

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

5.1. CONCLUSIVE OVERVIEW

This study has argued that Beyers Naudé's ministry during apartheid South Africa carried a missionary element to the victims of apartheid. These were people who were disillusioned by the Christian faith as a result of the way in which it was misused as a tool for oppression. This element uniquely communicated the Christian message to these victims in such a way that while they doubted and rejected this religion, they ultimately came to embrace it. His ministry changed their negative perception towards the Christian faith and consequently brought back the credibility of this faith.

In order to understand the missional ministry of Beyers Naudé which succeeded in incarnating the love of Jesus to the victims of oppression, I asked, what 'muthi' did he use to enjoy all these successes? It was even noted how Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu (1.1) referred to this 'miracle' as God's sense of humour. By this he was referring to the contradiction or 'surprise' of the SACC when they contradicted their previous decision of no longer electing a White person as their General Secretary due to the growing majority of Black congregations in the SACC (ibid).

This study focused on the ministry of Beyers Naudé to the victims of oppression from the early 1960s to the dawn of democracy in 1994. From the example of his ministry, a comprehensive mission strategy was developed which is presented as a tool for future people who will elect to minister to the victims of oppression.

Victims of oppression did not disappear with the demise of apartheid in 1994 and the end of the ministry of Beyers Naudé. There is a post-1994 new form of victims of oppression arisen from those people who feel left out by the government's economic development and service delivery programmes (1.3.4.c; cf 4.1). One of the main characteristics of these victims of oppression is poverty as a result of the uneven distribution of resources. This means that an economic element will always be at the centre of exploitation, resulting in the oppression of certain sections of society. Steve Biko (1989:205) stated that "there is no doubt that the colour question in South

African politics was originally introduced for economic reasons.” The widening gap between the rich and the poor breeds resentment and frustration among the poor who regard themselves as products of the apartheid economic policy. Their frustrations result in anger which develops into violent activities thus making the title of a book by Yancey (1991) relevant to their situation and minds when he asked: “Where is God when it hurts?”

The study has also revealed interesting and painful scenarios. Among the interesting scenarios was one that confronted Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu which could be described in terms of a contradiction, i.e. an unqualified love for a former oppressor by his victims. Among the painful scenarios is what Botha (2009; cf 3.3.1) refers to as the “stigmata of the cross” which characterized the ministry of Beyers Naudé.

This research project also brought a new meaning and understanding of the question of new identity and new possibilities. These developments showed themselves in the ministry of Beyers Naudé and his interlocutors who were victims of oppression. Volf (2006:78-80) shed a new light on the issue of new identity when he addressed it through the character of David Kelsey. He argued that the wronged normally get their identities from the wrongs they have suffered. For instance, when building an example of this from the South African context, within the confines of this study, the apartheid wronged are called victims of apartheid/oppression as their identity. In the same new identity approach, Beyers Naudé’s identity was that of a victim of apartheid. This identity which Volf (ibid:79) referred to as “distorted” does not heal memories. He argued that Jesus Christ offers a new identity which drives memories to the periphery. The identity of Christians is derived from how they related to God and not from their human relations. He continued to indicate that God’s presence in believers gives them a new identity. This God-driven (divinely bestowed) type of identity is the one that Beyers Naudé possessed, which paved his way to forgiving those who wronged him.

Volf (ibid:81-82) through Kelsey continued to argue that the new identity opens new possibilities which are not determined by people’s past pain or future, but by the promise of God. God in whom Beyers Naudé believed promised Christians new

possibilities for the future, although they sometimes doubt them like Sarah and Abraham did when they were promised a son. Their new possibilities were not determined by the past memory of barrenness, but by something that was outside their painful past. For Christians this means that life is defined by the promise of new possibilities of the Kingdom of God in which love reigns supreme and hate is outside the picture. With regards to Beyers Naudé, his venture into the CI and departure from the DRC into the unknown world of the victims of oppression were part of his new possibilities.

