

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1. THEME AND MOTIVATION

The theme of this study is the relationship between recruiting non-Christians for the Korean church through the patterns or styles of its diaconal services, and its influence on the religious actions of the church in South Korea.

God acquired the church for Himself with the blood of his own Son (Acts 20:28). The church, the body of Christ, has to grow towards the measure of fullness of Christ and into Christ (Eph 4:13, 15). Diaconal ministry is a key word in the New Testament. It is the 'service of caring for one's needs,' and the 'ministry of serving others in general' (Klinken 1989:26). Through making disciples, new members are baptised and incorporated into the church. Evangelism takes the form of 'preaching the gospel' to the unsaved, as well as diaconal service where there is a need in the local community. Hans Küng (1995:238) as a church historian, states that the church should strive for constant progress and improvement. The missionary church has to mature and to expand, serving the needs of the local community (Ac 4:35). Through word and deed it proclaims the gospel to all nations until the end of time (Mt 28:19-20).

As the quality of life of the Korean society, culture and economics has lately been improving at a much faster pace than in the past, considerable diaconal service changes are needed for building up the local church in South Korea. For example, the older traditional way of evangelising by personal visitation is no longer effective in Korea's 'new town' communities, which is defined as a form of city planning in South Korea. Since access to the apartments are strictly controlled, it is essential for church leaders to find new ways to reach out to the local community and its people, in order to draw the people of the 'new town' communities to the church.

In this dissertation it is called a ‘need-oriented diaconal service.’ This term is derived from ‘need-oriented evangelism’, one of the eight criteria of the Natural Church Development (Schwarz 1998:34-35; NCD hereinafter).

In chapter 2 the concept ‘need’ is explained according to the meaning or applications of the diaconal ministry, which is derived from biblical, theological and church historical perspectives. A ‘need-oriented diaconal ministry’ is closely connected with meeting the non-Christians’ need to have a positive view of the church, in order to settle down meaningfully in Christian life and membership of the Korean congregations. Baumann (1976:67) said that satisfying the non-Christians’ need should be done to save their souls. He said: “Research your community to identify its needs.”

If you are genuinely willing to seek advice and counsel from your community, you will begin to identify some direction for an enlarged ministry. Meet the needs of your community, and it will beat a path to your door. While it is far easier to guess at community needs while comfortably seated with a committee in the church parlour, it is also far less accurate than if you were to go door to door. If you want the unchurched and non-Christians to visit your church, you must take the initiative to discover what will bring them to you. Be bold enough to inquire. It will be a valuable revelation upon which you can build a growing church.

The basis and the degree of the need have to be assessed, and the age and status of the persons have to be borne in mind (Brox 1988:37). Therefore the Korean society and community, with its rapid pace of change, urgently requires church structures that can change effectively in order to satisfy the needs of the local community (cf. Pierli 2005:33).

The motivation of this study is that, having had experiences in traditional diaconal ministry in two well known churches for seven years as an assistant minister, the researcher has learned the following: only a few non-Christians are reached, or are getting involved in any meaningful way in the membership of the church, through the old type of service.

Almost all Korean churches have been ministering to non-Christians with traditional diaconal services. With the exception of a few Korean churches it was not a successful process. The unfavourable results of the traditional

ministry call for an effective diaconal ministry to help people to settle down as church members. Attfield (2001:16) stated that “Non-Christians are less ready to respond to the community activities of the churches and so to attend regularly for worship.” After new missionary strategies towards non-Christians have been developed, they need to be applied in practice. New and effective missionary strategies are needed for urban communities (Boskoff 1970:11-12) and cultures.

When a need-oriented diaconal ministry is fully utilised and applied to the missionary strategy in urban areas, and this results in building up the local church, it will open doors for churches and local communities to maintain intimate contact with one another.

Therefore this study will research data related to this topic, in order to ascertain the successful factors or reasons for building up the local church through effective diaconal services. It aims to develop applicable programmes or items of a need-oriented diaconal ministry for Korean congregational development.

## **2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

The diaconal services of the churches do not relate directly, intimately and lastingly to the needs of non-Christians, and the people served by the mission do not become meaningfully involved in Korean congregations.

## **3. EXTENT OF THE PROBLEM**

Entering a period of ‘the stagnation of the church’ is one of the serious problems of the Korean church (Shin 1997:165). The data of Statistics Korea shows that from 1985 to 1995 the number of Protestants had risen by 3.6%, but since 1995 the rate has dropped, as seen on the table below. This trend has continued to the present.

**Table 1 Religious distribution of the South Korean population (unit: %)**

	1985			1995			2005		
	Buddhism	Protestant	Catholic	Buddhism	Protestant	Catholic	Buddhism	Protestant	Catholic
All ages	19.9	16.1	4.6	23.2	19.7	6.6	22.8	18.3	10.9

Source: Statistics Korea, 1985, 1995, 2005.

The stagnation of the Korean Protestant churches seems to mean that it is facing a 'disconnection' (cf. Klinken 1989:32) between the church and the community. Lee (2004:332-335) argues that on the one hand the Korean church has been mainly concentrating its efforts on 'growth' of the church itself (cf. Schwarz 1998:44-45), but on the other hand, it has made very little investment in its diaconal ministry. The Korean church has not kept pace with the fast changes in the social organisation since the 1990's, and even before that time.

Since the Korean congregations have neglected to change in the right direction, and to act according to the changes in the community and society, the relationship between the church and the community deteriorated because of the wrong approach of the churches. The pattern of this decline in the relationship corresponds with that of the western church. Thorndike (1973) pointed out the reverse relationship between numerical growth and local-social welfare. The more the number of Christians increases, the fewer the activities of local-social welfare are. The Korean church has reached the situation where it has isolated itself from society, and has lost the power to influence the non-Christian community in the name of a sacred-secular dichotomy (Osmer 1990:16-20, 21; cf. 2008:1-29). The gap between the church and the community is growing wider every day. This is one of the greatest causes that mar the Korean church to expand adequately through the communication of the gospel of Jesus to the non-Christian community (Kim 2002:100).

One of the characteristics of the early missionary policy of the Korean church was the two sides to its missionary policy, by not only proclaiming the gospel with zeal, but also carrying out social reforms (Choi 2003:207). This was carried out from a holistic conception that included both personal and social

salvation, not leaning to one side, but accepting the fact that these two are complementary (Choi 2003:226). Korean Christianity was interested in medical services, local-social development, etc. as a way to promote social welfare (Kim 1997:56; Lee 2004:321). The Korean church played an important role in social welfare towards local social change (Bang 1984:305). If the gospel has to bring true reconciliation and mutual appreciation, the local church should demonstrate the reality of these theological truths in practical terms as their testimony to the community (Gibbs 1981:125). The social ministry of the early Korean Christianity was important, not only to proclaim the gospel and to lead the lost to salvation, but also to help people's educational, health, and social needs through providing a variety of schools and educational institutions, hospitals and medical institutions, together with their social involvement and activities.

As the Korean church's history proved, it should recover the valuable insights about the ministry to the community that it has lost, in order to improve the relationship between the church and the community in future. It should rediscover the biblical principles, keep an interest in relevant modern day problems, etc.

When it comes to its diaconal ministry, the Korean church is at present facing serious stagnation. According to Tracy (1983:61) the process to warrant the claim of growth & stagnation is a long, even a circuitous one, which is dependent on the diaconal ministry. It should teach the biblical way of sharing and serving through the church's direct actions (Choi 1996:205). The Korean church should see the local community through new eyes, and co-exist with modern society, serving the community and also proclaim the gospel of Christ to their non-Christian brothers and sisters.

#### **4. PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY**

Building up the local church through the use of diaconal services is an increasingly promising solution that the church will have to revive. Building up the local church through this ministry is the theme of this thesis. It will be researched with three main aims in mind: 1) to find *successful elements* for recruiting members for the church through diaconal services, 2) to explore

*models* of diaconal ministry to involve people in the church, 3) to formulate *the principles* of diaconal ministry that lead to integration of people into the church.

#### **4.1 Detecting successful elements to integrate people in the local church through the diaconal ministry**

The first purpose is to establish the ‘successful points’ to integrate people into the church through the diaconal ministry, centred on a ‘need-oriented diaconal ministry.’ A need-oriented diaconal ministry must be an amenable alternative means to recover the relationship between the church and the community, to move non-Christians’ minds to openly accept the modern church, its culture and activities, and to involve themselves in membership of the church.

It aims to find causes that will promote involvement in the church, through its need-oriented diaconal service. It is important to follow the next steps in order of precedence: 1) to detect non-Christians’ needs through scientific and social investigation methods, 2) to develop resources to perform such an effective diaconal ministry, 3) to put regular effective programmes in practice.

It is imperative for church leaders not only to follow the biblical principles for congregational development, but also to study social and scientific views to ascertain the ‘needs’ of the community. The local church should strive to satisfy these needs.

#### **4.2 Exploring models of diaconal service for involvement in the church**

The second purpose is to explore ‘models’ of diaconal service for better integration of people into the church. In order to achieve this, it is necessary to conduct the process of change in a way that is responsible from the perspective of both theology and the social sciences (Heitink 1999:113). Models are used to concretise practical theological theory in its transformation into ecclesiastic praxis. Such models present the theory visually, and help to clarify it (Heyns & Pieterse 1990:33).

Dulles (1974:22) distinguishes between explanatory and exploratory models. An explanatory model clarifies the function, whereas exploratory models help to discover things. This study focuses on an explanatory model,

because it basically contains the successful elements that involve non-Christians in the church. It is also useful and effective to explore successful programmes of diaconal ministry, such as a baby school and a pregnant women's group.

#### **4.3 Formulating the principles of diaconal ministry to integrate people into the church**

The third purpose is a better formulation of the 'principles' of diaconal ministry needed for involvement in the church. The churches that have developed through the use of a diaconal ministry have successful points in common, characteristics or patterns of ministry. The principles consist of various elements.

Firstly, 'satisfying non-Christians 'actual needs' is essential. Historically the missionaries of Korea were preaching the gospel with zeal, and were meeting the local community and its people's needs with God's love (Park 2008:64). From Christianity's earliest days, the Christian church in Korea has contained elements that responded to the 'needs' of the time (Park 1985:51). These two are inseparable and essential functions of the church.

Secondly, the diaconal service attending to those needs should be carried out with 'intimate contact.' It is one of the essential focal points for developing effectiveness of a diaconal ministry or gathering (Rovai 2002:4). To know the importance of intimate contact is essential. Through intimate contact people easily become involved in membership of the church.

Thirdly, a 'regular period' in which intimate contact is sustained is needed. The proper period depends on the style or pattern of the programme. From experience of the normal course of programmes for social ministry, it is desired that contact occurs on a regular basis, for example, twice a week over three months.

## **5. HYPOTHESIS OF THIS STUDY**

When need-oriented diaconal services of the churches serve the actual needs of non-Christians, and long term and intimate relationships are built up with the

people served by the mission, more people reached in this way will become meaningfully involved in Christian life and membership of the Korean churches.

## 6. METHODOLOGY

Methodology literally means the study of methods. This is more likely to be described as research methods. It can then refer to the theoretical underpinnings of these methods (Roberts 2009:168-169) (see the distinction between methods and methodology [Heimbrock 2005:275-276]). The methodology may aim at the development of theoretical models that attempt to account for the biological, psychological, sociological, or theological factors that influence human behaviour (Browning 1991:92).

A sound and clear methodology is needed to develop effective missionary strategies or principles for building up the local church through a need-oriented diaconal ministry. In order to identify a practical theological methodology for this study, it will be dealt with by dividing it into the macro-level and the micro-level.

On the macro-level, this study will employ *Heitink's methodology of practical theology*. It is an adequate 'theory of the action' of human beings in an empirically oriented practical theology. It will control the direction of this study. This methodology usually contains three perspectives (Heitink 1999:165) as follows:

- 1) The interpretation of human action in the light of the Christian tradition (*the hermeneutical perspective*);
- 2) The analysis of human action with regard to its factuality and potentiality (*the empirical perspective*);
- 3) The development of action models and action strategies for the various domains of action (*the strategic perspective*).

On the micro-level, each perspective has its own method that follows the macro-methodology of this study. The method chosen for the hermeneutical perspective is *hermeneutical phenomenology*, based on the work of Gadamer



(Swinton & Mowat 2006:105). This method provides an epistemological and ontological framework within which the process of this study is executed.

