEMALE ORDINATION IN THE AFRICAN PENTECOSTAL CHURCH IN NDOLA

The African Pentecostal church is an independent Pentecostal church located in Ndola, Zambia. This church is led by its founder and co-led by his wife who serves as the co-founder. To some extent, there appears to be a monarchical influence within the church where the founder occupies a supreme or semi-supreme status. Most of the pastoral team is directly appointed by the founder. Pastoral appointment is based on one’s loyalty to the vision and their commitment to the pastors.

This phenomenon is not unique to the African Pentecostal church. Most Pentecostal, non-denominational and independent churches are led by leaders who started the churches. There is a minimal system of control and governance. Emphasis is placed on gifting with prophecy, healing, deliverance and miracles ranking among the top gifting. There is a strong sense of awareness of the supernatural realm. Exorcism of demons and evil spirits is commonly witnessed in the weekly church gathering and mid-week services.

The absence of formal theological training is huge challenge for the team of pastoral/prophetic leaders. Of all the leaders serving the church, none possess a formal theological qualification. While most of the teachings are mainline Pentecostal doctrines, guest preachers are granted the liberties to speak on subjects of their interest.

While the Pentecostal churches and other Charismatic denominations have their areas of strength upon which they boast, it is evident that “Pentecostal and Charismatic hermeneutics’ inadequacy leads to wrong conclusions” on many subjects (Resane 2008:226). There is also an absence of coherence with their theology.

Men and women are equally encouraged to be involved in the leadership of the church. There are male and female leaders in every level of leadership within the African Pentecostal church in Ndola.

6.5 THE CASE OF ANNE ZAKI AND THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN EGYPT – A LESSON FOR THE AFRICAN PENTECOSTAL CHURCH IN NDOLA, ZAMBIA

While most Pentecostal and Charismatic churches amplify the ideology of the ordination of women, their conservative counterparts have mostly refrained from the practice. Women in principle are not encouraged to pursue ordination. Anne Zaki’s case reveals the current challenge the Presbyterian synod in Egypt and the Middle East places before women who seek ordination. Anne was appointed as the first female Egyptian professor at the Evangelical Seminary in Cairo.

Anne wrestled with the thought of seeking pastoral appointment/ordination from her childhood. She was born to an Egyptian Presbyterian cleric and eventually married a Canadian clergy who currently serves in the Presbyterian presbytery in Egypt.

At a tender age, Anne dreamt of being a Bible teacher, instead of a pastor, to be able to indirectly practice her pastoral dream. The second part of her dream was to marry a pastor. She eventually married a pastor. Her husband reignited the struggle she had been faced with all along. Her husband inquired on one fateful day “Are you not letting your culture shape your calling, instead of letting your calling shape your culture” (Zaki 2017).

While growing up, Anne watched the women of the Presbyterian church preach, visit, lead Sunday school every day of the week except Sunday. Women in the Presbyterian church performed almost every duty a presbyter could perform during the week except that they were prohibited from serving communion, baptizing or solemnizing marriages.

Anne reveals that “the Presbyterian church in Egypt states in theory that men and women are equal in God in every way: in creation, in salvation, in redemption, in the gift, in ministry” (Zaki 2017). Church praxis reveals however that women do not enjoy the same rights accorded to men.

While the Presbyterian church in Egypt allowed visiting female pastors to perform some of the duties local women could not do, they turned a blind eye on the quest of Egyptian women to assume clerical offices. The Presbyterian church in Egypt is tolerant to females ordained outside Egypt who come into the county to minister.

These practical issues which resulted in personal internal conflict led Anne to pursue a study of materials covering female ordination. She concluded after a year of study of the available materials that “women ordination as pastors is biblically permissive. There is no imperative to ordain or forbid ordaining women” (Zaki 2017). Her conclusion has since driven her quest for pastoral ordination in the Presbyterian church.

The remaining section of this study includes unpublished work sent by Anne Zaki covering the major arguments relating to the ordination of women. The arguments are attached below with her consent.

6.5.1 The main arguments presented by pro-women ordination advocates

There are a lot of examples of women as teachers, prophets, evangelists, leaders of God's people. Baptism is a sign of the New covenant (no Scriptural support).

Baptism become a genderless sign

6.5.2 The main arguments presented by anti-women ordination

The absence of women among the disciples of Jesus, and the absence of women priests in the Old and New Testament

Zaki (2017) believes that the pro-side of the debate has the strongest debate biblical and sociological standpoint. She acknowledges also that both the proponents and critics of women ordination consist of believers who present valid arguments.

