

CHAPTER 3: THE NATURE AND IMPACT OF THE MINISTRY OF BEYERS NAUDÉ TO THE VICTIMS OF APARTHEID, 1963 TO 1994

3.1. INTRODUCTION

It was because the Black community, I noticed this later on, were not sure whether to trust this White man, Beyers Naudé or not. Later on I realised that they were very careful and first wanted to see whether they could trust this White man? He was the Moderator of the DRC, he was chairperson of the KJV, he was a leading figure in the Afrikaner community, yes it was also known that he was a member of the Broederbond. Later on they said to me: We told ourselves that it is good to be true. For three, four years they surveyed the situation carefully. And what is interesting is this: it was after the Dutch Reformed Church strongly attacked the Christian Institute and the government increasingly attacked us that they said; Now we can move ahead together (my translation, Naudé 1995:94).

The previous chapter provided background information about Beyers Naudé's formation and context. This chapter attempts to answer the question as to "what 'muthi' did Beyers Naudé use to win such great love, acceptance and admiration across the colour line from victims of oppression as meted out by his people and church?" It joins Villa-Vicencio (1995:19) in asking a similar question when he wrote: "How did Naudé emerge from the ghetto of a narrow and exclusive brand of Afrikanerdom to become an Afrikaner with a broad ecumenical vision and an inclusive understanding of human existence?"

It is important to understand (from the onset) that the Christian Institute (CI) to which Beyers Naudé was a director was also strategically used as a vehicle to execute his ministry. It is therefore difficult to separate him from the views and character of the CI. The views of the CI are to a greater extent the views of Beyers Naudé. (Villa-Vicencio 1995:27) correctly puts this point when he wrote that "...[T]he life and person of Naudé was inextricably bound up with the fortunes and tragedies which constituted that organization. The story of the Institute is in many ways the story of Naudé's remarkable propensity for change."

The ministry of Beyers Naudé has also been analysed along centripetal and centrifugal lines of mission approach. Both approaches are evident in Bevans and Schroeder (2006:35-37) where they discuss what they call six constants on mission which are influenced by three types of theology as follows:

- Type A Theology focuses on mission as saving souls and extending the church.
- Type B Theology focuses on mission as discovery of the truth.
- Type C Theology focuses on mission as a commitment to liberation and transformation.

An analysis of these three types of theology could possibly be divided between centripetal and centrifugal lines. For instance, type A Theology could practically be interpreted along centrifugal lines in the sense that it represents projects, i.e. going out, preaching, evangelical tents and other related activities that could not be practiced from an arm-chair. Another example of centrifugal pattern of mission from these theologies is type C. This theology is also characterized by projects. Its point of departure is based on the question as to 'what is wrong in society?' It looks at people's lives in the quest of correcting the injustices within their contexts. Lastly, type B Theology represents the centripetal mission pattern because it does not have those out-reach projects like the other two types. It has a strong intellectual element which consequently draws and engages people in debates.

3.2. MISSION STRATEGY OF BEYERS NAUDÉ

3.2.1. Beyers Naudé and Liberation Theology

The function of theology as a critical reflection on praxis has gradually become more clearly defined in recent years, but it has its roots in the first centuries of the Church's life. The Augustinian theology of history which we find in *The City of God*, for example, is based on a true analysis of the signs

of the times and the demands with which they challenge the Christian community (Gutierrez 1988:5).

Beyers Naudé's ministry demonstrated tremendous influence from Liberation theology, a theology that is informed by the context of the people, in this case, the victims of oppression. Boff (1989:38) understood this type of theology as a new trend of thinking about God. Disclosing the claim of this theology, he reasoned that "...as a current within Christianity is to be a new way of thinking about God and everything connected to God." De Gruchy (2005:88) identified this type of theology as having been part of the three influences in the life of Beyers Naudé. The other two influences were Martin Luther King Jr and Dietrich Bonhoeffer. This theology is what Bevans and Schroeder (2006:61) categorized as type C Theology, which looks at mission "as commitment to Liberation and Transformation." According to Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger (from 2005 Pope Benedict XVI), Liberation theology is a phenomenon with an extraordinary number of layers. Among them are the following three:

- The whole spectrum from a radical Marxist position.
- The efforts which are being made within the framework of a correct and ecclesial theology.
- A theology which stresses the responsibility which Christians necessarily have for the poor and oppressed, such as we see in the documents of the Latin American Bishops' Conference (CELAM) from Medellin to Puebla (Ratzinger Report 2004).

This subject touched on the question of social justice. According to Bosch (1991:400) and within the framework of Liberation theology (on the third layer from the outline above), mission has been seen as the quest for justice in both the Old and the New testaments. Social justice was at the heart of the prophetic tradition of the Old Testament. For instance, prophets like Amos and Jeremiah challenged unjust authorities in the name of Yahweh. The New Testament is also a strong tool against social injustice. However, during the early church, the amicable relationship that existed between church and state because of the status of Christianity as *religio*

illicita during the reign of Constantine in the Roman Empire overlooked this aspect. During the time of Constantine the church's prophetic role against the state was therefore absent.

Prophetic ministry was at the heart of Beyers Naudé's ministry. This became apparent in his quest to understand how one can confess faith in South Africa today when he asked:

Which face of the Christian faith are we looking at? Is it the face of the pietistic evangelical approach of individual salvation, is it the face of the charismatic groups, is it the face of the fearful seeking refuge in churches and worship gatherings like those of the Rhema Bible Church, or is it the face of those who believe God is a God of justice and peace, a God who is on the side of the oppressed, a God who seeks liberation for all who are in bondage? (Naudé 2005:127).

He further indicated that an authentic confession of faith should be shaped by the situation in which Christians find themselves, be it political, social or economic (ibid). Bevans and Schroeder (2006:348) refer to this approach as "Mission as Prophetic Dialogue". They view this as a combination of three strains which were pillars of mission theology in the final quarter of the 21st century. The three strains are as follows:

- Mission as participation in the life and mission of the Trinity,
- Mission as continuation of the mission of Jesus Christ to preach, serve and witness to the justice of God's 'already' but 'not yet' reign, and,
- Mission as the proclamation of Christ as the world's only savior.

A careful analysis of these three strains with regards to the ministry of Beyers Naudé on the subject of liberation theology indicates that he pursued all of them but put more emphasis on the second strain. According to Meyer (2009), Beyers Naudé correctly stated: "It is of no use to have an ivory tower type of knowledge of Christianity and that this faith should be applied in all areas of human life....It is of no

use to have the theoretical concept of the Christian faith which is not hitting the target.” This type of uncontextual theology was dominant during the apartheid rule and was characteristic of apartheid theology. Referring to this vertical focused type of ministry which ignored the horizontal dimension, Beyers Naudé (2006:82) argued:

I do not wish to suggest that this form of ministry is not valid, but what image of the gospel of Christ and of His Kingdom is being conveyed to the world by such a ministry if no other dimension is added? Such a form of priestly service could be seen to be so timeless, so generalized and so unspecific as to be largely meaningless.

This approach, including the scriptural justification of apartheid, drove victims of oppression to lose credibility in the Christian faith. Meiring (2009) correctly noted this point when he confessed that “yes, victims of oppression lost hope in the Christian faith. I can understand why they lost faith.” He continued to show that his people in the DRC confessed that “they believed in Jesus Christ and were part of the communion of Saints but they did not practice that” (ibid).

Liberation theology is a response to this type of theology which is irrelevant to the context and conditions of the victims of oppression. It is the Latin American version of what is called Black theology in South Africa. This theology developed from a situation of suffering in which the sufferers wanted to see God addressing their situation.

In South Africa, traces of the origin of this version of this theology could be located within the Black Consciousness (BC) movement of the 1970s. Beyers Naudé was closely associated with Steve Biko, the father of BC movement even though this movement did not have room for liberal Whites in their leadership positions (Naudé 1995:10; cf Maguire 1991:118). This movement had tremendous influence on the proponents of this theology which also came to be known as Black theology in South Africa. The lesson from Biko (1989:212) on this type of theology is clear. According to him, this theology relates God and Christ back to Black people and their daily problems. It brings God back to Black people and to the truth and reality of their

situations. He further calls upon Black priests to save Christianity by adopting the approach of Black theology as a means of uniting Black people with their God (ibid).

Beyers Naudé, judged by his ministerial approach, appeared to have listened carefully to this lesson as could be judged by his ministry, particularly the influence it had on the Christian Institute to which he was a director (Randall 1982:43; cf Heaney 2004:188). The influence of BC in the ministry of Beyers Naudé could not be underestimated. His association with BC became apparent from the observation of Kritzinger (2009) who dedicated his doctoral thesis to Black Theology. Kritzinger (2009) in motivating this point stated as follows about Beyers Naudé:

He encouraged me to think clearly and to analyse what is happening in society. Black people did not regard him as a liberal because he lived what he said. For instance, when Black organizations were banned in 1977, the CI was also banned. He listened to Steve Biko and knew that BC was not against Whites but racism.

It is therefore important to understand this type of theology with reference to the influence it had on Beyers Naudé's ministry. Three theological names emerge when one addresses this type of theology namely; Liberation theology, Black theology and Contextual theology. All these three terminologies refer to one type of theology with one focus on the conditions of the disadvantaged and how God looks and reacts to their conditions. One notable proponent of this type of theology, Dr Allan Boesak (1988:61) also joined the debate in asserting that "Black theology also calls itself a 'contextual theology': it functions, and wants to be understood, within a particular situation." They all point to one direction namely a holistic liberation of people.

Liberation theology moves from the premise that salvation is not only related to a purely spiritual life or soul alone but also to the conditions that threatens one's faith. It argues that the soul does not exist in a vacuum but in contemporary human existence with all the problems that are associated with it. It was also motivated by the mistake made by Western Christianity. Western Christianity interpreted the Christian faith in the light of their situation of wealth and dominance and universalized their understanding of faith. It ignored the other side of life that resulted

from the temptations of sin that is associated with the accumulation of wealth. This included among others, exploitation, greed, hate and oppression of the weak or poor. This justified the contention of Boesak (1988:60) that

...white Western Christian theology lived under the illusion that it was a universal theology, speaking for all those who call themselves Christian. Christian theology had been cast into a white Western mold, reflecting the beliefs of the rich and the powerful as prescribed by their position of wealth, comfort and power. It did not reflect the cries and the faith of the poor and the oppressed.

Biko (1989:205) echoed a similar view when he contended that the colour issue in South Africa was brought in for economic purposes. According to him, White leaders created a divide between Blacks and Whites and had the courage to build moral justification of this “exploitation that pricked even the hardest of white consciences” (ibid).

This point has also been stressed by Khoapa (1989:203) who argued: “It is not necessary to argue the either/or question of whether racism is basically economic or basically ideological. What is certain is that racial problems can only be solved in a climate of economic equality.” Having listened to these thinkers, it became apparent that an economic element is at the centre of exploitation.

It is within this understanding that Beyers Naudé’s ministry was characterized by support to social and political issues. He demonstrated the need for the gospel to be implemented in every area of human life. One example of this was his support and involvement in the Study Project about Christianity in an Apartheid Society (SPROCAS) programme. SPROCAS brought people of diverse views together, who came with the description of the basic institutions and processes of society (Randall 1982:47). According to Beyers Naude (1995: 89), it was formed in 1966. Naudé (2006:45) discouraged against a Christianity that focuses on personal piety that entertains a faith that is divorced from the realities of life.

Beyers Naudé's ministry therefore, wrestled with the victims of oppression in trying to understand and provide answers as to

...what does it mean to be Black in South Africa? What does it mean in the world controlled by white racists? What if one believes in Jesus Christ as Lord and these other people also call themselves Christians? What if they say they believe in the same Bible, even deriving from it the arguments they use for the destruction of your humanity? (Boesak 1988:61).

3.2.2. The character of Beyers Naude

3.2.2.1. Positive character

- *Beyers Naudé: A politician or a Servant of God?*

When we refer to Beyers Naudé's political witness, the meaning is not to suggest he entered the political arena. He applied the implications of the message of the Kingdom of God in every sphere of society, including political life (my translation, Heaney 2004:204).

Different interpretations are attached to the ministry of Beyers Naudé. Some see a politician while others see a servant of God in him. Some in the DRC took it to the extreme and saw him as a representative of Communism. Anthonissen (2005:143) indicates that he was also called a "communist devil." Vosloo (2006:129) takes it further by stating that he was labeled a "dangerous communist." Others took it to the level of party politics by looking at him as a representative of the African National Congress (ANC).