From the empirical perspective, it gathers information that helps to discern patterns and dynamics in particular episodes, situations, or contexts (Osmer 2008:4). Social scientific theory and social scientific methods are needed in empirical-theological research (Hermans & Moore 2004:6). It adopts *applied research* to confirm the validity of the theories or hypotheses of this study (Kumar 1997:13). This type puts to the test the hypotheses or theories derived from chapters 2 and 3 for Korean congregational development through a need-oriented diaconal ministry.

From the strategic perspective, the methodological model of facilitating and promoting the interaction between theory and praxis is adopted. This model engenders a wider and deeper understanding of the results of the statistical data and analysis carried out in chapter 4 to propose principles or strategies for the building up of the local church through a need-oriented diaconal ministry in Korea.

## **6.1 The methodology of practical theology – a brief overview**

Tracy (1983:76) says “Practical theology is the mutually critical correlation of the interpreted theory and praxis of the Christian fact and the interpreted theory and praxis of the contemporary situation.”

This shift in practical theological studies has started in earnest from the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, since social sciences were introduced into university curricula, and were taken as partners in conversation by practical theologians to develop a more dynamic understanding of the theory-practice relationship (Osmer 1990:216-238; cf. 2008:31-218). Thus social sciences were taken seriously as partners in conversation by practical theologians.

Since the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, two concerns have emerged regarding the methodology of practical theology: 1) practical theology as hermeneutical and 2) a renewed emphasis on praxis (Chopp 1987:120-125; 129-132). The concept of action or praxis has begun to be modified in practical theology because Tillich’s method of correlation has been criticised as one-sided (Osmer 2008:165). The

‘revised correlation method’ referred to a distinctive approach to theology formulated by David Tracy (1975; 1987), following the work of Paul Tillich (1951). Tracy (1983:62-79) maintained that all theologies headed toward ‘praxis in correlation’ with one another instead of securing their supremacy. This was an effort to surmount the one-way character, from theory to practice.

Browning (1991:69-71) also argued that the view goes from practice to theory and back to practice, proposing a *praxis-theory-praxis* model (Osmer 2008:148-149), based on an interdisciplinary correlation that develops a mutually cooperative relationship between theology and social science (Van der Ven 1993:97-101). Thus this model helps practical theology to expand the scope of research, correlating non-theological disciplines with theology by means of a mutual influencing relationship.

In modern philosophy, Habermas (1984:286) interpreted the term *praxis* as communicative interaction between people, not confined by labour. Based on his view of modernisation, he developed the concept of ‘praxis’ as communicative action through communicative reason, as compared to purposive action based on instrumental reason. According to Ritzer (1996:154-157) communicative action was an attempt on the part of participants to reach a mutual understanding by presenting their own arguments and redeeming their validity claims. Understanding of praxis as communicative interaction provides a framework to incorporate the concept of praxis into the entire realm of human interaction (Habermas 1984:21).

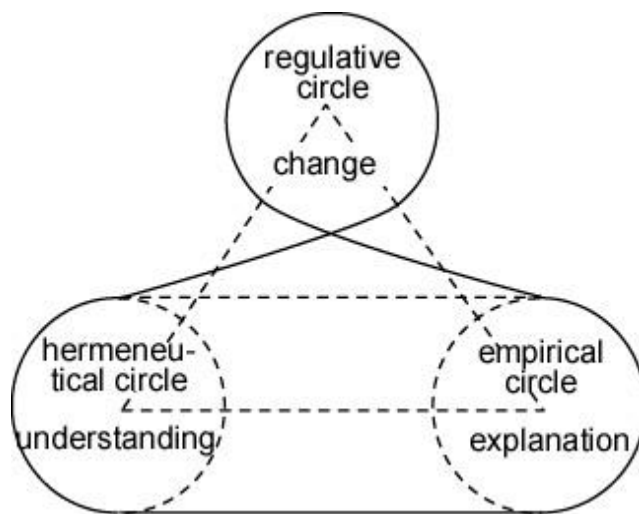
In this process a remarkably renewed emphasis on ‘praxis’ as a hermeneutical-communicative praxis has emerged regarding the methodology of practical theology (Heitink 1999:111). Heitink’s methodology is adopted as an effective method for this dissertation, centred with the concept of hermeneutical-communicative praxis, requiring an empirical approach (Van der Ven 1993:78).

## **6.2 Heitink’s methodology for practical theology**

The figure of Heitink’s methodology shows three circles: the hermeneutical circle, as the interpretation theory that is typical for the human sciences; the empirical circle, as the testing circle that is typical for the natural sciences; and

the regulative circle, which is typical for the methodology in practical thinking (Heitink 1999:165). These three circles correspond to the distinctive goals of the discipline, which are circularly exerting positive influences on one another. The relationship among the hermeneutical circle, the empirical one and the regulative one is showed below (figure 1).

**Figure 1 Heitink’s methodology of practical theology (Heitink 1999:165)**



### 6.2.1 The hermeneutical perspective, ‘understanding’

‘Understanding’ is central in the hermeneutical theory of interpretation. It is also drawing on theories of the arts and sciences to better understand and explain why these patterns and dynamics are occurring (Osmer 2008:4). Roberts (2009:120) states that “Originally this hermeneutics was a method of interpreting texts, specifically biblical texts. In sociology it is a theory and method of interpreting meaningful human action” (cf. Somekh & Lewin 2005:115). One must understand what motivates people and why they do what they do in this particular way in order to understand an action (Heitink 1999:179).

Hermeneutics is basically described as a dialogue of relationships between the relationships of the old text to their contexts (Van der Ven 1993:78). In order to understand an action satisfactorily one must grasp what motivates people, and why they do what they do in their particular ways (Heitink 1999:179). Hermeneutics deals not only with the text, theory, but also with the

context, action. More recently, it has expanded to include the interpretation of non-textual phenomena such as action, historical, and social phenomena (Ritzer 1996:197-198).

There are a number of different approaches to ‘understanding’ from the view points of theology, philosophy, and social sciences, since the hermeneutical circle of understanding involves a complicated process in which one must distinguish several interacting factors (Heitink 1999:196). The *hermeneutical phenomenology*, adopted for this perspective, shows that there are tensions between two concepts: the one seeking to explain the world and people’s experiences within it in an objective, unbiased way, and the other, claiming that interpretation and bias are crucial to the ways in which human beings encounter the world (Swinton & Mowat 2006:108).

*Phenomenology* is the study of lived, human phenomena within the everyday social contexts in which the phenomena occur from the perspective of those who experience them (Somekh & Lewin 2005:121). Phenomenology is the philosophy of experience, to understand the ways in which meaning is constructed in and through human experience, and aims at gaining a deeper understanding of the nature or meaning of our everyday experiences, seeking to present plausible insights that bring us in more direct contact with the world (Van Manen 1990:9). Phenomenology also observes the essence of things to see their true meaning. That people can understand each other means they all want to assign meanings that transcend the phenomena and are mutually exchangeable (Heitink 1999:183).

*Gadamer’s hermeneutics* developed a particular perspective on *experience*, which is necessary to understand. He suggests that the ability to remain open to new experiences, which may be radically different from previous ones, is of the utmost importance (1981:335). Gadamer (1981:334) clearly has captured the recursive nature of experience in the hermeneutical circle:

Just as true experience leaves one open to new experiences, each new experience also influences our understanding of previous experiences, which then, in turn, widens even more the horizon within which we may have yet more new experiences.

Thus the process of knowing relates to a constant process of experience – surprise – reencounter with renewed experience.

For Gadamer (Swinton & Mowat 2006:113), ‘understanding’ is a process where both subject and object are bound together and mediated by the historical context, personal experience and cultural traditions. He accepts pre-understandings as prejudices that are the inherited notions derived from one’s culture. *Prejudices* play a central role in his analysis (Crotty 2003:102-103). When approaching a phenomenon, one does so with particular prejudices which affect the process of interpretation. Thus our own biases make it possible to understand reality. Prejudices of the situation raise questions that help to understand a text from the past (Heitink 1999:184).

In order to understand a text we also need a fusion between *the horizons of the world* of the interpreter and the world of the text (Swinton & Mowat 2006:114). Genuine understanding takes place when the historical horizon is fused with our own horizon of understanding. Present and past are in a relationship of dialogue as a real ‘I-Thou’ relationship. In the discovery of the original questions, to which the text intended to respond, all depends on whether the right questions are asked (Heitink 1999:185).

Therefore, according to this study, hermeneutical phenomenology will help church leaders to adequately describe various contexts, to experience how non-Christians themselves feel, their concerns or needs, and to find resources for satisfying their needs in the local church. This approach will allow the researcher access into the inner experiences of the subject of study.

### **6.2.2 The empirical perspective, ‘explanation’**

The empirical perspective is central in the empirical approach of the human sciences (cf. Dittes 1985:88). The focus on meditative action must result in concrete suggestions for action. Practical-theological research is action research. Action research must at least have some relevance for meditative action (Heitink 1999:225). Empirical research for explanation has a role to develop a critical, methodological, verifiable, and theological theory about today’s religious praxis. In empirical research, a practical theological theory is

empirically tested and evaluated (Hermans & Moore 2004:4).

In the empirical circle, applied research is employed. *Applied research* is concerned with the solution of particular problems. It is based on the application of known theories and models to the actual operational fields. The applied research is conducted to test the empirical content or the basic assumptions or the very validity of a theory under a given condition (Kumar 1997:13).

Kumar (1997:13-14) regards applied research as the real kind of empirical research. In this research, the problem is identified and the results are expected to be applicable in the improvement of the practice or the solution of a problem to produce material gains. Applied research takes the form of a field investigation to collect the basic data for verifying the applicability of existing theories and models of a given solution. The knowledge of research methods has considerably increased in recent years and, given caution and patience, a researcher can comfortably test the reliability of his data before embarking upon the task of testing the applicability of a given doctrine.

Empirical research is a conscious process of comparing and evaluating. The basic pattern of the empirical cycle contains inductive as well as deductive moments, and the inductive and the deductive methods in research never exclude each other, but rather complement each other (Heitink 1999:233). *The quantitative method*, using a deductive approach, is chosen and used in the empirical part for this study. It entails deducting one's findings from questionnaires completed by people. Different variables are statistically compared and tested by means of a computer. This enables one to organise a large volume of collected raw data, both as a basis for conclusions and to demonstrate relationships between variables. According to Roberts (2009:224) there are major strengths in quantitative methods as follows:

- It is possible to study large numbers of cases, which can be samples that represent even larger populations.
- Hypotheses can be formally tested.
- The research can be repeated by a second investigator; on both occasions the findings should be free of hidden research effects.

- It is possible to check (through comparisons) for interviewer and coder biases.

Applied research, and the quantitative method with its empirical research will empirically test the theories or hypotheses derived from chapters 2 and 3 with the samples of the growth of two Korean congregations through their diaconal ministries.

### **6.2.3 The strategic perspective, 'change'**

The strategic perspective links 'who does what' with 'how' and 'for what purpose' (Heitink 1999:201). Osmer (2008:4) states that "It is determining strategies of action that will influence situations in ways that are desirable and enter into a reflective conversation with the emerging 'talk back' when they are enacted." Strategic action is acting methodically according to plan. Practical theology defines the communicative action from the perspective of the actor and of those who are affected by the action as co-subjects (Heitink 1999:202). There are micro-strategies, aimed at individuals, their behaviour and attitude, with the expectation that these may lead to changes in society in general (Laeyendecker & Van Stegeren 1978:78).

In the relationship between theory and praxis models serve mainly two purposes: as a concretisation of theory and as a first level of abstraction of praxis. Models are used to concretise practical theological theory in its transformation into ecclesiastic praxis. Such models represent theory visually and help to clarify it. They are no longer practical theological theory, but have not yet become ecclesiastic praxis (Heyns & Pieterse 1990:33). Tracy (1975:3-4) examined the models of theology to clarify really different ways of viewing both human experience and Christianity, and to set forth a revisionist model for contemporary Christian theology (cf. Kim 2007:427). Dulles (1992:41-52) argued that the method of models was helpful not only for mediating between different theological systems, but also for examining the inner tensions within a theological work.

Although Dulles (1974:22) made the distinction in a systematic theological context, it can be applied to the functioning of these two types of models in the praxis-theory relationship as well. These models serve partly to clarify theory and partly to discover the theories underlying praxis (Heyns & Pieterse 1990:33-34). Models thus function between theory and praxis, facilitating the traffic in either direction:

Praxis → Model → Theory, or, Theory → Model → Praxis

Methodological models depict a method of facilitating and promoting the interaction between theory and praxis. It is an interesting and useful model which can lead from a particular praxis to form a new theory, which can in turn lead to a new praxis. As a result, the model of a need-oriented diaconal ministry issued in this thesis (see figure 5) is used to promote the building up of the local church in Korea, explaining the relationship between congregational development and a need-oriented diaconal service. Thus this model will find the key strategies needed to build up the local church through a need-oriented diaconal service with the insights gained from the testing research (Chapter 4).