Looking back at this study, one is forced to ask whether the ministry of Beyers Naudé was successful or not. Deductions from this study suggest that Beyers Naudé was successful when judged from the mission strategy especially the fact that it calls for his example to be followed. One question leads to another. If one wants to determine the success of the ministry of Beyers Naudé, what measurement tool to apply, what are the indicators? The following indicators are important in this regard:

- *Popularity.* Beyers Naudé succeeded in making himself known among the victims of oppression whether intentionally or not. It was clear in this study how he was aluded for being known even in the dusty streets of the South African Black townships. Being a Chaplain in the South African Department of Defence, before I embarked on this study, I paraded names of several figures in South African history to soldiers during and outside Chaplains' periods to be advised on whom among them to write about. The overwhelming response was that Beyers Naudé got the most votes. I became intrigued at the way in which he is known all over the department especially among the senior members who might have had a direct contact with him.
- *Trust.* Beyers Naudé also succeeded in building trust between him and the victims of oppression. This study has demonstrated how Beyers Naudé was accepted in confidential internal circles of the victims of oppression. He was also appointed to sensitive strategic positions which were no longer meant for Whites such as the postion of General Secretary of South African Council of Churches (SACC). It has also been indicated in this study that he was included in the delegation of the victims of oppression (led by the African National Congress) in their first

negotiations with the apartheid government. The so-called radical Black political organisations such as the Black Consciousness movement accepted Beyers Naudé and to a greater extent he became a mentor and friend to Black Consciousness leader, Mr Steve Biko.

- *Credibility of the Christian faith.* The study also revealed how Beyers Naudé succeeded to bring back the credibility of the Christian faith. Prominent players in South African history such as Archbishop Desmond Tutu demonstrated this trend. His ministry to the victims of oppression through ministry of presence, i.e. by even attending funerals of the victims of oppression, participation in the struggle of the oppressed from his position as a Minister of Religion put the Christian faith in a positive light more especially when done by someone from the race and church that championed oppression and a distortion of the Christian faith.
- *Acceptance of Whites.* Beyers Naudé also succeeded to indicate that not all Whites were bad and hypocrites. In a situation where victims of oppression were increasingly looking at Whites especially Afrikaners with suspicion and mistrust Beyers Naudé proved that Whites can still be genuine in their fight against racism, He succeeded to indicate through his ministry that Whites can still be trusted in South Africa.
- *Credibility of the DRC.* The study also revealed how the credibility of the DRC was at stake as a result of her justification of apartheid. The ministry of Beyers Naudé to the victims of oppression corrected this perception. This was facilitated by the fact that Beyers Naudé was proud of the DRC except for her apartheid attachment. He did not shy away that he was a former Minister of this church before he was forced out of it. All in all Beyers Naudé did not hide his identity as an Afrikaner, former member of the Afrikaner Broederbond, Minister of the DRC and former Moderator of one regional synod of this church. The Christian Institute staff also knew his identity.
- *Won freedom for the victims of oppression.* Beyers Naudé could be counted as part of the collective that greatly assisted to bring about freedom for the victims of

oppression in 1994. This study revealed his ministry which was focussed on the plight of the victims of oppression.

- *Appreciation by the victims of oppression.* The way in which the victims of oppression appreciated the ministry of Beyers Naudé constitutes another indicator in his ministry success. They reciprocated by naming institutions and streets after him, writing works including festschrifts about him, conferring honorary doctoral degrees on him and honoured him with an official funeral as the first minister of the DRC in the post-1994 democratic South Africa to be honoured as such. The African Initiated Churches honoured him by qualifying him as the only White person who will be acceptable in heaven.

Employing an abductive approach, this study reached specific conclusions. Abductive approach means that both deductive and inductive elements were tools used in the analysis of data. Deductive in a sense that I was prepared to be informed by data collected. I tried to be objective in my approach although it is a controversial matter to make that claim. Having made deductions from data, I also applied an inductive approach. This means that as a participant observer, I opened myself to be influenced by data. Therefore, a reciprocal movement in terms of deductions and inductions was applied which collectively led to the abductive approach. This resulted in applicable conclusions from the ministry of Beyers Naudé.

5.2. LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE MINISTRY OF BEYERS NAUDÉ

Certain areas from the ministry of Beyers Naudé were identified in order to make conclusive deductions, inductions and abductions:

5.2.1. The influence of strong Afrikaner cultural upbringing

Some of the points that came out of this study were the strong Afrikaner cultural upbringing of Beyers Naudé and the resultant influence thereof. Beyers Naudé in his ministry did not shy away from his identity and love for his own people.