6.5.3 The socio-cultural debate for women ordination

Zaki (2017) indicates that there are four major socio-cultural challenges in the Presbyterian church in Egypt:

- 1) Men deserting the Egyptian villages for better chances. There is a huge need for women pastors as the men migrate to seek better jobs.
- 2) Women who are called and willing to fill the gap. Logically, there is a need and there are people willing to fill the need.
- 3) There is rise in view of the place of women in society.
- 4) Historically the Evangelical Presbyterian church of Egypt have been more supportive of women ministries. In 1854, they started the first school for women when it was still a scandal to allow women to be educated. In 1954, they started two schools for women evangelist. In 1970, the seminary graduated the first female students.

6.5.4 Proposed middle ground

Ordain women for specific ministry. Commence with this compromise agreement while the culture develops and changes over time. Once the culture matures further, it will adjust to global trend by embracing the role of women in leadership.

6.5.5 Argument relating to unity in the church of Egypt

Anti-women ordination critics indicate the ordination of women will create a bigger gap between the Presbyterian church and the Coptic orthodox in Egypt. Considering that the Christian community in Egypt occupies a smaller percentage of the total population, it will be ideal to strengthen unity among the denominations.

Zaki (2017) argues in response to each of the points listed:

6.5.5.1 It will threaten the unity of the church: Unity is not uniformity

The orthodox church encourages women who are called to singleness to become nun, and the orthodox church has made provision for married women who want to serve in the ministry

6.5.5.2 The timing is wrong

There is no better time to act than now. In 1870 the Presbyterian church accepted an aristocrat who owned slaves to release them in order to become a Christian.

6.5.6 The church has other pressing issues to address

Why not place this as one of the priorities? Why not consider women as part of the solution instead of a problem?

God has created us with differentiated natural role: There is a huge difference between natural role and church leadership role. The Presbyterian church in Egypt made a decision in 2007 to allow women to serve communion but they deny them the privilege to of serving as pastors.

6.5.7 The argument that ordaining women is a Western concept does not seem to be entirely valid

Indonesia, the world's largest Muslim nation in the world has been ordaining women since 1960s. Kenya, an African nation has been ordaining women since the 1980s. Couple of years ago, India, an Eastern nation ordained a female bishop.

6.5.8 All churches that ordain women also approve gay marriage

The record shows that there are several churches that ordain women without endorsing gay marriage.

6.5.9 There is no biblical example to follow (Jesus didn't ordain women)

Biblical record shows that Jesus did not ordain any male either. Ordination cannot be viewed as the exclusive condition for the appointment of women.

6.5.10 Women should not be ordained because they are prohibited from serving communion

There is no biblical injunction that mandates only male pastors to serve holy communion, marry couples, etc. In cases where such laws exist for specific denominations it can be proposed that the laws are re-examine in order to reflect scriptural imperatives.

6.5.11 Proposed middle ground

Certain Presbyterian clerics state women who have a sense of calling should serve without ordination. The drawback of this view is that

- 1) it incapacitates women from having support from the church;
- 2) it obliges women who are called to ministry to pursue secular profession and yet exercise the ministry;
- 3) you withhold your support/protection from women; and
- 4) it is unfair to the church because there will be no structure of accountability.

6.5.12 Others argue that women should be ordained abroad, and they will be recognized locally.

The challenge with this view however is that:

- 1) This is a demonstration of double standards. If it is right for women to be ordained abroad and accepted locally, why give the privilege of ordination to the West?
- 2) It also reveals the lack of trust by locals in their ecclesiastical structures

6.6 CONCLUSION

While most Pentecostals find liberty in freely ordaining women to pastoral offices, their conservative counterparts struggle significantly in allowing women express their ecclesial leadership gift/responsibility. The record shows that pastoral appointment within conservative churches are properly structured than their Pentecostal counterpart. The case of pastoral (self)-appointment is also a huge concern in most Pentecostal churches. Most of the leaders within the Pentecostal churches argue that their qualification is based on the gifting of the Spirit over any other credential.

Chapter 7

Constraints, deductions and recommendations from the study

7.1 INTRODUCTION

Having covered the contemporary significance and challenge of bishopric and pastoral (self)-appointment along with the debate surrounding female ordination in the preceding chapter, this section will attempt to provide some constraints, deductions and recommendations from the study.

This study set out to explore 1 Timothy 3:1-7 with the view of reconciling it with the current praxis of clerical appointments and (self)-appointments within the African Pentecostal church in Ndola, Zambia. The literary exploration revealed the gap between ancient biblical practices and the contemporary realities in the African Pentecostal church.