Through this method, key strategies or principles will be suggested to the Korean churches and leaders for the successful building up of the local church through a need-oriented diaconal ministry.

References will be made to the biblical witness, the collective researches of writers on the subject, as well as the collective experiences of those involved in the diaconal ministries of the Korean congregations.

## **7. STRUCTURE OF THIS STUDY**

Chapter 1 defines the introductory matters: theme and motivation, the statement of the problem, the extent of the problem and its purpose, the hypothesis of this dissertation, its structure, delimitation and key concepts.

With Heitink's methodology, this dissertation will begin with an explanation of the context. Chapters 2 and 3 will depict a descriptive theology of hermeneutical phenomenology. With this method, the researcher can access



the inner experiences of the subject of these chapters, in order to reach a genuine understanding of the relationship between Korean congregational development and effective diaconal service.

In Chapter 2 effective diaconal ministry for the local community will be dealt with. It will integrate the meaning or usage of *diakonia* from biblical, historical and theological perspectives, especially to ascertain the theoretical foundation in order to meet the needs of the local community with salvation. The characteristics of the local community will be studied to find how the local community influences the forms of the diaconal ministry, how the diaconal service can influence changes in the community, and the interrelations among them.

In Chapter 3, the theoretical backgrounds of congregational development will be studied from biblical, theological and historical perspectives. Such a building up of the local church plays an important role to motivate the Korean church to realise its missionary task to preach the gospel, to stimulate its spiritual dynamics to meet the various needs of the local community, and to make them to do the work expected of the body of Christ, faster. This will be connected with how to find the way to build up the local church through need-oriented diaconal ministries. The theoretical foundation of effective gatherings organised by the diaconal ministries, such as a baby school and a pregnant women's group will be dealt with.

In Chapters 2 and 3 the theoretical considerations for building up the local church through need-oriented diaconal ministries will be discussed.

Chapter 4 will deal with the empirical perspective. There are many methods of social research. According to the applied research method the Baby School of the Choongshin church, the Pregnant Women's Group & the Baby School of the Gwangyang Daegwang church will be analysed. The theories or hypotheses derived from Chapters 2 and 3 will be revisited, in connection with the empirical perspective. With this process, an effective building up of the local church will be interpreted as seen from a need-oriented diaconal ministry that complies directly and intimately with the local community and people's actual needs. The test results will be verified by looking at the methodological model in

## Chapter 5.

Chapter 5 will deal with a strategic perspective. It will look at the main reasons or factors these two models or programmes have in common in the light of a methodological model. This model is shaped in order to build up the local church through a need-oriented diaconal ministry in Korea. Through this model, the use of the need-oriented diaconal ministry that intimately and lastingly satisfies the need of the local community can be indicated with a view to an effective building up of the local church in the Korean society.

Synthetically, applicable strategies or principles to construct successful need-oriented diaconal services for Korean congregational development in different situations are presented. Finally, the conclusion of this study will be presented.

## **8. DELIMITATION OF THIS STUDY**

The scope of this dissertation will be confined to Korean Christianity and society.

First, the analysis of the success and decline of the relationship between the Korean church and society from the 1945's to 2000's will be discussed. The exploration of new principles of congregational development through need-oriented diaconal ministries will cover the present period.

Second, the local church is built up through various, complex and synthetic elements. This study will particularly focus on the method to be used for the development of the Korean congregations, namely through a need-oriented diaconal ministry.

Third, congregational development with a view to people's meaningful settlement in the Korean church as church members will be indicated. The success will be indicated of congregational development through need-oriented diaconal ministries to help people to become involved in Christian life and membership of the Korean church during a period of six months.

Fourth, the test results from the two Korean churches will be verified. They have been growing through need-oriented diaconal ministries with a methodological model. This process will help to detect successful principles and

strategies for congregational development adapted to the Korean society and church.

## 9. KEY CONCEPTS

Key concepts used in this study:

- Korean church: it refers to the South Korean church, since Korea was divided into North Korea and South Korea in 1953. 'The Korean church' that appears in the description of the historical background before that time includes both North and South.
- Building up the local church: it is about leading the congregation to understand its nature as the defined subject according to God's plan for the church. It leads the local church and its members on pathways to vitality, helps it become a living organism, and leads the members to do the work expected of the body of Christ.
- Need: this is a key word to guide the diaconal ministry of the church in the choice of their service in the community. It is derived from the meaning and application of the diaconal ministry from biblical, theological and church historical perspectives.
- Diaconal ministry: the basic meaning is generally to serve, not to be served. One of the purposes of the diaconal ministry is to respond to a variety of others' needs with God's love.
- Need-oriented diaconal ministry: this ministry focuses on meeting effectively the needs of the community and its people, as well as providing the essential functions of the church, such as *koinonia* (κοινωνία), *kerygma* (κηρυγμα) and *leitourgia* (λειτουργία) in a synergy.
- Need-oriented diaconal gathering: it refers to the gathering organised by a need-oriented diaconal service of the church for the local community, such as a baby school, a pregnant women's group, etc.
- McGavran's theory: this theory supports the basic ground of a need-oriented diaconal gathering from the sociological perspective. It is to

build a homogeneous unit, a people's movement, and the receptivity within the unit.

- Settlement: when non-Christians accept Jesus Christ as their saviour, attend worship as church members over six months, and become meaningfully involved in Christian life.

## CHAPTER 2

# THE HERMENEUTICAL PERSPECTIVE: A DIACONAL MINISTRY EFFECTIVE FOR THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

### 1. INTRODUCTION

This part deals with a need-oriented diaconal service that is effective in the local community. It ascertains the meaning or usage of *diakonia* (*διακονία*) from the biblical, theological and historical perspectives, with social and cultural contributions to it, in order to guide the search for forms of diaconal service that will satisfy the local community *directly*. The characteristics of the local community are also studied to see how effective are the *intimate* and *lasting* forms of diaconal ministry that comply with their needs.

Christianity is a religion to be shared with others, not only with those who already know Jesus, but also with those who do not know Him. This is our evangelistic responsibility (Armstrong 1979:60-61). The diaconal service of Jesus Christ has to be maintained by his church as one of the four functions, *kerygma leitourgia diakonia* and *koinonia* maintained by the early church (Kim 2000:69). The four together fulfil the missionary task of the church in the world. This way of speaking about the missionary church and *diakonia* emerged from the social perspective (Collver III 2010:344). During recent decades the word *diakonia* has become important to all churches, as a worldwide and ecumenical trend. Different explanations are given of *diakonia* (Latvus 2008:142).

Diaconal work can be interpreted as the anticipation of the reality of the kingdom of God (Jeremias 1999:28). *Diakonia* constantly has to challenge the frozen, static, self-centred structures of the church, and transform them into living instruments of the sharing and healing ministry of the church (Robra 1994:283). The church's *diakonia* should be a lasting service, helpful to

transform church structures to intimately care for the local community until the kingdom of God will be revealed.

While the diaconal ministry of the Korean mission was the practical preaching of Christ's love to neighbours in the past, at present the Korean church focuses on mission to extend the number of believers (Kim 2000:71-72). Its focus should change to enact the preaching of the word of God to fulfil the Lord's calling and promise through its *diakonia*, to include non-believers as well, and to help them to be integrated in the Korean congregations.

## 2. THE NATURE OF *DIAKONIA*

This section deals with some scholars' perspectives on the biblical and linguistic aspects of *diakonia*. Christian mission involves a life of service. The biblical word for this service is *diakonia*. It shares in Christ's *diakonia*, in his servanthood throughout his ministry with its climax on the Cross.

Paul's christological concept of *diakonia* reaches its climax in his hymn of Christ's self-humiliation (Phlp 2:6-11) (Chung 2010:143). The *diakonia* of the church has been commissioned by Jesus Christ, whose life embodied *diakonein* (the Son of Man came to serve) (Mk 10:45) (Klinken 1989:32). To serve the community as witnesses of Christ is the work of the church. To serve others is also inspired by Jesus' love (Stephen 2000:102-103).

The future of churches in coming times depends on the church's return to *diakonia*: to the service determined by mankind's actual need (Greinacher & Mette 1988:xvii). The important role played by the diaconal service of the first Christians continued for a few centuries, but gradually declined. A return to the biblical *diakonia* is required to follow the biblical and early church writings (Latvus 2008:142).

In Britain 'social service' has a narrow meaning. "It is the services provided by the local authority's social service departments, in which social workers are the key profession" (Roberts 2009:267). There are things in common between the diaconal ministry of the church and the social service of the state. Services to the local community are provided by both the local church and the local authorities.

## 2.1 The meaning of *diakonia*

The use of the Greek word *diakonia* in several passages in the New Testament, and the relationship among *kerygma*, *leitourgia*, *koinonia* and *diakonia* illustrate the works referred to by the word *diakonia*.

According to Hess (1992:545) the basic meanings of *diakonia* in Greek are: 1) to wait at table; this is expanded to 2) care for household needs, and from this to the general meaning 3) to serve generally. When used in the third sense it can be service for a cause, e.g. for the good of the community (Early Christianity described as *diakonia* all significant activity for the edification of the community [Beyer 1993:87]).

The substantive *diakonia* is the action of (Mk 10:45) *diakonein*: *diakonos* is the person who performs the service (Klinken 1989:26-31). *Minus*, the Latin word where the word ‘minister’ comes from, has the meaning ‘lowly’ (Stephen 2000:105). The ministry of *diakonos* (*διακονος*) is not an invention of the modern movement, but it gave a totally new meaning to the ancient Greek concept and also launched a new way to use a *diakonia*-derivative vocabulary (Herzog 1966:135).

Latvus (2008:145) explains that *diakonia* can be seen in some texts of the New Testament. The commandment to love “You shall love your neighbour as yourself” (Mk 1:28-34 NIV) or the so-called golden rule “Do to others as you would have them do to you” (Lk 6:31 NIV) are cornerstones of the Judeo-Christian tradition, with its roots in the Hebrew Bible. From these texts, the diaconal service is to be extended by ‘loving your neighbour as yourself, including non-Christians in the community.’

The diaconal ministry is also related to meeting people’s needs. The ministry of *diakonia* is “service to the people and to the community and particularly to the needy” (Pierli 2005:25). People and churches on every continent have needs, and *diakonia* should help all those who are needy (Greinacher & Mette 1988:xxi). Diaconal ministry is defined as “responding to others’ (physical and/or psychological) needs.” Accordingly, the healing action of Christ is motivated by pity, and in this sense, is a re-action to a suffering patient’s need (Delkeskamp-Hayes 2009:5).

Hans Küng (1995:394) presents us with insights about *diakonia* as follows:

*Diakonia* is rooted in charisma, since every *diakonia* in the church presupposes the call of God. “Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good” (1 Cor 12:7 NIV). Charisma leads to *diakonia*, since every charisma in the church only finds fulfilment in service.

Paul used two important words to describe all that helps to build the congregation – *gifts (charismata)* and *services (diakonai)*. Paul calls the charismatic gifts services *diakonai*. *Diakonia* can be used for each particular spiritual gift (Rm 12:6-7) (Hess 1992:547). *Charismata* that Christ has given the congregation through the Spirit, and *diakonia*, the way in which these gifts are used, function as ministers (Nel 2005:52). Rahner & Vorgrimler (1962) pointed out that the church is a ministering community with its multiplicity of services and functions, being equipped for this service (*diakonia*) through a great variety of gifts of the Holy Spirit (*charismata*). The caring love of God for humans, and especially for the weakest, will result in the outpouring of such *charismata* as are necessary for the specific situation (Klinken 1989:40).

Heitink (1999:91) outlines the praxis of the Acts of the Apostles by which men and women receive spiritual gifts (*charismata*), enabling them to proclaim the gospel (*kerygma*), to support each other in the establishment of a community (*koinonia*), and to be servants (*diakonoï*) in the kingdom of God that is being established in this world.

## **2.2 The quest for a new definition of *diakonia***

The term ‘service’ is always coloured by those who are on the receiving side of the mandate or mission, and how the instructor sees his own task and the tasks of his fellow workers (Klinken 1989:31). Throughout the ages up until the present day there has been a tendency to narrow *diakonia* down to mere charitable works (cf. Gooder 2006:33). Service does not necessarily mean menial or lowly service, but the word does signify that the attitude of the disciples of Jesus is ever to be one of humility in serving others (Cummings 2004:22). *Diakonia* means more than an area of tasks derived from one of the



basic ecclesiastical functions like the giving of alms and help for the helpless (Greinacher & Mette 1988:xviii).