Meiring (2009) confirmed that he loved his Afrikaner people and the DRC but was forced to criticize their unethical decisions when need be. Despite this, he continued to love them, their culture, the DRC and language.

The foundation of this was that his father was among the founder members of the Broederbond, its first President and a champion of protection for the Afrikaans language and a *dominee* in the DRC. He was raised in what was called “the heart of Afrikanerdom” (2.2.1), fought in the Anglo-Boer war, also comforting the Boer soldiers as a chaplain. His father was further described as “of conservative Voortrekker and Dutch stock” (2.2.1).

What were the results of this strong Afrikaner cultural upbringing? The influence of this was seen in Beyers Naudé’s love for his *volk*, culture and language (3.2.4). Hayes (2006:62) indicated how Beyer Naudé’s love for the Afrikaans language also attracted him to love this language. He wrote: “Whether in speaking or in writing, he made Afrikaans seem like a beautiful language. Even when he was prosaic, he was poetic. Whenever I was with him, I wished I could speak Afrikaans as he did.”

He loved his people despite the fact that they did what he did not stand for in his life. He did not shy away from associating with them in terms of public identity. Anthonissen (2006:146) concurred that the lives of the Beyers Naudé family “remind us that we need not be ashamed of our own roots....” This is a lesson that people who have been brought up to love their language, people and culture will continue to love their heritage under all circumstances. This indicates that Beyers Naudé succeeded to apply what Hirsch (2006:133) called the importance of an incarnational lifestyle when he addressed presence.

Beyers Naudé also incarnated the gospel to his own people. This had a positive impact on them and the DRC in particular, who named their centre for public theology in Stellenbosch University after him in 2001. They even invited him to the DRC synod and apologised to him. He was also welcomed back to his last DRC congregation of Aasvoëlkop. Another acknowledgement of incarnational lifestyle among his own people was that the Afrikaans Language and Culture Association commonly called the Afrikaans Taal en Kultuur en Vereeniging (ATKV) awarded him

their highest award for nation-building. This award was not only for questioning the apartheid system but also standing by his convictions to contribute to the new South Africa in 2004 (3.3.2).

5.2.2. Diminishing prophetic voice of the church in post-Beyers Naudé period

The era of the ministry of Beyers Naudé since the early 1960s, represented a strong prophetic voice from churches and other faith groups. Although the prophetic ministry differed from church to church, the general picture was that of also addressing injustices in state and society. In this study, I categorized Faith Groups that responded to apartheid into five namely; those that embraced apartheid, e.g. the DRC, those that rejected apartheid e.g. the Anglicans and the Methodists, those that adopted a neutral stance on apartheid, ecumenical bodies e.g. Cottesloe Consultation, main minority religions e.g. African Traditional Religions and Islam (2.6).

In comparing the degree of the church's prophetic voice during the time of Beyers Naudé and post-apartheid era, the difference became apparent.

While during the ministry of Beyers Naudé the church was vocal against apartheid but today she is silent. For instance, while during the ministry of Beyers Naudé, mass protests were led by religious leaders, today their absence is apparent. While during the times of Beyers Naudé the SACC and other Faith Based Organisations (FBOs) used to give a clear direction of events in the country, today one wonders if it still exists because of its stark silence. The example from the ministry of Beyers Naudé is important. The mission strategy that is based on the lesson learned from his ministry is equally important and justifiable.

Another point that silenced the church from effectively ministering to the victims of oppression is the close relationship that exists between individual religious leaders and the post-1994 democratic government. Religious leaders who used to exercise their prophetic ministry during the apartheid government are today in the employ of the democratic government, occupying senior positions. This trend silenced them and they became recipients of petitions from victims of oppression during protest

marches. They stand against the victims of oppression, taking the side of the state. Beyers Naudé as has been seen in this study declined lucrative political offers for the sake of maintaining a relevant ministry for the victims of oppression.

The church is expected to be prophetic at all times. Unfortunately, in the post-Beyers Naudé era, the church's prophetic voice has been silent. For instance, during the 2008 xenophobic violence in South Africa, the voice of the church was not heard in the way it used to speak during such incidents in times of Beyers Naudé. During post-Beyers Naudé's ministry period, apart from the above example of xenophobia, many incidents have continued to happen, which have challenged the prophetic role of the church. Examples of these are the general decline in morals, manifesting itself in high levels of rape, torturous criminal activities and corruption predominantly in government. The church should therefore be in a position to minister to all sectors of society including the state.