The views of several denominations regarding pastoral appointment and ordination were echoed in the preceding chapters. The major positions of conservative bodies as well as Charismatic and Pentecostal churches were highlighted.

The remaining portion of this study summarizes the findings of this study and provides some plausible recommendations that will require further research. Some tentative assessments are drawn from the study. It must be noted however that the findings presented in this study should not be regarded as the exhaustive position or the final commentary on the question of bishopric and pastoral (self)-appointments. The suggestions presented may be considered as an initial recommendation for a subject that will solicit much conversations in the years ahead.

This Chapter covers the following issues:

- An overview of the research
- Various constraints posed from the study
- Deductions from the research

- Possible recommendations for further study

7.2 AN OVERVIEW OF THE RESEARCH

The primary objective of this study was to critically assess the contemporary challenges that emerge from pastoral and bishopric appointments and (self)-appointments in light of 1 Timothy 3:1-7. An exegesis of 1 Timothy 3:1-7 was conducted with the goal of extracting principles that may be helpful in providing solutions to the contemporary challenges of bishopric and pastoral [self] appointment in the African Pentecostal Church in Ndola, Zambia. The research identified that while the case of the African Pentecostal church is highlighted, the phenomena is common to most Pentecostal churches in Zambia.

In this study, the first three chapters covered the basis of the research while the remaining four chapters dealt with different arguments and postulations. Chapter 1 established the foundation and provided the scope of the study. The relevant literary works were reviewed, and the main problem of the study was identified. Chapter 2 dealt with the historical background of the Pastoral Epistles. Chapter 3 covered an exegetical reading of 1 Timothy 3:1-7 with the goal of providing a working translation upon which the arguments for the study were to be based.

In Chapter 4, the appointment of overseers, elders and bishops were discussed. The emergence of the monarchical episcopate along with the development of the Roman Catholic episcopate were equally discussed. Having identified the history of the emergence of bishops, different views on gender restrictions were thereafter considered. Chapter 5 concentrates on elders in the Old, New and intertestamental periods. The differences and similarities of eldership in these different periods were examined. Chapter 6 presented the contemporary significance and challenges of the study. Different perceptions about ordination within the mainline denominations were covered. The concluding chapter summarizes the findings and present various recommendations.

The most problematic passages from this study were the usage of ἀϋθεντεῖν in 1 Timothy 2:12 and Πιστὸς ὁ λόγος in 1 Timothy 3:1. The circumstance surrounding the prohibition of women and the actual usage of the term is doubtful. There is

significant argument about the faithful sayings which is argued to be used in reference to what precedes the phrase or what follows thereafter.

7.3 SIGNIFICANCE OR THEOLOGICAL VALUE OF THE STUDY

The theological value of this study will provide an informed and balanced analysis of the necessary requirement of bishopric and pastoral appointment based on 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and it serves as a helpful theological tool for the African church.

7.4 CONSTRAINTS OF THE RESEARCH

While it is the goal of every study to remain as objective as possible, it has often been noted that most studies carry some level of subjectivity. There are possibilities that one's ecclesiastical, theological or cultural background may in some cases affect certain conclusions that are presented. There were various analysis and deductions made throughout the study but for the sake of this chapter, few of these are restated. The study was limited in several dimensions:

The research was primarily a literary study. No empirical data was required for the purpose of the study. The study focused on the assessment of available writings on the subject. Different writings and essays provided either a full analysis of the subject while others covered a very narrow explanation of the arguments.

The current literature assessed showed that African scholarship has made little contribution to the current issues discussed. Most of the literature were primarily western ideologies which were compared with African scenarios.

Two contemporary cases were presented, namely the case of Anne Zaki and the (self)-appointment of leaders within the African Pentecostal church were highlighted based on the work covered in the study.

7.5 DEDUCTIONS FROM THE RESEARCH

The deductions presented are based on the assumptions presented in § 1.1.6 which covers the theological reflections of 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and 1 Timothy 2:11-15. In spite of the constraints enumerated in § 7.3, certain deductions can be postulated from the results of the research.