Beyers Naude regarded himself as a servant of God guided by the Holy Spirit in his actions. While Beyers Naudé was serving the congregation of Potchefstroom, his doubts and inner struggle about the scriptural justification of apartheid were at their highest. He immediately turned to the scriptures in a search for answers. He allowed himself to be guided by the Holy Spirit as he struggled to declare his standpoint openly:

It was as I later realized, the quiet, pleading voice of the Holy Spirit which said to me: ‘Beyers Naudé, why are you trying to resist the call? Is it because of fear for possible outcomes of what this may have on your life, family and career? Is it because of fear that you can lose your popularity as a prominent minister in the Dutch Reformed Church?’ (my translation, Naudé 1995:42).

Beyers Naudé made God his regular interlocutor whenever he was to make an important decision in his life. The theme of his last sermon at his last DRC congregation of Aasvoëlkop in 1963 charts the way for the understanding that he was accountable to God alone rather than to human beings. His text verse was taken from Act 5:29 which reads as follows, “We must be obedient to God than to man” (Naudé 1995:68, 99).

Beyers Naude’s position in relation with God is also seen when he gave guidelines on the role of Christians and church in social matters. He contended that the church’s message is salvation. He believed that it had to be proclaimed in absolute obedience to God in whom all honour is due. He held that Christ sent Christians in this world which also includes politics. He warned that Christians must first seek God’s will in all aspects of their lives including politics. All these should be practiced in the light of the Word of God which goes with justice, fellowship, truth and love in the world (1995:79). In addition to all these, Beyers Naudé demonstrated to be a person who depended on prayer whenever he needed spiritual empowerment (ibid:112).

The fact that Beyers Naudé was the servant of God who was involved in God’s mission was seen by some ordinary people like Liz Clarke (Tribune, 12 September 2004) who when referring to the sad news of his passing on wrote:

Some might say that this was a defining moment in the history of the Afrikaner in one of their darkest hours, the prescribed rationale of racial division had been challenged, not only by one of their own, but by a man of God, a righteous man, a son of the Broederbond, a forceful apostle of white-dominated politics.

People who closely knew Beyers Naudé affirmed his deep spirituality in his ministry to the people of South Africa. They also agreed that he has been God's servant and did not have an ambition of becoming a politician. For instance, Botha (2009; cf Meiring 2009) defines him as a person who displayed remarkable spirituality. He adds that Beyers Naudé never wanted to be a politician. He bore the symbol of the cross in whatever he did for the oppressed in South Africa. Meyer (ibid) further states that the spirituality of the cross was seen in Beyers Naudé's leadership style and this was embodied everywhere in his ministry. Meyer (ibid) also adds that Beyers Naudé made a choice that Christ will come first in his ministry to the people of South Africa. He indicates that when Beyers Naudé was challenged by his church, he chose to follow Christ. This could be seen in the choice of theme he made for his last sermon at Aasvoëlkop DRC congregation in 1963. Beyers Naudé demonstrated that Christ must be followed despite politics or Broederbond. Meyer (ibid) shows that Beyers Naudé was a well informed person in quite a number of things happening around in the world. He adds that Beyers Naudé read newspapers, politics, economics but this did not make him a politician. He analysed politics, economics and every dynamic of the world in the light of the gospel. He asked the question, what is God saying about every challenge of this world. He states that Beyers Naudé applied theology practically.

Bartlett (2009)⁹ indicate that Beyers Naudé helped him to understand mission in a holistic way, that mission is more than the spread of the gospel but also about the peace of the Kingdom of God becoming the peace of the world in different situations of peoples' lives. Tshelane (2009)¹⁰ confirms that Beyers Naudé was to his understanding not a politician. He contended that he did not even belong to a political party during the period of his association with him. Mokgoebo (2009)¹¹ also confirms that there was no evidence that he belonged to any political party and that he did not even recruit him to join any political party.

⁹ Dr Andre Bartlett is currently a *dominee* of the DRC congregation of Aasvoëlkop, the last congregation of Beyers Naude.

¹⁰ Rev Siphon Tshelane is currently a leader of the African Initiated Churches (AICs) who worked with Beyers Naude within the context of these churches.

¹¹ Rev Zack Mokgoebo was the General Secretary of the Belydendekring/Broederkring. He worked with Beyers Naude within the context of this organization and the Dutch Reformed Church in Africa (DRCA) which later formed part of the Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa.

Beyers Naudé was a servant of God whose ministry was shaped by the dynamic political context of his time. It is understood that people can participate in *Missio Dei* from different platforms of their calling in life. Some can do that as lawyers, politicians or academics of different specializations. Beyers Naudé participated in *Missio Dei* from the platform of his calling as a Minister of Religion who needed God's answers in the challenging context to which he ministered. His approach was dictated by Liberation theology in which there is no separation between for instance, a politician and a servant of God in their service. He was one of the "channels or instruments which God uses to communicate His messages to people" (Bosch 1994:41). De Gruchy (2005:89) looked at him as a person who was "a pastor at heart" in his ministry to the people of South Africa and referred to his ministry as "public theology." Rumscheidt (2005:101) referred to him as a "teacher, mentor, companion, saint and fellow Christian." Beyers Naudé was therefore a servant of God who wanted to be nothing more than a *dominee*, but a person who entered public and political life for the sake of the gospel and justice.

- *Understanding the needs of the victims of oppression*

Beyers Naudé placed the needs of the victims of oppression at heart. He made it one of his priorities to understand their situation. He did this by arranging meetings, organizing projects and assisted Black people in a number of ways as a vehicle to learn more about them. The reason for this was to fully equip himself in order to be in a better position to assist them correctly. Beyers Naudé (1995: 106) puts it as follows: "Through these projects and publications and gatherings and contacts, we were in a position to grasp what is at the heart of the Black community" (my translation).

Beyers Naude also understood the poverty situation of the victims of apartheid. He advised Black ministers who wanted to buy cars to go for second-hand ones to avoid unnecessary debts:

But dear brethren, why do you put yourselves in debt by trying to buy a new car? That debt hangs like a weight around your legs for the rest of your life.

Rather buy a good but guaranteed second-hand car then you will have very little financial worry (my translation, Naudé 1995:110).

In order to further understand the world of the Black people better, Beyers Naudé's dream has been to study Liberation theology, social justice, the calling and the task of the church. The knowledge of a Black language has also been high on his list especially Zulu or Xhosa. But the government did not allow him because they reasoned that since he is 'dangerous' to them without a Black language, what more if he knew one! (Naudé 1995:115).

- *A 'politically' neutral Servant of God*

....[I]t is important to recognize that the Christian faith should never be identified with any specific political policy, social structure or economic system...Christ as Lord stands above all systems and structures and therefore the Christian should always adopt a positive critical attitude towards them....The minister as a man of God should at all times proclaim the biblical demands of justice and freedom to all, regardless of station or power. Applying the criteria of the gospel, his proclamation of God's salvation and judgement should, without favour or prejudice, apply equally to the policies and practices of Idi Amin, Samora Machel, John Vorster or Kaiser Matanzima (Naudé 2006:87).

Beyers Naudé avoided partisan politics by maintaining a neutral line and allowed himself to be a servant of God who become obedient to Him. This was epitomized by declining a nomination as Progressive Party candidate during the general elections of 1974 (Randall1982:37). Beyers Naudé (1995:79) reminds the church of her message as that of salvation to all in absolute obedience to God. But if she pursues party political agenda, she runs the risk of propagating the programme of one party and lose her meaning before God.

The point taken by Beyers Naudé is ethically suitable for ministers of religions. By virtue of being leaders of flocks which consist of people from different political

parties, the clergy should be above party politics. This makes it easy for them to be equally accessible to all members of their flock.

The fact that the ministry of Beyers Naudé was not dictated by party politics was also confirmed by those who worked with him closely. For instance, Meyer (2009) indicates how Beyers Naudé offered assistance to all people who came to him regardless of the political party they belonged to. When people approached him for assistance he did not even ask their political affiliations. He was sympathetic to everybody. Bartlett (2009) agrees that Beyers Naudé had an openness for all people and that all who came to him represented different political affiliations. Tshelane (2009) concurs by saying that Beyers Naudé never belonged to a political party during his ministry outside the DRC.

- *A humble person*

Beyers Naudé was a humble person. The decision he took of being obedient to God consciously led him to a life far below that of a person befitting the status of a moderator of the regional synod of the DRC. He was a person of unmatched leadership skills that could have placed him at the highest class of lifestyle.

Botha (2009) was impressed by the humility of Beyers Naudé. He contended that Beyers Naudé used a simple language, humble but with a remarkable power of prophetic vision. Botha (2009) states that

...he embodied the spirituality of the cross, he has borne the stigmata of the cross in terms of his leadership style and prophetic witness. He embodied the spirituality of the cross that is characterized by humility and courage. The late Prof David Bosch spoke of mission in both humility and love. Beyers Naudé was both humble and bold. That put him apart from the rest.

In addition, Beyers Naude's humility was also confirmed by Meyer (2009) who indicates how during his spare time he worked in the garden, would wear overalls, and that he did not buy a new car in his life. Meyer (ibid) referring to Beyers Naudé also indicated that "at old age his children bought him a Mercedes but he always told

people that it was not out of his own expense but was bought for him by his children.” Kritzinger (2009) saw Beyers Naudé in the same light as Meyer, but adds by categorizing him as a simple person. He echoes it as follows: “He was a typical Afrikaner *Oom* (uncle). He wore a green safari all the time. He was radical. He bought old cars, Peugeots and fixed them himself. He was simple.” Meiring (2009) identifies his humility from the fact that “he was a human being. After he leaked the Broederbond documents, he apologized.” Mokgoebo (2009) also echoes the same sentiments when after having praised Beyers Naudé states: “However, he was a human being and I loved him as such. Sometimes he cracked jokes about apartheid.” Tshelane (2009) looks at Beyers Naude as “a soft person, a good listener.” He also noted Beyers Naude’s humility from his choice to work with the AICs, who were looked down upon by ‘mission churches.’

- *Identification with the poor*

Beyers Naudé identified himself with the struggle of the poor. He took the side of the poor. In choosing the preferential option of the poor, Beyers Naudé identified himself with the approach followed by Luke as outlined by Bosch (1991:98) with regards to the poor. Bosch (ibid) indicated how Luke demonstrated “a particular interest in the poor and other marginalized groups. Already in the Magnificat (Lk 1:53) we read: ‘God has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he has sent away.’” Beyers Naudé in identifying himself with the poor, decided to leave the highly paid work as a *dominee* in the DRC. Already in 1948 he was paid 500 pounds per annum in the congregation of Olifantsfontein and 620 pounds in the congregation of Wellington (Randall 1982). As a result of his decision (in 1963) to be on the side of the poor, he could not afford to buy a house in the area of the rich in Johannesburg. His residence in Greenside was an affordable house because he could not afford a house in the affluent suburb of Aasvoëlkop (Naudé 1995:69).

Botha (2009) states that Beyers Naudé took the position of the poor and the downtrodden. Bartlett (2009) sees him as somebody who was able to relate with all people. Meyer (2009) also confirms the same point that Beyers Naudé took the side of the poor in his ministry.

- *Faithful servant of God*

Beyers Naudé has proven himself to be a servant of the Lord who chose to listen to and serve the Lord faithfully. Since his ‘conversion’ (2.4), he never turned back but served the Lord through his ministry to the victims of apartheid. His last sermon at the DRC congregation of Aasvoëlkop in 1963 fully addressed his choice and its title says it all “Gehoorsaam aan God¹²” (Naudé 1995: 68, 99). Meyer (2009) also stresses the same view that Beyers Naudé made the choice that Christ will come first in his life. He states that Beyers Naudé demonstrated this by choosing to follow Christ when he was forced by the DRC to make a decision. Bartlett (2009; cf Botha 2009) understood Beyers Naudé as “a strong prophetic figure.”

Beyers Naudé was sustained by his servant-hood to God in his frustrations and pains by the apartheid regime as Randall (1982:42) puts it:

Naudé must be sustained in his banning by his conviction that it is the result of his obedience to Christ’s will and there are no signs that he regrets the course that his life has taken. Even in his present situation he must believe that he is giving witness to God’s word.

Apparently, Beyers Naudé regarded himself as not having been faithful to God when he preached apartheid theology in the DRC. He seemed not to have been able to follow Christ faithfully while in the DRC, up until when he was no longer a minister of this church. The Sharpeville massacre played an important part in his ‘conversion’ towards being a faithful servant of God. Randall (1982:71) summarized the approach of Beyers Naudé after Sharpeville when he wrote: “From now on there was only one way to follow: Christ.” He was described as “a prophet and an Afrikaner who took a stand for justice in the face of injustice” (The Star, 13 September 2004).

¹² Obedience to God.

- *Person of profound faith*

Even during the times the Afrikaner establishments hated him most, his religious devotion was not doubted. He helped break the dogma that God wanted white and black in South Africa to live apart. It was in part due to his influence that so many Afrikaner Christians and theologians led the way in pressurizing the National Party government into re-examining the very foundations of its apartheid policies (The Star, 9 September 2004).