5.2.3. Stigmata of the cross

Another point that has strongly arisen out of this study was the question of the suffering associated with the ministry of Beyers Naudé. This is a situation that has been referred to as the "stigmata of the cross" (Botha 2009). I referred to it as a negative outcome of his mission to the victims of oppression (3.3.2). This was reflected in his harassment by the security forces, a night in custody, the banning order, rejection by his *volk*, family, DRC, and friends. It could therefore be concluded on this basis that suffering forms part of the package of ministry to the victims of oppression.

In line with this question of suffering, Volf (2006:111) addresses the issue of memory of the Exodus and the Passion. He sees a link between the memory of the Passion and the memory of the Exodus. The link is on historical and theological lines. Volf (ibid:112) argues that the Last Supper was a Passover Seder and the Holy Communion which originated from the Last Supper is a celebration of the new Exodus of God's people. This is viewed as a new kind of deliverance.

The relationship of Exodus and Passion with the future is important as a solace for the victims of oppression in terms of enacted promise. For instance, with regards to Exodus, Volf (ibid:112) reasons that God who delivered Israel of the past will also redeem Israel of the future. As far as Passion is concerned, Volf (ibid) believes that what happened to Christ happened to the entire humankind. Therefore Passion reminds one of the redeemed humanity in future. It is believed that part of the future promised world has already entered this sinful world of death. Küng (1981:59-70) referred to this as “a futurist-presentist eschatology.” He is addressing the question of the future eschaton that interrupts into the present world. This expresses the fact that people are living in what he called time “between the already and the not yet” (ibid:59), i.e. time between times. They are living in time between the already ascended Christ and the anticipation of His return. While they are waiting for His return, the foretaste of the Kingdom of God is experienced.

Beyers Naudé supported and was influenced by Black theology which is compatible to the view of Volf with regards to Passion and Exodus (De Gruchy 2005:88; see 3.2.1). The Good Friday story has been an encouragement for the victims of oppression. The Passion of Jesus has been a source of courage in a sense that it was an indication that He understood their plight because he has gone through the same. The same message of identification goes to the Exodus story. Their belief is that God who liberated the old Israelite will also liberate them from their oppression (Boesak 1988:7-9). Boesak (1988:8) puts it as follows:

God’s liberation is not an isolated deed, a blinding flash in history that we see today but of which no trace will be found tomorrow. God’s liberation, rather, is a movement. It moves through history. Over and over again God is manifested as the warrior who fights for justice. God deals grimly, justly, with the pharaoh (sic) who oppresses Israel; but God deals no less grimly, justly with the wealthy Israelites who offer no justice to their poor fellow Israelites...God’s justice or righteousness, therefore, is the liberation, the healing and salvation, that God wills to realise and actualise among us.

5.2.4. The transforming DRC

This period of the ministry of Beyers Naudé saw the transformation of the DRC from a racist, apartheid supporting church into a church that opened her doors to people of other races. However, this is something that is still in the process of completion at the moment. Already during the DRC General Synod of October 1986, cracks were beginning to be felt in this church's support for apartheid with the adoption of an open membership position. The cracks resulted in a division within the church which brought to birth the Afrikaanse Protestantse Kerk led by what König (1987:1) referred to as *Die Beswaardes*²². During the DRC General Synod of 1990, cracks became even wider as could be seen by the following declarations made (Kerk en Samelewing 1990:14-21; cf Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk 1990):

- The Holy Scriptures regard the human race as one.²³
- Race and colour play no role in the Biblical judgement of humankind.²⁴
- Racism is a serious sin which no person or church should defend or practice.²⁵
- The Christian neighbourly love is the ethical norm for fellow human relations.²⁶
- The exercise of righteousness and justice is an important Biblical instruction.²⁷

To sum up the above rejections of apartheid, the very 1990 General Synod also made a unanimous declaration on the official position of the DRC on apartheid:

The Dutch Reformed Church states that the handling of apartheid as a political and social system of injustice for most people and empowers one group above others, cannot be acceptable on the basis of Christian ethics because it is in conflict with the principle of neighbourly love and endangers the humanity of all involved (my translation, NGK ACTA General Synod 1990, Par 306).

²² The disgruntled.