At present there is a quest for a new and strongly focused definition of *diakonia* to lead to more effective ways for the church, its ministry and its community. According to McKee (1989:94) there has been discussion on new definitions. “It is better to speak of a new quest for the deaconate, because clarity on the matter is still a considerable distance away.” Latvus (2008:143) points out that the development and flourishing of *diakonia* has not been clear and logical.

In his analysis Collins (1990) offered a new explanation of *diakonia*. This term basically developed into the idea of a loving activity that is done for one’s neighbour, out of love for God – for that reason it is called charitable service (Nel 2005:41). The principle meaning of the concept is connected to the role of a messenger. A *diakonos* is a ‘go-between,’ an authorised figure that acts under the service of a higher power (Latvus 2008:144). Collins conducted an exhaustive analysis of the meaning of the word *diakonos* and its cognates throughout the classical world and then proceeded to unfold its New Testament and Christian nuances (Cummings 2004:31-32). Most occurrences of the word describe the ‘carrying out of a commissioned task’ rather than the traditional ‘humble service’ (Gooder 2006:33) (but the concept of the traditional humble service is still supported by Scripture [Mt 20:26; Mk 10:43-44; 1 Cor 3:5]). Therefore it can offer insights into the meaning and shaping of today’s ministry within the church.

Recently a new dimension to the discussion was given by Anni Hentschel. The results of her study are in line with Collins, but they also modify the thesis proposed by him. According to Latvus (2008:144) Hentschel argues that the occurrences of the word *diakonia* must always be read in context. One of the most common ways of understanding *diakonia* is as authorised and honourable acts or works (cf. Mk 9:35). On many occasions this means the proclaiming of the gospel authorised by God or by the church.

While meanings or definitions of *diakonia* are still discussed among scholars, it is better to render diaconal ministry with compassion and care for others in the community on the basis of biblical concepts (Klinken 1989:3).

### **3. THE BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE ON THE DIACONAL MINISTRY**

This section deals with the diaconal service of the church from the biblical perspective. The concept of diaconal service has been used in the New Testament in the light of the Old Testament practice (see section 3.1).

*Diakonia* is part and parcel of our obedience to God's law. The New Testament makes it abundantly clear that the obedience God's law requires is not a legalistic obedience under compulsion, but the loving obedience which derives from faith: the attitudes and actions which are the expression of faith (Cranfield 1966:41).

Beyer (1993:87-88) notes that the term *diakonia* has a variety of meanings or usages:

- 1) It means 'waiting at table,' or in a rather wider sense 'provision for bodily sustenance' (Lk 10:40).
- 2) It is used for any 'discharge of service' in genuine love. Thus the house of Stephanas gave itself to the service of the saints (1 Cor 16:15). In each of them the believer serves not only his brother, but Christ also. He is responsible for the service committed to him as a gift of grace.
- 3) It can denote the 'discharge of certain obligations in the community.' The apostolic office as the activity of Mark comprised personal service and assistance with missionary work (2 Tm 4:11).

As the 'service of the world' cannot be isolated from the 'service of the table,' the service of the table cannot be separated from the service of the world (Delkeskamp-Hayes 2009:16, 18). The word-cluster *diakonein*, *diakonos*, *diakonia* is found most often in 2 Cor (Fiorenza 1986:426). The meaning or application of the key words *diakonein*, *diakonia* and *diakonos* all relate to

service done to others in the New Testament. Thus the Greek words *diakonein*, *diakonos*, *diakonia* indicate ‘service’ (Cummings 2004:22).

The model of diaconal ministry, Jesus, the Word incarnated in human form, was willing to take up the role of a servant (Phlp 2:5-8). His servanthood is well described through his incarnation. He served others, willing to give his life, and identified with the people whom He served (Stephan 2000:106). Loving service to others is the result of God’s establishment of his grace (Jn 1:17), through the ministry of his Son and the gift of his Spirit.

### 3.1 Diaconal service in the Old Testament

To the neighbour *diakonia* embodies God’s love. Sharing in the mysterious love of God, it does not calculate whether the neighbour merits love. Herzog (1966:136) says that “The basic question of *diakonia* is not whether the neighbour needs my love, but whether I am capable of sharing God’s love.” The Old Testament has the concept of service and contains the commandment to love one’s neighbour (Lv 19:8). Israel knew charitable acts, as did the ancient Near East generally (Hess 1992:545).

Stephen (2000:103-104) notes that ‘Ebed Yahweh’ in Hebrew is ‘servant of God.’ The noun ‘Ebed’ (servant) is the worker who belongs to the master. ‘Ebed’ is also translated as ‘doulos’ (slave) in the Septuagint (the word-groups *doleuo* → *latreuo* and → *leitourgeo* are found in cultic contexts [Hess 1992:545]). Servants are the functionaries dependent on the king, who could be designated as ‘servants of the king.’ They might occupy a unique office at the court (2 Ki 22:12; 2 Chr 34:20). According to Jeremias (1999:27) Israel is reminded that they ‘were slaves in Egypt’ and therefore should not ‘deprive the alien or the fatherless of justice.’ What remains of the harvest should be left for the alien, the fatherless and the widow (Dt 24:17-22, cf. Dt 14:29; 16:11, 14). In the Hebrew Bible, a diaconal act, which is a basic dimension of the life of God’s people, originates in God’s partisan concern for the poor and the needy (Ex 20:2). This perspective penetrates the whole missionary-diaconal dimension in the Hebrew Bible (Chung 2010:145).

*Diakonia* can be seen throughout the Old Testament in a variety of contexts. Israel is seen as the 'servant of God,' helping the poor (Ex 23:11; Lv 19:10; 23:22; Ps 41:11), and praying for those who face difficulties or problems in life (Ps 10:12; 72:12; 130:2). Poverty was felt to be a very real and pressing problem during the centuries which produced the Old Testament (Lv 19:9-10). This perspective is gleaned from laws and the prohibition of unjust dealings with employees or neighbours (Lv 19:9-18). The law codes take account of the poor and their needs (Dt 10:17-18; 14:29). Foreigners are expected and allowed to come to the temple to worship (1 Kin 8:42-43).

According to Deuteronomy (14:22, 28-29 NIV) people who are aliens, fatherless or widows were to have their place at all the common meals at the sanctuary, provided by the tithes and free-will offerings as follows:

Be sure to set aside a tenth of all that your fields produce each year. ... [A]t the end of every three years, bring all the tithes of that year's produce and store it in your towns, so that the Levites (who have no allotment or inheritance of their own) and the aliens, the fatherless and the widows who live in your towns may come and eat and be satisfied, and so that the LORD your God may bless you in all the work of your hands.

Gratitude is due to God by Israel, for his blessings bestowed upon them (Dt 12:18-19; 14:22-29; 16:11, 14). The complaint of the poor must always be heard and cared for, according to the biblical teaching (Dt 24:14-15).

Klinken (1989:32) says that *diakonia* can be seen as psalms of prayer to God amidst sufferings and difficulties, which is in continuity with the suffering of God in the Old Testament.

Out of the depths I cry to you, O LORD;  
O Lord, hear my voice.  
Let your ears be attentive  
to my cry for mercy (Ps 130:1-2 NIV).

God hears and sees the victims of slavery and injustice, and He heeds their sufferings. Through his justice and mercy He brings liberation.

Stephen (2000:104-105) summarises the concept of *diakonia* as service in the Old Testament as follows:

- 1) Service is understood as a corollary of election (Is 41:8-20). Obedience is asked for (Is 65:12; 43:1-6). The servant should be utterly obedient to God's voice (Is 42:1; 50:4, 5).
- 2) The servant also has a vicarious role. He bears the sins of the people (Is 53:6, 11, 12; Mk 10:45). God will accept the sacrifice and vindicate his cause.
- 3) 'Lamb of God' (Jn 1:29, 36) is another significant expression to denote the 'servant.'
- 4) The covenant also foresees the service to all. The idea of the covenant with Abraham is that the blessing is passed on (Gn 12:1-3). To love God (Dt 6:4) and your neighbour (Lv 19:18) is the crux of the whole biblical vision.

These concepts of service were adopted especially to express the relationship of the people with God. The only connection with their original use seems to be the relationship of the service to the people (Hess 1992:552).

Humanitarian concerns and justice are significant issues in God's covenant. The Israelite community was asked to keep up the service to the neighbour (Am 3:9; 5:24; 6:12). It focussed on not neglecting the social responsibility to care for the poor, the sick and the afflicted, by people who are covenant partners of God as instruments of God's compassion (cf. Klinken 1989:34).

### **3.2 *Diakonia* in the New Testament**

The biblical principle is: not to be served but to serve (Mk 10:45). Jesus Himself is the best example of service (Jn 13:4, 5; 13:12-17). To Him the greatest is the one who serves (Lk 22:24-27). To serve humans in need is the foremost duty of a Christian (Lk 10:25-37). His service of men was not restricted to preaching and teaching, but included his serving of the sick, hungry and afflicted through his healing and other miracles (Mk 5:1-20; 7:24-30; Jn 5:2-9; cf. Chung 2010:142-143).

Jesus himself is portrayed as the servant of God (Ac 3:13, 26; 4:27, 30; 8:32). The mission mandate was given to the Twelve to heal the sick (Mk 6:7, 13; Lk 10:1,9). The servant should humble himself (Stephan 2000:105). According to Cummings (2004:22) the word *diakonein* indicates the close identification of Jesus with his followers. “Whoever serves me must follow me; and where I am, my servant also will be. My Father will honour the one who serves me” (Jn 12:26 NIV). The close communion of Jesus with the Father, and with his servant-followers helps to understand the structure of *diakonein*.

Jesus’ work of mercy grew out of his worship of God. Worship of God lies at the heart of *diakonia* and not of the secular services. Christ’s *diakonia* qualifies Christian worship in a specific way (Herzog 1966:136). *Diakonia* is to care for human need, which must accompany the church’s witness and life of worship (Collins 1990:25). *Diakonia* in all its forms leads to *leitourgia* – service to God. The regular weekly service of worship is the climax of the week’s *diakonia* as well as the beginning of the *diakonia* of the week that follows (Nel 2005:42, 45) (cf. Jesus Christ’s *leitourgia* gives meaning to the liturgy of communal worship: the congregation has to be guided to serve God through worship, songs of praise, thanksgiving, the confession of guilt and faith, prayers, offerings, etc.).

*Diakonia* is also expressed in the ‘liturgy after the liturgy,’ an extension of the Holy Eucharist (Jn 13:1-20; 1 Cor 11:17) (Robra 1994:281). Christian *diakonia* becomes itself specifically and irreducibly Eucharistic (Delkeskamp-Hayes 2009:11). That the liturgy after the liturgy is an essential part of the witnessing life of the church, is indicated by Bria (1978:87-90):

- 1) An ongoing re-affirming of the true Christian identity, fullness and integrity which have to be constantly renewed by the Eucharistic communion. A condition for discipleship and church membership is the existential personal commitment made to Jesus Christ the Lord (Col 2:6).
- 2) To enlarge the space for witness by creating a new Christian milieu, each in his own environment: family, society, office, factory, etc., is not a simple matter of converting the non-Christians in the vicinity of the parishes, but also a

concern about where Christians live and work and where they can publicly exercise their witness and worship.

3) The liturgical life has to nourish the Christian life not only in its private sphere, but also in its public realm. One cannot separate the true Christian identity from the personal sanctification, love and service to man (1 Pt 1:14-15).

4) Liturgy implies public and collective action, and therefore the Christian is in a sense a creator of community. The Christian has to be a continual builder of the true *koinonia* of love and peace, even if he is politically marginal and lives in a hostile surrounding.

Thus, through the 'liturgy after the liturgy,' the church, witnessing to the cosmic dimension of the salvation event, puts into practice its missionary vocation. Service that counts is not the service performed at the altar, but the service which reaches out from the altar to humankind: the true liturgy of the Christian community is its *diakonia* (Collins 1990:13).

Paul expanded the concept of *diakonia*. Paul saw the whole of salvation, God's *diakonia* in Christ for and among men, expressed in the *diakonia* of the apostles. This service has been entrusted to the apostle, who as Christ's ambassador proclaims, "Be reconciled to God" (2 Cor 5:18 NIV) (Hess 1992:547). Hence the term *diakonia* can be used as a technical term for the work of proclaiming the gospel (Rm 11:13; 2 Cor 4:1; cf. 2 Tm 4:5). The understanding of preaching good news as *diakonia* is inevitably linked with the fact that preaching introduces a person to the highest value, which is salvation. The definition of *diakonia* as 'service to the world,' in turn, either consciously or unconsciously, defines the mission of the church (Donfried 1992:3). In Paul *being a Christian* and *being a congregation* is at the same time *being in service* (Nel 2005:40). As such the technical word for the task of proclaiming the word of God is the biblical and theological proof that relates the proclamation of the gospel (*kerygma*) with the diaconal ministry (*diakonia*). It is the theme of this thesis, namely building up the local church through a need-oriented diaconal ministry.