Beyers Naudé was a person of profound faith. Although Bosch (1994:9) admits that the definition of spiritual life or devotional life (as he calls it) is a big challenge, it is not difficult to discern the life of Beyers Naudé in this regard. He was a person who invited God into everything good or bad in his life. For instance, when the banning order was served to him, he communicated with God through prayer in which he mentioned the following: “Thank you Father, for your kindness to allow me to be in your service thus far for almost forty years. And, Father, forgive them because they do not know what they are doing” (my translation, Naudé 1995:112). This prayer suggests a very deep faith on the side of Beyers Naudé to the extent that even if it appears as if life has turned against him, he still sees positive light in God. He still regards God as kind (goedheid) and he still had the guts to thank Him for having given him time to serve Him for almost forty years.

Prayer dominated the house of Beyers Naudé whenever he was visited by his supporters during the years of his ban. During the time of the visit by Archbishop Dennis Hurley of the Roman Catholic Church, they prayed together (Naudé 1995:121). One of the most unforgettable spiritual moments in the life of Beyers Naudé was the pronouncement of the benediction by Archbishop Desmond Tutu in his (Naudé) garden (Naudé 1995:121). His children even confirmed his deep faith that “he loved the Bible and believed in its truth” (Tribune, 12 September 2004).

Beyers Naudé invited God as a source of his strength in times of pains and frustrations. For instance, when he spent a night at the Central Prison in Pretoria he read the book of Amos before he slept (Naudé 1995:100). Botha (2009) sees Beyers

Naudé as somebody who displayed remarkable spirituality in whom the spirituality of the cross was clearly seen. He regarded him as a person of deep spirituality. The spiritual element of Beyers Naudé's ministry was also noted by Meyer (2009). He indicates how for Beyers Naudé, Christianity should not be practised in isolation from the context. Meyer (2006) writes that Beyers Naudé testified that Jesus Christ was his Saviour, forgiving his sins and providing ultimate meaning to his life. He states that for Beyers Naudé, the gospel of Jesus was sufficient as long as it was also applied towards renewal in South Africa. Meiring (2009) on the other hand recalls Beyers Naudé's deep connection to Christ. He states that there is no one who can live with Beyers Naudé without having been touched. Meiring further states that "he touched us in many ways, by his integrity, his deep commitment to Christ, to live the gospel in a difficult situation in South Africa." Meiring also advises of the river of pietism that flew through DRC and that Beyers Naudé was also part of it. At Beyers Naudé's death-bed, his daughter Liesel and her mother sang him the song that he enjoyed and explained the scenario as follows: "As he was going, my mother and I sang his favourite psalms about God being our shepherd. We know he would have liked that. He said that when he is gone, he didn't want people to cry, but to be hopeful" (Tribune, 12 September 2004).

When some people especially critics of Beyers Naudé argued that the CI and its publication the Pro Veritate are being used "more liberally", he responded by depicting a more religious picture on the activities of these two institutions. He wrote:

Pro Veritate since its inception has been founded on the Word of God and that its only intention is to encourage a discussion in dialogue form...in the light of the Word of God. God's Word is and remains the supreme and final authority as far as we are concerned (Pro Veritate 15 September 1965:5).

- *A loving person*

Beyers Naudé was a person of love. His love extended beyond his own Afrikaner people to all people in South Africa. The victims of apartheid to whom he dedicated his ministry were a good example of Beyers Naudé's boundless love for all people of South Africa. Despite the fact that Beyers Naudé dedicated his life to the cause of

justice for the victims of oppression, he did not forget his Afrikaner identity nor did he hate them.

Meiring (2009) remembers Beyers Naudé as a gracious person to the DRC. He loved this church but was forced to criticize her only on the point of her biblical justification of apartheid. He understood the position of those DRC ministers who found it difficult to fight against their church's justification of apartheid. He was never vengeful. He never gave up his own people but was prepared to speak out if they did wrong before God. Meiring (ibid) discloses that Beyers Naudé had a high regard for the community of Saints, the body of Christ, where brothers and sisters live together, take care and love one another. It goes beyond human boundaries.

Beyers Naudé was like a father figure to many of the people who met him. Bartlett (2009) describes him as a mentor, father and advisor. Beyers Naudé's love is judged by the sacrifices he made in his life mostly with regards to the victims of oppression. Botha (2009) describes him as somebody who took upon himself the pain and sacrifice of the cross. Botha (2009) advises that if one wants to live up to the gospel message, one needs to be prepared to take along the pain of the cross. This was what Beyers Naudé did for those he dedicated his ministry and life to fight for their struggle. Meyer (2009) indicates how Beyers Naudé visited the men's hostel where he was exposed to the difficult living conditions of the victims of oppression. This situation angered him so much that on his return he accused White *dominees* for not doing anything about the situation. Beyers Naude was open to every issue that came before him and wanted to assist as much as possible. He was unable to set himself clear priorities because he wanted to be a 'jack of all trades'. His openness to all people sometimes was a frustration to his colleagues in the Christian Institute. Randall (1982:45) reports:

If it was a fault, then it was fault of an over-generous spirit, of an over-developed sense of service which made it very difficult for Beyers Naudé ever to say 'no' to demands of his time and energy....Others simply accepted it as part of the man's style, even if it was irritating when he would break off discussion of a serious problem to rush to the assistance of a black clergyman experiencing transport difficulties.

- *Champion of perseverance and courage*

Beyers Naudé demonstrated to be a champion of perseverance and courage. Despite the fact that he was from a small minority of fellow White and Afrikaner people who criticized the status quo, he persevered all the hardships that were associated with it. When Steve Biko told him that Black Consciousness was not yet ready to accept Whites within its ranks of leadership, that did not dampen his spirit in the pursuit for justice for all (Naudé 1995:107).

Bartlett (2009) describes him as a courageous person when judged by the sacrifices he made and the challenges he has gone through since the early 1960s. Botha (2009) sees in him an embodiment of prophetic ministry, courage and hope. Botha (ibid) remembers how he always strengthened them by telling them that freedom will come and that a new day will dawn. Meyer (2009) also sees courage in Beyers Naudé for the challenge he posed to the DRC against her scriptural justification of apartheid. He saw his courageous stance again during the Cottesloe consultation where he stood alone in support for the consultation statement despite pressure from the DRC and Prime Minister Hendrik Verwoerd. Meiring (2009) also acknowledges the courage Beyers Naudé had and the fact that he was a prophetic witness despite the fact that he had hard times. He did not only see courage in Beyers Naudé, but also a symbol of hope. He states that Beyers Naudé challenged all DRC ministers especially the younger generation to follow him in his example of commitment to Christ.

Heaney (2004:5) touched on Beyers Naudé's perseverance and courageous nature when he wrote:

His message of hope, under dire circumstances, like his banning, inspired many in the struggle against apartheid and created space for the proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ. He was a prophet in his own land and believed in the transforming power of the gospel of Jesus Christ. His courageous witness against the ideological claims of racism, and his efforts to mobilize the churches against those claims, still inspires.

In the light of the courage that he had, it is important to ask where it came from. The obvious answer is that it came from his faith in Jesus Christ. But other areas of the source for his courage could be traced next to Paul's missionary motivation as identified by Bosch (1991:133-138). He sees his (Paul) motivation as pillared around three points; firstly a sense of concern for the low morality of the Gentiles in terms of the idolatry that was dominant in the Greco-Roman world. Secondly a sense of responsibility driven by his concern to minister to the Gentiles and thirdly, a sense of gratitude for the love of God for him through Christ. Beyers Naudé was also driven by these concepts. Firstly, he too demonstrated to have had a sense of concern about the victims of oppression who were excluded from human rights while his Bible teaches that they have been created in the image of God and that like all human beings, slightly less than angels (Psalm 8:5). Secondly, he had a sense of responsibility in that he regarded it as his responsibility to minister to the victims of oppression in order to bring change into their lives. In applying this sense of responsibility, Beyers Naudé seems to have done that within the understanding that "the God who gave us the gift of freedom asks us to honour and enhance the freedom of others. God, the ultimate Other, asks us to reach out to the human other" (Sacks 2005:3). Thirdly, he had a sense of gratitude, to thank God and take up his part in God's mission.

- *Bearer of balanced view on the use of violence*

Beyers Naudé had a balanced view with regards to the use of violence. In principle he was against it. He however believed that under certain circumstances, in the light of his interpretation of John Calvin it is justifiable. He approached this matter from the question: "Should a Christian support violence?" and at the same time he responded:

You must be obedient to the authorities except when the authorities through law demand of you that which is against the instruction of God. If you followed every peaceful means to find out solution at your disposal and there are no other options, then you have the right to take up arms (my translation, Naudé 1995:92).

In the light of the above quotation, Beyers Naudé drank from the well of Calvin who believed that people should be obedient to government as long as she rules according to the Will of God. If the government goes out of line with regards to the Will of God and use violence, Christians should explore all peaceful means. If the government does not listen despite all the peaceful means, then violence is justified. He recalled the fact that the Boer had to take up arms against the British after having followed all the necessary steps as proposed by Calvin (ibid).

- *The core message of Beyers Naudé's sermons*

Beyers Naudé's central message was derived from his own obedience to Jesus Christ and His message. This was seen as the basis or central force in his whole life and actions. This conviction guided him throughout his ministry to the people of South Africa since his last sermon entitled "Obedience to God" at the DRC congregation of Aasvoëlkop. In this regard Beyers Naudé (in Ryan 2005:41) wrote:

I would ask myself, 'what is the primary truth to which I must adhere in order to be loyal and committed to the gospel as I proclaim it?' That was the guiding light, which forced me from one position to another one, sometimes against my will, sometimes with trepidation and fear in my own heart.

In one of his sermons, Beyers Naudé spelt out what he believed in and this provided a better understanding of the core of his sermons' message. He believed that the Bible is the only true Word of God. Every believer is expected to obey the authority of the Bible which is above human authority. It is unbiblical to exclude people from the church of Christ on the grounds of their race or colour. He held that all people are called upon to love one another. This should result in other people having the same rights and opportunities as one's group demands (Ryan 2005:70).

Beyers Naudé contended that he does not regard these issues as political because he spoke them from his deep Christian convictions which grew in him over the years as a result of his serious study of the Word of God. He contends: "There is only one motive, one goal in me, to proclaim nothing other than Jesus Christ, Jesus Christ who was crucified" (Ryan 2005:70).

- *A peoples' person with incredible accessibility*

Beyers Naudé's ministry qualified him as a 'peoples' person' who accommodated every person. All categories of people in terms of race, age or economic class among others, were all equal to him. Bishop N. Phaswana (The Star, 9 September 2004) of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Southern Africa correctly puts it that Beyers Naudé "was a man of all people....To the young he was young at heart, to the older ones he was their colleague, and to the children he was their grandfather." His children also observed this attitude. For instance his son Johann Naudé (2009) confirms that, "he always had a good relationship with all his neighbors. He enjoyed the friendship of the young, the old, the people's (sic) of the multi-cultural rainbow nation of our diversified country."

3.2.2.2. Negative character

Beyers Naudé had weaknesses like any human being. The weakness of Beyers Naudé could be judged by the position from which one looks at him. For instance, victims of oppression looked at him as a hero while beneficiaries of oppression saw him as a traitor. There is also a group that is formed by the beneficiaries of oppression who 'converted' and became disciples of Beyers Naudé. The majority of them joined and supported the Christian Institute (CI). Bartlett (2009) in trying to interpret the reaction of those who benefited from oppression to the ministry of Beyers Naudé states: "Mixed kind of reactions. Many people rejected him. There were people who did not understand him and who didn't even agree with him. Some reacted with hostility. Very few people were ready to fully support him. He was a stronger leader outside the (DRC) ministry than he was inside."

When trying to identify the negative character of Beyers Naude the following areas stand out:

- *Radicalism*

Beyers Naudé's relationship within the Black Consciousness movement and when trying to accommodate their views in the CI was seen by some White members of the CI as an indication that he went too far (Kritzinger 2009). Ironically, this radicalism was a heroic act to the victims of oppression. That is why Botha (2009) states that "he broke in a radical way with a theology that justified an apartheid system. It was quite remarkable for a DRC *Dominee* to break with apartheid in the 1950s and 1960s....That is why millions of South Africans, especially Blacks, looked up to him with respect."

- *Overly accommodating*

Beyers Naudé was viewed by some as unnecessarily too reconciliatory. The fact that he accepted an invitation to return to the DRC tainted his credibility among victims of oppression especially members of the Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa (URCSA) which accommodated him after he was forced to resign from the DRC (Kritzinger 2009; cf Mokgoebo 2009).

Beyers Naudé also tried to please all people especially victims of oppression who came to him for assistance. Meyer (2009; cf Tshelane 2009) correctly puts it when he states:

He supported all views. When people came to him for financial support, he assisted without asking questions. He did not take a stand. He could accommodate different directions in himself. He was sensitive not to disappoint other people. I did not like this. Beyers Naudé was always a figure in-between. There were those who had a problem with this attitude in the CI but this did not bother me

Randall (1982:45) calls this attitude "fault of an over-generous spirit, an over-developed sense of service which made it very difficult for Beyers Naude ever to say 'no' to demands of his time and energy..."