- ²³ Die Heilige Skrif beskou die menslike geslag as 'n eenheid.
- ²⁴ Ras-en kleurverskille speel geen rol in die Bybel se beoordeling van mense nie
- ²⁵ Rassisme is 'n ernstige sonde wat geen mens of kerk mag verdedig of beoefen nie
- ²⁶ Die Christelike naasteliefde is die etiese norm vir mede-menslike optrede
- ²⁷ Die beoefening van geregtigheid en reg is 'n belangrike Bybelse voorskrif

Since the above synods, additional developmental processes were made with regards to the demise of what König (1987:1) referred to as “the Supper Apartheid in the church” (my translation)²⁸ The process also saw the DRC being re-admitted into the religious bodies nationally (e.g. SACC) and internationally (e.g. World Alliance of Reformed Churches). The fact that Beyers Naudé saw it fit to accept the apology from and an invitation to return to the DRC, suggests that this church made acceptable strides in the process of transformation. Beyers Naudé (in Clements 2006:171) admitted that

...there has been in many respects a tremendous change. First of all, the Dutch Reformed Church apologized to me and to others who opposed apartheid for mistakes they made. And we gladly accepted that. Secondly, I have said to the leaders of the Dutch Reformed Church: ‘All of us must move forward to this establishing of the Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa where *all of us*, regardless of our ethnic background, our language, our race, must be *one* in the Reformed family in order to build the Kingdom of God.’ But we must not remain only in the Reformed family. We must become part of the wider Body of Christ in South Africa where all of us contribute and make available this tremendous witness to the world.

The level of this change could also be measured against the fact that at the time of writing this study, the Western Transvaal synod of the DRC has two Black African male ministers²⁹ who have been called from the ranks of her so called daughter churches.

It could therefore be concluded that positive changes within the DRC cannot be underestimated. Despite this hopeful progress, the DRC is still unable to structurally unite with other churches of the DRC family.

²⁸ Die Super-Apartheid in die Kerk.

²⁹ Ds V.A. Magagula is attached to the congregation of Potchefstroom as a chaplain for non-Afrikaans speaking students (Jaarboek van die NG Kerke 2010:217) and Ds J. B. Moncho who is attached to the congregation of Mafikeng with special focus to the Chaplaincy of the South African National Defence Force as a Chaplain (Jaarboek van die NG Kerke 2010:299).

5.2.5. Contextual ministry as today's relevant mission approach

The study highlighted the importance of contextual theology in South Africa. The fact that Beyers Naude's ministry addressed the conditions of people, in this case the victims of oppression, made it meaningful in their lives. It has been clearly stated by those who knew him closely, as somebody who wanted his sermons to hit the target, who indicated how the Christian faith could not be practiced from an ivory tower.

Bevans and Schroeder (2006:35; cf 3.1) addressed the question of context when they introduced the subject of six constants (of mission) in context which always reflected within three types of theology. The six constants are; Christology, Ecclesiology, Eschatology, Salvation, Anthropology and Culture. They designed the three types of theology as:

- Type A: Mission as Saving Souls and Extending the Church.
- Type B: Mission as Discovery of the Truth.
- Type C: Mission as Commitment to Liberation and Transformation.

The six constants of mission constantly show themselves in all the three types of theology with different emphasis characteristics for the type of theology in which they appear. Bevans and Schroeder (ibid) attempts to make the Word of God relevant in its encounter with the changing world. Type C theology represented Beyers Naudé's ministry approach because of its focus on mission as a commitment to liberation and transformation of society. The success of Beyers Naudé in this approach indicates that contextual ministry is the solution for today's ministry.

5.2.6. Ministry by presence

One of the outstanding aspects of the ministry of Beyers Naudé was his ministry by presence. It became apparent in this study that he applied this principle in all aspects and occasions in the lives of the victims of oppression. This exposed and familiarised him with the victims of oppression. He did not practise his ministry from an arm-chair but was physically with the people in joys and sorrows by making appearances in funerals, community meetings, celebrations and sports (3.2.4; cf 4.2.1.7 (b) (iii)).

Being with the people popularises one and builds trust. The lesson learned from this ministry aspect is that it is one of the most important tools for success in ministry. This indicates that Beyers Naudé succeeded in applying what I referred to earlier on (3.2.4) which came from Hirsch when he addressed the importance of incarnational ministry. He stressed the need for Christians to be incarnational in following the example of God who was incarnated in Jesus Christ as His way of reaching the world (Hirsch 2006:133).