The failure of the church to practise works of service indicates a theological problem with its *koinonia* (fellowship) (Collver III 2010:345). *Koinonia* denotes fellowship with a close bond. In Ac 2:42 *koinonia* denotes the concrete community or society of Christians, which represented a circle of the closet fellowship (Hauck 1993:808-809). *Koinonia* also denotes the close union and brotherly bond between humans (Schattenmann 1992:639). *Diakoneo* became a term that denotes the loving action to fellow believers and other neighbours (Mt 20:28; Mk 10:45), which in turn is derived from divine love, and also describes the results of *koinonia* (Hess 1992:547). *Diakonia* is the expression of the unity of the church (*koinonia*) as the body of Christ (Robra 1994:281). Such a *diakonia* (service) builds *koinonia* (community). It requires personal, psychological and ecclesial maturity (Cummings 2004:12). *Diakonia* must be redefined, not as a good moral act, or as the expression of compassion, but as the overflowing of the grace, which binds and moves the community's inner life as a fellowship (*koinonia*) (Collver III 2010:345). While *koinonia* claims unlimited scope outwards, wherever there is distress, ministry (*diakonia*) claims the same scope inward, in a special sense: that is, within the community (*koinonia*) of the church's own social forms (Fuchs 1988:47). Thus building up the local church takes *diakonia* into account, and is focused on *diakonia* that grows out of the *koinonia* / consciousness of the congregation (Nel 2005:51).

At present the Korean church community is asked to concentrate on its social responsibility through its diaconal ministry, especially to meet the real needs of the local community in the synergy of *koinonia*, *kerygma*, and *leitourgia*. Such a diaconal ministry is called a 'need-oriented diaconal ministry.' Its need-oriented diaconal ministry is directly connected with the building up of the church in Korea.

#### **4. THE ROLE OF THE DIACONAL MINISTRY IN THE HISTORY OF THE CHURCH**

This section deals with the role of diaconal services in the historical context of the church. To use Rahner's word (Cummings 2004:31), it is helpful and stimulating to get a sense of how *diakonia* developed in the history of the



church. The social ministry insists that the service to human beings is the clearest expression of faith and love for God (Pierli 2005:31).

*Diakonia* is social service based on solidarity, inspired by Christian values (God's love and compassion). It is expressed through charity and philanthropy towards those in need (Molokotos-Liederman 2011:83). The study of *diakonia* and philanthropy in church history cannot be divorced from the study of the totality of history, because Christianity is a historical religion, conditioned and influenced by the religious, philosophical and cultural circumstances (Constantelos 2004:2). Throughout the history of Christendom, *diakonia* was rendered by Christian churches, monasteries, and charitable institutions (Delkeskamp-Hayes 2009:2).

History has, to a large extent, provided the fundamental theoretical tools. Although this is quite clear, it has not been explicitly clarified. Overall, however, the lack of theoretical transparency makes it hard to discern the fundamental presuppositions of a particular piece of research (Brodd 2009:317). We do not only interpret our diaconal sources in order to present a coherent historical *diakonia*, but also ascribe historical significance in accordance to the role of diaconal ministry in the history of the church (Fiorenza 1986:422). The historical perspective helps the Korean church and its leaders to perceive the meaning and best application of *diakonia*.

#### **4.1 *Diakonia* in the early church**

In the record of the early church *diakonia* is frequently discussed with great seriousness, to explain the diaconal ministry and its performance (Brox 1988:33). *Diakonia* was inseparable from the integral life of the early church. *Diakonia* was an essential element of the early church (Jeremias 1999:27). The term *diakonia* was used in early Christianity to indicate philanthropy and love of the human person (Molokotos-Liederman 2011:83). The terms *diakonia* and philanthropy were adopted by the early Christian community from the language, thought, and experience of ancient Hellenism (Constantelos 2004:2).

The Letter to the Hebrews tells us that “We are surrounded by such a great cloud of (Old Testament) witnesses” (Heb 12:1 NIV). In the early church

the Christian's sacrificial offering to God was made through prayer, thanksgiving, Eucharistic liturgy and through charitable work for the needy (Lampe 1966:49). According to Jeremias (1999:27) the word *diakonia* means the preaching of the gospel (cf. Eph 3:6-7), as well as the service of the apostles in general (cf. 1 Cor 3:5), and in particular the raising of funds for the Palestinian churches, especially for the Jerusalem community (cf. 2 Cor 8:4). The history of the church produced many witnesses of *diakonia*, people whose lives were examples of various aspects of a diaconal ministry of the highest degree (Cummings 2004:53).

Tertullian (Brox 1988:33-34) notes that Christians in the early church spent their money supporting poor people, helping orphans who had no other support, and 'pensioners' without a pension, paying for those whom misfortune had brought into distress and for those who were banished or in prison (cf. Constantelos 2004:14). Christians were aware of the obligatory nature of what they carried out as *diakonia* or service of their fellow-men. The consolidation of charity evidenced by Tertullian, gradually became the normal way for Christians to exercise their generosity (Osiek 2005:363). During Tertullian's time Christians' behaviour was very striking. It was in doing, that *diakonia* had meaning and at the same time gained support. *Diakonia* was an everyday affair.

Julian, the emperor of Rome (361-363), an apostate Christian who turned Gentile and opposed Christianity, was familiar with the Church's care of the poor and general *diakonia*. Constantelos (2004:15) makes it clear that in his efforts to revive ancient beliefs and practices, Julian urged pagan priests to imitate Christian priests in the practice of philanthropy, for carrying out its social programme as their social responsibility.

Brox (1988:35-36) also places the focus on the Christian praxis of love in Julian's perspective on diaconal service:

Julian's aim was to introduce the Christian praxis of love. He consciously carried out his social programme, calling on his people to compete with the Christians. According to him, the old Roman religion should be restored in praxis by imitating the Christian *diakonia*, and he consequently called on his priests to help the poor – including the poor of the enemy – to care for

prisoners and to exercise hospitality.

In the diaconal ministry of the early church members spent their time, money and passion in caring for people in need, and with God's love, carried out their charitable services as their social responsibility.

#### **4.2 *Diakonia* during the Middle Ages**

The practice of charity during the Middle Ages was mostly the fruit of private initiative: generous donors of every rank and station, monasteries and religious orders, commoners, and lay brotherhoods. According to McKee (1984:48) traditionally, charitable activity in general and the care of the poor in particular had been the province of the ecclesiastical authorities. Charity has always been understood as an extremely important religious responsibility of all Christians, and generous almsgiving was a highly honoured virtue in the Middle Ages.

Latvus (2008:145-6) explains the help of Christians' service during the plague and syphilis epidemics as follows:

During the epidemics, these disasters in the middle of the second and third centuries killed a large part of the population. Because of the horrifying mortality rate, people usually abandoned all who were sick including relatives. Christians broke this pattern and instead of fleeing, gave help to those who were suffering. Also the burial of corpses was known as a Christian practice. These acts had several effects. Even the simple care of sick people saved many, because they got water to drink and something to eat which helped their recovery.

This attitude of Christians, caring for others through their diaconal ministry, was an important charitable factor that had several positive effects.

Even during the most critical period in the history of the church during the Middle Ages, with poverty, civil wars, constant attacks from the Ottoman Turks, etc., the church stood by its principle. According to Constantelos (2004:21) Gennadios Scholarios, philosopher and theologian (1400-1473), one of the last representatives of Byzantine learning, urged church members to "Offer hospitality to strangers in order that you may not become a stranger to God. Give gladly bread to those who are hungry."

Robra (1994:227) states that “During the Middle Ages, charity and alms-giving were motivated by the fact that, under the influence of Mt 25:31-46, they were seen as a means of salvation.” The diaconal ministry did not only focus on its mission to serve the poor, the widows and the needy, but also to lead them to salvation.

Barrois (1966:69) pointed out that in the Middle Ages the diaconal or social ministry was influenced by the middle class that was created by the changing social movements:

The rapid growth of the middle class and the rise of spontaneous religious and social movements forming in the latter part of the twelfth century onward had, as one of their results, the increasing participation of lay brotherhoods and sororities in the voluntary assistance of the poor and the sick in hospitals and hospices.

In the later Middle Ages, the ways charity was distributed became increasingly diverse and individualised, and the organisation of ecclesiastical charity encountered increasing difficulties (McKee 1984:48-49).

The important factor is that the spontaneous religious and social movement was also motivated by seeing it as a means of salvation during the Middle Ages. Thus this diaconal ministry not only served the need of community and its people, but also led non-Christians in the community to become congregational members to attain salvation.

#### **4.3 Calvin’s theological view of *diakonia* at the time of the Reformation**

It is worth recalling that theologically all *diakonia* are parables of the archetypal, fundamental *diakonia*, the mission of Christ (Mackinnon 1966:190). According to Robra (1994:227) the Reformation viewed *diakonia* as the believers’ spontaneous response of gratitude, directed to the suffering neighbour (Lk 10:25-27). The sixteenth century is known as the age of great intellectual and religious changes, but it was also a time of social transformation. One of the major social changes was in the area of welfare. In fact, the sixteenth century is often seen as the beginning of modern social welfare (McKee 1984:48).

The *diakonia* of the Reformation was influenced by Calvin. Calvin (Institutes IV.iii.9; IV.iv.5) and his followers defined the church's *diakonia* as distinct and in theory separable from the charitable activity of the civil government (McKee 1984:38). Calvin (quoted by Kim 1998:72) placed equal emphasis on the soul-saving ministry and the service to the local society.

Calvin (Institutes II.viii.39) says that the Christian life is not a life of solitude by putting yourself far from others. Every individual should live in community with his or her neighbours, to grow in faith together. We are called to be neighbours to others and to contribute to the life of the people surrounding us (cf. Kerr 1989:68). Deacons are called by Christ to care for the poor in the church. Deacons are to receive alms from church members and distribute them to the poor to serve as stewards of the people's gifts to the poor. This task was ascribed to deacons in scripture and his office (Hall 2008:396). According to Calvin (Institutes IV.iii.1) the deacons, through the performance of their tasks show that Christ is merciful towards the wretchedness and weakness of our body and satisfies our earthly needs (cf. Niesel 1980:201). All the gifts we possess have been bestowed by God who entrusted it to us on condition that they are distributed to our neighbours' benefit (cf. 1 Pt 4:10) (Institutes III.vii.5). It means that we are the stewards of everything God has conferred on us, with which we are to help our neighbour.

McKee (1989:64-77) offers the summary of Calvin's exegesis of Acts 6 on the origin of the office of deacons. Acts 6 can be connected to other New Testament passages: 1 Tm 3:8-13; Rm 12:8 and 1 Tm 5:3-10. Phoebe's activity can be interpreted in the light of 1 Tm 5. Such an interpretation was possible during the days of pre-critical biblical study because Calvin thought that all scriptural references were describing a single reality in the apostolic period and his task was to clarify the biblical truth abandoned by the Catholic Church (cf. see the detailed discussion of the critique of Calvin's teaching on the diaconate quoted by [McKee 1989:77-79]).

In the Institutes (IV.iii.9) Calvin states that there were two distinct orders of deacons in the primitive church. He specifies them as those that administer the alms, such as receiving and holding goods for the poor, and those who devoted

themselves to take care of the sick, the poor and the needy. Calvin (Institutes IV.iii.8-9) states that the enduring office of deacon was for men chosen to show Christ's mercy towards the financial need of the poor, by the care of the Greek widows described in Acts 6 (cf. Hall 2008:396). All men are put in service: "He attributes nothing else to humans but a common ministry and to every individual his particular share" (Institutes IV.vi.10). Calvinists of the Reformation redefined the office of deacon. No longer were deacons liturgical assistants to priests; their office was an ecclesiastical ministry to care for the poor and unfortunate, an office which should be permanent in the church (McKee 1984:40) (that the primary task of deacons was one of administration and practical service may be deducted 1) from the use of the term for table waiters and more generally for servants; 2) from the qualities demanded of them; 3) from their relationship to the bishop; and 4) from what we read elsewhere in the New Testament concerning the gift and task of *diakonia* [Beyer 1993:90]).