3.2.3. Centripetal¹³ mission pattern of Beyers Naudé

Beyers Naudé's ministry made him a 'magnet' that pulled people to him. Bartlett (2009; cf Meyer 2009) confirms that Beyers Naudé was like a 'pulling force'. Because of this 'attraction', his house or office was inundated with people who needed advice or counseling. They followed him wherever he went especially during the years of his banning order. Randall (1982:42) wrote about Beyers Naudé that "even in his present situation he must believe that he is giving a witness to God's word." He attracted people from far or near who came to him for his ministry service.

Most of the people who came to him were victims of apartheid. One such a person was Rev T.S. Farisani, former MEC for transport and speaker of the Limpopo Legislature. He came to Beyers Naudé at his house after his release from prison in Howick and Pietermaritzburg. The aim of the visit was to share with Beyers Naudé about the nature of torture that he suffered in the hands of the security forces. He presented his case to Beyers Naudé until late at night while he listened (Naudé 1995:111). A point of note is that after that encounter, an atmosphere of forgiveness on his (Farisani) torturers existed. He even pitied his torturers that they were the ones who were prisoners of ignorance and oppression by apartheid in a different way. He even told his torturers that he does not hate them (ibid). Rev Farisani left the house of Beyers Naudé as a relieved person because he had somebody who could listen to him. They both empowered each other.

Beyers Naudé did not only attract the locals to him but also the international community. Countries from which people paid him visits included, the Netherlands, Germany, Britain, USA, Canada and other African countries (Naudé 1995:121). This situation is described by Randall (1982:42) that

¹³ This is the practice of mission whereby instead of agents of mission going out to people, it attracts people to them. Broadly speaking, the Old Testament has many examples of this mission practice. An exemplary definition of this mission practice is from Okoye (2006:12) who reasons that it is seen in a situation where "the nations stream on a pilgrimage to Zion, there to be instructed in God's torah and God's ways."

...a steady stream of visitors find their way to his modest suburban house in Johannesburg- ambassadors, foreign church dignitaries, journalists, and even the American writer James Michener, who claims that Naudé was the prime inspiration for his novel on South Africa, *The Covenant*.

The study room of Beyers Naudé was inundated with people who came to him for counseling mostly as individuals. My interviewees with regards to Beyers Naudé all agreed that his advice was sought after by many people. They followed him wherever he went for this purpose (Meyer 2009; cf Botha 2009; see Tshelane 2009 and Bartlett 2009).

Adding on this, Randall (1982:43) commented that

Naudé's days even as a banned man are very full. He does a great deal of pastoral counseling of individuals in his study, the one aspect of his ministry that is apparently not affected by the restrictions on him. Meeting visitors singly is time consuming and tiring; there is a voluminous correspondence, and as much reading as time allows.

The location of the offices of Beyers Naudé's Christian Institute (CI) in Braamfontein was of strategic importance in sending out a message of a non-racial society in a racist South Africa. He strategically chose his ministry centers in cities or urban areas (2.3.2; 3.2.4). Bosch (1991:129-131) also described Paul's choice of mission centers as strategic in the sense that it was also urban in terms of what he (Bosch) calls 'metropolises'. Bosch indicated that Paul "concentrates on the district or provincial capitals, each of which stands for the whole region: Philippi for Macedonia (Phil 4:15), Thessalonica for Macedonia and Achaia (1 Thes 1:7f), Corinth for Achaia (1 Cor 16:15; 2 Cor 1:1) and Ephesus for Asia (Rom 16:5; 1 Cor 16:19). These 'metropolises' are the main centers as far as communication, culture, commerce, politics and religion are concerned."

Another aspect of the character of the ministry of Beyers Naudé was reflected in the way in which he shaped his staff at the CI. Beyers Naudé turned the staff of the CI into a model of a 'true' community. It was converted into a community of equals in a

number of respects, where members were respected by the way in which they were as human beings. It was a community whose respect for one another ran across gender, age, economic class and racial lines. It was not necessarily a homogenous community in all respects but also a “collection of radicals, agnostics and demure servants of the gospel” (Randall 1982:45). At some stage, Beyers Naudé even suggested that all members of staff at the CI from the messenger to himself as director should earn the same basic income (ibid).

Having this approach in mind, the CI personified Beyers Naudé and his character as an opponent of racism. Knowing the nature of his ministry, many people of all races predominantly victims of oppression, flocked to the CI to enjoy his services.

The non-racial approach of Beyers Naudé’s CI with its location in the racist context of an influential South African ‘metropole’ was met with resistance from people in the neighborhood. Randall (1982:36) reported about the CI that

...in 1972 it was given notice to vacate its offices since ‘non-white’ staff and visitors had been using ‘white’ toilet facilities, and this had caused complaints from other tenants in the building. The CI then set about raising funds for the purchase of a building which could house non-racial and ecumenical bodies.

The media knew about the ministry of Beyers Naudé and were also attracted to him. They came to him for interviews and reporting about him. For this reason “he continues to feature prominently in the media” (Randall 1982:42). The English and Afrikaans media differed in their reporting about Beyers Naudé. For instance,

...to the English press he was a courageous, popular figure, a man who has been martyred and maligned by the Afrikaans community. The Afrikaans press portrayed him as a troublesome, controversial man with many new and suspect ‘communist’ or liberalistic’ views....The English press depicted him as the target of unfair victimization while the Afrikaans press, through several hostile reports and letters, conveyed the impression that he was probably getting what he deserved (Ryan 2005:99).

Beyers Naudé was inundated with visits from DRC missionaries who were working in Black 'daughter' churches of DRC. The aim of their visits was to ask for advice on how to minister to the Black congregations that were made out of the three 'daughter' churches of the DRC namely the Dutch Reformed Church in Africa¹⁴, the Dutch Reformed Mission Church¹⁵ and the Reformed Church in Africa¹⁶ (RCA) (Adonis 2005:120-121). Additional problems that were brought to Beyers Naudé were the challenges of poverty among ministers of those churches and the congregants. Some of those DRC missionaries knew him during his ministry period at the Pretoria East DRC congregation while he was a student chaplain at the University of Pretoria. During that time those ministers who paid him visits were still student ministers at the University of Pretoria (Naudé 1995:44; cf WCC 1986:6).

The 'conversion' of Beyers Naudé attracted many people to him for interviewing purpose. Some reflected on his ministry in the form of writing books. Among those who paid him visits for this reason was the unnamed person described by Randall (1982:32) as his American biographer and Alan Paton. The American biographer "compares his awakening with the transformation of Saul of Tarsus" (Ibid). On the other hand, Alan Paton (in Ibid) wrote: "One is forced to conclude, because one does not reach such a conclusion lightly, that this is the work of the Holy Spirit and that Beyers Naudé was struck down on some Damascus road."

Beyers Naude also gave a lesson on his theology of religions. He did not have a conservative approach to other religions. His flexibility was seen in his attitude towards adherents of other faiths and how he shaped the community of the CI in this regard. The CI team under Beyers Naudé was defined in terms of being "heterogeneous" (Randall 1982:45) not only on matters of race and gender but also because of their multi-religious mix. Randall (ibid) continued to indicate that in the CI "the contributions of non-Christians were readily accepted if they brought new and valuable insights." The composition of the SPROCAS commission represented the working together of people from different faith groups under the eye of Beyers

¹⁴ The Afrikaans name of this is N.G. Kerk in Afrika. This church was racially meant for Africans in the DRC family.

¹⁵ Also called N.G. Sendingkerk was racially classified for 'Coloureds' within the DRC family.

¹⁶ The Reformed Church in Africa was an Indian section of the DRC family.

Naudé. Meyer (2009) narrates the case of a Jewish employee of the CI who ultimately became a Christian as a result of the witness from the life of Beyers Naudé.

In the light of the above scenario, Beyers Naudé embraced the Enlightenment approach with regards to the question of theology of religions. Before this period, the attitude from the Catholics was that of “outside the *church* no salvation”, and from the Protestants “outside the *word*, no salvation” (Knitter 1985:135; cf Bosch 1991:475). Adherents of other faiths were seen as archenemy to Christianity. But the situation changed during the Enlightenment. The Enlightenment paradigm embraced a relativistic attitude with regards to other faiths which were not Christian. People valued facts for their survival rather than the world of values as prescribed by religion. Religion was pushed to the periphery and Marx rejected religion and called it the “opiate of the people” and visualized a world without religion (Bosch 1991:475).

Beyers Naudé subscribed to the Enlightenment relativistic attitude with regards to theology of religions. But having said that, he cannot, judged by the level of his spirituality, subscribe to the Marxist attitude to religion especially the fact that he “propagated the world in which it would have no place” (Bosch 1991:475).

3.2.4. Centrifugal¹⁷ mission pattern of Beyers Naudé

Beyers Naudé was not only a ‘magnet’ that drew people to him in search for his spiritual and moral support services but also went out to meet people as a result of the invitations he received. One highlight of these invitations was one from Europe to preach in Westminster Abbey and he was the first South African to be invited for that opportunity (Randall 1982:36). During his years of banning order, he continued to witness to the people of South Africa mostly as per invitation despite the frustrations and difficulty associated with the order. The ambivalence and frustrations associated

¹⁷ The definition of this mission practice is the reverse of centripetal mission. In this case, agents of mission are going out to people. Broadly speaking, the New Testament represents most areas of this practice of mission. According to Okoye (2006:12) “active effort is made to reach outsiders and through conversion included them in the covenant ‘proselytes’.”

with the right to witness the gospel message is outlined by Randall (1982:41) with regards to Beyers Naudé as follows:

The legal position regarding preaching is unclear and Beyers Naudé has accepted several invitations to preach since his banning. These have come particularly from the Anglican and Presbyterian Churches. When he preaches he leaves the church immediately after the service, since it would be illegal for him to greet the congregation as they leave, any form of gathering at which social intercourse takes place is prohibited. Banning is in fact a direct violation of the gospel's call to witness and to minister, and this must particularly be grievous for one whose whole life has been dedicated to these.

This situation exposes the frustrations brought about by the difficult context under which Beyers Naudé ministered to the people of South Africa. Beyers Naudé's ministry was also frustrated by his own people. This became clear as there were some DRC congregations that invited him to preach and to address their members on a number of issues. The example of this is his invitation to the congregation of Belgravia, Johannesburg in 1965. This visit turned violent when some of the members blocked the gates to the church building. Having been barred from that congregation, he was ultimately accommodated in a private house where he addressed willing members of that congregation (Naudé 1995:79).

Beyers Naudé was also invited to the DRC 'daughter' churches. The invitation came from DRC ministers who were ministering as missionaries in those 'daughter' churches. Beyers Naudé had an opportunity to meet their congregations, church councils, individual members of the congregations and their families (WCC 1986:6-7).

There were however, other visits by Beyers Naudé which had positive characteristics. The example of these is the invitation by the African Initiated Churches (AICs) that was brought to him by Rev Z.J. Malukazi from Ciskei. This saw him paying visits to both Transkei and Ciskei to look at the situation of AICs (Naudé 1995:83). The visits enabled him to meet different leaderships of these churches and to understand them better.

Beyers Naudé's ministry also included prison visits to Black political leaders. This was epitomized by his visit to Steve Biko, the father of the Black Consciousness movement three months before his death. The visit took place in June 1976 in King William's Town. During his prison visit, they touched on a number of topics in their discussion which were about the position of Inkatha and that of Whites with regards to the Black Consciousness movement (Naudé 1995:107).

Beyers Naudé's ministry could be described as ministry by presence. This reminds one of the incarnational lifestyle of Jesus Christ which is best described by Hirsch (2006:133) with regards to the manner in which we should practice the ministry of presence and of inserting ourselves in the communities we serve. He argued that incarnation qualifies the actions of both God and His followers in the world. God reached the world by incarnating Himself in Jesus. Judged by this act, God's followers in the world should be incarnational based on His example. This means that identification and affinity with the people who are served or those who are to be reached are equally important.

In the same breath Hirsch (ibid) emphasizes the importance of presence with regard to mission. In his understanding, presence underlines the importance of relationships in mission. He stressed the importance of being directly present with the people. In doing this he warned that the lives of Christians are their messages. He reminded that Jesus hung out with people that some Christians cannot feel comfortable to hang out with. The Christian presence among them conveys the message that God loves them too (ibid: 134).