- Most of the leaders within the African Pentecostal church in Ndola and the Pentecostal churches in general are not scholarly trained and to some extent do not promote formal theological training.
- The case of women assuming bishopric and pastoral offices remains an issue of great contention especially outside the Pentecostal circle.
- The debate on 1 Timothy 2:11-15 regarding the prohibition of women from ecclesial office is viewed as a contentious subject that lacks unanimous consensus. It is argued that the passage cannot be used to justify the reasons of restricting women outside the Ephesian church.
- The African Pentecostal church in Ndola lacks a well-defined structure. There is an urgent need for a theological document that addresses clerical appointments and (self)-appointments.
- The divergence of requirements for clerical appointments in different Evangelical bodies does not help the current scenario.
- Appointment or (self)-appointment to ecclesial office cannot solely be based on the desire of the applicant. The basis of pastoral appointment should not be restricted to 1 Timothy 3:1 where the case of desire is sole argued. There needs to be an accompanying ethical lifestyle and a recognizable sense of calling confirmed by a local church and if possible a wider body of Evangelical believers.

7.6 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH IN AREAS OF APPOINTMENT AND SELF-APPOINTMENT OF CLERICAL LEADERS

The recent rise of bishopric and pastoral (self)-appointment has resulted in waves of independent clerical designation across the Pentecostal church in Africa. Engaging in a study on the biblical requirement for clerical appointment can only be considered as an initial attempt on a subject that will continue to shape the leadership of the Pentecostal body in Zambia and the rest of Africa in the years ahead. It is noticed that there is a crucial need for specific research in the following areas:

- Critical analysis of the monarchical system emerging in the African Pentecostal church and other Pentecostal basis.
- The Scriptural and practical basis of bishopric and pastoral (self)-appointment.
- A critical examination of joint ecclesial leadership by married couples.

- An examination of the influence of the holiness doctrine introduced in the nineteenth century on Pentecostal churches.
- Formal theological training within Pentecostal churches.
- Further studies concentrating on clerical appointments.
- The critical analysis of major doctrines, teachings, beliefs and dogmas taught within Pentecostal churches.

The rise of the prosperity gospel, for example, has negatively influenced many Pentecostal churches. A research concentrating on the impact of this doctrine on the church and its evangelistic image will greatly aid in curtailing this practice.

7.7 CONCLUDING REMARKS

New Testament literature on pastoral and bishopric (self)-appointment is limited and often incomplete. Various works cover church government and pastoral qualifications, but few documents deal with the (self)-appointment of bishopric or pastoral leaders. Resane (2014:1) argues that “there is a general opinion within the ecclesiastical traditions that the church, especially in Africa, is under-led”. One of the reasons for such gap in church leadership is the absence of the relevant literature and training. A prevalent state of spiritual insecurity has possibly resulted in a system of dominance among church leaders on the continent.

Another plausible cause could be that there “there is a form of Christian syncretism operating in African Christians” and a great majority of their leaders (Magezi & Magezi 2017:1). While the African Pentecostal church in Ndola advocates for a separation from the world and its dictates, its leadership however tend to promote a patriarchal style of leadership, Leaders self-designate themselves to various clerical responsibilities.

There is a great deal of silence concerning the role of women in ecclesiastical leadership. The debate among Evangelical bodies remain alive and unsettled. These areas need urgent attention to help resolve the increase of self-attributed titles and responsibilities among Pentecostals.

Moreover, the exegetical and hermeneutical value of the study affirms that while the account in 1 Timothy 2 and 3 are primarily applied to the Ephesian church, some of its principles may find relevance in contemporary ecclesiological environments. Considering the intertextual and contextual relationships between the texts stated in the study helped significantly in arriving at some of the propositions presented in this study.

From a critical historical and hermetical perspective, it is important to review issues relating to the authorship, dating, and the audience to whom the epistle was addressed. The need of examining the post-New Testament debates especially among the early church fathers as well as the contemporary arguments among scholars is vital to this study.

There is a need of examining possible clues that point to the meaning of the original text and what it would have conveyed to its original audience. Various rhetorical, contextual, grammatical and lexical components could be used in this process. The views of commentators regarding probable interpretation and analysis of the text aids in the process of ascertaining the original message.

A comprehensive document covering the appointment or self-appointment of clerical leaders is a vital need for the contemporary African Pentecostal church which currently lacks a guideline for Pastoral leadership. This study helps in awakening an often-ignored area of theological discussion and serves as a useful document for the African Pentecostal church.

Finally, the tentative conclusion of this study is that the emerging African Pentecostal church lacks a coherent theological document for the appointment of clerical leaders. It seems appropriate therefore to recommend that the African Pentecostal church in Ndola, Zambia and the Pentecostal church in general needs to urgently consider the criteria and process of pastoral appointment and (self)-appointment within the local church. Apart from giftings and personal desire, the issue of character and proven leadership record need to be taken into consideration in the process. There needs to be a governing body that monitors the appointment of leaders in independent and non-denominational churches.

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