In the Calvinist Reformed tradition the ecclesiastical ministry of charity by the early church was intended as the pattern for the church throughout time (McKee 1989:70-72). Calvin (1949:220) stated that the ecclesiastical ministry of charity is amended gradually as follows:

If the apostles had spoken of choosing deacons before any necessity did require the same, they should not have had the people so ready; they should have seemed to avoid labour and trouble; many would not have offered so liberally into the hands of other men. Therefore, it was requisite that the faithful should be convinced by experience, that they might choose deacons willingly, whom they saw they could not want; and that through their own fault.

This ministry of the church to the poor and sick was intended to be permanent. Thus, for Calvin and the Reformed tradition which followed him, the ecclesiastical ministry of care for the poor and sick is a necessary and permanent office of the Christian church.

One of the expressions of the diaconal ministry of the local community is to meet its members' earthly needs. The role of the church is not only to help those who have some universal hardships such as poverty, disease and

loneliness, but also to consider the community and its members who are interested in actual things like education, culture and health.

#### **4.4 *Diakonia* in modern times: from the 18<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> centuries**

This section deals with the way *diakonia* was rendered to the local community in the modern ages. The world would see the church working together on projects involving human care rather than being divided. The cooperating together in matters external to doctrine made a good and positive witness (Collver III 2010:343).

According to Herzog (1966:137-138) Francke (1663-1727) describes the beginning of his educational effort with orphans and the children of the poor that stretched from elementary school to college as follows:

“For some time I had bread distributed to them in front of the door. But soon I thought that this was a welcome opportunity to help the poor people in their souls through the Word of God.” Seeing the need to instruct the children more extensively he opened a school because he realised that the poverty problem could not be overcome by almsgiving.

From the 17<sup>th</sup> to the early 18<sup>th</sup> century, diaconal service was carried out through education, which was usually aimed at enlightening the poor and the ignorant. The increase of knowledge led to the increase in man’s capacity to master his environment. It led to ‘industrialisation.’

During the latter part of 18<sup>th</sup> century, the state employed social welfare for its own secular goals. Delkeskamp-Hayes (2009:2) notes that a secular vision of the state and of society emerged, which led to the state confiscating church resources and arrogating to itself the philanthropic and social welfare undertakings that previously had been the charge of Christian communities.

According to Latvus (2008:142-143) Theodor Fliedner (1800-1864) was one of the leading figures in the 19<sup>th</sup> century diaconal movement. He was also one of the first to articulate the need to re-establish the ministry of *diakonia*. He was impressed by the practice of the Mennonite church, especially by the work of their deacons and deaconesses, during his visit to the Netherlands. He said

that “this Christian practice was worth being adapted to other evangelical confessions.”

Robra (1994:227) notes that during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the *diakonia* saw the misery of the poor masses as a missionary task (Lk 15:1-7). Brash (1966:199) states that the forms of Christian service are inherited from the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and are improving according to the realisation of the real needs of the sick and the poor as follows:

As missionaries arrived in most areas of Asia they found vast numbers of people, not only without any knowledge of God as their Father through Jesus Christ, but also without the means of education or of the healing of their many diseases. Along with the preaching of the gospel, therefore, and intimately related to it, came all the forms of compassion for the sick and ignorant. At first there were simple schools and clinics. But in the face of the need the work inevitably expanded until there were great colleges and hospitals, operated by qualified and specialist staff.

Concern to serve the neighbour flourished in 19<sup>th</sup> Christianity; although not all was perfectly ordered. Many Christians practiced their *diakonia* completely separately from their church, or left ecclesiastical charity to special organs, which could represent in a vicarious – and often remote – way their Christian responsibility of benevolence (McKee 1989:92). The diaconal ministry not only saw the alleviation of the misery of the poor and the sick as a missionary task, but it was also extended to care more comprehensively for the needs, with colleges of education, by supporting hospitals for the sick and providing houses for the homeless.

The most significant and exciting fact in 20<sup>th</sup> century Christianity is the rich and varied experience of the ecumenical movement. According to McKee (1989:93) the implications of the ecumenical movement for *diakonia* in 20<sup>th</sup> century is that the nature of the church is to be a servant as Christ was a servant (cf. the Reformed diaconate might be one small contribution to the late 20<sup>th</sup> century ecumenical reflection on the theological bases for the church’s diaconate [McKee 1989:100]). Therefore no Christian, no church member, can escape the responsibility of *diakonia* and still claim to be faithful to Christ and



the church. Although it does not sound revolutionary in theory, it can be rather discomfoting or disturbing in practice.

Another development of *diakonia* started in the 1960s. The main reason behind it was the growing understanding of individuals and churches of their social responsibility that led to diaconal actions in the western societies. Liberation theology is a good example (Latvus 2008:143) (although the *diakonia* movement and streams of liberation theology were separate, they shared the same motivation, to be aware, to see and to act. Compared to liberation theology, however, the diaconal movement has been much more restrained in its use of critical analysis and to make judgments about the actions to be taken).

Christians can seek, individually and corporately, to guide and utilise the political and economic institutions of secular society in order to effect improvements in the social structure (Lampe 1966:51). Social structures are regular patterns of social interaction and persistent social relationship. Social structures are constructed by the ongoing interaction of people (Kammeyer, Ritzer & Yetman 1997:88-89). Secular values such as human dignity, equality, and social justice are proclaimed as modern representations of the Christian commitment to love of neighbours and of Christ's preferential option for the poor and vulnerable (Delkeskamp-Hayes 2009:3).

Mostert (2003:6) makes three important points about history and theology: 1) Ministry (*diakonia*) is the task of every Christian. This is the common *diakonia* of the body of Christ. 2) Yet there is a special ministry, given by God for the building up of the church. 3) This ministry (*diakonia*) is related to the very basis of the church.

The forms of the diaconal service are getting varied, and improved to reach social levels that effectively comply with different needs, as church leaders develop understanding and awareness of the social responsibility of individuals and groups, and of the concept and characteristics of the modern local communities (see section 5).

## **5. THE UNIVERSAL FOUNDATION OF THE MODERN LOCAL COMMUNITY**

The purpose of this section is to survey the significant characteristics of a modern local community. This survey is meant to help the local church to find forms of effective diaconal service, that address the needs of the modern local community, and to relate intimately and lastingly through God's love and salvation to the needs of non-Christians.

The local communities are deeply concerned with some aspects of the contemporary significance of the concept of *diakonia*. This concept effectively illuminates the present-day scene (Mackinnon 1966:190). The local community has traditionally designed a particular form of social organisation based on small groups, such as neighbourhoods, the small town, or a spatially bounded locality (Delanty 2003:2). The concept of servanthood is of crucial importance for the life of every Christian. To serve others, as social responsibility is an essential part of the gospel. Jesus Christ came to serve humanity (Stephen 2000:103).

Effective diaconal ministry depends on effective leadership to guide diaconal meetings or groups that non-Christians want to attend, because it tends to their actual needs with intimate and lasting contact. Thus church leaders need to learn about the role of the diaconal service and about the modern local community.

### **5.1 The concept of the local community**

The purpose of this section is to survey the main definition or concept of a local community. The past few decades have witnessed increased interest in the concept of the community in general (Rovai 2002:2). Communities have been based on ethnicity, religion, class or politics (Delanty 2003:2). The definition or concept of the local community will be dealt with from the social and biblical perspective, and it will form a theoretic basis for a deeper understanding about the local community and its people.

### **5.1.1 The definition of the local community from the social perspective**

Historically, the role of the community in the urban society has been one of the main themes in modern sociology since the days of the Chicago School (Delanty 2010:37-38; cf. Giddens 1993:568; the first major school of American sociology is also situated in Chicago [Ritzer 1996:8]). In sociology, community is conceptually distinct and essentially more than society (Pietilä 2011:30).

Poplin (1979:1) suggests that sociologists use the word 'community' in essentially three ways:

- 1) It is often used as a synonym: at one time or other prisons, religious organisations, minority groups, and members of the same profession have been referred to as communities.
- 2) The word 'community' is often used to refer to a moral or spiritual phenomenon. Men and women the world over are supposedly engaged in a 'search for community' a quest for unity and involvement with other human beings.
- 3) The word 'community' is used to refer to those units of social and territorial organisation, which can be called hamlets, villages, towns, cities, or metropolitan areas.

Boskoff (1970:40), in the most general sense, defined the meaning of community as follows:

The community can be defined as a relatively self-contained constellation of variably interdependent social groups within a definite, manageable geographic area, which, through their interrelated functioning, provide minimal satisfaction of the basic and acquired needs of their members.

Herbert & Davies (1993:1) explained the meaning of the community as follows:

The term 'community' is derived from characteristics that bind people together, based on kinship, tribe, history or place, or on economics, interactions or social structures. Community can have a spatial or territorial context, a common territory or place that often reinforces the interactions, provides a psychological

association and enhances its character.

Roberts (2009:40) defines 'community' as follows. "It is a group that is wider than an extended family, but whose members are bound by kin-type relationships, among whom there is a sense of belonging, and a shared identity." The word 'community' or 'fellowship,' refers to what is held in common with others, to a body of people organised into a political or social unity. It seems to appeal to the sort of ideals that ought to capture near universal and virtually automatic assent (Alperson 2002:1). Communities are currently in transition as a result of major social transformations, which have brought with them new cultural and political experiences and forms of living (Delanty 2010:x).

The essential meanings of the word 'community' as these definitions suggest, are that the most essential elements of a community are interdependence among members, a sense of belonging, connectedness, spirit, trust, interactivity, common expectations, shared values and goals among members (Rovai 2002:4).

### **5.1.2 The concept of community from the biblical perspective**

Genesis 1:1 (NIV) says "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." God created man in 'our image,' with the need of community. Consequently He placed this communicative being in communicative relationships (Gn 1:27; 2:15). 'Our image' means that community life, for instance, between husband and wife, is the image of the community in God, between the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The society is the 'space' wherein humans live.

God is responsible for his world because it is his creation (Eph 1:22). All life comes from Him and terminates on his decision (Ps 104:29-30). The triune God is the One who takes the initiative in creation, redemption and in sustaining creation (Hendriks 2002:9). The world is the object of God's love. The members of the community are the objects of God's sanctification (Jn 17:13-21). Authentic communal structures constantly develop contextually as the faith community responds to the initiative of a living, purpose-driven God (Hendriks 2007:1007).

God gave his only begotten Son to be the church's source of life – its wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption (1 Cor 1:30). Everyone who believes in Jesus is saved and has eternal life (Jn 3:16). The members of the societies of Jesus are like sheep to be looked after by the good shepherd through his shepherds (1 Pt 5:2). The society of believers is the church in each location with its mission to be the light and the salt of the world (Mt 5:14-16).

The *polis* of classical Greece contained within it political, social and economic relations. Aristotle saw the city – the polis – as a community (*koinonia*), which for him had a very urban character, in contrast to the tribal and rural social relations of arcadia (Delanty 2010:1). The concept of the classical *polis* has been developed and varied. The early Christians belonged to the new form of relationship, *koinonia* meaning to have certain things in common, joint undertakings in everything from politics and war, to marriage, friendships or clubs. It conveyed a sense of community or togetherness (Herring 2006:2-3). The identity of a congregation is 'togetherness' through the metaphor of the body of Christ. This 'togetherness' has been called the 'basic form' of being of the congregation. The congregation constitutes our togetherness or *koinoia* (Nel 2009b:437). It is *koinonia* with God: "God, who has called you into fellowship with his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, is faithful" (1 Cor 1:9 NIV), and *koinonia* (*κοινωνία*) with others (Ac 2:44-47) (Duncan 2010:5).

The local Korean church also has the responsibility to reach out meaningfully to the community. As God sent his Son into the world, Christ sends his followers into the world (Jn 17:18). The church has to understand the community's need of 'togetherness,' and to meet the basic need of the people of the local community whom 'God calls to fellowship with Jesus Christ.'

## **5.2 The characteristics of the modern local community**

Lesser, Fontaine & Slusher (2000:viii-ix) notes that communities consist of three components as follows:

- 1) People: people are the primary ingredient in any community effort. A community is composed of people who interact on a regular basis around a

common set of issues, interests, or needs.

2) Places: communities need places for their members to gather. The place is often a physical space where members meet and exchange ideas and insights. But, in today's electronic world, the development of the internet has provided a virtual medium where individuals can effectively interact across boundaries of time and space

3) Things: individuals use *things* as mechanisms for documenting and sharing what they know and how the work they perform should be accomplished.