It is also interesting that Hirsch (ibid) reminds that Jesus mixed with all levels of people, good or bad i.e. Pharisees, tax collectors and prostitutes. This means Christians should do likewise to the people they aimed at reaching. He exposed himself in many places, some of which could be viewed as unexpected for a White person to attend, judged by the context of the events. The example of this was his attendance at the memorial service of the late Black Consciousness movement's father, Steve Biko who was brutally killed by the security forces in prison (Naudé 1995:107). The irony of his presence at that event was that the Black Consciousness

philosophy is unwelcoming for Whites as echoed by Biko (in Naudé 1995:107) to Beyers Naudé thus: “Beyers, in the near future there is no place for Whites. We Blacks must learn to restore our humanity and human rights on our own. But the time will come when this relationship will change....(my translation).” The manifesto limited Whites to a supportive role only.

Beyers Naudé’s ministry by presence was seen in a number of situations in which the victims of oppression found themselves. Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu correctly captured this when he stated that,

...when the negotiations came to bring an end to the injustice and oppression of apartheid, he was among the African National Congress delegation. He was chosen as a midwife to bring the dispensation of democracy to birth, this one who has been so long ostracized....When Madiba (former President Nelson Mandela) was celebrating his 80th birthday and his marriage in 1998, we sat at the main table with Beyers, and it was an extraordinary moment. There we were, sitting side by side with some of the most extraordinary stalwarts of our struggle (Ryan 2005:vi).

Beyers Naudé was also very much involved in ecumenism (Pro Veritate 15 May 1966:5; cf Pro Veritate 15 May 1965:5). Bartlett (2009) describes him as “a strong ecumenical person.” He adds that his funeral was an ecumenical event with the attendance of senior church leaders from various denominations and faiths. Meyer (2009; cf Tshelane 2009) also confirms that Beyers Naudé was an ecumenical figure who also went further by including African Initiated Churches (AICs) into the ecumenical structure. Heaney (2004) dedicated a doctoral thesis on Beyers Naudé’s ecumenical contributions in South Africa. This was another milestone indicating the ecumenical nature of Beyers Naudé.

The Christian Institute (CI) to which he was Director represented his approach to this matter. This institution was the first body that brought together Christians of different backgrounds into a single body of a witnessing community of clergy and laymen. Clarke (Tribune, 12 September 2004) referring to Beyers Naudé’s departure from the DRC wrote:

In many ways though, it was the whispers of a new beginning in religious tolerance. Within weeks of leaving his old spiritual home, Naudé had put his energies into the formation of the Christian Institute, bringing together different denominations and cultures.

Beyers Naudé even extended the element of ecumenism by including the AICs which were placed at the periphery of the main stream of Christianity (Naudé 1995:83; cf Ryan 2005:102). The CI played an important role in the creation of the South African Council of Churches (SACC) (Randall 1982:46; cf Pro Veritate 15 September 1966:50).

Beyers Naudé supported Black clergy in his ministry. The main focus in this regard were Black clergy from churches that came out of the mission work of the DRC usually called 'daughter' churches of the DRC. He assisted these churches in articulating their grievances against the subservient position in which they have been placed by the DRC. One other outcome of his efforts was the assistance in the creation of the 'Broederkring' which posed a major challenge towards the DRC (Randall 1982:46).

The ministry of Beyers Naudé included support to movements that were fighting for liberation. But he had a condition attached to that support and that is, only "insofar as these were not inconsistent with the criteria of the gospel" (Randall 1982:44). What then should be the role of a Christian in a situation where another political organization adopted violence as a means of a fight for freedom? How was one to approach this matter in the light of the condition as mentioned above? Beyers Naudé (1995:92) advised from the light of John Calvin who encouraged obedience to the authorities as long as they were obedient to the command of God. If she rules against God's authority, he advised the exploration of all peaceful means. If this attempt also fails, he advised that arms could be taken against such a state.

While one is advised to support political organizations, Beyers Naudé warned of the necessity of strict adherence on neutrality or non-partisanship. He sees the role of the church as that of freedom of the oppressed in obedience to God's Will. He warned that, "...when the church participates in party politics she consciously or

unconsciously involves herself in party squables and runs the risk of compromising her allegiance to God in favour of people” (my translation, 1995:79).

It is in the light of Beyers Naudé’s guidance above, that he himself supported the World Council of Churches (WCC)’s programme called ‘Programme to Combat Racism.’ This programme gave financial and humanitarian support to liberation movements. Political movements that financially benefited were the ANC and Pan African Congress (PAC) (Naudé 1995:92). The Mayor of eThekweni, Obed Mlaba (The Mercury, 17 September 2004) stated: “Naudé was a brilliant backyard mechanic and knowledgeable about second-hand cars. He used this as a cover to obtain cars for use by people going into exile or for internal missions.” Beyers Naudé also supported political organizations in different ways like ‘skipping’ the country to go into exile. He acknowledges the role he personally played in this regard:

I acknowledge that I assisted young people to skip the country. I assisted with the distribution of ANC literature to enable people to understand what the ANC is all about, especially the Freedom manifesto of the ANC (my translation, Naudé 1995:93).

It is interesting that his assistance to political organizations did not exclude far left wing groups such as the Black Consciousness movement (BC). The BC’s position on liberal Whites was that they can only play a supporting role and that fundamental change in the country can only be brought about by Blacks themselves (Naudé 1995:107; cf Maguire 1991:118).

The CI played a considerable role in the life of the BC in such a way that they were able to accommodate their (BC) ‘radical’ political views (Randall 1982:43; cf Heaney 2004:188). In the light of the above, Randall (1982:61) is correct in saying that “from 1973 until it was banned in October 1977, the Christian Institute formulated a strategy designed to encourage Black Consciousness and to prepare whites for a future in which Blacks would exercise predominant political power.” Beyers Naudé was motivated by his belief that Christianity is not a faith that could be practised in ivory towers but should be involved in other areas of life. Meyer (2009) sees Beyers Naudé as a custodian of practical Christianity.

Beyers Naudé also dedicated his ministry efforts in the development of Black leadership. This was apparent in his relationship with the leadership of some liberation movements and Black church leaders. During 1973 Beyers Naudé was driving the CI into a period of closer contact with Black liberation movements with a view to prepare for the situation where Blacks will ultimately take leadership positions (Randall 1982:60).

Beyers Naudé's Black leadership development mission was seen in his assistance to the leadership of the AICs with their theological education (Randall 1982:56). Tshelane (2009; cf Ryan 2005:102) acknowledges his role in this and how he was like a father to these churches in the midst of the criticism they suffered from the mainline churches and other Western mission-born churches. Botha (2009) also indicates how Beyers Naudé has been of assistance in his theological development.

Beyers Naude went out to expose the DRC's justification of apartheid. His ministry bore an element of fairness, bravery and objectivity as epitomized by his exposure of the injustice no matter where it came from. This has been demonstrated by his unwavering exposure to the injustices as meted out by his own church and people without bias or fear. In his own words he declared:

I appeal to the white clergy of our Afrikaans churches, who in some way or another have privately expressed their deep concern about the turn for the worse which human relations are taking in our country, to come into the open and to speak, as men of God, with a prophetic voice to inform and enlighten our Afrikaans people about what really is at stake (Naudé 2005:98).

Randall (1982:46) indicated that Beyers Naudé's ministry to the people of South Africa from the 1960s to the 1970s was dominated by the exposure of the "false theological argument used by the NGK to justify apartheid" (ibid; cf Pro Veritate 15 October 1966:2; cf Pro Veritate 15 March 1967:1; see Pro Veritate 15 August 1966). At some stage, Beyers Naudé put in focus, the integrity of the DRC as a church in the light of her biblical justification of apartheid (Pro Veritate 15 December 1966:2). He also lamented the fact that the stance of this church on apartheid makes it

difficult for its ministers to be trusted in their Christian witness (Pro Veritate 15 July 1966). Beyers Naudé (2005:111) therefore had churches such as the DRC in mind when he stated that

....I say this with regret, that in a number of instances the Christian church actively sided with the ecclesiastical, political, social or economic *status quo*, and even went further by actively opposing and rejecting the efforts of those who were deeply concerned to achieve social justice and full human rights for oppressed individuals and communities.

The ministry strategy of Beyers Naudé included the support of Black initiatives in many respects. Most of the people I interviewed confirmed his support for Black initiatives in different ways. They indicate how he assisted them and others with their studies. Botha (2009) and Tshelane (2009) came out clear on this point. Beyers Naudé (in Randall 1982:47) “came to see that Black initiative was the key to true liberation and development in South Africa.”

The support for Black initiatives came with its own challenges and pains from the government. This was because when Black political organizations were banned such as Black Community Programmes, the Black People’s Convention and the South African Students Organisation, Beyers Naudé’s CI was also banned (Randall 1982:47).

Beyers Naudé maintained a special relationship with the South African Council of Churches (SACC). He was involved in the formation of the SACC in the mid-1960s when he and Prof Fred van Wyk were involved in negotiations which aimed at the restructuring of the Christian Council (which represented the ‘English’ churches in South Africa). The negotiations “resulted in the Council being renamed the South African Council of Churches” (Randall 1982:35; cf Pro Veritate 15 September 1966:5). As a head of the CI, he encouraged his staff to co-operate with the SACC. Because he developed the CI into a multi-racial community, he wanted to co-operate with such like bodies in order to further develop his multi-racial ministry to the people of South Africa. The CI “worked with the SACC for improved co-operation among the multi-racial churches, and Naudé maintained a special interest in the Black DRCs....”

(Randall 1982:56). In the light of this, the multi-racial character of the CI determined and directed the relationship with the SACC because it also had the same social and racial agenda.

Beyers Naudé was also the General Secretary of the SACC after Archbishop Desmond Tutu from 1985 to 1988 (Ackermann 2005:67). According to Meyer (2009; cf Heaney 2004:200) this afforded him an opportunity to meet with critical Black youth in different SACC regions who questioned the credibility of the Christian faith in the light of their plight and the misuse of this faith by the state to oppress them. As the General Secretary of the SACC, Beyers Naudé

...continued to speak, teach and preach about the need for confession, reconciliation and unity among the churches. He pleaded ceaselessly for the DRC to become one united church. Ecumenism, economic justice, love and the value of the human person were his abiding themes. He led the protest marches and visited sites of struggle, suffering and conflict. I have an abiding memory of him at the funerals of young black activists, often the only white face (Ackermann 2005:67-68).

Beyers Naudé did not only support, but played an important role in the formulation of what came to be called 'the message to the people of South Africa' in September 1968 (Randall 1982:35). He acknowledged the partnership between the CI and the SACC in the creation of the message when he stated that "...the cooperation with the South African Council of Churches led to the decision of issuing the 'Message to the people of South Africa' in 1968" (my translation, Naudé 1995:86). Beyers Naudé's CI and the SACC convened a conference on 'Pseudo-gospels' in church and society during May 1968. The conference set up an interdenominational theological commission by the SACC. The commission issued this message and 7 000 copies were spread to stakeholders all over South Africa. The content of the message was a call "...on Christians to discriminate between what was demanded of them as citizens of South Africa and what was demanded of them as disciples of Jesus Christ" (Randall 1982:35). The message resulted in the setting up of the Study Project on Christianity in Apartheid Society (SPROCAS) (Ibid). Beyers Naudé's

support and active participation in projects such as these made him more appealing to the victims of apartheid.

Beyers Naudé in his ministry went out in support of the concept of military conscientiousness objection and blessed the military offensive by victims of apartheid as a 'just-war' in self defense against state violence (in Randall 1982:62). He started with the process of debates concerning this subject long before it was officially adopted by the SACC. In 1974 a conference was held in Hammanskraal and this subject was part of the conference resolution. The CI since 1973 started with the violence versus non-violence debate. When it came to the SACC Hammanskraal conference, Beyers Naudé supported the conscientious objection in such a way that he even seconded the conference resolution that was dominated by it (Randall 1982:37, 61; cf Naudé 2005:91). In simple terms, the Hammanskraal resolution "called upon Christians to consider becoming conscientious objectors. Quite simply, to accept military service in defense of injustice was not permissible" (Randall 1982:61).

Beyers Naudé's ministry embraced the preparation of Whites for future Black political power. One of the formidable steps taken by Beyers Naudé and the CI in this regard was the formulation of a "strategy designed to encourage Black Consciousness and to prepare whites for a future in which blacks would exercise predominant political power. This strategy included conscientious objection..." (Randall 1982:61). This move led to working together with leading personalities and organizations in the Black Consciousness movement. Although this strategy bore positive spin-offs on the side of the victims of apartheid, it boosted their love and trust in him, on the other hand, it ignited confrontation from the state in the mid-1970s (Randall 1982:63).

Beyers Naudé acknowledged his identity as an Afrikaner as evidenced by his utterances below:

I must feel the agony of this, especially because the people who are in control and in power doing this, these are my people. I cannot deny that I am an Afrikaner. I don't want to deny it. How can I? I am nothing else but an Afrikaner, and yet in that sense I don't see myself to be there, then the agony

of that separation. What are the basic roots, what are the deepest roots of such an injustice, of such inhumanity? How do we continue to justify it...? (WCC 1986:10).