In the light of this view, Beyers Naudé brought Christ into the dynamics of peoples' lives. This was done through his lifestyle and presence among the victims of oppression in times of need. Apart from this, he also incarnated the gospel to his own people as could be seen in the fact that they acknowledged his positive influence on them in the rejection of apartheid.

5.2.7. Salvation as liberation to full humanity

Another prominent feature in the ministry of Beyers Naudé was the manner in which he understood the scope of salvation (4.2.2.2). As in Liberation theology, salvation does not end with purely spiritual matters but also touches on the conditions of the person. Contextual or situational analysis which involves the re-reading of the Bible from the vantage point of the poor in order to answer their questions is emphasised (Maimela 1987:75). In the light of this, liberation theology sees salvation “not as the salvation of the souls but as the transformation of the entire cosmos” (Kritzinger 1988:157). The same emphasis was echoed by Boesak (1988:37) who in analyzing what the gospel of Jesus Christ is, which the church should preach, stated that

...it is not something meant for the ‘inner life’, the soul, only. It meant for the whole human existence. This Jesus who is proclaimed by the church was certainly not a spiritual being with spiritual qualities estranged from the realities of our human existence. No, he was the Word become flesh, who took on complete human form, and his message of liberation is meant for people in their *full humanity*.

These explanations move from the premise that the soul is in the body and the needs of the body (housing the soul) are to be taken care of. It was on those grounds that he was also concerned with the conditions for the victims of oppression. The lesson learned from this is the importance that should be attached equally to both body and soul in ministry.

5.2.8. Beyers Naudé's hermeneutics

The way in which Beyers Naudé used scripture stands out as a very important tool that will always be needed in ministry (4.2.2.1; cf 4.2.1.2). Preaching was central to his ministry. His scriptural reflection impressed victims of oppression, the example being Tshelane (4.2.1.2) who was impressed by the way Beyers Naudé reflected on the dream of Pharaoh. A similar point was clear in Meyer (2009) who noted that Beyers Naudé analysed the context in the light of the Christian faith. This was because he applied a scriptural approach that consciously insisted on the concrete situation of the poor and the oppressed. He did not use the Bible as propaganda to force victims of oppression to embrace a particular ideology (4.2.2.1).

This use of scripture stands out as a useful approach that the world needs today and in future. Contextual analysis of scripture is an important requirement for today's ministry. The world continues to have social problems of all kind such as poverty, crime and wars. A relevant ministry is the one that will be shaped in such a way that it reflects on these challenges.

5.2.9. Beyers Naudé's personal devotion

Another noticeable factor in the ministry of Beyers Naudé was his high level of spirituality that was displayed under all circumstances. The study indicated how he was a devoted Bible reader and a person of prayer. Hansen (2006:25) indicated how Beyers Naudé's critique of apartheid could not be separated from his faith in God as a Christian and minister. He further demonstrated how Beyers Naudé also criticised the DRC from his faith base by using the Bible.

Beyers Naudé's spirituality could not be doubted in the light of the information shed in this study. "Despite his life as a political activist and spokesperson for the oppressed, Naudé also remained a pastor at heart" (ibid:30). It became apparent in this study that the source of power for Beyers Naudé (in Clements 2006:169) could be deduced from his utterances:

I got it first of all from the Word of God. I got it from the example of Christ: his utterances, his life, his witness; I got it from the apostles, especially St Paul, but also the others; I got it from constant reflection on what God's intention was with his people and especially the suffering people in South Africa....

The strong spiritual element of Beyers Naudé has been confirmed by many people, from the family circles to the broader public. This gave credibility to his ministry to the broader public of South Africa. It could therefore be concluded that a firm spiritual element is very important in ministry. This is indispensable in the situation where ministers of religion get confused with politicians.

5.2.10. Reconciliation

Reconciliation stood high in the ministry of Beyers Naudé (4.2.2.4). Beyers Naudé challenged people to apply action on matters of reconciliation by emphasizing "the importance of going beyond words" (in Hansen 2006:28). He demonstrated reconciliation in very extreme circumstances when he reconciled with his church. His ministry has been centred on reconciling the victims and their torturers but at the end of his ministry he demonstrated it himself by returning to the DRC and also being buried from this church. This was a painful experience for some within the ranks of the leadership of the former so called daughter churches of the DRC (3.2.4).