According to the Cambridge Dictionary of Sociology (2006:83) community has two characteristics:

1) A web of affect-laden relationships that often crisscross and reinforce one another (as opposed to one-on-one relationships);

2) A measure of commitment to a set of shared histories and identities – in short, a particular culture. The concept of community is to include all its functions for social survival in terms of political theories.

The community also comprises of symbolism, allegiance, responsibility, and a sense of purpose that have become indistinguishable from the operation of centralised political power (Nisbet 2010:259). Delanty (2010:53) says that “The modern sociologists use the term ‘local community’ in order to refer to a small village, municipality or city as a socio-regional unit.” Here local community is one of the major expressions of community. A central question is whether the urban form of the city accommodates it. The Latin term *sub urbe*, means ‘under city control.’ Throughout most of the history of urbanism, this meaning of the term was an appropriate one (Giddens 1993:577).

The characteristics of the local community will be dealt with as the term has mainly been used in three different contexts, namely, community as a territorial unit, a unit of social structure and a psycho-cultural unit.

### 5.2.1 The modern local community as a territorial unit

In this section, the word 'community' is used to refer to those units of social and territorial organisation which may be called villages, towns and cities (Poplin 1979:3), even though today community has become de-territorialised and scattered in many forms and places (Delanty 2010:119).

The spatial form of a society is closely linked to the overall mechanism of its development. To understand cities, we have to grasp the processes whereby spatial forms are created and transformed (Castells 1983:103). The more general use of the term 'community' is its application to a complete settlement, to any town or village (Herbert & Davies 1993:4). Thus community studies provide empirical investigations and descriptions of the way of life of people in particular settlements or localities.

The urban community may be approached as a general type of community that occupies a roughly delimited portion of this continuum. Ritzer (1996:7) points out the reason to move to urban settings. "The massive migration was caused by the jobs created by the industrial system in the urban areas." According to Boskoff (1970:11-12) it is clear that we may refer to different subtypes or varieties of urban community or different degrees of the urban community. Some scholars (Giddens 1993:566; Scott 1988:119-140) divide the scope of the urban community into:

Village → Town → City → Urban Region → Metropolis → Megalopolis

It has been referred to as a spatial unit, a cluster of people living within a specific geographic area, or simply as a 'place.' The number of 'new towns' such as Bundang, Ilsan, Anyang, Gwacheon, etc. is increasing in South Korea. It has some characteristics with all the functions of government administration, finances, residence, education, public welfare and culture consolidated into small areas, designed to maximise the efficiency of the city's functionality ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New\\_town](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_town)). It can be regarded as 'satellite metropolises,' which are well-developed, high-density cores with well-defined offshoots (Jones 1990:161). Thus the modern local community in this study is

limited to the scope from 'town' to 'metropolis,' especially focusing on 'satellite metropolises.'

The modern metropolis is not just an important focus of production and work, but also of residential behaviour and social life. It is a geographical composite made up of both production space and social space (Scott 1988:217). The functional core of the city is made up of interdependent economic activities that secure the material reproduction of urban life at the outset. Euchner & McGovern (2003:2) suggests that cities have always occupied a central place in the economic, social, cultural and political life of humanity. Individuals with specialised skills and varied backgrounds have come together in an urban milieu to exploit opportunities.

A modern local community has a systematic pattern where members of the society get satisfaction from their daily life. A local society becomes a community of life on the basis of its common geographical space or common lifestyle as the regional scope of activity and the unity of social bond, and common things of culture.

### **5.2.2 The modern local community as a unit of a social system**

For the first half of the 20th century, modern local community sociology was dominated by approaches that emphasised the structural features of local life and the stability of local institutions and organisations (Bridger, Brennan & Luloff 2011:86). According to Brown & Schafft (2011:38) sociologists broadly use two complementary approaches to examine the nature of the social bond that sustains collective engagement and facilitates the accomplishment of collective goals:

- 1) Community as a field of social interaction, and
- 2) Community as a social system, i.e., an integrated set of institutional domains.

The term 'social system' has been defined in many different ways. Cities do not grow at random, but in response to advantageous features of the environment (Giddens 1993:569). Ritzer (1996:105) describes the social system



from the aspect of socialisation and social control as follows:

Socialization and social control are the main mechanisms that allow the social system to maintain its equilibrium. Modest amounts of individuality and deviance are accommodated, but more extreme forms must be met by re-equilibrating mechanisms.

The modern local community that has the characteristics of a social system is always influenced by change, because the society is made up by the interaction of its members (cf. Ritzer 1996:208-209; 223-224). This change in the community as a social system should be taken into account.

People are in a quest for some new moral or spiritual associations entailing an intimate relationship with other human beings in a community as a social structure or territorial entity (Herbert & Davies 1993:5). Society is usually presented as a world where social relations and social life are warm, authentic and moral, as is idealistically called up by the very idea of community (Wehrhahn & Raposo 2006:179). Community as a social system involves relatively lasting arrangements among concrete institutional entities such as education, the church, local government, the economy, and the polity (Brown & Schafft 2011:43). The local community should be considered as a social system. Community is communicative in the sense of being formed in collective action based on place, and is not merely an expression of a fundamental cultural identity (Delanty 2010:53). Local communities are important vehicles for the recovery and expression of moral recognition and the building of personal identities.

The characteristics of a local community's size and structure as a socio-regional unit affect the existing opportunity structure and the individual's perception of and aspiration for occupational changes. The local community is always influenced by the interaction of its members. It is therefore necessary that the local church and its leaders detect the characteristics of the local community, to have a good understanding of it and its needs.

### **5.2.3 The modern local community as a psycho-cultural unit**

Formally, culture is defined as the shared pattern of behaviours and interactions, cognitive constructs, and affective understanding that are learned through a process of socialisation (Hexmoor, McLaughlan & Tuli 2009:63). The concept of culture is one of the most widely used notions in sociology. Culture consists of the values held by the members of a given group, the norms they follow, and the material goods they create (Giddens 1993:31).

The development of an individual cultural identity is a process of acceptance of the cultural norms, beliefs, attitudes and values of one cultural group rather than of another (Campell 2000:31). The cultural system is not simply a part of other systems; it also exists separately in the form of the social stock of knowledge, symbols and ideas (Ritzer 1996:106). Patterns of location, movement and relocation in cities have a similar form. Different neighbourhoods develop through the adjustments made by inhabitants, as they struggle to gain their livelihoods (Giddens 1993:569).

The perspective of community as a psycho-cultural unit does not provide a distinct sociological focus on community. However, it is one aspect of community among others that play an important role (Müller-Prothmann 2006:278). The larger the community, the more it will depend on communication. The individual is not tied to one community only, but may have multiple and overlapping bonds (Delanty 2010:153). As the advantages of having multiple cultural identities become obvious, switching cultural identities becomes a conscious act (Campell 2000:35). Urbanisation is a complex of social, ecological, psychological and cultural trends which produce positive developments in any or all of these four aspects. The forms of the post-modern community can be viewed in terms of the openness of the community (Delanty 2010:117).

The characteristics of the socio-cultural life in the city determine the urban spatial organisation of the cultural centre and become the focus of change, innovation and creativity.

### 5.3 The identity of an effective need-oriented diaconal ministry for the modern local community

This section deals with the role of an effective diaconal ministry to help the local community and its people to bring about a positive attitude towards the local church.

Brash (1966:199) explains the importance of an effective method of diaconal service that is relevant to the community:

Through the churches of the world today there is an increasing awareness that many of the methods by which Christians serve are no longer appropriate to our modern circumstances. These methods, many of them expressed through inflexible institutions, may have been the most relevant possible when they were first adopted. But people both within and without the churches are raising fundamental questions today, and implying that perhaps the enterprises of Christian service should be radically reshaped in response to the characteristics of human life in our time. The debate continues.

Christian service should be appropriate for modern circumstances. The church is definitely required to consider methods of its diaconal ministry that are suitable for the characteristic of the urban society.

Armstrong (1979:58) demarcates 'service evangelism' in the relationship between evangelism and social action as follows:

Social action is the natural consequence of service evangelism, but not vice versa. It is possible to be meaningfully involved in social action without being involved in evangelism, as countless secular organizations and government agencies. But it is not possible, in my opinion, to be meaningfully involved in *service* evangelism without being involved in social action. An evangelistic approach that is truly concerned with reaching the whole person, I repeat, cannot overlook the social dimension of a person's life, or the context in which that life is lived.

To serve the local community with the salvation of God's love is to include the social dimension of people's lives, to have a profound understanding of them, and to approach them by caring for their needs (see the detailed discussion on

the relationship between evangelism and social responsibility by Hiebert & Cox [2000:344-346]).

In order to find the relationship between the diaconal ministry and the modern local community, the following will be dealt with: the diaconal ministry as a centre for the local community, the diaconal ministry as a good communication between the church and the modern local community, and the cultural diaconal ministry for the local community.

### **5.3.1 The diaconal ministry as a centre for the local community**

“In the twentieth century the church has discovered social responsibility as part of the gospel” (Attfield 2001:18). A local church should accept its responsibility towards church growth. Wagner (1986a:36-37) emphasises the responsibility of Christians for the local community service of the church. “While there is a growing consensus among evangelicals that social ministry is an obligation of Christians, the exact shapes that the ministry to the poor and oppressed should take are not yet clear.”

Today it is widely held that the mission of the church has two aspects: evangelism and social action. The church is accused of failing to give any consideration to social responsibility as an aspect of mission, and therefore of appearing to present a one-sided communication of the gospel (Attfield 2001:117). To revise the role and practice of the church in a new context, requires the discerning of God’s will and following his guidance. It often takes considerable effort by a faith community to deal with this process (Hendriks 2007:1007).

In the Acts of the Apostles, the church is introduced and characterised as a community fellowship and *diakonia* (Ac 2:42-47). In the light of the Pauline theology, Küng (1995:395-398) describes the diaconal structure of the church, stressing the ministries of preaching, welfare and guidance in and for the community as follows:

1) The permanent ministries in the community have the same characteristics as the charismas, inasmuch as in each case God calls a particular individual to a

special ministry in the community, and at the same time gives him the power to fulfil that ministry.

2) The New Testament offers no fixed and exclusive catalogue of these permanent ministries within the community which would be valid for all communities.

3) In the New Testament the foremost ministries are those of preaching: the ministry of reconciliation, in which the reconciliation is proclaimed (2 Cor 5:18).

4) In addition to ministries of preaching, there are also ministries of welfare and of guidance. For Paul, the community is a communion of charismas, but this does not mean disorder, in which each can do as he chooses.

In all these cases the ministries referred to are more or less permanent ones, which were assumed for life or at any rate for long periods, but about their substance and extent there is a scarcity of reliable historical evidence.

The church is an interpretative community in an ongoing engagement with the remembered patterns of God's praxis (Hendriks 2007:1011). According to Hiebert (1996:140-141) the social responsibility of the local church defines our identity in the society and shapes our lives. The community dimension has to do with the way a social system defines, allocates and uses social relationships. Thus the role of the local church and the local community system has to be involved in the social ministry for serving the local community.

All Christians are expected to be involved in the care of the poor and these actions should be emphasised as an important role of the diaconal ministry. Its role can influence the Korean congregations to become a centre of community service as God wants them to meet the needs of the Korean people with a proper diaconal ministry.

### **5.3.2 The diaconal ministry as a good communication between the church and the modern local community**

While the mission of the church is to preach the gospel, the local community is the field of church's ministry (Nicholls 1986:11-12). It is important that the local church maintains good communication with the local community.

The church should recognise the obvious truth that proclaiming the gospel and communicating the gospel are two different things. Proclamation is a necessary and valid form of evangelism, but it cannot assume that, just because the gospel has been proclaimed, communication has taken place (Armstrong 1979:57). Effective communication is vital in maintaining a productive working community and environment, in building positive interpersonal relationships and for solving problems effectively (Manala 2010:4). Therefore, the church has to understand the community in order to become a good communicator to it. Good communication can guide the church in detecting the needs of the community, in order to develop an effective diaconal programme.

There can be no real bringing of salvation to any man unless it is concerned with his whole life. There can be no expression of genuine compassion that is not interested in more than a man's bodily state (Brash 1966:199-200). As a servant community, the local church exists to minister to the needs of people; the church must serve the whole person – to physical as well as spiritual needs – just as the churches of the New Testament (Armstrong 1979:58). As missionary congregations it is necessary to return the ministry to the people and to win the non-Christians who have never been to church (Sjogren 2002:33). God initiated something that changed people and formed them into a missionary community of people called to love God and their neighbour (Hendriks 2007:1013). Thus genuine compassion, helping the poor and the needy, should be concrete expressions or programmes for the people concerned. The church should present an effective programme for the community.