It psychologically happens that people hide their identity when buying acceptance from other people especially when their race is known to have done something that is generally unacceptable. For instance, people such as Kritzinger (2009) who later became a disciple of Beyers Naudé, at some stage wanted to deny his Afrikaner identity until advised by Beyers Naudé against it. Beyers Naudé in his ministry did not shy away from his identity and love of his own people. For instance, in the CI, Randall (1982:45) reports that

...more than one member of staff was conscious of the apparent incongruity of the safari-suited Afrikaner who had once been a moderator of the Dutch Reformed Church earnestly discussing such matters with a rather motley collection of radicals, agnostics and demure servants of the gospel.

Beyers Naudé was instrumental in the creation of the *Broederkring/Belydende-kring* which was a body composing of some Black clergy from the three so called daughter churches of the DRC. The *Broederkring* became a formidable challenge to the DRC on its racist policy (Randall 1982:46; cf 1995:94; see Naudé 2005:128-130). It called among other things for the unity of the DRC family. Rev Zack Mokgoebo (2009) was the General Secretary of this body and he spoke well about Beyers Naudé's contributions. He states that Beyers Naudé did not occupy a position in the *Broederkring* for security reasons. Mokgoebo (ibid) adds that Beyers Naude was contributing from behind the scene because for fear of harassment by the security forces. The *Broederkring* was changed to *Belydendekring* in order to be gender inclusive. Mokgoebo (ibid) further reasons that the roots of the Belhar confession were cultivated within the *Broederkring* with contributions from people like Beyers Naudé.

It was as a result of the *Belydende-kring* that

...the black church began to call for a forthright, non-racial witness to Christian unity, for example, common witness with mixing of congregations, as well as shared decision-making; it was time to drop the condescending terms 'mother church' (White) and 'daughter churches' (African, Coloured and Indian) (Randall 1982:65).

In the light of this, it became clear that Beyers Naudé armed the Black churches that came out of the mission of the DRC to stand for justice despite the fact that they were financially dependent on the DRC. The financial dependence on DRC made it difficult for these churches to speak out against their financial source.

Beyers Naude also contributed to the debate on investment versus disinvestment and sanctions ranging in South Africa then. He had a soft spot for investment and attached conditions for foreign investors. He “argued in favour of foreign investment in South Africa, on condition that it assisted in improving the condition of Blacks” (Randall 1982:36).

The position taken by Beyers Naudé in this regard was difficult to realize. In an apartheid South Africa, it was part of apartheid protocol that Blacks were at the periphery of the economic lather. This meant that foreign investment was going to first fall on the hands of the apartheid government which had to satisfy itself before it can give the remnants to other racial groups. It was therefore unlikely under those circumstances that Blacks could ever expect to benefit from foreign investment. No foreign investment could ever be for the improvement of the position of Blacks under an apartheid environment.

In March 1980, Beyers Naudé joined the congregation in Alexandra of the Dutch Reformed Church in Africa (DRCA)¹⁸. In 1987 he was licensed as a Minister in this church. Beyers Naude chose Alexandra because the suburb of Greenside fell under the boundaries of the congregation in Alexandra (Naudé 1995:119). Randall

¹⁸ The DRCA was a section of the DRC family meant for Africans in terms of her race classification.

(1982:42; cf Naudé 1995:119) explains Beyers Naudé's position in joining the Black church thus:

Naudé has joined Ds Sam Buti's congregation of the black N.G. Kerk in Afrika, together with a handful of other whites. Ds Buti welcomed them with the words, 'these people have left because they understand we are all God's children, I am delighted.'

This step has been viewed by some scholars (Randall 1982:42; cf Heaney 2004:193) who commented that "In February 1980, Naudé's witness took a dramatic turn when he and several other white members of the NGK formerly resigned from the NGK in order to join the black NGK."

The ministry of Beyers Naudé also embraced the 'despised' African Initiated Churches (AICs) (Pro Veritate 15 July 1965:5; cf 2.6.4). Beyers Naudé assisted these churches with theological education as well as the establishment of their organization called the African Independent (Initiated) Churches Association (AICA) which was launched in Queenstown in June 1965. He and the CI found themselves having to deal with forty of these churches (Meyer 2009; cf Hayes 2006:59; see Tshelane 2009). The association of Beyers Naudé with these churches led him to a study of them which also included visits to Transkei and Ciskei as a result of invitations received (Naudé 1995:83; cf Ryan 2005:102).

Tshelane (2009), an AIC leader, knew Beyers Naudé very well within the context of the AICs. He appreciates the fact that Beyers Naudé attended their conferences and his initial contact with him was along those lines. He remembers Beyers Naudé as a good listener, a soft person who assisted the AICs in a number of ways. Highlights of his assistance were on finance and theological training. In 1965, Beyers Naudé organised a seminar for mainline churches where he led a discussion on the means of assisting the AICs in theological education. A year later, an AICA seminary was formed. They asked the University of Fort Hare to host that seminary and lecturers from this university were used on condition that they simplify their lectures. Theological Education by Extension (TEE) is the result of this initiative. Beyers

Naudé's interest in uplifting the educational standard of the AICs won him love, admiration and support from them.

The ministry of Beyers Naudé was characterized by his love for his 'enemies'. Ryan (2005:112; cf Meiring 2009) indicated that he "was cordial and good-mannered even with his fiercest enemies, including the security police." One of the many incidents in which this attitude was demonstrated was during one occasion when he was summoned to appear at John Vorster Square in Johannesburg before a senior policeman. It is reported that "Beyers Naudé walked into his office and shook his hand. He saw a photograph of his son and began asking him about the boy and the rest of his family. I saw this policeman who had been ready to have a real confrontation with Beyers, suddenly dissolve" (Ryan 2005:112). Beyers Naudé's limitless love was also seen when he met his greatest opponents such as the two who were identified by Ryan (ibid) as Koot Vorsters or Kosie Gericke. He shook their hands and talked to them as if they were his best friends.

3.3. OUTCOMES OF BEYERS NAUDÉ'S MINISTRY TO THE VICTIMS OF OPPRESSION

3.3.1. Negative response

- *Harassment by the security forces*

The ministry of Beyers Naudé also attracted negative responses. One area that injected pain was the harassment by the security forces. The security forces regularly searched his house and the offices of the CI (Randall 1982:34; cf Pro Veritate 15 June 1965:5).

The searches of the offices of the CI and his home in Greenside started as early as 1965. The reason given for the search was that they were looking for documents that were related to communism and the ANC. Beyers Naudé (1995:86) commented as follows about the search: "I had to empty my pockets and a policeman personally searched me. They left with few copies of Pro Veritate and a report of the British Council of Churches" (my translation, 1995:86). In another search Beyers Naudé

(1995:110) explained the painful way in which it was conducted: “The security police waited for us at the entrance, myself, my wife and other staff members were separated and they accompanied me to my office on the fourth floor, Ilse and other staff members were kept in the small hall....” (my translation). Randall (1982:39) puts the number of security officers who participated in the search at 40 and the date at November 1965.

- *Allegations of violence and subversion*

Some of the results of the ministry of Beyers Naudé included the suffering he endured as a result of allegations that he supported violence and subversion. The Nederduitsch Hervormde Kerk van Afrika (NHK) rejected the CI and warned her members not to subscribe. She threatened that those who ignored this call will face disciplinary action from the church.

It was out of this context of hate towards the CI and its director that false allegations of violence and subversion were made. These allegations were made by the NHK minister, Prof A.D. Pont. This went with the discomfort that was caused by the security forces with the interruption of their work and comfort by regularly searching his offices and home. After a court battle that ensued, it was found that the allegations were incorrect and Beyers Naudé and Prof Albert Geyser (chair of CI Board of Management then) were awarded damages of R10 000 each (Randall 1982:35; cf Naudé 1995:77).

- *The Schlebusch Commission*

The findings of the Schlebusch Commission also represented some of the negative responses to the ministry of Beyers Naudé (1995:97; cf Nash 2005:37). The commission established by Prime Minister John Vorster on 7 February 1972 was made up of seven parliamentarians, four from the National Party and three from the United Party. Mr Alwyn Schlebusch was at some stage a chairperson of this commission after Mr Jimmy Kruger who was the first chairperson immediately after the establishment of the commission (Naudé 1995:97).

The commission investigated certain organizations including the CI during 1973. Members of the CI who were subpoenaed to appear as witnesses refused to testify. They were therefore tried under Communism Act, found guilty and consequently their passports were withdrawn. Directors of the newly formed Ravan Press who included Beyers Naudé “were charged under the Suppression of Communism Act for allegedly having published statements by a banned person” (Randall 1982:36-37). The CI was placed under a strict spotlight and barred from receiving funds from abroad from 1975.

- *A night in custody*

Beyers Naudé’s ministry resulted in him spending a night in custody at the maximum security division of the Pretoria Central Prison on 28 October 1976 (Naudé 1995:100). This came after he refused to pay a fine of R50.00 for the charges leveled against him, that he refused to testify in 1973 before the Commission of Enquiry into certain organisations. Beyers Naudé was released after the Parkhurst DRC congregation minister anonymously paid the fine for him (Randall 1982:38).

Beyers Naudé’s case had a rippling negative effect on other members of the CI. For instance, “Theo Kotze, the Cape director of the CI, was sentenced to four months imprisonment, suspended for three years, and Peter Randall, director of Ravan Press and former director of SPROCAS, was sentenced to two months, also suspended for three years” (Randall 1982:39).

- *The June 1976 Riots*

The ministry of Beyers Naudé also led to the state’s constant interference and limits placed on his ministry as epitomized by the youth action of 1976. During the 1976 uprisings, the state suspected that he might have a hand or that he might have had influence in it. It was on those grounds that the chief magistrate of Johannesburg served him and the general secretary of SACC, Mr John Rees with notices “warning them to dissociate themselves ‘totally from interfering with the present situation of

unrest in the Witwatersrand area'. The minister of justice stated later on that the warning would stand 'indefinitely'" (Randall 1982:38).

- *Christian Institute declared unlawful*

The ministry of Beyers Naudé also resulted in the banning of the CI in 1977. The ban also included the CI's newsletter, *Pro Veritate* and two Black newspapers. In addition, seven Whites were banned for five year and they included Beyers Naudé (Randall 1982:39). The results of this were that

...the security police took away all the records and property of the CI. The Minister of Justice announced that an executor would be appointed to wind up the affairs of the banned organizations and their assets would be given to appropriate bodies (Randall 19982:40).

- *The effect of the Banning Order*

Another painful result of the ministry of Beyers Naudé was the banning order he received, dated 11 October 1977 and signed by Minister Jimmy Kruger. The ban was for five years until 1982 but was renewed and ended up extending to seven years (Naudé 1995:112). The ban meant a lot of readjustment in Beyers Naudé's life. The implication of this was to start a new chapter of life at the age of sixty-two where he was

...restricted to the Johannesburg magisterial district, unable to attend meetings of any kind, whether social, political or religious, unable to be quoted, unable to speak in public, or to write for publications, unable to enter black townships, factory or any educational institution, compelled to report like a common criminal to his local police station every week.... (Randall 1982:40; cf Naudé 1995:112-113; see Heaney 2004:194).

- *Rejection by the 'volk'*

It is sad that for many years his own Afrikaner people were deaf and blind to this reality. They persecuted him and defrocked him, and when his prophetic voice continued to ring out against racist oppression tried to silence him with two banning orders (sic). For the sake of justice he became an outcast. Yet throughout all of this Beyers Naudé never tried to deny his Afrikaner roots (Mandela 1995:7).

Beyers Naude also suffered rejection by his Afrikaner people. The ministry approach he had taken had created more enemies for him from the ranks of his church, the Broederbond and the 'volk' in general. Ngcokovane (1989:158) puts it well in saying that "by his stand, he struck at the heart of the Afrikaner civil religion." He further stated that this was the beginning of his hard road as he was rejected by the DRC and his 'volk' and called names (ibid; cf Pro Veritate 15 August 1966:7).

In the view of Kistner (1995:42) Beyers Naudé's choice of the route of obedience to God and resistance to injustice meant loneliness and isolation from people of his own Afrikaner family and cultural background. Most of those who were close to him came to regard him as a traitor to his people and church.

- *The reaction of the DRC*

Beyers Naudé was a dangerous person, but not a traitor. He was dangerous because he had the courage to challenge the system. Many of us only realize later the devastating effects of our actions on other people. We preferred to isolate ourselves but people like Beyers Naudé had the courage to challenge the injustice. It must be said that we were wrong and that in the process we harmed people like Beyers Naudé. We had to apologise to Beyers, and through the grace of God, he forgave us (The Star, 13 September 2004).