The reconciliatory road followed by Beyers Naudé is reminiscent of one described by Volf (2006:170-181) when he addressed the question of redemption within the context of "harmonizing and driving out." He touched on the Last Judgment after which he contended that mutual love will reign as a result of God's grace that will embrace the wrongdoers and the wronged. Volf (ibid:181) described this as follows:

So even after the question of 'right and wrong' has been settled by the judgment of grace, it is necessary to come through the door of mutual embrace to enter the world of perfect love. And through that door the inhabitants of the world to come will move enabled by the indwelling Christ, who spread out his arms on the cross to embrace all wrongdoers. When former enemies have, and embraced as belonging to the same community of love in the fellowship of the Triune God, then *only* then will they have stepped into a world in which each enjoys all and therefore all take part in the dance of love.

Volf's reasoning in this regard indicates that through God's grace, after the Last Judgment which involves disclosure of the wrongs done and thereafter the wronged and the wrongdoers will belong together in the world of perfect love. Beyers Naudé supported the same approach to reconciliation. This could be seen in his emphasis on the role of the government of national unity in this regard. For instance, when interviewed by Clements (2006:168) in 1996, he indicated that in this government (led by the then President Nelson Mandela),

...even the most bitter enemies of the past have found a way and a method of working together; and we have the gift of God, as I see this, of a president who, with his wisdom, his insight, his vision and his commitment towards reconciliation, is assisting all of us in building up a new nation in South Africa.

Volf's concept of the Last Judgment in which the wrongdoers and the wronged will live together is shared by Beyers Naudé (ibid:169) who speaks of God's eternal wisdom where he "loves all of us, including those children who are disobedient or tend to support evil and injustice, and that is a lesson that I must still learn."

There is a great lesson to be learned from Beyers Naudé's ministry of reconciliation. In the words of Pauw (2005:21), "Naudé's name had come to stand for the process of reconciliation in a formerly divided country." It became apparent that reconciliation cannot be organised or arranged, but it is a fragile and wonderful gift from God (Meiring 1999:242).

5.2.11. Ecumenism

Ecumenism is among the elements that stood supreme in the ministry of Beyers Naudé (3.2.4). Beyers Naudé brought different churches together. Cooperation among churches is equally important as was the case during his time. The success of ministry during times of political protest is measured by cooperation among churches. If churches are not united, they cannot speak with one voice in their prophetic ministry. Ecumenism is therefore important especially when ministering among victims of oppression who are from various denominations and even religions.

5.2.12. Interaction with authorities

Beyers Naudé contributed to a particular understanding of the interaction between church and authorities and the way this relationship should be conducted (4.2.1.3). According to Beyers Naudé (in Clements 2006:170) the church's prophetic ministry to the state should not only be limited to an apartheid oppressive one but to all governments whether democratic or not. When interviewed about this, two years into democracy in 1996 he contended:

We have the task to assist the government where possible. To do whatever is good and just in the restructuring and rebuilding of the country. But we also have the task, as never before, to be the watchdogs. Where the government is disobedient to the demands of the Kingdom, there it is our responsibility to address ourselves to the government and to say, No....

It emerged that a prophetic ministry to the state is very important and especially if she rules against the will of God. Prophetic ministry is therefore an aspect of ministry which should not be undermined. All Ministers of Religion should therefore adopt a prophetic ministry towards an unjust state.

5.3. FINAL CONCLUSION

In the quest to understand and unearth the missionary character of Beyers Naudé, the question that has often been asked especially in the first chapter of this study was around the *muthi* (or secret) of his success in winning the love and hearts of people, mostly the victims of oppression. Throughout this research, the answer became evident and a helpful description of this came from Anthonissen (2006:146) who summed it well thus:

Everyone who knows Oom Bey and Tannie Ilse knows that although they were both blessed with various talents of leadership and social skills, in a sense they were just an ordinary traditional Afrikaner couple---people with a deep love of and concern for their own community. They understood the fears and ambitions of the Afrikaner and wanted, above all, to assist them in understanding their real calling in this beautiful country. For this they constantly drew on the heritage of their religion and faith and especially on what they understood as the more authentic version of Reformed theology. For them this meant a deep respect for the Bible as the authentic Word of God. It also led them to understand in an almost childlike way, that the basic message of the Bible is one of grace, compassion and justice for all people and that this message has to be faithfully and uncompromisingly proclaimed and practiced in unjust society. It was exactly this understanding of the Bible and the life-changing choices it brought about that made them warriors for justice and the respected people they are today.