Klinken (1989:25) explains the motives of the diaconal ministry, which are important for good communication, as follows:

The motives that stimulate communication between persons and between groups are the love of one's neighbour, solidarity, justice and compassion. These motives induce changes in the situation of all who are involved in a relationship. Justice and compassion are also founded on a strong desire that the weakest on earth may live in a more just society and that they may become able to use their

talents to serve others.

According to the study of Dudley & Johnson (1991:105-110), the pilgrim church's people are able to move into advocacy roles along with individual service. When their history is mobilised in ministry, they can become a powerful force for community-building (Dudley & Johnson 1991:115).

The relationship between communicator and receptor in the diaconal ministry should be clear. Effective communication of the gospel depends not only on a thorough understanding of the content of the message, but also on an ability to relate that message to the contemporary situation (Gibbs 1981:84). Most Christian communicators are more message-oriented than receptor-oriented. According to Attfield (2001:155-156) the communication of the Christian gospel should be the central task of the church in the modern, secular, pluralistic and individualistic age.

Robra (1994:282) explains that the 1982 consultation on 'Contemporary Understandings of Diakonia' characterised *diakonia* with some key-words:

- 1) Essential for the life and well-being of the church;
- 2) Concentrating on the local church level, for it 'starts where the people are' with their immediate needs;
- 3) Worldwide international solidarity;
- 4) Preventive, to tackle the root causes together with people, and not to sustain unjust structures;
- 5) Humanitarian help beyond the household of faith;
- 6) Mutual;
- 7) Liberating, with the stress on empowerment of people, promoting participation and respecting their culture and values.

These are new observations regarding the role of the local community and *diakonia* as a relationship of exchange in a healing and sharing community. They help to understand the relationship between the church and the local community on the relational basis of *diakonia*.

In Christian *diakonia*, voluntary and professional service providers, as well as the recipients, should be aware of the centrality of the church in all diaconal undertakings (Delkeskamp-Hayes 2009:20). Understanding the relationship between the local church and the local community, and its importance is essential for relevant communication of the gospel. Church-oriented interpretations of the local community should not overlook a community-oriented view of the society's needs. Thus the local church has to approach the local community with clear sociological perspectives to support an effective diaconal ministry.

### **5.3.3 The cultural diaconal ministry to the local community**

This section deals with the cultural angle on the diaconal ministry to the local community. Culture is basically the human response to the task to care for, and to develop the creation. The diaconal ministry requires an awareness of how the church is intertwined with society and has to learn to understand and to practise its task as a cultural diaconate (Greinacher & Mette 1988:xx).

People live in a social context, and they are affected by the pressures and problems of society. To be involved in their lives is to be concerned about the social, political, and economic problems that affect their lives (Armstrong 1979:58). An encounter between different cultures and civilisation is prone to clashes and conflict resulting from the view of different religious and cultural communities (Chung 2010:142). The New Testament recognises the division of cultural differences and treats it as a problem. When the conflict arose over the alleged favouritism shown to Hebrew widows above Jewish widows, the solution was not to divide these people according to their cultural differences (DuBose 1978:127). Deacons were selected to give special attention to such matters, that there might be unity in the church (Acts 6:1-6). The solution was to handle 'the social problem in the early church ... administratively accordingly to the cultural method.' According to Klinken (1989:31) the New Testament has examples of solving problems that arose in 'human need' in social and cultural contexts. Aware of the distance between the cultural context of the Bible and



our own cultural environment, we have to be modest in arriving at conclusions for the contemporary *diakonia*.

The church's mission statement begins with the words, "Therefore go and make disciples of *all nations*" (Mt 28:19 NIV). To be successful in fulfilling this mission, the character of the Christian church should be multicultural. How the church fulfils this task depends on its understanding of the different cultures in the local community (Gibbs 1981:88). There has been a great deal of debate in recent decades about the relationship between the gospel and culture (Gibbs & Bolger 2006:16). In order to fulfil its mission, the Christian church has to work for the growth of Christianity in every country around the world, regardless of current levels of adherents (Fields & Rosson 2008:269).

The church has to recognise that it operates in the midst of a cultural revolution and that 19<sup>th</sup> century forms of the church do not communicate clearly to twenty-first-century cultures (since the 1950s, two cultural shifts affected the whole of society, embroiling the church at the same time. The first is the transition from Christendom to post-Christendom. The second is the transition from modernity to post-modernity [Gibbs & Bolger 2006:17-18]). A major transformation in the way the church understands culture must occur for the church to negotiate the changed ministry environment of the twenty-first century (Gibbs & Bolger 2006:17). The church is a modern institution in a post-modern world, a fact that is often widely overlooked. The Korean church must embody the gospel within the culture of post-modernity for the church to survive the twenty-first century.

The diaconal ministry of the early church should not dictate the shape of today's ministry. Our times are different, our cultures are different and the needs of today's church are somewhat different (Cummings 2004:30-31). The work of evangelism, which begins with how one communicates the gospel in meaningful terms, extends to what kind of Christian community can most authentically express the new life of the gospel within that cultural context (Gibbs 1981:85). The church's ignorance of the wider culture becomes problematic. Due to its cultural entrenchment, the church no longer relates to the surrounding culture,

hence its increasing marginalisation and perceived irrelevance (Gibbs & Bolger 2006:15).

According to Nel (2009b:440-441) there is a new perspective on the diaconal ministry in terms of 'relational service' between *marturia μαρτυρία* (witness) and *diakonia διακονία* (service). It is describing not only a ministry but the being of the congregation. It shows that mission is a kingdom of God-seeking venture into the world as the theatre of God's activity. It is also focusing on the ministry to save the people who are disillusioned with the church. A relational service is indeed a style by which congregations serve them to win them back (cf. Nel 2002:65-87). Sjogren (1993:22) calls this 'servant evangelism.' In the emerging culture this may ask for a different kind of church. Armstrong (1979:53) identifies 'service' in terms of evangelism, and explains the relationship between service and evangelism as follows:

By evangelism I mean reaching out to others in Christian love, identifying with them, caring for them, listening to them, and sharing one's faith with them in such a way that they will freely respond and want to commit themselves to trust, love, and obey God as a disciple of Jesus Christ and a member of his servant community, the church. That, I realize, is a statement of method as well as my definition of evangelism. The word 'service' is intended to imply a style of evangelism that is caring, supportive, unselfish, sensitive, and responsive to human need. It is evangelism done by a servant church, whose people are there not to be served but to serve.

It is thus necessary to have the *charismata* because we are gifted for the sake of our servanthood (Klinken 1989:40).

The relationship between congregational development and modern society mirrors this two-sided puzzle. As the pieces of one come together, the other finds expression as well (Olson 2002:11). The factors influencing the diaconal ministry are therefore related to the characteristics of the society and the culture. It plays an important role in dealing with 'human needs.' The attitude toward 'human need' is influenced to a very great extent by cultural values and norms, and the actual kind of 'human need' also influences people's response to that need.

#### **5.4 Developing an effective need-oriented diaconal ministry organised by the church for the local community**

The practice of diaconal service through his people is God's will and command. Through this ministry the local church can closely approach the local community. An effective diaconal ministry of God's people for the community's salvation is indicated by their 'need.' The local community influences the forms of the diaconal service. It strongly requires the church and its leaders to find the kind of diaconal ministry suitable for the modern local community. The effectiveness of a need-oriented diaconal gathering such as a baby school and a pregnant women's group as part of the ministry is also required in the church.

While the urban society is developing rapidly, the forms of the diaconal service diversify and develop to meet people's needs. The church has to consider the environment of the community to serve it effectively. The Christian church is located within the civil community. Issues of the public sphere affect and shape the characteristics of congregational life and mission (Chung 2010:141). The society or community influences the forms of the diaconal ministry. Its forms at any particular time and place depend on the nature or need of the neighbourhood in the community (cf. Greinacher & Mette 1988:xvii).

The location and movement of persons, groups, or activities always rest more or less on a perceived social and cultural motivation. Forms of the diaconal service that stimulate the social and cultural motivation of people in the community can be effective practices of service (Boskoff 1970:94). Individual behaviour or attitudes are influenced by the local environment, especially the typical values and role models present within any neighbourhood (Herbert & Davies 1993:80).

The social characteristics of need are seen in the social factors that lead to a situation in which persons or groups are not able to achieve or maintain social integration without assistance (Klinken 1989:21). All Christian *diakonia* must offer its services on the immediate practical and personal level of relief of personal need (Delkeskamp-Hayes 2009:19). Thus an effective need-oriented diaconal ministry that complies with the community's needs, including their physical, mental, cultural and sociological needs, requires the Korean

congregations to make use of the social and cultural characteristics of the community and the people involved in it.

## 6. CONCLUSION

This chapter dealt with the variety of roles of the church's *diakonia*, characteristics of the modern local community, and relationships between the church and the community.

The role of the diaconal ministry is 'service to the people and to the community and particularly to the needy' leading them toward salvation and God's love. This chapter indicated how an effective need-oriented diaconal ministry is to meet the local community and the people's 'need' according to biblical, theological and historical perspectives:

- 1) The biblical principle for the *diakonia* to fulfil its social responsibility is not to be served, but to serve with God's love and compassion.
- 2) The term *diakonia* *διακονια* can be used as a practical way of the preaching ministry of the gospel (*kerygma* *κηρυγμα*). *Diakonia* in all its forms is worship or service of God (*leitourgia* *λειτουργια*). *Diakonia* is also the expression of the unity of the church (*koinonia* *κοινωνια*) as the body of Christ. *Diakonia* coexists with all the ministries of the church.
- 3) In the early church, the diaconal ministry by the first Christians played an important role in society, but declined gradually.
- 4) During the Middle Ages, Mathew 25:31-46 influenced charity and alms giving to be seen as a way to attain salvation.
- 5) Calvin and his followers defined the church's *diakonia* as distinct and in theory separable from the charitable activity of the civil government.
- 6) Different forms of diaconal ministry have gradually developed, not only to give help to the poor, the sick and to widows, but also to comply with the needs of people in the local community who are interested in education, health and culture.

7) Ministry (*diakonia*) and church belong inseparably together. Church and ministry (*diakonia*) are given in and with each other, especially given by God for the building up of the church.

‘Need’ is one of the key words to guide the diaconal ministry from Old Testament times to the present. The diaconal ministry should be need-oriented.

As different forms of the diaconal ministry have gradually developed toward meeting the actual needs of the local community, effective forms of the diaconal ministry are essential to coexist in the synergy between *kerygma*, *leitourgia*, and *koinonia*. The relationship between them can and should not be separated (cf. Guder 1998:54). This coexisting ministry is the basis of the building up of the local church.

A need-oriented diaconal ministry that is effective for the local community and its people’s need is indicated in this chapter as seen from the perspective of the local community:

- 1) This study focuses on ‘satellite metropolises’ and is limited to the scope from ‘town’ to ‘metropolis’ as the territorial unit of the modern local community.
- 2) As a society or community develops, forms of diaconal service also vary and develop to adjust to the social and cultural situation. The church has to consider the environment of the local community to serve it effectively.
- 3) The characteristics of each local community, its size and its structure determine the opportunities as well as the individual’s perception of and aspiration for occupational changes. The local community is always influenced by the interaction of its members.
- 4) Forms of diaconal service are effective if they arouse a social and cultural motivation in the people. Issues of the public sphere affect and shape the characteristics of congregational life and mission. But the aim of the church’s ministries remains the salvation of the people.
- 5) The church should recognise the obvious truth that proclaiming the gospel and communicating the gospel are two different things. Proclamation is a

necessary and valid form of evangelism, but it cannot assume that, just because the gospel has been proclaimed, communication has taken place.

6) The diaconal service is intended to promote a style of evangelism that is caring, supportive, unselfish, sensitive, and responsive to human needs. Evangelism should be done by a servant church, whose people are striving not to be served but to serve.

7) The society or community influences the forms of the diaconal ministry. Its forms, at any particular time and place, depend on the nature or need of the neighbourhood in the community.

In order to satisfy the community's needs the community structure will guide the forms of diaconal service. The diaconal service can with God's love influence changes in the community, and in the relations between the church and the community, towards its purpose of salvation.

A need-oriented diaconal ministry has to constantly challenge frozen, static, self-centred structures in the Korean churches, which resulted in the discontinuity between the Korean church and the local community, to transform them into living instruments of a sharing, healing ministry by Korean congregations that will restore the discontinued relationship between them.

The next chapter deals with how an effective diaconal ministry leads people to be meaningfully involved and to become members of the Korean congregations who join in the building up of the local church.