The DRC was the first entity to ‘punish’ Beyers Naudé. He indicated the manner in which he was isolated by the DRC through the Christian Institute (CI). Many DRC church councils and presbyteries predominantly in the Transvaal took decisions against the CI. This marked the beginning of friction between him and the DRC for many years to follow (Naudé 1995:76).

In another instance, some DRC congregations practically barred Beyers Naudé from addressing them. The example of this was the congregation of Belgravia, Johannesburg in March 1965 (Naudé 1995:79). In their general synod of 1966 the DRC resolved that “officials and members of the church should withdraw from the CI” (Randall 1982:34-35; cf Naudé 1995:80) and that disciplinary action should be taken against those who do not comply (Pro Veritate, 15 April 1967:2).

The reaction of the DRC to Beyers Naudé’s position and how this will affect him is summarized by Randall (1982:29) as follows: “It will mean not only loss of his status as a minister of the church, but also the automatic loss of his position as moderator of the Southern Transvaal synod, and the end of any further prospects in the church.”

- *Rejection by family members*

The negative output of the ministry of Beyers Naudé was the rejection by members of his family. Firstly, his mother had a negative reaction when she heard of his involvement with the CI. Beyers Naudé tried to explain but it did not help until he took her to some of the CI meetings which positively changed her heart to realize that the CI was not a communist organization as she thought (Naudé 1995:75).

Secondly, Beyers Naudé’s brothers and sisters decided to cut contact with him. Prominent among his sisters on this matter was Hymne who with her husband Prof Detlev Weis told him right away that they do not want any contact with him. Since then they had met twice at different family funerals. First was at the funeral of his mother and later of his sister Lierieka (Naudé 1995:75). However, they later reconciled.

Prof Lammert Leertouwer (in WCC 1986:2) interviewed Beyers Naudé and Prof Dorothee Solle, a German Theologian in a Dutch ecumenical broadcasting company on 20 June 1985. In his comparison between these two servants of God he confirmed the same view when he wrote that

...for many people all over the world their very existence is a sign of hope, but for others, among them old friends and relatives, they are dangerous people, misguided in their hopes, confused in their way of life, even traitors to the best tradition of the Christian church: heretics, to say the least.

The same view of rejection by relatives was also identified by Meiring (2009) in his many years of personal contact with Beyers Naudé.

- *Rejection by friends*

Beyers Nauder was also rejected by his friends. He (Naudé 1995:75) laments that “In our own friendship circles we noted that we have lost most of our old friends from our Aasvoëlkop congregation. People became wary of us” (my translation). Some of his friends adopted a very careful approach in their contacts with him. Many negative stories were spread about him for instance that he followed Bram Fischer as an underground leader of the South African Communist Party (Naudé 1995:75).

- *Harassment of his family*

Additional negative effects of the ministry of Beyers Naudé were seen by his family. Randall (1982:41) advised that Beyers Naudé cannot deny the negative impact of the banning order, not only on himself but also to his wife and family. He points out that the banning order “must have sometimes resulted intense frustration and deep despondency...”

This situation could further be interpreted to mean that family holidays and picnics outside the magisterial area are affected. His house was constantly raided by the security police (Randall 1982:41; cf Naudé 1995:113-114).

The Children of Beyers Naudé also had a taste of some kind of harassment by their peers. Beyers Naudé's daughter, Liesel (Tribune 12 September 2004) recalled the pain and frustrations that came with the status of being a child of Beyers Naudé:

At school when they ask you what your father did and you said he was a minister, you were immediately thought of as too odd,....So that helped a bit. But certainly when my father made his then very radical views public, the changes came very quickly. Before we were regarded as respectable, upright family. Now we were outcasts. It was a shock.

This situation as explained suggests that the hardship that was directed at Beyers Naudé ended up affecting every one who was seen to be close to him, his wife, children and even grandchildren.

- *Beyers Naudé and the 'Volkskongress' 1964*

The *Volkskongres* which was held in 1964 in Pretoria also represented negative results of the ministry of Beyers Naude. The congress charged bodies like the CI as "playing the communist game" (Randall 1982:34). This charge resulted in some of the Afrikaner members resigning from this body before the end of that year (Randall 1982:34).

- *Physical violence against Beyers Naudé*

The ministry of Beyers Naudé resulted into smear campaigns and even violence directed at him and properties associated with him. Smear letters against Beyers Naudé were circulated. The offices of CI in Cape Town were set alight twice, petrol bombs and shots were fired at the home of the director of the CI in the Western Cape, Rev Theo Kotze (Randall 1982:36).

At some stage he was invited by Rev Roelf Meyer to address his Belgravia DRC congregation members at 19h00, on 9 March 1965 during which an ugly incident

happened. Some members led by the Church Councilors of this congregation did not approve of his visit to this congregation. On his arrival they blocked the gate and prevented him from entering. Arguments ensued which resulted into violence. There was also shouting at Beyers Naudé. In the midst of those shouts when Beyers Naudé walked into the yard of the church, the resistance became so serious that “two men then grabbed Beyers by the arm and marched him outside the church gate” (Ryan 2005:105). Police were called to calm the situation but they failed. Beyers Naudé was ultimately escorted to another venue, a private house where he addressed the youth (ibid).

- *Critique from the URCSA members*

The end of the ministry of Beyers Naudé ended on an unpleasant note for some members of the Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa (URCSA). This is a church that is made up of the unity between two of the ‘daughter’ churches of the DRC. One of these ‘daughter’ churches (the Dutch Reformed Church in Africa) is the one of which Beyers Naudé became a member and later a minister in the early 1980s in the congregation at Alexandra near Sandton. According to Rev Zackie Mokgoebo (2009), a Minister of this church serving the congregation of Orlando, Soweto, Beyers Naudé had disappointed this church. Mokgoebo was supported by Kritzinger (2009) and other ministers of this church who had been interviewed.

Their argument against the ministry of Beyers Naudé is that despite the fact that he did good work for the victims of apartheid, he returned to the DRC and was buried by that church, left a bitter taste in their mouths and the URCSA which according to them contributed considerably to his life after he was dismissed by the DRC. They argued that the URCSA accepted and restored his status as a minister and became his spiritual home. In their understanding, this was an indication of a lack of commitment and hypocrisy.

Many unanswered questions are still disturbing their minds such as; why did he return to the church (DRC) that brought him so much pain? Why was he alone at the DRC synod when he was welcomed back while there were other former DRC ministers who were frustrated by the same church?

3.3.2. Positive response

- *Beyers Naudé's ministry: A confirmation that not all Whites are bad!*

Many younger generations of liberation fighters who joined us in prison after 1976 mentioned the example of Beyers Naudé as one of the reasons why they accepted the non-racial character of our struggle....Together with people like Bram Fischer and Joe Slovo, his name is mentioned in the streets of our townships as the personification of the non-racial character of the struggle against apartheid (Mandela 1995:7).

The ministry of Beyers Naudé produced some positive results for instance it ruled out the perception that all Whites are bad and can therefore not be trusted to fully commit themselves to the struggle for the oppressed in South Africa. Beyers Naudé's ministry contributed to non-racialism. Black political organizations such as the Pan African Congress and Black Consciousness movement aligned groups, subscribed to this view to a greater extent. For instance, one of the icons of the Black Consciousness movement, the late Mr Steve Biko confirmed that the time has not come for Whites to be included in the leadership structures of the organization except only in a supportive role. The assertion is that fundamental change can only be brought about by Blacks themselves (Naudé 1995:107). Banda (2009:111) in analyzing the role of some Whites he termed "solidarity with victims", concluded that Biko's adage "Black man you are on your own" (if it meant exclusion of all Whites from participation in the Black political struggle) was seriously challenged. Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu (Ryan 2005:v) reasoned that God picked up Beyers Naudé as a champion of non-racialism when He

was looking for a champion for non-racial justice and democracy, for caring and compassion. He was looking for someone who would stand up against vicious racist oppression, the evil policy of apartheid, someone who would stand up for the fundamental rights of all God's children.

The ministry of Beyers Naudé empowered those organizations which believed that South Africa belongs to all who live in it, Blacks and Whites equally as acclaimed by

the freedom charter of the Congress of the People in Kliptown, Soweto in 1955. His contribution through his life conveyed the message that not all Whites are bad. This was also summed up by Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu (Business Day, 8 September 2004; cf Ryan 2005:v) who stated that, “Beyers Naudé helped black people not to hate white people by showing them that not all white people are bad.” This point is also stressed by du Preez (The Star, 9 September 2004) who stated that Beyers Naudé’s presence in South Africa “meant that not all Afrikaners and whites were intractable racists and oppressors, with some pressure and persuasion the rest could one day follow.”

- *Restored Christian Credibility*

They are saying: ‘Sorry, we don’t understand your Christian life and Christian faith as you portray it. To us it has no relevance, no meaning. We want to see a concrete, living example of justice, of righteousness, of love, of truth, of liberation.’ The moment they see something of that in a minister or a priest, or a person who calls himself or herself a Christian, then there is a response (WCC 1986:18).

The misuse of Christianity as a political tool for the justification of oppression placed the victims of oppression at the doubtful position where they questioned the credibility of this faith. Some rejected this faith. During the earlier period of the ministry of Beyers Naudé to the people of South Africa this became clear during the mid-1960s after the incarceration of legitimate Black political leaders. During this period, the ‘Christian’ apartheid government appeared more prosperous and the economy of this country grew tremendously. The indication was that the ‘Christian’ God was supporting and accepting the prayers of the apartheid government to oppress other people. It is understood that liberation theologies such as Black theology came to the fore in order to address this situation. Beyers Naudé played an important role from his position to convince the disillusioned victims of apartheid to re-embrace and have trust in the Christian faith.

Meyer (2009) who spent more than thirty five years with Beyers Naudé remembers the many instances where Beyers Naudé successfully addressed the Black youth on

this matter. Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu (in Ryan 2005:v) echoed the same view about Beyers Naudé through what he referred to as God's sense of humour. He argued:

That is what human beings thought. But they had not reckoned with God's sense of humour. God was looking for a champion, someone who would help give Christian *credibility*, especially among blacks....God laid His hand on an unlikely candidate, from the self-same Afrikaner community that had embraced apartheid as a creed and a way of life. Out of this Saul figure he (sic) gave us a remarkable Paul, our own Oom Bey.

- *A source of courage to the victims of apartheid*

I have never met anybody...who in the most adverse circumstances, in the most appalling times of darkness, was always full of hope and courage. You could be in a conversation in which things were so bad in terms of your prognosis of what was going on around you that you didn't know where to turn, and Beyers would come into the meeting and all of a sudden he would begin to open up possibilities. He would once again be an abler by beginning to project a vision and to instill courage in the people who were there (De Gruchy 2005:89).

Beyers Naudé's ministry demonstrated courage which became attractive to victims of apartheid. The courage he demonstrated despite the challenges he came across in his ministry became a source of courage for the victims of apartheid. This point was also acknowledged by Mandela (1995:7) who stated that, "for the majority of people in SA who have been oppressed and exploited by apartheid, Beyers Naudé has become a fellow liberation fighter, a powerful symbol of human courage and humanity." Beyers Naudé (2005:98) appealed to the Black people of South Africa to prepare themselves, act responsibly, inspired and fearlessly to be able to lead South Africa to a new future when the day of their freedom which is at hand comes. Akper (2006:69) indicated how the name of Beyers Naudé was associated with resistance and hope for the poor and oppressed and a promise that a bright future is awaiting them for a free South Africa. At the peak of his ministry, in 1977, addressing the

graduates of the Federal Theological Seminary, he encouraged them by saying that they are going to participate by ministering in a democratic and free South Africa. He stated that South Africa will be free from racial oppression despite denials from apartheid authorities. He compared the denials of apartheid authorities to "...a patient desperately clinging to life and will fight to stave off the dying day, but it is of no avail: he will not survive...[H]e is destined to disappear...." (Naudé 2006:81).

Former South African President, Thabo Mbeki (www.iol.co.za 2004.09.18) referring to Beyers Naudé stated that "our country has a great need for people with a vision, conviction and courage of a Beyers Naudé who must reach out together for the real power of brotherhood, sisterhood and a whole community." The then President of South African Council of Churches, Prof H.R. Botman (2004) confirmed that Beyers Naudé was a courageous person to stand up to his enemies, whenever it was necessary, to his own people and to resist public pressure and private greed.

- *Praised by post-apartheid South African Presidents*

The ministry of Beyers Naudé greatly touched and impressed the victims of apartheid some of whom assumed senior government positions in the post apartheid South Africa today. The impression did not exclude those who occupied the highest office in the land like the president of the post-apartheid South Africa. Mandela (The Star, 9 September 2004) knew Beyers Naudé as the anti-apartheid cleric who achieved much in his life and whose work has been a source of inspiration for South Africa. After learning that Beyers Naudé passed on, Mandela cut short his visit in Mozambique and returned to South Africa without delay, to comfort the Naudé family.