Despite the fact that there are victims of oppression of our time that were created by the new form of oppression which is corruption and an economic system that has led to the divide between the rich and the poor, apartheid left a legacy of its own victims (1.3.4.c; cf 5.1). The methods used to combat apartheid in the form of protests are still seen today. This means that the legacy of protest action as seen today is a continuation of that which started in the fight against apartheid. That legacy is therefore passed on from generation to generation. It is therefore necessary to have a mission strategy that will assist people to effectively minister to the victims of this

new form of oppression who are characterised by anger and violence (like in the case of the times of Beyers Naudé), in the fight for their rights.

The ministry example of Beyers Naudé will therefore stand out as a yardstick for a successful ministry to the victims of oppression. His ministry approach is not only relevant to the victims of oppression but also to other areas with different dynamics of the ever-changing ministry context of our time.

A suitable closing statement to this research about Beyers Naudé was taken from Mokgoebo (2009) who states that:

Beyers Naudé was a prophet of his time. As the saying goes, 'the prophet is never respected at his own home'. His witness will remain long after we have gone, as a white man who was grasped by the powerful message of the Kingdom of God, of justice and reconciliation.

5.4. WAY-FORWARD

5.4.1. Areas for further study

This study concentrated on the contribution of Beyers Naudé for the victims of oppression, an effort that resulted into the development of a mission strategy to them. Therefore, it triggered areas for further research such as the following:

- a. The DRC's scriptural justification of apartheid must have damaged her future mission efforts and past mission gains. Lubbe (2009:131; cf 1.1) had the DRC in mind when he wrote:

The close association which existed between the apartheid regime and the Christian church, albeit by and large with one particular denomination, brought the credibility of the Gospel of Jesus Christ into question. The loser in this case proved to be not the state but the church, whose message of love, peace and justice became tarnished by an inhumane and sinful ideology.

It is therefore important to further research the degree of damage caused to the image of this church with regards to her future mission efforts. Some sort of damage-control may also be addressed in this.

- b. The theology of the DRC did not only dent her mission efforts as indicated above, but was also suicidal in terms of her own existence especially in post-1994 South Africa. One could ask, 'what the future of this church is with regard to the new upcoming critical young generation that grows in a racially mixed environment?' This question is asked in the light of Anthonissen 2006:146-147) who referring to the youth in this church contended that

...in fact, one of the surprising and even unexpected things that happened after 1994 is that many amongst the latter (youth) in the Dutch Reformed Church turned their backs on the church. Recent research shows that up to 28% of students leave the Dutch Reformed Church once they arrive on campus. Given the way the Dutch Reformed Church has erred and misled its own members over the years, teaching them that apartheid was a biblical notion, perhaps this trend or development could have been anticipated.

Further research therefore is required to look at the future of this church in the light of this problem.

- c. Another area for further study is still around the DRC. Because there has been an indication that she has transformed, the extent of this change should be investigated (5.2.4). One should research the degree of change undergone by the DRC. Could the return of Beyers Naudé to this church suggest that transformation was completed and if not how far does she still has to go!

- d. Because during the time of Beyers Naudé, ministers of religion played a very important role in the South African society and influenced political events, further research could still be developed around this point. It is important to write about the impact of the age of the reverends in South African politics. Or to compare the wrangle of reverends from both left and right politics of the times, maybe pairing two in the debate, for instance Emeritus Archbishop Desmond Tutu with the late Dr (Rev) Andries Treurnicht³⁰.

Benchmarking by Beyers Naudé, one could look at the impact of the reverends in today's politics. Today most of those who were vocal against the apartheid government are sleeping in the same bed with the current democratic government. They are occupying senior political positions and are no longer prophetic.

³⁰ Dr Andries Treurnicht was a former minister in the DRC who became the leader of the (right-wing) Conservative Party during the 1980s in the apartheid government.