Mbeki (www.iol.co.za 2004.09.18) stated that had it not been for Beyers Naudé, history books would have told a different story of hatred, fear and loathing for South Africa. He added that Beyers Naudé had called on all South Africans to understand that the reconciliation needed for peace and progress of South Africa required that all her people work together.

- *Beyers Naudé, a strong spiritual and moral symbol*

The ministry of Beyers Naudé has been a source of spiritual support and enrichment to many in South Africa and abroad. This element has also been acknowledged by a DRC moderator (leader) of the Northern Transvaal synod and the General Secretary of the General Synod, Dr J. Gerber. Comparing Beyers Naudé to Moses he stated that his church was sorry it realized too late that Naudé was the Moses sent to take them out of bondage (The Mercury 17 September 2004). He continued to indicate that when there were problems in life, God always provides a Moses who would not only preach about the good things but who would also fight for the good. He showed how the road across the desert could have been long and bloody for all South Africans had it not been this Moses. He added that, Beyers Naudé, like Moses, died after making sure that all had reached the promised land and that we owe him a thank you.

The President of the South African Council of Churches, Prof Botman (2004) saw a good man who is full of the Holy Spirit in Beyers Naudé. He indicated that,

his whole life was unto us a daily reading from the sacred scriptures. It was a constant reminder to us as churches, as people from different faith communities and as a nation: 'remember your unity', 'work together for the just common good', 'pray without end for peace and reconciliation' and 'live in love and hope....His sermons were always expressions of hope. The courage to hope and to give account of ones' hope were the cornerstones for his ministry.

- *Beyers Naudé, a champion of a new paradigm shift in mission*

Beyers Naudé has been hailed as an eye-opener to the understanding of mission in a broader sense. Bartlett (2009) states that Beyers Naudé went beyond the traditional understanding of mission, i.e. going out to convert people. He indicated that Beyers Naudé assisted people to understand mission in a more holistic sense. Bartlett (2009) went further to reason that Beyers Naudé's ministry helped in

understanding that the peace of God's Kingdom should be translated into the peace of the world in different situations. The experience of the children of Beyers Naudé (Tribune 12 September 2004) assists us to understand the nature of the practical and broader ministry of their father:

Liesel, like her brothers, remembers her father speaking of the terrible hardship in the mines and the poverty that existed in the townships. Most of all, it was the events of Sharpeville, the killing of 69 school children (sic) involved in a peaceful protest, that finally turned the tide.

The point raised by Bartlett above confirmed that the ministry of Beyers Naudé centered on the transformation of the world, in this context, the conditions of the poor with whom he identified himself. Botha (2009) describes this move as a confirmation that he took the position of the poor, the down-trodden. Meyer (2009) hails Beyers Naudé as somebody who taught the world that Christianity need to be practical, that it could not be practiced in an ivory tower. He added that Beyers Naudé taught the world that Christ is not a theoretical concept.

- *Beyers Naudé's ministry, a lesson against ignorance*

The ministry of Beyers Naudé is commended for having highlighted the importance for agents of the Word to be well informed on things that are happening around them. Meyer (2009; cf Meiring 2009; see Heaney 2004:196) indicates that Beyers Naudé during his ministry to the people of South Africa, kept himself well informed about things that were happening. He read newspapers and other publications that kept him informed about the world around him. He read about politics, economics and other subjects that had a bearing on peoples' lives and analysed them in the light of the gospel demands.

A clear picture of Beyers Naudé's knowledge of developments around him became apparent in the devotions he conducted during the Cape Town consultation on the occasion of the visit by the World Council of Churches (WCC) General Secretary, Dr Emilio Castro in 1991. In his message it was clear that he was abreast with the context of the time because he mentioned the "endless violence, the growing

poverty, the massive unemployment, the lack of housing for millions of homeless people” (Naudé (1991:91).

Saayman (2007:96) refers to the need to cross the inner boundaries (created by colonialism and apartheid), as a tool to avoid ignorance. The inner boundaries refer to two separate worlds i.e. the super rich and privileged world for Whites on one side, and the poor and disenfranchised Black world on the other side. He adds that Blacks touched both worlds because they had been crossing boundaries into the other world on a daily basis for reasons of work. The Whites did not see reasons to cross the inner boundaries towards the Black world and experience it. This scenario placed Blacks at a better position to know both worlds. Saayman (ibid) further indicated that the Tomlinson report to a greater extent enlightened Whites about the other world which they have not yet touched.

A German theologian, Dr Dorothee Solle (WCC 1986:8) reflected on her meeting with two White South African students in the United States who were unable to answer questions about the situation in the townships. She wrote:

We got to talk a little bit and I asked them about the situation in South Africa, and about the situation of black people, and specifically about whether they knew Soweto, whether they had been there, whether they knew if the people had water or not in their huts or barracks, if they had electricity or oil or not, very specific questions. And they did not know a thing (ibid).

This has been a general perception with regards to South African Whites. Beyers Naudé (WCC 1986:17) also confirmed this view though in this case his focus was on White youth: “...as far as the young white people are concerned, the majority of the young white people in South Africa live to a large degree in ignorance of what is happening, or even if they are aware they are not concerned.”

I noted the cause of this problem from the observation of Beyers Naudé (Pro Veritate 15 January 1967:1ff) that most Whites who reside in Africa have double citizenship. In this way they don't get fully rooted in Africa. I therefore concur with Beyers Naudé who reasoned that if Africa was predominantly White this was not to be a problem

(ibid). Another cause for this is seen from the influence of government propaganda on which most Whites depended (Naudé 2006:65).

This scenario highlighted the level of ignorance prevalent among South Africans which Beyers Naudé also fought against. Beyers Naudé succeeded to cross this inner boundary. He therefore became a champion against ignorance.

- *A champion of ecumenism*

Beyers Naudé has proven himself to be a champion of ecumenism (3.2.4; cf Heaney 2004). He was hailed as “a strong ecumenical person” (Bartlett 2009). Bartlett (ibid) knew that the CI was an ecumenical community, shaped by Beyers Naudé as her director. He however adds that he was also impressed by the ecumenical element that was demonstrated during Beyers Naudé’s funeral in September 2004. He remembered how he was impressed to see the most senior religious leaders representing different denominations and religions in attendance. Tshelane (2009) commends Beyers Naudé for his ecumenical capabilities as were shown in his relationship with the African Initiated Churches (AICs). Beyers Naudé’s ministry was thus practiced along ecumenical lines making him one among leaders on ecumenical matters.

- *“There is a saying in our church that if there is a White man they will meet in heaven that is Beyers Naudé”*

Tshelane (2009), (an AIC leader), gives many praises about him. The AICs looking at the apartheid machinery that was seen to be driven by Whites against the oppressed, concluded that there is no White person to be allowed in heaven. Looking at the unconditional love that Beyers Naudé had for them, Tshelane stated: “There is a saying in our church that if there is a White man they will meet in heaven that is Beyers Naudé.” His association with the AICs was so close that they also gave him a name that was popular within their (AICs) circles, *Intaba mayikhonjwa* (loosely translated as, ‘a mountain is not pointed out with a finger’). This is from African traditional belief systems where some mountains were regarded as sacred,

so holy that it was a taboo to point them out with a finger. In their (AICs) understanding, the Christian witness as demonstrated by the life of Beyers Naudé with regards to their relation, earned him this qualification that was conveyed through his new name.

- *In honour of Beyers Naudé*

The ministry of Beyers Naudé resulted in him receiving awards and honours in South Africa and abroad. The academic honours included nine honorary doctoral degrees (between 1972 and 2000) from the following universities (Pauw 2005:21):

- The University of Amsterdam (1972),
- The University of the Witwatersrand (1974),
- The University of Cape Town (1983),
- Notre Dame University (1985),
- Limburg University in the Netherlands (1989),
- The University of Natal (1991),
- The University of Durban Westville (1983),
- The University of the Western Cape (1997) and
- The University of Stellenbosch (2000).

Apart from the above honours, Beyers Naudé was also awarded the Reinhold Niebuhr Award for 'steadfast and self-sacrificing services in South Africa for justice and peace.' He was also awarded the prize for reconciliation and development from the Swedish Free Church and an award from the Bruno Kreisky Foundation in recognition of his 'uniting work in race relation' (www.anc.org.za. 8 September 2008).

The Afrikaans Taal en Kultuur en Vereeniging (ATKV)¹⁹ awarded him their highest award for nation-building, for not only questioning the apartheid system but also standing by his convictions to contribute to the new South Africa in 2004. Beyers Naudé also received the freedom of the city of Johannesburg in 2001 (Ibid).

¹⁹ Afrikaans Language and Cultural Organisation.

The ministry of Beyers Naudé also resulted in the victims of apartheid naming institutions and other structures after him as a symbol of honour and gratitude. For instance, one of the main streets in Johannesburg, D.F. Malan was re-named after him as Beyers Naudé Drive (The Star 9 September 2004). Apart from this there is a Beyers Naudé Square in Johannesburg that was also named after him. The University of Stellenbosch called their Centre for Public Theology after him (Pauw 2005:21).

The ministry of Beyers Naudé also resulted in authors writing works in dedication and honour of him. In 1982, Peter Randall produced a book entitled *Not Without Honour. Tribute to Beyers Naudé*. This work was about essays in honour of Beyers Naudé. Four years later, in 1986, the World Council of Churches (WCC) published a book entitled *Hope for Faith. A Conversation*. This book was about the interview conducted between Beyers Naudé and Dorothee Solle, a German theologian who taught at Union Theological Seminary in New York. This publication is also available in a video format. Almost ten years later, in 1995, a Festschrift was published entitled *Many Cultures, One Nation. A Festschrift of Beyers Naudé*. This work was edited by Prof Charles Villa-Vincecio and Mr Carl Niehaus. In 2004 another work about Beyers Naudé was produced by a doctoral student of the University of Pretoria, Dr M. Heaney. This thesis was entitled *Beyers Naudé, Ekumeniese Baanbreker in Suid Afrika: 1960-1994 (Beyers Naudé, Ecumenical Pioneer in South Africa: 1960-1994)*. A year later, in 2005, C Ryan produced *Beyers Naudé. Pilgrim of Faith*. This was about the life of Beyers Naudé.

3.4. CONCLUSION

The question I asked in the beginning of this chapter was as follows: “What ‘muthi’ did Beyers Naudé use to win the love and hearts of the victims of oppression?” The ministry of Beyers Naudé as explained in this chapter, provided enough answers as to why he succeeded to win the love and trust of the victims of oppression. Above all of this was the credibility that he brought back to the Christian faith among the oppressed who were disillusioned and discouraged by the way in which this religion was misused for political gains. Another element that popularized him could be found from Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu (in Ryan 2005:vi) who contended that “the

more the system tried to discredit him the more his stature grew amongst the oppressed and throughout the world.”

Because Christian mission means the continuation of the ministry of Jesus of Nazareth in this world, in a way that it brings meaning into peoples’ lives, then Beyers Naudé to a great extent succeeded in following His (Jesus) footprints. The discipleship of Jesus means a mixture of pain and joy. Pain in being misunderstood and confused with politicians as it happened with Jesus’ friction with the Roman authorities. It means joy when seeing peoples’ lives being transformed for the better and peace, love and justice being brought back to the world by the agents of God’s mission. This task is assigned to all Christians as they are all expected to pursue and continue the ministry of Jesus of Nazareth in different situations.

It became apparent that Beyers Naudé’s mission in South Africa could be characterized in line with what Saayman (1991:11) called “God’s liberating mission.” This is the same as prophetic witness. Both these concepts clearly define Beyers Naudé’s mission in South Africa. Beyers Naudé gave practical expression to some of the “elements of an emerging ecumenical missionary paradigm” (Bosch 1991:368). They include; Mission as *Missio Dei*, Mission as the quest for justice, Mission as the church with others, Mission as contextualization, Mission as common witness, Mission as a witness to people of a living faith, Mission as liberation and Mission as action in hope (Bosch 1991:368-498).

Having observed the ministry of Beyers Naudé in this chapter, I am attracted to the biblical example that was employed by Saayman (ibid) by which he indicated the interrelationship between politics and mission. Saayman demonstrated that in the book of Exodus the Israelites after having been released from Egypt did not say, ‘We worship the God who has liberated our souls’, but instead they said: ‘We worship the God who has liberated us from bondage in Egypt’. Saayman further motivated this point by reasoning that the meaning of this is that God has liberated them for a new social, political and economic existence in the world. They have been freed from slavery. Beyers Naudé’s mission in South Africa fitted well into this category which basically meant transformation of peoples’ lives in the light of God’s mandate.

The ministry of Beyers Naudé as outlined in this chapter is of significance in the development of a way-forward with regards to Christian mission to the victims of political oppression. In other words, this chapter laid a strong foundation for me to develop a comprehensive mission strategy to the victims of oppression in the next chapter, based on his approach.